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Answer Writing & Syllabus Mastery



AWSM NOTES

SOCIETY & CULTURE IN HIMACHAL

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ANALYSIS: SYLLABUS AND PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION PAPER**1. Tribes of Himachal Pradesh (their historical, social, cultural, economic and legal aspects)**

- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Marriage
- ❖ Birth and Death
- ❖ Property Division
- ❖ Dances and Music
- ❖ Fairs and Festivals
- ❖ Dresses, Ornaments and Jewellery
- ❖ Economic and legal aspects

1. Describe the main festivals of Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh. (2016, 4 marks)
2. Describe in brief the folk dramas of Himachal Pradesh? (2017, 4 marks)
3. Write a brief note on the tribes of Himachal Pradesh (2018, 4 marks)
4. Discuss the beliefs and practices during birth and death among Kinnaur tribe. (2020, 4 marks)
5. Major traditional fairs and festivals have undergone transformation. They are increasingly become distant from folk traditions and heritage. How do you evaluate this change. (2022, 4 marks)
6. Mention the principle of inclusion under the tribal development frame work of Himachal Pradesh. (2019, 4 marks)
7. Discuss the basic challenges encounter for the inclusion of tribals in Himachal Pradesh (2019, 4 marks)
8. Discuss the provision of Act which helps in preventing the land alienation among tribal communities of Himachal Pradesh. (2019, 4 marks)
9. Tribal societies are in transition all over the world. Analyze the factors and impact of this transition in Himachal Pradesh. (2021, 4 marks)
10. Underline the key challenges in process of tribal development in Himachal Pradesh (2022, 4 marks)

2. Important Social And Cultural Dimensions

- ❖ District Wise

1. Describe Kulluvi Nati's world record ? (2017, 4 marks)
2. Write a short note on the Nalwari fair of Bilaspur district? (2017, 4 marks)
3. Describe in brief various forms of marriage in Kinnaur district? (2017, 4 marks)

3. Social Institutions

- ❖ Family
- ❖ Marriage
- ❖ Kinship
- ❖ Caste system

1. Traditional rituals and customs among the people of Himachal have been undergoing transformation due to modernization and market forces. What is your opinion on this statement and how do you think these social practices could be saved from extinction? (2021, 4 marks)
2. Development paradigms must recognize the diversity of cultures and geographies. In the light of above statement what specific focus would you suggest for the development of hill state like Himachal Pradesh. (2022, 4 marks)

3. How has the spread of mass media impacted the culture of Himachal Pradesh, especially of those inhabitant's living in the far flung areas. (2022, 4 marks)
4. Status of women in India has been a critical theme for a long time in any intellectual discourse. What is your assessment of gender development in Himachal Pradesh? Give reasons and cite facts to highlight your argument. (2022, 4 marks)
5. Discuss the changing pattern of family among tribes in Himachal Pradesh(2020, 4 marks)
6. Write brief note on the forms of family in Himachal Pradesh. (2018,4 marks)
7. Write a brief note on the forms of marriage practiced in Himachal Pradesh. (2018, 4 marks)
8. What is "Bata-Sata" ritual in Himachal Pradesh ? Mention its functions. (2019, 4 marks)
9. Discuss the social implication of "Karewa" for women in Himachal Pradesh. (2019, 4 marks)
10. Discuss the structural and functional view of caste system in Himachal Pradesh(2020, 4 marks)
11. Explain the main socio-economic reasons behind the increasing trend of pompousness and exhibitionism in marriages of the Himachal Society? (2021, 4 marks)

QUESTION BANK

1. Highlight the cultural heritage of Himachal Pradesh.
2. How have the geography and environment of Himachal Pradesh influenced the culture and traditions of the region's indigenous communities?
3. Examine the various schemes of HP government in the socio and economic development of tribal population in Himachal Pradesh.
4. What are the major Issues and challenges faced by women of Himachal Pradesh? Discuss programme and policies for the welfare of women.
5. Do you think that people in HP are happy with their traditional way of amusement and recreation ?
6. What conditions need to be met for a region to be granted "Special Category State status"? What advantages emerge following the acquisition of this designation?
7. What are the factors responsible for the changes in the family structure of the people of Himachal Pradesh?
8. Provide an explanation for the factors that have influenced the traditional caste system in Himachal Pradesh.
9. How fairs and festivals of Himachal are helping in the socio-economic development of the state?
10. What are the traditional kinship systems among the tribes in Himachal Pradesh, and how have they evolved over time?
11. How do Himachal Pradesh tribes maintain their sense of identity and cultural heritage through their kinship systems in the face of modern influences? Discuss about the government policies or initiatives aimed at preserving or documenting the traditional kinship systems of Himachal Pradesh tribes.
12. How does participation in traditional community gatherings and festivals contribute to upholding social unity within Himachal society? What effects has the migration of young individuals from Himachal to urban regions had on the state's traditional cultural identity?
13. Provide an overview of the Tankri script, which is native to Himachal Pradesh. Explain the state's efforts to conserve and rejuvenate this script.
14. The religion of the tribes of Lahual-Spiti is a mingle of Hinduism and Buddhism. Explain.
15. Examine the factors influencing the transition of tribal communities in Himachal Pradesh and assess the resulting impacts.
16. Discuss the basic challenges encounter for the inclusion of tribals in Himachal Pradesh.
17. What do you know about Gotshi(Gochi) and Binger festival in Himachal Pradesh ?
18. Write about Khampa and Jad community in Himachal Pradesh?
19. What are the unique features of family system in tribal district Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh?
20. What is Kariyala in Himachal Pradesh?
21. Write a short note on famous dances in district Sirmaur of HP.
22. Write about the ways of acquiring the mate for marriage, which have been popular among Himachali People.
23. Give a Historical and Social aspect of Pangwals tribes in Himachal Pradesh?
24. Discuss the mains festivals of Pangwal tribes in Himachal Pradesh.
25. What do you know about Bunda Fair in Upper Shimla area?
26. Briefly discuss about the Khampa tribe in Himachal Pradesh?
27. Describe in brief Phulech tribal festival in Himachal Pradesh
28. What legislative provisions is guaranteed to tribal population in Himachal Pradesh?
29. What is "Bata-Sata "ritual in Himachal Pradesh? Mention is functions.
30. Discuss about term "Karyala" and "Banthara" of hill states as a part of culture.
31. Give an account of religions belief and practices in Himachal Pradesh.
32. Describe the main festivals of Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh.
33. Write brief note on the forms of family in Himachal Pradesh.
34. Give a brief account of Riwalsar Lake.
35. Give a detailed account of the traditional dance forms of H.P.

36. Discuss the various types of marriages practised in Himachal Pradesh.
37. What are the primary indigenous tribes in the state of Himachal Pradesh, and how does each tribe traditionally engage in occupational activities?
38. Write a note about the international festivals of Himachal Pradesh.

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CULTURE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Culture encompasses our way of life, from food, attire, language, and religion to art, music, customs, and traditions.

- It's a unique heritage passed from one generation to the next, and preserving it is our responsibility and make the young generation proud of our rich cultural heritage.

The Cultural Heritage of the H.P. are:

