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HIMACHAL PRADESH

LAHUL & SPITI

Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteers

LAHUL & SPITI



BY

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FOREWORD

I am glad the Gazetteers Unit of Himachal Pradesh Government has placed yet another gazetteer after Kinnaur of a border district of Lahul and Spiti in the hands of the readers. I must congratulate the State Editor, Shri M.D. Mangain and his team for producing the first district gazetteer of this area which was only a tahsil up to 1960. While the gazetteer was in the press two events—one happy and the other sad—took place affecting this district. The happier part is that it has been extended and the four patwar circles of Chamba district namely Tindi, Udeypur, Triloknath and Miyar Nala have been added to it, making it administratively convenient to attend to these areas.

The sad part is that the Spiti area of the district passed through a grave calamity when on the 19th of January, 1975, an earth-quake rocked the area and wrought havoc causing unprecedented damage and human suffering. Some villages were completely devastated. Tabo monastery, described as the Ajanta of Himachal was damaged as cracks and breaches appeared on the fresco paintings on the walls. Besides, many surrounding villages suffered heavy loss of life and property. The famous Kye monastery has also developed major cracks. The Government is making all possible efforts for relief and rehabilitation.

To provide whatever succour was possible the Chief Minister rushed to the area and stayed there at considerable personal risk and supervised the rescue operation as also saw to it that essential necessities like food and shelter reached the affected people. He stayed in the area for about a week.

Simla, Solidarity day,
1975

K. C. PANDEYA
Financial Commissioner

P R E F A C E

Lahul & Spiti is a small district having international boundary with Tibet. It attained the status of a district only in 1960 and therefore to produce a full-fledged district gazetteer meant intensive touring and study of various travelogues, journals, books etc. Till then it was merely a tahsil of Kulu Sub-division. The valleys, mountains, glaciers, rivers, forests, pastures, *gonpas* (monasteries) and ancient buildings of the former ruling dynasty are the principal objects of study. The rugged awe-inspiring snow-clad mountains are standing invitations to the hikers, mountaineers and adventurers. The entire district is full of natural scenery as standing invitation to the tourists and visitors to explore and write about its hidden grandeur. The customs, myths, beliefs and conventions of the simple unsophisticated people are the unique features of this border highland. Every village or a hamlet has a prayer flag fluttering over the Buddhist monastery. These shrines are the centres of the cultural life of the people that have influenced their religious beliefs for centuries and round which their social life revolves. Not long in distant past the visitors to this area felt that with the crossing over of Rohtang they had entered altogether a different country. With the passage of time and improvements in communications one does not feel that way now.

This volume is fourth in the series of district gazetteers of the State, the earlier three being Chamba, Sirmur and Kinnaur districts. I have ventured to collect the entire data from scratch without any comprehensive old gazetteer of the area. However, the old gazetteer of Kangra district of 1917, contained useful information though very brief and sketchy describing it as a tahsil of that district, stood me in good stead in building an edifice for writing a comprehensive volume. The travelogues and writings of many eminent and enterprising writers helped a lot in unfolding the cultural heritage, customs, rituals, etc. of the people. The noteworthy among them are Capt. A. F. E. Harcourt, Dr. M. S. Randhawa, Dr. Pran Chopra, M. S. Gill, etc.

I am grateful for the encouragement and liberty provided by the two Financial Commissioners S/Shri L. Hminglana Tochhawng and K. C. Pandeya, to the Gazetteers Unit. With liberty comes responsibility and this we have tried to discharge with dedication and interest, even then there are deficiencies of which I am aware. This is the first gazetteer of this area as a district, and I am sure when a revised volume appears this will be improved upon.

Numerous departments of the State and the Central Governments rendered valuable assistance by supplying information and data incorporated in the volume. Amongst others, I am indebted especially to the Geological Survey of India, the Meteorological Department of India, the Directorates of Education, Health, Animal Husbandry, Agriculture, Industries, and Economics and Statistics and the Departments of Public Works, the Forests and the Census of Himachal Pradesh.

While I was in the midst of writing the preface an earthquake of unprecedented intensity rocked this area about which a mention is made in the Foreword by the Financial Commissioner of Himachal Pradesh.

My grateful thanks are due to the entire team of officials of the Gazetteers Unit especially S/Shri D.D. Sharma, Editor, Sohan Lal Sharma, B. S. Rawat, Kesar Singh Thakur, R. D. Negi, Bal Krishan Sharma, Puran Chander Sharma and Jagdish Chand Chauhan, all Compilers, for their help and co-operation in this challenging task. I must acknowledge the co-operation rendered by Shri Goverdhan Singh, Librarian of the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library, for providing the requisite material and books.

I will be failing in my duty, if I do not express my thanks to Dr. P. N. Chopra, M. A., Ph. D; Editor, District Gazetteers and the staff of the Central Gazetteers Unit, Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Department of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi, for their effective role in planning and co-ordinating the

work of preparation of the District Gazetteers. The Unit scrutinized the draft of this volume with great care and made several suggestions with a view to improving the standard and the quality of the publication. It may also be mentioned here that a portion of the expenditure incurred on the compilation and printing of the district gazetteers is being met by the Government of India.

Though it is far more difficult to write a perfect gazetteer without any deficiency but, I am confident, this will serve as a useful guide to the tourists, scholars and administrators.

M. D. MAMGAIN

State Editor

CHAPTER I

GENERAL

Origin of the name of the district

Lahul and Spiti, which now form a district of Himachal Pradesh, bordering Tibet, were at one time separate Himalayan *waziries* or cantons of the Kulu sub-division, and Kulu itself formed a part of Kangra district of Punjab.

As is clear from the name 'Lahul and Spiti', the district comprises two different mountain tracts, one known as Lahul and the other as Spiti. Hence the name of the district came into being with the formation of these two parts into a revenue district. The names, Lahul and Spiti, have different origins.

*Hiuen Tsiang stated Lahul to be 1,800 or 1,900 *li* (575 or 610 km) distant by road from the middle of Kiu-lu-to (Kulu). It is a gross overestimate as the first village in Lahul is only about 70 km from Sultanpur. Despite this error, whatever its source may be, Lahul is clearly the country referred to here. But the Tibetan Li-yul has also been identified by Rockhill with Khotan. If this is correct Hiuen Tsiang's placing Lo-u-lo at 1,800 or 1,900 *li* north of Kulu might be intelligible though an under-estimate. Probably Hiuen Tsiang confused the two countries as Li-yul (Khotan) and Lo-u-lo (Lahul) in his estimate of distances, admittedly derived from hearsay.

In ancient Buddhist scriptures, '*Padma thangyang*' and '*Mam-kambum*' there is mention of a country named Khasa or Hasha to the south of Ladakh and Zangskar. It is possible also that 'Garzha' may be corruption of Khasa or Hasha. Between the 6th century B. C. and the 5th century A. D., the Saka and Khasa tribes, after having been driven out from Central Asia by the Huns, crossed over into India. Many of these settled down in the valleys of Mid-Himalayas between Garhwal and Ladakh. This is borne out by the numerous remains of their graves found in these valleys. There is a nullah near Keylong known as Shaks, which seems to have taken its name after the Saka tribe settled in the Bhaga valley.

*Hutchinson, J. and Vogel, J. Ph, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Vol. II, 1953, pp. 475-76.

Location

The district is adjoined on its eastern border by Tibet, to its north lies the Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir, on the western and southern borders it is bounded by the Chamba and Kulu districts of Himachal Pradesh. On its south-eastern boundary lies the border district of Kinnaur. The district lies between north latitude $31^{\circ}44'57''$ and $32^{\circ}59'57''$ and between east longitude $76^{\circ}46'29''$ and $78^{\circ}41'34''$.

Area and population

The area of the district is 12,210 sq km and the population, according to 1961 census was 20,453 persons i.e. 15,177 of Lahul sub-division and 5,276 of Spiti sub-division. During 1971 census the population rose to 23,538 persons, out of which 12,975 are men and 10,563 women. The density of population is about 2 per sq km now. There being no town in the district the entire population is rural.

History of the district as an administrative unit

The two units of the district i.e. Lahul and Spiti, have separate historical backgrounds. In the distant past Lahul had been changing hands between the rulers of Ladakh and Kulu. In the second half of the seventeenth century with the disintegration of Ladakh kingdom, Lahul passed into the hands of the Kulu chief. In 1840, Maharaja Ranjit Singh took over Lahul along with Kulu and ruled over it till 1846 when the area came under the sway of the British. From 1846 to 1940, Lahul formed part of the Kulu sub-division of Kangra district and was administered through the local jagirdars/thakurs. One of the thakurs was designated as Wazir of Lahul and was invested with judicial and executive powers. Another thakur was given the powers of a Revenue Officer. These functionaries exercised traditional as well as other powers conferred by the Government. The Assistant Commissioner, Kulu used to visit the area once a year for a month or so. In the late thirties the unprecedented prosperity of the people through growing *kuth* and their consequent awakening created a formidable challenge to the power and influence of the Wazir of Lahul, which gradually started declining. The inadequacy was soon noticed by the Government which considered the extension of the regular system of administration. Accordingly in 1941, a separate sub-tahsil comprising Lahul and Spiti was formed and a *naib-tahsildar* was posted at Keylong thereby divesting the thakurs of their powers. The system remained in vogue till June, 1960 when Lahul and Spiti district came into being. *Simultaneously, Lahul was

*Vide Revenue Department, Punjab Government, notification No. 1052-Rg. II-60/758, dated June 30, 1960.

constituted into a separate tahsil, and, later⁴ on it was formed into a sub-division.

The East India Company took over the possession of the Spiti portion in the year 1846 after the cessation of cis-Satluj States as a result of the Anglo-Sikh War. Before that it formed a part of Ladakh, a subsidiary of Jammu and Kashmir. Because of its remoteness and poverty of natural resources, the British following the example of the Ladakhi rulers, did not introduce any substantial changes in the administrative set up of the territory. The Nono of Kyuling was recognised as the hereditary Wazir of Spiti (re-affirmed by the Spiti Frontier Regulations of 1883) and was supposed to represent the British India Government. He collected the land revenue for the government, his judicial jurisdiction included trial of all criminal cases, except cases of murder; and he performed all functions and enjoyed all necessary powers for the fulfilment of his tasks and duties, as laid down in the regulations of 1883.

In 1941, Spiti, with Lahul, was constituted into a separate sub-tahsil of Kulu sub-division which had its headquarters at Keylong. Later on, after the formation of Lahul and Spiti into a district, in 1960, Spiti was formed into a sub-division with its headquarters at Kaza.

There are two police stations, at Keylong and Kaza, two police posts, at Jalma and Sumdo and six seasonal check-posts, at Rohtang, Khoksar, Batal, Losar, Kiato and Darcha.

TOPOGRAPHY

The Lahul and Spiti district is a unique socio-physical unit of Himachal Pradesh. Its two components, the sub-divisions of Lahul and Spiti, are in turn equally distinct from each other in several respects. Lahul constitutes the western and physically more accessible area of the district.

Separated by high mountain ranges from Jammu and Kashmir territory on the north, Kulu and Bara Bangahal on the south, Spiti on the east and Chamba on the west, Lahul is a physically closed unit. In its west, however, the Chenab river forces its way by a narrow valley, while in the north-east the Yunnan river flows into Zangskar. The Rohtang Pass, the gateway to this sub-division, connects Lahul with the Kulu district. There are passes on the northern and eastern mountain ranges also but all remain closed for more than half the year because of the snow.

Within Lahul there is a great deal of topographic diversity of which the two most important features are the high mountain ranges and narrow river valleys. The ranges rise to a mean elevation of about 5,480 metres above sea level, the lowest point being the Rohtang Pass and the highest, peaks

exceeding 6,400 metres. Even the Chenab river does not fall below 2,740 metres at its exit. The whole area is very much higher and rugged than its southern counterpart in Kulu. Lahul abounds in high peaks giving the appearance of a highly pinnacled topography. The height of these peaks range from about 5,180 metres to over 6,400 metres. Opposite Rohtang, a little towards the left, are the twin peaks of Gye-phang La, jagged pyramid of rocks, snow streaked and snow-crowned. The higher of these two peaks is 5,856 metres high. The slopes up to an elevation of 3,350 metres are characterised by vegetative cover during summer but above this height barrenness is the rule. The whole Lahul and Spiti district is a cold desert whose bare rocks and steep slopes stare the visitors in the face.

The Chandra and Bhaga rivers, which constitute the Chandrabhaga/Chenab river after their confluence at Tandi, are the major features in the geomorphology of this region.

Physical regions

Lahul can be divided into five distinct physical regions :—

(i) The Chandra valley, called Rangloi in the lower inhabited part, begins from the snow bed on the south-eastern foot of the Baralacha Pass. For the first 72 km the valley is barren and uninhabited, with high peaks and large glaciers tapering downwards from snowfields on the tops of ridges. The slopes are characteristically stony and bare. Pastures exist in patches only along the valley where the Gaddis camp during the summer.

The Rangloi contains four *Kothis* of Khoksar, Sissu, Gondhla and Gushal. Khoksar is the first village in the valley. From thereon scenery becomes greener and less oppressive. The valley on the right bank broadens out; villages are more frequent and cultivated area more widespread, flanking both sides of the road which runs through the middle of the valley. On the left is a sheer mountain wall from the river bed to the rugged crest. Beyond Gondhla, however, the topography to the left also becomes less rugged and the mountain slopes are gentler, with terraced fields sloping down to the river.

(ii) The Bhaga valley starts from the south-western foot of the Baralacha Pass. It is barren, rocky and uninhabited up to Darcha which is the first village in the valley. It is situated at the junction of Yoché Nullah and the Zangskarcha (taking off from the Shingola Pass) with the main river. The valley broadens out from here onwards. The right bank has large tracts of level and cultivable land. Every seven or eight kilometres one comes across a small village. From Darcha to Kolong, the valley is called Stod, and from Kolong to Keylong it is called Gaar. Keylong, on the right bank of Bhaga river is the largest village in Lahul and is the headquarters of the district. There are precipitous cliffs on the left bank but in the lower part the slopes become gentler and there are some villages on the left

bank also. Kardang, the one time capital of Lahul and the seat of a famous monastery, lies on a commanding spot opposite Keylong. Gaar contains four *Kothis*: Kardang, Barbog, Kolong and Gungrang.

(iii) The valley of the combined Chandra and Bhaga rivers, called the Pattan valley, starts from Tandi where the Chandra and Bhaga meet and ends at Thiroth on the boundary with Chamba. It is a broader, more fertile and thickly populated valley. This valley contains six *Kothis*: Tandi, Warpa, Ranika, Shansha, Jalma and Jobrang.

