

## AWARDS



Dr Saumya Malviya was awarded the Bharat Bhushan Agarwal award for his poetry collection "Char Ek Namumkin Jagah Hai" in August 2022. The award was instituted in memory of the well-known Hindi poet Bharat Bhushan Agarwal and since 1980 has been given by the Raza Foundation, Delhi, to young poets of Hindi literature.



Dr Puran Singh was selected as a member of a Startup Panel constituted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to represent CII Himachal Pradesh on the Startup ecosystem in the state. He was also selected as Co-Convenor of the Panel on Startup & Education for the year 2023-24 by CII HP State Council.



Muskan Dhandhi won the Shastri Indo-Canadian MITACS Globalink Research Award in January 2023. This all-paid award will allow Ms Dhandhi to work at a Canadian university for four months to translate and document Haryanvi folkloric traditions "Ahoi Ashtami" and "Dev Uthan Ekadashi".

Sujata S., Papari Saikia, and Archana Pathak each received ICSSR travel grants for participating in conferences respectively in Norway, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

## CHAIRPERSON'S NOTE

I am delighted to welcome our readers to the second edition of Himalayan Chronicles, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) newsletter at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi.

Since the publication of the previous issue, we have seen a lot of success in terms of faculty and students awards, several publications and ongoing projects of high impact. Five of our doctoral students, specializing in the disciplines of literature, psychology, economics and management graduated at the 10th Convocation of IIT Mandi in Dec 2022. A number of new courses are being offered by our faculty members in various disciplines across undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We have had the honour of hosting renowned academics and guests at our School specializing in various disciplines, all of which have upheld the high standards of our active intellectual pursuit.

Much has changed in our school physically since last year. We are now housed in a new building in the North Campus, with a dedicated SHSS wing on the second floor of A14, next to the Central Library. Our close-knit group of faculty members and students have full access to meeting and conference rooms, a language lab, office space and study rooms, all furnished and well equipped. Our new vibrant environment promises to see us through a productive period in terms of research and teaching, as we continue to progress collectively.

This present edition of Himalayan Chronicles brings together some of the highlights of our journey from Oct 2022 to March 2023, including the latest research, projects, events, and awards. I take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in seeing the success of our School and our Institute. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to your continued support.



**Dr Shyamasree Dasgupta**  
Chair, School of Humanities and Social Sciences

## PHD AWARDED



Shishu Bala



Monika Kaushik



Amrutha N. V.



Pooja Sankhyayan



Sanal Gupta

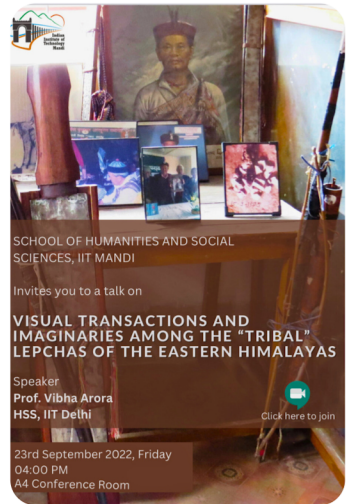
- Shishu Bala, "Procreate Or Perish? Being A Woman In Contemporary India: A Literary Study of Select Indian Texts" (2022).
- Monika Kaushik, "Identities at the Crossroads: Probing Gendered Bodies Through A Play of Language In Mahesh Dattani's Select Plays" (2022).
- Amrutha N.V., "Community Behaviour And Collective Resilience In Disasters. A Study of The 2018 Floods In Kerala" (2022).
- Pooja Sankhyayan, "Access to modern fuels for cooking and lighting in Indian households: An economic and policy discourse" (2022).
- Sanal Gupta, "Dynamics of Agent Banking Model: An agent-centric study in Himachal Pradesh" (2022).

## SPONSORED PROJECTS

- "The Politics of Philanthropy: An Integrated History of the Kangra Earthquake of 1905", sponsored by the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi (2022-2024), P.I. Dr Devika Sethi.
- "Sustainable Irrigation Advisories for Mid-Himalayan Farmers using Smart Satellite Image Analytics (SaIAFarm)", sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, (2021-2024), Co-P.I. Dr Ramna Thakur.
- "Socio-economic Impact Assessment of Beneficiaries under PMAY (G) in Himachal Pradesh 2022-23", sponsored by the Department of Rural Development, Government of Himachal Pradesh, (2023-2024), P.I. Dr Ramna Thakur.
- "Climate Change Risk Assessment and Mapping at District and State Level in India", funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, P.I. Dr Shyamasree Dasgupta.
- "Race and Ethnicity as the Determinants of Racialized Coastal Experiences in the Indian Ocean Region", funded by Social Science Research Council, USA., Coordinating P.I. in India, Dr Shyamasree Dasgupta.