- **Cuisine** – The state of Himachal Pradesh boasts a diverse range of traditional dishes.
 - ❖ **Dham** is the traditional food served in marriages or other functions.
 - ❖ **Siddu, Patrode, Cheele and Babru** are the authentic snack dishes of the state.
 - ❖ Some of the specialities of Himachal include Manee, Mandra or "**Madra**", "**Palda**",
 - ❖ Patrode, Chouck, Bhagjery and chutney of **til (sesame seeds)**.
- **Dresses** - The people of Himachal Pradesh mostly wear **woollens** as it is best suited to the climate.
 - ❖ **Scarves and shawls** are ubiquitous with the women while the men can be found in various types of Kurtas and the typical **Himachal cap**.
 - ❖ Women wear long kurtas covering them from the neck to their toes. They also wear Ghaghri, Salwar-Kameez, and Cholis i.e. shirts.
 - ❖ The **Himachali cap** is a must traditional wear, it is a 'brand' known to many. The **shawls** of Himachal are very famous they are available in Lambs Made of wool, Angora, and Pashmina.
- **Dances** - The primary dance form in Himachal Pradesh is Nati, reflecting the cultural identity of the region.
 - ❖ Specific to various regions within the state, there are other traditional dances, such as Losar Shona Chuksam in Kinnaur, Dangi in Chamba, Gee Dance and Burah dance in Sirmour, Naati, Kharait, Ujagjama, and Chadhegrikar in Kullu, as well as Shunto in Lahaul & Spiti.
- **Fairs and festivals** - Some of the fairs and festivals in the upper regions are the Kullu Dussehra, Shivratri Fair (Mandi), Shoolini Mela (Solan), Minjar Fair (Chamba), Holi Fair (Sujanpur Tira), Fulaich (Kinnaur valley).
 - ❖ In the lower regions of Himachal are temple Fairs in Una District such as the Peeplo Fair, the Bharoli Bhagaur Fair, the 'Mairi' Gurudwara Fair, the 'Chintpurni' temple Fair, the 'Kamakhya temple' Fair.
- **Art and Culture** – Himachal Pradesh is renowned worldwide for its handloom offerings, including iconic products like Kullu Shawls, Pahadi Topis, and Lahauli Gloves and socks, among others.
 - ❖ The state's distinctive architectural style known as Kath-Kuni further emphasizes its unique and traditional building designs.
 - ❖ Additionally, Himachal Pradesh boasts a reputation for its exceptional craftsmanship, with a special emphasis on Wood Carving and Chamba bronze metal works.
- **Language** - The official language of this state is Hindi.
 - ❖ Some of the most commonly spoken Pahari individual languages are Kangri, Mandeali, Kulvi, Chambeali, Bharmauri, and Kinnauri etc.
- **Religion** - Himachal Pradesh is a multi-religious, multi-cultural as well as multi-lingual state like other Indian states.
 - ❖ Hinduism thrives in the southern Greater Himalayas, while the middle hills showcase diverse local worship customs.
 - ❖ Buddhism has a rich history in the Trans-Himalayan region, spanning over a millennium.
 - ❖ Sikhism has sacred sites throughout the state, and Islam is present in Nahan and major cities.

Influence of Geography and Environment of H.P. on the Culture and Traditions of the Region's Indigenous Communities:

- **Traditional Architecture** - Indigenous communities adapt their architectural styles to the mountainous terrain.
 - ❖ Dwellings, temples, and monasteries feature steep roofs to withstand heavy snowfall, employing practical wood and stone construction techniques.

E.g., the unique Kath-Kuni architecture of Himachal Pradesh suits the region's climate.
- **Traditional Attire** - Mountain communities don traditional attire designed for cold climates and steep landscapes.
 - ❖ Woollen garments, distinctive headgear, and sturdy footwear are common elements.
 - ❖ Gaddi men, for example, wear Chola (a long woollen coat), Dor (used for tying the coat around the waist), Topi (made from Patti, a woven woollen cloth), and Patti pyjamas, all tailored to the geographical and environmental conditions.
- **Festivals and Rituals** - Geographic diversity has given rise to unique festivals and rituals celebrating the natural environment.
 - ❖ Many festivals are tied to agricultural cycles, seasons, and local mountain deities.
 - ❖ E.g., include the Minjar Fair (Chamba's Harvesting festival), Phulech Festival (marking the flowering season in Kinnaur), and Halda (Pattan Valley, Lahaul's New Year celebration).
- **Cuisine** - Mountain cuisine relies on resources available in high-altitude settings. Traditional dishes incorporate ingredients suitable for the environment, like grains, lentils, and locally raised livestock.
 - ❖ Dishes such as Siddhu (Kullu), Ainklu (Bilaspur and Solan), Madra and Chukh (Chamba), Maarchu (Pattan Valley of Lahaul), and Dham (Mandiyali, Chamyal, etc.) exemplify the influence of geography and climate.
- **Craftsmanship** - Remote mountain communities exhibit exceptional craftsmanship, producing intricate handicrafts using materials like wood, wool, and metals.
 - ❖ E.g., "Mohra" metal crafts and Rumal of Chamba, Shawal of Kullu and Kinnaur, and Gloves and Socks of Lahaul-Spiti.
- **Religious Practices** - Indigenous communities have developed spiritual beliefs influenced by the state's geography. Different regions foster distinct rituals and practices.
 - ❖ While the lower regions adhere to Hinduism, the upper regions, influenced by Tibet, practice Buddhism alongside Hinduism.
 - ❖ Additionally, various tribes in the state maintain their unique religious beliefs and customs.
- **Traditional Medicine** - The state's varied climates, rainfall, and snowfall patterns yield diverse soil types and medicinal plants, used by locals for various remedies.
 - ❖ E.g., "Nag Chhatri" (Trillium govanianum) addresses reproductive disorders, while "Dhoop or Dhoop-Lakkad" (Jurinea macrocephala) treats fever and jaundice.
- **Music and Dance** - Folk music and dance forms convey the stories, struggles, and joys of mountain life, passed down through generations, preserving the essence of regional culture.
 - ❖ E.g., the Demon Dance (Chham Dance), Naatis, Warrior Dance (Thoda Dance), Laane (accompanying various marriage functions), and Laman (free-form recitations of thoughts on life, death, romance, and sorrow).

Transformation of Traditional Culture and Customs of the Himachal Pradesh:

- Traditional rituals and customs among the people of Himachal have been transforming due to modernization and market forces.

The various changes that we saw are:

- **Wedding rituals** – “Dehre” which is a traditional wall painting done as a religious ritual after the marriage has been almost forgotten by the people of the state.
 - ❖ Traditional ways of serving food (Dham) during marriages and other functions are taken over by modern standing style serving.
 - ❖ “Timde-Luh” a marriage ritual of the Khampa tribe of H.P. where questions, are asked to the bridegroom by the bride’s friends is rarely seen today.
- **Death Rituals** – The “Sapindi” ritual performed when someone dies untimely is limited to only a few areas.
- **Folk music and dance form** – Many forms of music and dance are being replaced by more modern forms of entertainment.
 - ❖ E.g. Laane (a chant form in which women accompany various marriage functions), Laman (a free-form recitation of thoughts, expressing sorrow, or about life and death, or romance), etc.
- **Traditional Attire** – such as Retza (long dress), Dhathu (head scarf), Topi (Cap), Saluka (waistcoat), etc. are being replaced by Western wear.
- **Languages and scripts** – various dialects from various parts of HP are either extinct or on the verge of extinction.
 - ❖ According to the UNESCO report, four dialects from Himachal i.e. Hinduri, Baghati, Sirmuari, and Pangwal are on the verge of extinction.

Various initiatives should be taken to save traditional rituals and customs;

- **Preservation and promotion of extinction scripts** – e.g., the State started a training centre at Nahan to conserve the Pabuchi script under the Guru-shishya yojana.
- **Use of social media** – take full benefit of various social media platforms to promote and advertise Himachal’s unique culture and rituals.
- **Awareness among the new generation** – Children should be made familiar with various rituals and cultures of H.P. at the school level.
 - ❖ Marriage, birth, and death rituals must be taught by elders of the family to the next generation.
 - ❖ Separate chapters should be added to the curriculum related to traditional rituals and customs of H.P.
- **Training and documentation** – Audio Video documentation of various folk arts of the state.
 - ❖ E.g., Govt. started an audio-video cultural program of traditional “Nati” & Lahyen of Sirmour and training and presentation of Karyala and Swang (both are folk theatres of H.P.).
- **Community and NGO Participation** – Ensure community participation in the conservation and preservation of traditional rituals & customs and encourage NGOs to promote and advertise the traditional rituals and customs of H.P.
- **Promoting Cultural Tourism** – It will motivate the people of the state to preserve and promote the traditional culture.

