

/ Concrete Valleys

Concrete Valleys



M.S. Gill

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Trending

Ride The Bullish Run Of Cryptocurrency

Pre-1966, the Beas-Kangra valley was part of the Punjab. My early service was spent in that beautiful valley. In 1961-62, I was deputy commissioner, Lahaul-Spiti, across the Rohtang Pass. My

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family and I have continued to visit Lahaul since then. Last week, I went after a decade and a half and was appalled at the changes. The climb up to Swarghat was in an unending chain of heavily-laden trucks, groaning up the slope. The reason for this became obvious at Bilaspur. That historic town, which Guru Gobind Singh had visited, has a horrendous cement plant with stainless steel towers dominating the cityscape. Once upon a time, Sunder Nagar was a broad, agriculturally rich, green valley surrounded by hills. The population and road construction has grown alarmingly and the cement plant has destroyed the serenity of the place. All the cement has to be evacuated on the narrow hill road by overloaded trucks unchecked by the police. I was told that seven such plants are to come up in the valleys of Chamba, Sunder Nagar and Beas. Himachal is destined to become a cement state! Kullu and Manali towns are crowded and unplanned, with a confusion of buildings tumbling into rivers. The hotels in Manali belong mostly to the rich of Delhi and give employment to the locals only at the lowest level. The real income goes elsewhere. I would suggest that the finance minister should push his banks to give loans up to Rs 5 lakh at less than 5 per cent interest to local landlords who can expand and upgrade their bedrooms and bathrooms, and thus get worthwhile income on the bed-and-breakfast model.



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