Balbir Singh Sidhu appeals people not to oppose cremation of COVID-19 positive body

Says cremation does not pose any additional threat

Chandigarh, April 3:
Moved by the incident that took place on Thursday in which cremation of the body of renowned Ragi Padam Shri Bhai Nirmal Singh was opposed owing to his demise from nCov, the Health Minister, Punjab, Mr. Balbir Singh Sidhu made an appeal to the public to not to panic as cremation of COVID-19 positive patient's body does not pose any additional threat.

Sensitizing the public, the crematorium and burial ground staff he reiterated that the cremation has no adverse effects if proper protocols are adhered to. So much so that the even the ash does not pose any risk and can even be collected to perform the last rites.

He said that as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (GoI) the crematorium and burial ground staff need to ensure hand hygiene, use of masks and gloves.

Besides, the viewing of the dead body by unzipping the face end of the body bag (by the staff using standard precautions) may be allowed, for the relatives to see the body for one last time and religious rituals such as reading from religious scripts, sprinkling holy water and any other last rites that does not require touching of the body are allowed.

But, the bathing, kissing, hugging of the dead body is not allowed and the funeral/ burial staff and family members should perform hand hygiene after cremation/ burial.

Apart from this, large gathering at the crematorium/ burial ground should be avoided as a social distancing measure.