Government Initiatives to Preserve the Cultural Heritage of the State:

- **Tribal Development Department** – The Tribal Development Department came into existence in June 1976 with the objective/purpose to give special focus on the social and economic upliftment of the most deprived class of society i.e., Scheduled Tribes.
 - ❖ At the field level i.e., in the Scheduled Area of Himachal Pradesh, five Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) had been opened viz. ITDP Kinnaur at Reckong Peo, ITDP Lahaul at Keylong, ITDP Spiti at Kaza, ITDP Pangri at Killar and ITDP Bharmour with its headquarter at Shimla.
 - ❖ The state government has made a provision of Rs. 857 crores under the Tribal Area Development Program (TADP) for the welfare and upliftment of the tribal people in the financial year 2023-24

- **Cultural Heritage Conservation** - The Himachal Pradesh government has set up the Himachal Pradesh Record Management Committee which is looking after the archaeological work to preserve the cultural ethos of the state. The 11-member committee has been constituted for this purpose.
 - ❖ E.g., With a view to preserving old languages and dialects of the states so far cataloguing of 1.26 lakh manuscripts have been preserved at catalogued at the manuscript resort centre set up at the Academy under the National Manuscript Mission.
- **Educational Initiatives** – The state govt is contributing to preserving the old dialects of the states and providing training to students as well.
 - ❖ E.g., The state has started a training centre on Pabuchi script at Nahan under “Guru-Shishya Yojana”. Annual training on the “Pabuchi” script is being provided to five students in the centre
- **Centres and departments** – The state government is sensitive towards protecting and preserving this age-old culture of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ For that, a separate Department of Art, Language and Culture has been set up in the state.
 - ❖ Besides the Art, language and Culture Academy is implementing various schemes and programmes for preserving the rich culture and tradition of the tribal of the states.
- **Cultural festivals** – These types of festivals are started by the H.P. administration to promote cultural tourism and advertise the tribal culture, attires, music, dance, etc.
 - ❖ E.g., “Margul Utsav “ was organised by the Lahaul-Spiti administration in association with the Department of Tourism with the aim to promote cultural tourism in the valley.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** The state govt has taken many awareness generation programs to promote and conserve unique practices among tribal societies.
 - ❖ E.g., The Youth Development Centre, an NGO, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has been working under the Centrally sponsored scheme “Preservation of Cultural Heritage of Himalayans”.
 - ❖ The objective of the scheme is to promote, protect and preserve the cultural heritage of the

In preserving and celebrating its cultural heritage, Himachal Pradesh not only pays homage to its past but also ensures that future generations can take pride in its unique and diverse cultural legacy.

CUSTOMS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Birth Customs:

- **Sootak** - The initial 20 days after childbirth are referred to as “Sootak,” during which the family observes various religious rituals.
 - ❖ During this time, no one can accept anything directly from the hands of the new mother.
- **Feeding Ghutti** - The initial sight of the newborn is reserved for the father, and the first feeding is of a tonic known as Ghutti.
 - ❖ In the case of Ghutti, it is believed that the child inherits the temperament of the person who administers the first dose.
 - ❖ Hence, it is customary to select a family member with a good nature to give the child their first taste of Ghutti.
- **Ghoontar Ceremony** - The “Ghoontar Ceremony” takes place 21 days after the child’s birth. During this event, a gathering is held at the house, and the birth chart (Kundli) of the newborn is prepared.
 - ❖ “Gau mutra,” is distributed to all household members, and it is used to purify the entire house in a ritual called “shudhikaran.”

- ❖ Additionally, a special “Sund,” made from dried fruits, is prepared and shared with close relatives.
- **Mundan Ceremony** - The child’s first haircut, known as “mundan,” is performed in the 3rd, 5th, or 7th year following birth. This event holds great importance and is referred to as “Jatloo.”
- **Tribal Customs Related to Birth:**
 - ❖ **Gotchi** - The Punapa tribe of Chandra and Bhaga valley in Lahaul celebrates the vibrant Gotsi or Gochi festival.

This joint celebration involves families with sons born the previous year and serves as an expression of gratitude to the deities Yulsa, Sad, and Sadma.

- ❖ **Binger or Binge** - Celebration of the birth of a **son or the first daughter** in district Lahaul and Spiti.

By and large, this festival is also celebrated on the same line as Gochi

- ❖ **Sukud** - In tribal regions such as Kinnaur, when a male child is born, the palanquins of deities are brought into the family’s home, accompanied by a lavish feast of food and alcoholic beverages for the villagers.

Marriage Customs:

- **Use of Middle Man** - A middleman, known by various names such as “Roovary,” “Dhamu,” “Mazomi,” and “Rivara,” is employed as a matchmaker.
- **Betrothal or Engagement** - In the initial phase of a marriage ceremony, known as Betrothal, the match between the boy and girl is settled, often involving Kundli matching in most of Himachal, except certain tribal areas.
 - ❖ **Sagai or Sotha System** - In Chamba the Sagai or Sotha system is known as Bandha Dena and in a remote part of Mandi, it is known as Barina.
 - ❖ In tribal areas both parties exchange Chhang (rice wine) and close relatives are invited to participate in the ceremony.
 - ❖ In Kinnaur during various festivals gifts of jewellery and clothes are sent to betrothed known as ‘Chharmi Natta’.
- **Determination of Marriage date** - Religion holds a prominent position in marriage ceremonies.
 - ❖ The marriage date is determined in collaboration with a priest, and in some regions, the blessings of deities are also sought.
- **Marriage Ceremony** - Marriage customs in Himachal Pradesh exhibit variation.
 - ❖ While the lower regions of the state adhere to the Vedic marriage system, the upper and tribal areas have distinct marriage functions and rituals.

Divorce Customs:

- **Hindu Marriage Act** - The Hindu Marriage Act, of 1955 has recognized the right of a Hindu woman to divorce her husband.
- **Reet Divorce** - The **Reet system** of divorce (in which rural folk women do occasionally leave one husband and go settle with another) applies to Jhanjhrara and Gaddar marriage.
- **Dehri Divorce** - Divorce law known as **Dehri** in tribal Areas, people seeking divorce take a twig of **Shur wood** and snap it in front of a witness and through behind them.
- **Kupachacha or Tshud-Thwagsti** - In the Lahaul region, the pair prepares a thin thread of wood, holds it by little finger and pulls it apart in the presence of the elder.
 - ❖ In some villages couple must break a Sal leaf into two pieces to divorce each other.

Customs Related to Funeral:

Funeral customs in Himachal Pradesh are in no way different from those performed in northern India, but the tribal area of the state has unique customs related to funerals.

- **Three Forms of Custom** - It is only in Kinnaur that three forms of custom were performed regarding the death of a person:
 - ❖ **Dubant** - Drowning the dead body near the river.
 - ❖ **Bhakhant** - Throwing the dead body in the open field.
 - ❖ **Phukant** - Burning the dead body, which is mostly practised now in the Kinnaur district.
- **Recitation of Prayer** - At the cremation site, a Lama holds the deceased's hair and chants a prayer (Foa) in their ear three times.
 - ❖ Over seven weeks, Lamas visit the deceased's home to recite sacred texts (Chhos).
 - ❖ After seven weeks, both the Lama and a Jomo (an unmarried girl who has chosen an ascetic path) read the text together, and the family of the deceased provides them with a meal.
- **"Chholya and Damkochang"** - On the third day after the death, the "Chholya" ceremony takes place, and on the 13th day, the "Damkochang" ritual is performed, similar to the "Kriya Karma" in the plains.

FAIR AND FESTIVALS OF THE HIMACHAL PRADESH

There are many festivals and fairs in Himachal Pradesh, which are celebrated by the people of the state with full enthusiasm.

The famous Festivals of the Himachal Pradesh are:

- **International Festivals:**
 - ❖ **Kullu Dusshera** - Kullu Dussehra, celebrated in the month of October in Himachal Pradesh, is a world-famous mega festival.
 - ❖ Drawing in more than 4-5 lakh visitors from all corners of the globe, this grand celebration takes place at the Dhalpur Maidan in the picturesque Kullu Valley.
- **Mandi Shivratri** - The Mandi Shivaratri Fair is a well-known event that happens every year for seven days. It starts with the festival of Shivaratri and takes place in the Paddal ground of Mandi.
 - ❖ It was started by the Raja Ajber Sen of Mandi.
- **Lavi Fair** - The Lavi Fair, is almost 400 years old and is a trade fair that takes place in Rampur Bushahr, Shimla. It is held in Oct-Nov month every year.
 - ❖ Every year, the main attraction during the fair is the sale and purchase of Chamurthi horses, an endangered species of horse that traces its origin to the Tibet region. Chamurthi horses are also known as the 'ship of the cold desert'.
- **Renuka Ji Fair** - The International Renuka Ji Fair is celebrated every year in the first fortnight of November (after 10 days of Diwali).
 - ❖ It is a 5-day fair. Thousands of devotees gather here every year to worship their beloved gods and goddesses.
 - ❖ The belief is that to meet his mother, Parshuram visits the lake at the time when the fair is held. Idols of Renuka ji and Parshuram are taken out in a procession for a dip into the lake's sacred waters.
- **Minjar fair** - Minjar mela is held on the second Sunday of the Shravana month at the Chaugan ground of the Chamba.
 - ❖ Maize flowers, a coconut, a rupee or a small coin, a fruit and, a few patty tentacles are offered to Varuna the god of rain in the river Ravi.

