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AWSM NOTES

Himachal Pradesh

Politics and Governance (GS-II)

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ANALYSIS: SYLLABUS AND PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

1. National Movement with special reference to Praja Mandal movements in Himachal Pradesh, 1848-1948. (Covered in GS1)

2. Administrative History and Politics

- ❖ Reorganization and politics of statehood.
- ❖ Vishal Himachal or Merger of Punjab and PEPSU Districts.
- ❖ Development of political parties
- ❖ Their support base and performance
- ❖ Sub-regionalism
- ❖ Pressure groups

1. Trace the journey of Himachal Pradesh from Chief Commissioner's Province in 1948 to full statehood in 1971. (2016, 20 marks)
2. Analyse the role of the Legislative assembly of Himachal Pradesh between 1968 and 1971 in getting the statehood. (2017, 4 marks)
3. Describe how state reorganization in past has affected the contemporary politics of Himachal Pradesh. (2019, 4 marks)
4. Describe Himachal Pradesh's journey to become democratic state. (2019, 4 marks)
5. Discuss the impact of linguistic organization of Punjab on the politics of Himachal Pradesh. (2020, 4 marks)
6. Describe the journey of Himachal Pradesh to become a democratic state. (2021, 4 marks)
7. Discuss how language reorganization has impacted the politics of Himachal Pradesh (2022, 4 Marks)
8. What has been the performance of Congress and the BJP in the 2012 H.P. Vidhan Sabha elections in terms of votes polled and seats won? (2016, 4 marks)
9. Critically examine the role of women in the politics of Himachal Pradesh. (2018, 4 marks)
10. Examine the role of socio-economic factors for the birth of two party system in Himachal Pradesh. (2019, 4 marks)
11. Give reason that why politics in Himachal Pradesh largely remained **bipolar** game. (2019 4 marks)
12. How has the pressure- groups emerged in the political system of the Himachal Pradesh? (2017, 4 marks)
13. Discuss how cultural divide has influenced the politics in Himachal Pradesh. (2018, 4marks)
14. Describe the phenomenon of upper area and lower area politics in Himachal Pradesh. (2018, 8 marks)
15. Discuss how 'cap politics' represent identity politics in Himachal Pradesh? (2020 4 marks)
16. Discuss the impact of Cultural divide on the politics of Himachal Pradesh. (2020, 4 marks)
17. Describe the "New" and "Old" area politics in Himachal Pradesh. (2021, 4 marks)
18. Discuss how cultural divide has impacted the politics of Himachal Pradesh. (2022, 4 marks)
19. Discuss about the role of socio economic factors in the evolution of bipolar politics in Himachal Pradesh. (2022, 4Marks)

3. Governance in Himachal Pradesh

- ❖ Structure, organization and functioning of Statutory, Regulatory and various Quasi- Judicial bodies in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The Himachal Pradesh Public Service Guarantee Act 2011
- ❖ Right to Information Act, 2005 and rules made thereunder by the Himachal Pradesh Government.
- ❖ Administrative reforms for effective public service delivery in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Implementation of 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments in Himachal Pradesh. Issues and Challenges.
- ❖ Programmes and policies for the welfare of differently-abled persons, women and children in Himachal Pradesh.

1. Under the H.P. Lokayukta Act of 1983, what are the eligibility conditions for the appointment of Lokayukta? (2016, 4 marks)
2. Assess the working of Panchayati Raj institutions in Himachal Pradesh. (2022,4 Marks)
3. The implementation of Himachal Pradesh Public Service Gurantee act ,2011 has led to the empowerment of the citizens and fixing of accountability of Government officials in the state". Discuss. (2018,20 marks)
4. What are the major provisions of Himachal Pradesh Public Service Guarantee Act,2011. (2022 ,8 marks)
5. On what grounds can penalties be imposed by the H.P State Information Commissioner on the Public Information Officers of the State? (2016, 8 marks)
6. Which problems are confronted for the implementation of Right to Information act, 2005 in Himachal Pradesh? (2017, 4 marks)
7. What activities have been completed in H.P. under e-District Projects upto 2016-17 fiscal? (2016, 8 marks)
8. Critically evaluate various administrative reform measures initiated by governments for improving the service delivery to its citizens in the State of Himachal Pradesh. (2019,20 marks)
9. For the village level functionaries of which department in Himachal Pradesh, it is mandatory to attend the meetings of the Gram Sabha in whose jurisdiction they are posted? (2016)(4 marks)
10. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 has been implemented in true letter and spirit in the State of Himachal Pradesh. Comment. (2020, 20 marks)
11. Discuss the problems faced by Urban Local bodies in Himachal Pradesh after the implementation of 74th constitutional amendment. (2022, 8 marks)
12. What help is being provided in H.P. under the Mukhyamantri Bal Uddhar Yojana to the children who need care, protection and rehabilitation? (2016, 4 marks)
13. Which policies are made for the welfare of differently- abled persons in Himachal Pradesh? (2017, 4 marks)
14. Women empowerment is still a distant dream, despite the several efforts made by the Himachal Pradesh govt for the upliftment of women. Do you agree with this statement? (2021, 20 marks)
15. What do you know about the Beti hai Anmol Scheme of Himachal Pradesh Government. (2022, 4 marks)

16. Issues, Policies and Welfare

- ❖ Cyber crime and drug menace – mechanism to detect and control it in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Enactments made by Himachal Pradesh Government to protect and promote the interests of agrarian society.
- ❖ Various policies framed by the Government of Himachal Pradesh for the socioeconomic development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the State.
- ❖ Tribal welfare administration, Tribal sub plan and Single line administration in Himachal Pradesh.

1. How does the state help in combating the Cyber crime? (2017,4 marks)
2. Analyse the enactments made by the Himachal Pradesh Government for the protection and welfare of the interests of the Agrarian Society? (2017, 20 marks)
3. What are the main activities of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) in Himachal Pradesh? (2016,4 marks)
4. Write a brief note on the impact of legal protection to Scheduled Castes in Himachal Pradesh. (2018, 4 marks)

QUESTION BANK

1. Elaborate on the significance of the Praja Mandal in the context of the Indian freedom movement.
2. Examine how the linguistic reorganization of Punjab has influenced the political landscape of Himachal Pradesh.
3. Trace the history of Political Parties in HP before the merger of Punjab Hill states in 1966.
4. What was the stand of 'Jan Sang' on the merger of Punjab hill states into Himachal Pradesh as far as state reorganization was concerned?
5. What do you know about Vishal Himachal Samiti? Discuss the various challenges faced by Greater Himachal movement.
6. Briefly describe the unprecedented political development took place in the politics of Himachal Pradesh in 1998-99.
7. Why third party other than congress and BJP couldn't emerged in the politics of Himachal Pradesh? Give suitable reasons.
8. What is the politics of sub regionalism and what were the reasons for development of this politics in HP? Discuss while putting light on the current status of sub regionalism in state politics./ Do you agree that politics of sub-regionalism in Himachal Pradesh seems to be ended?
9. Describe the role of land reforms in politics of sub regionalism.
10. Analyse the role of Pressure groups in the politics of Himachal Pradesh.
11. Critically examine the role of women in the politics of Himachal Pradesh.
12. Examine Dr Y S Parmar's contribution to the establishment of Himachal Pradesh.
13. Write a note on the "State Finance Commission of Himachal Pradesh".
14. Compose a brief overview of the "Himachal Pradesh State Information Commission".
15. What are the key features of HP Public Services Guarantee Act 2011?
16. Critically evaluate the measures taken by HP government in the direction of effective delivery of services.
17. What are the major problems faced by HP Government in implementing Right to Information Act?
18. Describe the Himachal Pradesh's journey towards a successful Panchayati Raj System. Briefly discuss the features of Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj act 1994.
19. What steps has been taken by HP government in recent years to make governance more responsible and accountable?
20. What help is being provided in HP, under major schemes to children's who need care, protection and rehabilitation?
21. Analyse the administrative reforms made by HP government for the welfare of specially abled citizens of the state.
22. Implementation of various policies, schemes, and programmes of HP government has led the empowerment of women in the state. "Discuss".
23. Critically evaluate the existing legal framework and government programs for persons with disabilities in Himachal Pradesh.
24. Analyse the challenges faced by marginalised section and various initiatives taken by Himachal Pradesh government for their socio economic development.
25. Discuss various indicators of Himachal Pradesh given by the 5th National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in comparison to National Statistics?
26. How govt of Himachal Pradesh empowering women by promoting Self-Help Groups.
27. Write a note about Mukhya Mantri Sukh Ashray Yojana.
28. What are the roles and responsibilities fulfilled by the Secretary of a Gram Panchayat?.
29. What are the various causes of the sub-optimal performance of the Panchayati Raj Institution in H.P.?
30. Describe different types of cybercrimes, for which People of HP are vulnerable.
31. Drug's paddlers are being arrested on a daily basis in Himachal Pradesh, on your opinion what could be the major reasons for their movement within state?
32. What is Single Line Administration and how this system work in Himachal Pradesh? Critically evaluate.
33. What do you know about Tribal Sub Plan and its benefits for Himachal Pradesh? What steps has been taken by HP government for the economic development of Tribal population of the state?

34. What are the major schemes and programs have been started in recent years for the welfare of schedule caste in Himachal Pradesh?
35. Government of HP is coming up with a policy to allow controlled cultivation of Cannabis in the state. what could be the pros and cons for this move of HP government?
36. Discuss about the 'Cyber Crime Police Station' in Himachal Pradesh.
37. What do you know about Aryabhata Geo-informatics & Space Application Centre (AGiSAC) and its benefits for Himachal Pradesh.
38. What are the benefits of having special category status to Himachal Pradesh?
39. Uncontrolled tourism could be seen as a cause for the problem of drug menace in HP. Discuss.
40. Write down major provisions of the HP Tenancy and Land Reform Act of 1972.
41. Give an account of the Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1972.
42. What specific legislations or enactments has the Himachal Pradesh government implemented to protect the interests of the agrarian society?

REORGANIZATION OF STATE

Before attaining full statehood, Himachal Pradesh underwent multiple reorganizations in its journey to become the 18th state within the Union of India.

The following steps contributed to the attainment of full statehood for Himachal Pradesh.

- **Origin of State** - After independence, Himachal came into existence as a Chief Commissioner's Province on 15 April 1948 after a long political struggle.
 - ❖ 26 Shimla Hill states and 4 Punjab Hill States, a total of 30, were merged to form Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ Chamba, Mandi, Sirmaur and Mahasu were created on 15th April 1948.
 - ❖ N.C. Mehta became the first Chief Commissioner of H.P.
- **Part C State** - Indian parliament created "Part C" states in 1951 and Himachal became a Part-C state with a legislative assembly of 36 members.
 - ❖ Major General MS Himat Singh assumed the office of the first Lt. Governor of Pradesh.
 - ❖ The Legislative Assembly was elected in 1952 and Dr. Y S Parmar was elected as the first Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh.
- **Merger of Bilaspur** - On 1st July 1954, Bilaspur became part of H.P. as its 5th district.
 - ❖ Raja Anand Chand of Bilaspur was against the merger of Bilaspur with H.P.
 - ❖ He also founded the Swatantrta Party for achieving his goals, but failed.
- **H.P. Became Union Territory** - On the recommendation of the State Reorganization Commission, headed by Fazl Ali, it was decided to merge H.P. with Punjab, but with efforts of Dr Y S Parmar, Fazl Ali used his veto and favoured the formation of Himachal Pradesh as a separate state.
 - ❖ Thus Himachal Pradesh became a union territory on 1 November 1956.
 - ❖ The Legislative Council dissolved and a 43-member territorial council was established for Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ Raja Bajrang Bahadur became the first Lt. Governor and Thakur Karam Singh became Chairperson of the territorial Council.
- **Formation of Kinnaur** - On May 1, 1960, Kinnaur was separated from Chinni Tehsil, and 14 villages from Rampur Tehsil were incorporated into it.
- **Appointment of Sen Committee** - The Committee was appointed to look after the loopholes of the political system in the state and on the recommendation of the committee territorial council was replaced with a legislative assembly.
 - ❖ YS Parmar was sworn as Chief Minister on 1st July 1963.
- **Formation of Hukum Singh Committee** - This committee was formed to evaluate the reorganization of Punjab on 28 September 1965.
 - ❖ The committee recommended forming Haryana as a separate state and merger of Punjab Hill areas to Himachal Pradesh.
- **Merger of Punjab Hill States** - After the reorganization of Punjab on 1st July 1966, Kangra, Shimla, Kullu, Lahual-spiti Nalagarh, Dalhousie, and Una were merged with H.P.
- **Full Statehood** - On 18 December 1970, the State of Himachal Pradesh Act was passed by Parliament, and the new state came into being on 25 January 1971.
 - ❖ Himachal became the 18th state of the Indian Union with Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar as its first chief minister of the state of Himachal Pradesh.

Role of Various Political Parties and Committees in Formation of Himachal Pradesh into a full-fledged State:

- **Praja Mandal and Congress Party Unite** - In the post-independence era, the Praja Mandal initiated the “Suket Stayagrarah” movement, advocating for the amalgamation of princely states.
 - ❖ This effort led to the signing of a merger agreement. On April 15, 1948, Himachal Pradesh was established, combining thirty small and large hill states as Chief Commissioner’s provinces.
- **Formation of “Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee”** - Following independence, various Praja Mandals were consolidated to create the “Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee.”
 - ❖ Their aim was to shape Himachal Pradesh’s identity and preserve culture, and ethos while preserving its individuality.
 - ❖ When the Indian constitution was being formulated, Himachal Pradesh initially became a Part C state.
 - ❖ In 1954, Bilaspur was merged into Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ The “Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee” persistently advocated for the inclusion of Kullu and Kangra into the state.
- **Formation of “Vishal Himachal Samiti”** - In 1954, political parties such as the Communists, Praja Socialist Party, and some Congress members, along with leaders from Una and Kangra, formed the Vishal Himachal Samiti.
 - ❖ They aimed to protect Himachal Pradesh’s identity and sought to merge adjoining hill areas of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.
- **Efforts of “Himachal Pradesh Prant Sabha” and “All Himalayan People’s Association”** - These organizations were established to work towards the merger of hilly areas of Punjab with Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ The All India Linguistic States Conference (AILSC) was also founded with a similar goal.
- **Role of the “Greater Himachal Pradesh Committee”** - The Greater Himachal Pradesh Committee, representing people from Chamba to Tehri Garhwal, feared Himachal’s merger with Punjab.
 - ❖ They sought not only separation but also a larger Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ Committee members included individuals from Kangra, Pathankot, Una, Kullu (Punjab), Kohistan (PEPSU), Garwal, Mussoorie (Uttar Pradesh), and prominent leaders from Himachal Pradesh.
- **Influence of the Fazal Ali Commission** - While some members suggested merging Himachal Pradesh with Punjab, Fazal Ali recommended keeping it as a separate entity under direct central control.
 - ❖ In 1956, Himachal Pradesh became a union territory based on Fazal Ali’s recommendations, replacing the state legislative assembly with a territorial council.
- **“Negotiating Committee of Himachal Vidhan Sabha”** - A committee was formed by the Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, led by Krishan Chander, to pressure their demands for a democratic rule and a separate state with a full-fledged Legislative Assembly.
- **Recommendations of the Ashok Sen Committee** - Headed by Ashok Sen, the committee recommended a democratic setup for Himachal Pradesh, which led to the reinstatement of a popular government with a Legislative Assembly in 1963, under the leadership of Y.S. Parmar.
- **Sardar Hukam Singh Committee** - In 1965, a Parliamentary Committee, led by Sardar Hukam Singh, recommended the integration of Kangra and Shimla districts into Himachal Pradesh based on cultural and linguistic similarities, as well as to address the concerns of exploitation of hill people.
- **Punjab Boundary Commission** - The Indian government recognized the state of Punjab on linguistic grounds and constituted the Punjab Boundary Commission in 1966.
 - ❖ On the recommendation of, the committee, Punjab Hill States merged with Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ In 1966, Kangra, Kullu, Lahaul Spiti and Shimla were created and merged with H.P.
- **Himachal Pradesh Attains Statehood** - On January 25, 1971, Himachal Pradesh finally achieved full statehood.