(iv) Enclosed by the Chandra and Bhaga rivers is a great triangular mass of mountains which forms the centre of the area. From outside, this great mass of mountains presents the spectacle of a huge fort with more or less evenly serrated settlements. Here and there, the sheer wall is broken forming a deep furrow, revealing on the top a huge tapering glacier and a torrential nullah gushing forth from underneath it. The highest of these is the Samundari glacier with two branches, each 16 km long with a mouth about 3 km wide, opening into the Chandra river. The main axis of the central mass lies from north to south with a branch going west towards Tandi. On the top of the mass are lateral spurs with intervening valleys filled with glaciers and perpetual snow. The peaks rise to over 6,400 metres above sea-level and include the Gye-phang Peak which can be seen from Simla.

The Bhaga flows at some distance from the northern and western heights, and numerous torrents pour into it from the glaciers placed in the angle formed by these mountains, as well as a large stream which joins the left bank from the central mass. The Baralacha Pass is an important feature in the general configuration of the region. It is nearly eight kilometres long and consists of a high neck of land connecting the central mountains with the main Himalaya. Its name implies "Pass with cross roads on summit"—roads from Zangskar, Ladakh, Spiti and Lahul meet at the top. The pass gives off, on the north-west, and Bhaga river, on the north the Yunan, and on the south-east the Chandra. The Yunan crosses the pass from a glacier on the south-west belonging to the central hill and thus passes between the sources of the other two rivers.

(v) Across the Baralacha Pass, towards the north is a vast tract of land some 260 sq km in area known as the Lingti maidan. This tract is uncultivated and uninhabited and has a minimum elevation of about 4,270 metres. The plain is a good grazing ground and Gaddis move in during the summer. The plain is dissected by the Lingti which meets the Yunan river and the combined stream runs north-east to meet the Tsarab river before flowing north into Zangskar.

The high pinnacled mountain ranges and narrow river valleys are the most conspicuous features in the topographic diversities of Lahul.

Spiti

The Spiti sub-division is even more difficult than Lahul in terms of terrain, climate and habitation. It is less accessible and less developed than Lahul with which it stands back to back. It is vastly different from the regions that surround it, and thus it has its own mountain ranges. Within it also ruggedness of terrain is the rule, level areas are few and of limited extent. Spiti mountain ranges belong to the Great and Middle Himalayas. The sub-division lies at a mean elevation of about 4,570 metres. The average elevation of the mountain ranges is over 5,485 metres above sea level which is somewhat higher than what is found in Lahul. The valleys in Spiti are some 610 metres higher than Chandra and Bhaga. The Tsarab valley has a minimum elevation of about 4,270 metres and the lowest parts of Spiti valley are considerably higher than 3,350 metres above sea level. The drainage of the northern waste of Tsarab flows into the Indus, while that of the main Spiti valley, and its tributaries, join the Satluj.

Except for a few kilometres of uninhabited river valleys in the north and north-east, the boundaries of Spiti sub-division lie along the crests of very lofty mountain ranges, pierced only at the south-east corner by the narrow gorge of the Spiti river. The western boundary is about 128 km long, and begins on the north with the junction between the Serchu and Lingti rivers. It follows the former river up to its source some sixteen kilometres southwards in the main Himalaya, and proceeds along the crest of that range for a similar distance in the same direction till it meets the Kunzam Range. The main Himalaya here turns south-eastwards across Spiti, separating the waste tract of Tsarab on the north from the Spiti river valley. The Kunzam Range runs roughly southwards for 48 km till it meets the Middle Himalaya. Southwards of Kunzam Pass, the Middle Himalaya range runs south separating Rupj and Saraj from Spiti till it meets the Srikand Range. The Pin Parbati Pass is the only one on this length and is hardly ever attempted. The Srikand Range runs westwards through Saraj and eastwards with a slightly southern inclination as the southern boundary of Spiti. The length of this range is about 80 km and it is crossed by four passes, three of which are seldom used while the fourth is easy and provides the main southern approach to Spiti. At its eastern extremity the boundary goes down by a small tributary to the Spiti river.

The main Himalaya contains one peak, east of the Parang La, which is over 7,000 metres high, and the Manirang peak to the south, in Srikand Range, is 4,600 m high. To the north of Kaza is the Chocho-Lang Kilta peak which exceeds 6,400 metres in elevation. Spiti really abounds in high peaks many of which are above 6,000 metres high.

There are several peaks in the Mid-Himalayas which can be approached and climbed from Spiti. Most of the Spitian peaks have yet to be conquered; this coupled with the prevailing dry weather which makes it possible to trek and climb throughout the summer months, can justify Spiti's claim of being a mountaineer's paradise.

With an annual rainfall of about 17.7 cm Spiti is a typical mountain desert. The mountains from bottom to top are bare, except for a few favoured localities. The general impression is of desolate grandeur, but in spite of the utter want of vegetative cover, there is beauty in the scenery. The scarped sides of the hills expose great variety of strata each of a different colour. In the background one can get a glimpse of some snowy peaks standing against a very blue sky. In front are the bold sweeps of the river and the cliffs, supporting the plateaus, (actually ribbons of level land). The white houses and the green fields of the villages look conspicuous when viewed from long distances. All this, seen through an excessively clear, pure and rarefied atmosphere, makes as pretty a picture as is possible in the absence of vegetation and large expanses of blue water.

On the west bank of Spiti, behind the height which flank the valley lie rolling downs, resembling the famous pastures of Tibet and Ladakh, covered with herbage on which yaks, ponies, etc. live during the summer. With the great range of the main Himalayas in the background, this green sweep of country looks exceedingly refreshing and beautiful.

The Spiti valley is at places three kilometres wide. There is level land on either side of the river giving the appearance of terraces. This level land on which the villages are perched varies in width from fifty to more than a thousand metres. The villages are built around occasional springs or streams on these flat pieces of land. Villages consist generally of not more than a dozen households each and are three to nine kilometres apart. The soil is too dry and too barren to support plant life on its own, and every hectare that is cultivable must be irrigated. This is done by harnessing the small rivulets.

The highest village of Spiti is Gette, situated at a height of about 4,270 metres, one of the highest in the world.

The local people divide Spiti into the following four units :—

- (i) *Sham* (lower region) which lies on both sides of the main river between its confluence with Lingti and its junction with the Pare Chu ;
- (ii) *Pin* which lies on both sides of the Pin river ;
- (iii) *Bhar* (middle region) which is the local name for the Spiti

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valley lying between the point where Shillah Nullah meets the main river about 3 kilometres above Kaza and Sham ; and

- (iv) *Tud* (higher region) which includes all portions of the territory above *Bhar*.

Thus it may be noted that, notwithstanding other differences the topography of Spiti, like that of Lahul, is marked by high mountain ranges and narrow river valleys with flat land being an uncommon occurrence. The arid climate, highly rugged relief and high altitude make the region difficult for human habitation.

RIVER SYSTEM AND WATER RESOURCES

The Chandra and the Bhaga rivers are the main drainage lines of Lahul. After their confluence at Tandi, their combined waters constitute the Chandrabhaga or the Chenab river. In the Spiti sub-division, as in other parts of the Himalayas, river valleys and mountain ranges are the chief topographical features. The Spiti, together with its tributaries, provides the main drainage system of the area. There are other streams also which are of lesser significance.

The local legend regarding the Chandra and Bhaga rivers will be found in Chapter XIX of this volume. Description of the main rivers is, however, given below :—

Chandra river

The Chandra river originates from a huge snow bed on the south-eastern side of the Baralacha Pass and assumes a large size very soon. During the summer, it becomes unfordable within a short distance, about two kilometers of its source, while the rocky bed, the icy temperature of the water and the swiftness of the current deter the boldest swimmer. Looking down the valley from the pass, a vista of grand peaks and glaciers, on the right hand side, falling abruptly to the water's edge makes a memorable impression on the visitor. On the left hand, the slopes are bare the feet of which remain perpetually covered under heavy mass of debris falling from above. Lower down, the Chandra Tal, a kilometre long and a half wide, lies in a broad grassy plain, the lake is placed between a low ridge and the main Kunzam Range with an outlet into the river. Following a general south-westerly course for about 48 km the river sweeps round to the west whence a further course of 64 km west and north-west takes it to Tandi where it meets the Bhaga river. Throughout its course the river is fed by a number of glaciers the biggest being the Shigri on its left bank, and the Samundari on the right. The chief tributaries of the Chandra below Shigri lie on the right bank and they originate from the Sonapani glacier opposite Khoksar and the Sissu glacier. The left bank is steep and bare, but there is

good grazing ground on the right bank beyond Khoksar. There are several villages on the right bank as far as Sissu, and from Sissu the valley becomes richer and cultivable down to Gondhla. The hamlets grow larger as Gondhla is approached, and the houses are seen to be better built, surrounded by groves of poplar and willow. The northern mountains take gentler slope, but on the south, opposite Gondhla, the whole mountain side, from the peaks over 6,090 metres to the river bed below 3050 metres, is visible. Glaciers and snowfields overhanging rocky steeps merge into grassy slopes below. At one point the cliffs descend for some 1,210 metres and form the grandest precipices in the world.

From its source to its confluence with the Bhaga at Tandi, the Chandra registers a fall of about 12.5 metres per kilometre.

Bhaga river

¹“The Bhaga river rises in the Suraj Dal or Lake of the Sun, a name given to the small but deep tarn situated well on the summit of the Baralacha Pass, a little below an altitude of 16,000 feet.” The Bhaga is another significant constituent of the Chenab river system. It takes its origin from the snow-bed on the south-western foot of the Baralacha Pass and flows north-west and later curves round to the south-west. The country is barren down to Darcha village, which is situated near the junction of the Yoche Nullah and the Zangskar Chu with the main stream at about 3,500 metres from the sea. The total length of the river is about 65 km with an average fall of about 28 metres per kilometre. The banks of the stream are steep and rocky.

Below the confluence of the Chandra and the Bhaga at Tandi the joint stream is known as Chandrabhaga. From a height of about 2800 metres the fall of the river is six metres per kilometre through 25 km of length in a north-westerly direction to the border of Chamba district. The side ravines are numerous the biggest among them being the Chokhang nullah, which pours in from the north by the village of Thiroi.

Spiti river

The Spiti river has its source far north on the eastern slopes of the mountain ranges which run between Lahul and Spiti. The river is formed at the base of the Kunzam Range by the confluence of Kunzam La Togpo and the streams Kabzima and Pinglung. On the western side of its source lies a vast salt-water lake.² The river follows a long winding course interlocked here and there by spurs that project from the foot of the plateaus on both

¹Hugh Whistler, *In the High Himalayas*, 1924, p. 24.

²Swarnjit Kaur Mehta, *Spiti-Its Geographical Setting*, *Every Day Science*, Vol. XI No. 1, 1966, p. 27.

sides. The Spiti has a broad and flat valley bordered by high vertical cliffs. The valley tops are flat and plateau-like. Above the 'plateaus' and land again rises in steep scarps. The length of the river within Spiti on the south-east, is about 130 km. It continues in Kinnaur district upto a place known as Khabo where it joins the Satluj.

The main stream of the Spiti river, which is fed by the glaciers, is a perennial one, while some of the tributary streams disappear in the loose morain at the feet of the 'plateaus'. During its course through the difficult, complex terrain, the Spiti is joined by a number of tributaries from both the sides. Those which join its right bank include: Chiomo, Gyundi, Rahtang, Ulah, Pin, Lungze, Mane, Surahl, Pomograng, Mamdang and Sumra; the left bank tributaries are: Thamar, Hanse, Thumna, Tagling, Thumpa Lumpa, Shila, Kaza, Lingti, Poh, Tabo, Karati, Gimdo and Parechu.

The Pin river constitutes the most important right bank tributary of Spiti river. Its main branch, Kyoti, originates from the Lasuma mountain in the Srikanth Range of the Middle Himalayas. It is joined by another branch from the Bhaba Pass near Mudd village. Later it is fed by a number of streamlets, chief among which are Palder Chia, palder Chum and Shang on the right bank, and Karve, Lavrang, Mudd Taking, Madang, Sagnam, Barakuit, Gooling, Seeling and Kir '*togpos*' on the left bank. The Pin is about 50 km long. The Gyundi and the Rahtang, like the Pin, rise from the Mid-Himalayas and are fed by glaciers.

Of the left bank tributaries of the Spiti, the most important are: Lingti, Gimdo and the Parechu, all of which rise in the main Himalayas. Lingti is about 40 km in length and there are a number of villages in its watershed. Parechu, which starts from near the Tagling La and Parang La ranges, runs north-east and joins the Spiti at Sumdo.

The Spiti rivers are all violent torrents whose depths vary enormously, depending upon the season. In winter, when the water freezes, the Spiti is barely about half a metre deep and at its widest only a stone's throw across, and has a discharge of a couple of hundred cusecs. Its water, heavily charged with silt, is generally turbid and yellow. Fording, especially in the latter part of the day, is thus rendered perilous and almost impossible. The maximum discharge in the river, at the point where it enters Kinnaur, may go as high as twenty to thirty thousand cusecs. The discharges in its tributaries also are subject to seasonal, daily, and even hourly fluctuations. None of the rivers is navigable. The larger tributaries of the Spiti flow through valleys which sometimes resemble its own. But shortly before joining it, these are forced into narrow chasms in the rocky heights which rise on either side of the main river. The depth of these cuttings is enormous; the walls of the canyon in the Shila Togpo can hardly be less than 600 metres. The Pin gorge is several kilometres in length; similar rocky chasms can be seen

in the gorges formed by the Sampa, Lingti, Rahtang and Gyundi *togpos*.

Tsarab river

In the north, the Tsarab runs north-westwards for about fifty kilometres before joining the Lingti river and entering Zangskar in Ladakh. The Tsarab is, because of its peculiar location, not used for any purpose by the Spitians. Its watershed does not contain any human habitation; it ultimately joins the Indus in Ladakh.

Myths and historical association

The rivers are not associated with any myths or historical events; on the other hand gods—one in each case are supposed to reside at the various junctions of the important streams and all such places are named after these gods. Similarly places where ancient bridges exist are also supposed to be the abodes of gods; these gods are propitiated by occasional, often annual, sacrifices of goats and sheep.

Lakes

Apart from a number of smaller standing bodies of water, there are two small lakes in the district (both in Lahul sub-division) known as Chandra Tal and Suraj Dal. Chandra Tal is placed between a low ridge and the main Kunzam Range with an outlet into the Chandra river. It is about six kilometres from the Kunzam Pass. It is almost a kilometre in length and half of it in breadth. The other tarn, Suraj Dal, from which the Bhaga river originates is situated just below the summit of the Baralacha Pass. During the winters, it remains in the grip of a pall of ice untidy with lumps of frozen snow and jutting stones. In the summer season this little lake changes into a majestic sight in its beauty, the deep blue of its icy waters reflecting the rocks and snow, with the long vista of the peaks as the background.

