

# Himachal Tribune

FORECAST  
RAIN AT MANY PLACES



TEMPERATURE

SHIMLA  
MAX: 21.2°C MIN: 17.6°C

DHARAMSALA  
MAX: 27.5°C MIN: 17.6°C

SUNSET  
TUESDAY 7.05 PM

SUNRISE  
WEDNESDAY 5.47 AM

## YOUNG THESPIANS TRAVEL TO A WHOLE NEW WORLD

Junior and middle school students of Bishop Cotton School stage Aladdin, a classic musical play. P2»



## DOCTORS DEMAND JUSTICE IN KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER CASE

Say incident underscores the need for measures to ensure safety of medical professionals. P3»



## IT'S 'LOVE OF LIFE' THAT INSPIRES MILIND SOMAN

Adding another feather to his overflowing cap, the fitness icon has come up with his second book. P4»



TUESDAY | 13 AUGUST 2024 | HIMACHAL

## IN BRIEF

### VERMA IS CHIEF I-T COMMISSIONER



Shimla: A 1990-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, Suneel Verma, on Monday took over as the Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Shimla. The orders were recently issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes, Delhi. Verma hails from Lahaul and Spiti district and has also served as Principal Commissioner of Income Tax, Shimla. ms

## HELPLINE

### POLICE

Report corruption (WhatsApp) 8988700100

Report cyber crime - 1930

Gudiya helpline (women safety)- 1515

Hoshiar Singh (Forest crime) - 1090

### HEALTH

Medical emergency 108

Drug de-addiction, counselling and general health enquiry 104

Free drop back ambulance service for expectant mothers 102

# Houses teeter on the edge after flashflood, admn seeks report

Villagers keeping night vigil | Naib tehsildar told to assess ground situation

RAJIV MAHAJAN

NURPUR, AUGUST 12

Massive hill cutting due to flashfloods in Bhedkhud rivulet has put some houses at Luther village under Rajol gram panchayat in the Kotla area in a precarious situation.

Torrential rains during the past fortnight have been giving sleepless nights to residents. Agricultural land of a villager, Hari Singh, with stranding crop has been damaged as the rivulet has filled it with sand, gravel and stone. A footpath leading to local deity Mata Bagulamukhi, near Kotla, has also been washed away in the flashfloods.

As per information, houses of over 10 villagers are under the threat. The affected villagers stay awake at night and keep a vigil so that they can react immediately if it rains heavily.

The local gram panchayat had constructed a gabion wall and concrete retaining wall to save the village from soil erosion, but flashfloods have



Houses situated on the bank of Bhedkhud rivulet at Luther village in Jawali subdivision. TRIBUNE PHOTO

washed away these protective structures.

The residents who have been living under constant threat have appealed to the state government to find a permanent solution to the problem. They said the authorities should spend flood relief funds on the construction of the protection wall in Luther village.

Jawali SDM Vichar Singh said the naib tehsildar had been directed to prepare a ground report of the affected area so that further action could be taken.

Pradhan Pushpa Devi said the gram panchayat had

approved money from MNREGA funds for the construction of concrete protection wall to save Luther village. The work would start after monsoon season, she said, while admitting that the old gabion wall raised on the bank of Bherkhud the village had been washed away.

The DC said the Irrigation and Public Health Department had suffered the maximum loss of Rs 7.56 crore, while PWD incurred loss to the tune of Rs 2.53 crore. He said the electricity board had also suffered loss. He advised officials of the Revenue Department and disaster management authority to stay alert as they could receive distress calls any time.

## Hamipur dist suffers over ₹40-crore loss due to rain

OUR CORRESPONDENT

HAMIRPUR, AUGUST 12

The district has suffered a loss to the tune of over Rs 40 crore, including Rs 10 crore in the past two days, during the current rainy season. Stating this here today, Deputy Commissioner Amarjit Singh said the Meteorological Department had issued an orange alert for the district for the next two days.

### Officials of Revenue Dept told to stay alert

He asked people to refrain from going near rivers and streams.

The DC said the Irrigation and Public Health Department had suffered the maximum loss of Rs 7.56 crore, while PWD incurred loss to the tune of Rs 2.53 crore. He said the electricity board had also suffered loss. He advised officials of the Revenue Department and disaster management authority to stay alert as they could receive distress calls any time.



Cracks on the outer walls of the PWD office in Solan. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Staff shifted after building develops cracks in Solan

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SOLAN, AUGUST 12

A building housing the office of the Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department (PWD), developed cracks following heavy rain this morning.

After one floor of the building, having three rooms, was found to be unsafe for working, employees were shifted to the other floor on a temporary basis. The cracks were widening and more damage could occur to the building. The staff would be shifted to the division office of the department, as the building could suffer further damage in the rainy season, said an official.

The manner in which big cracks have appeared in the building, including the floor, points toward total damage. Though some repair work was undertaken earlier to plug the cracks, these failed to sustain and the structure now appeared to be ripping apart. The building is situated right next to the skill development centre of the HP State Electricity Board, which also had suffered a damage last year in the rainy season owing to excavation activity near its base. The seepage of water at the base appears to have weakened its foundation owing to which cracks are appearing on the floor and walls.

## Baglamukhi Temple ropeway likely to open around Navratri



A trial run of the ropeway to Baglamukhi Temple being conducted in Mandi. TRIBUNE PHOTO: JAI KUMAR

DIPENDER MANTA

MANDI, AUGUST 12  
To give a boost to religious tourism and provide easier access to pilgrims to Baglamukhi Temple in Mandi district, Himachal Pradesh will soon get its first government-operated ropeway. The new ropeway, a significant development for the region, has been constructed by an Austrian company and aims to facilitate the influx of devotees and tourists.

