INTRODUCTION

Kullu became a part of Himachal Pradesh in 1966. Earlier it was a sub-division of Kangra district which was a part of Punjab. Since Kullu became a part of Himachal Pradesh, it has established benchmarks in many aspects. It has made immense progress in many spheres and has become a role model for many districts in the state. There has been a steady movement targeted at the well-being of its people. This has stemmed from strong political and administrative commitments and the active involvement of the people. The roads, the schools, expansion in health care, political stability, all combine to create a picture that indicates good social indicators.

In the present study, we have tried to analyse the criteria of change and development in Kullu in various sectors i.e. political, demographic, social and economic from 1966 to 2001. Kullu area lies in a valley surrounded by mountains, a very picturesque region. It has been a beautiful experience studying and researching in the area.

The first chapter gives a historical perspective of Himachal Pradesh and also of district Kullu. To understand the background of our study, we have also dealt with the geography and topography of the area. Himachal Pradesh is situated in the western Himalayas, covering an area of 55,780 kilometres (34,660 meters). Himachal Pradesh is a mountainous state with elevation ranging from about 350 metres (1,148 ft) to 6,000 metres (19,685 ft) above the sea level. It has been blessed with many rivers that are the Chandra Bhaga or the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej and the Yamuna. These rivers are perennial and are fed by snow and rainfall. They are protected by an extensive cover of natural vegetation.

We can trace the existence of human beings in this region from prehistoric period. The Aryan influence over this area dates back to the period
before the Rig Veda. This was followed by several small chiefs ruling the region. Mahmud of Ghazni invaded the area in 1009 AD. In about 1043 AD, the Rajputs started ruling over this territory. The Rajputs, under the leadership of Sansar Chand owned this region in 1773 AD, till the attack by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1804 AD, which crushed the Rajput power here. The Gurkhas conquered this area and ravaged it. In about the early 19th century AD, the British exercised their influence and annexed the areas of Shimla after the Gurkha War of 1815-16.

Himachal Pradesh was made a centrally administered territory in 1948 with the integration of 30 princely states. It had the status of a union territory after independence till it was granted statehood in 1971.

The history of Kullu also dates back to the ancient times. It also has been mentioned in the great Indian epics like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Brihat Samhita and also in the ancient scripture of the Vishnu Purana. With the coming of the British, the region was annexed to the British Empire in 1846. After independence Kullu was initially a subdivision of Kangra district. Later for proper administration it was established as a separate district of Punjab in 1963. In 1966, Kullu was merged with Himachal Pradesh.

The second chapter covers the political development of the district. In this chapter attempts have been made to understand the political scenario of the Kullu district since independence. Developmental changes alongwith the study of Panchayat system and structure of the Panchayats have been researched. A unique feature of the political arena of the district, as well as of the state, is the prevalence of the two party system. With each passing decade the two party system has strengthened which is in variance from other parts of the country. The stranglehold of two parties, alongwith the study of every aspect of political participation.
The third chapter of this study is the demographic changes in the district. In this we have analysed the changes in the nature of population, density of population, and its settlement and migration pattern. We study how from negative population growth, Kullu district because of better health facilities, transportation network and schools, has become a populace district. We also study the population pressure on the resources.

The fourth chapter highlights the social development of the district. If we look at the social development of the region, Himachal Pradesh has done extremely well and has surpassed many of her counter states in various aspects. Not so long ago, Himachal Pradesh was considered as a backward region. Kullu district being a part of Himachal Pradesh was also considered as backward and illiterate region. The literacy rate in Kullu in 1966 was 13.10 percent which was below the corresponding all India averages. Since then, however Kullu has made remarkable progress in education especially in primary education. In 2001, the literacy rate went up to 73.36 percent.

In this chapter we also study not only the growth of education but the improved status of the women in the society. Earlier in Kullu two customs i.e. ‘Reet and Polyandry’ were prevalent. Till 1970, these customs were in vogue. We will study the nature of these customs and how education has brought about an end to them. Along with the education the government has taken major steps in improving the health standards of the people. The death rate in the district in 1966-67 was 13.60 percent, which was reduced to 3.0 percent in 2001.

Fifth chapter of my research deals with the economic development of the Kullu district in context with Himachal Pradesh. Kullu district basically has a rural economy; the mainstay is income from agriculture and horticulture. We understand the dynamics of the rural economy and how it has progressed after independence and undergone various changes. Opening of the new areas of occupation will be discussed and how it has
benefited the people will be analysed. Tourism industry and hydel power projects are new fields of occupation and have benefited the people of the area. These new occupations along with other industries will be analysed in detail.

The concluding chapter deals with the negative aspects of development. When development is lopsided, it affects the environment as well as the humans. What all is left out, how it affects the people of the region is being discussed in this chapter. The district is still in the process of growth, the people are still not really progressive; a lot still needs to be done to bring it on par with the developed areas of the country.

