



At their home in Markham, Ont., Prakash Bhardwaj and his wife, Rama, look through family photo albums as they remember their son, Harish, who was killed at age 20 in the bombing of Air-India Flight 182 in 1985. 'I remember him every day,' Mr. Bhardwaj says. 'The anguish is always there. It's been very, very difficult.'

'I'm not looking for revenge, just justice,' relative says

VICTIM from page A1

Mr. Bhardwaj has little hope that those charged will be convicted and he worries that the trial will drag on for years.

"I'm sure of nothing, except that my precious son is dead."

For Ramji Khandelwal, hardly a month has passed during the past 15 years when he did not contact the RCMP in Vancouver to find out whatever small step the force might have made in the painfully long investigation into the bombing.

And every time he talked to an investigator, he would hear the same hollow-sounding promise that charges would soon be laid.

But the last time he was in touch, just 10 days ago on a trip to Vancouver, there was something different about the stock reply he was so accustomed to hearing.

"They told me it would be soon, and that's something I've heard before," said the professor at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. "But this time, there was something in their facial expressions, I believed them more than before."

Sure enough, Prof. Khandelwal received the long-awaited call from the RCMP yesterday, and he said a sense of relief washed over him.

But at the same time, he too fears the prospect of a long and emotionally charged trial that will rub raw all the painful memories from 15 years ago. Prof. Khandelwal and his wife, Vimla, lost their two daughters, 21-year-old Chandra and 19-year-old Manju, both students at the University of Saskatchewan

who were travelling to India to attend the wedding of their uncle.

The Khandelwals' son was scheduled for the same flight, but backed out at the last minute to attend a computer camp.

All these years later, Ms. Khandelwal still wakes up in the middle of the night sobbing over her two girls.

"It has been quite hard on our family," Prof. Khandelwal said. "And [the trial] won't be an easy thing. I always tell my wife and son that we have to be strong. We can't go back. We have to look to the future. But it's an easier thing to say than to practice."

Nagendran Meiyappan lost two nieces, Shyamala Laurence, 18, and Krithia, 16. He was in his car yesterday when he heard the news of the arrests.

"I am glad that justice has been served," he said in an interview from his home in Brampton, Ont. "I'm not looking for revenge, just justice."

Mr. Meiyappan said that the lives of many families have been shattered in the wake of the bombing. "Marriages have broken down, people have become ill and died, friends have become distant."

And he too remembers his loss every day. "These children were very beautiful and so talented. They were dancers. They were such good children."

Pictures of the girls hang on the walls of his home. "We see and think of them every day."

He is grateful that the bodies of the girls were never recovered.

"Personally, I was happy that

they were not found. It was a blessing," he said. "We saw their smiling faces when they were leaving. That's how I want to remember them, smiling as they waved goodbye."

Sandeep Cheema was too young to understand what had happened to his father, Shingara, another of the 329 people on the Air-India flight. He was seven when his father was killed.

Living without a father has been hard, he said. His dad has missed graduations, weddings and watching his three children growing up.

"Time passes by, but there have been some hard times," Mr. Cheema said.

Alone, his mother became withdrawn. "She never had anybody to share her things with," he said. "She didn't have a companion."

Mr. Cheema, now 22, lives in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey, B.C. Yesterday's news brought him some relief. "For me, it is peace of mind. This can rest, finally," he said.

Susheel Gupta was a 12-year-old schoolboy in Toronto when his mother died in the bombing and some of his memories of her have faded over time.

But he remembers vividly the pain of losing a mother, the anguish of his father and older brother, and the gut-wrenching shift his father made to play the roles of both father and mother to his two sons.

With a report from Caroline Alphonso in Vancouver

HISTORY OF A BOMBING

Investigators trace trail of clues across ocean

June 23, 1985: 0218 GMT — Air-India Flight 182 departs Montreal for London, en route to Delhi and Bombay. The flight is one hour and 38 minutes behind schedule. There are 329 people aboard the Boeing 747 — 307 passengers and 22 crew. Most of the passengers are Canadian. The 747 is named Kanishka, after a powerful Indian king who ruled in the first century AD. Although he was a devout follower of Buddhism, which preaches non-violence, Kanishka met a violent end — he was murdered by some of his subjects.