The ropeway stretches to 750m, connecting the Chandigarh-Manali highway — located just 1 km ahead of the Pandoh Dam's popular selfie point — to the revered Baglamukhi Temple. With a carrying capacity of 16 people per cabin, it promises a swift and scenic three-minute uphill journey to the temple, significantly reducing travel time and offering a unique aerial view of the surrounding landscape.

Om Prakash, Assistant Manager of Himachal Pradesh Ropeway and Rapid Transportation Development

### TO CUT TRAVEL TIME TO 3 MINUTES

- The ropeway stretches to 750 m, connecting a point on the Chandigarh-Manali highway to the revered Baglamukhi temple.
- With a carrying capacity of 16 people per cabin, it will offer a swift and scenic three-minute uphill journey to the temple, significantly reducing travel time and offering a unique aerial view of the surrounding landscape
- The ropeway, constructed at a cost of ₹48 crore by an Austrian company, marks a milestone for the state as the first ropeway project funded by the state government

Corporation (HP RTDC), said the ropeway was currently under a testing phase. "We are optimistic of making the ropeway operational before this year's Navratri festival," he stated. The timeline aligns with the temple's major annual celebrations, during which thousands of devotees flock to the site.

As the testing period progresses, authorities are working diligently to ensure the ropeway meets all safety and operational standards. Once fully operational, it is expected to become a key attraction not only for the devotees, but also for the tourists seeking to experience the natural beauty and spiritual significance of the district. The ropeway, constructed at a cost of Rs 48 crore, marks a milestone for the state as the first ropeway project funded by the state government.

It is anticipated to significantly boost the local tourism sector, which has long been a vital part of the region's economy. By easing access to the temple, the ropeway is expected to increase the number of visitors, thereby benefiting local businesses and generating additional revenue for the area.

Baglamukhi Temple, a prominent religious site dedicated to Goddess Baglamukhi, attracts thousands of pilgrims every year.

## Hit by falling rocks, woman, nephew killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT

CHAMBA, AUGUST 12

A 26-year-old woman and her nephew were killed on Monday after being hit by rocks falling from a hillside at Divru in the Saho area of Chamba district. The deceased were identified as Arpana and Akshay (9), hailing from Othal village under Pratha gram panchayat.

The woman's three-year-old son who she had strapped on her back escaped with minor injuries.

The incident occurred at 8:45 am when Arpana was on her way drop her nephew at school. As they were hit by rocks, bystanders rushed to their rescue.

The duo died on the spot, while the injured toddler was taken to a hospital. A police team also reached the spot. The bodies were handed over to the family after post mortem.

Chamba Superintendent of Police Abhishek Yadav said a case had been registered and an investigation was on.

## Power board property worth ₹1 cr gutted



Smoke billows from a building housing a testing and maintenance lab of the electricity board in Hamirpur. TRIBUNE PHOTO

OUR CORRESPONDENT

HAMIRPUR, AUGUST 12

Property worth over Rs 1 crore was destroyed in a fire at the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board's Testing and Maintenance Lab near a sub-station at Anu in ward number 1 of the town today.

The lab that was housed in a decades-old building near the board Chief Engineer's office

was used to repair and maintain old transformers.

The fire erupted around 10:15 am with a blast and engulfed the entire building within minutes. Twelve employees of the testing lab were inside the building at the time of incident. Rajan Sharma, SDO incharge of the lab, said all employees immediately rushed out of the building. He added that all employees

are safe. The blaze was brought under control by the firefighters after three hours, but everything had been reduced to ashes by then.

There were 80 transformers and several barrels of inflammable oil inside the building that not only augmented the intensity of the fire, but also made it difficult for the firefighters to put out the blaze. Flames leapt as high as 30

feet as a layer of smoke covered the entire area.

Station Fire Officer Prem Chand said a team was rushed to the site immediately after they received the distress call.

SDO Rajan Sharma said though the exact loss was being estimated, it was likely to be around Rs 1 crore. He added that the cause behind the fire could will be ascertained after an investigation.

## Traffic restored on Chamba-Holi road

CHAMBA, AUGUST 12

The Chamba-Holi road that was blocked due to a massive landslide at Khadamukh was restored to traffic on Monday, bringing much-needed relief to residents of the Holi valley and motorists who were stranded due to the road closure a day ago.

The Public Works Department (PWD) had already stationed its machinery at the site in view of the risk of landslides. As soon as the road was blocked, the department started removing the debris. However, the continuous threat of further slides made the work challenging. The department resumed the work early today morning and the road was reopened around 2 pm.

The road closure caused inconvenience to commuters,



A vehicle plies on the Chamba-Holi road. PHOTO: MANI VERMA

besides delaying the supply of essential goods such as vegetables, milk, eggs and bread was to the Holi area.

The hillside near Khadamukh, along the Chamba-Holi Road, continues to pose a serious threat to the motorists. Early this year, the Holi valley had remained cut off from the district headquarters for nearly two months due to a landslide at the same spot.

The administration and departments concerned have advised motorists and public to exercise caution when crossing this stretch. "We urge motorists and public to prioritise safety when passing through this area as the risk of landslide looms large here," said Bhan Chand Thakur, Assistant Engineer of the Public Works Department. — OC

## 98-kg poppy straw seized

NAHAN, AUGUST 12

The Paonta Sahib Police seized 98-kg poppy straw during a search operation yesterday. A special team under the leadership of the Station House Officer (SHO) of Paonta Sahib was formed following a tip-off regarding the movement of the contraband.