**School Talks**

- Professor Vibha Arora, Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology at IIT Delhi, delivered a talk on “Visual Transactions and Imaginaries among the ‘Tribal’ Lepchas of the Eastern Himalayas” wherein she demonstrated how the colonial imaginary of the Lepcha community was selectively appropriated, internalized, transformed, and circulated by the Lepcha ideologues of Sikkim and the Darjeeling Himalayas to organize their resistance to hydropower development between 2007-2012.
- Dr Rahul Sarwate, Assistant Professor of History at Ahmedabad University, in his talk “Ideas, Text, and Translation: Sharad Patil’s Marxism Phule-Ambedkarism” explored the making of a philosophical and programmatic form of Indian Marxism developed in Marathi by Sharad Patil. The talk specifically focussed on Patil’s monumental effort of synthesizing Marxism with the anti-caste radical thought of Phule and Ambedkar through a study of his Marathi volume Marxism-Phule-Ambedkarism.
- Dr Prasenjeet Tribhuvan, Assistant Professor of Sociology, IIT Jodhpur presented a lecture on “Cannabis Futures in Indian Himalayas” discussing the spatial and temporal diversity of the use and practice and the unpredictability of effects on individuals and communities with respect to the cannabis-human relationship. The talk specifically focussed on the possible paths that cannabis policy can take in India with a special focus on the Himalayan regions and it laid out a framework on which future policy can be based.
- Dr Jens Marquadt, a post-doctoral researcher at the Technical University of Darmstadt, delivered a talk titled “From projects to institutions: An overlooked challenge for low-carbon development?” where he discussed the challenges of low-carbon development activities and their implementation into long-term policies within the context of post-Paris climate governance. Dr Marquadt argued that institutionalization should be the key concern when addressing low-carbon development.
- Dr Pushkar Sohoni, Associate Professor at IISER, Pune, delivered a lecture titled “Reading beyond the writing: the materiality of texts”. Through a close examination of coins, copper-plate charters, and temple inscriptions, Dr Sohoni demonstrated how art history can provide a nuanced and richer recovery of the past by studying the physical object that bears the text.



**Workshops**

- Dr Prasenjeet Tribhuvan from IIT Jodhpur was the resource person for an in-person workshop on “Doing Ethnography” which offered participants an opportunity to develop a nuanced understanding of how contextual situatedness of ethnographic observation can contribute to the process of research.
- Dr Pushkar Sohoni from IISER Pune was the resource person for an in-person workshop centred on the study of material history and numismatics. The talk aimed to enable participants to learn about studying material artefacts such as coins, and exploring what new dimension such investigations can bring to research



Dr Prasenjeet Tribhuvan conducting the workshop on "Doing Ethnography"



Dr Nilamber Chhetri in conversation with Prof. Deepak Singh during the book discussion

**Book Discussion**

To mark the book release and to celebrate the text and its author, a discussion on Dr Nilamber Chhetri’s monograph, *The Politics of Ethnic Renewal in Darjeeling Gorkhas and the Struggle for Tribal Recognition* (2023) was conducted on 27 March 2023. Eminent political scientist and an expert on the Northeast, Prof. Deepak K. Singh, from Panjab University, led the discussion and conversed with Dr. Chhetri on key questions and themes animating the book.

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- Dr Ramna Thakur was one of the organizers for a workshop on “Efficient Delivery of Crop Irrigation Advisories” in collaboration with IT University of Copenhagen and DHI GRAS from 10-11 November, 2022.
- Dr Shyamasree Dasgupta co-organized a 2-day capacity building workshop in collaboration with IIT Guwahati and CSTEP, Bengaluru for the state climate change cells in Bengaluru as a part of the project “Climate Change Risk Assessment and Mapping at District and State level in India” funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt.