- ❖ This was a result of prolonged efforts by the Congress and various political parties in Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The State of Himachal Pradesh Act, of 1970, declared Himachal Pradesh as the 18th state of the Indian Union.

Impact of the Linguistic Reorganizations of Punjab on the Political Framework of Himachal Pradesh:

- **Extended New Constituencies** – The merger of Kangra, Kullu, Lahaul-Spiti and districts of Shimla into old Himachal provided new constituencies to the state.
- **Emergence of New Leadership** – As a result of the merger, new leadership from the Kangra Hill State, represented by Jan Sangh, emerged within the state to challenge the established leadership of old Himachal.
- **Politics of Sub-Regionalism** – Due to historical, economic and social distinctiveness in the Old and the New Himachal gave rise to the politics of sub-regionalism.
- **Aligning of Pressure Groups** – The Laghu Zamindar Sabha, formed in 1973, aligned with Jan Sangh and later Janta Party due to mutual interests.
 - ❖ When the Janta government took power in Himachal, it raised orchard taxes but lowered agricultural taxes.
 - ❖ Further, the Apple Growers Association came up in the politics of H.P. in 1983 and associated itself with Congress.
 - ❖ Hence, both regions lean towards Congress or BJP to secure their economic interests.
- **Two-Party System** – Due to the formation of two distinctive blocks in the state on political grounds, restricted the emergence of third parties (apart from Congress and BJP) into state politics.
- **Strengthened the Demand for Statehood** – The amalgamation of Punjab Hill States into Himachal Pradesh significantly bolstered the confidence of the state government, political parties and its residents, sparking an enthusiastic demand for complete statehood.

In conclusion, Himachal Pradesh's journey to full statehood was a complex and dynamic process, marked by the efforts of various stakeholders and guided by political, historical, and regional considerations.

POLITICAL PARTIES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

After the formation of Himachal Pradesh on 15 April 1948, many political parties emerged in the state.

These parties are:

- **Praja Mandal (later constituted as the Congress Committee)** - In the elections to the 36-member Legislative Assembly, the Indian National Congress secured 24 seats, leading to Y.S. Parmar being sworn in as the first Chief Minister.
- **Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party** - During the 1952 Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections, this party contested 22 seats and managed to win 3.
- **Swatantra Party** - This party initially opposed the merger of Bilaspur with Himachal. However, Raja Anand Chand eventually agreed to the merger in 1954, which held historical and administrative significance for the state.
- **Communist Party** - The Communist Party of Himachal Pradesh was established in January 1953 and gained state party status in 1961.
 - ❖ They gained support from the poor peasants and working class due to their ideological considerations.
- **Bharatiya Jan Sangh** - Founded in October 1951, this party initially struggled during the first three general elections and later evolved into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).
- **Lok Raj Party** - This party, also known as the People's Rule Party of Himachal Pradesh, was formed in the early 1970s under the leadership of Thakur Sen Negi and J.B.L. Khachi.
 - ❖ In the 1972 state assembly elections, it fielded candidates in 16 out of 68 constituencies, with two candidates winning.

- **Himachal Vikas Congress** - Founded by Pt. Sukh Ram after splitting from the Indian National Congress, and later HVC eventually merged with the Congress in 2004.
- **Loktantra Morcha** - Registered as a political party in 2003, this party is led by Mohinder Singh Chaudhary, a former member of Himachal Vikas Congress.
- **Himachal Swabhiman Party** - Founded by former BJP ideologue Govindacharya on August 10, 2011. This party participated in assembly elections but did not win any seats, receiving only 6,571 votes.
- **Himachal Lokhit Party** - This party was created by some dissidents of the BJP just before the 2012 Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly election.
 - ❖ Maheshwari Singh served as its president, and senior leaders like Mahender Nath Sofat and Shayama Sharma joined the party.
 - ❖ Half of the party merged with the BJP in 2016, and the remaining members later joined the Aam Aadmi Party.

Reasons for the Failure of Any Non-Congress, Non-BJP Party to Emerge in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Old and New Area Politics** - In Himachal Pradesh, the Congress and BJP have strongholds in specific regions.
 - ❖ The Praja Mandal played a pivotal role in the democratization of the Shimla Hill States and the merger of princely states into the Indian Union. It later transformed into the Congress Committee, advocating for Himachal's statehood under YS Parmar.
 - ❖ During the freedom struggle, Jan Sangh played an essential role in Punjab politics.
 - ❖ These historical connections restrict the emergence of a third front.
- **No New Face** - In Himachal Pradesh, there hasn't been a case where a fresh entrant, similar to the AAP in Delhi and Punjab, someone not affiliated with either of the established parties, has entered the political arena and established a new party.
 - ❖ All those who made attempts either separated from the dominating parties or offered nothing new to the people.
 - ❖ E.g., TS Negi, Vijai Singh Mankotia, Sukh Ram or Maheshwar Singh. They all left their parent party for personal interests and came back after some time.
- **Politically Smart Electors** - The voters in this region display a high level of political astuteness, a quality that can be linked to the elevated literacy rate and rising per capita income.
- **Negligible factors of caste or religion** - Hindus constitute around 95% of Himachal Pradesh population, which is why there is very little scope for the emergence of political parties based on religion.
 - ❖ In Himachal Pradesh castes like Brahmin, Rajput, and SC support both the political parties BJP and Congress equally.
- **Anti-Incumbency** - In Himachal Pradesh, a trend of anti-incumbency often leads to a change in the government every five years. This cycle hinders the formation of a stable voter base and discourages political revolution.
- **The Strong Employee Force** - The substantial presence of a robust workforce has also played a significant role in Himachal Pradesh's political landscape.
 - ❖ With approximately 2.35 lakh employees, their considerable influence has consistently shaped the dynamics, leading successive governments to cater to their interests.
- **Famous Political Leaders** - Both, the Late Shri Virbhadra Singh (Congress) and Shri Prem Kumar Dhumal (BJP) remained popular among people of the state, and were identified as people's leaders.
 - ❖ Hence, people didn't get influenced by other third-party leadership.

All these factors restricted the advent of a third political party in the state.

Performance of Political Parties in Legislative Assembly Election 2022:

- **Number of Seats Won** - In the legislative assembly election, Congress obtained 43.90% of the overall vote share and emerged victorious in 40 seats.
 - ❖ Meanwhile, the BJP, while securing 43% of the total vote share, managed to win only 25 out of the total 68 seats in the assembly.
 - ❖ Independent candidates won the remaining three seats, i.e., Ashish Sharma from Hamirpur, Hosiyar Singh from Dehra and K L Thakur from Nalagarh.
 - ❖ The AAP was unsuccessful in securing any seats in the election.
 - ❖ Additionally, the CPI-M did not win any seats, and their sitting MLA from Theog also lost.
- **Highest Margin Win** - Jairam Thakur (former CM) won the election with the highest margin of 38183 from the Seraj constituency by defeating Congress candidate Chetram Thakur
- **Women Candidate** – Despite women voters outnumbering men voters in the election, only one candidate (Reena Kashyap) out of the 24 women contestants managed to secure a seat in the assembly.
 - ❖ Reena Kashyap of Pacchad constituency of Sirmaur district emerged winner by defeating Congress's Dayal Pyari by a margin of 3,857 votes.
- **Voter Turnout** - According to the Election Commission data, HP witnessed a record of 75.6% of voter turnout for the assembly election.
 - ❖ In this election, 76.8% of women cast their votes, exceeding the 72.4% turnout among men.
 - ❖ Women voters outnumbered male voters by 82,301.
 - ❖ Interestingly, the polling percentage of women voters was more than men since 1998 polls and the trend continued in the past five elections.
 - ❖ The polling percentage of women and men electors was 72.2 and 71.23 per cent in 1998, 75.92 and 73.14 per cent in 2003, 74.10 and 68.36 per cent in 2007, 76.20 and 69.39 per cent in 2012 and 77.98 and 70.58 per cent in 2017.
- **Third-Gender Voters** - As many as 26 out of 38 registered transgenders (68%) cast their vote in the assembly elections in 2022, which is double the number that participated in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.
 - ❖ A transgender, Bijali Mahant, was made the 'district icon' of Bilaspur district in a bid to encourage more members of the community to vote.

POLITICS OF SUB-REGIONALISM

Sub-regionalism is a multifaceted concept that arises due to historical, cultural, economic and social distinctiveness.

- When these unique characteristics are employed as influential factors in shaping the political structure of a state, it is referred to as the politics of sub-regionalism.

Various Factors Responsible for the Political Sub-Regionalism in H.P. are:

- **Historical Impact** - Before independence, the Shimla Hills were ruled by native Princes, whereas Kangra Hill states were directly administered by the British govt.
 - ❖ Thus, in the hilly region before independence, two types of movements were going on simultaneously, i.e., the Praja Mandal Movement (in Shimla Hill States), and the Freedom Movement (In Punjab Hill States).
 - ❖ Hence, the ideology of movements also affects the politics of the states.
- **The Feeling of Sub-Regionalism Within Congress Party** - Although most party presidents after 1966 had been from the "new area", the real power was concentrated in the hands of the chief minister who used to be from upper Himachal.

- **Cap Politics** – This politics was started by the Late Shri Virbhadra Singh (who wore a Green cap) and Shri Prem Kumar Dhumal (who wore a maroon cap). The green cap represented the Congress party whereas the maroon represented the BJP party.
 - ❖ Hence with time the caps become the identity of politics rather than culture.
- **Economic Interests** – Shimla Hill states is a horticulture region whereas Kangra Hill is an agriculture region. Under the land reform, the big landowners from Kangra were deprived of their surplus land, but orchards were exempted from the land ceiling during Congress's rule.
 - ❖ Laghu Zamindar Sabha was formed in 1973 to protect their landed interests. This sabha was naturally an ally of Jan Sangh and later of the Janta Party, as both needed each other in the given political reality.
 - ❖ Further when the Janta govt formed govt in Himachal, it levied more taxes on orchards farming and reduced taxes on agricultural products.
 - ❖ Hence both regions support Congress or BJP to secure their economic interest.
- **Effects of Social divide on Politics** - In some areas of Upper Himachal people mainly in Kinnaur high hills, Lahaul Spiti follows Buddhism while in lower Himachal, Hinduism is the main religion.
 - ❖ Congress in state politics has followed a traditional leftist approach in politics and attracts people from different castes and religions, whereas the BJP follows a rightist approach in politics and is seen as leaning towards people of a particular religion.
 - ❖ **Unbalanced Development** - The issue of unbalanced and inequitable development of two regions is also exploited by political parties.

Current Status of the Politics of the Sub-Regionalism in the State:

- While HP has experienced sub-regional politics, recent developments suggest that people have transcended this mindset.

Several Key State-Level Developments Shifted the Focus Away from Sub-Regionalism and its Associated Politics:

- **Literacy and Education** - The Kangra region exhibits a higher literacy rate (85.67%) compared to the Shimla region (83.64%).
 - ❖ This reflects positive progress in education and literacy within the Kangra region.
- **Healthcare Access** - Today, medical institutions like Tanda College are opening in the Kangra region, improving healthcare facilities.
- **Economic Opportunities** - Most small-scale industries are now thriving in the Kangra region, boosting economic growth and employment opportunities.
- **Rise of Dharamshala** - Dharamshala is achieving a status equal to Shimla, covered under the smart city mission program, and known for its international cricket stadium.
 - ❖ It is also declared as the second capital of Himachal Pradesh.
- **Government Infrastructure** - The inauguration of Himachal Pradesh's new Vidhan Sabha complex for the winter session of the state assembly has been held in Tapovan, Dharamshala.
 - ❖ This represents a positive investment in infrastructure and governance facilities.
- **Agricultural Diversification** - The Kangra region, traditionally known for tea gardens, is witnessing the growth of apple trees alongside tea plantations.
- **Unity Over Divisiveness** – Former Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur's decision to discontinue divisive political symbols, like caps associated with different parties, reflects a move toward unity and progress.
- **Leadership Transition** - New leadership in Himachal Pradesh from the Seraj area of Mandi i.e., Jairam Thakur and first chief minister of Congress from lower Himachal i.e., Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, marks the end of the dominance of two clans in the Shimla and Kangra regions.

- ❖ Moreover, Mukesh Agnihotri, the First Deputy Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh representing the Haroli constituency in Una, emphasized the shift in the state's political focus away from sub-regionalism.

As Himachal Pradesh progresses, it has the potential to anticipate a future marked by greater unity and prosperity, leaving behind the influence of sub-regional politics.

PRESSURE GROUPS

A "Pressure Group," also called an "Interest Group" or "Advocacy Group," is a collective of individuals or entities with shared interests working to influence government policies through lobbying and advocacy to represent their members' concerns and viewpoints.

The major differences between Pressure Groups and Political Parties are:

- **Varied Membership** - Pressure groups typically have a more specialized and limited membership compared to political parties, which attract a broader and more diverse range of members.
- **Formal vs Informal** - Pressure groups tend to operate in an informal and less structured manner, whereas political parties are characterized by well-defined hierarchies and organizational frameworks.
- **Financial Backing** - Pressure groups primarily depend on financial contributions from their members and supporters, whereas political parties rely on a combination of donations and possible government funding.
- **Goals and Priorities** - The primary focus of pressure groups revolves around lobbying to shape policies, while political parties prioritise the goal of winning elections.
- **Ideology** - While pressure groups might be driven by a specific ideology or agenda, political parties typically present a more comprehensive and all-encompassing platform.
- **Representation** - Pressure groups do not have elected representatives, unlike political parties, which are built around the concept of elected representation.
- **Time Period** - Pressure groups can be short-lived, driven by current issues, while political parties usually last longer and have a more stable presence.