Snow-fields, glaciers, ice caves etc.

Andrew Wilson, an European traveller who visited the district in 1873, described it as a valley of glaciers. He says, "Looking down the valley, immense glaciers were seen flowing down the clefts, in the high mural precipices on both sides of the Chandra and extending from the great beds of snow above, down to, and even into, the river. This was the Abode of Snow, and no mistake; for nothing else but snow, glaciers and rocks were to be seen, and the great ice-serpents crept over into this dread valley as if they were living monsters."

The largest glacier in the district is situated in Lahul sub-division known as Bara Shigri, *Bara* meaning big and *Shigri* meaning glacier, in Lahul dialect. Many mountaineers have trekked it for the sake of hobby or geographical exploration. Among the earliest visitors was Captain

Harcourt, who in 1869 said, "In the early morning, when the sun has had little power to melt the ice, the passage of the glacier is comparatively easy, though I doubt whether it would be ever possible to ride over it, for every step has to be canned over, and, as I counted 3,648 of these when I walked over it in 1869, it might be safe to put the width of the Shigri at nearly two miles." This glacier rises from a number of large glaciers, meeting in great valley above, filling that up, and then pushing themselves over its rim in one great ice-stream down to the river.

Hugh Whistler, writing in 1924, says, "Shigri is applied *par-excellence* to one particular glacier that emerges from the mountains on the left bank of the Chandra. It is said to be several miles long, and the snout reaches right down to the river, lying athwart the customary road from Kulu to Spiti." Estimates differ as to the breadth of the glacier where it is crossed, as owing to its movement and roughness no two caravans cross it in exactly the same way, but it is not less than a mile wide. In 1836 this glacier burst its bounds and dammed the Chandra, causing the formation of a large lake, which finally broke loose and carried devastation down the valley. The story runs that the people of Spiti posted guards in the Kunzam Pass to watch whether the water would rise high enough to flow across into Spiti."

Across the Bara Shigri is another glacier known as Chhota Shigri. It is a comparatively smaller glacier and does not reach down to the bed of the river, but it is most steep and slippery, difficult to cross. A detailed description of these glaciers follows :

There are several glaciers in the Lahul region such as the Gangtang at the western Lahul and the Sonapani, Perad and Bara Shigri near the Spiti border. The published quarter inch map of the area shows many side glaciers, but in fact most of these are ice-slabs and ice-falls, over one of which is a recently explored track to the Kulu valley.

The Gangtang glacier situates at the western border of the Lahul region at an altitude of about 5,480 m streaming into Shahsha nullah which joins the Chandrabhaga river at about 13 km to the south.

Sonapani glacier—The desiccated glacier lake and the old terminal moraine are visible from the Rohtang Pass. The desiccated lake, about 2.5 km in length, is a narrow meandering plain following the contours of bounding slopes and consists of such fluvio-glacial deposits as mud, fine sand, pebbles and angular gravels, through which the glacier stream runs. The glacier is about 11 km long. An ice-cliff forms the snout which is

mostly covered by stone, and the stream issues from an ice cave situated towards the western limb of the curved ice-cliff. To the south of the snout, and near to it, is a small terminal moraine. A large terminal moraine used to hold up the waters of the old lake. Three more old terminal moraines are cut through by the Sonapani stream after its escape from the lake-bed.

Perad glacier—It is a small one and is easily accessible being within one kilometre of Putiruni. There is a well marked ice-cave and the glacier stream runs between two large lateral moraines.

The Bara Shigri glacier attracted much attention for many years because of the valuable antimony deposits found there. The glacier was first surveyed in 1906 by H. Walker and E. H. Pascoe of the Geological Survey of India. During 1955 the Geological Survey of India sponsored an expedition to this glacier as part of the Indian programme for the International Geophysical Year 1956-57, when a number of Himalayan glaciers were examined and their snout position fixed.

The Bara Shigri glacier, whose name signifies 'boulder-covered-ice', flows northwards and debouches into the Chandra river where its southerly course is deflected westwards, close to the Spiti border. The glacier is above 3,960 m altitude and extends beyond 4,570 m, a 11 km length of which has been recently surveyed and mapped. The glacier is so heavily covered with surface moraine that ice is not visible for long stretches except along the crevices and in the ablation areas.

The ice-cave is large and well marked. The terminal moraine is thicker on the eastern side having a maximum width of nearly 0.8 km. From the evidence of this terminal moraine it may be concluded that this glacier has retreated more than 0.8 km and in some parts, farther, during the past 150 years. Ancient lateral moraines occur near the Shigri Flats and about 3.2 km farther west. Several types of glacial drift deposits such as wind-blown detritus, surface and sub-glacial moraines, crevasse filling and fluvio-glacial sediments occur in the area.

The Chandra valley bears unmistakable signs of recent alpine glaciation. Above the level of fluvial erosion the valleys are U-shaped and at other places the valley bottoms bear evidence of glacial erosion. In some places the terminal moraine of the valley glaciers descends into the Chandra river, while at other places wide terraces bear testimony to former morainic dams. The most important lake in this area, the Chandra Tal, lies on the site of an ancient glacier. The glacier west of Chandra Tal had deposited a conspicuous terminal moraine on the east bank of the Chandra river. Previously the glacial stream had joined the Chandra river across the moraine, but now it runs to the west of this morainic hill and joins the Chandra river

about 1.6 km farther south. There is a similar ancient terminal moraine at Karchha.

Bara Shigri has been the most popular glacier with the mountaineers. In 1956 an all woman expedition known as "Abinger Himalayan Expedition, 1956, to Bara Shigri glacier" conquered it. In 1958 an expedition led by J.G.G. Stephenson, conquered the Bara Shigri and Gyundi glaciers. In 1970 an expedition to Bara Shigri was successfully organised by St. Stephen's College Hiking Club under the leadership of Major Baljit Singh. Many other expeditions have conquered this glacier in the past.

GEOLOGY*

General

The geological importance of the district lies in the fact that there is a complete sequence of geological formations dating from the pre-Cambrian to the Cretaceous with short breaks in upper Carboniferous and Jurassic time.

The geological formations met with in the district are arranged in the table below :—

	Recent	Soils, Scree, Valley fills
	Pleistocene.....	Moraines, Glacial tills etc.
	Cretaceous...	Chikkim Series Giumal Series.
Mesozoic	Jurassic	Spiti Shalesunconformity.
		Sulcacutus Bedsunconformity.
		Kioto limestone.
	Triassic Lilang System.	Upper Triassic Middle Triassic Lower Triassic
	Permian Kuling System.	Productus Shales Calcareous Sandstones
	Upper Carboniferous.	Conglomerateunconformity..... (short duration).

*Courtesy—Geological Survey of India.

Lower Carboniferous.	Kanawar System.	Po Series.	Fenestella Shales Thabo Stage.
		Lipak Series.	
Devonian.....		Muth Quartzites	
Silurian.....		Silurian rocks	
Ordovician.....		Ordovician rocks	
Cambrian Haimanta System		Upper Haimanta Middle Haimanta Lower Haimanta	

Pre-Cambrian.....

Vaikrita System.

Pre-Cambrian

In this region, the most ancient rocks are found in the Spiti valley. They are highly folded micaschists, slates and phyllites which constitute the Vaikrita System.

Palaeozoic

The Haimanta System of rocks (thickness about 1220 to 1830 m) occurs in the northern slopes of the Central Himalayan Range between Spiti and Kulu and forms a curved belt from the Chandra river to the district boundary at the south-east. These rocks continue into the Lahul region in the north-west through Kado Tokpo Valley. Upper Haimanta comprises of grey and green micaceous quartzites, thin slates and light grey dolomites; the Middle division comprises of red and black shales with some quartzites and the Lower part consists of dark slates and quartzites, which are highly folded. The formations are fossiliferous and the upper division contains various types of *trilobites*, *brachiopods* and *echinoderms*.

The Cambrian rocks described above are overlain by a thick series of shallow water deposits consisting of conglomerates, quartzites and grits, and these in turn by shales and limestones, this whole succession being referable to Ordovician and Silurian (thickness about 660 m). These rocks contain various types of *trilobites*, *lamellibranchs*, *gastropods*, *cephalopods* and *corals*.

Muth Quartzites (above 150 m thick) overlying the Silurian rocks, are a group of hard, white quartzites. They are mainly Devonian in age but the lower part may be Upper Silurian. In Upper Spiti, there are dark fissile

limestone containing abundantly various types of *brachiopods*. These are Middle to Upper Devonian in age.

The Muth Quartzites of Devonian age constitute a conspicuous horizon not only in Spiti area, but in other parts of the western Himalaya. They are overlain in Spiti by a series of limestone, shales and quartzites, called the Kanawar system (thickness about 1210 m), which is sub-divided into Lipak and Po Series.

Lipak series consists mainly of limestones and quartzites with subordinate shales. These rocks have yielded good fossils such as *brachiopods*, *trilobites* and *lamellibranchs* of Lower Carboniferous age. Po Series, which overlies the Lipak Series, has two sub-divisions – the lower division, called the Thabo Stage, consists of quartzites and shales with the plant fossils of Lower Carboniferous age, and the upper portion, known as Fenestella Shales, contains a large number of *bryozoa* and *brachiopods* of Upper Carboniferous age.

The Upper Carboniferous of Spiti is marked at places by an unconformity conglomerate, which rests on the Po Series or earlier rocks and is followed by Permian strata constituting the Kuling System. The lowest members of this system are grits, quartzites and calcareous sandstones containing various types of *brachiopods*. The calcareous sandstones are succeeded by a group of brown or black carbonaceous and siliceous shales called the productus Shales, which have a thickness varying from 3 to 60 metres and form a persistent horizon in Spiti region. They enclose, especially in the lower part, a group of rich and characteristic Permian fauna which include *brachiopods* and *cephalopods*.

Mesozoic

The most complete section of the Triassic System is exposed in the Spiti-Kumaon belt of the Himalayas. The Lilang System, which comprises the Triassic rocks of Spiti, is seen to attain a thickness of nearly 1200 metres. It is entirely marine in character and is fossiliferous except the topmost division which grades imperceptibly into the Lower Jurassic without any change in lithology. The Lower division of the Trias which is about 12 metres thick consists of limestones and intercalated shales rich in *cephalopods*. The Middle division which is about 120 metres thick comprises of various types of limestones and shales containing a large number of *brachiopods* and *cephalopods*; and the Upper part, which is about 1050 metres thick, consists of various types of limestones, sandstones and shales yielding a large number of *brachiopods*, *corals* and *crinoids*.

The rocks succeeding the Triassic rocks in Spiti area are the Kioto Limestone, black ferruginous oolite known as Sulcacutus Beds and the Spiti

Shales of Jurassic age. The Spiti Shales consist of micaceous shales with several intercalated layers of sandstones. They contain numerous fossils, mostly *ammonites* and several *lamellibranchs*.

The Spiti Shales pass upwards into the Giumal Series of Lower Cretaceous age having a thickness of about 90 m. The Giumal Series comprises of yellow and brown sandstones and slaty quartzites enclosing large number of *cephalopods* and *lamellibranchs*. The Giumal Series is overlain by Chimmim Series comprising of grey or white limestones, having a thickness of 30 m or more, which contain *cephalopods* and some *foraminifera*. Overlying the Chikkim limestones are the Chikkim shales (45-60 m) consisting of calcareous, sandy, grey-green shales.

The Chikkim Series is overlain by a group of sandstones and arenaceous shales of the flych facies, which are entirely unfossiliferous. It is clear, therefore, that after the deposition of the Spiti shales the Jethys sea gradually became shallow and unsuitable for supporting a rich fauna. There is also a distinct difference between the Spiti Shale fauna and the Cretaceous fauna since the two have very few common elements.

Pleistocene

The Pleistocene is a period of glaciation in Northern India. Evidences of several advance and retreat of glaciers have been recorded in this area. Minor movements, including the thrusting and uplift of the Pir Panjal range, continued during the Pleistocene. Recent movements along the Himalayan foot hills are known from the inclination of river terraces, thus indicating that isostatic equilibrium has yet to be attained.

Soils

The depth of the soil cap in the area is generally shallow, especially in the upland areas. As the soil at any place is mainly derived from the rocks, which crop out in its immediate neighbourhood, it varies as rapidly as its parent rocks. The mica-schists most commonly gives a stiff reddish loam or a stiff red clay. This type of soil is mainly siliceous and aluminous. It is poor in lime, magnesia, phosphorus and nitrogen, but fairly rich in potash, some parts being quite rich in potassium derived from the muscovite of the schists. The quartzites are very resistant to weathering. They are predominantly siliceous. When they are pure, little or no soil accumulates on their surface because the debris from a pure quartzite contains no binding matter, and is easily washed away as quickly as it is formed. The shales, slates and phyllites are rather soft, and decay more easily. In most cases they are well covered with soil, which supports good vegetations. The limestones mostly occur in broken hilly country, and the limestone hills are dry for the best class of forest.

Economic geology

Asbestos—Small occurrences of asbestos of uneconomic nature have been found near Kami village.

Copper—Copper mineralisation has been found in quartz veins at a few places near Shitikar in upper Spiti valley. The Cambrian formations exposed at Hersang about 80 km south-east of Shitikar are said to be auriferous.

Gypsum—Beds and masses of gypsum have been recorded in the valley of the Gyundi in upper Spiti and also on the right bank of the Spiti river near Losar. At Chango in the lower Spiti valley, a good deposit of gypsum has been reported.

Lead-Ore

A small occurrence of galena was noted in a small quartz vein traversing limestone between Po and Dankhar in the Spiti valley. It was found only in small isolated cubes and used locally for making bullets.

Mica

Plates of mica have been obtained in the upper Chandra valley, especially near the Hamta Pass, but they are usually deformed.

Ochre

Yellow ochre was recorded near Dauksa camping ground on the Ratang river in Spiti.

Zinc

Zinc blonde is sparingly disseminated through the gangue of the antimony-ore at the Shigri Glacier.

Earthquakes

Seismologically Lahul and Spiti district lies in the Alpine-Himalayan mountain system, which is a major earthquake belt of the earth. Earthquakes of great intensity very often occur along the highly disturbed belt of the Himalayan mountains, which are the region of marked instability of the crust. Light tremors occur occasionally in the district. In recent years the Kangra earthquake which occurred on the 4th April, 1905 was of a fair intensity but not severe within the district. The loss of life was small, but considerable damage was caused to houses. Regarding the intensity of shocks received, the area was enclosed by the isoseismal line VI-VII, within which the acceleration of earthquake wave varies from 250 to 500 mm per sec per sec of Rossi Forrel scale. In Spiti the houses built of mud with twig roofs suffered considerably, and many yaks and some cattle were destroyed. In Lahul the damage to houses was considerable, a few human lives and many cattle were reported to have died. The most remarkable effect of the

earthquake in Lahul was the almost complete darkness caused by enormous snow-slides filling the air with fine particles of snow. The whole of Lahul was the under snow at that time. The earthquake caused immense avalanches in snow slopes as well as rock slides which destroyed a large number of trees.

