CHAPTER-4

BEAS CIRCUIT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

This chapter is an overview of Beas Circuit of Himachal Pradesh. This chapter is an outcome of personal visits to the area, various brochures, websites and other travel guides. This chapter takes up a note of the tourist destinations, activities and other facilities available at various tourist places in Beas circuit of Himachal Pradesh.

4.1 VARIOUS CIRCUITS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH:

Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) has divided the State into four circuits. The tourism related infrastructure available in these circuits is explained in detail as under:

Beas Circuit
Dhauladhar Circuit
Sutlej Circuit
Tribal Circuit

The Beas Circuit:
The Beas Circuit derives its name from the ancient river Beas. It passes through the highly picturesque Kullu - Mandi regions. The main attractions are the flower filled meadows, terraced fields of paddy, maize, apple orchards and the sparkling Beas river.

This circuit covers Delhi - Swarghat - Bilaspur - Mandi - Rewalsar - Kullu - Manali - Rohtang - Naggar - Manikaran – Delhi

4.2 KULLU:

The Kullu-Manali tourist complex is spread in the entire Kullu valley, which is lavishly gifted with superb scenic wealth. Kullu, also 'known as valley of Gods', has numerous temples. Kullu valley offers a scenic charm of peaceful wooded glades and rivers through the rocks. The Dussehra of Kullu is world famous. The ancient Hindus regarded Kullu as the fartherest limit of human habitation – 'Kulantapitha', and its original name finds mention in the epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as Vishnu Purana. Kullu, which is located on the bank of the river Beas is the Central point of this tourist complex. Running North to South, the main river valley is only 80 km long and 2km at its broadest, yet a fairly wide area is open to the visitors to enjoy the spectacle of variegated mountain scenery. The deodar-fringed grassy maiden, Dhalpur, is a stage for many colourful fairs. Manali with its unspoilt scenic grandeur is extremely popular with the tourists, for a lavish display of natural scenery. It is one of the principal show places of the Kullu region.

4.2.1 Tourism – Locations:

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<th>Altitude</th>
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<td>Latitude</td>
<td>31° 20' 25&quot; to 32° 25' 0&quot; North Latitude</td>
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<td>Longitude</td>
<td>76° 56' 30&quot; to 77° 52' 20&quot; East Longitude</td>
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4.2.2 Surrounding Areas & Districts

The district is bounded on the north and east by Lahaul & Spiti district. On the south-east by Kinnaur district. On the south by Shimla district. On the south-west and west by Mandi district. And, on the north-west by Kangra district.

4.2.3 Kullu - The District Headquarter.

The much honest people which have strong culture and beliefs generally follow the Hinduism believe that the Pandavas came and resided in the land while in the exile. Thousands years old Temples still exist in the area.

The apples, appricote, almond and other dry fruits are grown here are world famous. The high terrain here give way to great adventures sports of all kinds. Beautiful trekking routes includes the 'Chanderkhani pass and other som many treks and peaks for climber'. Here is also the Beautiful Beas Kund and the famous wild life sanctuaries GHNP.

4.2.4 History:

There are several reference of Kullu in the Ramayana & Mahabharata, Vishnu Purana & other Sanskrit literature. But it is believed that Manu after the great deluge, first stepped into the earth from the celestial boat at a place on this land. The particular spot where he established his abode was the present Manali (village), which is regarded as the changed name of 'MANU-ALAYA', that is the home of Manu. It was from here that the human race came into being after the deluge.

Kullu was probably the most ancient state next to Kashmir and Kangra. Like other hill states, Kullu had its ups and downs till it was ceded to the British in 1846 according to Lahore agreement, along with other trans-Sutluj states.

Kullu was made a sub-division of Kangra District. Lahaul-spiti was attached to Kullu for administration. In 1960 Lahaul-Spiti was a separate district.
Kullu was also declared a district in 1963 and was a part of Punjab up to October 1966. On 1st November 1966, on reorganization of states, Kullu became a District of Himachal Pradesh.

4.2.5 Mythological Legends

There are several reference of Kullu in the Ramayana & Mahabharata, Vishnu Purana & other Sanskrit literature. But it is believed that Manu after the great deluge, first stepped into the earth from the celestial boat at a place on this land. The particular spot where he established his abode was the present Manali (village), which is regarded as the changed name of 'MANU-ALAYA', that is the home of Manu. It was from here that the human race came into being after the deluge.

RAMAYANA:

According to some legends connected with Ramayana period it was the privilege of a Rishi from the valley, called Shringi Rishi, who had his ashrama near Banjar to act as a purohit at the 'Putreshti Yajna' of Raja Dashratha as a result of which the great Rama was born. Even the Rishi Vashishtha performed this 'tapa' (Penance) in this valley. A story goes that the Rishi tied himself with the ropes and flung down a hill near Manali into the river, after his one hundred sons had been done to death by Rakshasa Kalinashped. The miracle river as if by divine powers, released all the bonds of the Rishi. It got the name of Vipasha after this event which means 'the liberator from bondage'.

MAHABHARATA:

The valley has witnessed a number of events and incidents believed to be associated with it during the Mahabharata period. The Pandvas, it is said, visited this valley as many as three times. Their first visit was made after the
'Lakshagarh' (wax house) incident. According to a legend it was here that Bhimsen killed a strong and cruel demon Hadimb and married his sister Hadimba, a powerful deity of Dhungr (Manali), of whom Ghatotkachh was born, who showed unparalleled heroism and velour in the great war of Kurukshetra. It is further said that Hadimba performed great 'tapa' and began to be worshiped as the great deity.

According to another legend, Arjuna, under the advice of Rishi Vyas, practiced austerities in a cave called 'Arjun Gupha' in the mountain of Inderkila (now called Deo Tiba) in order to get the powerful Pasupata Astra from Indra. It was here that he gave a fight to Shiva, the three eyed God, who had come there in the garb of a Kirata and won his grace and succeeded in ultimately getting the Pasupata Astra. Reference to Inderkila is made in the Kulantapitha Mahatmya. The great Vyas Rishi performed his ‘tapa’ in this valley during the Mahabharata period, at a place called 'Vyas Kund' on Rohtang Pass. It was because of this that the river Vipasha got the present name of Beas

Barihat Sahinta:

Kullu drives its name from "KALUT" which was a tribe in the upper valley of River Beas, as mentioned by Barahmir in Barihat Sahinta. In Mahabharat also, the ruler Parvateshawer of Kalut fought against Arjuna. Agian Kshem Dhurti, a king of Kalut was killed in the war of Mahabharat. Certain coins of first century an later period were found in which the king of Kalut was mentioned. There are other evidences in history and literature that confirm that the name of this part was "KALUT" and "T" dropped from the name with the passage of time. As such, this place got the name Kullu.

**Sources:** Various historical evidences regarding the existence of Kullu are found on coins, in inscription (Tamra-Patra/Shilalekh, from traveller accounts (Yatra-Vritant) and printed references.
4.2.6 Before Independence:

Kullu was probably the most ancient state next to Kashmir and Kangra. The Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsiang (AD 629-645) described the country of Kiu-lu-to (Kullu) situated at 117 miles to the north-east of Jalandhar which exactly corresponds with the position of Kulata. According to known history, it was founded in the first century of Christian era by one Behangamani Pal whose forefathers originally came from Tripura and had migrated from there Allahabad and then to Mayapuri near Hardwar. Many legends are associated with the name of Behangamani Pal. It appears that the people of the higher valley of Kullu at that time were suffering under the repressive regime of the Thankurs of Spiti and a keen desire to overthrow the Thakurs was smoldering in their hearts. Behangamani Pal organised what may be rightly called the upper valley first revolution sparked off at Jagatsukh. A renowned astrologer of village Paljhot is believed to have helped him allot and his endeavors duly blessed by the powerful Goddess Hadimba, were crowned with success. This goddess is up to now is respected as the 'grandmother and the patron-deity' by the Rajas of Kullu. Pal dynasty was thus established. It's original capital was established at Jagatsukh and nearly ten generations ruled from there, till it was shifted to Naggar which remained as the seat of the Government for many as 1400 years till it was finally mover to Kullu.

Their rule continued till about 1,450 when reference is available of Raja Kelas Pal. After this, there was long break of about 50 years. It appears the Thakurs and the Ranas might have captured power during this period, forcing the Pal Rajas to flee from the valley. It was again in the fifteenth century that the name of the Sidh Singh appears as the Raja of Kullu. There is almost identical legend about Sidh Singh as marked the name of Behangamani Pal. He too rallied the people against the Thakurs and established the old Pal dynasty, duly pleased by the goddess Hadimba.
Reference may be made to Raja Jagat Singh (1637-1672) who conquered the fort the Madankot which belonged to Jihna Rana, above Manali and also the of Baragarh opposit to Naggar, where Rana Bhosal held his sway. It was during his regime that the famous idol of Raghunathji was brought from Ayudhya and installed at the temple of Raghunathji at Sultanpur (Kullu). This of course a historic turn of events, in-as-much as the Rajas who had till then Shaiv and Shktik, adopted Vaishnava Dharma. Not only this, the Raja gave away the whole kingdom to Raghunathji by placing the image on the 'gaddi' (throne) and himself became the vice-regent of Raghunathji. Since hten, the Rajas of Kullu ruled the state in the name of Raghunathji.

**Sources:** Various historical evidences regarding the existence of Kullu are found on coins, in inscription (Tamra-Patra / Shilalekh), from treveller accounts (Yatra-Vritant) and printed references.

4.2.7 After Independence:

Like other hill states, Kullu had its ups and downs till it was ceded to the British in 1846 according to Lahore agreement, along with other trans-Sutluj states. Kullu was made a sub-division of Kangra District. Lahaul-spiti was attached to Kullu for administration. In 1960 Lahaul-Spiti was a separate district. Kullu was also declared a district in 1963 and was a part of Punjab up to October 1966. On 1st November 1966, on reorganization of states, Kullu became a District of Himachal Pradesh.