The team intercepted a vehicle (HP85 5786) at Bhuppur. The driver identified himself as Zakir Hussain (56), a resident of Paonta Sahib. The police discovered five sacks of poppy straw or 'bhukki' from the car. A case has been registered. Paonta Sahib Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Aditi Singh emphasised the police commitment to a zero-tolerance policy against drug trafficking. — OC



Students of Bishop Cotton School, Shimla, stage Aladdin at Irwin Hall on Monday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Young thespians travel to A Whole New World

**TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE** SHIMLA, AUGUST 12 The junior and middle school students of Bishop Cotton School (BCS), Shimla, recently staged *Aladdin*, a classic musical play. The show ran for three days, including performances for parents and other local schools. Manasi Sahay Thakur, an IAS officer, was the chief guest at the event. "This is the first time in my life the story that I fantasised about in my childhood came to life on stage. There are a few great lifelong lessons to be learned from the storyline. The BCS school motto 'Overcome evil with good' is apt for the theme of the play," Thakur said. Expressing his gratitude over the successful organisation of the play, BCS director Simon Weale said, "Thanks to everyone who helped make this such a wonderful production. The choir rehearsed for weeks, together with the musicians and the backstage crew. It is a real team effort putting on such a show in a school. With the teachers guiding the senior boys, they gained vital leadership opportunities, which would help make the world a better place in the future." The junior and middle school students, with the help of the pitch-perfect choir, executed the dance sequence *A Whole New World* with great zeal and ebullience. *Aladdin* features an opulent tapestry of Arabic culture, which flourished along the streets of Agrabah. Princess Jasmine desires a prince of a noble and pure heart, but instead finds Aladdin, a commoner who falls in love with her.

## Three-day symposium on Indian folk theatre



The symposium underway at IIAS, Shimla, on Monday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

SHIMLA, AUGUST 12 The Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS) here today inaugurated a three-day national symposium on the theme "Indian Folk Theatre: Bearer of the Cultural Heritage of the People". Over 30 speakers from 17 states across the country are participating, both online and offline, in the event. The inaugural session was presided over by IIAS Governing Body Chairperson Shashiprabha Kumar. The symposium commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. IIAS Director and Central University of Punjab Vice-Chancellor RP Tiwari joined the event virtually. In the inaugural session, University of Delhi (Hindi Department) former Professor Rajendra Gautam shared his thoughts. Following this, Haryana Sahitya and Sanskriti Akademi, Panchkula, vice-chairman Kuldeep Chand Agnihotri highlighted the cultural heritage of folk theatre in his address. Shashiprabha Kumar delivered the presidential address online, emphasising the significance of Indian folk theatre. She said the symposium was being organised to promote the heritage of Indian folk culture, revive the tradition of folk theatre and make it more inclusive under the New Education Policy. Throughout the symposium, researchers, scholars and experts would discuss the definition of Indian folk theatre, its various forms, social concerns and its role in nation-building, Kumar added. — TNS

# How kuhlms of Kangra reached US, Euro university classrooms

Considered to be the best community management system across globe for irrigation

RAGHAV GULERIA

DHARAMSALA, AUGUST 12 The kuhlms of Kangra are considered an exemplary model of effective and efficient public asset management of public assets across the globe.

The kuhl system is among the few examples of how public property is managed by the community itself, without any assistance or interference by the government of the day.

In many universities in the US and Europe, Kangra's kuhlms are taught as a compulsory case study in courses of sociology and anthropology, and, in some cases, economics courses.

Many opine that these water bodies in Kangra district are the world's best community management system for irrigation.

Professor (Environment) and Community Coordinator, California State University, J Mark Baker delves into this community management system in his book, 'Kuhlms of Kangra: Community Management for Irrigation System in Western Himalayas'.

Baker's study, assisted by Rivaz-e-Aabpashi — a British documentation — terms this model of elaborated water channels as the best in the world, a system that did not cost the government a single penny.



Kangra's kuhlms are taught as a case study in many sociology and anthropology courses.

Under this system, farmer families maintain the kuhlms, supplying water to their fields.

Baker, in his book, states that mainly based on channels emerging out of the Neugal rivulet, in 1897, 100 per cent of the irrigation system of Kangra district was based on kuhlms.

According to him, most of the irrigation was done through kuhlms in Kangra and

Palampur tehsils.

Filmmaker and writer Amit Dutta, in his book 'Asal Samridhi Ke Aakhri Satambh' (The last pillars of the real prosperity), gives a description of these water channels.

Talking to *The Tribune*, he said, "Kohlis (kuhl supervisors) judiciously distributed water to peasants, who, in turn, would religiously help them maintain the kuhlms.

There are records, which prove that the income generated through kuhlms was used to fund artists."

Dutta's short film 'I do it for the sparrow and the mouse' narrates the life of the Kohlms.

They are referred to as custodians of native rituals, who, without any greed, look after the perennial water channels emerging out of snow-fed rivers.

### THE KOHLIS

“Kohlis (kuhl supervisors) judiciously distributed water to peasants, who, in turn, would religiously help them maintain the kuhlms. There are records, which prove that the income generated through kuhlms was used to fund artists.”

— Amit Dutta, FILMMAKER AND WRITER

## Pesticide testing kit unveiled at 250th Tea Board meeting

RAVINDER SOOD

PALAMPUR, AUGUST 12 The National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management, Kundli (NIFTEM-K), an Institute of National Importance under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India, showcased its innovation — a rapid pesticide detection system — during the recently held 250th meeting of the Tea Board of India, hosted by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry at Palampur.