The district was included in Isoseismal IV of the Mercalli scale during the great Bihar-Nepal Earthquake of 15th January, 1934. The shock was moderate, not felt generally, but with creaking of floors and slight oscillations of suspended objects. The acceleration in Isoseismal IV is 50 mm per sec per sec.

FLORA OR BOTANY*

The flora of Lahul is of Central Asian or Siberian character and also of dry alpine nature at lower elevations, on account of the limited amount of rainfall and humidity and extremely cold climate. The valley up to an elevation of nearly 3,350 m is characterised during summer by its greenery but above this height by a general want of it. The flora is richest at the lowest elevation, below Jalma Nullah, and becomes poorer as one goes upstream in Bhaga valley. We might divide the vegetation according to the altitude into three zones first extending from 2,590 m to 3,350 m containing the maximum of vegetation; second from 3,350 to 4,875 m with moderate vegetation; and, third, above 4,875 m containing the minimum of vegetation.

The flora of the first zone, which may also be called the zone of vegetation, consists of nearly all the trees that exist in Lahul viz., junipers, blue pine, birch, hippophae, willows, poplars, spruce, pyrus and walnut; the first three species forming the main natural forests in Lahul.

Roses, *Hippophae rhamnoides*, *Juniperus communis*, *Juniperus recurva*, *Artemisia* and *Ephedra* form the main shrubby vegetation of the valley. Other shrubs and herbs of lesser importance are *Crataegus oxyacantha* (Hawthorn) *Viburnum foetens*, *Fraxinus xanthoxyloides*, *Berberis vulgaris*, *Prunus padus*, wild rhubarb of fair quality, wild gooseberry, *Spiraea vestita* and *Lonicera* with *Hyricaria* as a river-side shrub; this shrubbery during the month of July when the roses are in full blossom, is extremely beautiful; mixed with them we have several of the *Ribes* spp. as well as *Codonopsis ovata*. The finest flowering plant in Lahul is *Eremurus himalaicus*, of which the flowering stem is 1.5 metres in height, and the spike of inflorescence from 60 cm to 90 cm in length. Next comes *Hemerocallis fulva*, not very common but the most gorgeously flowered plant, its flowering stem being nearly 2 m in height, bearing numerous flowers, each one having a brilliant orange corolla, about 1.5 cm long in depth.

*Mataaril supplied by the Botanical Survey of India.

Iris kumaonensis occurring at nearly all heights, characterises the country with its immense beds of purplish blue flowers. The *Lemon* is in great profusion with *Ranunculi* and *Caltha palustris*, covering the meadows with their varying coloured flowers, *Potentilla*, *Sibbaldia* and about nine species of *Pedicularis*. *Gnaphalium*, *Podophyllum emodi*, *Valeriana*, *Artemisia*, *Epilobium*, *Galium*, *Chaerophyllum*, *Aconites*, *Delphinium*, *Aquilegia* and *Primulae* are very common in spring. *Gentians*, with *Androsace* (which is the commonest flower in Lahul) *Geranium wallichianum* (sweet), *Tussilago farfara*, flower throughout the summer. *Taraxacum officinale* and *Boraginaceae* are common in the extreme reaches. Three kinds of *Cuscuta*, a creeper, are also met with frequently.

Characteristic of the second region is an absence of trees. Juniper, birch, andromeda and the dodendron are found in shrub form up to the height of about 4,270 m. Here frequent good patches of short rich grass and wild flowers are also met with. The *Gentians* grow in great luxuriance with *Aconitum*, *Jurinea macrocephala*, *Rhubarbs* and *Polygonum*. The latter two are seen in large patches producing a striking effect on the landscape. There are yellow and orange-coloured *Potentillae*, with several of the *Saxifragas* and one or two of the *salices* in an alpine form. Some of the *Primulae* occur in extensive beds discernible from quite a long distance.

In the third region viz., above 4,875 m the most characteristic plant is *Rheum moorcroftianum* which does not thrive below this height.

Some plants grow luxuriantly on hill-tops and the exposed northern or southern aspects. Upon the crests of hills *Iris kumaonensis* grows in luxuriance, although it prefers more sheltered localities and lower elevations, *Jurinea macrocephala* may be regarded as the typical plant occurring on these crests. *Hierochloa laxa* is met with in similar localities and is valued as a good grass for fodder as also several of the *Primulae*.

The important species that occur on the northern slopes of the hills, are *Primula alliptica*, *denticulata*, *Eritrichium elongatum*, *codonopsis ovata*, *gentiana decumbens*, *kurroo*, *Swertia* species, *Podophyllum emodi*, *Epilobium montanum*, *Polygonum vacciniifolium*, *Cassiope fastigiata*, *Aquilegia vulgaris*, *Anemone polyanthes*, *Salix* species and *Ligularia arnicoides*. On the southern slopes *Saxifraga diversifolia*, *Anemone rupicola*, and *Cuminum Cyminum* are met with.

North-east of the Baralacha lies the plain of Lingti. The soil here is alkaline and the flora differs from the rest of Lahul. On this plain the vegetation is limited to the species *Caragana*, which, on the sandy wastes at the north end forms mounds of spiny scrub with a beautiful golden papery bark and typical legumes. Some plants of *Gentianaceae*, *Compositae* and

Boraginaceae occur near streams. The huge screes near the main ridge by Kyinlung, have the species of *Stellaria*, *Silene*, *Astragalus*, *Meconopsis*, *Salvia*, *Boraginaceae*, *Umbelliferae*, *Polygonaceae*, *Primulaceae*, with occasional shrubs of *salix*. Clumps of *Urtica* abound, which look like junipers from some distance.

The important medicinal herbs are : *Artemisia*, *Enhedra*, *Aconitum*, *Podophyllum*, *Gentiana* and *Hyoscyamus niger*. In lung complaint the jelly made from the fruit of *Hippophae rhamnoides* is strongly recommended by the lamas. *Aconitum heterophyllum*, *Jurinea macrocephala* (Dhup), *Cuminum cyminum* (zira), and *Gentiana* species are largely sent to Kulu and recently some quantity of *Artemisia brevifolia* was sent to Jammu and Srinagar. *Artemisias* are the only source of santonin which is valued for its anthelmintic quality. *Saussurea lappa* is extensively cultivated and is exported.

In comparison with the vast area of the tract there are only a few and scanty natural forests of *kail*, *devdar* and *birch* owing to difficult climatic conditions and high elevation. The stocking of these forests, is very poor. The principal tree species in the forest areas are *Kail* (*Pinus wallichiana*), *devdar*, *pencil cedar*, *Juniperus macropoda* and *bhoj* or *birch* (*Betula utilis*) ; in addition to this, dwarf juniper (*Juniperus communis* and *J. recurva*) forms low shrub. *Willow* (*Salix insignis* and *Z. viminalis*), *Hippophae*, *Rose* species, *Jiburnum foetens*, *Ribes*, *Berberis vulgaris*, *Rubus*, *Rhamnus* species, *Reuns* (*Cotoneaster*), *hawthorn* (*Crateagus oxyacantha*) *bird cherry* (*Prunus padus*), *Spiraea vestita* and *Fraxinus xanthoxyloides* are met with in various places in the form of small trees and shrubs. The chief ground species on the right bank of the Bhaga is a species of *Artemisia* (*A. parviflora* and *A. brevifolia*, a non-santonin yielding variety locally called *neorcha*). In the vicinity of hamlets and along water courses crack willows (*Salix fragilis*) have been extensively cultivated by the people and this cultivation forms a distinct feature of the country. To a small extent poplars (*P. nigra* and *balsamifera*) have also been cultivated and by their considerable height they form fine boulevards along the main roads. Walnut and birdcherry are found mostly in private lands in the lower part of the Pattan valley which contains better vegetation. In the upper valley, as one goes upstream, the vegetation becomes scarcer and ultimately gets limited mainly to *birch* and dwarf junipers.

Kail (*Pinus wallichiana*) the most valuable tree of Lahul, is found at intervals along the left bank of the river Chandra from a point between Khoksar and Sissu, upto Tandi, along the Cheneb (Chandrabhaga) down to Chamba border, and a little beyond Nainghar in the Thirot Nullah. On this side of the river the ground is often precipitous except for some gentle slopes formed by land slips. The aspect is northern. In the Bhaga it occurs on its left bank in the small Kardang and Cheling forests again on northern slopes. Except in Mooling where there are some big trees, *kail* is generally

of small size and mostly occurs either in bands of canopied trees or scattered amongst the cliffs where the soil is sufficient for them to grow. The growth is slow and the canopy often open. A few young sapling can be seen, but otherwise regeneration is absent. In the upper reaches of the hills *kail* growth is inter-mixed with birch.

Devdar or *shugpa* (*Juniperus macropoda*) the most common tree of Lahul, is chiefly found in the Bhaga valley in *Kothis*, Gumrang, and Kolong near Jispa and in the Pattan valley in *Kothi*, Jalma on the right bank of the river Chandrabhaga. Scattered trees, occasionally in small patches, are found on the right bank of the Bhaga. On the right bank of the Chandra and the remaining Pattan valley, this tree is not found except near the monasteries and other religious places. On the left banks of all the three rivers and in the Thiroth Nullah, scattered small trees are found in the lower elevations. It occurs chiefly as a shrub between 3,660-4270 m elevation.

The land under devdar forests consists of loose stones and soil and is not suitable for the growth of the trees of other kind. The devdar growth is scanty and the trees are, at best, of medium size. There is only a limited amount of reproduction. In the best localities the trees are found in groves, but the forests in general present a most miserable appearance. The tree is slow-growing and as the stem increases in height it does not keep in proportion to its girth at the base and as such assumes a conical form. This tree is being attacked at places by a parasite called *Arceuthobium oxycedri*.

Birch occurs on northern slopes, on the left banks, mainly in the Chandra and Pattan valleys and to a small extent on the northern slopes falling on the left bank of Bhaga valley. Birch also occurs in the Youche Nullah and the Thiroth Nullah forming canopied forests mixed with *kail*. There are good patches of birch above the Guru Ghantal monastery and near village Peokar in Bhaga valley.

There are a few trees of spruce near Guru Ghanta monastery, in the Jalma Nullah and in the Thiroth Nullah mixed with *kail*. Opposite Thiroth village, on the left bank of the Chandrabhaga also spruce makes its appearance and is found mixed with *kail*.

Willow (*Salix fragilis*), locally called '*beli*' is largely cultivated near villages where irrigation is available. They are planted in long stakes, generally three together, and tended with much care. Willow trees are much valued by the people for they supply both fodder and fuel. Lombardy poplar (*populus nigra*) and Balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) are found cultivated at various places near villages with willows. Lombardy poplars were introduced by the Moravian Mission and are doing very well in Lahul. Recently the Forest Department have introduced Russian elm in their nurseries which is also doing well.

The meadows contain various kinds of herbs like Lupins, *Medicago*, species (Lucern), *Trifolium repens* (sweet clover and red clover) *Anemone*, *Physochluina praealta*, *Ranunculi*, *Caltha palustris*, *Potentilla*, *Epilobium*, *Pedicularis*, *Gnaphalium*, *Valeriana*, *Artemisia*, *Galium*, *Aconites*, *Delphinium*, *Aquilegia*, *Primulae*, *Androsace*, *Geranium Wallichianum*, *Tussilago farfara*, and *Polygonum*. The common grasses found are *Phleum alpinum*, *Poa alpina*, *Pos jaunsarenis*, *Pensisetum flacodium*, *Melica Jacque Montii* *Agropyron semicostatum*, *Rottboellia* species, *Helictorichon pratensa* and *Hierochloe laxa*.

The vegetative cover of the entire area of Spiti is very sparse but due to its dry Alpine nature it is most varied and attractive. The area remains under snow for over six months in the year and as such only such plants can thrive here which are adoptable to such a cold climate. The general adaptations that are witnessed are, founded forms, twisted and bent nature of stems, succulency, perennation by underground organ propagation by suckers, cushiony and matted habit etc. The other reasons responsible for scanty vegetation are low precipitation in the form of rainfall, poor moisture retention by the substratum and excessive grazing and browsing by sheep and goats.

The flora of the sub-division can be divided into three zones, namely, Dry temperate zone, Alpine zone and the zone of perpetual snow, each of these zones are described below separately

Dry temperate zone (3275-4000 m)

In this zone scattered herbaceous and shrub growth predominates over the woody species, the latter occur only in small patches, dotted about here and there. They are of insignificant value, good only for leafy fodder, firewood and as secondary timber. The main tree species are, *Juniperus macropoda*, found in the lower reaches of the valley, *Betula utilis*, occurring on the northern slopes sporadically and *Salix* spp., growing on moist places. Among the main shrubs that grow here the prominent are wild roses, *Hipophae rhamnoides* and *Juniperus recurva* accompanied by sister shrubs like junipers, *Ephedra* and *Lonicera* etc. The density of shrub growth is also poor.

The herbaceous growth is remarkable for its variety. The important species are *aquilegia fragrana*, *Anemone obtusiloba*, *Caltha palustris*, *Ranunculus* spp., *Trifolium ripens*, *potentilla agrophylla*, *Primula* spp. etc. Pin valley has the richest herb growth.

Alpine zone (4000-5000 m)

It is characterised by the absence of trees. The junipers, birch and rhododendron are found in shrub forms. This is the region of rich grass growth and herbaceous flora. Most of these grasses have a tufted habit, bearing

larger patches of bare ground in tufts. The common grasses frequently met with are *Poa* spp. and *Agropyron* spp. These grasses are rich in nutritive value and attract many herds of sheep and goat, every year, from Kulu, Kangra, Kinnaur and Mandi districts.

Zone of perpetual snow (above 5000 m)

In this zone two belts are differentiated, namely the Glacier and the Tundra. The former is a huge glaciated ice sheet enveloping the high lands where no vegetation has so far adapted due to the worst impact of offensive cold. Tundra, on the other hand, is a narrow belt below the glacial zone extending throughout the length of the mountain chains. It is characterised sub-soil that is permanently frozen from about one metre to several metres, and as such, lichen, mosses and a few grasses capable of surviving on poor soil and intense cold are the only vegetative life of this zone.