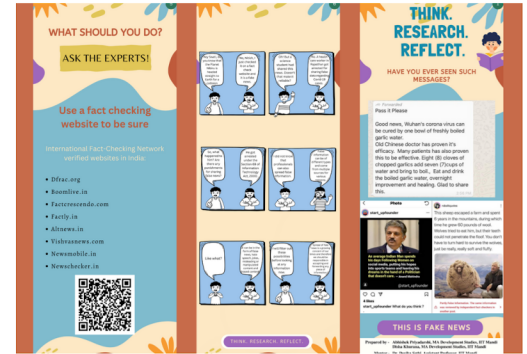


Workshop co-organized by Dr Ramna Thakur

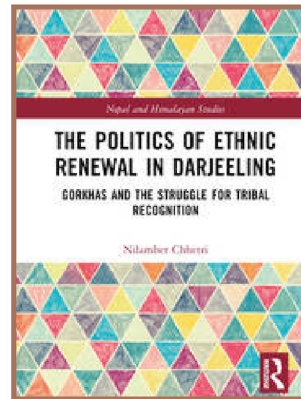
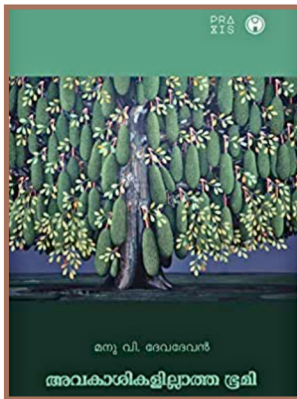


Workshop co-organized by Dr Shyamasree Dasgupta

- M.A. students Disha Khurana and Abhishek Priyadarshi employed the outcomes of their development practicum project, “Weaponisation of Social Media: Impact and Intervention”, in the form of posters and pamphlets to 5 schools in Mandi Distt. (4 Govt. and 1 Private) and conducted in-person sessions with school children and distributed 9 posters and 800 pamphlets.



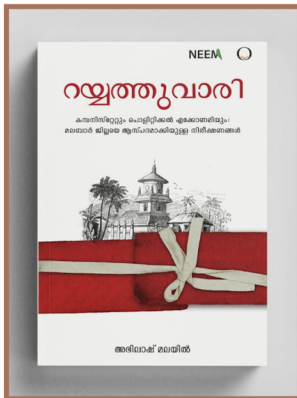
Pamphlet by M.A. students



## SELECT PUBLICATIONS

### Books by faculty members and alumni

- Abhilash Malayil, Ryotwari [in Malayalam], Neem Publishing, 2022.
- Devika Sethi (ed.) Banned and Censored: What the British Raj Didn't Want Us to Read, Roli Books, 2023.
- Manu V. Devadevan, Avakashikalillatha Bhoomi (A World without Inheritors) [in Malayalam], Insight Publications, 2022.
- Nilamber Chhetri, The Politics of Ethnic Renewal in Darjeeling: Gorkhas and the Struggle for Tribal Recognition, Routledge, 2023.



### Book Chapters

- Manu V. Devadevan, “The Vachanas”, Global Language Justice: Ecology, Diversity, Digital Vitality, eds. Lydia H. Liu, Anupama Rao, and Charlotte A. Silverman, Columbia University Press, 2022.
- Thirthankar Chakraborty, “Collected Plays and Stories I and II”, Reading Sri Aurobindo, eds. Gautam Chikermame and Devdip Ganguli, Penguin, 2022.
- Thirthankar Chakraborty, “Samuel Beckett and the World Republic of Letters”, Pascale Casanova's World of Letters and Its Legacies, eds. Gisèle Sapiro and Delia Ungureanu, Brill, 2022.

### Journal Articles

- Aman Mishra, “Siyadonī: An Unplanned Town of the Gurjara-Pratihāra Times,” Urban History, 49, 2022.
- Aruna Bommareddi, translator, “Hariakka: The Warrior Woman,” Indian Literature, 66, Sahitya Akademi, 2022.
- Ashish Bollimbala, P.S. James, and S. Ganguli. “Grooving, Moving, and Stretching Out of the Box! The Role of Recovery Experiences in the Relation between Physical Activity and Creativity,” Personality and Individual Differences, 196:5, 111757, 2022.
- Bhed Ram and Ramna Thakur, “Epidemiology and economic burden of continuing challenge of infectious diseases in India: Analysis of socio-demographic differentials,” Frontiers in Public Health, 10, 2022.
- Bhed Ram and Ramna Thakur, “Measuring the burden of accidental injuries in India: a cross-sectional analysis of the National Sample Survey (2017-18),” Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 9:1, 2022.
- Nupur Bandyopadhyay, “A Journey to Justice: Early Twentieth Century Transnational Civil Rights Movement and Ramnath Biswas, the Bengali Globetrotter, 1938-40,” South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, 45: 4, 2022.
- Rajeshwari Dutt, “Emancipation and Imperialism in a Borderland: The Challenge to Settler Sovereignty over Slavery in Belize in the 1820s”, The Americas 80: 1, Cambridge University Press, 2023.
- Saumya Malviya, translator, “Personal Integrity of an Artist:1,” by Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, hākārā, 16, 2022.
- Saumya Malviya, translator, “Personal Integrity of an Artist: 2,” by Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, hākārā, 17, 2022.
- Saumya Malviya, “The Ethics of Repetition and 'Ek Sāhityik Ki Diary',” hākārā, 17, 2022.
- Sujata, S., Bhed Ram, and Ramna Thakur, “Analysing the burden of morbidity, associated expenditure, and coping strategies among India's elderly population: Evidence from national sample survey 75th round,” Indian Journal of Public Health, 66: 2, 2022.