* Sources: Various historical evidences regarding the existence of Kullu are found on coins, in inscription (Tamra-Patra / Shilalekh), from treveller accounts (Yatra-Vritant) and printed references. http://hpkullu.nic.in/histmyth.html

4.2.8 Places of Interest in Kullu

Kullu, the headquarters of the district, is situated at an altitude of 1200 mt on the confluence of Savory rivulet and Beas river. Though it is somewhat warm
during June and early July, but for the rest of the year provides a delightful and healthy climate. The annual rainfall is about 40", of which a little less than a half occurs during the winter months from October to March. There is not much snowfall during the winters but the snow clad peaks look very beautiful. Kullu town has made its name on the international tourist map for its famous Dussehra festival. Town is a seat of the chief deity of the valley i.e. Raghunathjee. During Dussehra the visiting deities from all over the district first pay their obeisance by visiting abode of Raghunathjee at Sultanpur. The town of Kullu can accommodate large number of visitors with all facilities of boarding and lodging required by them.

Kullu district offers many attractions to the tourists. It has rich art and cultural heritage, lush green deep meadows, dazzling rivers, white capped snowy peaks and high mountains. The district has incomparable Beas and its sub-valleys which are full of natural charm and grandeur. Though, Kullu does not have the rich historical archaeological or epigraphically antiquities like Chamba but still has some ancient remains antiquities like Nirmand in outer-Seraj and Hat
at Barjaura. Not only the district is famous for its scenic beauty but also as a paradise for the trekkers and mountaineers.

**Manali**

Situated near the end of valley, Manali is one of the most attractive tourist spot not only of Himachal Pradesh, but of International fame also. Manali is synonymous streams and birdsong, forests and orchards and grandees of snow-capped mountains.

Manali is the real starting point of an ancient trade route which crosses the Rohtang and Baralacha passes, and runs via Lahul and Ladakh to Kashmir while divergent road connects it with Spiti. Now the motor link have been provided up to Leh in Jammu & Kashmir, Pangi valley in Chamba and Kaza of Lahul & Spiti. There are regular bus services to these places from Manali during summer season. It is situated at a distance of 45 kms from Kullu.

There is an interesting legend about Manali which goes to say that Manu, the author of 'Manu Samhita', after the great deluge first stepped on the earth from the celestial boat at a place in this land. The particular spot where he established his abode was the present Manali which is regarded as the changed name of 'Manu-Alaya', the abode of Manu. The temple dedicated to Manu is still existing in the Manali village.

**Naggar**

Naggar, on the left bank of the Beas and about 300 mts above the river, is delightfully situated on a wooden slope and commands extensive views,
especially of the north and west of the valley. It is 27 kms from Kullu and 5 kms from Patli Kulh. There is a bridge across the river Beas connecting Naggar and Patli Kulh. Naggar succeeded Nast (Jagatsukh) as the capital of Kullu. It was founded by Visudh Pal and continued as the headquarter of the state until the capital was transferred to Kullu (Sultanpur) by Raja Jagat Singh. A massive castle belonging to the Rajas of Kullu still exists here. The castle now is converted into a tourist lodge is built on a steep eminence overlooking the valley and dominates the village and surroundings countryside. It is supposed to have been built during the reign of Raha Sidh Singh with stones brought from Baragarh fort on the opposite of the valley.

At the foot of the small bazaar, below the castle is the Gauri-Shankar Temple of Lord Shiva, a charming example of the architecture and carving. It is presumed that the temple which is a protected monument is eight hundred years old. A little higher is the Vishnu temple of Chatturbhuj (with Four Arms). Higher still in the upper part of the village, is Pagoda shaped temple of Tripura Sundri Devi. Highest of all on a small ridge above Naggar, is the Krishna temple of Murli Dhar. This temple is perhaps the oldest of its type in this part of Kullu.

Above the castle a road leads to Hall. The beautiful house which gives its name to the estate was built by Late Colonel Rennick, but is now in the possession of the Roerich family. The late Professor Nicholas Roerich (died in Dec, 1947) was a illustrious artist of international repute had selected Naggar as his residence when he came to India in 1929 along with the other members of his family. One of his sons Sovetoslav Roerich, was also a renowned painter.

Rohtang Pass

Numerous mountain passes lead in and out of Kullu, but one the most popular with trekking parties is the Rohtang, about 3,978 mt. above sea level. It is easily the most convenient route from Manali and throughout the whole
distance provides a charming variety of scenery. The length of the pass is about 1 km. and has served as the route for many centuries for trade with Lahaul, Ladakh and to far away countries in Central Asia. The road from Manali to Keylong passes over this pass which is 51 kms and the vest of the Rohtang pass affords a wide spread panorama of mountain scenery.

The Beas river rises near the crest of Rohtang springing into existence from a block of mica-schist. To the left of the pass five or six hundred feet higher is the little lake of 'Sar Kund' (also called Dashair). On 20th Bhadon (about the 4th September) each year, this small glacier lake is visited by numbers of people from Kullu and other adjoining districts with a belief that a bath in the cold water at day break on this particular day will cure all bodily ailments.

In early summer and late autumn after about 11:00 AM or mid-day, the crest of the pass is occasionally subject to sever blizzards and snow storms, accompanied by a deadly cold breeze. Daily bus service is available at Manali for a trip to Rohtang-pass. The reservations for this trip may be done with assistance of Tourism Development Officer, at Manali.
Jagatsukh

The original name of which was 'Nast' was the ancient capital of Kullu state. Here the earliest Rajas ruled for twelve generations till, in the reign of Visudh Pal, the capital was transferred to Naggar. It lies on the left bank of the Beas and the road from Naggar to Manali runs through the village. It is about twelve km from Naggar and six km from Manali. Before reaching Jagatsukh a place Shooru, near the entrance to Hamta Nullah, is passed at which is located the ancient and historical temple of Devi Sarvali. In Jagatshukh some ancient temples are still in existence. The most important being the Shiva Temple in the Shikhra style. It has a very chaste sculptured decoration. The temple of Gayatri Devi is also located near this temple.

Vashishtha

A little village located on the left bank of the Beas, but well above the river and about 3 kms beyond Manali and is renowned for its hot sulphur springs named as Bashisht or Vashist. There is a regular walled bathing pool with stone floors. Turkish styled shower fitted bath rooms, separate for ladies and gents have been built closely where the hot/ cold water is separately piped, maintaining the regular temperature for bathing, charges are nominal. There is cafeteria. Flanking the pool there is a stone and a wooden temple dedicated to Vashishta Muni, from whom the village gets its name. The hot sulphur springs at Vashist are famous for their great gelling powers.

Arjun Gufa

A cave, which is about five kms from Manali and known as Arjun Gufa, is situated a little up from the left bank road near the village Prini. According to a legend, Arjuna under the advice of a Vyasa rishi practiced austerities in a cave in order to get the powerful 'Pashupata Astra' from Indra.
Nehru Kund

A spring of clear cold water named after the late Prime Minister, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, is about 6 kms from Manali on Manali-Keylong road.

Solang Valley

It is a splendid valley between Manali and Kothi and offers the views of glaciers and snow caped mountains and peaks. The nearest glacier from Manali is in this valley. It is about thirteen kms. from Manali and one can go there either by jeep or by bus up to Palchan a village from where a jeep able road branches off to the left. Good skiing slopes are also available here which are famous for summer skiing.

Manikaran

Nestling among, sylvan surrounding in Parbati valley, Manikaran is famous for its hot springs. Manikaran at an altitude of 1,829 mt. and 40 kms from Kullu has the finest hot water springs. Probably the most important and most useful is the one on the river bank at the entrance to the village which is always in great activity and is said to rise and fall with the increase and decline of river water. Rocks surrounding the spring are uncomfortably hot, while the temperature of the water is above boiling point. Rice can be cooked if placed in a muslin bag or tied up in cloth and thrown into the hot water pool. The water of the springs is said to be radioactive. It is supposed to be beneficial to sufferers from rheumatism and similar ailments. Due to Raghunathjee and Gurudawara, Manikaran is a favorite resort of pilgrims for Hindus and Sikhs. According to an ancient legend, Manikaran is also connected with Lord Shiva and his divine consort Parvati.

Malana

Nestled between Jari and Khiksa thatch lies the village Malana. Here one can still see the oldest democracy of the world where all inhabitants of the village
participate in the village administration. They have their own pattern of parliament that is Upper House (Jaistang) and Lower House (Kanishtang or Core). Jaistang has its own Executive and it works like Judiciary. If no solution comes out in the both houses, then the case is put forward to Jamalu Rishi (Devta) and then Devta decides the case through its 'Gur' and its decision is final and binding to all inhabitants of the village. The inhabitants of Malana speak a peculiar language of their own, called Kanashi, which is entirely different from Pahari of Kullu and is a mixture of aboriginal Mundari and Tibetan.

4.2.9 Fairs and Festivals of Kullu:

Kullu Dussehra

Dussehra is celebrated in most parts of the country on Vijya Dashmi to commemorate the victory of Rama over demon king Ravana. The highlight of this fair is The victory of good over evil.

Kullu Dussehra is however, different in certain ways from Dussehra celebrations in the other parts of the country. It presents cultural ethos of the people and their deep rooted religious beliefs which manifest during this festival with traditional songs, dances and colorful
dress. It begins on Vijya Dashmi and lasts for a week. There is an interesting story behind the beginning of Dussehra Festival. And now also, the internationally famous Dussehra of Kullu is celebrated in the same tradition.

**Pipal Jatra/Vasantotsava**

The traditional name of Vasantotsava is Pipal Jatra or it is also called Rai-ri-Jach. It takes place at Dhalpur, Kullu on 16th Baisakh every year.