The treeless, rugged and badly denuded tract of Spiti calls for afforestation and soil conservation measures. *Salix* and poplar are coming up nicely where irrigation is available. A number of plantations have been raised by the Forest Department which are still in their infancy. These are welcome green spots, very pleasing and attractive to the eyes. The local inhabitants are also realising the importance of such plantations and villages like Mane and Tabo present encouraging example of farm forestry.

Bushes

Ribes (*chhir-man*), furze (*doma*), wild roses, *epedras*, *artemisia*s and juniperous family of bushes form the main shrubby vegetation of the valley. Of the other bushes found in the area prominent are *Crataegus oxycantha*, *Berberis Vulgaris*, wild gooseberry and *Lonicera*s. Most of these shrubs are collected by the local inhabitants for fuel and some of them like furze, are used for fodder. *Karu* is found growing in the nullahs. *Khamad*, (Ratanjot) is also found along the inner valleys. *Layo* and *Kanche*, as these are called locally, are the main wild growing ferns and are used as condiments. The bark of a small plant, locally called *Pipjul* is used for curing wounds. *Ephedra* and *Artimesia* are the only exploitable medicinal herbs of Spiti which are collected every year.

Flowers

Another characteristic of vegetation in this area is that some of the plants bear bright coloured flowers, e. g., *Aquilegia vulgaris*, *Paraquilegia grandifloram*, *Delphinium cashmirianum*, *D. brunonianum*, *Aconitum heterophyllum* and members of *Ranunculaceae*. *Potentilla biflora* and *Potentilla multifida* also lend colour to the mountain-sides by their multi-coloured flowers. Similar flowers can be seen on *Androsace villosa* (*Primulaceae*), *Gentiana moorcroftiana* (*Gentianaceae*), *Anemones* and *Iris*.

Forest preservation is a big problem in Spiti because of heavy incidence of grazing by goats and sheep. Due to the geographical situation

of the tract in alpine area, the rearing of these animals is indispensable. The animals not only provide meat for the people but also wool and skins. These animals browse every blade of grass. The vegetation is already poor and the struggle of plants to propagate is put to an end before it has time to seed. The human axe is the next enemy which reach the very roots, of the trees and shrubs to provide for fuel and timber. Winters are very severe and the nature is, on the contrary, very miser in its supply of fuel material and as such the people notch every twig for the purpose.

FAUNA OR ZOOLOGY

The wild animals of Lahul are not numerous. The common mammal is the ibex (*Capra ibex sibirica*), locally called *tangrol*. It is a heavily-built sturdy goat with large scimitarlike horns. Herds of this sure-footed animal graze on the lower slopes in the winter but retreat to their rocky fastnesses towards the summits of the mountains in summer before the advance of the flocks of sheep. In the autumn after the flocks of sheep leave Lahul, ibex come down to lick the salt left by the shepherds on the grazing grounds.

The snow leopard and the wolf are also found but they are on the decrease and are by no means common. They prey on sheep, goats and ibex. Some *bharal* (*Pseudots navour*) exist on the Lingti plain. Red foxes are more numerous and there used to be some trade in fox skins in the past. Brown bears are also found. Musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*) are also seen but rarely. Marmots abound on the Lingti plain which is honey-combed with their burrows. An odd rabbit-like animal, called mouse-hare or *pika* may be seen occasionally among the boulders on the hill sides. Snow pigeons are plentiful near cultivation and *chukor* on the hill sides. The only game bird is the snow-cock (*golind*) which, however, is not very common. Wild ducks are seasonal birds which pass through Lahul on their way from Central and North Asia to the plains of India during autumn. Some singing birds are known from Lahul but generally there is a stillness which is one of most striking feature of this tract, unbroken, save by the sound of rushing water and the occasional thunder of an avalanche. Snakes and other venomous reptiles are unknown. Snow-trout of very good quality is found where side streams join the river or where water lies in pools.

The ibex and the musk deer have gone scarce through reckless shooting in the past. The shooting of ibex, *bharal*, musk deer, brown bear and *chukor* is regulated by game laws. The shooting license is issued by the Divisional Forests Officer, Keylong. The enforcement of the game laws presented great difficulty in the past, as the area was completely cut off from the administrative headquarters in Kulu and violations remained un-noticed. Since the formation of the district poaching has, however, decreased considerably.

The following animals have been noticed in the Spiti valley :—

Himalayan Blue Sheep (also called big horn) - Local name-*Nabu*. Colour-Faded greyish brown females are paler. Characteristics : Males have beautifully curved horns ; females have small tapering, almost vertical, horns. Habits : Seen in abundance on the left side of the Spiti river. Quite shy and feeds at great heights, 3960 m and above. Utters a sharp, shrill whistle when frightened. Size-big sheep, weight up to about 50 kg.

Ibex—Local name-*tangrol* or *kin*. Characteristics : Full grown male varies in height from 0.85 to 1.3 m, has a massive set of spiralled-shaped horns, measuring up to 1 m and a gorgeous black beard ; it also emits a pungent glandular smell ; its skin contains a thick undergrowth of *pasham* (a fine quality of wool).

Himalayan fox—Local name-*Hatse*. Size: wolf. Colour : golden brownish with a white tuft at its tail. Characteristics : It looks about for abandoned carcasses and in the winters even comes into the village *abadis*. It is prized for its fur.

Snow leopard—Local name-*jhatpo* or *shin*. Belongs to the cat family. Generally it eats the cattle of the local population ; especially found near villages. Colour-Greyish with black spots. Size : 38 to 59 mm high, up to 288 mm in length from the tip of the nose to the tail end.

Snow-wolf—Local name-*shingoo*. A shy night prowler ; it is a notorious killer of domestic animals. Size : Ordinary sheepdog.

'*Kokar*' is a rodent of the size of a porcupine, becoming fast extinct. It is killed because of its highly priced skin. Snow rabbit-Local name *reon*; Colour:brownish grey. Habitat. Lower parts of the valley.

Snakes, lizards and fish—

Snakes are found in the portion of the valley below Lari of the two types seen one is whitish grey in colour and 50-75 mm in length, the other is yellowish brown in colour and measures up to 150 mm. These are suspected to belong to the Viper family and are thought to be poisonous ; but since these are seen rarely, and never near villages, it is not possible to confirm this. A few lizards, with sleek, shining and slim bodies, are also seen in the valley. No known species of fish have been observed, probably due to the extremely cold water in the rivers, however small groups of fish, size 50-75 mm are sometimes seen in spring water.

Spiti belongs to the Zoo-geographical region which extends over the greater part of Asia and all Europe and is known as Palaeartic. The local names, general description and Latin names, have been given below :

Kongmo (Himalayan Snow Cock)—Species : *Tetraogallus himalayensis*. Size : King vulture. Colour : Dull greyish brown. Habits : Cannot

ascend in flight : found generally in freshly sown fields at heights about 3650-3960 m. The male emits a sweet melodious whistle at regular intervals, especially before sunrise. It is shy in nature and is a nice table bird. **Chukor-Shakpa** ; (*Chukor* Partridge) *Alectoris Chukar* Species : *Cauabis chucor*. Size : Half grown domestic hen : colour greyish brown. It is a little bigger than the grey partridge. Habits : effects dry and open country especially near river beds and is a very fast runner. This bird is a good flier too. Call : a singing, high pitched *kateeta, kateeta*. Good table bird. **Ram-Chakor, Shakpa, Chanmo**, snow partridge *Lerwa Lerwa*. Size : domestic hen : otherwise similar to *chukor* described above ; it is also good game bird.

Mooker—Hill pigeon—Species *Columba rumpertris*. Size and habits : Similar to the Blue Rock Pigeon ; is a little bigger and has white bar on its tail.

Chungak : Brownish-red beaked crow. Jet-black in colour. Size: Mouse Crow (*Pyrrhocorax pys.*)

Kagchh—Red billed chough (*cervus corax-Raven*) glossy black crow with beak. This is of the size of a common house crow.

The following birds are also found in the district :—

Birds of prey—Lammergeyer (*Gypaetus barbatus*). Griffon vulture (*Typs fulvus*), Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*).

Game birds—Blue Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*), snow pigeon (*Columba leuconota*), lesser sand plover (*Charadrius mongolus*), Green Sandpiper (*Tringa Ochropus*), Ruddy Sheldrake (*Tadorna ferruginea*).

Other conspicuous birds—Alpine Chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), various snow finches (*Montifringilla*), rose finches (*Carondacus*), larks (*Calandrella Eremophila*), Wagtails (*Motacilla*), leaf-bird (*Phylloscopus*), thrushes (*Monticela*), red starts (*Phoenicurus*), drippers (*Cinclus*), martins (*Riparia*), Swifts (*Apus*).

Climate

This district which lies between the eastern or Main Himalaya on the north and the Mid-Himalaya on the south, has a bracing climate. The general elevation in the district is above 2700 metres with the greater part of the area having elevations ranging from about 4000 metres to about 6000 metres, some of the peaks being above 6400 metres. The seasons follow more like that of the temperate zone. The winter season from about the middle of November to March is followed by the spring which lasts up to the end of May. The next four months may be termed the summer season. October and the first half of November constitute the transition season.

Rainfall

Records of rainfall are available for Keylong only for 77 years. The details of the rainfall at Keylong are given in table No. I. The average annual rainfall at Keylong is 554.6 mm. No records of rain or snowfall are available for any other station in the district. The precipitation in the east towards the north and east of Keylong is expected to be much less than at Keylong and would be mostly in the form of snowfall. The enormous Mid-Himalayan mountain ranges keep off the monsoon currents and as a consequence the summer rainfall is scanty. The total rainfall for the period June to September is only 141.3 mm being only about a quarter of the annual rainfall. The period December to May is the season with good precipitation, almost mainly associated with the passage of western disturbances.

On an average there are 50 rainy days (i.e. days with rainfall of 2.5 mm or more) in a year at Keylong.

The heaviest rainfall recorded in 24 hours at Keylong was 133.6 mm in October, 1917.

Temperature

There is no meteorological observatory in the district now. From some very old records of temperatures available for Keylong it is seen that the maximum temperatures at that station range from 26.7°C in August to 6.1°C in February. The minimum temperatures range from 17.8°C in February to 6.7°C in August. July and August are the warmest months.

Humidity

The air is generally very dry over the district particularly in the summer and transition seasons. In the winter also the air is very dry except during spells of rain or snowfall.

Cloudiness

During the period December to May skies become heavily clouded or overcast when the district is affected by western disturbances. In the summer season there is some moderate cloudiness. In the rest of the year skies are mostly clear or lightly clouded.

Winds

Winds are generally light in the valleys and at lower elevations. But at higher elevations winds are stronger. Wind directions at the surface will depend very much on the nature of the terrain. But generally speaking winds are northerly to north-easterly in the summer season and westerly to north-westerly in the rest of the year.

Special weather phenomenon

During the winter and the early part of the spring the district is affected by a series of western disturbances which cause snowfall sometimes heavy at the higher elevations and rain at lower elevations. Fog occurs in the valleys in winter.

Tables No. 2 and 3 give the details of temperature and relative humidity and mean wind speed respectively for Keylong.

TABLE NO. I
Normals and Extremes of Rainfall

Station	No. of Years of data	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual rainfall as % of normal year*	Highest annual rainfall as % of normal year*	Lowest annual rainfall as % of normal year**	Heaviest annual rainfall in 24 hours in amount/ date (mm)
Keylong	50 a	58.7	63.7	101.9	78.7	55.9	22.9	33.3	33.0	32.1	20.8	7.4	26.2	554.6	154 (1914)	57 (1939)	133.6 Oct. (1971)†
	b	5.8	5.8	7.6	6.2	5.0	2.3	3.8	4.0	3.0	1.3	0.7	3.1				43.6

(a) Normal rainfall in mm (b) Average number of rainy days (*i. e.* days with rain of 2.5 mm or above)
 *Based on all available data upto 1959. **Years given in brackets.

TABLE NO. 2
Normals of Temperature and Relative Humidity.

Month	Mean daily maximum temperature	Mean daily minimum temperature	Highest maximum ever recorded	Lowest minimum ever recorded	Relative humidity 0800
	C°	C	C°	C°	%
January	6.7	-16.5	13.1	-19.4	74
February	6.1	-17.8	9.0	-19.7	76
March	9.8	-13.8	16.7	-16.1	75
April	14.8	-7.4	18.7	-13.6	66
May	22.1	-0.9	25.9	-1.9	62
June	25.9	2.9	27.7	-0.2	62
July	26.8	5.3	28.7	1.7	74
August	26.7	6.7	28.2	4.6	77
September	25.6	1.3	27.1	-0.1	64
October	21.8	-4.1	22.9	-8.9	52
November	16.3	-7.7	20.2	-10.4	54
December	12.1	-14.1	13.9	-17.5	67
Annual	17.9	-5.5			

TABLE NO. 3

Win Meand Speed in K. M. P. H. (Keylong)

[illegible]

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

Pre-history

It is difficult to have a connected and coherent past account of the area. This has been a home to these sturdy people who could not only endure and withstand the rigours of nature, but loved solitude and extremely hard life of these forbidding mountains. Their needs have been from the beginning, so few and uncumbersome and existence so bare that no outsider was tempted to establish himself and make any connected account. Faint traces of history of Lahul, mainly discovered through a study of the languages, go back to about 2000 B.C.,* but the first authentic recorded material dates back to no earlier than A. D. 635.

Archaeology

Nothing has so far come to notice which may deserve archaeological description, within the district, except, of course, a few monasteries, perched normally, on steep spurs and rocks. The most important and popular monastery in the Lahul sub-division, is that of Kardang on the left side of the Bhaga river opposite Keylong. A narrow path, shaded by willow trees, and then a steep ascent leads to the monastery. The flat roofed, three storeyed houses are massed together, in two blocks, so as to enable flow of under communications in winter. In the vicinity of the monastery is a silver coated *chorten*. In the portico is a row of prayer cylinders. There are four chapels in the monastery one of which contains the ashes of Lama Narbhu Rimpoche, who established the monastery. The walls are decorated with colourful paintings without any affinity with Basohli paintings. A *tantric* painting depicting two figures, a male and a female, engaged in ecstatic union, decorates the wall. Brass images are ranged on shelves on one side of the altar and on the other stands a book-case full of sacred books. Cylindrical prayer wheels, which spin round at a slight touch of the finger, are placed on each side of the altar. In the centre of another chapel is an image of Triloki Nath, with eleven heads and one thousand hands. It has a benign expression. The walls are painted with figures of the incarnations of Buddha and other saints. Paintings of male and female divinities, saints and demons painted in brilliant blue and red, on cloth with silk borders are hung on the walls.

*Chopra, Pran, *On An Indian Border*, pp. 42.

In the store rooms are stored musical instruments, dresses, weapons and masks used in the devil dances. There are, archaeologically, similar monasteries located at a number of places within the district and find mention in chapter III of this volume.

