Today started with yoga, by far the best way to start any day! Our team was enlightened as to how inflexible we all are, apart from a notable few. I myself struggle to touch my toes so it was quite an experience... Everyone has to start from somewhere though.

Our first trees were also planted today. In fact, we planted just under fifty trees in total despite quite a few of yesterday's trenches being filled by the monsoon last night. The fences also went up today, meaning there is very little left to do in the garden other than sit back and watch the trees grow. Unfortunately we won't be around to see how they do, but all of us from team Duck will be following their progress on the blog. It was definitely a quiet day compared to yesterday, and for once in my life I'm very much looking forward to school tomorrow. We did still manage to pull a crowd of locals all too eager to give us advice on how to plant trees. I'll be good to see what the pupils here think tomorrow. We still need to label all the trees with their names and (where applicable) their medicinal uses, so it'll be a good learning experience for both us and the locals.
A small group of us went on a short excursion in the evening around some of the local temples. One thing that still amazes me is how vibrant the religions are here, especially compared to those back home. The temples we visited were such a mix of ancient timber structures with beautiful carvings and paintings, alongside modern touches of posters and clocks. The people in the village are all so welcoming and willing to share their culture with us.

We also had a surprise visit from a judge from the Shimla High Court. Justice Sanjay Karol, who sits on the green bench of the High Court stopped by to share with us the work he's been doing to protect the natural heritage of Himachal and help local farmers. One of his many concerns is the protection of water sources, which is quite fitting as tomorrow we aim to start work cleaning some of the natural springs in the village which have fallen into disuse. So till tomorrow, where we look forward to more yoga, more dancing and maybe, if the weather holds out, volley ball. Francis Churchill Team Duck

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