The Raja of Kullu was used to sit in front of the 'Kala Kendra' on a raised platform of Pipal Tree along with his courtiers and the traditional dance was held in front of him. Once about 16 Kullu gods participated in this fair but by and by it lost its grandeur. In 1976 AD efforts were made to revive this fair with the help of Himachal Academy of Arts, Culture and Language. The Baishakha is the month of Blooming spring season in Kullu Valley. So the fair has been renamed as Vasantotsava or Spring festival. Cultural programs are organized with classical music songs and dances. Vasantotsava is now held from 28th April to 30th April every year. It is also very significant from the business point of view. The people belonging to Lahaul begin to return to their native place after passing cold winter.
in the valley. This fair gives them an opportunity to buy their agricultural tools and other useful/needful equipments and items.

**Shamshi Virshu**

This fair is held on 1st Baisakh (April 13) for one day in village Khokhan. The fair is religious and seasonal. The legend connected with he moved by the alluring beauties of the hill springs used to dance at this place with her girl friends who were daughters of Rishis and Munis. The local inhabitants also regard themselves as the progeny of the daughters of those Rishis and Munis. The goddess is worshiped outside and then it is taken inside the temple. The people offer young yellow sheets of barley which are specially sown for the occasion to be offered to the Devi along with garlands. Then a he goat is scarified. Thereafter the women sing and dance around the Rahta carrying the Devi. The devi is also danced about. Men-fold stay on as spectators and on-lookers.

**Mela Bhuntar**

The fair is held on 1st Ashad (June-July) for 3 days in village Bhunter. The fair is seasonal and religious. The fair was started by the Devta of the ilaqua Suraj Pal. Palaghmiar a Devta from mardo also attends. From this day the use of food grains from the newly harvested crops starts after cooked food offerings are made to the gods and then the meal is shared by other relatives and friends. This is known as 'Tahoolikhana' in the local terminology.

**Sainj Fair**

This fair is held in Raila on 21st of Baisakh (April-May) for one day. The significance and legend of the fair is religious and recreational. Idol of Devta Laxminarayana is brought from Raila to Sainj. Thereafter the fair starts with folk dances and songs rhythmical with the beat of drums and trumpets.
Luhri Lavi

This fair is held on Kartik 21 and 22 (October-November) for two days and one night in village Dingidhar at Luhri. The significance of the fair is religious and commercial. The fair is held in honor of Devta Jogeshwar and Khegro Maya. The Devtas are worshiped. Nati dances, mimicking, fold dance performances at night are resorted to.

Ani Fair

This fair is held on the 27th Vaisakh (April-May) for two days in village Franali at Anni. In the fair deities of the adjoining villages participate. The main attractions of the fair are folk dances and other cultural programs.

Daiash Fair

This fair is held in the month of Bhadon for three days and nights in village Soidhar at Daiash. The fair is altogether religious and is held in honor of Devta Jogeshwar Mahadev of Dalash and Bungli Nag. The devtas are worshipped and natti dances, cultural programs and sorts tournaments are performed.

Ganter Fair

This fair held on Pon 3rd (Dec.-Jan) for one day. The fair is mainly religious and it is said that Rana and Thakurs the then rulers of Kullu valley were at logger head and used to be constantly at war with one another. To commemorate the battle a ram used to be scarified. The practice of ram sacrifice is still in vogue.
Ghatasani Fair

This fair is held on Chait 4th (March-april) for two days in village Dawra. The legend connected with the fair is that once mother Parvati asked Lord Shiva to forget Rama saying that even Rama could change. To prove this she went to Rama in the guise of Sita to deceive him. When Lord Rama saw her he could see through the game and addressed Parvati as mother and enquired as to why she has left his guru i.e. Lord Shiva. The fair starts with worship of Vishnu Bhagwan and the village Devi. Natti dances, folk songs and other cultural programs are the main attractions of the fair.

Dhoongri Fair

This fair is held on Jaishth 2nd (May-June) for the three days at Dhoongri (Manali) in the memory of Devi Hadimba who meditated at Dhoogri and was married to Bhima one of the five Pandvas. She had a son from him who was named Ghatotkach. He fought in the battle of Mahabharta. The fair starts with the worship of Goddess Hadimba.

Bhadoli Fair

This fair held once in three years, dates whereof are decided by the Brahmins. The fair is held for four days. The fair is commemorated in the memory of Lord Parshu Ram who is stated to have meditated here.

On the first day of the fair reception of Devis and Devtas and their attendants takes place. On the second day Devis and Devtas are propitiated through songs and dances. On the third day they are carried in a procession around the village. On the fourth day, the fair comes to an end after serving community feast.

Buddhi Diwali

This fair is held on Maghar Amawas for three days in village Nirmand. The fair associated with the battle of Mahabharta which is said to have started on that
day. The fair is also held to commemorate the killings of two demons Dano and Asur who resided at village Nirmand in the form of snakes. The fair starts with a brief recital of Mahabharata and story of Raja Bali in folk songs. Two ropes of munj grass signifying the snake demons are cut into pieces by the Kashtriyas.

**Phagli Fair**

The fair is held in the month of Phagun and hence the name Phagli. The fair is held to show the struggle of supremacy between the god and demon, in which ultimately the god emerges victorious. This fair is also held to commemorate the event of killing the demon by god.

A person wearing the mask and a grass tied with the help of strings all over the body acts as a demon and god is represented by GUR (god's spokesman). Special dances 'Deo Khel' and 'Raksh Khel' are performed by these people with the rhythm of the drum-beats. The demon is 'Tundi Raksh' who troubled people living from Manali to Archhandi. Manu Rishi with the help of Shandalya Rishi killed him. Phagli is held at Malana, Jana, Halan, Soil and in all temples of Jamlu.
Birshu Fairs

This fair held in the month of Chaitra or Baisakh, throughout the district. One day before the first day of the month delicacies are cooked in the houses and sent to all the relatives. The temples are decorated on the first day. All the villagers assembled there and gur of the god performs 'Deo Khel'. Then the god is taken for a round in the village. All the people greet & pay respect to him outside their houses and seek his blessings. After completing the round, the god returns to the temple.

Sharhi Jatra

This fair is held in the temple of the Tripura Sundri, in the ground named Sharhi. This fair is held for three days. The gathering here is always large. It takes place in the month of 'Jaishtha' (May-June). http://hpkullu.nic.in/TourFair.html

4.2.10 Tourism - Adventure/ Sports:

Mountaineering & Allied Sports

Kullu terrain is almost mountainous. To popularize the mountaineering and allied sports the Mountaineering Institute second of its kind in the country was established at Chadhiari near the hot springs of Vashist Village in September, 1961. The first training course conducted by the Institute was in Nov-Dev, 1961 and the Institute was known as Western Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (WHMI), with the coming up of its own complex in the year 1976. The Institute was shifted to present location, Aleo Bihal, Manali and since then it is known as the Department of Mountaineering and Allied Sports.

Training in snow skiing was started in early 1970 at Solang Nala Ski-slopes. High Altitude Trekking was also started in 1970 and thereafter in order to conduct adventure and rock-climbing, specific courses were introduced. The Institute also imparts mountaineering and rescue training to the people living in the tribal area. For this purpose two mountaineering sub-centres were established at Jispa in Lahaul & Spiti district and Bharmaur in Chamba district in
the year 1979. In order to help people to cross over Rohtang Pass to Lahaul & Spiti or Manali during winter months, the Directorate sets-up rescue posts at Marhi and Koksar from 15th November to 31st December and 1st March to 15th May. For trainees arrangement of boarding and lodging is made by the institution. The trekkers can also hire the needed equipments or articles from the institution.

**Angling**

Trout fish is found in large quantity in river Beas and its tributaries Parvati, Sainj, Trithan, Manikaran and Katrain areas. So fishing in Kullu district is an anglers paradise and this sport is catching up day by day. Tirthan river is particularly rich in brown trout fish where natural breeding of the fish takes place. The license for angling can be obtained from Fisheries Office, Kullu, Patlikulh, Larji & Banjar or from Tourist Office, Kullu and Manali. The Department of Fisheries are also organizing angling tournament every year in April and in Sept-October.

Ideal trout beasts: River Beas (Katrain to Manali, 18 Km), Trithan Stream (Larji to Nagani, 20 Km), Sainj Stream (Larji to Ropa, 22 Km), Lambadug Stream (Barot to Lahoradi, 6 Km), Uhi Stream (Barot to Kothikad, 10 Km) and Sangla Bridge to Farm (5 Km).

**Fishing Rates:**
- Trout Waters - Rod & Lines: Rs.100/- per day.
- General Waters - Rod & Lines: Rs.40/- per day.

**Close Season:**
- Trout Water: From November to last day of February each year.
- General Waters: From 1st June to 31 July each year.

**Trekking**

Kullu valley provides easiest as well as adventurous trekking paths to trekking lovers. Most of the routes pass through rugged and unspoiled beautiful valleys with awe-inspiring glens, mossy meadows, deep forests interwoven by...
rushing streams and running brooks. Kullu-Manali valleys are full of real mountains and give comparatively easy access to them.

April to mid June and mid September to mid October is the best season for trekking. Tourist Development Corporation of Himachal Pradesh in collaboration with Department of Mountaineering and Allied Sports, Manali and some other agencies arrange trekking expeditions. The charges include hiring of equipment, porters, transportations, meals and medical facilities and optionally, the approved high altitude guides and porters can also be hired. The accommodation in HPPWD-Rest Houses or Forest Rest House can be arranged through XEN or SE, PWD and Divisional Forest Office (DFO) of that area.

**White Water Rafting**

White water rafting is a thrilling as well as adventurous sports. In Kullu, Badah to Jhiri is a nine kilometer long down stream journey path. It takes rafters four hours to reach the destination.

The water of river Beas is fast and water waves are dancing, giving the rafters an exciting experience. Rafting is available only in the period of May to July, that is summer only. Professional companies from private sectors make the necessary equipments & gears available to rafters. Each rafter is provided with a
life jacket and a helmet. They are expected to wear a specific dress. An experienced guide and helper is also provided to the rafters.