Various Pressure Groups and Their Role in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Advocating for Environmental Conservation** - Groups like Sirmaur Hills Awarred Resident Association (SHARA) and AWAAZ work to protect Himachal Pradesh's natural resources and ecosystems.
 - ❖ They lobby for sustainable development and fight against issues like illegal mining and environmental pollution.
- **Promoting Tourism** - The Federation of Himachal Hotel & Restaurant Associations (FOHHRA) advocates for policies that support the growth of the state's tourism industry, contributing to economic development and job creation.
- **Supporting Agriculture** - Organizations like the Apple Growers Association and Laghu Zamindar Sabha address the concerns of agricultural communities, advocating for fair prices, agricultural policies, and rural development.
- **Education Reform** - Student groups like Akhil Bhartiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and National Student Union of India (NSUI) focus on educational reforms and student welfare, influencing policies related to the state's education system and highlighting student issues.
- **Preserving Culture and Arts** - Cultural and Artistic Organizations like Abhiyan Darpan and Active Monal Cultural Association work to preserve and promote the cultural heritage, arts, and traditions of Himachal Pradesh.
- **Economic Growth** - Business and Trade Associations, including Himachal Pradesh Laghu Udyog Mahasang, HP Transport Workers Union, and HP Chamber of Commerce and Industry, advocate for policies that promote economic growth and development in the state.
- **Fighting Against Drug Menace** - Organizations like GUNJAN Organization for Community Development and Shimla Youth Progressive Association work against the drug menace, assisting the government in efforts to combat illegal drug use and improve public health.

- **Caste-Based Politics** - Pressure groups organized along caste lines, such as the Himachal Pradesh Brahmin Sabha and the Anusuchit Jatti-Janjatti Kalyan Sangh, aim to shape the state's politics to serve their specific caste-based interests.
- **Generate Public Opinion** - Pressure groups, like the Himachal Pradesh Teacher Association, HP Medical Officers Association, etc. actively assess policies affecting their interests, significantly influencing public opinion, as seen during elections.
- ❖ E.g., the "No work, no Pay" policy of the Shanta Kumar Government proved fatal for him.

Hence, Pressure groups in Himachal Pradesh enhance the democratic landscape by representing various interests, influencing governance, and contributing to policy development.

STATUTORY BODIES

Himachal Pradesh Commission for Protection of Child Rights

The HP Commission for Protection of Child Rights was constituted on 27 April 2013 to achieve the very purpose of the guidelines adopted in the special session of UNO for protecting the rights of children worldwide.

The aims of the Commission are:

- **Public Awareness** - The commission is responsible for raising public awareness about children's rights.
- **Efficient Law Implementation** - The commission ensures the effective implementation of laws, policies, and programs related to child abuse prevention.
- **Comprehensive Protection** - It safeguards children's rights to education, health, and nutrition, and investigates barriers to these rights caused by various factors such as natural disasters, domestic violence, maltreatment, exploitation, and more.

Composition of the Commission:

- There is a chairperson and 6 members of the commission.
- Members shall hold the office for a term of three years from the date on which he or she assumes office and no member shall hold the office for more than 2 terms.
- Salary and allowances payable to the members shall be such as may be prescribed by the state government.

Functions of the Commission:

- **Law and Policy Alignment** - Ensure alignment of laws, policies, and administrative processes with the child rights perspective outlined in the Indian Constitution.
- **Investigate Violations** - Investigate and take action on violations of child rights, including initiating inquiries and handling complaints as a civil court when required.
- **Monitoring and Rescue** - Vigilantly monitor and facilitate the rescue and rehabilitation of child labourers, including migrant children, addressing issues related to education, healthcare, child trafficking, and the welfare of children in need of care and protection.

Himachal Pradesh State Commission for Women

Himachal Pradesh State Commission for Women is a statutory body constituted in the year 1993 to deal with the issues relating to crime against women in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

Composition:

- The H.P. State Commission for Women comprises one Chairperson and 3 to 4 nominated Members amongst the educationists, social workers, NGOs, environmentalists, jurists etc.

Aims and Objectives of the Commission are:

- Ensuring the prevention of women's harassment.
- Elimination of the Dowry System.
- Safeguarding the constitutional rights of women.
- Addressing women's grievances.
- Facilitating the rehabilitation of women facing disruption.
- Promoting awareness among women in areas such as social, legal, constitutional matters, health, and livelihood.
- Providing recommendations to the State Government for the betterment of women.

Powers and Functions:

- **Legal Protection Adherence** - The commission ensures that women's legal rights and protections as defined by the Constitution and related laws are upheld.
- **Agency Oversight** - It monitors and reports if any state agency fails to protect women effectively.
- **Legal Amendments** - It can provide recommendations for the amendments in any law if it fails to provide justice to the women of the state.
- **Addressing Violations** - It works with authorities to address violations of women's rights and recommends corrective actions.
- **Direct Redressal** - Women can approach the commission directly if their rights are violated.
- **Counseling and Assistance** - The commission provides help to women who are victims of discrimination and abuse.
- **Legal Expenses** - Providing financial support for legal costs in cases involving a large number of women and, when necessary, submitting reports to the state government concerning these cases.
- **Premises Inspection** - Inspecting any premises, jail or other remand home where women prisoners are lodged or any other case and bringing them to the notice of respective authorities, in case of need.
- **Enquiries and Investigations** - It investigates women-specific issues and suggest actions.
 - ❖ **Suo-Motu Investigations:** It can initiate investigations on issues that harm women's rights, laws, or policies.
- **Promoting Women's Rights** - The commission promotes research and methods to ensure women's representation in all areas.

QUASI-JUDICIAL BODIES**Himachal Pradesh State Information Commission**

The Himachal Pradesh State Information Commission (HPSIC) was constituted on February 4, 2006, under the Right to Information Act, 2005. It officially commenced operations on March 1, 2006, with its headquarters in Shimla.

Appointment and Tenure:

- They are appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of a committee consisting of the Chief Minister as Chairperson, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and a State Cabinet Minister nominated by the Chief Minister.
- The Commission consists of a State Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten State Information Commissioners.
- The tenure of the State Chief Information Commissioner and a State Information Commissioner for holding office will be a term of 3 years or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier and will not be eligible for reappointment on completion of tenure.

Key Powers and Functions:

- **Enquiry into Complaints** - The Commission can initiate inquiries when there are valid grounds for investigation.
- **Acting as a Civil Court** - It possesses the same powers as a civil court when addressing matters specified under section 18(3) of the Act.
 - ❖ While investigating a complaint, the Commission can see any records controlled by a public authority.
 - ❖ They have the right to access these records for their investigation.
- **Awarding Compensation** - It has the authority to require public authorities to compensate complainants for any loss or harm suffered.
- **Imposing Penalties** - The HPSIC can impose penalties on State Public Information Officers for various defaults, amounting to Rs. 250 per day, not exceeding Rs. 25,000.
- **Opportunity for a Hearing** - Before imposing penalties, the Commission offers a reasonable opportunity for the State Information Officer to be heard.
- **Recommendation for Disciplinary Action** - The Commission can recommend disciplinary action against State Public Information Officers.

Lokayukta of Himachal Pradesh

The Lokayukta is India's state-level Parliamentary Ombudsman, established through the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act of 2013 in each state's legislature.

- It aims to address grievances quickly, focusing on government integrity and efficiency, particularly in the conduct of public servants.

Appointment:

- The Lokayukta is appointed by the Governor of the state on the recommendation of the committee, consisting of the Chief Minister as chairperson, Chief Justice of the State High Court, Leaders of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Assembly Speaker.

Qualification:

- The appointee must be a former Supreme Court judge or a former Chief Justice of a High Court, aged over 45, with a clean record free from convictions or past removal from state service.

Lokayukta's Term:

- The Lokayukta hold office for a five-year term or until they reach the age of 70, whichever is earlier.
- The Lokayukta can also resign by addressing the Governor directly in writing.

Lokayukta's Functions:

- The Lokayukta's primary role involves investigating corruption cases on the basis of a complaint received from citizens or suo moto to ensure transparency and promote citizen-friendly administrative practices.
- The extent of their function depends on their jurisdiction and the availability of facilities for promptly addressing citizens' grievances without undue technicalities.
- The Lokayukta can investigate public servant actions when referred by the state government.
- During investigations, they wield the authority to issue search warrants and possess the powers of a civil court, including summoning individuals, taking oaths, requesting documents, receiving evidence via affidavits, and acquiring public records or court copies.
- He presently presents the annual report to the Governor of the state and the Governor puts that report before the state legislative assembly.
- He takes the help of the state investigating agencies for conducting inquiries.
- The recommendations made by the Lokayukta are only advisory in nature.

Himachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission

The Himachal Pradesh Human Rights Commission was established under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act of 1993.

- This empowers the commission to probe human rights violations in matters within the concurrent list of the Indian Constitution and those specific to Himachal state.

Appointment:

- The Chairman and members of the Commission are appointed by the state's Governor, with recommendations from a committee comprising the Chief Minister (committee head), Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Home Minister, and the opposition leader in the state Legislative Assembly.

Composition:

- The Commission must have a minimum of three members, with the Chairperson being a retired Chief Justice of an Indian High Court. The other members should include:
 - ❖ A current or retired High Court judge or District Judge in the state with at least seven years of District Judge experience.
 - ❖ An individual with practical expertise or knowledge in human rights matters.

Tenure:

- The Chairperson and members of the commission have a fixed term of five years or until they reach the age of 70, whichever comes earlier.
 - ❖ After their term, they can't be employed by the state or central government, except for another term on reaching the age limit.

Functions:

- **Complaints Investigation** - The commission can inquire into human rights violations based on petitions from victims, suo motu actions, or complaints regarding negligence by public servants in preventing such violations.
- **Legislation Review** - The commission reviews existing constitutional and legal safeguards for human rights and recommends measures for their effective implementation.
- **Detention Facility Inspection** - The commission can visit and assess the living conditions of inmates in state-controlled jails or detention facilities, providing recommendations for improvements when necessary.
- **Remedial Measures** - After reviewing factors hindering the enjoyment of human rights, including actions like terrorism, the commission can recommend appropriate remedial measures.
- **NGO Support** - The commission encourages and supports the efforts of Non-Governmental Organizations and other institutions working in the field of human rights development.
- **Legal Proceedings Intervention** - The commission may intervene in court proceedings in cases of alleged human rights violations with the court's approval.
- **Research and Promotion** - The commission undertakes and promotes research in the field of human rights and works to spread awareness and literacy about human rights among the general public.

Limitation:

- **Advisory in Nature** - The recommendations of the commission are not binding and only advisory in nature.
- **No Penalizing Powers** - The commission can recommend penalties or specify compensation amounts but does not have the authority to enforce them.
- **Time Limit** - The commission only considers cases reported within one year of the complaint being registered.
- **Political Interference** - The body is considered post-retirement heaven for judicial and bureaucrats with allegiance to the govt.

REGULATORY BODIES

Himachal Pradesh Private Institute Regulatory Commission

The H.P. Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Commission was created under the Himachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions (Regulatory Commission) Act, 2010.

- Its main role is to regulate and maintain standards in private educational institutions, safeguard student interests, and act as a liaison between the state government and central regulatory bodies.
- Composition:
- The Commission is composed of a Chairperson and a maximum of two members.
- These members are selected from individuals with eminence in public life or the higher education sector.
- They must have held positions of Secretary or above in the Government of Himachal Pradesh or equivalent roles in the Government of India for a minimum of three years.
- Importantly, the Chairperson and members cannot come from the same field of specialization.

Appointment and Tenure:

- The Chairperson and members of the Commission are appointed by the State Government based on the recommendations of a Search Committee.
- They are appointed for a term of three years or until they reach the age of 65, whichever comes earlier.
- These individuals may be eligible for a second term, provided they don't exceed the upper age limit of 65 years.
- After their term ends, the Chairperson or member cannot work in any Private Educational Institutions within Himachal Pradesh or their associated offices or companies, both within and outside Himachal Pradesh, for three years.

Power and Functions:

- **Ensuring Educational Standards** - The Commission ensure that Private Educational Institutions meet standards in admission, teaching, and infrastructure, as per government guidelines.
- **Merit-Based Admissions** - The Commission ensures admissions in Private Educational Institutions are merit-based, relying on national or state-level entrance tests.
- **Grievance Redressal** - The Commission establishes and oversees a grievance redressal mechanism for student and parent complaints.
 - ❖ Institutions must resolve complaints within a specified time frame.
- **Quality Inspections** - The Commission conducts inspections of Private Educational Institutions and forms expert committees for this purpose.
- **Fee Regulation** - The Commission has the authority to monitor and regulate fees charged by Private Educational Institutions.
- **Power of Civil Court** - The Commission, for any inquiry or proceedings under this Act, possesses the same authority as a civil court.

Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board

The H.P. State Pollution Control Board is a nodal agency in the administrative structure of the State Government, for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of environmental programs.

Functions of the HPSPCB are:

- **Air and Water Quality Supervision** - Monitoring and regulating air and water quality in the state.
- **Noise Monitoring** - Monitoring and controlling noise pollution levels.
- **Waste Management** - Managing various types of waste, including bio-medical waste, plastic waste, hazardous waste, e-waste, construction, and demolition waste.

- **Consent Certificate (Pollution NOC)** - Providing consent certificates to organizations, allowing them to discharge industrial waste in a regulated and environmentally responsible manner.
- **Environment-Related Risk Mitigation** - Playing a role in assessing and mitigating environmental risks associated with upcoming development projects in the state.
- **Advisory Body** - Serving as an advisory body for the Himachal Pradesh State Government, providing guidance and recommendations on pollution prevention, control, and reduction measures.
- **Regulatory Function** - Implementing various acts and rules related to environmental pollution control, ensuring compliance and enforcement.
- **HPSPCB enforces the following Acts and Rules in Himachal** -The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;
- The Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
- The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;
- The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991;
- The Hazardous & Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016;
- The Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Himachal Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority

The Government of Himachal Pradesh established the Himachal Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) in December 2019.

- The RERA in Himachal Pradesh commenced operations on January 1, 2020.

Composition:

- The authority comprises of Chairperson and two Members.

Functions and Powers:

- **Enhance Transparency** - RERA's main objective is to enhance transparency in the real estate sector by mandating the disclosure of project details and providing consumers with reliable information.
- **Consumer Protection** - It provides a mechanism for speedy dispute resolution, ensuring that consumers' rights are protected and disputes are addressed effectively.
- **Appellate Tribunal** - The Act establishes an Appellate Tribunal responsible for hearing appeals against decisions, directions, or orders issued by the Real Estate Regulatory Authority and the adjudicating officer.
- **Mandatory Project Registration** - The Act requires project promoters to register with RERA before any promotional activities, like advertising, booking, or selling real estate in a planning area.
- **Registration of Real Estate Agents** - It is mandatory for all real estate agents to register with the Authority.

GOVERNANCE

- Governance can be defined as 'the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented.
- **Good governance** means efficiently managing public affairs and resources in a transparent, accountable, and participatory manner to serve society's needs and citizens' well-being while upholding the rule of law.
- Good governance aims to ensure that decisions are made fairly and justly, resources are used efficiently, and the rights of individuals and groups are respected.