**Methodology:**

The meaningful study of history, politics, economy and society of Kullu hinges on the distinction between what is changing and what is stable. And the demonstration of how aspects of life of Kullu, which seem to continue immutably, are related to the areas of obvious change. In a study of this kind, a detailed understanding of the past is a prerequisite for identifying new developments and measuring the extent of change. The background also provides a clue to the selectivity, apparent in response to new opportunities and general direction of change. The development of an accurate picture of the past and its use in the study of change is primarily a historical and methodological problem rather than a theoretical one.

For the analysis of the present study, a combination of quantitative and field work methods was used. Following tools were used for the collection of the data. Five year plans, Census reports, Statistical Reports of Kullu district, Gazetteers of Kullu district and Economic Development District Reports.
With the use of these reports, changes in the district over a period of 40 years were statistically worked out. Sources of my study were both primary and secondary.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. M.S., Ahluwalia, Social Cultural and Economic History of Himachal Pradesh, 1998, New Delhi. This book covers the three most important aspects of regional, social, cultural and economical in one compact volume. It gives a bird’s eye view of Himachal Pradesh from ancient times to 1966. This is not an in-depth study. It just provides us with an outline and is more relevant for the social structures.

2. Y. P. Chathley, Education, Population and Development of Regional perspective of North West India, 1995, Chandigarh, CRRID. It correlates the relationship between the demographic structures, population distribution and level of economic and social development in North India. The study emphasizes that merely creation of the educational infrastructure does not ensure its use. It is more relevant to identify the conditions both necessary as well as adequate, which determine people's responses to such programmes. This is a macro level study.

3. Dr. Ashok Ranjana Basu, Tribal Development Programme and Administration in India, 1985, New Delhi, National Book Organization Publication. It deals with Bharmour and Pangi sub-division of Chamba district, which are located in the remotest corner of Himachal Pradesh. The basic focus of this book is on the government programmes towards tribal development. It also analyses the causes of failure of these programmes. The book highlights the importance of regional participation in state and central planning programmes.
4. L R. Sharma, *The Economy of Himachal Pradesh, Growth and Structure*, 1987, Delhi, Mittal Publication. This study is a macro level study of economic development of Himachal Pradesh from 1950 to 1981. The study is based on the last seven Five Year Plans and their affect on the economic development of people, including scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. As this is a macro level study, the effects of Five Year plans and economic growth at micro level on districts and villages is not explained. The author has compared the economic growth of Himachal Pradesh with other states of India but the factors within the state, which make progress are not discussed. The author does not list the regional factors of development.

5. Penelop Chetwode, *Kullu- The End of the Habitable World* 1972, Camelot Press Ltd. London. It is a travelogue, here the author relates to her own experience while traveling through Kullu. Chetwode dwells on social issues prevalent in Kullu like polyandry, caste system and writes about the temple architecture in inner hills, classical sculptures and pahari folk art of every kind (wood and stone), economy of people and about British who settled down in Kullu.

6. D. P. Sexena, *Rural Towns and Socio-economic development of Villages*, 1994: Delhi, Mittal Publication. It is an attempt at examining the role of rural towns in the context of social change and economic development in the surrounding villages in Gorakhpur district in east U P. The study gives us an insight into rural towns. Such rural towns appear to have made available many necessary goods and services to the rural dwellers.

7. Tom G. Kessinger, *Vilaytpur: 1848 -1968, Social, Economic Change in North India*, 1974, University of California Press. This book is a masterpiece. According to the writer, the causes of the social changes
are always to be found in changes in the external politics and economic environment. It also gives insight into the progress of agriculture, migration and its impact on village, education and land holdings. The analysis of the data helps in understanding the socio-economic development of the village.

8. M.S. Ahluwalia, History of Himachal Pradesh, 1993, New Delhi, Intellectual Publishing House. The book consists of nine chapters. It deals with the different aspects of the history of Himachal Pradesh from Stone Age to modern times. It exclusively deals with a survey of political, social and religious movements with a special emphasis on 'Praja Mandal Movement' in the state and also a brief study of major tribes inhabiting the state. It also throws light on cultural, traditions of Himachal Pradesh also. It is a scholarly work throwing important light on the political history of Himachal Pradesh. This book is helpful in understanding political history of Himachal Pradesh.

9. Public Report on Basic Education in India, 1999 New Delhi, Oxford. This report is a balanced assessment of the state of India's schooling system. There are the striking findings emerging from the PROBE (Public Report on Basic Education) survey. It is a contact between Himachal Pradesh and other states. In the field of primary education, Himachal Pradesh has made a remarkable progress. Himachal Pradesh comes next to Kerela and Goa. This report helped me in understanding the development of primary education in Himachal Pradesh.

10 Singh, Mian Goverdhan, Himachal Pradesh History, Culture and Economy, 1994, Minerva Book House, Shimla. Starting from physical setting of this state, an attempt has been made to highlight the social life, art and cultural heritage and economic evolution of Himachal Pradesh. It presents a wholesome picture of its natural wealth and
development potentialities. Besides associated problems, new topics like administrative and constitutional history of Himachal Pradesh have been attempted for the first time in this work.

Alongwith these, I read many more books, reports, statistical data which is given in the bibliography; I also met people of the district to get a better understanding of the subject.

My research is a humble attempt to fill the gap on Kullu district which I have fallen in love with.