**Skiing**

Skiing is possible in winter season (mid-Dec to end of June) only when there is a thick layer of snow on the hills. It this view, the Solang Nala is the best consideration for skiing. The Mountaineering Institute, Manali is imparting training in skiing along with its other activities and training courses. Some professional skiers are also conducting the skiing courses. Skiing tournaments are also organized at national and international level. Bhrigu peaks and slopes near Hamta are perhaps the best slopes in the world for skiing. Winter skiing is organized at Solang whereas in summer, skiing is organized at Rohtang slopes.

**Heli-Skiing**

It is a new sport in India but is picking up in Manali. The heli skiers are dropped on mountains and ridges as high as 5500 mt by a helicopter. The skiers are in group of three equipped with a guide for safety. It also removes the pressure on less experienced or learners. This sport requires enough snow hence it is possible in the peak winter season. Private companies provide packages for heli-skiing.

**Para Gliding**

This sport too is in its initial stage but gaining popularity in Kullu. It is very thrilling sport. The high hills are natural launching sites for para gliding. Bhaikhali (9 km from Kullu, easily approachable by vehicle), Bijli Mahadev and Slang slopes are ideal locations for para-gliding. The best season for this sport is May-June and Sept-Oct. At Manali, the facility of seven days training course is available. Bijli Mahadev is approachable by own vehicle via Naggar or up to Chansari on vehicle and three km on foot, with landing sites are both Dhalpur ground and Bhunter Airport. http://hpkullu.nic.in/TourAdve.html
4.2.11 Tourism – Pilgrims:

Raghunath Temple (Kullu)

The chief deity of Kullu is Raghunath Ji. Dussehra festival is held in its name. The idol is same which was used by Lord Rama himself at the time of Ashwamegh Yagya and was brought from Tretanath temple of Ayodhya. The temple was constructed in 1660 AD with a mixed look of Pahari and Pyramidal style. Everyday puja (aarti) is held for five times. Round the year, 45 festivals are held. It is said that Raja Jagat Singh used charanamrit of the idol for 42 days and was absolved from the evil effect of the curse of a Brahmin Durga Dutt.

Vaishno Devi Temple

On the way to Manali 3 km. from Kullu, it is a nice place to pilgrim. There is small cave just like Vaishno Devi Temple. an idol of Durga is installed here. In 1964 AD, a saint established this temple. After his death, this temple is managed by Sharda Sewa Sungh. There is a Lord Shiva temple also.

The management runs a free 'LUNGER' and a 'SAFAYE' is there for night stay also within the temple premises. The atmosphere of this temple is peaceful and calm. Flow of river Beas in front of the temple gives this place a commanding view. In side the temple premises an acupressure treatment centre is also running providing free of cost treatment.

Bhakhali Temple

In the lap of a hill, about 10 km far from Kullu, Bhakhali is a small village of Brahmins. But, on foot it is only 4 km. It is the adobe of Jagannathi mata, also called as Bhuweneshwari, sister of Lord Narayana. The temple is 1500 years old. A fine sample of local art of sculpture, a full sized lion of stone stands in lawn of the temple. Walls have the painting of Durga in various actions.

According to old said, a boy of Palsara family went to graze cattle. He was a good flute player. Once playing on the flute he saw two girls dancing on the his
music. But their feet were not touching the earth, they were floating in the air. He caught one of those girls. The girl disclosed her identity and agreed to stay in the village. Then Narayana vacated the temple for the goddess. Three fairs, in APRIL, JUNE and on first day of Kullu Dussehra held here at Bhakhali. On Dussehra day gur-khel is worth to seeing. After the sunset the goddess is taken out on a chariot. The place gives a very beautiful view at a height of 1833 mts.

Bijli Mahadev Temple

Situated at an altitude of 2435 mts on a hill call Mathan 11 km. from Kullu. The temple is ideally located offering a commanding view. The temple is in 'khash' style. 20 mt high wooden pole stands are installed for seeking blessings from the sky in the form of lighting which shatters the temples Shivlinga Ghat which is then rebuilt by the temple priest. All the pieces are joined together with butter as adhesive. A special ceremony is performed in this process. The followers carry a Chariot of Bijli Mahadev where the deity is taken out. The followers invokes his blessing for bringing rain, good crop, help in worldly affairs or birth of a son.

A regular bus goes up to Chansari village, 14 km from Kullu. The remaining three km. are to be traversed on foot. The 2 km road is totally surrounded with pine trees. There is great rush at the temple in the month of July. A visit to this place provides memorable moments and journey through the forest is very enjoyable.

Addi Brahma Temple (Khokhan)

Khokhan is 12 km from Kullu on a link road from Shamshi at 4 km distance from there. The temple of Aadi Brahma is in Pagoda style. Built in 14th century, it has four roofs. There are three other small temples within temple premises. The door of the temple has nice carving of Puranic Scenes. As temple is situated at a height, it provides an excellent view all around.
Bishweshwer Temple (Bajuara)

Built is 9th century, it was rebuilt in 1673 AD by Raja Shyam Sen of Mandi, this temple is of great architectural value. The style of this temple is pyramidal and is built on shankracharya 'Panch Dev Puja Padhati' that means worship of five gods together at a place. Along with Shiv Linga inside the temple, there are four other gods installed inside the temple. Vishnu, Ganesh and Durga in the West, South and North sides respectively whereas Surya is on the top of the temple.

The main door opens in the East. Ganga & Yamuna welcomes every visitor at the gate. The art of sculpture is also superb and that's why it has been declared as a protected monument. The wall are so thick that this temple with stood the earthquake of 1905.

Rama Temple (Manikaran)

Rama temple built by Raja Jagat Singh in the place of two Shiva temples, is in pyramidal style. The idol of Rama was brought from Ayodhya. The idol was kept here till 1661 AD, thereafter it was shifted to Kullu. The temple was repaired by Raja Dilip Singh in 1889 AD. Since 1981, a trust is looking after the temple. A free lunger also runs here. Private & government accommodation is also available here, where hot bath's facility has been extended.

The other temples at Manikaran are Bhagwati temple, Krishna temple of Bairagis and Vishnu temple known as Raghunath temple.
**Gurudwara Shri Narayan Hari (Manikaran)**

Saint Shri Narayan Hari came to Kullu in 1940 from his native place Kamalpur (Pakistan) and settled in Manikaran. Initially there was nothing except two hot water springs. He worked on the Gurudwara building and the 50 years long service bore fruit in the shape of present Gurudwara. And, now this Gurudwara can accommodate more than 4000 people with free 'Lunger' facility.

There is an artificial cave near the Gurudwara built by the saint where he used to meditate for 40 days or so in a year. He died in 1991. At present his daughter and his son-in-law look after the Gurudwara management.

**Dhungri or Hadimba Temple**

This temple constructed in pagoda style displays the finest example of wood carving on it. It's sanctuary is built over a rocky crevice covered by a large rock that is worshipped as a manifestation of Durga, an image of the goddess is also enshrined here. The divinity is popularly worshipped throughout the region during the festivals and the goddess is transported to Kullu to visit the Lord Raghunathji during Dussehra.

Inside the temple, stone idol of Hadimba has been installed, which is about 60 cm. On the left side of the entrance there are 10 cm. feet (Charan Paduka) of the Goddess Durga. The temple was built by Raja Bahadur Singh in 1553 AD. Hadimba was a giantess who meditated at his place. She married to Bhima, one of the five Pandavas who visited here during their exile (Mahabharata Period). Because of her penance, she attained the position of Durga. There is a rock inside the temple about which it is believed that Hadimba meditated on this rock. In local dialect, a rock is called 'Dhoonger'. The temple and place is named after it.

**Manu Maharaj Temple (Manali-Village)**

The temple of Manu Maharaj is located in Manali village, which is about 1.5 km from the main town. The idol was found in the court yard of the house of
a person, named Gauri of Dhauni Chauni. The present temple has been constructed on the said spot. On the 6th day of Phalgun, the famous Phagli fair is held here in honor of Manu Maharaj, every year. It marks the beginning of the spree of fairs in the valley.

The temples of Manu Maharaj found very rare in India. Manu Smriti was written by him.

Vashistha Rishi Temple (Manali)

There is a 4000 year old temple of Guru Vashishtha on the right side of the springs, built by the king Janamjaya. Inside it, there is a black stone statue of the Rishi Vashishtha, clad in dhoti. The village Vashishtha is famous for hot water springs.

Rama Temple (Left Bank)

There is Rama temple on the left side of the spring in which the idols of Rama, Sita and Laxmana have been installed. Dussehra festival is held here every year for seven days. The village was the centre of vaishnava cult for a long time. People making visit to the village also make a pilgrimage to this temple.

Gauri Shankar Temple (Left Bank)

This temple is about 40 mt. from the main road. The temple was built in 8th century and is in a pyramid style. The idols of Parbati and Shankar have been installed inside the temple. A fair, locally called as Chachohli fair is held in March/ April for three days.

Sandhya Devi Temple (Left Bank)

Originally this temple was built in vallabhi style architecture and rebuilt by Raja Urdhanpal in 1428 AD according to one inscription. For the third time, it was rebuilt in 19th century. And, now the temple is in pahari style having sloppy roof and square at the bottom. The idol of Ganesh installed in the temple is a master piece of sculpture. The wood work is also notable. There is a 120 cm stone idol of Sandhya inside the temple.
Dashal Temple (Left Bank)

About 30 km from Kullu, on the left bank there is village named Sarsai. Dashal village is about 1/2 km from Sarsai village. The temple here is of Gauri-Shankar which is very famous for its architecture. Built in 14th century it is in pyramid style. The temple is built on a raised platform. The outer walls bear some sex-scenes like those Kahrao, under the philosophy that one must leave sex aside to attain God. Shiva-linga has been installed inside the temple.

Tripura Sundary Temple (Naggar)

The temple is in Pagoda style with three roofs. The design of the temple is in the shape of a web and made by goddess herself after turning herself a spider. Raja Yashodhapal built the temple. Sharhi Jatra, a popular fair is held here every year in honor of the goddess in the month of May. The temple consists of stone idols of Ganesh, Vishnu, Brahma, Laxmi Narayan and Shiv Parvati. A 30 cm idol of Tripura Rprakshisha of Asht-dhatu (a mixture of eight metals) is also there.