June 23, 1985: 0620 GMT — At Japan's Narita airport, an explosion in the baggage handling area kills two baggage handlers and injures four others. Investigators later determine that the bomb was in a suitcase being transferred from a Canadian airliner onto an Air-India flight.

June 23, 1985, 0714 GMT — The transponder signal from Air-India 182 suddenly stops, causing it to disappear from radar screens at an international flight monitoring centre located in Shannon, Ireland. Until its disappearance, the aircraft had been cruising at 31,000 feet. The wreckage falls into the ocean about 175 kilometres off the southwest coast of Ireland.

June 23, 1985, 0730 GMT — Shannon radar centre notifies marine authorities that a plane has gone missing. Ships begin converging on the area. The tragedy is confirmed when bodies are found floating.

June 24, 1985 — Investigators and government officials from India, the United States, Canada and Ireland arrive in Shannon. Recovery of the wreckage is complicated by the extreme depth at the crash site. The remains of the 747 lie under 2,010 metres of water. Initial examination of wreckage and bodies leads investigators to believe that the 747 was blown apart in midair, and that at least some of the passengers were alive as they fell toward the Atlantic.

When submarines locate the wreckage on the ocean floor, they find initial evidence that suggests an explosion.

July 16, 1985 — Tapes are removed from Flight 182's data recorders by Indian investigators to be played and analyzed. The tapes reveal normal conversation among the flight crew, then a loud bang that ends the recording.

Sept. 10, 1985 — Two B.C. Sikh fundamentalists are taken into custody by police on explosives charges in connection with the Narita airport bombing. The two are Inderjit Singh Reyat, of Duncan, and Talwinder Singh Parmar, of Burnaby, a Sikh priest and founder of the fundamentalist Babbar Khalsa Religious Society of Canada. Mr. Reyat, a friend of Mr. Parmar, belongs to the International Sikh Youth Federation. Although the arrests lead to widespread speculation that the Air-India bombing is about to be solved, that does not prove to be the case: charges against Mr. Parmar are eventually dropped for lack of evidence, and Mr. Reyat is charged with a minor offence, unrelated to Air-India. Mr. Parmar later acknowledges that he is considered a prime suspect in the Air-India bombing.

Jan. 22, 1986 — The Canadian Aviation Safety Board formally concludes that a bomb brought down Air-India Flight 182.

Feb. 4, 1986 — B. N. Kirpal, a judge heading an Indian government inquiry into the disaster, concludes a bomb in the forward baggage compartment brought down Flight 182.

May 11, 1986 — Federal Solicitor-General James Kelleher says new evidence discovered in the case may lead to charges, but warns that the evidence gathered so far is insufficient to get a conviction in court.

Nov. 11, 1987 — The head of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service resigns after it is revealed that the agency submitted a misleading affidavit in 1985 in order to obtain a wiretap warrant from a judge as they investigated suspected Sikh terrorists in connection with the Air-India bombing.

Nov. 14, 1987 — Liberal MP John Nunziata accuses CSIS of bungling the investigation of the Air-India crash so badly that criminal charges may never be laid.

Feb. 5, 1988 — Inderjit Singh Reyat is arrested in England in connection with the Narita airport bombing. Soon after Mr. Reyat's arrest, Talwinder Singh Parmar leaves Canada for India. Although he is still widely regarded as the prime suspect in the Air-India case, police say Mr. Parmar is free to travel where he wants, since he has not been charged with any crime.

Feb. 20, 1988 — Air-India announces that it will resume flights from Canada to India later in the year. The airline had suspended its twice-weekly flights from Toronto on June 25, 1985, two days after the



One of the two flight recorders aboard the Air-India jet that crashed off Ireland in 1985 with the loss of 329 lives is taken away for examination.

downing of Flight 182.

Aug. 10, 1988 — A British court orders Mr. Reyat's extradition to Canada.

Aug. 7, 1989 — Submersibles begin a new search of the underwater wreckage site off the Irish coast.

Aug. 21, 1989 — Canadian investigators confirm they have found new evidence in the Air-India bombing, but refuse to make it public.

