



Rinchen Zangpo Society For Spiti Development

Educational Newsletter No. 32

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Winter Migration

Five senior classes from Munsel-ling School migrated to the warmer region of Dharamsala in late November for winter studies. That is, the four senior classes of

the secondary school proper and the pre-medical entrance examination coaching class, making a total of two hundred students on the move!



Neither high mountain passes nor treacherous roads can lessen our desire to learn!

No snow had fallen so the shorter two-day route via Manali was still open. The road has seen considerable

improvements but there are still rough and icy patches in the middle of nowhere to negotiate.



Academic Excellence and Higher Education Achievements

TRIBAL STATUS IN INDIA

About 9% (104 million) of India's population are classed as belonging to tribal communities, acknowledging their status as belonging to minority peoples, divergent from the mainstream and often economically marginal. The people of Spiti belong in this grouping.



सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India

Ministry of Tribal Affairs

National Commission for
Scheduled Tribes



Sonam Chodon

OUTSTANDING NATIONAL AND STATE RANKING

In this year's NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, Undergraduate) i.e, the India-wide medical school entrance examination, our student Sonam Chodon achieved an exceptional distinction by securing 12th All India rank among the Tribal Group and the 2nd position in our state of Himachal Pradesh. She is now studying to be a doctor at AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) Rishikesh, a premier medical training institute. She is a source of great pride to our Spiti school community.

PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL SELECTION

Pema Ankit has chosen to study engineering where she scored high in one of two most challenging and competitive entrance examinations in India, the JEE (Joint Entrance Examination, Advanced) for aspiring engineers. As a result, she earned admission to the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)

Mumbai with an intent to study Aerospace Engineering. In Spiti at Munsel-ling School we are able to offer high quality entrance examination coaching classes for medical studies. To prepare for her engineering entrance examination, however, Pema had to study outside Spiti.



Pema Ankit

Academic Excellence and Higher Education Achievements (cont'd)

INTERVIEW WITH PEMA ANKIT

Q: Your village?

A: Rangrik, Spiti.

Q: Your place of studies?

A: I studied from kindergarten up to the end of secondary school at Munsel-ling. [note: Pema's entrance exam coaching was provided free by 'Super 30', an academic booster organisation for 30 low income JEE aspirants per year.]

Q: What degree are you studying for now?

A: I am pursuing a B. Tech from IIT, Mumbai.

Q: Do you have a special interest in aerospace engineering? What gave you the idea to take up this field of study?

A: From my childhood I have been interested in aerospace. I used to play with aeroplane toys and saw aeroplanes flying over the Spiti mountains. One teacher also motivated me.

Q: Do you want to be a pilot or an astronaut?

A: Not decided yet.

Q: Have you ever flown in

your dreams?

A: No ... [I have not] dreamt many.

Q: How do you find life at the IIT in Mumbai?

A: Coming from a small village to this big institution was amazing ... so many brilliant students from everywhere.

Q: What advice do you have for girls wishing to take up engineering as a career?

A: Work hard, we are same as boys, even can do better! ཨོཾ།



Pema Ankit at IIT, Mumbai

Further Admissions: Medical



Tanzin Palden (right)

Of our talented students, Tanzin Palden has fulfilled his potential and gone south to enter Guntur Medical College, Andhra Pradesh, for doctor's training (MBBS, Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery).

Ringzin Dolker, another bright star, has travelled even deeper into south India to take her MBBS training place at AIIMS Government Medical College, Ramanathapuram, Madurai. She is about 3,400 km, 2,100 miles, by road from home, though still in the same country of course!



Ringzin Dolker



Tashi Palmo

Tashi Palmo earned admission to MBBS studies a little closer to home, in the southern corner of our home state of Himachal Pradesh. She is studying for her medical degree at the Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar Government Medical College.

Further Admissions: Medical (cont'd)



Yangchen Lamo

Yangchen Lamo has been selected for the BSc Nursing programme at AIIMS Rishikesh, Uttarakhand.

Tenzin Yeshey has secured a place in the BSc Nursing programme at the AIIMS College of Nursing, Deoghar.



Tenzin Yeshey



Dekit Tsomo

Dekit Tsomo has entered the BSc Nursing programme at AIIMS Bilaspur. ༄

Gutor Celebration – Educational & Cultural Trip To Kee Monastery



Monks wearing masks and silk brocade visualise themselves as dieties and protectors while performing a ritual dance (*cham*)

Students from Munsel-ling School visited Kee Monastery to witness and celebrate the traditional Gutor festival — a colourful ritual that marks purification, protection, and the welcoming of positive energies.



A monk in costume holding symbolic weapons and implements

In the timeless spiritual atmosphere of the monastery, our students learned about the significance of Gutor, enacted by the monks, in keeping with a tradition that has been maintained in Spiti for centuries, a chance for them to experience the richness and sophistication of their own local, high Himalayan culture.



Students from Munsel-ling at the festival

Himalajsky Patron team from the Czech Republic

From August 1 to August 9, 2025, the Himalajsky Patron team from the Czech Republic dedicated their time and effort to build two beautiful play areas at Munsel-ling School.



They created an enormous climbing structure for our children to play on. We are deeply grateful for their kindness and hard work.