The various elements of good governance include:

- **Rule of Law** - A fair and just legal framework that applies equally to all citizens, including those in power.
- **Participation** - Involving citizens in decision-making processes, allowing them to express their views and contribute to policymaking.

- **Transparency** - Making information about government actions, decisions, and financial matters easily accessible to the public.
- **Accountability** - Ensuring that government officials and institutions are responsible for their actions and decisions and that mechanisms are in place to hold them answerable.
- **Responsiveness** - Government institutions should be responsive to the needs and concerns of citizens, addressing their grievances and providing timely services.
- **Equity and Inclusiveness** - Ensuring that policies and decisions consider the needs of all segments of society, without discrimination.
- **Effectiveness and Efficiency** - Government processes should be streamlined and resources utilized efficiently to achieve desired outcomes.
- **Consensus Orientation** - Encouraging a spirit of cooperation and consensus-building among different stakeholders.

Initiatives taken by the Himachal Pradesh government to improve governance include:

- Fighting Corruption and Criminalization of Politics:
- **The H.P State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau** – It was established in 2006 through the amalgamation of the previous anti-corruption unit.
- It began functioning as an independent entity at that time.
- **The H.P Lokayukta Act of 2014** – It plays a significant role in addressing corruption cases and suggesting appropriate actions.
- This institution acts as a potent deterrent against corruption, enhancing transparency within the system and making government administration more accessible to citizens.
- **Ensuring Service Delivery:**
 - ❖ **Jan Manch** – On June 3rd, 2018, the state government initiated a program called “Jan Manch” with the primary objective of facilitating direct communication with the public and promptly addressing their concerns.

This initiative took place on the first Sunday of every month and rotated through the assembly constituencies within each district.

During these events, all relevant district officers were present to offer immediate solutions to public complaints.

- ❖ **Lok-Mitra Kendra** – The Web-enabled Government-Citizen Interface, named **Lok Mitra** is a web-enabled interface that provides a platform for citizens to interact with government officials and services.

In aims to make people aware of government policies and programmes, and also provide an interface to interact with various government functionaries and solicit their active and direct contribution to the process of governance.

- ❖ **The H.P Public Service Guarantee Act in 2011** - It is enacted by Himachal Pradesh to provide time-bound citizen-centric services to the public of the state.

It notified 27 departments and 188 services for the time-bound services.

- ❖ **HIMBHOOI AND HIMRIS** – It is a computerization of land records and registration of deeds.

The system is being implemented in all the district headquarters in which data of land records will be entered into computers for future access.

- ❖ **Sugam** - A comprehensive information service that provides easy access to a wide range of essential citizen services.

These services include accessing the High Court cause list, Vidhan Sabha’s list of businesses, public utility forms, examination results, elector registration, online police complaints, and a helpline for pensioners.

- ❖ **Sevottam Model** - The term “Sevottam” is formed by blending two Hindi words: “Seva” (service) and “Uttam” (excellence).

The primary goal of the Sevottam model is to enhance the quality of public service delivery within the state.

➤ **To Promote Transparency:**

- ❖ **Mukhya Mantri Seva Sankalp Helpline 1100** – The proactive outreach initiative aims to assist citizens effectively by offering a helpline service through the Citizen Call Centre and other suitable channels. These services cater to various citizen needs, including:

Registering grievances

Capturing suggestions and citizens' demands

Providing information about government schemes

Escalating matters to relevant authorities for timely solutions

Through the toll-free number 1100, citizens across the state can proactively lodge complaints.

These complaints are then digitally recorded on the portal and monitored until they are satisfactorily addressed.

The closure of complaints occurs within the software only after receiving confirmation from the individual who lodged the complaint.

- ❖ **HP MyGov** – This is a new platform that uses technology to connect the government and citizens. It's aimed at helping the state of Himachal Pradesh develop and grow inclusively.

Through MyGov, people can easily share their ideas and feedback with the government.

The government considers these inputs seriously and combines them with other contributions to make the state and the country better.

- ❖ **Right to Information Act 2005** - It was enacted in 2005 to make the citizens more aware of the workings of the administration by bringing transparency to the system.

Challenges to Good Governance in the State:

- **Criminalization of Politics** - The unhealthy nexus between politicians, civil servants, and business interests undermines the notions of good governance.
- **Corruption** - A major impediment to development and good governance, diverting government attention and resources.
- **Lack of Awareness** – A significant portion of the state's population possesses minimal to no awareness regarding the numerous programs or initiatives related to effective governance.
- **Effective Delivery in Remote Areas** - The challenge of providing services to people's doorsteps due to the challenging terrain in Himachal Pradesh.
- **Lack of Digital Infrastructure** – only cities or some towns have adequate digital infrastructure to promote digital services to the citizens of the state.
- **Digital Divide in Himachal Pradesh** – Due to a lack of digital literacy Himachal Pradesh has a high digital divide.
 - ❖ E.g., Only around 27.17% of schools in Himachal Pradesh have internet access.

Way Forward:

- **Strengthen Legal Framework** - Enforce stricter laws against individuals with criminal records running for political office and bar them from participating in elections.
- **Transparency and Accountability** - Implement measures to enhance transparency in government operations and hold officials accountable for corrupt practices.
- **Information Dissemination** - Use various media channels, including radio, television, and social media, to inform the public about government programs and initiatives.
- **Infrastructure Development** - Invest in improving infrastructure, including roads and telecommunications, to ensure that remote areas are accessible for government services.
- **Public-Private Partnerships** - Collaborate with private sector companies to expand digital infrastructure in underserved regions.

- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Launch digital literacy programs for citizens, especially in remote areas, to bridge the digital divide.

Good governance is an ongoing process, and Himachal Pradesh's commitment to transparency, accountability, and public participation will be essential in achieving its goals of efficient and equitable governance.

HIMACHAL PUBLIC SERVICE GUARANTEE ACT 2011

Himachal Public Service Guarantee Act 2011 was enacted by the government of Himachal Pradesh to provide time bond citizen-centric services to the public of the state.

- Currently there are 23 departments that are providing 119 services notified under the Public Service Guarantee Act.

Key provisions of the act:

- **Right to Obtain Services Within Stipulated Time-Bound** – Under the act, the designated officer shall provide the services notified under the acts to the eligible person within the prescribed time limit.
- **Right to Appeal** – Under the act if any person who is not provided with the service within the stipulated time limit or whose application is rejected by the designated office can file an appeal to “the first appellate authority”.
 - ❖ **2nd Appellate Authority** – If the appellant is not satisfied with the judgement of the first appellant authority, he or she can again register an appeal to the second apparent authority within 60 days from the date of the decision to the first appended authority.
 - ❖ **Penalty** – If and designated officer is convicted guilty, the second appellant authority may impose a lump sum penalty, which shall not be less than Rs 1000 but not more than Rs 5000.

The second appellant authority may order to give any amount as compensation to the appellant out of the penalty.

- ❖ **Protection of Action Taken in Good Faith** – No legal action can be taken against anyone or anything for actions performed in good faith under this act or its associated rules.
- ❖ **Bar of Jurisdiction** – Orders made by designated officers, the first appellate authority, or the second appellate authority are immune to challenge in any court or before any other officer/authority.

Benefits of the HP Public Service Guarantee Act in Governance:

- **Government Assurance of Timely Service Delivery** - The PSGA serves as a government commitment to ensure the effective and timely delivery of services.
 - ❖ **Establishment of a Redressal Channel** - By opening a channel for redressal, the PSGA helps streamline administrative processes, leading to more efficient service delivery and prompt issue resolution.
 - ❖ **Enhanced Transparency** - The PSGA brings greater transparency to the application process for public services.

Transactions are meticulously recorded in digital formats, and service providers are obligated to issue receipts to applicants.

- ❖ **Mechanism for Holding Errant Public Servants Accountable** - The act provides a mechanism for holding public servants accountable when they fail to deliver services as required, creating a strong incentive for timely and proper service delivery.
- ❖ **Expedited Service Delivery** - PSGA ensures that services are delivered within defined timeframes, resulting in quicker and more efficient service delivery.
- ❖ **Reduced Risk of Corruption** - PSGA's transparency measures and adherence to set timeframes play a role in reducing the likelihood of corruption.

In conclusion, the Himachal Public Service Guarantee Act of 2011 stands as a significant legislative effort by the Government of Himachal Pradesh to ensure the timely delivery of citizen-centric services to the public.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT OF 2005

The Right to Information Act was passed in the year 2005. This law empowers Indian citizens to seek any accessible information from a Public Authority and makes the Government and its functionaries more accountable and responsible.

Objectives of the Right to Information (RTI) Act 2005:

- Allow the citizens of the country to question the working government.
- Promote transparency and answerability of the working government.
- Check corruption prevailing in the government to serve the citizens better.
- Make citizens well-informed about the functioning of the government system.

The main features of the Act:

- **Right to Information** - Any Indian citizen can seek any information from any public authority without specifying any reason.
- **Information in Stipulate Time** - Requisite information has to be provided by the public information officer within the specified time limit which can be denied only under exceptions provided in Act itself.
- **Bodies Covered** - Egg applies to all government departments, corporations, urban local bodies, Panchayati Raj institutions, etc.
- **Adequate Number of PIOs** - The public authorities are required to designate an adequate number of public information officers to provide information and assist public information officers at the sub-divisional or sub-district level.
- **Penalty** - The commissions, both at the central and the state level are empowered to impose a penalty at the rate of Rs 250 per day subject to a maximum of Rs 25000 on erring public information officers in cases where;
 - ❖ The PIO has without any Reasonable explanation refused to receive an application for information;
 - ❖ has not furnished information within the time specified
 - ❖ malafidely denied the request for information, etc.
 - ❖ In certain cases, the Commission can recommend disciplinary action against an erring Public Information Officer.
- **Exceptions Under the Act** - Section 22 of the RTI Act has overriding effects over other laws, including the Official Secrets Act.
 - ❖ Therefore, the RTI Act shall take precedence over any contradictions with regard to the Official Secrets Act regarding the disclosure of information.
 - ❖ However, Sections 8 and 9 of the RTI Act permit the government to withhold information.

The various challenges associated with the RTI Act 2005 in Himachal Pradesh are:

- **Issues on the Public Side:**
 - ❖ **Misuse of RTI** - Because the RTI law doesn't require people to have a valid reason or a direct interest in a matter, some individuals misuse it for personal gain rather than using it for the public good.

E.g., according to a study in Himachal Pradesh, in 51% of cases, the information sought under the RTI Act was used for personal matters and not in the larger public interest.

- ❖ **Low Public Awareness** - Inadequate public awareness results in difficulties when filing applications, as there is a lack of user guides.

The RTI Act allows applications in writing or electronically, but insufficient efforts have been made to facilitate electronic submissions.

- ❖ **Poor Information Quality** - The study has shown that there is no standardized process for providing information and poor information quality is provided.

➤ **Issues on the Government Side:**

- ❖ **Non-serious authority** - The authorities in Himachal Pradesh demonstrate a lack of commitment when it comes to providing information to applicants under the RTI Act and to the general public.
- ❖ **Inadequate training of PIOs** - According to the study, 56% of 160 Public Information Officers and Assistant Public Information Officers think that the training they receive isn't good enough for dealing with legal matters effectively.
- ❖ **Obsolete Record Management Guidelines** - Inefficient record management and data collection from field offices cause delays in processing RTI applications.
- ❖ **Lack of Monitoring and Review Mechanism:** The absence of a centralized database for RTI applicants and their requests, along with responses from information providers, hinders accurate and timely compliance.

Way Forward:

- **Raise Awareness** - Implement extensive awareness campaigns to educate the public about the proper use of RTI and its significance for the greater good.
- ❖ Provide user guides and facilitate electronic submissions to make the process more accessible.
- **Promote Accountability** - Encourage citizens to hold those who misuse the RTI Act accountable for their actions, ensuring that the law's integrity is upheld.
- **Enhanced Training** - Improve the quality of training for Public Information Officers (PIOs) to equip them with the necessary skills to handle legal matters effectively.
- **Modernize Record Management** - Revise record management guidelines and practices, emphasizing digitization, cataloguing, and indexing to streamline the retrieval of information.
- **Centralized Database** - Develop a centralized database to monitor and review RTI applications, requests, and responses.

This will aid in ensuring accurate and timely compliance with the RTI Act's provisions and improve accountability.

Overall, the RTI Act remains a valuable tool in strengthening democracy by fostering transparency and accountability, but its full potential can be realized through collaborative efforts from both the public and the government to address the current challenges.

PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION

Panchayati Raj is a system of local governance with three levels: Gram Panchayat (Village level), Panchayat Samiti (Block level), and Zila Parishad (District level).

- The 73rd Amendment Act of 1992 gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- The Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act was enacted in 1994.
- Himachal Pradesh currently has 12 Zila Parishads, 81 Panchayat Samities, and 3,615 Gram Panchayats.

Exemplifying the Successful Implementation of Panchayati Raj in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Periodic Elections** - The Himachal Pradesh government successfully conducts the periodic elections for the various panchayats of the states.
- **Organization of Gram Sabha** - Every panchayat of the state is provided with the formation of Gram-Sabha.
 - ❖ Additionally, Gram Sabha meetings are planned to be conducted in every district during January, April, July, and October, with the quorum for regular Gram Sabha meetings reduced from one-third to one-fourth.
- **Reservation for SCs and STs** - Seats are reserved for the Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in every panchayat and at every level as per their population in the panchayats.
- **Reservation for Women** - Himachal Pradesh successfully reserved 50% of seats for women in every panchayat of the state.

- **Formation of Finance Commission** – The Governor of the state established the State Finance Commission every five years to review the financial positions of the Panchayats.
 - ❖ The Sixth State Finance Commission was constituted by the Himachal Pradesh Government on 22nd August 2020. The Commission report covers a period of 5 years from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2027.
- **Establishment of State Election Commission** – The Himachal Pradesh govt also established the SEC as per the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act.
- **Devolution of Powers** – PRI in the state is provided with powers and authorities to enable them to function as an institution of self-government.

Even after conferring the constitutional status and protection through the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act, the performance of the Panchayati Raj Institutions has not been satisfactory and not up to the expected level.