- ❖ A procession starts from Akhand Chandi place and terminates at Ravi River Bank.
- **Tribal Festivals:**
 - ❖ **Phulech** - Celebrated only in the Kinnaur region in the month of Bhadon or at the beginning of Asauj.
 - ❖ People from each household proceed towards hilltops to collect flowers, which are offered to the village deity and afterwards, these flower garlands are distributed among the people.
 - ❖ Priest makes forecasts about crops and changes in seasons etc. Priest's words are taken for granted by local people.
 - ❖ One can witness a Chham dance, various mask dances and dramas reminiscent of the post-Buddhist culture with traditional orchestra.
- **Nawala** - Gaddis of Kangra, Chamba, Mandi and Kullu celebrate this festival when a household individually collects enough money for the celebration.
 - ❖ Nawala is a thanksgiving ceremony to Lord Shiva, who is worshipped at the time of misfortune and calamity.
 - ❖ Devotional songs in praise of Lord Shiva are sung throughout the night.
- **Jagra** - It is a rite offered to any village deity.
 - ❖ This is commemorated each year on the fourth day of the month of September.
 - ❖ Mahasu Devta (deity) is worshipped in the upper Shimla hills, Kinnaur and Sirmour regions of the state.
 - ❖ Singing and dancing is the common feature of the festival.
- **Halda** - It is celebrated especially by the people of Chandra and Bhaga Valleys in December or January in Lahaul and Spiti districts.
 - ❖ This festival is akin to Diwali for them. Instead of lamps or candles, people carry burning cedar sticks to create a bonfire. They later toss the bonfire towards the villages of Gushal and Kardang.
- **Buddhist Festival:**
 - ❖ **Jidjed** - It is a religious festival that, takes place in the month of October at 'Thang-gyud Monastery' in the month of October, a similar festival called Gutor is held in the Monasteries at Ki, Tabo, Dankar and Pin-Spiti sub-division.
 - ❖ **Gochi** - It is a festival organised in Gumrang Kothi in Keylong and adjoining areas, falling sometime in January or February.

The date for the celebrations is decided by the Lamas based on their astrological calculations.

This festival is celebrated jointly by all the families, where the male child was born in the preceding year.

- ❖ **Lossar** - This festival is celebrated in the entire tribal belt of Himachal Pradesh and the Tibetan colonies at Manali, Shimla, Dharamshala, Solan and Baijnath.

The old Buddhist shrine, celebrating Padamsambhava's marriage with a local Princess at Rewalser in Mandi district also emerges as a pivotal attraction for these religious celebrations.

This festival means the beginning of a new year and is held in the last week of February.

➤ **Festivals to Attract tourism:**

- ❖ **Ice Skating Carnival – A Pinnacled Gala Time** - The ice skating carnival in Himachal Pradesh, held in Dalhousie and Shimla, is a major attraction for tourists.

Visitors from across India and around the world gather for this event, creating a festive atmosphere.

- **International Himalayan Festival – McLeodganj's Baby** - As the snowflakes start making their presence felt in Himachal Pradesh, it is time to get ready for the International Himalayan Festival.
 - ❖ December is the month when Dalai Lama, the Tibetan leader, blesses McLeodganj, which further prepares itself for this festival.

- ❖ This is a three-day event that is celebrated with pomp and grandeur and invites huge tourist attractions.
- **Winter Carnival** - Manali's Winter Carnival, held in January, is a three-day festival highlighting traditional dances and culture. In 2018, over 1600 women came together to perform traditional dances, delivering a strong message on women's empowerment and girls' rights.

Role of Fairs and Festivals in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Cultural Identity and Heritage** - In Himachal Pradesh, community gatherings and festivals celebrate cultural heritage through music, dance, art, clothing, and cuisine, preserving traditions for younger generations and fostering a shared identity among residents.
 - ❖ E.g., the Halda festival in Lahaul-Spiti closely resembles Diwali, the festival of lights is a 2-day grand carnival celebration. Halda festival has its roots in the Lamaistic traditions of the valley.
- **Social Bonding** - People from different villages and communities come together during these events, fostering interactions and friendships that might not otherwise occur.
 - ❖ E.g., during Kullu Dusshera, people from different villages brought their local deities (Devatas) to participate in the festival.
- **Inter-Generational Exchange** - These gatherings provide a platform for different generations to interact and learn from one another.
 - ❖ Elders can share their wisdom, stories, and experiences with the younger generation, while the youth can offer fresh perspectives and new ideas.
- **Economic Opportunities** - Many festivals involve local handicrafts, traditional foods, and products.
 - ❖ This can stimulate economic activity by providing local artisans and entrepreneurs with opportunities to showcase and sell their goods.
 - ❖ E.g., Kullu Shawl, Lahuali Woolen Socks and Gloves, organic foods, local cuisine (Siddhu, Dham, Ainkloo, Madra, Bhabhru, etc.) etc.
- **Religious and Spiritual Significance** - Festivals in Himachal Pradesh hold religious and spiritual significance, allowing people to express their faith, share in rituals, and feel a sense of belonging. This shared experience contributes to community unity.
 - ❖ E.g., Trilokinath temple in Lahaul-Spiti is a holy shrine revered equally by Hindus and Buddhists within the same premises.
- **Preservation of Traditions** - Some traditional practices and rituals might fade away with changing times. Festivals and community gatherings offer a chance to revitalize and reinforce these practices.
 - ❖ E.g., The Snow Festival in Lahaul-Spiti is dedicated to the preservation and rejuvenation of the vanishing tribal cultural heritage.

As the state embraces modernity, these celebrations continue to play a crucial role in keeping Himachal Pradesh's cultural tapestry alive and vibrant, ensuring that the essence of the region's diverse traditions is cherished and upheld for years to come.

DANCES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh boasts diverse traditional dance forms, performed on special occasions like local fairs and celebrations, marriages, birth, etc.

- Men and women adorn traditional attire and dance with grace and splendour, adding glory to events.

Various dance forms of Himachal Pradesh are:

- **Nati** – There are various forms of this dance varying reason by reason amongst the folk dances from Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ Some of the popular ones include the Kullu Nati, the Kinnauri Nati, Gaddi Nati, Shimla Nati and so on.
 - ❖ Each dance has its own style of costumes and music and aids in the distinguished form of rest.
- **Garland Dance (Mala Dance)** – The Kayang Mala Dance is one of the most popular dances in Himachal.
 - ❖ In this, the dancers are dressed in their traditional finery and weave their arms together to form a sort of crisscross pattern in order to appear like beads in a woven garland
- **Warrior Dance (Thoda Dance)** – This dance is performed by the Rajputs in the districts of Sirmour, Shimla and Solan of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ It is performed during the Vishu Fair in the month of Chaitra and Vaisakh (April-May).
 - ❖ It traces its origin to Mahabharata and it manifests a subtle confluence of dance, sports and folk theatre.
- **Mask Dance (Chhanak Cham Dance)** - Lamas in Lahaul-Spiti perform a devotional dance every three years, on the occasion of a festival called Chakhar, honouring Lord Buddha.
 - ❖ The dancers hold knives and swords in Their hands while black masks cover their faces and make slew and circular movements.
 - ❖ The musicians wear the traditional dress of the Lamas, with caps decked with yellow feathers, and play long pipes, known as ‘Tangchim’, and drums, known as ‘Ghhan’.
- **Demon Dance (Rakshasa dance) or Chhabha** - These dances from the Kinnaur area are reminiscent of the pre-historic period.
 - ❖ This dance form is performed with demon masks numbering three, five, seven or nine.
 - ❖ It shows demons attacking crops and being ritually driven away by good forces.

Other famous dances are:

- **The Dandras Dance** - Dandras is a traditional dance of the Gaddi tribe in the Bharmaur region of Chamba district. It's performed by men using small sticks and can go on for hours.
- **Lahauli Dance** - Lahauli dance is performed on the tunes of the musical instruments of Ladakh, known as Surna and Damman.
 - ❖ The steps are simple but graceful. For instance, dancers move in a circular pattern after interlocking their hands.

They usually wear long gowns with embroidered borders, matching jackets and ornaments made of beads and stones.