Guari Shankar Temple (Naggar)

The temple is in a pyramidal style on a raised platform, with square at the base and a dome above. The stones used are richly engraved. The temple consists of the idol of Gauri-Shankar installed inside it. In the front portion of the Garbh-Grih, the figures of Ganesh, flowers, a musician and a dancer have been engraved on stones. The temple is a protected monument.

Murlidhar Temple (Thawa-Naggar)

Thawa is situated at a small distance from Naggar. The temple is in pyramid style, inside it a beautiful idols of Radha-Krishna have been installed. It enjoyed royal patronage for a long time. Dussehra festival is held here for one day. The temple also consists of the idols of Laxmi-Narayan and Padam Sambhav.
Vishnu Temples (Naggar)

There are two Vishnu Temples at Naggar. One is on the way to the village on the right side of the road. This is temple has small pyramid type shape and is of great archeological importance. The festival 'Ganer' starts from here.

The other Vishnu Temple is near the castle on the eastern side, a few steps down from the main road towards the village. The temple has pyramid shape with a slatty roof. No 'Mandap' is there infront of it. There is an idol of Vishnu about 4ft. height of 'Asht-Dhatu' (A mixture of Eight Metals). The idol is standing on the pedestal (Kamalasan) and has Chaturbhuj figure. The pedestal is itself of stone square and about a foot high. Petals of kamal have been carved round it.

Shringa Rishi Temple (Banjar)

Rishi Shringa is the chief deity of Banjar valley. This valley is Rishi’s 'Tapo Bhoomi'. According to a legend, there was a 'Pindi' (A sacred stone) in the forest at Skeeran. The Pindi asked every passer by for its installation in a temple. The people built a temple in the forest at Skeeran.

But then they found it difficult to go there for worship. So they built another temple of the Rishi the Bagi village. The new temple is 12 km from the original one. Every year in the month of May, Rishi makes a visit to this place.

The deity is kept in its chariot all the time. The new temple is in Pagoda and Pahari style with four roofs. The wooden work is marvelous. The idols inside the temple are of stone and brass. The temple remains closed during winter.

Parshuram Temple (Banjar)

This temple is like a fort. Inside is a statue of Parshuram having three heads. The statue was presented by Rani Agartala of Kashmir in 900 AD. There is a diamond eye in the central forehead. There are other idols too kept in other room.
Ambika Temple (Banjar)

It is believed that the temple was built by Parshuram in the memory of his mother Renuka. The idol of Ambika is about 0.75 mt in height. In front of it there is pair of lions. There is figure of fighting animals on the entrance. Copper sheets presented by the 'Rana of Khanertu' have been used on the roof of the temple.

Shrikhand Mahadev

Shrikhand Mahadev is considered to be the adobe of Lord Shiva. Its peak is 5155 mt. high. So it is a place of great attraction for the religious people as well as for climbers. To reach to this place one has to reach Jaon village of Nirmand.

The Shrikhand peak is visible on the eastern side of the village. There is a miracle known about the Shiva-linga here. Round the year the snow falls here, but it does not stay at the Shiva-linga and melts down soon thereafter.

Dhar Deo Dhank Cave (Nirmand)

This cave is 3 km from Nirmand towards south. A narrow defile leads to the place. The cave is quite deep and about 6 ft. in height. A Shiva-linga is there
inside the cave. On it, water oozing from the roof falls drop by drop. This is a miracle of the nature, otherwise there is no water on that rock hill. There is a grove of sacred trees outside the cave and under these grove idols of some other gods are kept. The entrance of the cave has shape of Lord Ganesha. The local people consider it to be a very sacred shrine. The temple is worth to visit.

4.3 HISTORY OF MANDI:

The present District Of Mandi was formed with the merger of two princely states Mandi and Suket on 15th April 1948, when the State of Himachal Pradesh came into existence. Ever since the formation of the district, it has not witnessed any changes in its jurisdiction.

The chiefs of Mandi and Suket are said to be from a common ancestor of the Chandravanshi line of Rajputs of Sena dynasty of Bengal and they claim their descent from the Pandavas of the Mahabharata. The ancestors of the line believed to have ruled for 1,700 years in Indarprastha (Delhi), until one Khemraj was driven out by his Wazir, Bisarp, who then took over the throne. Khemraj, having lost his kingdom, fled eastward and settled in Bengal, where 13 of his successors are said to have ruled for 350 years. From there they had to flee to Ropar in Punjab, but here also the king, Rup Sen, was killed and one of his sons, Bir Sen, fled to the hills and reached Suket.

The State of Suket is said to have been founded by Bir Sen, an ancestor of the Sena Dynasty of Bengal. The separation of Mandi from Suket took place about the year 1200 AD. Upto that time, it was the single state of Suket. The then reigning chief Sahu Sen had a quarrel with his younger brother Bahu Sen, who left Suket to seek his fortunes elsewhere. Bahu Sen after leaving Suket settled at Manglan in Kullu, where his descendents lived for 11 generations. Then then chief, Kranchan Sen was killed fighting against the Kullu Raja and his Rani, who was pregnant at that time fled alone to her father who was the chief of Seokot, who had no son. Here she gave birth to a baby boy who was named
Ban, the tree under which he was born. Ban had hardly crossed the age of 15 when he defeated the chief of Kilti who used to plunder travellers. On the death of the chief of Seokot, Ban succeeded to the chiefship of Seokot. He, after some time killed the Rana of Sakor and took possession of his lands. He then changed his residence to Bhiu, on the banks of Beas and a few miles from the present Mandi town.

Mandi emerged as a separate state in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Down the line of descendants of Ban came Ajbar Sen, nineteenth in descent from Bahu Sen, who founded Mandi Town in 1527 AD, the capital of the erstwhile state of Mandi and the headquarters of the now Mandi District. Ajbar Sen was the first great ruler of Mandi. He was probably the first to assume the designation of Raja. He consolidated the territories that he had inherited and added to them new ones that he wrested from the hands of his neighbours. He built a palace here and adorned it with four towers. He also built the temple of Bhut Nath and his Rani constructed that of Trilok Nath.

Down the line of descendants was Raja Sidh Sen, who succeeded Raja Gur Sen in 1978 AD. Mandi had never been so powerful before his reign and after that never was. He captured great areas from the adjoining areas. It was during his reign that Guru Govind Singh, the tenth guru of the sikhs visited Mandi in the close of the 17th century. He had been imprisoned by Raja Singh, the chief of Kullu, from whom he had sought assistance against Mughal troops and his followers believe that Guruji escaped by using miraculous powers. Raja Sidh Sen, who is also considered to be a possessor of great miraculous powers, entertained his with great hospitality. He built the great tank before the palace. He also built the temples of "Sidh Ganesha" and "Trilokinath".

The entire history of both the states of Mandi and Suket is littered with wars with among themselves and other adjoining states. These two states had always been rivals and generally enemies, but there was no great result of their warfare. The fertile valley of Balh was the common ground of desire and dispute.
On 21st February 1846 the chiefs of Mandi and Suket visited Mr. Erskine, Superintendent of the Hill States for the British Government, owing their allegiance to the Britishers and securing their protection. on 9th march, 1846 a treaty was concluded between the British Government and the Sikh Durbar whereby the whole of the Doab area between the Beas and the Sutlej was ceded to the British Government, and this included the states of Mandi and Suket also.

On 1st November 1921, both the state of Mandi and Suket were transferred from the political control of Punjab Government to that of Government of India till 15th August 1947, India's Independence Day.

Not much is known about the early history prior to the formation of Suket in 765 AD. The area had been under the control of Ranas or Thakurs. The only place that has an early mention in literature is Rewalsar and it is mentioned in the Skanda Purana as a sacred place of pilgrimage. Karnpur, a small village is said to have been founded by Karan, a hero of the Mahabharta. A temple at Gumma points to the locality where the Pandavas sheltered themselves when the attempt to burn them down failed. Beyond this not much of the erstwhile state's existence can be found in classical literature.

According to the Tibetan tradition, Padam Sambhav (750-800 AD), the great Buddhist Patriarch, who was summoned by king Tisong-De-Tsen of Tibet for preaching Buddhism, hailed from Zahor, which represents the country round about Rewalsar. On the basis of this it is concluded that Mandi must have been a great place of Buddhist learning about this time.

4.3.1 Religious Beliefs:

Similar to the other districts of the state, religion plays an important role in every one's life. People here are have a strong belief in God and religion regulates the actions in almost every sphere of life. In the days of the Rajas also, this feature was quite evident. The theocratic nature of the state received special
emphasis when Raja Suraj Sen, who was without a heir dedicated the State to
to God Madhav Rao, a form of Vishnu. His successors have thus, always held it in
trust for the God and act as his representatives on various occasions.

Madhav Rao is the Guardian deity of the State/District and to him all
Honour is due on all State occasions. He is the Principal deity of the numberless
Gods whom the people of Mandi have chosen to fear, worship and propitiate. This
nature of the Hindu pantheon is emphasized when during the Shivratri Fair all the

The worship of Shiva and Devi, the goddess, are predominant. Shiva is
known in several forma, the commonest of them being the Panchavaktra or the
five-faced Shiva, the Triloknath or the three-faced Shiva, Ardh Nareshwara which
is the half body of Shiva and the other half of Parvati, His consort. The Goddess
goes by several names viz, Sri Vidya, Bala, Kali, Tara, Bagla and Durga.