With regard to the houses, though there may be of no great archaeological interest, but are functional and very apt in the type of terrain and climate. These are, therefore, naturally different in appearance from those built in the Kulu or Manali area. Barring few houses of old Thakurs who were rich enough to import timber from across the Rohtang, such as the Gondhla fort owners, the common men have made good use of the local material. Made of stone, their rectangular construction have been so well plastered with off white mud that from a distance it appears as if cement has been used. In fact the plaster is as hardy as cement. These have flat roofs and the walls mud plastered outside as well as inside. Three storeyed houses are common, with small windows all over. In Pattan valley some of the houses are bigger and some have four to five storeys. The houses all over are so built that during winter people can live comfortably without stirring out.

The people of the district living for centuries, may be for a millennium are behind, beyond and yet within the snow-bound desolation. Their culture is all its own and inbred. Because of the isolation imposed by geography they are forced to maintain and guard their spirit of independence and self help. India, more than a thousand years back, had given Buddhism and alphabet to Tibet from where it filtered through to this area of the Chandra, the Bhaga and the Spiti. Life, rotates around religion and is monastery-based, governed by the rituals and conventions mostly of the lay monks or nuns. The better class of monks in quest of higher spiritual attainments live retired in far off caves away from the struggle of ordinary mortals to whose lot therefore, the materialistic monks and nuns fall and these have to be there as without these symbols of religion there would be nothing in the lives of common people to live for.

To trace a continuing linguistic and anthropological link with the past local research data have revealed that this area in about 2000 B. C. was inhabited by aboriginal tribes, in language and perhaps, also in stock analogous to the Munda-speaking tribes of Bengal and Central India. Survivors of the same ethnological stock are to be found in the Kanawar Kothi of Rupri Waziri in Kulu, in the isolated village of Malana and in the Bushahr tract on the Satluj. At a later period, Tibetan settlers came in from the north and east from Rupshu and Ladakh into the head of the Bhaga valley, and from Spiti and Tibet into the head of the Chandra valley near Khoksar, where the language spoken approximates rather to that of Spiti than to that of Ladakh. Aryans and semi-Aryans also came

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from the west and south, and the present Lahulas must, in all probability, be the ultimate product of the amalgamation of these different races. Their peculiar languages, three in number-Bunan, Tinan and Manchat, are found to have strong affinities with the languages of the Munda-speaking tribes. It seems probable, therefore, that at that distant time the whole hill tracts, from Kinnaur to Lahul, including much of Kulu, were inhabited by tribes related to the Mundari-speaking races of Central India. In point of grammar the vocabulary shows surprising affinity with Mundari and differ widely from any Tibetan dialect. In the initial stages the amalgamation between the Tibetan tribe and the Mundaris must have taken place in Lahul. An idea of the early history of Lahul can only be had from old traditions as no written records apparently exist. Before Lahul came under the sway of Kulu it was one of the provinces of Guge. Lahul became independent, probably in the beginning of the sixteenth century (1500-1580) then followed an epoch of local rule under petty chiefs (Thakurs) who paid tribute to the erstwhile state of Chamba (now Chamba district). There are still traces of those families surviving to the present day. About the year 1700 the supremacy passed on to Kulu with which its fortune swung and with which it passed under the British rule in 1846.*

During the Kulu supremacy a considerable influx of the Kulu men must have resulted in their intermingling with the Lahulas, especially in the Pattan valley or Manchat and Chamba-Lahul, resulting in yet another admixture of the tribes.

Buddhism seems to have been introduced into Lahul in the eighth century, mostly by Padam Sambhava, the famous missionary from Udyana, who, according to an ancient Tibetan book, visited Zahor and Garshe (Mandi and Lahul), and preached the doctrines of Buddha in Tibet. It was then that some of the Buddhist shrines in Lahul, such as Guru Ghantal, were founded; the Guru Ghantal monastery under the name of Gandhola, is mentioned one of these the foundation of which was laid by Padam Sambhava.

Previous to this, snake, demon and phallic worship was common as in the other parts of the hills. Lamaism followed later. The Guru Ghantal white marble head is of the same workmanship as the Triloknath image (Chamba Lahul) and both are of the same Boddhisattiva.

Hieun Tsiang, in the course of his travels in India between A.D. 629 and 645, visited Kulu in 635 A.D. He places Lahul north-east of Kulu and over estimated the distance but despite this mistake in the calculation of

*Imperial Gazetteer, p. 116

distance it is indisputable that he refers to the present day Lahul. Hieun Tsiang probably did not visit Lahul personally but wrote his account from hearsay from Kulu.

The origin of the name (Lahul) is uncertain. The Tibetan Lho-yul south country, (with reference to Ladakh) and Lhahi-yul, the country of the gods, have been suggested.*

It seems probable that a loose connection with Ladakh was in existence since a remote period. But this connection was mainly restricted to cultural and trade relations and the Gyalpos of Ladakh did not actually rule over this valley at all. There are indications in the records of these countries that Chamba held the Pattan valley, almost as far up as the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers at Tandi, while Kulu had some influence in the Chandra and Bhaga valleys. During wars, the Chamba armies probably advanced by way of the Kugti Pass and Lahul when invading Kulu. At that early time Brahmaur (Brahmapura) was the capital of the Chamba State which was then confined to the Upper Ravi valley, the lower valley being still in the possession of local petty chiefs, called Ranas and Thakurs. In the Kulu annals it is stated that Lahul was conquered by Chamba from Kulu in about A.D. 600, but was recovered by Kulu in the following year, after a battle at the foot of the Rohtang Pass. These records are largely legendary, yet they tend to confirm the common belief that Lahul at one time or the other was under Kulu and Chamba in those times.

The titular rulers of Lahul at that early period were, no doubt, the ancient petty chiefs, called Jos or Thakurs (corresponding to the Ranas elsewhere) who extracted some yearly tributes from the people of the area. A part of the tribute they may have paid to Ladakh just as they did at a later period to the two states of Chamba and Kulu. There were baronial families at Gushal, Kardang, Darcha, Barbog and elsewhere, like the jagirdar or Thakur families of the present time. Ranas are said to have lived in Loth (Lote) and other places in the main valley, as they were in Chamba-Lahul, at a later period.

The main Chandrabhaga valley was once included in Chamba territory. Many traditions exist in Lahul pointing to this conclusion. The people of Gushal, on the left bank, at the junction of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers, say they once owned a copper-plate deed, granted by a Chamba Raja, which was taken away from them when the country was annexed to Kulu. On the right bank, these traditions are not so clear. The tract must often have changed hands. The Chandra valley may be

*Real, *Buddhist Records of the Eastern World*. Vol. I. p. 177

assumed to have been under Kulu, and even this does not seem to have remained long with the latter kingdom.

About A. D. 1080-1110 Lha-Chen-Uppala,* king of Ladakh, invaded Kulu, presumably through Lahul, and exacted from the raja a treaty, under which the raja promised to pay tribute in *dzos* (half bred yaks) and iron. As there were no *dzo* in Kulu they must have gone from Lahul, which must, therefore, have been a province of Kulu, in part at least. This treaty remained in force till the seventeenth century.

The Jesuit Father, Azendo, who, in 1631 passed through Lahul on his way from Leh to the Punjab plains, definitely states that Lahul, which he calls Garja was subject to the kingdom of Kulu.

It is certain also that after the reign of Bahadur Singh (1532-1559), who was ruler at least of Tinan and possibly of other territory in Lahul, most of Upper Lahul remained under Kulu rule for a long period. The names of the next three rajas of Kulu occur in a number of inscriptions, decrees and other documents, found in various parts of the country. Up to the present time each of the rajas-Partap Singh (1559-1575), and Parbat Singh (1575-1608) has been found mentioned in eleven instances, and Prithi Singh (1608-1635) in eight. During Partap Singh's reign, the foremost chief in Lahul was Troshi-gya-tspo of Barbog. No records of the two successors of Prithi Singh have so far come to light.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, Ladakh was invaded by Central Tibet, then under Mongols. Ladakh king, Delegs Namgyal (1645-1680) sought the aid of the Mughals from Kashmir. With their help the invaders were defeated at Basgo and driven back. In Lahul, as well as in Spiti and Zangskar, this invasion is still remembered as that of the Seg-po (Mongols) under Galdan Tashang or Tshewang. In the invasion the Tangyud Gonpa and some temples at Lhalung in Spiti were burnt. One Mongol detachment is said to have stormed Kolong fort in Lahul, and after crossing the Bhaga with a view to proceeding to Kulu were completely annihilated near Gondhla by crashing avalanches. Human are said to have been found on a plain, called Roh-langa-tha, where, according to tradition, this disaster happened. On the retreat of the Mongols the Raja of Kulu, Bidhi Singh (1672) seized the opportunity to bring the Upper Lahul entirely under his sway. This was probably rendered all the more easier in consequence of the invasion of Ladakh by Eastern Tibet in 1646-48 which rendered Ladakh engaged and disabled to interfere. Bidhi Singh also annexed the whole of the Pattan up to the present boundary with Chamba at Thiroi. A tradition, prevalent at the

*Francke, A.H., *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* Vol. II, p. 96

Triloknath shrine, also indicates that a Kulu Raja reached Triloknath and tried to carry off the idol, but was defeated in the attempt, as the idol became so heavy that it could not be moved. There is a mark on the right leg of the marble figure, which is said to have resulted from a sword blow by a Kulu soldier. One account states that Manchat was acquired from Chamba by Raja Bidhi Singh of Kulu as dowry with a Chanba princess. There is however, no record of such a marriage having taken place. The Kulu Raja also said to have taken away a copper plate grant which had been conferred on them by Chamba.

Bidhi Singh's name occurs in Lahul, in documents and inscriptions, more frequently than that of any other Kulu ruler. This confirms that Bidhi Singh invaded Lahul and expelled Ladakh influence from the upper valley, and also acquired the main valley from Chamba down to the present boundary, either by conquest or private arrangement. According to another version Raja Bidhi Singh had gone to Chamba via Lahul and took the opportunity *en route* of impressing on the Lahulas the advisability of throwing off the yoke of Guge and of offering their allegiance to Kulu. Lahul was then annexed to Kulu. Raja Bidhi Singh is said to have introduced various improvements in the administration, chief one of which was the payment of the revenue in cash instead of in kind. There can be little doubt that both Chamba and Kulu were, at this period, in accord as to the wresting of Lahul from Guge. Raja of Chamba subsequently seized Pangi and Triloknath. On the other hand until the reign of Jit Singh, almost the whole of Lahul remained in the possession of Kulu ruler.

In the reign of Bidhi Singh's successor, Man Singh (1688-1719), the foremost of the noble families, the Jos of Lahul and that of Barbog, resisted and were deprived of all power. Bil-chung was the last 'Jo' of Barbog. The other two houses that of Kolong (from* which at this time the junior branch of Gumrang separated), and that of Tinan-submitted and recovered *jagirs* and also the title of Thakur as in Kulu. The principal chief at that time was Nono Chogan of Kolong. They called themselves Rajputs, and claimed that their ancestors entered Lahul from Bangahal. All except Barbog possessed chronicles to support this claim. They marry into the Kulu Thakur and even into Kulu Rajput families except Barbog and Gumrang who used to intermarry with the house of the ex-king of Ladakh, residing at Stog, near Leh.

It is stated that the Gyalpos of Ladakh never ruled in the valley at all. When attached to Guge, Lahul was larger than it is

*Francke, A. H., *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Vol. II, pp. 22-24.

now, both Triloknath and Pangi, at present in Chamba district, having been within it.

From about A. D. 1670 onwards Ladakhi influence came to an end in Lahul. Soon after, the kings of Kulu and Leh entered into a trade agreement, whereby the former sent each year, through Lahul to Lingti, at least a hundred coolie load of iron in exchange for sulphur, provided by the latter. The people of Lahul had to buy the iron in Kulu and carry it to Lingti. This exchange lasted till the Sikh occupation of Kulu Lahul.¹

About A. D. 1700 Raja Man Singh of Kulu further strengthened his hold on the country by advancing to the north of the Baralacha La and fixing the boundary with Ladakh, probably at Lingti, where it still exists. He also built the Gondhla Fort and married a daughter of the Gondhla family. There exists an inscription of his time in the Iron Castle of Gondhla, and his name occurs in a decree relating to the revenue of the Gandhola monastery but after Bidhi Singh, it is surprising how seldom the names of Kulu Rajas occur in inscriptions or decrees.

In the time of Raja Pritam Singh, whose name is found in the inscriptions at Guemur and Lindur (C. A. D. 1800) a Lahul contingent assisted him in the war with Mandi at Bajaura, where they fought under the banner of GyePhang La (the spirit of the great peak that looks down the Kulu valley). An account of this event, written both in Pahari and Urdu, was in the possession of the Moravian Mission at Keylong. The Moravian Mission, with its headquarters at Keylong founded in 1853 was closed in August, 1940. Some of the missionaries did valuable historical, archaeological and linguistic work, especially the Rev. Dr. A. H. Francke, whose second volume of the *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* contains a wealth of original material and commentary, indispensable for the historian of Lahul. The chronicles of Ladakh² also record a foray into Zaskar made by the people of Kulu and Lahul, who, after devastating and plundering the village, withdrew.

The Kulu revenue headquarters in Lahul were at Tandi, where two officers, a Commissioner and *Kanungo*, resided. There was also a storehouse, called *kothi*, where grain was deposited as revenue.

Three families of Thakurs of Kolong, Gumrang and Gondhla made up with Kulu. They were given *jagirs* which they still hold. The fourth

of Barbog however, fell from its high estimates. Barbog genealogy dates from Tsering Anrup who was a contemporary of Bahadur Singh in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Thakurs had their castle on the left bank of Bhaga, opposite Keylong, at Kardang which was the original capital of Lahul and commanded the old trade route. The policy of the Barbog Thakurs was pro-Ladakh and, therefore, hostile to the Kulu Rajas. Politically they sided with the kings of Ladakh, which led to their down-fall when the Kulu Rajas invaded Lahul in the late seventeenth century. The family still keeps up the custom of lighting a large bonfire to announce the new year to the Lahulas.