Jan. 30, 1990 — Citizens Alliance for a Public Inquiry into the Air-India Disaster claims RCMP are blocking its bid for a public inquiry.

May 10, 1991 — Inderjit Singh Reyat is convicted in Vancouver of manslaughter and four explosives charges related to the Narita airport bombing.

May 14, 1991 — Liberal MP John Nunziata says RCMP know who bombed the plane but don't have evidence needed for prosecution.



A door from the Air-India jumbo jet that crashed in 1985, killing 329, floats off the Irish coast.

June 22, 1991 — The editor of an Indo-Canadian newspaper says the people who had a bomb placed aboard Air-India are well known within Vancouver's Sikh community. Among them are the people who took the bombs to the airport and checked in the luggage that contained the bomb. The editor says the killers are prospering, moving into bigger houses, and thriving in the community. He says police also know the names of those involved, and speculates that charges have not been laid because Crown lawyers are afraid that if one case is not proved beyond a reasonable doubt, judges may throw out all subsequent charges.

Oct. 15, 1992 — Key Air-India bombing suspect Talwinder Singh Parmar, who returned to India after Mr. Reyat's arrest in 1988, dies after a

battle with Indian police.

Feb. 3, 1994 — Solicitor-General Herb Gray says a royal commission into the air disaster hasn't been ruled out, but declines to order one.

April 13, 1994 — RCMP say they have spent \$20-million on the Air-India investigation, and are still working on the case.

May 17, 1995 — Federal authorities say they believe the Air-India bombing was carried out by six to eight people involved in the fight for an independent Sikh state, and that the bomb was timed to explode on the ground, but went off in the air because Flight 182 left Montreal one hour and 38 minutes late.

May 31, 1995 — RCMP announce a \$1-million reward for help catching Air-India bombers.

Dec. 11, 1996 — RCMP announce that they expect to lay charges against several suspects in the bombing within a few months. No charges are laid.

April 14, 1997 — RCMP announce they are pushing back completion date of a probe into the Air-India case until early fall.

Oct. 15, 1998 — RCMP announce they have handed their Air-India report to British Columbia's Crown counsel office, which may allow them to bring charges in the bombing.

March 11, 1999 — RCMP announce they have spent \$26-million on the Air-India probe.

June 26, 1999 — Sikh temples across Canada hold memorial services to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the Air-India bombing.

Jan. 26, 2000 — a former CSIS agent tells The Globe and Mail that a turf war between his agency and the RCMP led him to destroy taped interviews with Air-India sources rather than hand them over to his rivals at the RCMP.