Throughout the district there are numerous local Gods known as the
Devtaas. A glimpse into belief of the people in these Devtas can be had during
the Shivratri Fair. http://www.hpmandi.nic.in/history.htm

4.3.2 Fairs and Festivals:

In Himachal Pradesh the predominant size of Hindus are occupying the
area of Mandi district. It is a land of Gods and fairs & festivals are an important
part of hill culture. Almost every village is associated with fairs and festivals.
Some of the important fairs celebrated in the district are:

SHIVRATRI

The Shivratri fair Mandi was started by Raja Ajber Sen, 300-400 years
ago at Purani Mandi. Suraj Sen had 18 sons, al of whom died in his lifetime.
Suraj Sen got a silver image crafted and named it Madho Rao to which he
considered to be the King of the State of Mandi thereafter and all the rulers had
to serve the state as servants of Madho Rao and caretakers of the State.
The illustrious Madho Rao made by the golsmith Bhima, in the year 1705, Thursday, the 15th Phagan. This date corresponds to A.D. 1648.

King of Kangra, Sansar Chand invaded Mandi state in 1792 taking its ruler Ishwari Sen prisoner for twelve years who was got released by Gurkha invaders who attacked Kangra and Mandi states. Gurkha invaders returned Mandi state to Ishwari Sen who received a warm reception when he returned to his headquarters. King invited all hill deities and organised a grand function on his return and the occasion happened to be Shivratri festival. It is believed that thereafter the practice of organising such function during Shivratri continued year after year and is still in force.

In the Shivratri fair, the village gods are carried into Mandi to do homage to Madho Rao and the Raja. The fairs for seven days; but is is general rule that each god on arrival shall pay his respects to Madho Rao before he proceeds to the palace to salaam the ruler. On the second day of the fair, a parade of gods is held in Padal the large open plain in the angle between the Beas and Suketi.
Baisakhi aisakhi

At about 24 Kms from Mandi, at Rewalsar Basakhi Fair is held on the first Baisakh each year, in the honour of Rishi Lomas, which is attended by several thousands of both sexes. An earlier fair take place in Phagan, but this essentially of Budhist interest, a considerable number of Tibetan, Lahaulis and Kanawaris performing the pilgrimage each year.

Nalwar Nalwar

Nalwar Fair of Sundernagar held in the month of April. It is famous for the trading of cattle besides its religious and cultural importance.

Kamaksha Fair Kamaksha

This fair held at village Kao in Karsog Sub-Division, Started during second World War, to pray to goddess Kamaksha to end the war.

Kamrunag Fair Kamrunag

Held every year in the month of June. Local people participate in large number showing the glimpse of local culture in its most colorful form. People throw gold and silver coins in the lake in reverence to God Shiva.

Kuthah Fair Kuthah

Kuthah fair held in the month of May for a week in the beautiful Janjehli Valley in Gohar Sub-Division.

Prashar Fair Prashar

Held every year in the month of June, the fair depicts local culture of hill people besides attendance by the local dieties.

Magru Mahadev Magru

Held every year in the month of August for three days. reflecting local hill culture and religious fervor of people to its best
Fairs and festivals are the most important part of the life of hill folk. Besides, a number of fairs organised at different places throughout the district, some festivals like Navratra (Nine auspicious days); Basoa- a festival of crops; Bakarmala, Chidan Mala, Haryalitri - festival relating to cattle wealth; Saayar - another crop festival; Naag Panchami, Gugga festival, Deepavali and Shivratri are some of the major festivals celebrated in the district during different seasons.

http://www.hpphoni.nic.in/fairs.htm

4.3.3 Places of Interest in Mandi:

Rewalsar

Location: 24 kms. from Mandi.

Rewalsar is equally sacred to Hindus, Sikhs & Buddhists. It was from this place that Padam Sambhava, a zealous teacher & Buddhist missionary left for Tibet to preach his new doctrine of Buddhism.
The Hindus believe that it was here that Rishi Lomas did his penance in devotion to Lord Shiva. Rewalsar is important to the Sikhs who have a Gurudwara built in commemoration of Guru Gobind Singh’s visit to this place. It is a very sacred place for the Bhutanese, who are following this doctrine of religion as their State Religion. So there is a temple, gompa and gurudwara, besides the holy lake with floating islands.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House - Private Hotels

Janjehli

Location: At a distance of 67 kms. from Mandi.

It has all the elements that make it a paradise for trekkers. It offers paths under thick deodar forests, beautiful scenery, water falls and springs

Where to Stay: PWD Rest House

Prashar Lake

Location: 40 Kms north of Mandi

The beautiful Prashar Lake is located high in the mountains. It is here that the sage Prashar is said to have meditated. On the lake’s edge is a three storied Pagoda-like temple dedicated to the sage. Capped with a roof of slate tiles, the temple has a wealth of wood carvings. An old temple, it is said to have been built by Raja Ban Sen of Mandi in the 14th century. An entire panorama of snowy mountain ranges is visible from this location.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House Top

Barot

Location: Just 40 kms. by road and 12 kms. by Haulage Trolley from Jogindernagar.

Barot packs an enormous range of out door activities. The reservoir of the Joginder Nagar Hydel Power Project is located here.
A trout breeding centre, makes it a wonderful place for angling. Across the river Uhl is the Nargu Wildlife Sanctuary-home to the Ghoral, Himalayan black bear and a variety of pheasants. A trek route through thick forests links Barot to Kullu.

Where to Stay: PWD Rest House

Shikari Devi

Location: There are two approaches, one through Janjehali and the other through Karsog.

Trekking Paths through woods of assorted trees and shrubs-which include several medicinal herbs-two separate trek routes lead up to this ancient shrine which crowns the top of a hill. Hunters in the area once prayed to the goddess for success in their hunt and here perhaps, lies the origin of the name "Shikari Devi".

The goddess is worshipped in the form of a stone image. Interestingly, the temple which is said to have been in existence since the time of the Pandavas, has no roof, for local legend has it, that all attempts to build one have been unsuccessful.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House Top
Jhatingri

**Location:** It is situated on Ghogar Dhar at an elevation of 6,600 feet. It is 12 kms. from Joginder Nagar. It is easily accessible from Urla in Mandi Pathankot National Highway.

There are beautiful deodar and blue pine forests. The spot infolds breath taking vistas of the valleys below.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House

Karsog Valley

**Location:** Karsog is Sub-Divisional head quarter of Mandi district at the height of 350 mtrs.

It is famous for Mamleshwar Mahadev, Kamksha Devi and Mahunag temples. It is full of scenic beauty and abundance of apple orchards.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House - PWD Rest House - Private Hotels

Panjain Thach

**Location:** 75 Kms from Mandi via Bali Chowki.

These are two villages situated in the middle of thick forests of deodar, pine and tosh trees. Both villages offer beautiful scenery and base camps for adventure loving tourists.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House
Gadda Gusaini

Location:

The valley is virgin and has not been explored by many adventure loving tourists. One finds nature at its best offering beautiful surroundings, green forests and pollution free environment. Madhopur Fort was also built by former rulers of Mandi district who had kept their arms and ammunition in it.

Besides the fort was used as punishment to hardcore criminals in the state. One more fort named Tungasi was built in the valley and the remains of the fort are still visible.

Where to Stay: Forest Rest House (in Balichowki) - PWD Rest House (in Banjar-Kullu district) Top

Tatta Pani

Location: 155 kms. from Mandi and 50 kms. from Shimla.

It is a deep scenic valley and surrounded by high hills, Tattapani is famous for its hot sulphar springs and white water rafting - noted for therapeutic
powers. 4 kms from Tattapani is a recently discovered Shiva Gufa which has created a lot of anxiety among local populace and researchers.

Where to Stay: PWD Rest House - HPTDC Hotel - Private Hotels

Jogindernagar

Location: 56 kms. from Mandi.

In 1925, the enterprising Raja Joginder Sen of Mandi created an elaborate hydel power scheme near the village of Sukrabatti - which was then renamed Joginder Nagar after him. After tunnelling and piping the water over several kilometers from the river Uhl to Joginder Nagar, the power house at Shanan was built by a team of engineers. Joginder Nagar's attractions include the Machhiyal lake, the Bassi Power House, Gumma and the haulage trolley.

Where to Stay: PWD Rest House - HPTDC Hotel - Private Hotels

Chindi Resort

Location: It is located at Chindi in Karsog Valley.

Situated over a ridge in Karsog valley with spectacular view of range of mountains on both sides, the place is famous for apple orchards and beautiful sceneries and dense forests of deodar and pine.
Where to Stay: PWD Rest House

**Himachal Art Gallery Himachal Darshan Photo Gallery**

**Location:** Situated at about 4 kms from Mandi towards Kullu on the Chandigarh-Manali National highway.

This art gallery contains a beautiful collection of photographs of exotic locations of the entire state and reflects the social & cultural heritage of the people of Himachal Pradesh. [http://www.hpmandi.nic.in/tourism.htm](http://www.hpmandi.nic.in/tourism.htm)

4.3.4 Temples of Mandi:

- Bhunath-Triloknath-Panchvakra-Mahamritunjya-Maa Tarn-Ganpati- Bhima Kaali - Other Temples

Bhootnath Temple:Bhunath Temple: The temple, located in the heart of the town was built by Raja Ajber Sen in 1527 AD. The temple is devoted to Lord Shiva and was built at the time when State Capital was shifted from Bhiuli to present place. There is tradition of Raj Madhav Rao, the deity who ruled the Mandi state, visiting the temple and offer prayers before starting the procession of Shivratri Fair along with all the visiting hill deities.
Trilokinath Temple:

The temple of Triloknath was built by Sultan Devi, queen of Raja Ajber Sen in 1520 AD. Temple houses the three-faced image of Lord Shiva and is located in Purani Mandi across Victoria Bridge on Mandi Pathankot National Highway. Trilokinath temple is one of the oldest temples in the town with typical architecture and sculptural artistry. Idols of Narda and Sharda and many Hindu gods are also worshipped along with the main deity Trilokinath. Top

Panchvaktra Temple:

Situated at the confluence of Beas and Suketi rivers the Panchvaktra temple houses the five-faced image of Lord Shiva. Built in Shikhara style of architecture the temple has been taken over by Archeological Survey of India and declared as national heritage monument.