NIFTEM-K unveiled a newly developed indigenous rapid pesticide testing kit for tea at the event. Ministry of Commerce and Industry Additional Secretary and Tea Board Chairman Amardeep Singh Bhatia was the chief guest at the event, which was also attended by secretaries from the departments concerned, senior officers from Tea Board of India, members from tea grower associations and exporters from all over the country. The kit developed by

Can screen major pesticides in fresh, dried leaves within 30-60 minutes

NIFTEM-K aims to transform the food safety ecosystem of the tea industry.

The rapid pesticide testing kit would enable faster and more accurate detection of prominent pesticide residues, ensuring better safety and quality standards for tea.

The kit can screen major pesticides both in fresh as well as dried tea leaves within 30-60 minutes.

While acknowledging the support of Tata Consumer Products Limited for this endeavour, NIFTEM-K Director Harinder Oberoi said the kit, after validation at CFRA, NIFTEM-K, a notified primary and a referral lab of FSSAI would be sent to reputed FSSAI notified labs for inter-lab comparisons. Once the validation is complete, it is likely to be launched during World Food India-2024, set to be organised by MoFPI from September 19 to 22.



An exhibit at Auckland House School's Annual School Exhibition in Shimla on Monday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Kids journey to 'India through ages'

SHIMLA, AUGUST 12

Auckland House School for Boys, Shimla, hosted its three-day Annual School Exhibition with the theme "India through the ages". At the event, the rich cultural heritage and historical milestones of India across various eras were depicted by the students. The exhibition, held at the school auditorium, was inaugurated on August 10 by founding principal Michael A John. Director Sunita John and principal Smaraki Samanthroy lauded the students for their creativity and deep understanding of India's history. The event highlighted the evolution of the Indian civilisation from the Stone Age to Modern India.

The event was divided into several sections, each dedicated to a significant period in Indian history.

At the Stone Age showcase, students depicted early tools and cave paintings, reflecting the lifestyle and survival strategies of prehistoric humans. At the Indus Valley exhibit, models of urban planning, The Great Bath, Citadel, and handmade pottery, seals jewellery and artefacts captivated the audience.

At the Vedic Age showcase, the Gurukul system was depicted through enactments, and a display dedicated to ancient India's educational system was put up. Mauryan and Gupta

Dynasty exhibits highlighted the eras' advancements in art, architecture and literature.

The grandeur of the Sultanate and the Mughal era was brought to life with models of architectural marvels like the Qutub Minar, Taj Mahal, Red Fort and Akbar's Fort. The struggles of India under the British rule, including key battles and revolts, reminded visitors of the sacrifices made for freedom.

The final section focused on India's progress post-Independence, showcasing its advancements in science, technology and culture. The exhibition received an overwhelming response from parents, teachers and the local community. — TNS

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The Tribune Voice of the People

## Budding leaders debate global issues

SOLAN, AUGUST 12

The seventh edition of Lawrence School's Model United Nations conference, SNAMUN'24, on the theme "Where are we Going?" concluded last evening at the school in Sanawar.

Over 100 students from Army Public School, Dagshai; Daly College, Indore; Hyderabad Public School, Begumpet; Mayo College, Ajmer; Mayo College Girls' School, Ajmer; Pinegrove School, Solan; St Kabir Public School, Chandigarh; St Xavier's Senior Secondary School, Sirsa; and the host school, Lawrence School, Sanawar, participated in the conference. While the United



Students being felicitated during SNAMUN'24 at Sanawar.

Nations (UN) Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence (AI) suggested inclusive approaches towards the global governance of AI, the UN General Assembly-SOCHUM discussed the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) analysed the

dynamics of human smuggling and trafficking on routes to the Central Mediterranean.

The European Union committee brainstormed on the financial meltdown in Europe. The committee on the United Kingdom Parliament deliberated on British India.

Chief Parliamentary Secretary Ashish Butail, as the chief

guest at the event, congratulated the winners and complimented the participants.

He said, "Be humble when you win, and be graceful while you concede, as these virtues will help you become good leaders." Srishti Priya, Aayan Gautam, Siya Shukla of Lawrence School, Veer Vikram Kochhar of Mayo Boys, Rajshree Tayal of St Xaviers, and Aryanam Gupta of St Kabir were declared best delegates of their respective committees.

Siddham Goyal of St Xaviers bagged the Secretary General Best Delegate award. The Best Delegation Award went to Lawrence School, Sanawar. — TNS

### WHAT OUR READERS SAY

Is a civic issue bothering you? Are you agitated over the lack of concern? Is there something heartening that you feel needs to be highlighted? Or a picture which in your opinion ought to be seen by many, and not just you?

**The Tribune** invites its readers to have their say. Please email at: [hpreadersfeedback@tribunemail.com](mailto:hpreadersfeedback@tribunemail.com)

### ERRATIC WATER SUPPLY BANE OF TOTU LOCALS

DRINKING water is not being supplied regularly in the Totu ward of Shimla. People have to depend on handpumps and spring water sources to meet the daily water needs. The municipal corporation should ensure regular drinking water supply to the area. **KAMLESH, SHIMLA**

### HAPHAZARD PARKING IN SOLAN

VEHICLES are parked haphazardly on Solan's Mall Road, narrowing the road and hindering the smooth flow of traffic. The authorities concerned should ensure that the vehicles are parked in parking lots. **SOM DUTT, SOLAN**

# Govt taking steps to fill vacant posts in Chamba, says Speaker

OUR CORRESPONDENT

**CHAMBA, AUGUST 12**  
The Speaker of Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, Kuldeep Singh Pathania, today said the state government was taking appropriate steps to fill the posts lying vacant in various departments of Chamba district.