The various reasons for this sub-optimal performance are:

- **Lack of Adequate Devolution** – The state has not taken adequate steps to dissolve adequate fiscal powers, even after many recommendations of the State Finance Commission.
 - ❖ E.g., it is paradoxical that most of the functions assigned to Panchayat Samities are being performed by the extension officers of various Departments posted in the development blocks but the elected members of the Panchayat Samitis have no control over the working of these extension officers.
- **Limited Autonomy and State Oversight** - Gram Panchayats have limited control over their lone employee, while in Panchayat Samitis, the Block Development Officer (BDO) serves as the Ex-Officio Secretary, appointed by the State Government.
 - ❖ Zila Parishads in Himachal Pradesh, established after 1996, has a basic staff, including a Stenographer, Clerk, Driver, and Peon, all managed by the State Government.
- **Tied Nature of Funds** - In Himachal Pradesh Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads have no power to impose any taxes. In the case of Gram Panchayats, it could impose house tax and property tax up to a limited extent.
 - ❖ Thus, Panchayati Raj institutions in Himachal Pradesh are dependent on grants received from the State Government.
- **Reluctance to Use Fiscal Power** – An important power devolved to Gram- Panchayat is the right to levy taxes, but very few panchayats use their fiscal power to levy and collect the taxes.
- **Creation of Parallel Bodies** – Often parallel bodies are created for supposedly speedy implementation and greater accountability. However, there is little evidence to show that such parallel bodies have avoided the evils including that of partisan politics, sharing of spoils, corruption, and elite capture.
- **Poor Infrastructure** – A large number of gram Panchayats in the state do not have even full-time secretaries. Many panchayats do not have basic office buildings
- **Lack of Awareness** - A large number of elected representatives of Panchayati Rajasthan are semi-literate or literate and know little about their roles and responsibilities, programme, procedure, and system.
- **Lack of Digital Infrastructure** – According to the e-Swaraj portal of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, out of 3615 Panchayats in Himachal Pradesh, only 2031 i.e., 56% of Panchayats are connected to the internet.

SCHEMES RELATED TO THE WELFARE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with disabilities (PWD) are those who have long-term impairment in terms of physical, mental, sensory and psychological conditions which can stop their equal participation in all aspects of society if met with various barriers.

- According to Census 2011, Himachal Pradesh has around 97,284 people who come under the definition of persons with disabilities.

The challenges faced by PwDs are:

- **Inaccessible Infrastructure** - Many public spaces, buildings, and transportation systems are not designed to accommodate people with disabilities, making it difficult for them to move around freely.
- **Lack of Assistive Devices** - Access to essential assistive devices like wheelchairs, hearing aids, and visual aids can be limited due to cost or availability.
- **Stigma and Discrimination** - Negative attitudes and stereotypes about disabilities can lead to discrimination, social exclusion, and marginalization.
- **Limited Employment Opportunities** - PwDs often face difficulties in finding suitable employment due to biases and inaccessible workplaces.
- **Inaccessible Education** - Many educational institutions lack the necessary facilities and resources to accommodate students with disabilities, making it challenging for them to access quality education.
- **Inaccessible Healthcare** - Medical facilities, equipment, and information may not be accessible to PwDs, leading to inadequate healthcare services.
- **Attitudinal Barriers** - Healthcare providers may hold biases or lack proper training in treating individuals with disabilities.
- **Inadequate Communication Support** - PwDs who have speech or communication impairments may face challenges in expressing themselves and accessing information.
- **Inaccessible Public Transport** - Many forms of public transportation are not designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities, limiting their mobility.

The various schemes implemented by govt of Himachal Pradesh to empower the PwDs are:

- **Himachal Pradesh Vocational Rehabilitation for the Persons with Disabilities Scheme 2007** - The “Himachal Pradesh Vocational Rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities Scheme 2007” is a program that was initiated by the government of Himachal Pradesh, to provide vocational rehabilitation and support to individuals with disabilities.
 - ❖ The scheme aimed to empower persons with disabilities by helping them acquire skills, gain employment, and lead independent lives.
- **ASEEM (A Scheme for Enabling, Empowering and Mainstreaming of the Specially Abled)** – Govt of H.P. started the ASEEM scheme with the objectives to;
 - ❖ prevention, early detection, screening of disabilities & provision of disability cards;
 - ❖ Programme for awareness generation on disabilities;
 - ❖ Programme for research on disability issues;
 - ❖ Scheme of scholarships to students with disabilities;
 - ❖ Scheme of special education for visually, speech & hearing-impaired children;
 - ❖ Scheme of rehabilitation for mentally challenged children/adults;
 - ❖ Scheme of grants in aid to NGOs working for persons with disabilities.
- **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016** - The Act aims to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities in India.
 - ❖ The Act expanded the criteria for disabilities and added more types of disabilities to the list.
 - ❖ The Act also provides for establishing a National Commission for Persons with Disabilities.
 - ❖ The Act also provides for establishing State Commissions for Persons with Disabilities.
- **Free Travelling Facilities in HRTC Buses** - Handicapped persons are allowed free travel facilities within the State & blind personnel are allowed free travel even outside the State.
- **Marriage Grants to PwDs** – The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment is providing grants for those persons with disabilities who attain manageable age.

- ❖ There are two sets of grants as per the degree of disability; one who has 40% to 74% disability will be granted Rs 8000 and those who have 75% to 100% disability will be given Rs 15000.
- **Educational Scholarships** – The state government is giving monthly scholarships to disabled students from 1st standard to postgraduate degrees and courses.
 - ❖ A person, whose family's income is not more than rupees Rs 60,000, is eligible for the scholarship.
- **State Disability Pension** - This scheme is known as Himachal Pradesh Social Security Pension in the form of Rs 400 per month, and is administered by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ The individual with a disability should be of any age, with a disability percentage of 40% or more, and the income sources should not exceed Rs 15,000 per month, to be eligible under the scheme.
- **Special Ability Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs)** - Two Special ability Rehabilitation Centres are being run through the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) Hamirpur and Indian Red Cross Society, Dharamshala respectively.
- **Post Matric Scholarship to Disabled Students** - Students with a disability exceeding 40%, as certified by the competent state medical authority, are eligible for a full scholarship if their family's total annual income does not exceed ₹2, 50,000 from all sources.

SCHEMES RELATED TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Women constitute 49.28% of Himachal Pradesh's total population as per the 2011 census. The empowerment of women is essential for the overall development of society, the state, and the nation.

Women empowerment is required because:

- **Larger Part of Workforce** - Women constitute 63% of the rural agriculture-based workforce in Himachal Pradesh.
- **Economic Role** - They contribute to the state GDP through self-help groups, paying taxes, and contributing to other manufacturing processes.
- **To Ensure Safety and Security** - It will help to reduce various crimes against women like sexual harassment, and domestic violence by introducing them to their rights.
- **Fulfil Constitutional Obligation** - It will really fulfil the notion of equality enshrined in the Constitution of India.

Various Initiatives Started by the State Government for Women's Empowerment are:

- **Beti Hai Anmol Yojana** – This program is designed for families with up to two girl children belonging to economically disadvantaged backgrounds (BPL families).
 - ❖ Following the birth of each girl child, the government department deposits Rs 10000 into a designated post office or bank account.
 - ❖ These girls are eligible for scholarships ranging from Rs 300 to Rs 1200 throughout their 1st to 12th grades.
 - ❖ These scholarships can be used for expenses related to books, clothing, and other necessities.
- **Mother-Teresa Asahaya Matri Sambhal Yojna** - The objective of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to widow women for educating and looking after their children up to two children till they attain the age of 18 years.
 - ❖ In this came women get Rs 5000 per annum per child.
- **Vishesh Mahila Uthaan Yojna** - Vishesh Mahila Uthaan Yojana was launched by the Women and Child Development Department Government of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ This scheme is specially launched for the rehabilitation of physically and sexually abused women through technical and vocational training.

- ❖ Under this scheme beneficiary, women are provided vocational training, a monthly stipend, a financial loan to be self-employed at a 4% rate of interest and a subsidy of Rs. 10,000.
- **Sashakt Mahila Rin Yojna** - The 'Sashakt Mahila Rin Yojna' is an initiative of Himachal Pradesh State Cooperative Bank (HPSCB), which will provide loans to women for pursuing their entrepreneurial dreams, engage in livelihood activities, fulfil their day-to-day needs and uplift their families.
- ❖ Under the scheme, the bank offers credit of Rs 21,000, Rs 51,000 and Rs 1,01,000 at a relatively low-interest rate of 8.51 per cent.
- **Mukhyamantri Vidhwa Evam Ekal Nari Awas Yojna** - A state government scheme to provide financial assistance to eligible widows and single women for the construction of houses.
- ❖ A sum of Rs 1.5 lakh is provided as financial assistance under this scheme to about 7,000 women with an annual income of less than Rs 2 lakh per annum.
- **Mukhya Mantri Swawlamban Yojana** - The state government has also launched Mukhya Mantri Swawlamban Yojana under which provision has been made to provide a 30 per cent subsidy to women for setting up their ventures.
- **Self-Employment Assistance for Women** - Under this scheme 5,000 are provided to women having an annual income less than 35,000 for carrying income-generating activities.
- **Rehabilitation Support to Minor Victims of Rape & Child Abuse** - The objective of this scheme is to restore the self-confidence and dignity of a minor victim of rape and child abuse through intensive counselling, financial security, skill upgradation, rehabilitation and livelihood support.
- **Safety and Security** - In 2018, the state govt launched a 24/7 'Gudiya' helpline, for quick police response to cases of crimes against women.
- ❖ It also launched 'Shakti Button' - a mobile app linked to police control rooms for ensuring the safety of women in the state

Assessment of the Outcomes of Diverse Policies and Initiatives Aimed at Empowering Women:

- **Increased Participation in Labour Force** - The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act boosted women's participation in Himachal Pradesh from 13% to 46%.
- ❖ In the state, women make up 63% of the agriculture-based workforce, while the national average is only 27%.
- **Accessibility to Health Institutes** - Around 82 per cent of villages have a health sub-centre within 3 kilometres, 93 per cent of which have auxiliary nurse midwives on staff.
- **Reductions in child marriage** - In 2010, Himachal Pradesh instituted the "Beti Hai Anmol program" to provide an incentive for girls' educational attainment and delayed marriage.
- ❖ As a result, the percentage of women (aged 20-24) who were married before the age of 18 is 8.6% in H.P. whereas it is 20% in Haryana and more than 30% in Rajasthan.
- **Improvement in Education Enrollment** - These reforms helped the state boost literacy rates among women to 88 per cent and raised school enrollment among girls aged 7-11 to 99.8 per cent. The state also maintains one of the lowest dropout rates in all of India.
- **Decision-making** - Among married women, 90.8 per cent of those in Himachal Pradesh reported participating in household decisions, compared to 84 per cent for all of India. (National Family Health Survey-4)

But apart from all these efforts, there are still many problems that are hindering the overall development and empowerment of women.

The Challenges are:

- **Child marriages** - Despite tall claims by the government to curb child marriages, there are 205 cases recorded in five backward districts of Sirmaur between 2015 and 2020.

- **Lack of job opportunities** – Women have less job elasticity as compared to men which reduces their economic independence and empowerment.
 - ❖ E.g. despite being Asia's largest industrial hub, due to its locality to Baddi-Nalagrh and other areas of Solan, the family of girls avoid her movement to these industrial areas due to various concerns.
 - ❖ In agriculture as well their work is restricted to sowing, weed-pulling, thrashing, etc.
- **Less wages** – Despite various laws in force, women get less wages for the same work in many fields in the state.
 - ❖ According to the 68th report of NSSO, the average wage earned by daily wagers in non-public work is Rs. 467/day for men and Rs. 411/day for women in rural areas. It is Rs. 534/day for men and Rs. 450/day for women in urban areas.
- **Lack of land holding** – Though women's participation in the agriculture-based labour force increased significantly, very few women hold the ownership of agricultural land.
 - ❖ According to National Family Health Survey-4, only 9% of women in H.P. hold land ownership.
- **Social constraints** – Being patriarchal in nature society still restrict the movement of women for job seeking outside town or state.
 - ❖ Further higher education of girls has been seen as illogical because girls are considered as "Paraya-Dhan".
 - ❖ After marriage, it is a woman who has to leave her job if such a situation arises.
- **"Sarpanch-Pati" culture** - Though women are given reservation in the Panchayati Raj institution, the real power of the post is enjoyed and practiced by her husband or any male member of the family.

All these issues and challenges restrict women's empowerment in the state in a true sense. To overcome these issues various approaches should be adopted:

- **Community participation** – Policies and schemes will become effective only when they are accepted at the ground level by society. Hence educating and informing the society about benefits of women's empowerment is the most effective tool to overcome these challenges.
- **Strict implementation of laws** – The child marriage act and other laws in force should be implemented strictly to reduce the occurrence of child marriage and other crimes against women.
- **Promoting Women Self-Help Groups** – As of now 24500 self-help groups have been formed under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in the state.
 - ❖ The main objective of the SHGs is to provide a platform for women to sell their products so that they can be financially strengthened.
 - ❖ Further women of SHGs can also provide financial, emotional, and health-related help to each other.
- **Equal access to land ownership** – Girl child should also provide the land and property ownership in the father's property, which makes them financially empowered.
 - ❖ Recent amendment to the 51-year-old legislation 'Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act of 1972' is a welcoming move of the govt.
- **Counter Pradhan-Pati syndrome** – Using various techniques like audits, training sessions, etc., it should be ensured that women representatives take decisions related to their posts by themselves.
 - ❖ Strict legal action should be adopted to counter the Pradhan-Pati syndrome.

Women empowerment is a target under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which we have to achieve by 2030. Though we are quite ahead of the national level in various indicators of women empowerment, Himachal Pradesh still has to walk a long way to achieve this goal. With "Sabka sath sabka vikas" approach, we will eventually cover this distance.

SCHEMES RELATED TO CHILDREN'S WELFARE

Himachal Pradesh has launched numerous programs to enhance the well-being and development of its children. These initiatives encompass health, nutrition, education, and protection against exploitation.

The various schemes are:

- **Beti Hai Anmol Yojana** - Beti Hai Anmol is the prominent scheme of the Himachal Pradesh Government. It was launched in July 2010. This scheme is a welfare scheme to provide financial assistance to girl children.
 - ❖ The scheme is for girls of BPL Families. Up to two girls in a family. The department will deposit rupees 21,000/- per girl child to the post office or bank account.
 - ❖ The motive is to make girls self-reliant for necessary financial assistance and education.
- **Mukhya Mantri Sukh-Ashray Yojana** - The govt started the scheme for children in need of care (orphans, semi-orphans and specially-abled).
 - ❖ All children/persons up to the age of 27 years covered under the scheme, will be known as "children of the state" and the state government will look after them by following the principle of "Sarkar hee Martha Sarkar Hee Pita".
 - ❖ Children covered under the scheme will be taken out for educational tours outside the state once a year.
 - ❖ A Mukhya Mantri Sukh-Ashray Kosh with the provision of Rs. 101 crores have been established for this scheme.
- **Mukhya Mantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana** - Under the scheme eligible poor children will be given education loans at the interest rate of 1% to pursue engineering, medical, management, Ph.D., ITI/Polytechnics, Pharmacy, Nursing, and midwifery etc.
- **Scheme for Adolescent Girls** - This aims to support school Adolescent Girls of 11- 14 years of age to back to formal schooling or bridge learning, improving their nutritional and health status on the basis of 90:10 between Centre and State Government.
- **Mukhya Mantri Surakshit Bachpan Abhiyan** - Under the scheme, the people of the state, especially the children, will be made aware of the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 (POSCO).
- **Mukhya Mantri Bal Udhar Yojana** - Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to children after leaving Child Care Institutions, after completing the age of 18 years to pursue Higher/professional education.
- **Saksham Gudiya Board** - The primary goal of the scheme is to provide policy recommendations aimed at empowering girls and safeguarding their rights.
 - ❖ This includes analyzing existing laws, policies, and initiatives, as well as assessing the effectiveness of programs implemented by various government departments to protect and uplift girls and adolescent girls from various forms of crime.
- **PM Poshan Scheme (Automated Reporting and Management System)** - The Himachal Pradesh government initiated the ARMS program as part of the PM Poshan scheme to promote transparency in the mid-day meal program and ensure that school children in the state receive a consistent and nutritious diet.
 - ❖ This program enables schools to report daily meal data to the government's website.