- **The Jhamakada Dance** – This dance is from the Kangana District of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ It is only profound by young girls and the highlights of this dance are the strong lyrics and percussion-based instruments.
 - ❖ This chance of Kangra District is famous as it is an integral part of the marriage ceremonies.

Hence, Himachal Pradesh boasts a rich tapestry of traditional dance forms that reflect the vibrant culture and heritage of the region.

FOLK THEATRES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachali folk dramas are deeply rooted in rural culture, with some, like Swang, Banthra, and Bhagtu, being actively preserved, despite the extinction of others, showcasing the enduring heritage of the region.

- District-wise distribution of folk dramas of Himachal Pradesh is Kariyala of Shimla & Solan, Swang and Dhaja of Bilaspur, and Banthda/Banthra of Mandi. Bhagtu of Kangra, and Jhanki and Haanter of Chamba.

The Various Folk Theatres of Himachal Pradesh:

➤ **Karyala**

- ❖ The traditional folk theatre of Himachal Pradesh, performed without scripts or directors, is a genuine reflection of the region's rich culture, but it's gradually fading away.

Karyala's main purpose is to entertain and educate people about local events, combining music, dance, drama, and poetry.

The actors, known as karyalchies, have simple makeup with beards and wigs made from readily available materials.

This art form is exclusively male and appeals to audiences of all ages, creating a direct connection due to the use of the local language.

➤ **Bura and Sih:**

- ❖ This is the name of **ballet and opera** in language. Fascinating masked dance dramas are also performed in the **Jubbal and Rohru valleys of Shimla**.
- ❖ They narrate stories and romantic and satirical themes that have been handed down orally from generation to generation.

➤ **The Banthara Folk Theatre:**

- ❖ Banthara folk theatre, popular in Mandi district, derives its name from "Bhand," meaning clown or jester.
- ❖ Historically, these jesters entertained feudal lords, using humour to alleviate tensions. As feudalism declined, they began amusing the masses, leading to the emergence of Banthara folk theatre.
- ❖ Groups of artists called Banths competed for rewards, often near the Diwali festival, accompanied by folk instrumentalists and performers.
- ❖ The protagonist called a Swangi, is humorous and sometimes addresses serious subjects to educate the masses, as seen during the Indian Freedom Movement under the leadership of Praja Mandalists in hill states.

➤ **The Buddha or Budechhu Theater:**

- ❖ The lower castes of the society were not allowed to perform Banthara which was reserved for upper castes only.

They were not allowed to satirize the deeds of the upper strata of society. So, they invented their own theatre called Buddha without any direct reference and used lyrical renderings.

This theatre form was found in the **Sundernagar and Karsogh areas of the Mandi district**.

- ❖ In Buddha, actors were used to covering their bodies with the straw of wheat and jute with headgear of a cap fitted with three horns.

The hands too were covered with straw gloves.

- ❖ The act **begins with a devotional song or Bhakti geet** followed by the farces of Buddha, Chandrauli, mascara or the clown, Pahari or rustic etc.

➤ **Hiran or Harnatra Theatre Form:**

- ❖ It is the folk theatre of the **Gaddi or shepherds tribe of Bharmour, Chhattri, Bassu and Saho areas of the Chamba district**.

- ❖ It is performed in the **spring season** when the Gaddis or shepherds come out of the hibernating nightmare of winters in the higher ranges of Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The protagonists of this folk drama are called Khappar, Chandrauli, Gaddi, Gaddan, Sadhu, Sahib, Hiran etc.
- **Bhagatan or Bhagat Theater:**
 - ❖ This theatre form was practised in the **Chamba district** and the adjoining region inhabited by the Dogra tribe of Jammu and Kangra.

It originated **from the Raas Leela of Lord Krishna** at Mathura and Brindavan.

- ❖ In this theatre, performers wore comical attire such as tattered gowns, grass headgear, jute hair, and patched pyjamas, using their appearance to generate humour.
- ❖ There was **no stage for the performance of this theatre** form, but some pasture called **Chowgan** or a wooden platform served the purpose.

There was no green room, no script, and no makeup.

The Role of Folk Theatres of Himachal Pradesh in the Cultural and Social Fabric of the Region:

- **Preservation of Heritage** - These theatres help preserve the rich cultural heritage of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ They pass down traditions, stories, and practices from one generation to the next.
- **Entertainment and Education** - These theatre forms serve as a source of entertainment, often combining music, dance, drama, and poetry.
 - ❖ They also educate the local populace about historical events, social issues, and moral lessons.
- **Promotion of Local Language** - Many of these folk theatres are performed in the local language, fostering a connection between the audience and the performers.
 - ❖ This helps in the promotion and preservation of regional languages.
- **Social Bonding** - Folk theatres bring people together. They serve as a common ground for communities to interact, share experiences, and strengthen social bonds.
- **Reflection of Society** - These theatres often address social issues and satirical themes, offering a commentary on the state of society.
 - ❖ They can be a medium to express concerns and initiate conversations on relevant topics.
- **Inclusivity** - Some theatre forms, like Buddha, were created by lower-caste communities who were excluded from upper-caste performances.
 - ❖ This showcases the adaptability and inclusivity of the region's cultural expressions.
- **Promotion of Tourism** - These theatres can attract tourists and promote cultural tourism, contributing to the local economy.

In the face of modernization, these traditional art forms continue to be vital custodians of Himachal Pradesh's rich and diverse cultural tapestry.

TRIBAL SOCIETY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh is home to several indigenous tribes, each with their distinct cultural practices, traditions, and occupational activities.

Some of the primary indigenous tribes in Himachal Pradesh are:

- **Kinnauris** - The Kinnauris inhabit the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh., also known as Khas, Khasia and

Kurpa, famously known as Negi.

- ❖ They traditionally engage in agriculture, growing crops such as apples, apricots, Chilgoza and grapes.
 - ❖ They also practice animal husbandry, rearing sheep, goats, and yaks.
- **Lahaulis** - The Lahaulis reside in the Lahaul and Spiti districts.
- ❖ Their livelihoods are centred around agriculture, along with animal husbandry. Lahaul is famous for its potatoes.
 - ❖ They also trade with Kangra, Chamba and Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Gaddis** - The Gaddis are primarily found in the Chamba and Kangra districts.
- ❖ They are known for their semi-nomadic lifestyle, practising animal husbandry and rearing sheep and goats along with agriculture.
 - ❖ Gaddis move with their livestock to higher altitudes in summer and descend to lower valleys in winter.
- **Swangla** - They live in Pattan Valley along the Chandra and Bhaga in Lahaul-Spiti district.
- ❖ The people of this community are basically agrarian. Some of them are engaged in trade. They export wheat, barley and Kuth (herb).
 - ❖ Many of them are well-educated and have joined govt services in the state.
- **Khampa** - They are believed to have migrated from Tibet and they are settled in Kullu, Chamba, Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti.
- ❖ They are a semi-nomadic and semi-agriculturalist community. They sell pashmina wool.
- **Gujjars** - The Gujjars are mostly found in Mandi, Bilaspur, Poanta-Sahib, Sirmaur, Kangra and Chamba districts.
- ❖ Gujjars are Hindus as well as Muslims.
 - ❖ Hindu Gujjars lead a settled life and practise agriculture whereas the majority of Muslim Gujjars are pastoral and they sell milk and milk products.
- **Pangwal** - They are residents of the Pangi Valley of Chamba. It is said that they had migrated from Lahore and lower Chenab Valley.
- ❖ They are mostly engaged in farming due to the scarcity of cereals they eat grains with chaff.
 - ❖ Every household possesses choori, a cross between yak and cow.
- **Hatti Tribe** - The Hattis are a close-knit community that got their name from their tradition of selling homegrown vegetables, crops, meat, wool etc. at small markets called 'haat' in towns.
- ❖ **Region** - The Hattis are settled mainly in Shillai, Sangrah, and Kamrau, which are known as the trans-Giri areas of Sirmaur district, bordering Jaunsar-Bawar hilly region of Uttarakhand's Garhwal region.
 - ❖ **Society** - The community follows a very rigid hierarchy. It is broadly divided into two categories of "Bhat and Khash" which enjoy higher status and "Badhois" in the lower ranking.

The community is governed by a traditional council called "Khumbli", which is similar to the 'khaps' of Haryana. Inter-caste marriages between these 2 castes are discouraged.