He was presiding over a review meeting to assess progress of various developmental projects being executed under the district plan and 20-point programme. The meeting was chaired by Pathania as the Chairman of the district planning and 20-point programme Committee. The meeting focused on a comprehensive review of various programmes under the 20-point programme, including MG-NREGA, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, National Health Mission, malaria control programmes, rural electrification, small irrigation schemes, mid-day meal scheme, child welfare schemes under the Integrated Child Development Project, environmental conservation and tree plantation initiatives, along with the implementation of minimum wage laws. The meeting also approved several decentralised planning programmes from the financial years 2017-18 to 2023-24, including the State Decentralised Plan (SDP), the MLA local area development scheme, the Chief Minister's rural road scheme and works under the backward area sub-plan. Pathania emphasised the

Efforts will be made to secure additional funding for the district: Pathania



Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania presides over a review meeting regarding 20-point programme in Chamba on Monday.

critical role of officials and employees in achieving development goals in any region. He highlighted that Chamba was included among the aspirational districts of the country in terms of development, requiring all officials, employees and public representatives to work in coordination and with dedication.

The Speaker said that the Himachal Pradesh Government was giving special priority to development works in the district, and recently, during the conclusion of the Minjar fair, the Chief Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for devel-

opment projects worth approximately Rs 120 crore for the district. He assured that efforts would be made to secure additional funding from the state government for future developmental projects in the district.

Pathania instructed the Deputy Commissioner of Chamba to ensure that the important issues discussed in the meeting were included in future district-level meetings on development progress to ensure that positive outcomes on crucial development aspects were achieved. He also directed officials to complete long-

pending projects within the next six months and submit their utilisation certificates. Furthermore, he urged the officials to reallocate the budget for pending development projects to other areas so that the funds provided by the government could benefit the local population.

During the meeting, District Development Officer Om Prakash Thakur informed the Speaker that during the fiscal year 2023-24, 55.86 lakh person-days of work was generated for 1,40,000 MG-NREGA job card holders in the district, which is 123 per cent more than the target of 45.50 lakh

person-days, with an expenditure of Rs 21.71 crore. Additionally, under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, 700 individual toilets were constructed, achieving 100 per cent of the set target.

The meeting was attended by Chamba legislator Neeraj Nayar; Bharmour MLA Dr Janak Raj; Neelam Nayar, Chairperson of Chamba Municipal Council; Deputy Commissioner Mukesh Repaswal; Superintendent of Police Abhishek Yadav; Additional District Magistrate Amit Mehra; and heads and officials of various departments.

# Scrap special development authority: Bir-Billing locals

Panchayats rue delay in approval of construction plans

OUR CORRESPONDENT

**BALAMPUR, AUGUST 12**  
Residents of four Bir-Billing panchayats — Bir, Keyor, Gunehar and Chogan — have demanded immediate scrapping of the Special Area Development Authority (SADA) set up by the government for the development of the two places and replacing it with a municipal council. In this regard, panchayat pradhans, representatives of hotels and restaurant associations, and residents participated in a meeting held at Bir Forest Rest House today.

A panchayat pradhan said, "As the SADA has failed to deliver the goods, the government should immediately form a municipal council to push development activities in this budding tourist destination and stop rampant illegal and unplanned constructions." The pradhan added

that in the past six years, since the SADA was formed, the region had been marred by illegal constructions.

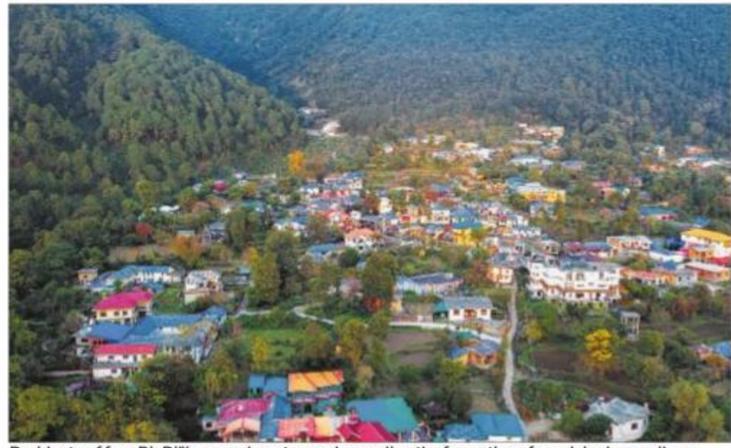
Residents criticised the SADA for its complicated rules like advance approval for the construction of houses, shops and other buildings in the area, leading to further delays. Despite providing the requisite information, building maps were not cleared, which had led to illegal constructions in the area, they lamented.

"The villagers cannot construct even a cowshed without the permission of the SADA. Besides, it takes months to get the approval of site plans of residential houses and other buildings from the SADA," said Bir pradhan.

All four panchayat pradhans said the SADA was constituted for the welfare of local residents and development of the area, but it had become a

headache for them because of the "irresponsible and non-cooperative behaviour" of the officials concerned. They said despite meeting the Chief Minister and local MLA, no improvement was seen in the functioning of the SADA. Rather, the situation had become worse, they added.

"Efforts are being made to approve site plans in a month, but in most of the cases, violations like encroachments on government land, no parking areas proposed, no proper setbacks left and no controlled width of five metres followed on roadside buildings are common. Therefore, the approval of such a building gets delayed. Powers to relax such norms lie with the state government, which must listen to people's problems," said Bajinath SDM DC Thakur, who is also chairman of the SADA.