CYBER CRIMES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Cybercrime refers to criminal activities that involve the use of computer networks, digital devices, and the internet to commit unlawful acts.

- These crimes target computer systems, networks, and individuals, often causing financial loss, data breaches, privacy invasion, and disruption of services.

Status of the Cyber Crimes in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Rising Cyber Threats** - Cyberspace emerges as a prominent arena for criminal activities, with Himachal Pradesh recording approximately 18,000 cybercrime complaints in the past five years (2017-2021).
- **Monthly Cyber Complaints** - The state consistently registers an average of 5,000 monthly cybercrime complaints on the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.
- **March 2023 Cybercrime Snapshot** - In March 2023, the cyber police received 2,700 complaints, including 1,135 financial fraud complaints, 293 social media-related complaints, 799 inquiries, and 473 other complaints, reflecting the diversity of cybercrimes facing the state.

Different Categories of Cybercrime that Jeopardize the Security of the People of the State:

- **Cryptocurrency Scam** - Under the scam, the fraudulent lured unsuspecting investors with the promise of high returns within a short frame, employing a Ponzi-style scheme.
 - ❖ E.g., the cryptocurrency scam was worth Rs 200 crore in Hamirpur, Rs 100 Crore in Una and Rs 200-250 Crore in Kangra district registered in the state.
- **Malware Attacks** - Malware, short for malicious software, refers to any intrusive software developed by cybercriminals (often called hackers) to steal data and damage or destroy computers and computer systems.
 - ❖ Viruses, trojans, ransomware, spyware, etc.
 - ❖ E.g., on Jun 18, 2023, police in Himachal Pradesh registered a case after a man claimed a ransomware attack on the server of his computer by hackers demanding money to decrypt files.
 - ❖ It is the first case of a ransomware attack reported in the state.
- **Hacking** - Unauthorized access to computer systems, networks, or devices to gather information, disrupt operations, or manipulate data.
 - ❖ E.g., personal details including telephone numbers, bank account details and Aadhaar numbers of more than 20 lakh customers of Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Ltd (HPSEBL) have been leaked online.
- **Identity Theft** - Uses another person's personal identifying information, like their name, identifying number, or credit card number, without their permission, to commit fraud or other crimes.
 - ❖ E.g., the Aadhaar cards of Nepalese people and migrant labourers have been misused by cyber criminals in five to 10% of the cyber fraud cases in the past two years in Himachal Pradesh.
- **Financial Frauds** - H.P. police registered the greatest number of financial crimes out of total cybercrimes. Cybercrime hubs mostly situated in UP and Bihar are targeting residents by luring them with debit or credit card reactivation, online bookings, winning the lottery, revival of insurance policies, etc.
 - ❖ E.g., The cyber-crime cell of the state, while dealing with these cases, has successfully refunded Rs 75,36,789 to the victims and put on hold the transaction of Rs 1,53,76,785 involved during this period.
- **Cyberbullying or Cyber Stalking** - Harassment, threats, or intimidation conducted online, often through social media platforms.
 - ❖ E.g., Himachal has recently reported a spurt in cases of cybercrime in the state. In most such cases, miscreants persuaded women to send their nude or semi-nude photos to them, which they later used to blackmail or harass them.
- **Online Extortion** - Threatening to release sensitive information or data unless a ransom is paid.
 - ❖ E.g., Cyber fraudsters have been using novel methods for extortion from affluent elderly men in Himachal Pradesh, with the police receiving 55 complaints of honey trap in the first two months of the year alone.
 - ❖ Out of the 55 complaints, 95 per cent pertain to men in the age group of 45 to 75 years. In 80 per cent of the cases, the victims paid the ransom.

Steps taken by State Government to Curb the Cyber-Crimes are:

- **Cyber Crime Investigator Badge** - Officers who excel in the field of cybercrime investigation will be awarded a 'Cyber Crime Investigator Badge' under this initiative.
 - ❖ The badge will be presented twice a year by the Director General of Police (DGP).
- **Formation of Special Investigation Team (SIT)** - DGP Sanjay Kundu, in September 2023, constituted a 13-member special investigation team (SIT) to investigate cases related to cryptocurrency ██████████ ██ ████████ ████████ stations of the state.
 - ❖ The SIT will be headed by DIG (Northern Range) Abhishek Dullar
- **Training Programs for ICT Teachers** - There is a proposal to train ICT teachers in schools. These trained teachers can then educate other educators and students about cybercrime vulnerabilities.
- **Cyber Swachhta Kendra in Himachal Pradesh** - The "Cyber Swachhta Kendra" (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre) has been established in Himachal Pradesh in alignment with the goals of the "National Cyber Security Policy," with the aim of creating a secure cyber ecosystem within the state.
- **Awareness Generation Campaign** - The govt of the state along with NGOs and Gram Sabha has started awareness drives to check cases of cyber-crimes.
 - ❖ In the majority of instances, it was discovered that the crime occurred due to errors on our part.
- **Proposal for Cyber Police Stations** - At present. There are three cyber crime police stations in the state, i.e., at Shimla, Mandi and Dharamshala.
 - ❖ Further, the Himachal Pradesh Police has submitted a proposal to the state government for the establishment of cybercrime police stations in 10 districts as well.
- **Cyber Labs and Skill Enhancement** - Under the Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) scheme, facilities for cyber forensic analysis and training have been established.

As cybercrimes continue to evolve and adapt, the state of Himachal Pradesh is taking concrete steps to enhance its cybersecurity measures, protect its residents, and mitigate the impact of cybercriminal activities.

DRUG MENACE IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

The problem of drug trafficking has evolved into a significant state-level concern. As transportation networks expand and become more accessible across different regions, with numerous routes facilitating movement between states, the prevalence of drug-related issues has steadily risen over the years.

Status of Drug Trafficking and Abuse in the State:

- **Emergence of Synthetic Drugs** - While the smuggling of marijuana and charas remains a prominent issue in the Kullu district, the increasing prevalence of heroin/Chitta addiction in various regions of Himachal Pradesh has become an urgent concern.
- **Drug Addiction Among Youth** - Approximately 60 to 65 per cent of the state's youth population in Himachal Pradesh falls victim to the drug menace.
- **High Incidence of Trafficking** - More than 40 per cent of the total inmates imprisoned in 14 prisons across the state face charges related to drug offences under the NDPS Act.
- **Involvement of Foreign Nationals** - Between 2017 and 2021, a total of 72 individuals from foreign countries have been apprehended for their participation in the narcotics trade within the hilly state.

Factors Contributing to the Rise in Drug Trafficking in the State Encompass Various Aspects:

- **Geographical Location** - Himachal Pradesh's proximity to states like Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, historically linked with drug cultivation and trafficking, can result in spillover effects and an increased drug influx.

- **Tourism** - The state's status as a prominent tourist destination inadvertently boosts drug trafficking. Tourist areas become focal points for the drug trade due to demand from both tourists and locals.
 - ❖ E.g., Kasol has evolved into a hub for rave parties, intensifying the demand for drugs.
- **Unemployment and Economic Factors** - High levels of joblessness and limited economic prospects can drive individuals into illegal activities like drug trafficking as a means of earning a livelihood.
 - ❖ A study on "Dynamics of Drug Addiction and Abuse in North West India" underscores the connection between unemployment and the lure of easy money, contributing to the alarming rise of substance abuse and drug addiction in the region.
- **Advent of Social Media** - The tricks of the drug trade have also changed as most of the drug sales nowadays are done on the "Dark Net".
- **Lack of Law Enforcement** - Ineffectual law enforcement and inadequate border control measures can facilitate the movement of drugs across state and national boundaries.
- **Networks and Routes** - Existing criminal networks and established trafficking routes contribute to the expansion of the drug trade in the region.
- E.g., **three major trafficking axes are the** Damtal-Nurpur Axis for heroin, the Baddi-Solan-Shimla Axis for heroin, and the Parvati Valley Axis for cannabis.
- **Cultivation** - In some instances, the state's terrain is suitable for the cultivation of drug-producing plants, further fueling the drug trade.
 - ❖ Notably, Malana Cream, a world-renowned cannabis extract, serves as a potent drug.
- **Corruption** - Corruption within law enforcement agencies and local administration facilitates the smooth operation of drug trafficking networks.
- **Social Factors** - Socioeconomic disparities, lack of education, and other societal elements can render specific communities more susceptible to engagement in drug trafficking.
- **New Methods of Trafficking** - With the progress in technology, drug traffickers using new methods to smuggle drugs across borders.
 - ❖ E.g., use of Drones.
- **Global Drug Trade:** The international nature of the drug trade means that global factors, such as worldwide drug demand, can indirectly impact local drug trafficking scenarios.
 - ❖ Over a period from 2017 to 2021, a total of 72 foreign nationals were apprehended for their involvement in the narcotics trade in Himachal Pradesh, including 36 Nigerian nationals, 15 individuals from other African countries, and 14 Europeans.
- **Lack of Awareness and Prevention Programs** - Inadequate awareness and prevention programs can result in communities remaining uninformed about the dangers of drug trafficking and drug abuse.

To Combat the Problem of Drug Trafficking within the State, the State Government has Initiated Several Strategies and Actions:

- **Awareness Campaigns** - Various awareness campaigns have been initiated by the state government to educate the public, with a special focus on the youth, regarding the perils of drug abuse and trafficking.
 - ❖ E.g., PRADHAHV is a comprehensive program initiated by the government to combat drug abuse among the youth.
- **Strengthening Law Enforcement** - This involves training law enforcement personnel, equipping them with modern technology, and enhancing intelligence sharing to track down drug traffickers.
 - ❖ Notably, Himachal Pradesh has established a special task force, led by the Additional Director General of Police CID and officers from the Department of State Taxes and Excise, to combat the drug menace in the state.

- **Surveillance and Monitoring** - Advanced surveillance techniques and technology are being utilized by the state government to monitor drug-related activities, identify potential trafficking routes and locations, and take timely action against drug traffickers.
- **Raising Legal Penalties** - The government is reviewing and amending related laws to impose more stringent penalties on drug traffickers.
 - ❖ E.g., the Himachal Pradesh Assembly has passed a resolution to amend the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, rendering all drug trades as non-bailable offences to prevent drug traffickers from evading the law.
- **Community Engagement** - Local communities, NGOs, and civil society organizations are encouraged to facilitate support for drug addicts and their reintegration into society after rehabilitation.
 - ❖ E.g., GUNJAN Organisation for Community Development is an NGO in H.P. that fighting against the evil of drugs in the state.
- **Border Vigilance** - Given its proximity to international borders, Himachal Pradesh is intensifying border vigilance to deter drug smuggling across state and national borders.
 - ❖ E.g., the police forces of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab have collaborated on joint operations along the Punjab-Himachal Pradesh border to monitor criminal activities in these states.
- **Interagency Coordination** - Various government agencies, including law enforcement, health departments, and social welfare organizations, are working in coordination to address the multifaceted aspects of the drug trafficking issue.
- **Crackdown on Illicit Drug Manufacturing:** Vigilant efforts have been made to identify and dismantle illicit drug cultivation and manufacturing units within the state.
 - ❖ In one of the biggest destruction operations conducted over 2 weeks in Himachal Pradesh, officers of the Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) destroyed 1032 hectares (12,900 bighas) of illicit cannabis (ganja) cultivation.
- **Seizure and Confiscation** - The government routinely conducts operations to seize and confiscate illegal drugs, thereby disrupting the supply chain and financial incentives for drug traffickers.
- **Rehabilitation and Counselling** - The government has established rehabilitation centres to help drug addicts recover and lead a drug-free life and also drafted a policy to ensure the goal of rehabilitation.
 - ❖ E.g., State Policy on Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts of 2019.

The State Policy on Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts 2019

In 2019, the state of Himachal Pradesh recognized the urgent need to address the escalating problem of drug addiction within its borders.

This Policy was Driven by Several Key Reasons:

- **Mitigating Rising Addiction Rates** - Despite law enforcement's efforts to control drug supply, the state witnessed a surge in drug addiction, especially among the youth, necessitating urgent action.
- **Enhancing Awareness Initiatives** - Inadequate awareness programs left vulnerable groups uninformed about substance abuse risks, highlighting the need for improved prevention strategies.
- **Expanding Access to Treatment** - Existing De-Addiction Centers in Medical Colleges were either inaccessible or overwhelmed, emphasizing the necessity for broader access to addiction treatment.
- **Supporting NGOs Financially** - The absence of financial support for NGOs operating De-addiction Centers hindered their capacity to expand services, underlining the importance of funding assistance.
- **Improving Affordability and Quality** - Self-financed De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centers were unaffordable for most addicts, particularly those from middle- and low-income backgrounds, calling for more accessible and standardized therapeutic services.

- **Implementing Data Collection** - There was no systematic data collection system in place to monitor and evaluate drug demand reduction efforts in the state.
- **Legal Mandate for Comprehensive Policy** - The High Court of Himachal Pradesh also directed the state government to formulate a comprehensive State Policy on the Rehabilitation of drug addicts.

The objectives of the policy were clear and aimed at addressing these concerns:

- **Prevention** - To prevent drug abuse through awareness campaigns and education.
- **Capacity Building** - To train medical staff in addiction management and provide the necessary infrastructure.
- **Early Identification and Treatment** - To establish mechanisms for early diagnosis and treatment of drug disorder patients in health institutions.
- **Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration** - To reintegrate treated addicts into society through rehabilitation centres and support programs.
- **Accreditation** - To set minimum standards for De-addiction/Rehabilitation Centres, ensuring quality care.
- **Skill Development and Livelihood Support** - To offer skill development and vocational training to individuals in recovery, promoting their reintegration into the workforce.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** - To establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track progress and effectiveness.

By continuing these efforts and adapting to changing dynamics, Himachal Pradesh aims to mitigate the drug problem and provide a healthier and safer environment for its residents, particularly its youth.

ENACTMENT RELATED TO AGRARIAN SOCIETY

In 1952, two significant legislative acts were introduced in Himachal Pradesh, namely, the Punjab Tenancy (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Act, 1952 and the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy Rights and (Restoration) Act, 1952. These acts brought about important changes in the regulation of land tenancy in the region.

Punjab Tenancy (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Act, 1952:

Key provisions are:

- **Establishment Maximum Limit on Rent** - This act established a maximum limit on the rent that tenants were obligated to pay to landowners, which was set at 1/4th of the agricultural produce.
 - ❖ This marked a significant alteration in the existing tenancy regulations.