- ❖ **Culture** - The Hatti men traditionally wear a distinctive white headgear on ceremonial occasions.

Their famous dances are "Hathi Nach and Bhedaltu" performed during Budhi Diwali and other occasions.

Transition in Tribal Society of Himachal Pradesh:

- Transition in tribal societies is caused by various factors like social, cultural, economic and political. All these factors, individually or collectively, led to changes in tribal societies.

Reasons for transition in tribal societies are:

- **Occupational Change** - Modern Occupations Replacing the Traditional Ones.
 - ❖ E.g., the Tourism industry in the tribal area of HP grew quite significantly; commercial agriculture took the place of subsistence agriculture (Black **Cunim of Lahaul-Spiti got GI tag**); **Kinnaur's apple** is exported abroad.
- **Connectivity** - The construction of roads, rail lines, helipads, and tunnels led to the assimilation of tribal people into modern society.
 - ❖ E.g., the construction of the Atal Tunnel between Manali and Lahaul-Spiti; the **four-lane highway from Kiratpur to Lahaul-Spiti**, a total of 32 helipads in Lahaul-Spiti, Pangi, Bharmaur, and Kinnaur.
- **Modernization and Industrialization** – led to the movement of people from one place to another for favourable occupations.
 - ❖ E.g., the construction of Dam projects in Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur, and industrial development in Baddi and Una provide a pull factor for tribal people.
- **Govt. Policies** – TRIFED, Van Samridhi Jan Samridhi Yojana, GI tags to various tribal products like Kala Jeera, Woolen socks and gloves (Lahaul-Spiti), Scheme for Training and Proficiency in Computer Applications and Allied Activities, etc.
- **Education** – The increase in education penetration along with modernization and digitalization led to the change in economic and social changes in the tribal societies.
 - ❖ E.g., the percentage of literacy among the STs of the state increased from 65.5% in 2001 to 73.56% in 2011.

The impacts of this transition in Himachal Pradesh can be seen in many ways:

- **Positive Impacts**
 - ❖ **Increase in living standard** – E.g., increased Per Capita Income, higher literacy rate, low mortality and neo-natal death rate, higher wages, and higher elasticity of occupation.
 - ❖ **Sense of oneness** – Assimilation with the main population will enhance the unity and stability of the state.
 - ❖ **Shift in Livelihood** – commercialization of agriculture, more participation in Govt. and other collar jobs, etc.
 - ❖ **Political Participation** – more involvement of tribal people with the political system of state led to the development in the social, economic, and political sphere of tribal people.
- **Negative Impact**
 - ❖ **Land alienation** – due to new economic model or govt. policies.
E.g., the Jangi-Thopan Hydropower project dispute between the state and local people in Kinnaur.
 - ❖ **Cultural Identity Loss** – traditional customs, dialects, rituals, etc.
E.g., According to the UNESCO report, 4 dialects from Himachal Pradesh i.e., Baghati, Handuri, Pangvali, and Sirmaudi are on the verge of extinction.
 - ❖ **Environmental Degradation** – A sudden change in the economy from subsistence to commercial led to a more environmental burden. Further, the construction of Dams, roads, and tunnels put a great toll on the environment.

Way Forward:

- **Strengthened Land Rights** - Strengthen land tenure rights for tribal communities and ensure that they have legal protection for their land and resources.
 - ❖ Prioritize community-based land management to prevent land alienation and overexploitation.
 - ❖ **Preservation and promotion of extinction scripts** – e.g., the State started a training centre at Nahan to

conserve the Pabuchi script under the Guru-shishya yojana.

- ❖ **Efficient Environment Impact Assessment** – To prevent the negative impacts of development projects on the environment as well as the socio-economic conditions of the tribal people.

Creating awareness and advocating for tribal rights, both within the government and among the general population is essential to preserve Himachal Pradesh's rich tribal heritage while fostering progress and development for a harmonious and sustainable future.

FAMILY STRUCTURE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Though family is a universal institution, its structure or form varies from one society to another.

Classification of families on different bases is given below:

➤ **Based on Organisation:**

- ❖ **Nuclear Family** - The nuclear family is a unit composed of a husband, wife and their unmarried children.

Earlier nuclear families were not prevalent in HP, but gradually the new mode of employment, industrialization and outward migration of people paved the way for the nuclear family.

- ❖ **Extended / Joint Family** - The term extended family is used to indicate the combination of two or more nuclear families based on an extension of the parent-child relationships.

In Himachal, strictly speaking, it is a property-sharing unit. It is quite prevalent in villages and tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh.

➤ **Based on Authority:**

- ❖ **Patriarchal Family** - A patriarchal family is a type of family in which all authority belongs to the paternal side.

In this family, the eldest male or the father is the head of the family.

- ❖ **Matriarchal Family** - It is a form of family in which authority is centred on the wife or mother.

In tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh polyandry system is prevalent (one wife and more than one husband) which strengthens or makes women equally powerful to their husbands.

➤ **Based on Residence:**

- ❖ **Patrilocal Family** - When the wife goes to live with the husband's family, it is called the patrilocal family.
- ❖ **Matrilocal Family** - When the couple after marriage moves to live with the wife's family, such residence is called matrilocal.

In Himachal Pradesh "Ghar Jawain system" (the husband start living in the wife's house) is in practice, and it makes women's position stronger as compared to the husband's.

➤ **The Basis of Descent:**

- ❖ **Patrilineal Family** - When descent is traced through the father, it is called a patrilineal family. This is the common type of family prevalent today in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ **Matrilineal Family** - In this type of family descent is traced along the female line and inheritance of property also takes place along the female line of descent. Some people of tribal are matrilineal.

➤ **Based on Marriage:**

- ❖ **Monogamous Family** - A monogamous family consists of one husband and one wife. It is an ideal form of family prevalent widely.
- ❖ **Polygynous Family** - It is a type of family in which one man has more than one wife at a given time and

lives with them and their children together.

- ❖ **Polyandrous Family** - In this type of family one wife has more than one husband at a given time and she lives with all of them together or each of them in turn.

Polyandrous families are found among Kinnaur, Lahauli and other tribes and the Hatti community of Sirmaur district.

➤ **based on In-group and Out-group Affiliation:**

- ❖ based on in-group (Endogamous) and out-group (Exogamous) affiliation families, with the changes over time both types are prevalent in Himachal Pradesh.

Functions of the Family Institution:

➤ **Biological functions**

- ❖ It fulfils the desire of humans to procreate children and thus regulates the perpetuation of the human race.
- ❖ It is the family that rears the child, protects it, trains it and creates personality thus it performs a function of maintenance of its members.

➤ **Socialization of family members:**

- ❖ The social norms, moral values, beliefs and ideals of society are indoctrinated into its child to help the child shape their personality and make it a civilized adult to build a better society.

➤ **Psychological Function:**

- ❖ **Affection** - Family provides emotional satisfaction to its members through love, sympathy and affection.
- ❖ **Mental Security** - It is the family that provides the most intimate and dearest relationship for all its members that makes them mentally secure.

➤ **Economic function:**

- ❖ The family fulfils the basic economic needs of its members and supports them in financial crisis.
- ❖ There is no other institute than a family where the members feel free to ask for support during a financial crisis.

➤ **Educational Functions:**

- ❖ The child gets its basic and formal learning within the family. It provides training in social attitudes and habits which are important for an adult in their social life.

➤ **Religious functions:**

- ❖ Family is the centre for the religious training of its members as it inherits the religious teaching to the next generation.
- ❖ It teaches its members all religious values, ways of worship, and moral precepts.

➤ **The Recreational Functions:**

- ❖ It is in the form of various family functions such as reunions, hoisting relatives, playing indoor games, social gatherings, sports etc.

The Changes in the Family Structure of the People of Himachal Pradesh:

- With the changing times, the family structure of the people of Himachal Pradesh also transformed into a new version.

The various changes are:

- **Dilution in Patriarchy** – With time male dominance in decision-making has diluted over time. Women have also got a rightful position to contribute to decision-making in the family.

- **Joint family to Nuclear Family** – The joint family structure of the family has shifted toward the nuclear family due to modernisation, migration to other areas for employment opportunities, etc.
- **Weakened Kinship relationship** – A changing economic pattern of people and lack of attraction during various rituals and functions weaken the kinship relationship among the families.
- **Son preference** – With modernisation, education penetration, govt policies and awareness, the son preference mindset of people has become more equitable.
 - ❖ The same type of opportunities are provided to girl children as well, without any discrimination.
- **Property rights** – over time, the girl child also gets the right to own parental property on equal terms as the boy child.