Residents of four Bir-Billing panchayats are demanding the formation of municipal council. FILE



Minister Vikramaditya Singh presides over a review meeting in Shimla on Monday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

# Remove hanging cables in MC area, Vikramaditya tells officials

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**SHIMLA, AUGUST 12**  
Taking stern cognisance against the haphazard wires across the town, Public Works and Urban Development Minister Vikramaditya Singh here today directed officials of the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board to immediately remove such cables. He also directed the officials to submit a report in this regard within a week.

The minister said, "Many areas under the jurisdiction of the Shimla Municipal Corporation have mesh of wires with all types of cables on electricity poles, which is marred the beauty of the town and posing danger to the lives of the residents. Therefore,

these wires should be removed."

He said this during a review meeting with the Municipal Corporation and Urban Development Department. During the meeting, discussions regarding various development works under the Smart City project and pending demands of the area were discussed.

The minister sought detailed information about various developmental projects being implemented under the Smart City project in the areas under the Shimla MC and instructed the officials concerned to complete the pending works within the stipulated time frame.

He also instructed to expedite the construction of parking lots, bridges, lifts etc at

various places around the town and repair the damaged retaining wall near the Ridge, without delay.

He asked all councillors to identify suitable places for parking construction in their wards and send proposals to the department soon, so that the problem related to parking could be solved. Discussions were also held for the construction of a club for senior citizens and a playground for children in every ward.

The PWD Minister said the first drinking water scheme of Shimla Water Management Corporation, Bulk Water Supply Scheme (Suni-Shakrodi), would be started soon to ensure that residents do not face any problem related to potable water.

# Doctors demand justice in Kolkata rape-murder case

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**SHIMLA, AUGUST 12**

The Resident Doctors Association (RDA), IGMC, Shimla, today condemned the murder of a female resident doctor at Government Medical College, Kolkata, and demanded strict punishment for the perpetrators.

While lodging their protest over the heinous crime, the doctors said the incident underscored the urgent need for stringent measures to ensure the safety and security of medical professionals. "This tragic incident highlights the critical shortcomings in the security systems of our medical institutions nationwide. It is a sobering reminder of the urgent need for systemic reforms to create a supportive and humane work environment," said RDA, IGMC, demanding swift, impartial



Doctors protest the murder of Kolkata's resident doctor, at IGMC Hospital in Shimla on Monday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

and transparent investigation into the incident.

The RDA further urged the government to expedite the implementation of appropriate legislation to safeguard the lives and

well-being of healthcare professionals. "We will escalate this protest to seek justice in the future if the demands are not fulfilled," said Dr Hari Mohan Sharma, RDA president.

# Medical officers' association calls for enhanced security

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**MANDI, AUGUST 12**

The Himachal Medical Officers Association (HMOA) has strongly condemned the recent rape and murder of a female resident doctor at Government Medical College, Kolkata. This heinous crime has highlighted the urgent need for increased safety measures for medical professionals nationwide.

In a statement, HMOA president Dr Rajesh Rana and general secretary Dr Vikas Thakur pledged support to the Union of Resident Doctors of West Bengal's call for protests and their demand for a Central Healthcare Protection Act. This legislation is aimed at improving the safety and security of doctors across the country.

Dr Vikas Thakur stated that medical professionals in Himachal Pradesh will participate in candle march-

"We will take out candle marches across the state"

es at various institutions to advocate for swift action and justice to the victim. He alleged that the Medicare Act, introduced by the then Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh-led government in 2017, has not been fully implemented. The HMOA is calling for immediate enforcement of this act to better protect healthcare workers in the state.

The association also urged state government to provide police security at all hospitals in the state and to enhance overall security protocols in the medical institutions. The HMOA stressed the importance of swift and decisive action to prevent future tragedies and ensure the safety of medical personnel.

# Paonta Sahib celebrates 'gentle giants' of forests

PANKAJ SHARMA

**NAHAN, AUGUST 12**

For the first time, World Elephant Day celebrations were held in Paonta Sahib, marking a significant milestone under the "Project Elephant & Tiger" initiative, which was officially launched in Himachal Pradesh this year by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). This initiative is aimed at the conservation and protection of the wildlife, particularly the gentle giants of the forests — the elephants.

The celebrations kicked off with a series of awareness and sensitisation programmes aimed at educating students and the local community about the importance of elephant conservation. These events were held across various schools and



Programmes were organised in Paonta Sahib to raise awareness on elephant conservation.

other places in the region.

At the Senior Secondary School in Batamandi, Class XII students participated in a special event organised by the Majra and Girinagar Ranges. The school was adorned with banners and posters that highlighted key facts about elephants and the need for their protection.

Students took part in quizzes and other activities designed to raise awareness on human-elephant conflicts and the steps that can be taken to mitigate them.

In addition to the quiz, schools were provided with brochure boards detailing the dos and don'ts in human-elephant conflict situations.

This practical information is expected to help students and their families better understand how to coexist peacefully with elephants, reducing the chances of dangerous encounters.

One of the key moments of the day was when the students took a solemn pledge to protect elephants and to

actively participate in raising awareness about their plight. Paonta Sahib Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Aishwarya Raj emphasised the importance of such educational initiatives in fostering a culture of conservation. "The celebrations are just the beginning of a larger movement to protect our wildlife," the DFO said.

DFO Raj also highlighted the efforts being made by the Forest Department under the project. In addition to awareness programmes, the department has procured early warning systems on a pilot-basis, camera traps, sound guns, safety equipment and uniforms for the field staff.