The Thakurs of Kolong who were the descendants of Rajputs soon realised that the star of Rajput ascendancy was rising. This policy paid dividends to the family which held the lordship of Lahul, under the British Government, and proved beneficial to the area. The late representative of the time, Thakur Amar Chand, availed himself of an opportunity arising out of the First World War (1914-19) and did valuable work in recruiting, finally proceeding in person to Mesopotamia as a Jemadar in the 6th Labour corps, with a five body of Lahulas serving under him. He was given the title of Rai Bahadur in 1917 as a reward for his administrative and war services, but his life came to an end in 1921. In the Thakur families the rule of primogeniture obtained but at his death his son Thakur Abhai Chand was still a minor, and the administration was vested for two years in Thakur Mangal Chand brother of the late Thakur. When on obtaining majority, control was handed over to Thakur Abhai Chand, Mangal Chand continued to serve and worked as wazir of Lahul. Abhai Chand's son Khushal Chand has been a colonel in the Indian Army. Both, Thakur and his brothers Prithvi Chand and Khushal Chand have won Maha Vir Chakra in the Kashmir campaign. Thakur Fateh Chand is the present Jagirdar of Gondhla.

Gumrang branch of the Thakurs of Lahul enjoy a larger *jagir* than the others and are senior to Kolong. The *jagirs* were founded in the seventeenth century by Sengee Namgyal who built a 'castle of Gumrang' near Keylong. The present jagirdar Prem Chand is eleventh in the line from Sengee Namgyal according to the chronicle of the house.

On the subjection and annexation of Kulu by the Sikhs in 1840-41, Lahul also was taken over and ruled by them in what the people then said an extortionate manner, with the cession of the Jullundur Doab by the Sikhs to the British in 1846, both Kulu and Lahul became British territory. Till then the history of the area was a history of the obscure kings and rajas, Mongolian and Hindu, who fought and intrigued for its possession with ever shifting boundaries and loyalties.

1. Francke, A. H. *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, Vol. II. pp. 22-24.

2. Ibid pp. 125

The British placed Lahul under the administration of a wazier who happened to be the head of the Thakur family of Khangsar village of Kothi Kolong. In 1941, due to the atrocities of Thakurs this arrangement came to an end and a naib-Tahsildar was posted for the first time in this area to run the administration on the lines as in other parts of the provinces.

The naib-Tahsildar had his headquarters at Keylong and used to look after the sub-tahsil during the summer months. In winter due to the extreme cold and absence of any facilities then, the staff moved to Kulu. The Lahulas were comparatively advanced over their Spitian neighbours particularly because some of the families used to migrate to Kulu or to the other areas where they had their permanent houses. They were, therefore, in touch with the major events taking place in the country. They were aware that a freedom struggle was on in India to end the foreign rule of the British. Some of the men from Lahul themselves took part in the struggle.

Spiti

In very early times Spiti (pronounced Piti) was probably ruled by a pre-Buddhist Hindu dynasty of rajas bearing the surname or suffix of 'Sena'.* Captain Harcourt states in his historical notes that, "coins of this dynasty have been found in the valley, but this has not been verified." Spiti at one time may have included at least the Bushahr and Kulu Pandrabis Kothis on the right bank of the Satluj. Perhaps for a short period of time it was an important power in the loosely defined tract, known as Guge. Communication from the Pin valley to Outer Saraj, via the Bhaba and Rupin Passes, along the right side of the Satluj, was not difficult, and the present Rampur-Simla Road was not necessarily the route followed then. The communication between Spiti and Rampur Bushahr and Kulu appear to be frequent and close. This is somewhat evident from the fact of a copper-plate by Raja Samundra Sen who this ruler Samundra Sen was, has not been ascertained for certain. It is surmised that the ruler belonged to Spiti. But the deed is still extant in the possession of the Parushrama Temple at Nirmand in Kulu district. The deed appears to have been assigned seventh century date.

Some time about that period there is mention of one Spiti Thakur who lived at Rumsu above Nagar and apparently held possession of the Upper Beas valley towards the Hamta Pass, near the head of which the ruins of the fort, ascribed to him, can still be seen. There would seem to have been many in succession bearing this name, Rumsu which was really a title

*Journal of The Punjab Historical Society (Lahore), Vol. vi, pp. 52 & 70.

meaning the 'Spiti Lord,' as they came from Spiti. One of them is said to have been killed in fighting. This is just about the period when reference to Spiti is found in the Kulu annals, and two Rajas of Spiti, are mentioned by name bearing the 'Sena' suffix. One of these, named Rajendar Sen invaded Kulu simultaneously with Chamba and made it a tributary in the reign of Raja Ruder Pal C.A.D. 600-650. Kulu remained tributary to Spiti for two reigns. It was Raja Parsidh Pal who declined to continue the payment of the tribute and moved out with an army to oppose the Spiti chief Chet Sen. He came out victorious over Spiti in a battle near the Rohtang Pass, and thus secured the freedom of his country. Spiti and Chamba were probably allies in the invasion of Kulu which was made through Lahul, as also in the subsequent war in which Parsidh Pal was the victor. Lahul was also recovered from Chamba about the same time. Spiti must at that period have been possessed of considerable resources, and it seems not improbable that the copper-plate referred to may have been granted by one of the earlier rajas, bearing the name of Samundra Sen. Local Buddhist dynasty was then probably overthrown.

Some time after 1680, Spiti was invaded by Raja Man Singh of Kulu, who exacted tribute, and established a loose authority over the country which still remained under Ladakh. The two forts, ruins of which may still be seen at Sumdu at the foot of the Bhaba and Rupin Passes near the Pin river, are known as the Lyungti Khar (Kulu forts), and may possibly have been built by Raja Man Singh; but according to Sir L. Dane, they may had association with Raja Jagat Singh. It is probable that tribute was paid both to Ladakh and Kulu, but from its remote and inaccessible situation Spiti was left very much to itself. An official was sent from Leh as Governor, but he generally went away after harvest time and left the administration to be carried on by the wazier and other hereditary officers, who again were controlled by the headman (*gadpo*) of groups of villages. The same state of things existed in 1821 when Trebeck, travelling companion to Moorcroft, visited Spiti.

Spiti seems always to have been at the mercy of its neighbours Bushahr, Kulu and especially Ladakh. The Spiti people were not warlike and discovered an easy way by readily paying small tributes to all the surrounding states, by way of blackmail, to keep them appeased and thereby escape plunder. Whenever the territory was raided or plundered a simple and elaborate warning system was invoked. They built huge fires on certain mountain-tops visible throughout the valley and thereby communicate the message for a meeting up in the sanctuary of rocks unreachable by others. These places they called and still call DHANKARS. There is also a place called Dankhar where a fort existed and was thus a meeting place convenient to all. A meeting decided the steps to be taken against the aggressors. The course of action generally adopted was to search the fields, desert the

villages and monasteries and escape to the higher uninhabited plateaus, moving all men, women, children with their worth carrying valuables. They remained in the mountains till the invaders retired. Three such invasions are recorded in documents. The first is referred to in the latter half of the seventeenth century when a foray was made from Ladakh. The usual course was followed at the outset, but the Ladakhis settled down in the valley for the winter, and the Spiti men then took counsel among themselves to overcome the invaders by treachery. This they did by making professions of friendship, and then inviting the intruders to a feast. Being numerous the enemy was purposely distributed all through the villages. As *chhang* or strong liquor has been an invariable accompaniment of all such entertainments, Ladakhis were made to drink beyond their capacity. When they became helpless, they were attacked and killed. A few fled to Dankhar fort where they were persued, caught and cast down the cliffs. Those who escaped to the mountains perished in the desolate wilderness due to cold and hunger. Gerard also states that about A. D. 1776 the fort of Dankhar was held by the Bushahris for two years.

Trebeck gives an account of a raid,* which had been made over the Kunzam Pass by a body of armed men from Kulu in 1819. It was evident that the Kulu Wazir, Sobha Ram organised this invasion.

When Ranjit Singh captured Kashmir, he exacted tribute from Ladakh. Spiti at that period paid revenue to the latter, as also tributes to the *rajas* of Kulu, and Bushahr.

After the conquest of Ladakh by the Dogras under Zorawar Singh, Gulab Singh's ablest General, one Rahim Khan was, in 1841 placed in charge of Spiti, and his son-in-law Ghulam Khan, occupied himself in plundering the monasteries and destroying the idols. On the advance into Eastern Tibet in December of the same year, Ghulam Khan accompanied the force under Zorawar Singh, and was taken prisoner and conveyed to Lhasa where he was slowly tortured to death. Zorawar Singh also perished with almost the whole of his army.

After the annexation of Kulu by the Sikhs in 1841, a force was sent into Spiti. The Sikhs plundered parts of Spiti. As usual the people fled to the uplands on their approach, leaving their houses and monasteries to be plundered. The burnt condition of the mural paintings in the temple of the Pin Monastery is attributed by some authors to have been due to the incendiarism of that time, but probably it was the work of Ghulam Khan. No attempt, however, was made by the Sikhs to annex the country which remained a province of Ladakh.

*Moorcroft, W. and Trebeck, G., *Travels*, 1819 to 1825, p. 64.

In 1842 the Lhasa armies invaded Ladakh, but were expelled. In 1846, after the First Anglo-Sikh War, the whole Alpine Punjab from the Ravi to the Indus, including Ladakh and Spiti, was transferred in perpetual sovereignty to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, but in the same year Spiti was exchanged for other territory and added to Kulu, with the object of securing a road to the wool districts of Chang-Thing in Tibet proper. With the coming in of the British, the seasonal forays by the neighbouring states ceased. The valley started paying some land revenue to the British; but otherwise the administration remained more or less the same as in the days of the Ladakhi rule, the only exception being that a Ladakhi '*garpon*' or Governor was not there. Thus for centuries Spiti was a weak pawn annexed first by one then by another of its large warring neighbours. With the coming of the British raj in 1846, frontiers were demarcated, war ceased and Spiti settled down to a century of semi-independence.

In the autumn of 1846, Sir (then Captain) A. Cunningham and Vans Angew fixed the boundary between Spiti and Ladakh and Eastern Tibet, the mountainous and uninhabited territory to the east of the Baralacha and north of the Parang Passes being attached to Spiti. The boundary runs from west of the Baralacha Pass, crosses the Lingti plain, and passes eastward to the south of the Tsomoriri Lake, and thence south to the Satluj, touching Tibet proper on the way. For the first three years after 1846 the collection of the revenue was farmed out to Mansukh Das, Wazier of the raja of Bushahr, but in the autumn of 1849 Major Hay, Assistant Commissioner of Kulu, went to Spiti and took over charge.

Later, a jagir was formed and granted to the Nono, who was designated as the wazier of Spiti. In 1883, by the Spiti Frontier Regulations he was vested, formally, with honorary magisterial powers and a reader was provided by the Government to assist him in his judicial work. In 1941, a sub-tahsil of Lahul and Spiti was created with headquarters at Keylong.

After the attainment of Independence in 1947 the attention of the Government of Punjab was drawn towards the development of Lahul and Spiti and to bring it in the fold of the developing Punjab. A Development Council directly under the Chief Minister of composite Punjab was constituted in 1952. With a view to developing the area more rapidly the Government of Punjab in 1960 converted Lahul and Spiti area into a sub-district with headquarters at Keylong. Spiti area was constituted in a sub-division with headquarters at Kaza. The area was termed as 'excluded' and under the Constitution of India was subsequently declared as 'Scheduled area'.

To-day Spiti is no more an isolated country. Except for a few months everyday bus service between Mandi and Kaza runs for the convenience of the people. The special developmental programmes launched by the Himachal Government for ameliorating the so far backward condition of the people and the development in the means of communications are changing the face of the area. It will pretty soon be approachable in all weather by vehicle through Kinnaur.

CHAPTER III

PEOPLE

POPULATION

Some of the inhabitants perforce remain mobile for their mere existence and survival throughout the year and it is difficult, if not impossible, to find all the people in their houses at any one time. If during the summer months most of the people keeping flocks of sheep and goats move to the remote pastoral lands in the winter; the intense cold and no work drives them down to Kulu, Manali, etc. The month of September is, therefore, the most suitable which could be chosen for the purpose of carrying out the census. Even then the figures collected during 1961 may not be very accurate but under normal circumstances these are the best that could be had. The 1961 census indicate that the total population of both the valleys of Lahul and Spiti was 20,453 (11,519 males and 8,934 females). The 1971 census figures record a population of 23,538 (12,975 males and 10,563 females). The population figures for the years 1868 to 1971 i.e. almost for the last one hundred years are as follows:—

Years	Persons	Decade variation	Decennial growth rate per cent	Males	Females
1868	8,994	—	—	—	—
1881	8,622	—372	—4.14	—	—
1891	9,530	+908	+10.53	—	—
1901	10,444	+914	+9.59	5,198	5,246
1911	10,903	+459	+4.39	5,427	5,476
1921	10,660	—243	—2.23	5,290	5,370
1931	11,481	+821	+7.70	5,724	5,757
1941	11,986	+505	+4.40	6,210	5,776

2					
1951	12,728	+742	+6.19	6,558	6,170
2					
1961	20,453	+7,725	+60.69	11,519	8,934
2					
1971	23,538	+3,085	+15.08	12,975	10,563

The table above reveals that the population in 1868 was greater than in 1881. The difference is partly due to the reason that in the Spiti area enumeration in 1881 was undertaken at a time, when a good number of the people left the valley to get supplies. The difference between the two enumerations is, therefore, due to the exodus having commenced later in the one year than in the other.

The sub-divisionwise population as returned in 1961 and 1971 censuses is given below :—

Sub-division	1961 Population			1971 Population		
	P.	M.	F.	P.	M.	F.
Lahul	15177	8692	6485	16342	12975	10563
Spiti	5276	2827	2449	7196		
Total	20453	11519	8934	23538	12975	10563

During succeeding 102 years, reckoning from 1868, the population witnessed almost a 262 per cent increase. Till 1951 whatever little increase took place was gradual, except for two decades i.e. 1881 and 1921 which registered a small decrease. This slow growth in population is ascribed by some to the custom of polyandry in the area. The population figure of 1961, however, registered a steep rise of 61 per cent over the earlier census of 1951. The reasons for this large increase are that during the year 1960, the sub-division of Lahul and Spiti was elevated to a district and a large number of persons came over from outside to man various developmental projects as also administrative complex. During 1961 census there were 11519 males and 8934 females i.e. a ratio of 56 to 44.

In 1971, of the 23538 persons in the district, 12975 are males and 10563 females, i.e. a ratio of 55 to 45. The low proportion of females is, for the most part, due to the presence of a large number of male labourers from outside the district at the time of enumeration.

The density of population per square kilometre in Lahul and Spiti, according to 1971 census worked out to only two persons, the lowest figure

1. *Revised Settlement Report of the Kulu Sub-Division of the Kangra District 1898* p. 5. *Census of India 1961*.

2. *Punjab District Census Handbook No. 8, Lahul and Spiti District*, p. 96.

among the districts of Himachal Pradesh. In Kinnaur it is eight persons. This is because although the district is quite large in terms of area (claims 21 per cent of the total area of the state), yet the land being extremely rugged mountainous with high peaks and deep gorges and cliffs, exposed to cold during winter, is inhospitable for settlement. It is only at selected spots that the sturdy hill tribes have made settlements, struggling against all sorts of natural odds. In terms of the area available for cultivation, the density of population is pretty high.