Mahamritunjya Maharaj:

Situated in the heart of the town, this temple houses the image of Lord Shiva with his third eye and the lotus posture in meditative contemplation. The four arms of Shiva with usual symbols and right lower hand in 'Bhumisparsha mudra', lower left hand holding 'Kamandal' right upper hand raised in benediction and upper left hand holding 'amritkalasha' - all create the mystique of the rare charm and beauty of Mahamritunjaya Shiva. Top

Tarna Mata Temple:

Built by king Shyam Sen at the top of hill named as Tarna Hill, at an altitude of 300 feet above sea level. Temple house the image of Godess Kaali, Lord Shiva and others. There about 305 stairs path to the temple from main bazar.

Shidh Ganpati Temple:

Temple of Siddha Ganapat, son of Lord Shiva, is located near the Regional Hospital in Mandi town and houses the image of Lord Ganesha.
used to be seat of tantrik sadhana of Raja Siddha Sen who built the temple. In Hindu way of life, before starting any auspicious celebration, image of Ganesha is worshipped. Top

Bhimakali Temple: Bhima Kaali Temple: This temple is located on the bank of Beas river near Beas Sadan on Mandi Pathankot National highway.

Other Temples: Mandi district has numberless temples of various deities where hill people offer regular prayers. Besides many temples in Mandi town there are few more prominent temples worth visiting such as, Magru Mahadev in Chhatri, 155 kms., Mahun Nag, 130 kms., Mamleshwar Mahadev, 132 kms., Kamaksha Devi, 136 kms., Balak Rupi- 63 kms., besides Naina Devi - 33 kms., Padama Sambhava Cave and Gurudwara at Rewalsar and Kamru Nag.

Among others Gurudawara of Mandi town is also one of the holiest shrines where personal belongings of 10th Guru of sikhs Sh.Guru Gobind Singh are preserved. http://www.hpmandi.nic.in/temple

In times past, this burning usage was thwarted by lack of flying machines, lack of money, lack of time and zeal. Not any more. We now have new method of taking to the air that combines latest in technology with low cost and simplicity to bring the reality of flight accessible to everyone. Paragliders and Hang-gliders have made all this possible and brought about long cherished flying with in reach of a common man and woman.

We fly through invisible fluid (Air) that must be understood in order to thoroughly know the capabilities and limitations of flying wings to gain control. Once one gains the understanding and masters the beginning skill, he yearns to expand the horizon by flying higher and further. Thus the newly trained pilot enter the new realms, where the dreams come true.

Today the state of Himachal Pradesh is playing a lead role in the field of Paragliding, in our country. One can see the skies of billing (Kangra), Solang
(Manali) and Bandla (Bilaspur) overcast with colourful butterflies (Paragliders). Joy sides have become great attractions for tourists visiting the state. The credit goes to the State Government especially the department of Tourism, which has played a key role in promotion of Paragliding in the State. Take a look at the comprehensive Paragliding link at http://himachaltourism.nic.in/parahome.htm

4.3.5 Adventure Sports in Mandi:

Adventure sports in Himachal Pradesh

Adventure sports discover the zeal to discover the majesty of the romance of the Himalayas. There are many adventurous sports in Himachal Pradesh. The list of adventure sorts in Himachal is endless, as there are a number of games that Himachal endorses. Himachal Pradesh has trekking, river rafting, paragliding, mountaineering, cycling, skiing, biking, angling and fishing, ice climbing, rock climbing, rapelling, hang gliding, jeep safari and camping.

Trekking season in Beas circuit runs from mid May to mid October. Brochures are available at Himachal Pradesh tourist office that briefly detailed a number of treks in the state. It’s a lot of fun trekking in Himachal Pradesh on the short and tough roots.
It's even greater fun while trying the various skiing regions in Himachal Pradesh. Out of all, Solang Nala in Manali is one of the oldest places in India to be associated with skiing and the slopes are still in use during winter.

In Himachal Pradesh has world's best slopes for paragliding, just infrastructure has to be raised. Place where paragliding is done regularly are in Kullu valley.
River rafting, is now being held on the Sutlej near Shimla on the Beas near Kullu, the Ravi near Chamba and Chandra in Lahaul. Possibilities are also being explored on the river spiti. Significantly, this sprot takes a break during winter and during the monsoons.

These were the activities which are carried out in Beas circuit. But there can be several other activities which can be brought up in Beas circuit, thereby increasing tourism potential in the state and hence strengthening the economy. These activities can be photography, jungle safari, biking, jungle survival, bungee jumping, ice climbing.

Alternate Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

In Himachal there are several forms of alternate tourism. There can be eco tourism options, agri tourism and rural tourism. Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as "responsible travel which conserves environments and sustains the well being of local people." The world wildlife fund defines, "the term ecotourism refers to any travel to or through wilderness areas that has minimal impact on the natural environment and its wild life while providing some economic benefits to local communities and the area's indigenous stewards."
Eco Tourism (in present time one can find several ecotourism options in Himachal starting from camping, nature, trails, bird watching, etc.

Moreover forest department of Himachal Pradesh has developed a separate ecotourism policy for the development of ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh).

Agritourism:

A visitor to a farm or ranch who wants a farm or rural experience as much as to buy agricultural products in a tourist (Kandari-1996).
Agritourism is high in impacts because labour used, business ownership and the products sold are usually local.

There are lot of scopes for agritourism in Himachal Pradesh like Sangla, Naggar, Banjar etc.

**Rural Tourism:**

Rural tourism is the activities of persons traveling to and staying in rural areas (without mass tourism) other than those of their usual environment or less than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (including the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited).
These are thinly populated areas into limited tourist accommodation capacity. Important feature of rural tourism is that goods and services provided to the tourists are produced in the rural area. To develop this form of tourism in Himachal Pardesh Himachal Government has identified some villages as Heritage villages these are Paragpur, Kalpa, Old Chamunda, Baroh, etc.

The purpose of visit should be closely linked to the activities undertaken by the visitor in the rural area. Main means of transport are used for the visit. Finally, only the expenditure on goods and services consumed from the rural area should be taken into account. Rural tourism products and the native goods and services should be provided to visitors in rural areas. Eco Tourism (in present time one can find several ecotourism options in Himachal starting from camping, nature, trails, bird watching, etc. Moreover forest department of Himachal Pradesh has developed a separate ecotourism policy for the development of ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh), Agri. Tourism (There are lot of scopes for agritourism in Himachal Pradesh like Sangla, Naggar, Banjar etc.), Rural Tourism (To develop this form of tourism in Himachal Pardesh Himachal Government has identified some villages as Heritage villages these are Paragpur, Kalpa, Old Chamunda, Baroh, etc.)

It can be concluded that tourism products of Himachal are very versatile, varied, and attractive. Each district of the state has so much potential to present itself as a unique entity in terms of its culture, cuisine, architecture and scenic attraction that if this potential is harnessed properly and effectively, tourism in Himachal can reach its zenith.

4.4 CUISINES OF BEAS CIRCUIT:

Himachal is known for its ethnic cuisines. Each district of the state has its very own special cuisine, which is prepared by the special cooks. The state's different regions and their varied produce have created a range of tantalizing
dishes that are special to each area. In most parts, the pastoral tradition is strong and milk, and milk, products are liberally used. Non-vegetarian food is the norm and meals are centred on meat, cereals and lentils. It is only in recent times that green vegetables have become a part of the daily fare – especially in the higher tracts. Food is generally spicy and while cardamom, cinnamon and red peppers are all used, most recipes call for subtle variations to suit local palates. Cereals form the backbone for many meals. The staple cereal dish, sidu is made of wheat dough to which yeast has been added. This is allowed to rise for four of five hours. With a stuffing of fat, it is first browned over a slow fire and then steamed. These cakes are normally eaten with ghee, lentils and mutton. A traditional festive meal, dham, is only cooked by Botis a special caste of Brahmins who are hereditary chefs. This is regarded to have originated in Kangra. The preparations being around midnight for a meal that is normally served at mid-day. This is served in courses. (Himachal Pradesh – India: A Himalayan Experience).

4.5 SOUVENIR INDUSTRY OF BEAS CIRCUIT:

Himachal’s wide range of weather conditions, as sorted domestic requirements and diverse cultural and historical influences have produced a variety of handicrafts. Most were once created solely for household use – there was definite purpose and utility for every item, which is why their tradition is so deeply woven into the fabric of every Himachali’s life. Others were targeted at sale or barter and then, there were a few court crafts – like the fine miniature paintings and the Chamba rumal.
It is hardly surprising that given the long winters, the people of Himachal Pradesh have evolved fine skills in the spinning and weaving of wool. The variety is immense, there is gossamer-like delicacy in the pashmina shawl and then, there are the thicker, more functional, brightly patterned woolen shawls. The vivid shawls of Kangra, Kullu and Kinnaur are famed the world over. The local tweeds, ‘pattu’, are rough, rustic and unbelievably warm. The need to keep the chill at bay has given rise to warm and wonderfully embroidered footwear and the distinctive caps of Himachal. The ‘pullas’ of the Kullu area are perfect carpet-slippers.

The range of carpets has gained richly from the ties with Tibet. Traditional motifs and weaving skills have not foundered over the years. There is a boldness of design and their use was once as varied as saddle drapes, curtains, bedspreads and wall coverings. These carpets are chunky, soft and quite pliable – and their springiness lasts for years. The pile is normally half an inch thick and the knots per square inch vary between thirty and eighty.

The jewellery is ornate to say that least. The women of Himachal are often adorned by such a mass of exquisitely worked silver that their faces are
barely visible. Interestingly, this was one way of keeping the family wealth in the days before banks and passbooks.

Perhaps the most unusual item of Himachal’s metal ware is the ‘moharas’ or busts of deities and village or household gods. Then there is a range of statuettes, vassals, bells in brass or copper – and occasionally, silver.

Wood makes its presence felt in carvings, walking sticks, furniture and bowls. Bamboo and grass mats, leather products and the little dolls of Himachal are both souvenirs and utility items.