Celebrations were also held at Yamuna Riverfront in Paonta Sahib, where the Paonta Range field staff engaged with students from a local girls' school.

# Ensure effective assistance: DC

**RAMPUR, AUGUST 12**  
Kinnaur Deputy Commissioner Amit Kumar Sharma instructed the block development officers (BDOs) of Kalpa, Pooh and Nichar to ensure effective assistance.

In case of natural disasters causing damage to land, kuhls, roads or other infrastructure in any panchayat area, the assistance grants provided for such works should be converged with MG-NREGA to ensure timely and complete restoration, he added. — OC

# Van Mahotsav: Butail plants winter cherry in Palampur

**PALAMPUR, AUGUST 12**

Local MLA and Chief Parliamentary Secretary Ashish Butail on the occasion of Van Mahotsav planted an ashwagandha sapling on the premises of Neelkanth Mahadev in Sungal village.

Speaking on the occasion, he asked residents to plant ashwagandha as it has medicinal properties. He said for hundreds of years people have used the roots and orange-red fruit of the tree for medicinal purposes.

The herb is also known as Indian ginseng or winter cherry. The name ashwagandha describes the smell of its root, meaning "like a horse".

He said ashwagandha contains chemicals that help to calm the brain, reduce swelling, lower blood pressure and alter the immune system. As the tree is traditionally used for many conditions related to stress, he added. — OC

**KING KHAN WILL ROAR AGAIN**



Get ready to witness a cinematic spectacle as Shah Rukh Khan joins forces with his sons Aryan Khan and AbRam Khan for the Hindi version of Disney's *Mufasa: The Lion King*. Scheduled to roar into Indian theatres on December 20, this latest instalment in the *Lion King* saga is directed by Barry Jenkins.

# Tribune Life Style

HIMACHAL | TUESDAY | 13 AUGUST 2024

**For peace**

Pooja Hegde revealed her 'mantra for life' and it is 'inner peace'. Pooja took to Instagram and shared a picture of a mouse pad, which has a panda on it.



ANANDITA GUPTA

**T**HE moment his bare-chested, lithe frame stepped out of a giant wooden trunk in Alisha Chinai's music video *Made In India*, Milind Soman catapulted into a national crush of sorts. Since then, he's stayed in the spotlight for decades, finding fame as a super-model, actor, TV presenter and fitness enthusiast. Even at 58, Soman retains much of his Greek God charm. His sculpted physique, barefoot marathons and his incredible achievements in endurance sports, have rightfully earned him the title of Iron-Man of India. His advocacy for healthy, sustainable living and various fitness campaigns have always kept him in the news. And adding yet another feather to his overflowing cap, the fitness icon has now come up with his second book, *Keep Moving*.

Written by Roopa Pai (author of Milind Soman's memoir *Made In India*), this book is a part-biography, part-fitness journey of the Soman trio. It documents the fitness journeys of 58-year-old Milind Soman, his 32-year-old wife Ankita Konwar and 85-year-old mother Usha. Delving into the fitness choices made by these three people of different age groups; the book explores their different perspectives on being holistically healthy.

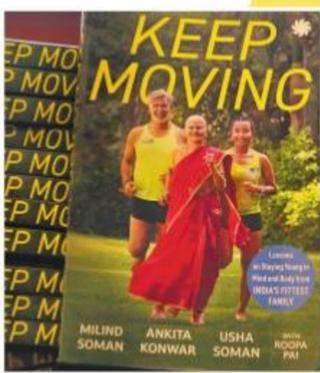
We caught up with Milind Soman to know more about the book and his inspiring fitness journey that went into it. Excerpts:

**How did you get the idea of writing this book?**

The idea came from the publishing house Jugernaut—to explore how three people in one family stay fit. My mother Usha at 85, me at 59 and my wife Ankita at 33. We just decided that rather than a book of advice and tips, it should explain how three people from three different generations arrived a healthy, fit and sustainable lifestyle, through their individual choices.

## Run Milind RUN

It's 'love of life' that inspires actor and fitness enthusiast Milind Soman to 'Keep Moving', which also is the title of his latest book



**What is the essential message of the book? Is age just a number when it comes to fitness?**

My belief is that life is to be enjoyed, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. All limits to enjoyment of life are within us. If we desire, we can change those limits to a certain extent with effort. At any age.

**You've been a national-level swimmer and a marathon runner. Which, among these two, is closer to your heart?**

As a child, I loved swimming so much that I spent an inordinate number of hours in the pool. As a grown-up, when I heard of a marathon in Mumbai, I kicked out what was holding me back and started running. At 50, I did my first Ironman Triathlon. So, my sportsman heart beats for both swimming and running. However, running is easier as you can run anywhere, but you need a pool or sea or lake to swim in.

**You are a national fitness icon now. Tell us about your personal fitness routine.**

I never go to the gym. I don't have any fixed routine. But yes, my goal is to maintain a certain level of fitness. So, I just challenge myself regularly with different activities and movements.

**Are you a morning person? What are your favourite morning rituals that recharge you for the day ahead?**

No, I'm not at all a morning person. I get up around 8 am unless there is something exciting planned—like a run. Talking of morning rituals, I do a plank or a set of push-ups or a set of squats, or all of it, depending on how I feel.

**Tell us something about your magic diet.**

I have a lot of fruits and vegetables. Coconut water is my other favourite. In meals, I prefer khichadi, daal and rice. Otherwise, I don't deny myself of anything I feel like, including pizzas, chaat, whatever. I try to minimise packaged foods, fried foods and foods made with refined ingredients like white sugar, maida, etc. Very rarely do I have coffee or tea. Sometimes, I indulge in hot chocolate.