Himachal Pradesh Tenancy Rights and (Restoration) Act, 1952:

Key provisions were:

- **Rights of Pre-Emption** - This act primarily focused on the restoration of land and the rights of pre-emption for tenants, who had been evicted after August 15, 1950.
 - ❖ These restored tenancies were to be on the same terms and conditions as they were held at the time of eviction.
- **Rent As Per Act Punjab Tenancy Act** - The maximum rent upon reoccupation had to comply with the amended rules outlined in the Punjab Tenancy (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Act, 1952, to ensure consistency with the updated tenancy regulations.

H.P. Abolition of Big Landed Estates and Land Reforms Act, 1953:

Under this act, several crucial provisions were made:

- **Security of Tenure** - The Act guaranteed that tenants would have a secure and protected status. This means that they couldn't be arbitrarily evicted from the land they were cultivating without just cause.

- **Resumption of Land** - Landowners could reclaim up to 5 acres of leased land for personal use, but they couldn't evict tenants from more than 25% of their cultivated land. This protected tenants from complete displacement.
- **Right to Acquire Ownership** - Tenants, excluding sub-tenants, had the opportunity to acquire proprietary rights by applying to the Compensation Officer.
 - ❖ They could pay nominal compensation to the landowner and become the owners of the land.
- **Compensation for Landowners** - Compensation for landowners was determined by the Compensation Officer and besides compensation of the land, the tenants were liable to pay the value of any building standing on the land belonging to the landowners.
- **Vesting of Rights in Government** - The landowner who held land, the land revenue of which exceeded Rs.125/- per year, the right, title and interest of such owner in such land were transferred and vested in the State Government
- **Maximum Rent** - The maximum rent payable by tenants was limited to 1/4th of the crop's value, and landowners couldn't arbitrarily increase it beyond this limit.

The H.P. (Transferred Territory) Tenants (Protection of Rights) Act in 1968:

Provisions under the act are:

- **Remove Disparities in Land Laws** - The Act was enacted after the merger of Punjab Hill States into Himachal in 1966. The act provided security to tenants in the merged areas.
 - ❖ Ejectment of tenants in these areas could only occur based on grounds similar to those in the existing tenancy laws of the old areas.

Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, 1972:

The major Provisions of the Act are:

- **Abolishing Intermediaries** - The Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, 1972, abolished intermediaries, marking a new era in land ownership in Himachal Pradesh.
 - ❖ Occupancy tenants in old areas and Kismi tenants in new areas became immediate owners of their tenancy land upon the commencement of the Act.
- **Reserve Land for Cultivation** - Small landowners were entitled to reserve land for personal cultivation, with limits of 1.5 acres for irrigated and 3 acres for unirrigated land.
- **Non-Occupancy Tenant Ownership** - Non-occupancy tenants in affected holdings also gained ownership of their tenancy land.
- **Nominal Compensation** - Other non-occupancy tenants, including sub-tenants, could obtain ownership by paying a nominal compensation of 96 times the land revenue and rates.
- **Protection for Serving Soldiers** - Under the new law, tenants of the serving soldiers will not be able to acquire ownership of the tenancy land.
 - ❖ On ceasing to be a member of the armed forces, they can resume up to five acres of land for personal cultivation, provided such members of the Armed Forces were cultivating the land personally before joining the Armed Forces.
- **Protection of Vulnerable Groups** - The Act protected the land rights of vulnerable groups, including widows, unmarried/divorced women, minors, those with physical or mental disabilities preventing personal cultivation, and those under detention or imprisonment.
- **Burden of Proof** - In disputes between landowners and tenants regarding tenancy existence, the burden of proof fell on the owner to establish that no tenancy existed.
- **Transfer Restrictions** - Tenants gaining land ownership under the Act were prohibited from transferring the land for ten years, except for productive purposes with the collector's prior permission.
- **Discouraging Land Speculation** - Section 118 of the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, 1972 places clear limitations on the transfer of land to non-agriculturists who do not engage in personal cultivation within an estate located in Himachal Pradesh.

Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1972:

The primary objective of this act was to address the issue of land concentration and to ensure equitable distribution of agricultural land among the landless and marginalized sections of society.

Major provisions and objectives of the Himachal Pradesh Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1972 are:

- **Definition of “Family”** - The act defined a “family” as a group of persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, who normally reside together and cultivate land as a single unit.
- **Permissible Area** - The permissible land area for individuals or families based on irrigation capability is as follows:
 - ❖ Land with assured irrigation for two crops: 10 acres.
 - ❖ Land with assured irrigation for one crop: 15 acres.
 - ❖ Land of other classes, including orchards: 30 acres.
 - ❖ In the recent amendment, an adult girl child, married or unmarried will be considered a separate entity and the adult daughter will be permitted to have a separate independent unit of up to 150 bighas of land.
- **Exemptions** - Exemptions from this Act include:
 - ❖ Lands owned by the State or Central Government.
 - ❖ Lands owned by registered Co-operative Farming Societies, provided a member's share, along with other owned land, doesn't exceed the permissible area.
 - ❖ Lands owned by Land Mortgage Banks, State and Central Co-operative Banks, and other Banks.
 - ❖ Lands belonging to or vested in local authorities.
 - ❖ Lands belonging to religious or spiritual bodies or organizations, propagating moral or secular teachings including the eradication of casteism, alcoholism, drug addiction etc.
- **Penalties for Violation** - The act prescribed penalties for individuals or families found in violation of the ceiling limits.
 - ❖ He/she shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months, or with a fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.
- **Land Redistribution** - One of the main objectives of the act was to redistribute excess land holdings to landless and marginalized sections of society.
 - ❖ The government had the authority to take possession of excess land and distribute it to eligible beneficiaries, such as landless farmers and agricultural labourers.

INITIATIVES TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF AGRARIAN SOCIETY

Agriculture and its allied activities are integral to the lives and livelihood, as it provides livelihood to more than half of the state's workforce, i.e., 57%.

- Further it also contributes around 13% to the state GDP.
- Hence, to ensure its full efficiency, the state govt has started many initiatives to protect the interests of the agrarian society of the state.

The various initiatives are:

- **Irrigation Related Initiatives:**
 - ❖ **HIMCAD** - The state government of Himachal Pradesh has started a new scheme named 'HIMCAD', to provide irrigation facilities to farmers.

The scheme will provide end-to-end connectivity of farmers' fields for better water conservation, crop diversification and integrated farming.

- ❖ **Jal Se Krishi Ko Bal Yojana** – Under the scheme, check dams and ponds are built. Total expenditure is borne by the state govt.
- ❖ **Flow Irrigation Scheme** - Under this scheme besides renovating the source location of Kulhs, strengthening of Kulhs in the common area is being undertaken.
- ❖ 100% of expenditure is borne by the government on community-based work government has decided to grant a 50% subsidy for the construction of bore wells and shallow wells for individuals or irrigation purposes under this scheme.

➤ **Crop Protection Scheme:**

- ❖ **Mukhya Mantri Krishi Utpadan Sanrakshan Yojana** - The Mukhya Mantri Krishi Utpadan Sanrakshan Yojana, consolidates three separate schemes with the common goal of safeguarding agricultural produce. The various components of the MMKUS scheme include:
- ❖ **Solar Fencing** - This initiative offers an 85% subsidy when three or more farmers collaborate to install solar fencing, and an 80% subsidy is available for individual farmers who choose to install it on their land.

This electric fence, powered by solar panels, generates enough current to deter stray animals, wild animals, and monkeys from entering and damaging crops.

- ❖ **Anti-Hail Nets** - In this segment, the state provides 80% financial assistance to eligible farmers for the acquisition of anti-hail nets.

This scheme is designed to shield agricultural products from damage caused by hailstorms.

- ❖ **Greenhouse Renovation** - Under this component, the government offers a 70% subsidy for the replacement of poly sheets after five years of setting up the greenhouse or in cases of damage resulting from natural disasters.
- ❖ **Mukhya Mantri Nutan Polyhouse Pariyojana** – This program will result in the construction of 5000 polyhouses.

It will be implemented in two stages; the first stage will be run from FY 2020-21 to 2022-23.

Under this scheme 85% subsidy support is provided for the construction of polyhouses.

➤ **Agriculture Promotion Scheme:**

- ❖ **Mukhyamantri Krishi Samvardhan Yojana** – This scheme subsumed the eight ongoing programs with similar goals to prevent activity duplication and arranged them into four components.

These are:

Cluster Bases Vegetable Production Scheme;

Input Based Umbrella Scheme;

Strengthening of Seed Multiplication Scheme;

Strengthening of Laboratories.

➤ **To Promote Sustainable Agriculture:**

- ❖ **H.P. Crop Diversification and Promotion Project** – To promote sustainable agricultural diversification in prospective locations the crop diversification project with the aid of Rs 321 crores from Japan International Cooperation Agency was sanctioned and implemented in the state till 2020.
- ❖ Kangra, Mandi, Una, Bilaspur and Hamirpur were selected as project locations.
- ❖ The objectives of the scheme are:

Increase area and production of vegetation;

To increase farmers income;

Training and capacity building of Agriculture Field Extension Staff.

- ❖ **Prakritik Kheti Kushal Kisan Yojana** – This initiative is introduced to promote Zero Budget Natural Farming to reduce cultivation costs.

The use of synthetic fertiliser and pesticides is discouraged.

The funds allocated to the Department of Agriculture and Horticulture for pesticide/insecticides are utilised to deliver bio-pesticide and bio-insecticides

➤ **Farmer Protection Scheme:**

- ❖ **Mukhya Mantri Kisaan Evam Khetihar Mazdoor Jeevan Suraksha Yojana** – The state government introduced this programme in 2015-16 to provide insurance coverage to farmers and agricultural labourers in the event of suffering injury or death due to the operation of farm machinery.

Under this programme in case of death Rs 3 lakh, in case of permanent handicaps Rs 1 lakh and for partial amputation Rs 10,000 to Rs 40,000 is provided to the affected farmers.

➤ **Horticulture Promotion Scheme:**

- ❖ **HP SHIVA Project** – Under the scheme, the government will develop a 6,000-hectare area for horticulture in 28 development blocks in 7 districts (Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Mandi, Sirmour, Solan and Una).

This will be developed under the “One Crop One Cluster” approach.

- ❖ **Him Unnati scheme** - “Him Unnati,” which has received an initial allocation of Rs. 150 crore, will concentrate its efforts on enhancing various agricultural clusters, including those dedicated to milk production, pulses, millets, vegetables, fruits, flowers, cash crops, and natural farming.

Over the upcoming five years (2023-28), more than 2600 such clusters will be established, which is expected to provide a significant boost to the agricultural sector in the state.

For the current year (2023-24), 51 clusters have already been identified for the Kharif cropping season, and an additional 286 clusters are scheduled to be established during the Rabi season, with a budget of Rs. 25 crore allocated for this purpose.

➤ **Other Schemes of State Government:**

- ❖ **Mukhya Mantri Krishi Kosh Yojana** – The state government has initiated the Krishi Kosh program to provide financial support to farmers for purchasing seeds, offering interest rate subsidies, and ensuring credit guarantee coverage.
- ❖ **Krishi Se Sampantta Yojana** – This scheme is being implemented in the state to encourage the cultivation of Heeng (Asafoetida) in high-altitude areas (Lahaul-Spiti, Kinnaur, Pangi, etc.) and Saffron in suitable climate conditions.
- ❖ **Rajya Krishi Yantrikaran Yojana** – To facilitate agricultural engineering the mechanisation in the agriculture sector in the state, the government started Rajya Krishi Yantrikaran Yojana in 2018-19.

Under the scheme, the state government is offering a 40% to 50% subsidy on additional equipment such as Chaff Cutters, Maize Shellers, Wheat Thrashers, Sprayers, Toolkits, etc.

These initiatives collectively demonstrate the state government’s commitment to the welfare of its agrarian society, promoting sustainable agriculture, and ensuring the security of farmers’ livelihoods.

POLICIES FOR SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES

The policies for the socioeconomic development of Scheduled Tribes in Himachal Pradesh encompass a range of constitutional provisions, acts, and schemes designed to ensure balanced growth and promote the well-being of these marginalized communities.

The various initiatives of the state government are:

➤ **Constitutional Provisions:**

- ❖ **Article 15(4)** - refers to the special provisions for their advancement.
- ❖ **Article 16(4A)** - speaks of reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services under the State in favour of SCs/STs, which are not adequately represented in the services under the State.
- ❖ **Art 338 (A)** - Provide for the establishment of a National Commission for Scheduled Tribes to ensure the overall development of the scheduled tribes.
- ❖ **Article 332** - Under Article 332 of the constitution, reservation is provided to the Scheduled tribes in the state legislative assembly.
- ❖ **Article 243 D** - Under the article, reservation of seats is provided to the STs in every Panchayat (i.e., at all the three levels), in the proportion of their population to the total population in the panchayat area.
- ❖ **Tribal Advisory Council** - Under the 5th schedule of the constitution, a tribal advisory council is established in the state, whose 3/4th members are the representatives of the scheduled tribes in the state legislative assembly.

Apart from advising on the matter referred to it, it oversees the implementation of the tribal sub-plan in the state.

➤ **Acts and Schemes:**

- ❖ **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989** - The act prohibits various offences, including atrocities committed against these communities.

It defines offences and specifies penalties for those found guilty of committing atrocities.

The act also outlines procedures for the investigation, trial, and prosecution of such offences.

- ❖ **Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996** - The state govt introduced the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996 in the tribal areas of the state, to strengthen the Gram-Sabhas of these regions.
- ❖ The PESA conferred absolute powers to Gram Sabha, whereas the state legislature has given an advisory role to ensure the proper functioning of Panchayats and Gram Sabhas.
- ❖ PESA acknowledges the traditional decision-making process and advocates for the self-governance of the people.
- ❖ The Gram-Sabha provided with power to the Right to mandatory consultation in land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced persons, ownership of minor forest products, resolution of local disputes, etc.
- ❖ **Samudayik Van Samvardhan Yojana** - The main objective of the scheme is to ensure the participation of local communities in the conservation and development of forests through the plantation, improving the quality of the forest and increasing the forest cover.
- ❖ **H.P. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation** - The government of Himachal Pradesh has opened the Himachal Pradesh Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation in every district headquarters of Himachal Pradesh. It was established on 14th November 1979.
- ❖ **Eklavya Scheme** - The Eklavya Model Residential Schools were established to cater to the educational needs of tribal children, who often live in remote and underdeveloped areas with limited access to quality education.

The EMRS model was first introduced in 1997-98.

The scheme envisions establishing one EMRS in each Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) block where the tribal population is concentrated.

Current status in Himachal Pradesh:

- At present, a total of four EMRS are functional in three districts of Himachal Pradesh.
- The list of schools is given below;

Chamba - EMRS Brahmaur;

Chamba - EMRS Pangti;

Kinnaur - EMRS Nichar;

Lahaul-Spiti - EMRS Lahaul.

- **Enrollment during 2019-20** – A total of 312 students enrolled in the EMRS in four schools, of which 50% are boys and 50% are girls.