And then there is a whole range of fresh fruit products, pickles and preserves to choose from. All these things are easily available at various outlets throughout the state. (Himachal Pradesh – India: A Himalayan Experience).

4.6 THE HILL ARCHITECTURE:

The Himalayas in the past ages has developed its own distinctive architectural style. This type came into prominence where extensive and dense forests were available. So by hill architecture one should understand the stone and wood structure with a square or rectangular plan and a roof with a concave appearance or superimposed pyramidal roofs, one on the top of the other. The temples with such style are lie scattered all over the upper areas of Garhwal, Kumaon, Chamba, Kullu, Mandi and Shimla. The wood carvings in these structure are of great sculptural merit. The wood used in the temples and also houses, which together make a hill architecture, is the Cedrus Deodar, locally known as Keloo, is a very valuable timber because it does not show easy signs of decay and is also not prone to the attacks of insects. The life span of a tree of this pine species extend over a thousand years. The two prominent types of hill architecture based on roof as the style are discussed below:

The Pent-Roofed Structure:

These constructions with a pent-roof are simple in structure, the only things they require by way of material is stone wood. Stone is used as is
available. The use of wood in the walls is a bit surprising for an outsider. The wood is laid in horizontal position. Apart from its own use, the wood is also made to serve the purpose of cement. It is along the length of the wall that a beam is kept on the outside and another on the inside. The space between is filled with simple stones. There is no use of cement, lime, mud or any other adhesive. The structures thus constructed are extraordinarily durable.

The architecture that developed along the lower hill (Shivalik hills) where Hinduism is a predominant faith, is a simple rectangular construction consisting of a cella raised on a square plinth of heavy timber and covered with a sloping roof of slates or shingles. The roof extends over the covered 'verandah', which serves the purpose of 'Pradakshina' (i.e. circumambulatory) round the shrine. Carvings on the doors, the pillars and the ceiling is common feature. Some of the shrines which are truly representing the pent-roof structure, generally covered with slates or shingles are:

Bijli Mahadev (Kullu district), Shirgul (Sirmaur district), Hatkoti (district Shimla), Lakshna Devi (Bharmaur), Shakti Devi (Chhatrari in Chamba district) and Kali Devi (at Mrikula in Chamba district). The beauty and uniqueness of Chamba temples is, thorough use of wood, wood carving and housing fine metal images.
The Pagoda Style:

In the pagoda style, the diminishing roofs rise one above the other and the top one, unlike the squares two, is round, which is like the shape of a funnel. The pagoda style shrines are not much in number in Himachal Pradesh as compared to the pent-roofs style. Some of the well known temples of pagoda style are:

Hidimba Devi or Dhungari (at Manali in Kullu district), Tripura Sundari (at Naggar in Kullu district), Brij Mahadev (Kullu district), Triyung narayan (at Dayar, opp. Bajaura, Kullu district), Adi Brahma (at Khokan, district Kullu), Prashar and Chhatri (Mandi district) and Sungara Maheshwara (Sungara, district Kinnaur). Outside Himachal Pradesh pagoda style is found in Kashmir, Nepal and Burma (now Mayanmar).

The Domed Temples:

This style is the direct outcome of the Mughal and the Sikh rule. The shrines built in the 18th and 19th centuries by the local rulers are representing the domed style. Some of the important shrines belonging to this category are – Jawalamukhi (Kangra district), Chintpurni (Una district), Kameshwar (Mandi) and Tarna temple (Mandi).

The Flat-roofed temples of Kangra Valley:

In this category shrines have ordinary walls in mud and lime plaster and the remarkable paintings executed in the traditional pahari style round the Ramayana and Mahabharta. Famous among this category includes, the shrine
of Narbadeshwar Sujanpur-Tira (Hamirpur district), Ramgopal (Damtal in Kangra), Brajraj Swami etc. (Himachal Pradesh-India: A Himalayan Experience).

4.7 MAIN MOTIVATION FOR TOURIST IN BEAS CIRCAT:

**Rural Tourism** The fruits of tourism must percolate down to the rural areas in order that it is truly sustainable and responsible. For this the Deptt / Board proposes that

- Rural Tourism villages are identified and notified by the Deptt.
- The precondition for declaring these as RT villages would be that they must predominantly have traditional architecture and an MOU would be signed with the Panchayat that this would be maintained. The villagers may modify their houses internally but they must maintain their traditional outer façade.
- For the sake of easier marketing these villages must be near to the existing tourist centre which will also ensure dispersal of tourist to the rural areas and promote decongestion.
- These would be dovetailed with the Govt of India Ministry of Tourism Scheme under which funding is available up to Rs 5 lacs. This would be used to create infrastructure like roads, streets, drainage, lighting, parking, bus stand, water supply, sanitation, tourist reception centre, rural museum, open air theatre, parks, nature trails, crafts bazaar etc. This could also be funded from the Deptt / Board funds.
- In such notified villages there would be no luxury tax or commercial rates for electricity up to 5 bed room home steads.
- The existing schemes of the Deptt would be reviewed and efforts would be made to provide funds for renovating the homesteads and providing grant /loans to the weaker section of the society. The Deptt would actively work with the Deptt of Rural Development and nationalised banks for tying up in this regard.
The government proposes that in these home steads Himachali/ local food will be served.

Linkage would be sought to promote local handicrafts and cultural toupes

The procedure for registration of village tourism guest houses shall be simplified and adequate publicity given to the facilities available.

The above scheme would be made applicable mutus mutandi to Heritage and Orchard tourism.

**Eco Tourism**
Himachal offers a new era of nature enjoyment and learning. It also provides visitors an excellent exposure to the temperate forests. This makes it an ideal area for developing eco-tourism activities like jungle safaris, trekking, rock climbing, forest trails, nature walks, angling (esp. golden mahaseer and brown trout), camping etc. All these activities are to be conducted in a manner that promotes awareness of the environment and helps maintain the ecological balance.

The Government will harness the tourism potential of forests in the state by developing camping sites with basic infrastructure facilities and other public convenience services. A nominal fee shall also be determined by the Government for the use of camping site for the maintenance and for the conservation of these forests. The private parties shall be encouraged for setting up of such camping sites on erwerorment friendly basis. The Government will endeavour to open forest rest houses for the tourists through the society. These would be run on community based eco tourism tenets or through public private partnership with companies with good track record of working in Eco – tourism.

**Wildlife Tourism**
is an integral part of Eco Tourism. Himachal Pradesh has a varied topography, climate and forest cover and is endowed with a vast variety of flora and fauna. At present there are 32 Sanctuaries, 2 National Parks and 3 Game Reserves.
Development of Lakes and wetlands is also part of eco tourism. The State Government will make special efforts to make natural and man made lakes as important tourist destinations. Steps will be taken to maintain and enhance their beauty by undertaking development in an integrated manner. Maharana Pratap Sagar will be developed as a world class water sports destination with the financial assistance of the Central Government in order to develop activities like water sports, angling, bird watching, setting up of house boats, development of artificial beaches etc. The Government will also encourage the private sector to set up houseboats and operate shikaras in the Maharana Pratap Sagar. Improvement of the forest rest houses will also be carried out in the area and will also be made available to the tourists in order to accommodate them.

Pilgrimage Tourism Himachal has emerged as an important pilgrim destination. A large number of religious tourists visit sacred shrines of Himachal Pradesh throughout the year. A large number of religious places for people of almost all religions are situated in the State. The State Government propose to develop wayside/civic amenities, parkings, landscaping and beautification around the temple, Sulabh Shauchalyas, drinking water, garbage disposal etc. at these religious places in coordination with the temple trusts on the lines of Shri Vaishnu Devi Trust. During important festivals special measures will be taken up for the safety and security of the tourists like setting up of information centres, tented colonies to accommodate tourists and to deploy special Tourist Police Force on the lines of Shri Vaisn Devi

Adventure Tourism The Tourism Deptt./ Board will make comprehensive adventure tourism promotion plan for the State and shall lay down the regulatory framework for enforcement of safety standards. For the promotion of adventure sports, the department/Board will impart training in different sports to the youths.
Sports etc. in coordination with the WHMI Manali and the State Level Associations. The Deptt / Board will help the WHMI in setting up more Sub Centres in the State to take adventure tourism the hitherto unexplored places. It will assist in training the local youth in adventure tourism so that they also benefit through employment & other means. Similarly it will work at tandem with Forest Deptt and the Eco Tourism Societies to meet the above ends.

The State was the first and continues to be the only State, which has **heli-skiing** in the country. This attracts foreigners and quality tourists with paying capacity to some of the best powder-snows that the world can offer. The experience in this venture has been very positive despite the initial apprehensions about possible disturbances to the environment and fauna. It is proposed to expand the concept of heli-skiing by introducing activities like heli-trekking and cross-country skiing. Conventional skiing and setting up of more ski lifts and ski resorts in the public private partnership will be a major thrust area. The Chanshal range beyond Rohru which has great potential will specially be explored.

The State started promoting paragliding from 1984 onwards. Himachal is now the leading States in the country in this field. Bir Billing in Kangra, Solang and Marhi in Kullu, Bilaspur, Kasauli etc will continue as important centres for the sport. More areas will be explored and opened up with the objective of providing a source of livelihood to the local youth. The Bir Billing Pre World Cup Event will continue to be an annual event. A paragliding School will be opened at Dhelu. Bir Billing will be developed over the years into a top class paragliding destination internationally on self financing basis with the local community benefiting the most.

One of the major aims in this area will be to get the latest technology in the field of adventure sports in terms of equipments and know-how be it skiing / ropeway projects, water sports or paragliding. All PPP projects in this field of adventure tourism will have this as a necessary precondition.
International competitions in such sports will be organised for attracting participants not only from the country but also from the abroad in coordination with the Deptt. of Sports.

The Tourism Deptt / Board will support all efforts to promote and set up adventure sports schools at various locations in order to train more youths in Paragliding, Rafting, Water Sports, Angling, Skiing, Mountaineering, Motor