Causes for the change in the family structure over time are:

- **Urbanization and Migration** - As urban centres have grown and opportunities for employment and education have expanded in cities, many individuals from Himachal Pradesh have migrated to urban areas in search of better prospects.
 - ❖ This has led to a shift from traditional joint family structures to nuclear families, as people often move away from their extended families.
- **Economic Changes** - The state has seen economic transformations with the growth of sectors like tourism, agriculture, and horticulture.
 - ❖ Economic growth can influence family structures by altering financial dependencies and leading to changes in traditional gender roles.
- **Social Mobility and Empowerment**: With increasing awareness about individual rights and empowerment, particularly among women, there has been a shift in traditional gender roles within families.
 - ❖ Women are now more likely to pursue education, careers, and decision-making roles, affecting the dynamics of family relationships.
- **Cultural Changes**: Traditional norms and values are evolving with time. Younger generations might prioritize personal choices and individual aspirations over adhering strictly to traditional family norms, leading to changes in marriage patterns, family size, and living arrangements.
- **Government Policies**: Social welfare programs, land reforms, and other government policies can have indirect effects on family structures by influencing factors such as land ownership patterns, inheritance laws, and social safety nets.
 - ❖ E.g., The amendment to the 51-year-old legislation 'Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act of 1972' will now allow adult daughters (married and unmarried) to have a separate independent unit of up to 150 bighas of land, bringing them an equal position as sons.

As families continue to evolve, they will remain the building blocks of society, shaping the lives and aspirations of generations to come. The balance between preserving tradition and embracing change will be critical in ensuring the well-being and prosperity of Himachal Pradesh's families.

KINSHIP SYSTEM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

The kinship system refers to a set of persons recognised as relatives either by a blood relationship or by a marriage relationship.

- Kinship is the socially recognized relationships between people in a culture, who are either held to be biologically related or given the status of relatives by marriage, adoption, or other rituals.

Types of Kinship:

Kinship is a subject of debate among sociologists and anthropologists who categorize it into three primary types:

- **Consanguineal Kinship** - This type is rooted in blood relations, encompassing the connections between parents, children, and siblings.
 - ❖ It's the fundamental and most widespread form of kinship, involving direct biological relationships.
- **Affinal Kinship** - Affinal kinship is based on marriage bonds. It includes the kinship between spouses, highlighting the significance of marital relationships in kinship systems.
- **Social Kinship** - Schneider's perspective adds a third category, emphasizing that not all forms of kinship are birth-related (consanguineal) or marriage-based (affinal).
 - ❖ Social kinship recognizes that individuals, unrelated by blood or marriage, can still have a kinship bond.
 - ❖ This can occur through shared religious affiliations, social organizations like service clubs, or within close-knit rural or tribal communities where social connections function as kinship ties.

The Traditional Kinship Systems among the Tribes of Himachal Pradesh: Top of Form

Traditional kinship systems within Himachal Pradesh's tribal communities revolve around lineage, clan, and extended family structures, serving as the bedrock for defining social roles, marriage customs, inheritance, and resource distribution.

- **Clans and Lineages** - Many tribes in Himachal Pradesh are structured into clans or lineages.
 - ❖ These affiliations determine an individual's social identity, roles, and responsibilities.
 - ❖ Marrying within the same clan is often forbidden, promoting exogamous practices (marrying outside one's clan).
- **Extended Families** - Extended families are pivotal units within the kinship systems of Himachal Pradesh's tribes.
 - ❖ These families comprise multiple generations residing together, including grandparents, parents, children, and at times, more distant relatives.
 - ❖ They offer essential social support, resource sharing, and collective decision-making.
- **Marriage Traditions** - Marriage customs among Himachal Pradesh tribes are profoundly influenced by their kinship systems.
 - ❖ As mentioned earlier, exogamy is a prevalent practice, fostering alliances and social cohesion between distinct clans.
 - ❖ In some Kinnaur district tribes, polyandry was historically observed, wherein one wife had multiple husbands.

Changes in the Traditional Kinship System of Himachal Pradesh:

- **Nuclear Family** - Due to various factors, in joint family system of H.P. seeing a transition to a nuclear family structure.
- **Inter-Caste Marriages** - Modernisation, job profile, education, etc. led to changes like the traditional marriage system in the society of the state.
- **Gender Roles** - Changing gender roles and expectations are redefining the roles of men and women within families, impacting kinship practices.
- **Kinship Gathering and Festivals** - Over time, the traditional gathering practices among kin have either evolved into formalities or faded away altogether in practice.

Factors Responsible for Changes in the Traditional Kinship System of Himachal Pradesh:

- **Modernization** - As societies modernize and urbanize, traditional kinship ties weaken, as individuals are exposed to different cultural norms and lifestyles.

- **Education and Employment** - Education and employment opportunities outside the tribal communities lead to a dispersal of family members, impacting the cohesiveness of extended families, i.e., a shift from joint families to nuclear families.
- **Legal Changes** - Changes in inheritance laws and property rights, often influenced by national and state laws and policies, alter traditional kinship dynamics.
 - ❖ E.g., The amendment to the 51-year-old legislation 'Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act of 1972' which will now allow adult daughters (married and unmarried) to have a separate independent unit of up to 150 bighas of land, bringing them an equal position as sons.

Reservation of seats for STs (especially women) in Panchayati Raj Institutions and legislative assemblies, further changes the dynamics of decision-making within the kinship.

- **Communication and Transportation** - Improved communication and transportation have led to increased interaction with people from other regions, potentially influencing marriage practices and social norms.
 - ❖ E.g., the opening of the Atal Tunnel leads to more interaction and movement of tribal people from other regions of the country.
- **Social and Economic Changes** - Economic shifts, such as the transition from subsistence agriculture to other forms of livelihood, can also impact traditional kinship structures and values.
 - ❖ E.g., the people of Lahaul-Spiti tribes are increasingly employed in service industries such as tourism, and public and private sectors, which in turn affects their traditional kinship relationships.

In this evolving landscape, the preservation and adaptation of Himachal Pradesh's rich kinship systems remain vital, as they represent a unique cultural heritage that deserves recognition and protection.

MARRIAGE SYSTEM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh being a multicultural state, practices various types of marriages as given below:

- **Marriages Based on Social Norms:**
 - ❖ **Endogamy** - Endogamy is the social rule that requires an individual to marry within a specific culturally defined social group of which he/she is a member.
 - ❖ E.g., practised in some tribes of H.P.
 - ❖ **Exogamy** - Exogamy is the social rule that requires an individual to marry outside a specific culturally defined social group of which she/he is a member

Most common marriage practised in H.P.

- ❖ **Common Marriages or Arrange Marriage:**

Biah - It is a regular form of marriage in accordance with "Shastras".

This form of marriage termed "Brahma marriage", is the superior form of marriage and is largely practised in Himachal Pradesh.

Janeknag or Janetang - This is a type of arranged marriage, practised by the people of Kinnaur.

Kawachi Biah - It means arranged but performed very briefly.

Marriage by Eloping:

- ❖ **Jhindphook or Jarar Phuki** - A peculiar form of marriage among tribes of Kangana and Chamba.

Marriage takes place without the approval of the parents.

The couple walks around a burning bundle of brushwood in the jungle seven times to complete their marriage.

- ❖ **Dam-Chalshish** - In this form of matrimony, the couple flees together, and the father of the groom dispatches a matchmaker (Mazomi) to the residence of the bride in an attempt to persuade them with offerings.

They agree and the ritual of marriage is followed.

➤ **Marriage by Kidnaping:**

- ❖ **Darosh or Dab Dhab** – It is a tribal system prevalent in Kinnaur. In this, a girl is forcefully dragged away from a fairground of a festival.
- ❖ After this, the boy's father went to the girl's father and sought their apology for the outrage committed by his son.
- ❖ Afterwards, they ask the boy's father to adjust the payment known as "Izzat," which is settled on the spot.
- ❖ Within a month of resolving this, the boy and girl's marriage is arranged. The boy, along with a relative and two women, escorts the girl to her home.
- ❖ **Hari or Har** – In the Kinnaur area, it is known as khuchis or Khutu Kima.