## M.A. DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FIELD WORK

As part of the M.A. Development Studies programme, postgraduate students engage in a 4-credit "Field Study" course in the Summer Term between semesters 2 and 3 during which they stay in rural or urban communities across the country. Through exposure to various on-site and real-world scenarios during their fieldwork, students learn how to diagnose development challenges and apply their theoretical knowledge to gain a more refined understanding of real-world praxis.

During the last summer break, our students went on field visits to Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Odisha, Nagaland, and Himachal Pradesh and gained an understanding of challenges pertaining to issues such as water conservation, health care and implementation of government health initiatives, and rural tribal welfare, among others.



M.A. students on field trip to Khunti, Jharkhand in 2022



M.A. students on field trip to Odisha in 2022

## NEW COURSES

SHSS increased its course offerings with the following new courses for both undergraduate and postgraduate students at IIT Mandi:

- "Indian Literatures in Transition" (HS 549)
- "Partition of India" (HS 303)
- "Elements of World Literature" (HS 546)
- "Introduction to Drama in English" (HS 302)
- "Science and Society" (HS 548)

## FACULTY INTERVIEW

In this interview with Dr Saumya Malviya who was awarded the Bharat Bhushan Agarwal award for his Hindi poetry collection "Ghar Ek Namumkin Jagah Hain", we took the opportunity to find out more about his work and his views on the significance of writing and reading poetry in our time.

### Could you please tell us about the genre of poetry you write?

I usually dabble in free-verse poetry and occasionally use certain easily recognisable metrical forms, but that only when I am writing for children. It is hard to escape the contemporary when you write poems, and hence themes with socio-political resonances often find their way into my writing. Having said that, I also try to keep my engagement with such themes as personal as possible, in an attempt to explore the poetic-mode of bearing witness to our times. How sceptical fears generated in the 'everyday' (and beyond) threaten it, and how we can recover the same is also a common motif in my poems.

### What role does language play in your poems?

I am always fascinated when I hear words with their meanings. I say so because it is rare to listen to a word beyond its conventionally wrought meanings and to hear it afresh as it were. I am on a constant look out for strange, interesting words to use them in my poems. I am also very particular about how I handle Urdu words in my writing, and further look to put those words from Hindi, which have slowly and for varied reasons have fallen out of circulation, and drawn both from Sanskrit and the vernacular, into my poems.

### What is your view on the impact and importance of poetry in today's world?

Poetry contributes in its own small way in challenging-exposing how the coordinates of the sensible are arranged in today's world. It brings to light the contemporary structures underlying what can be seen, heard and said, and points to alternatives. The political aspect of poetry doesn't lie in the fact that it speaks about politics, rather in that it allows you, and hopefully your readers, to come back to your language as a stranger would, thereby scratching the film of familiarity that covers the world around you, not only to restore the wonder of words and worlds, but to enable one to feel what our routines and habits hide from us.



## FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

A special thanks to Stuti Sharma for all the information that she provided with great diligence; to Dr. Shyamasree Dasgupta for all the suggestions and constant support; and to all the contributors for their invaluable input. We look forward to featuring more achievements, projects, publications, and other stories of SHSS in the next issue of Himalayan Chronicles. In the meantime, please send us all your feedback and comments on this one, and share with us your stories for the next issue of the Himalayan Chronicles.

## TEAM

### Faculty Members

- Neethi Vadakkan Alexander
- Thirthankar Chakraborty

### Students

- Bhagyasree
- Indra Sankar Ghatak
- Ritriban Chakraborty

## CONTACT US

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