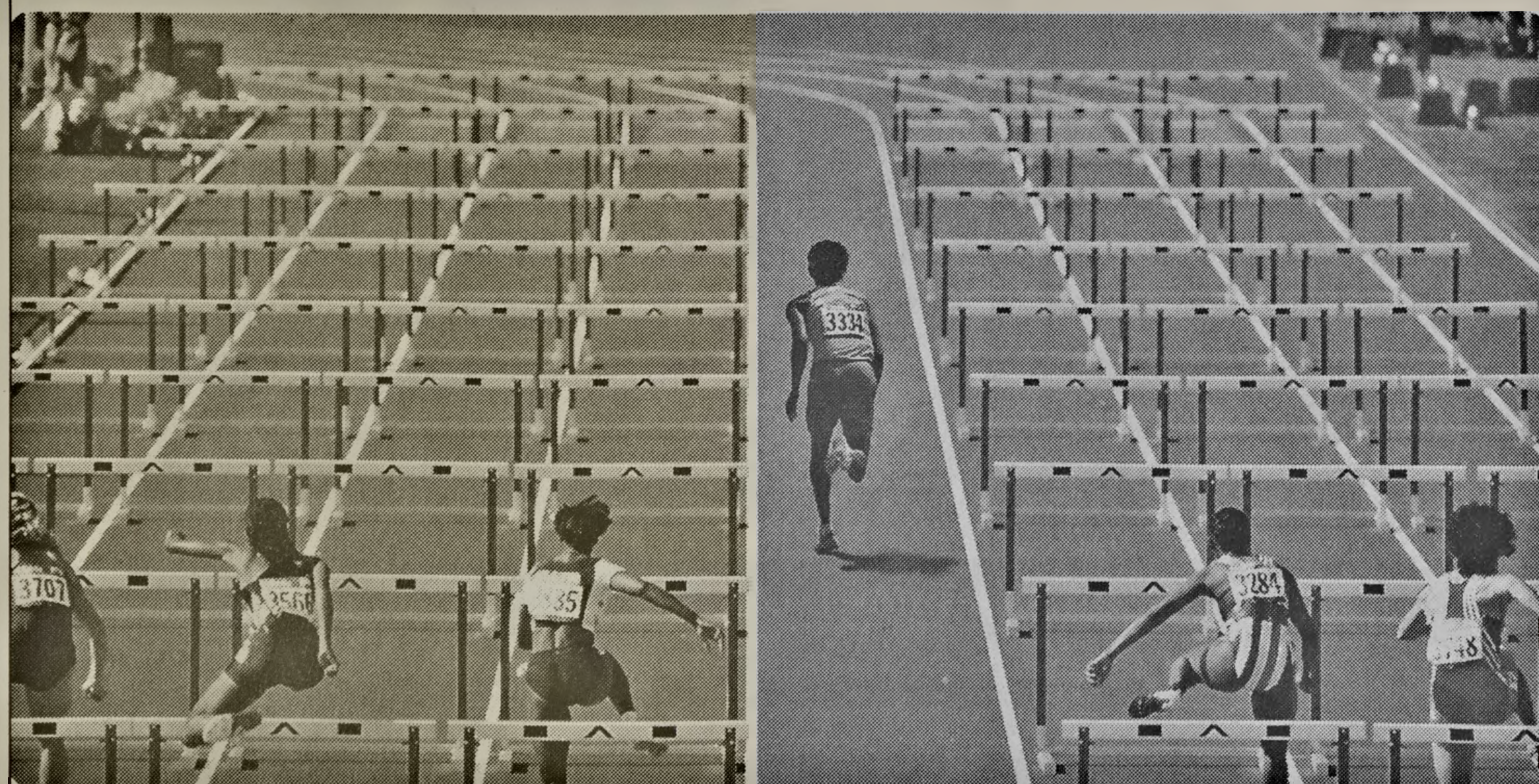
June 19, 2000 — Days before the 15th anniversary of the Air-India tragedy, an official with B.C.'s Ministry of the Attorney-General says a team of 12 prosecutors is moving closer to deciding whether the evidence gathered so far warrants charges, but cautions that "nothing is imminent or pending." John Nunziata, an Independent member of Parliament who has continued his crusade for an Air-India inquiry for more than a decade, says the Air-India bombing is "off the radar screen in Ottawa."

June 26, 2000 — Documents obtained by The Globe and Mail reveal that police have identified a third suspect in the Air-India investigation. The documents indicate that a link has been established between the suspect and Inderjit Singh Reyat, who is still in prison after being convicted in connection with the Narita airport bombing. Although police do not name the suspect, they say he has significant financial ties to Mr. Reyat's family.

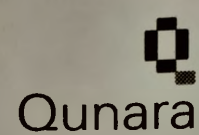
Oct. 27, 2000 — Ripudaman Singh Malik, 53, and Ajaib Singh Bagri, 51, are charged.

Compiled by Peter Cheney

discover your unfair advantage



Qunara provides total eSolutions for your business that can be implemented efficiently, effectively and expertly. With four years of experience in providing electronic commerce and eBusiness solutions, Qunara can give you a jump on your competition.



To register call 1.888.783.5555 or visit us at www.qunara.com

Executive eSolutions Seminars

Join us at our complimentary seminar, and hear how companies have flourished using Qunara eSolutions as their unfair advantage.

8-9 am Partner Presentation, 12-1pm B2B Presentation

Four Points Hotel Sheraton	Oct. 31/00
Toronto Airport, Mississauga, Birch Room	
Delta Toronto East	Nov. 1/00
Scarborough, Unionville Room	
Royal York Hotel	Nov. 2/00
Toronto, Library Room	