WELFARE MEASURES RELATED TO SCHEDULE CASTE OF THE STATE

The SC population constitutes 25.19% of the total population as per the 2011 census.

- Himachal Pradesh holds the second rank among all states and union territories in terms of the proportion of its SC (Scheduled Caste) population to the total population.
- The SC population is primarily rural, with about 93% residing in villages. However, certain districts, such as Sirmaur and Lahul & Spiti, have the lowest proportion of SC population.

The Various challenges faced by SCs of the state are:

- **Lack of Representation** -The local Khumli judicial system, primarily consisting of Brahmins and Rajputs, lacks representation from Dalits and women.
 - ❖ Khumli makes crucial decisions regarding violence, rape, and crimes against Dalits by non-Dalits.
 - ❖ Dalits are often discouraged from seeking police intervention, and those who do are penalized.
- **Religious Problems** - Dalits are often denied a role in managing temple affairs, face discrimination in participating in rituals, and are denied entry into some places of worship.
- **Economic Problems** - Many Dalits lack land for farming and grazing their cattle.
 - ❖ Even in villages where Dalits are in the majority, most of the land belongs to non-Dalits.
 - ❖ As a result, many Dalits work as landless labourers in the fields of high-caste Hindus.
- **Educational Problems** - Traditionally, untouchables were denied access to public educational institutions, leading to high illiteracy rates among them.
- **Social Problems** – Members of lower castes are prohibited from entering the kitchens of higher castes and are required to clean their utensils when consuming food or beverages in the homes of those from higher castes.

The government of Himachal Pradesh has taken various initiatives for the upliftment and welfare of Scheduled Castes (SCs), to ensure their social, economic, and educational development.

Some of these initiatives include:

- **Constitutional Provisions**
 - ❖ **Article 15(4)** - refers to the special provisions for their advancement.
 - ❖ **Article 16(4A)** - speaks of reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services under the State in favour of SCs/STs, which are not adequately represented in the services under the State.
 - ❖ **Article 17** - abolishes Untouchability
 - ❖ **Art 338** – Provide for the establishment of a National Commission for Scheduled castes to ensure the overall development of the scheduled castes.
 - ❖ **Art 332** – provides reservations for seats in the state legislative assembly for SCs.
 - ❖ **Part 9 and 9A** - provide for the reservation of seats for SCs in Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies.
- **Schemes and Acts:**
 - ❖ **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention Of Atrocities) Act 1989** - The act prohibits various offences, including atrocities committed against these communities.

It defines offences and specifies penalties for those found guilty of committing atrocities.

The act also outlines procedures for the investigation, trial, and prosecution of such offences.

- ❖ **H.P. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation** - The government of Himachal Pradesh has opened the Himachal Pradesh Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation in every district headquarters of Himachal Pradesh. It was established on 14th November 1979.
- ❖ **Him Swablaban Yojna** - Under the scheme the corporation assists the scheduled cast families whose family income is below the poverty line.

These loans are provided to purchase various types of transport vehicles, agriculture implements, dairy farming, dhabas, guest house cottages, small-scale industries, etc.

- ❖ **Dalit Varg Vaivsaik Prashikshan Yojna (Skill development program)** - Under the scheme, the corporation provides training to the unemployed scheduled caste youth in various employment-oriented trades.

During the training, the trainee is eligible to get a stipend ranging between Rs 500 to Rs750 per month and the cost of training is also borne by the corporation.

- ❖ **Ambedkar Laghu Rin Yojna (Micro Credit Finance Scheme)** - To meet the small financial need of poor Scheduled Caste families to start small and petty businesses individually or in a group, total assistance up to Rs. 50,000/- is provided by the Corporation directly in collaboration with National Scheduled caste Finance and Development Corporation.
- ❖ **Hast Shilp Vikas Yojna** - Under this scheme, the corporation provides working capital assistance to artisans. The artisans can form a Group/Society/Association for availing working capital from the corporation. An individual artisan is also eligible for this scheme.

Rs.15,000/- per artisan is provided free of interest for 2 years. However, the society/ Association/ Group may charge an interest of @2% from an artisan to meet their administrative expenditure.

- ❖ **Study Loan** - Under this scheme, the Corporation provides education loans to SC/ST eligible students for professional and technical courses that are approved by the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) and National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC).

A maximum loan of up to Rs 10 lakh will be provided at a 4% interest rate to SC students whose family income is below a threshold level.

- ❖ **Post Matric Scholarship to SC/ST/OBC students** - Students belonging to SC and ST categories with parents earning an annual income of up to 2,50,000 and OBC students with parents earning up to 1,50,000 annually qualify for scholarships.
- ❖ **Training and Proficiency in Computer** - The state government offers training in computer skills and proficiency to individuals from SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, specially-abled, single women, widows, and those with an annual income of less than 2.00 lakh.

They receive a monthly stipend of 1,350, while specially-abled individuals receive 1,500.

Despite all these initiatives, there are still many challenges persisting in the state, which hinder the effective implementation of the policies.

These are:

- **Persisting Atrocities Against ST Population** - Incidents like the alleged murder of Right to Information activist Kedar Singh Jindan in Sirmaour district and the fatal beating of a Dalit youth in Nerwa, Shimla, underscore the continuation of caste-based violence.
- **Ongoing Caste System in Society** - Instances like the segregation of Dalit students outside in a Kullu district government-run high school during the telecast of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Pariksha Par Charcha,' as well as discriminatory practices during the Buddha celebration, reveal the persistence of the caste system in daily life.

- ❖ Further, the notion of purity and pollution is still persistent in many areas of the state.
- **Caste-Based Political Strategies** - Elected representatives from reserved seats often find their decisions influenced by non-Dalits, and it's observed that SC individuals face difficulties contesting elections when seats are not reserved, indicating the use of caste for political gain.
- **Unequal Distribution of Benefits** - Only a small segment of the SC population manages to access and benefit from the available policies and programs, leaving many marginalized individuals without assistance.
- **Lack of Awareness in Rural Areas** - Many residents in rural areas remain unaware of the advantages offered by these policies and programs, hindering their effective utilization.

It is essential that the government and civil society organizations work together to address these challenges comprehensively and create a more inclusive and just society for all.

SINGLE LINE ADMINISTRATION

Single line of administration is a term in governance meaning proper coordination among various departments of government.

- The single-line administration was introduced in Himachal Pradesh in 1986 in the Pangi (Chamba) and later was extended to all scheduled areas of the state in 1988.

The objectives of the SLA are:

- **Efficiency Unleashed** - To speedy disposal of schemes and execution of development plan.
- **Adapting Progress** - To generate flexibility in development work.
- **Unblocking Progress** - Minimizing administrative planning obstacles for seamless advancement.
- **Harmonizing Governance** - Amplifying governance effectiveness via interdepartmental coordination.

Benefits of the Single Line Administration:

- **Efficient Administration Operations** - To ensure that work proceeds smoothly and without unnecessary delays, the Deputy Commissioner has been granted special and increased powers.
- **Administrative Discipline** - Within this system, the Deputy Commissioner is responsible for writing the yearly confidential evaluations for all officers and employees in the district, emphasizing their responsibility and accountability in their roles.
- **Effective Leadership** - The Deputy Commissioner not only acts as the District Magistrate and Collector but also takes on the leadership of all district-level offices.
- **Success of Panchayat Raj System in Tribal Regions** - The Deputy Commissioner ensures the effective implementation of the Panchayati Raj Act and PESA Act in tribal areas.
- **Maintenance of Law and Order** - In his role as District Magistrate, the Deputy Commissioner is responsible for upholding law and order and acts as the head of the police and prosecuting agency within the district.
- **Efficient Revenue Department Operations** - As the Collector, the Deputy Commissioner holds the highest position in the revenue administration and is accountable for collecting land revenue and all outstanding dues, including arrears of land revenue.
- **Effective Execution of Tribal Sub Plan Provisions** - The Deputy Commissioner ensures the successful implementation of planned projects and coordinates the activities of all development departments.

TRIBAL SUB-PLAN

The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) is a strategy that was established in 1974-75 to accelerate the socio-economic development of tribal communities.

- Its primary goal is to reduce the disparities between the Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the general population in various socio-economic development indicators within a specific timeframe.

- **The Sub-Plan should;**
 - ❖ Identify the problems and needs of tribal people and critical gaps in their development;
 - ❖ Identity all available resources for TSP;
 - ❖ Prepare a broad policy framework for development;
 - ❖ Prepare a detailed department-wise plan;
 - ❖ Define a suitable administrative strategy for its implementation;
 - ❖ Specify the mechanism for monitoring and evaluation.
- **Tribal areas are categorized into two groups:**
 - ❖ Areas with over 50% tribal population;
 - ❖ Areas with scattered tribal populations.
- In Himachal Pradesh, the identified tribal regions were further divided for administrative purposes into five distinct regions:
 - ❖ The entire district of Kinnaur;
 - ❖ Spiti sub-division;
 - ❖ Lahaul sub-division;
 - ❖ Pangi sub-division;
 - ❖ Bharmour Sub-division.
- State government has kept Rs 857 crore under the Tribal Area Development Program for FY 2023-24.
 - ❖ Besides, an outlay of Rs 335 crore is proposed in the Central Schemes under the “Tribal Area Development Program”.

Benefits of tribal plans in Himachal Pradesh:

- These plans helped in streamlining the schemes directly to the people;
- The Grants given by the centre are impossible to reach tribal people without the tribal sub-plan;
- Under various heads state government is investing heavily for the development of the tribal areas. Like in health, buildings and irrigation water supply;
- Similarly opening of many schools in tribal regions under Eklavya Adarsh residential school;
- Opening up of Tribal Bhawan in Rampur;
- Facilitation of people of **Lahaul through the Atal Tunnel** which will increase tourism hence planning is required;
- Regular helicopter sorties are being carried out to facilitate the people of the tribal areas.

TRIBAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

In Himachal Pradesh, according to the 2011 census, Scheduled V areas cover about 42.49% of the state's total geographical area and the scheduled tribes make up 5.71% of the total population, with their primary concentration in districts like Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, and parts of Chamba.

Obstacles to the integration of tribal communities in Himachal Pradesh include:

- **Land Alienation, Displacement, and Forced Migration** - The challenge of land alienation, forced displacement, and enforced migration restricted the integration of tribal communities.
- **Issues with PESA Act Implementation** - Forged and manipulated Gram Sabha resolutions, lack of consent before land acquisition and other grave issues persist in the implementation of the PESA Act 1996.
- **Education Disparity** - Currently, the **tribes lag** behind not only the general population but also the Scheduled Caste population in literacy and education.

- ❖ This disparity is even more marked among Scheduled **Tribes women**, who have the **lowest literacy rates** in the state.
- **Cultural and Language Barriers** - Schedule Tribes who migrate from rural areas to urban areas suffer loss of identity, community solidarity, land, entitlements such as ration cards, and common resources.
- **Geographical Challenges** - The difficult geographical terrain, marked by extreme climate conditions, results in isolation and inhospitable living conditions for tribal communities.
- **Budgetary Constraints and Implementation Issues** - Budgetary constraints and Poor implementation of programmes are offered as another explanation for the issue of lack of social development among the tribe.
- **Limited Employment Opportunities**: The tribal areas suffer from a lack of employment opportunities, as a majority of the tribal population depends on rainfed agriculture, which is seasonal.

For the socio-economic growth of the tribal population Govt. of Himachal Pradesh has set up a proper tribal welfare administration.

The core principle within the framework of tribal development in Himachal Pradesh:

- **Non-imposition of Values** - The importance of allowing people to develop in alignment with their own cultural and societal values.
 - ❖ E.g. formation of Tribal Development Council which involves tribal people.
- **Respect for Tribal Land and Forest Rights** - Emphasizing the need to respect tribal rights in land and forests.
 - ❖ E.g., effective implementation of the Forest Rights Act of 2006.
- **Local Training for Administration** - Highlighting the training of tribal individuals in administration and development, while avoiding excessive external intervention.
- **Simplicity in Administration** - The importance of avoiding an excessive number of schemes and adopting a single-line administration approach to prevent overwhelming tribal areas.
- **Human-Centric Evaluation** - Stressing that the assessment of results should not be based solely on statistics or financial expenditures, but on the positive human development outcomes achieved.
- **Sustainable Development** - Advocating for a sustainable development approach through initiatives such as homestays and eco-tourism, which not only create employment opportunities but also preserve and promote tribal culture.
- **Leveraging Traditional Knowledge** - Encouraging the use of traditional knowledge to conserve and protect the ecology and to empower and uplift tribal communities.

Organizational Set-Up under Tribal Development Administration are:

- **The Tribal Development Department** – It was established in 1976 and has headquarter in Shimla.
 - ❖ In 1981, its name was changed to the Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribes Development Department, and it was entrusted with the responsibility of the welfare of scheduled castes.
 - ❖ In 2002, the task of scheduled caste welfare was transferred to the Social Justice & Empowerment Department, and the department became known as the Scheduled Tribe Development Department.
- **The Modified Area Development Approach (MADA)** – MADA was created during the sixth Plan to encompass tribal-concentrated areas with a population of 10,000 or more, of which 50% or more were tribal.
 - ❖ In Himachal Pradesh, this approach identified two such areas: Chamba and Bhatiyat Blocks in Chamba district.
- **Eklavya Model Residential Schools** – EMRSs in tribal-populated areas were approved during the Ninth Five-Year Plan by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.
 - ❖ These schools, similar to Navodaya schools, are established to cater to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students.

- **The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)** – It aims to promote the socio-economic development of tribal communities by focusing on marketing their products.
 - ❖ This involves forming Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and providing training to undertake specific activities, as well as exploring marketing opportunities in national and international markets.
- **The Village Grain Bank scheme** – It was initiated in November 2004 by the Department of Food & Public Distribution and helps food-insecure households, particularly during lean seasons or natural disasters.
 - ❖ These households can borrow food grains from village grain banks established within their villages, which they return later.
- **The Tribal Advisory Council** – TAC established under Article 244(1) of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of India, has been in operation since December 13, 1977.
 - ❖ While it serves as an advisory body, its recommendations are generally accepted by the government after due deliberation.
 - ❖ Apart from advising on matters referred to it, it oversees the implementation of the tribal sub-plan in the State.
- **The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)** – TSP introduced in 1974-75, is a strategy for the rapid socio-economic development of tribal populations.
 - ❖ It aims to narrow the socio-economic development gap between Scheduled Tribes and the general population in a time-bound manner.
 - ❖ The concept of integrating the Tribal Sub-Plan into the state's Annual Plan was first introduced during the 5th Five-Year Plan.
- **Single Line Administration** SLA is a governance concept that ensures proper coordination among various government departments.
 - ❖ In 1986, the ITDP Pangi was placed under the authority of a Resident Commissioner-ranked officer, who oversaw all offices in the ITDP area.
 - ❖ This officer became the ultimate authority, establishing single-line administration between the ITDP and the government.

While challenges persist, the government's proactive approach and these strategic mechanisms aim to bridge the socio-economic gap and improve the overall well-being of the tribal populations in the state.

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