When a boy kidnaps a girl or a girl elopes with her fiancé, it is called Har.

➤ **Informal Marriages:**

- ❖ **Jhanjhrara or Paraina** – It is a designated informal marriage.

In this, no religious ceremony is performed like seven steps by the bride and groom jointly around the consecrated fire. These are mainly popular among low-caste people.

➤ **Marriage by paying money:**

- ❖ **Reet Marriage** – This type of marriage takes place when an already married woman wants to leave her husband and marry another man.
- ❖ The husband charges "Reet money" from the husband-to-be and allows her to go with the man of her choice.

➤ **Widow remarriage:**

- ❖ **Topi Lana** – It is a type of widow remarriage, performed by the Pangwal tribe of the state.

➤ **Marriage by Exchange:**

- ❖ **Batta-Satta Marriage** - Bata satta includes inter-familiar exchange. No money is exchanged but marriageable boys and girls are exchanged.

This marriage system is prevalent in Gaddis.

It is a type of endogamy marriage i.e., marriage within its own social group.

Socio-Economic Reasons Behind the Increasing Trend of Pompousness and Exhibitionism in Marriages in the Himachal Society:

➤ **Economic reasons:**

- ❖ **Economic prosperity** – Due to the increase in income level, people have more money to spend on weddings.
- ❖ **Growth of the wedding industry** – Earlier family members and relatives jointly arranged and conducted the wedding function but with the economic prosperity wedding industry also came into existence which emphasized expensive and lavish weddings.

➤ **Social reasons:**

- ❖ **Societal Burden** – To fulfil the expectations of society and relatives, it pressurized the person to invest more in weddings.

E.g., today along with dham, other food items are also served by people to their guests.

- ❖ **"Dekha-Dekhi" system** - Weddings have become another form of competition among people and hence they try to make their weddings as lavish as possible.
- ❖ **Influence of Social Media** – Reels, vlogs, videos, etc. on various social media platforms influence the

expectations of people toward the standard of a wedding. And it led to a grand and expensive marriage.

Himachal Pradesh, with its rich cultural heritage, can find a way to celebrate the sanctity of marriage while avoiding excessive pomp and exhibitionism. Ultimately, the significance of marriage should not be overshadowed by the extravagance of the ceremony.

CASTES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

In Himachal Pradesh, a robust caste system prevails, with individuals categorized into different castes based on their birth within specific clans. These castes are further subdivided into Gotras or sub-castes.

Various Castes of the H.P. are:

- **Koli** – Kolis are thought to have originated from the descendants of Kanets who were once marginalized.
 - ❖ In the Shivalik Hills, Kolis identify themselves as New Rajputs or Kshatriyas.
- **Chamar** – The traditional leatherworkers are referred to as Chamars, and this community is prevalent throughout Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ They venerate 'Sidh Chano' as their community deity, known as 'Garha Devta'.
 - ❖ Chamars are recognized by various names, including Mochi, Ramdasis, and Ravidasi.
- **Battarha** – The Battarhas are occupationally stone – workers or dressers/breakers. They are commonly known as 'Mistri' or 'Rajgir' or 'Raj' or 'Sangatrash'.
- **Sippi** – These are described as a 'weave of the Gaddi tribe' and virtually the same as Hali. They are mostly found in Bharmour, district Chamba.
- **Sunar** – The Sunar primarily serves as the village jeweller. Additionally, they function as moneylenders, accepting jewellery as collateral and providing cash advances against it.

The Soni, Kapila, Jargar, and Zargar are alternative names for this community.

- **Kumhars (Potters)** – Kumhar is the man who makes earthen pots. These pots are used in the village to store the grains. Some of their got/gotras are Shandil, Kashab and Bharapdariye.
- **Lohar (Blacksmith)** – The Lohar is one of the village menials, receiving customary dues in the form of a share of the produce, in return for which he makes and mends all the iron implements of agriculture.
- **Brahmin** – The Brahmin from one of the largest social groups in India. The Brahmins have their 'gotra' associated with various Rishis of ancient times.
 - ❖ They consider themselves descendants of seven Rishi ancestors, namely Jamdagni, Gautama, Bhardwaj, Attri, Agatsaya, Kashyapa and Vashista.
- **Rajput** – Rajputs, historically the primary warrior and ruling community in Himachal Pradesh, are believed to have Brahmin origins.
 - ❖ The Rajput community is structured into six status groups, encompassing ranks such as Raja, Rajput, Mian, and Thakur, and including first and second-grade Ranas and Rathis.

Factors Responsible for Changes in the Castes System of the State:

- **Economic Development** - Economic progress and modernization drive urbanization and education access, potentially weakening the caste system.
- **Education** - Improved access to education can empower individuals from lower castes to break free from traditional occupations associated with their caste and pursue professions of their choice.
 - ❖ This can lead to a shift in societal perceptions and provide opportunities for social mobility.
- **Legal and Government Initiatives** - Various laws and government policies in India, including Himachal Pradesh,

have been aimed at promoting social equality and reducing caste-based discrimination.

- ❖ Affirmative action measures, such as reservation quotas in educational institutions and government jobs for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), have been implemented to uplift historically marginalized communities.
- **Urbanization** - Urban areas tend to be more heterogeneous in terms of population mix.
 - ❖ City life can make people less focused on their caste identity and more inclined to interact with people of different castes.
- **Inter-Caste Marriages** - As society becomes more progressive, inter-caste marriages are gradually becoming more acceptable.
 - ❖ These marriages can contribute to the breaking down of caste barriers and fostering social integration.
- **Media and Communication** - The spread of media and communication platforms can expose people to diverse viewpoints and information, challenging traditional beliefs and promoting social harmony.
- **Cultural Changes** - As societies evolve, cultural norms and values can also change. Younger generations may be less inclined to adhere strictly to caste-based norms and practices, leading to a gradual transformation of the caste system.

Polarization of Caste System in Himachal Pradesh:

- The politicization of caste is the practice of using caste as a tool of politics and increasing the role of caste-based politics in India.

Various factors contribute to the politicization of caste:

- **Poverty and Discrimination** – Even seven decades after independence, some parts of Himachal Pradesh persist with archaic caste practices, which unfairly deprive lower-caste individuals of vital resources and opportunities.
 - ❖ E.g. no entry in the kitchen of higher caste, Separate wells or water bodies for lower caste, separate rows in dham (serving foods in community functions) for lower caste, etc.
- **Vote Bank Politics** – Today many parties' foundation of politics is based on caste issues which use the anger and frustration of lower castes to fetch their votes.
- **Education and awareness** – With the growth of literacy in India caste-consciousness of the members has been increasing to safeguard their interests.
- **Emergence of Caste-based pressure or political groups** – These groups are playing a significant role in politicizing the issues of specific castes.
 - ❖ E.g. Himchal Rajput Sabha, Himachal Jaat Kalyan sabha, Anusuchit Jati-Janjati Kalyan Sangh.
- **Reservation Politics** – Reservations, which were started by the constitutional makers to promote the welfare and the notion of equality among the people of the nation have become a tool of caste-based politics.
 - ❖ E.g. Issue of Schedule Tribe status to the haati community of Sirmaur.

Roles of various castes in the politics of Himachal Pradesh are:

- **Rajput dominance** – Being the largest caste group in the state, Rajputs have been able to rule consistently ever since Himachal Pradesh came into being in 1948. Out of six Chief Ministers, five were Rajputs.
- **SC-ST communities hold the key to success** - An estimated 30.34 per cent population in the Sirmaur district belongs to Scheduled Castes followed by 29 per cent in Mandi, 28 per cent in Solan and Kullu each, and 26 per cent in the capital Shimla.
 - ❖ Both Congress and the BJP are trying to woo the tribal and Dalit voters. A hint of their importance can be seen from the fact that the BJP had recently sent Dalit academician Dr. Sikandar Kumar to Rajya Sabha from the state, and in 2020 the party had appointed Suresh Kashyap – a Dalit, as the state president.

- **Role of Brahmins** – According to the 2011 Census, around 51 per cent of the population of the state comprises upper castes, of which 33 per cent are Rajput and 18 per cent are Brahmin.
 - ❖ Brahmins have been in the role of kingmakers in Himachal but could never rule barring Shanta Kumar.

In summary, caste dynamics continue to influence politics in Himachal Pradesh, highlighting the need for a balanced approach to address caste-related issues and promote social equality and harmony.