**What form of exercise would you recommend to our readers?**

Exercise is a very intimidating term. If you want to be healthy, you need to be active. The human body is not made for ease and comfort. I recommend running a marathon at least once in your life. Endurance sport is a life-changing experience, emotionally and spiritually.

**What keeps you so motivated?**

Love of life. To be fit means to be able to enjoy your life fully, whether it is your job, your relationships, nature, adventure or even just the amazing capabilities of the body and mind you are gifted with.

**What else are you working on right now?**

The film *Emergency* will be releasing in September, in which I am playing the role of Field Marshall Manekshaw. Many more exciting projects are in development.



MILIND SOMAN WITH MOTHER USHA AND WIFE ANKITA

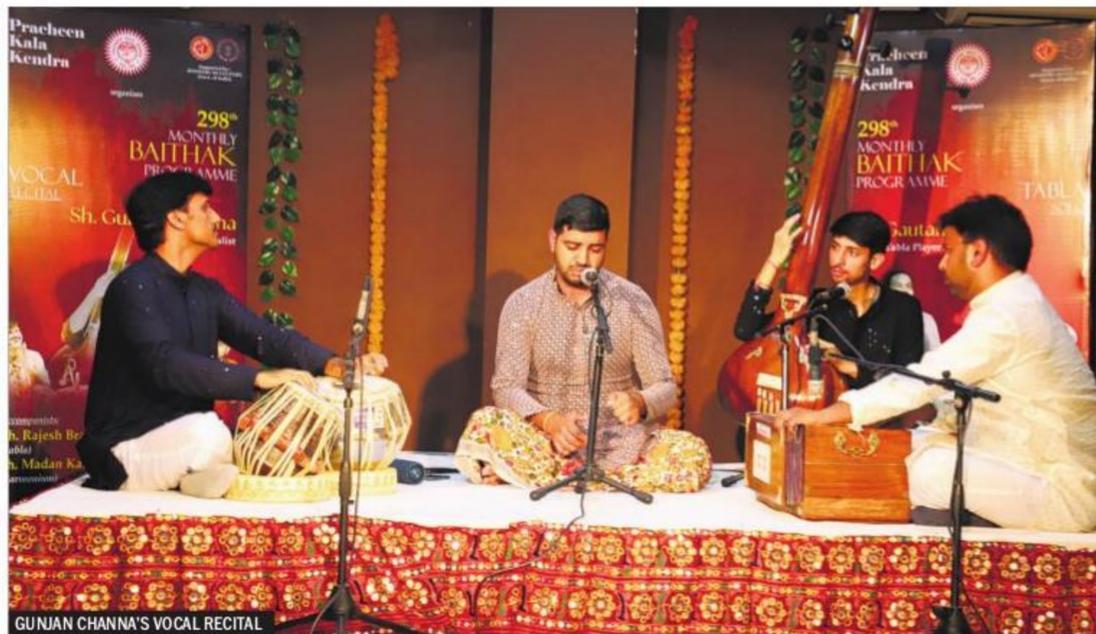
## Rhythm meets raga

Tabla beats and soulful vocal recital marked the Baithak programme of Pracheen Kala Kendra

The Monthly Baithak Programme of Pracheen Kala Kendra was a treat for music lovers as Gautam Pal, noted *tabla* player from Jaipur, and Gunjan Channa, a promising vocalist from Shimla, presented their compositions at ML Koser Indoor Auditorium.

Pal, a talented *tabla* player, represents the glorious tradition of Farukhabad Gharana. Gautam started playing the *tabla* at an early age under the guidance of Shib Shankar Karmakar, who is a disciple of Ustad Keramatullah Khan. Later, he became *gandh-bandh sagrid* of renowned *tabla* maestro Pt Shankar Ghosh.

Pal commenced his programme with traditional *uthan* followed by *peshkar* based on *teen taal* of Farukhabad Gharana. Then he moved on to present *kayda*, *rela* and *palta*. He also performed *farmaishi* and *kamali chakradar*, *tukde*, *rele* and *tihari* in a well-composed manner. He con-



GUNJAN CHANNA'S VOCAL RECITAL

cluded his recital with traditional *bandishes*. He was accompanied by Gurpreet Singh Moga on the harmonium.

After the beats of *tabla*, it was the turn for Gunjan Channa's vocal recital. He started with Raag Bihag. After *alaap*, he presented a composition *Kaise Sukh Soye* in *Vilambit khayal* followed by two compositions *Balam Re* and *Baje Re Mori Payal* in *Madhya Laya Teen Taal*, which were well received by the audience. He was accompanied by Rajesh Brahmhatt on the *tabla* and Madan Kashyap on the harmonium. — TNS



GAUTAM PAL WITH GURPREET SINGH MOGA



## Standing by Sonakshi

Shatrughan Sinha says daughter's marriage not 'illegal & unconstitutional'

for each other", Shatrughan said. "Parents will always stand for their children's happiness and I feel that our children are happy. I call them made for each other and we are very happy for them." On June 23 Sonakshi married her long-time beau Zaheer. — IANS

Politician and veteran actor Shatrughan Sinha has spoken about his actress-daughter Sonakshi Sinha's wedding with Zaheer Iqbal and said it is not "illegal and unconstitutional".

Shatrughan said, "This is a matter of marriage... Secondly, if the kids got married, it is not illegal and unconstitutional. They did it with their own wishes and our blessings. So, I appreciate it."

"Who will stand with my daughter if I don't... My wife Poonam Sinha and I, got together to celebrate her wedding. This is about their happiness." Tagging them as "made