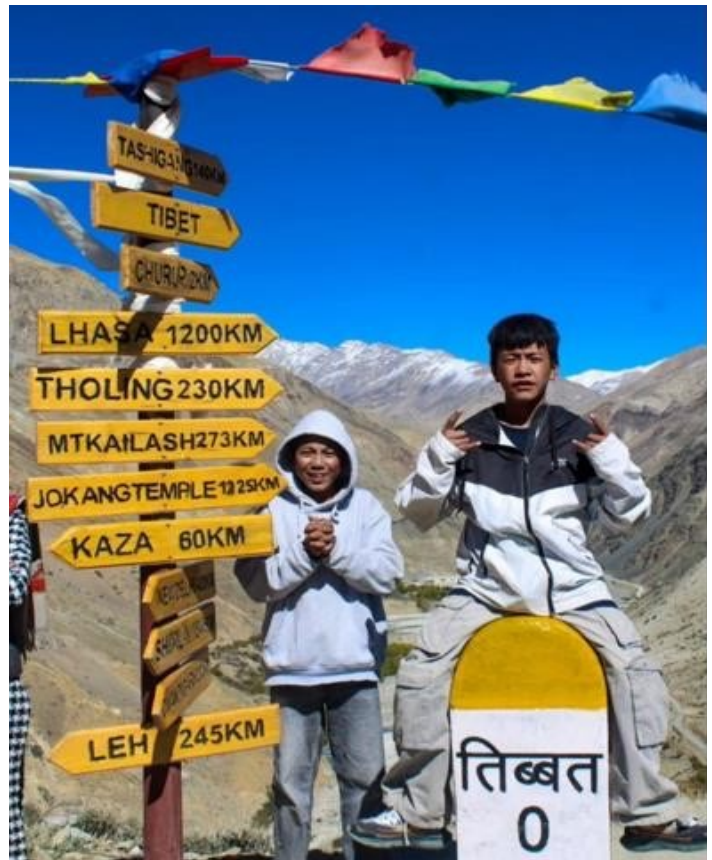


Class Outings

Classes VIII and IX visited Lepcha, not far from Sumdo, one of the few places in Spiti where one can easily touch its long mountainous border with Tibet, and so a good place for a photo-opportunity! The milestone in Hindi says, “Tibet 0 km”.



Unfurling the tri-colors on the Indian side



Kilometre 'zero' marks the border with Tibet

Students from class X on the other hand visited Chandra Thal, Moon Lake, a notable beauty spot just to the north-west of our valley. 



Students enjoy the sun on the shores of 'moon lake', the glorious Chandra Thal

Tribal Pride and Upliftment

In India, November 15 is Janajatiya Gaurav Divas, Tribal Pride Day, a day honouring India's tribal communities for their contributions to the country's cultural heritage, not least their various resistance movements against British rule. The popular MLA (Member of the

Legislative Assembly) for Lahaul-Spiti district, Honourable Mrs. Anuradha Rana, was chief guest at our celebration and distributed school prizes. In attendance was our local senior government official, Kaza ADM (Assistant District Magistrate) Mrs. Shikha Simta.



Lama Tashi Namgyal hosts Honourable Mrs. Anuradha Rana and Mrs. Shikha Simta at our Tribal Pride Day celebration

This important day on November 15, 1875 was the birthdate of Birsa Mundi, freedom fighter, spiritual inspiration and folk hero who led a popular struggle against British injustice but who died in custody at the age of twenty-five. His slogan: "Let the Queen's kingdom cease and our kingdom begin!"



Celebrating Labour Day



On May 1, 2025, in observance of International Labour Day, students honoured the contributions of labourers, skilled workers and craftsmen working at our schools by presenting them with traditional white scarves (*ashi*) and sweets as tokens of appreciation. We thereby expressed respect for the hardworking individuals who contribute the progress of our schools and society and gratitude for their work.



We owe so much to our hard working labourers and crafts-people

World Environment Day



On June 5, 2025, twenty-five trees were planted on the Munsel-ling campus. གྲུབ།

Anti-Tobacco Day



May 31, 2025 was Anti-Tobacco Day in India and internationally. It was commemorated by us with various activities to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco and other intoxicant drugs.

Students engaged in poster-making and slogan-writing sessions to convey anti-tobacco messages. Students from Classes IX and X took part in a march against tobacco in collaboration with the Lahaul-Spiti Police, which culminated in Rangrik, thus promoting health and well-being among our students and the wider community. གྲུབ།



Gratitude and Support from Our Well-Wishers

MS. DIANA PETRENKO

We are delighted to share that Ms. Diana Petrenko first visited Munsel-Ling School in 2023. During her visit, she generously donated a large number of books to the school. Since then, her support has continued in many meaningful ways. She has contributed washing machines for the school and provided study floor mats for the children, helping to improve their daily learning environment.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Ms. Diana Petrenko for her constant care, kindness, and ongoing support.

MS. SATVIKA KHERA
FOUNDER TRUSTEE, URMIL TRUST

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ms. Satvika Khera, Founder Trustee of Urmil Trust, for her valuable contributions to our school. Last year, Urmil Trust supported the construction of a basketball court, encouraging sports and physical activity among our students.

This year, the Trust has further supported our primary classes by donating televisions, enhancing learning through audio-visual education.

We deeply appreciate the continued commitment and generosity of Urmil Trust in supporting the holistic development of our students.

School Student Statistics, 2025

Munsel-ling School, Rangrik	520	mixed boarders and day students
Kaza Public School, Kaza	255	day students
Rewa Primary School, Rongtong	115	boarders
New Nalanda Pre and Primary School, Chango	120	day students

Total 1,010 happy students!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our education programme this year. Great apologies to anyone we have forgotten. Apart from those already mentioned above we extend special thanks to:

Zoe Maogany, France
Jackie Bushe, Ireland
The Reifenberg Trust, UK
Jaqueline & friends, France

Nantwich Buddhist Group
Upper Chapel, Sheffield, UK
Fulwood Old Chapel, Sheffield, UK
Michel & friends, France

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