Classification of population according to marital status and age composition as enumerated during 1961* census is as under :—

Marital Status	Males	Females
1. Never married	5940	4616
2. Married	5110	3481
3. Widowed	418	690
4. Divorced or separated	50	147
5. Unspecified Status	1	...

Despite polyandry and the traditional custom of only the eldest son getting married and the younger ones becoming celibate monks, the population has shown rise more than the all India average for the last 20 years. The rise particularly during the decade 1951 to 1961 was 60% followed by 15% in the 1961-71 decade. This apparently is due to the influx of the large number of persons from outside the district working on the construction of roads and buildings and other development activities. There has been no permanent immigration perhaps because of the hostile severity of the climate and apparently non-availability of culturable land.

There are four principal valleys in the district of which the Pattan in the Chenab valley is more thickly populated and contains 82 out of the total 173 Lahul hamlets. The hamlets are set among the fields and not on the spurs of the hills as in Kulu. The other three valleys are of Chandra, Bhaga and Spiti. Here too villages are set on the river banks as the higher reaches are almost inhospitable.

The household pattern in all the valleys is similar. The houses are made of stone well-plastered, with a flat roof and rectangular in shape. The census held in 1961 indicates that the most common size of a household in the district has four to six members. These constitute 32.6% of the total household, though they contain about 29% of the total population, at the same time about 14% of the households containing ten or more

**Census of India 1961-Punjab District Census Handbook No. 8, Lahul and Spiti District*, pp. 138-139.

members account for 30 % of the total population. A sample survey reveals that out of the total households numbering 726, 216 are neither engaged in cultivation nor in household industry. Only 12 households are engaged in household industry, 210 in cultivation and the largest number i. e. 288 are the households which are engaged both in cultivation and household industry.

MIGRATION

Out of 20,453 persons enumerated in the district during 1961 census, as many as 12,757 persons or 62.4 per cent were born at the place of enumeration. Among males as many as 63.6 per cent were born at the place they were enumerated in as against 60.8 per cent in the case of females. The comparatively low figure for females is attributable to the extra factor of their leaving their place of birth on marriage.

Another 16.7 per cent of the population was born at another place within the district. This percentage is 6.0 in the case of males and as high as 30.4 in the case of females, due to the factor of marriage. Persons born in the Punjab districts other than Lahul and Spiti numbered 1,183 or 5.8 per cent of the population. The remaining 15.1 per cent hailed from areas like Andhra, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and other areas.

During winter a large number of Lahulas move out. They leave their homes with piles of wool and other articles of export and visit Manali, Kulu and Simla Hills. Those who cannot trade, work as labourers or ply mules on hire or start small business during the winter. But mass of the traffic, however, is composed of the flocks of sheep and goats which surge forward and backward like a mighty tide in the Himalayas, flowing down in September and climbing in June when the snows melt and the vast Alpine pastures emerge from the snow.

Migration from village to village is not a common place occurrence though a few persons from Pattan in the past have settled in the Chandra valley. Yangle and Shulling are the two villages in the Chandra valley consisting entirely of Harijans from Pattan. There are also a few others from Pattan who hold lands in Chandra valley. The difficulty in the way of inter-village migration is the inability of the right-holders from outside a *kothi* to get virgin lands for breaking except at the market rate which is considered rather high. The earlier migrations were entirely because of the fact that the jagirdar of Gondhla *Kothi* was free to grant *nautor* to people even from outside the *kothi*. This applies equally to the sub-division of Spiti.

Distribution between urban and rural areas

Within the district there is not a single town as such the question of drift from the villages to towns never existed. There are 20 villages-14 in Lahul and 6 in Spiti according to 1971 census.* However, the people do endeavour to seek employment in other districts of the Pradesh and for that matter some of them make their temporary abode wherever they get employment but it is not the general practice with the people to settle outside the district permanently. In fact they cherish to beautify and enrich their native houses with whatever they earn during the course of their employment outside the district. Most of the migration is to Kulu where to avoid the rigours of winter these quasi-migrants have built houses. During winters no agricultural operations are possible as almost all the lands remain under snow. Only indoor occupations such as weaving, spinning, rope making etc. are undertaken. The migration of the people is, in a way, helpful as the drain on the static winter economy of the district is mitigated. The migrants return to their homes with the commencement of the summer season which incidentally coincides with the agricultural operation season. Normally people start moving down to the plain in October and return back to their homes in early March, unless of course the severity of season at either end forces them to migrate early and return late.

LANGUAGE

Regional distribution of population on the basis of mother tongue

Lahuli is the main language of the people and takes precedence over other languages in the numerical order. According to 1961 census it is spoken by some 10954 persons and works out to about 54% of the total population. *Bhotia* unspecified comes next in order (6180) and constitutes about 30% of the population. *Kashmiri* takes the third place (1212) and comes to about 6% of the population. The remaining 10% people speak other dialects and Hindi is spoken by 473 persons.

The distribution of languages and dialects spoken by the people in the district is mirrored in the following table :

Language	District			Tahsils			
	Total			Lahul		Spiti	
	P.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
i. Bashahri	27	15	12	15	12	—	—
Bengali	3	2	1	2	1	—	—
Bharmauri/ Gaddi	8	8	—	8	—	—	—

*1966 figures show hamlets hence total number was 227. In 1971 only revenue estates were enumerated.

ii. Bhotia							
Unspecified	6,180	3,067	3,113	659	665	2,408	2448
Bhutani	2	—	2		2	—	—
Chini	3	1	2	1	2	—	—
Garhwali	7	5	2	5	2	—	—
Gorkhali	1	—	1	—	1	—	—
*†Himachali	77	74	3	74	3	—	—
Hindi	473	455	18	198	18	257	—
*Jabakhri	8	6	2	6	2	—	—
Kangri	176	173	3	173	3	—	—
iii. Kashmiri	1,212	1,212	—	1,212	—	—	—
Kului	235	222	13	222	13	—	—
Ladakhi	62	54	8	54	8	—	—
iv. Lahuli	10,954	5,419	5,535	5,402	5,534	17	1
Mandeali	7	6	1	6	1	—	—
Multani	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
Nepali	95	86	9	86	9	—	—
Pahari	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
Pahari-Un-							
specified	91	86	5	86	5	—	—
Pangwali	12	12	—	12	—	—	—
Punjabi	240	239	1	94	1	145	—
Sanskrit	8	8	—	8	—	—	—
Siraji-Inner							
Siraji	14	14	—	14	—	—	—
Spiti	8	4	4	4	4	—	—
Tibetan	543	344	199	344	199	—	—
Urdu	5	5	—	5	—	—	—
Total :—	20,453	11,519	8,934	8,692	6,485	2,827	2,449

Notes :—i) Names occurring after hyphen (—) have been introduced by the Linguist to indicate groupings.

ii) Asterisk (*) means that the Mother Tongue is unclassified in Linguistic Survey of India.

iii) Asterisk and dagger (*†) denote that the Mother Tongue is unclassified by Grierson but is tentatively classified by the Linguist.

iv) There is no urban area in this district.

Lahul is rich in poetical gifts and folklore but there is no literature in the Lahul language except the Bible.

The opening up of the valley and the establishment of a number of schools in the post-Independence period generally and in the sixties parti-

cularly, have brought about a spectacular change in the knowledge of the languages in Lahul. The younger generation has learnt Hindi and in some cases English. After the integration of this district with Himachal Pradesh the once mountain locked area is now connected with the outside world through motorable road from Kulu. The Rohtang Pass is no more forbidding and is crossed on vehicles during the fair weather. These links with the outer world have brought about a revolutionary change and resultantly a common language facilitating easy communication of ideas and interchanging them within and without the outside area.

RELIGION

Presently Hinduism and Buddhism are the two dominant religions in the district. According to 1961 census the religionwise break up of the population is given below : —

Name of religions	Males	Females	Total
1. Buddhists	423	4680	9503
2. Christians	2	—	2
3. Hindus	5321	4254	9575
4. Jains	1	—	1
5. Muslims	1210	—	1210
6. Sikhs	162	—	162
Grand total	11519	8935	20453

It will be evident from the above table that Hinduism is the leading religion in Lahul sub-division while Buddhism predominates in the Spiti sub-division. In fact there is an admixture of these religions. Even the monasteries when these are visited by Hindus they would offer worships according to the Hindu style and consider the deity as a form of Siva such as in the Kye Monastery it is Avlokiteshwara. For Buddhists it may be Bodhisattva or Padmasambhava. We might trace short history of prevailing Hinduism and Buddhism in the district.

Hinduism

In the bleak atmosphere and the awe-inspiring ruggedness of the rocky mountains as well as swift torrents emanating from the glaciers, fear and mystique dominated the inhabitants. From their fear and submission to the grandeur of nature they sought protection and mercy for their survival and created mountain-gods. At first these were represented merely by an upright stick in the centre of a round base of stones and pebbles. This was the simplest symbol and the most common basic object of Siva worship. In the Himalaya Siva's trident is also visible and is placed over an ornamental skull. These symbols represented the mountain peaks also such as Gye-phang of Lahul, Jamla of Spiti. Before the advent of Buddhism

there was a popular animistic creed calling for species of belief that went under the title of the religion of a valley in which bloody sacrifices to evil spirits were made. In spite of the introduction of Buddhist faith which tolerates no blood-shedding goats and sheep are still sacrificed on occasions such as the opening of water courses or festivals at the beginning at the harvest. Because of the severity of the weather also even where Hinduism is not rampant Yaks can be or are allowed to be killed, and no offence is meant to Buddhist faith. Hinduism is more prevalent along the Chandra-bhaga valley.

It has also been seen that some Hindus join the monasteries and don the lamaistic robes but if circumstances force them to return to their households they readily come back to Hinduism.

As has been mentioned above there is admixture of Hinduism and Buddhism. During the 7th Century A. D. in the empire of Harshvardhana, Lahul and Spiti also came under the sway of this admixture. A form of Buddhism styled as Vajrayana Buddhism, transformed many Hindu deities. Buddhism in a way allowed to be brought in its fold many Hindu tenets, rights and practices thus bringing in the happy blending of both the religions without offending the popular dogmas. Guru Ghantal monastery is one of those shrines where joint Hindu-Buddhist worship used to be conducted and is still venerated by both.

In Lahul thus there are monasteries where lamas are the priests and Buddha the chief god but for Hindus these contain the favourite divinity of Mahadeo. Nor have the occultism and mystic rituals vanished. These weird creations are even today looked upon with the dread and fear of a believer. In short Hinduism followed by the Bon religion is still predominant in the Lahul area and more particularly in the Pattan valley evidently because of its having come under the influence of Chamba-Lahul. In spite of this dominant Hinduism the people have never been militant and gladly, though imperceptibly, accepted and even welcomed the soothing forces of Buddhist pantheon.

Buddhism

The western Himalayas came under the influence of Buddhism in the time of Asoka in the third century B.C. This is evident from the rock edicts of Kashi. Eversince, in spite of the settlement of other ethnic groups Buddhism maintained its hold rather loosely. It was when Padmasambhava toured this area and preached his doctrine in the ninth century that Buddhism really caught hold of the people. The introduction of Buddhism in the Spiti valley was greater.

One of the most peculiar features of the lamaistic system is the hierarchy from which it takes its name. The teachings of Buddha included an elaborate monastic system, but no priests, for there was no god to worship or ceremonies to perform, and no hierarchy, for all men were equal. About 1400 A.D. the abbot of the Galdan monastery proclaimed himself the patriarch of the whole lamaistic priesthood, and his successor, of the Tashi monastery, declared the grand lamas to be the perpetual re-incarnations of one of the Bodhisatwas or semi-Buddhas, who, as each lama died, was born again in the person of an infant that might be known by the possession of certain divine marks. Below the lamas there are ordinary monks who live in monasteries ruled by abbots claiming precedence one over another in accordance with the importance of the institution over which they presided, or from the influence of personal sanction. They are, with the exception of the Drugpa sect (or Nyingma) bound to celibacy, while leading a monastic life, and are collectively called *gendun* or clergy. They consist of lamas of full monks (for the word means nothing more), and novices or neophytes.

The lamaism of Spiti has differently interpreted and for purists contaminated by local legends and superstitions and also by indigenous demonology of the mountains. There are many benevolent spirits and malevolent demons who are supposed to dwell in trees, rocks and hill-tops, and before whom the Spiti Buddhists sacrifice sheep and goats. They believe greatly in witches, sorcerers and the evil eye.

This form of tantric Lamaism keeps its hold on the people by an association and dread and fear of spirits dead or inanimate. The simple ritual ridden people of Spiti cling to their old beliefs, and pursue a routine course of conduct, any digression from which is threatened with severe consequences unknown. There is a taboo even on the planting of trees or the opening of new sources of irrigation, or in the preparation of old water-ducts.

The religious and even economic life of the people is inextricably tied up with the monastic order. *Omi Mane Padma Hum* is a sacred utterance. Its repetition, conscious or unconscious, vocal, manual or mechanical is the panacea for all ills. It washes away all sins. The Spitial utters the words as he wakes up in the morning; he repeats the *mantra* when he is telling over his beads; he inscribes them on copper or silver wheel, and spins the sacred words round and round in the clockwise direction; he paints them on a small or a large drum, and makes the drum rotate on its axis; he carves them on a stone slab and leaves them to mingle with the chorus of a thousand other slab; he prints them on a piece of cloth and lets it flutter in the wind, so that with every flutter his prayer goes up to heaven. Sometimes he fastens the prayer drum to a mechanical contrivance such as a water or a wind mill, and lets the forces of nature play for his benefit.

Gyephang La can be seen from all directions. It is visible from Rohtang, from Kunzam, from Pangi-Lahul and from Serchu plains across the Baralacha Pass. As such this is the most popular peak in Lahul and the people attach religious faith to it. A deity (known as Gyephang) is believed to dwell on the peak which is propitiated throughout the district. The spirit protects the people from natural calamities. At times of wars, Lahulis fought under the banner of Gyephang La. A wooden pole, with a gold-plated parasol atop it, is the symbol of the deity which is kept below the Gyephang peak beneath a lonely cedar tree, the holy tree of the pre-Buddhist era. The image of the deity is enshrined in the Sissu temple but is not shown to the public. The said holy pole is taken out on a village to village tour after two or three years. The deity is believed to be the younger brother of Jamlu, the powerful deity of Malana village, in Kulu which still rules over the Malana tribe there.

Monasteries

There are eighteen monasteries in Lahul, the chief and most noted among these are that of Guru Ghantal, Kardang, Shashur and Tayul. People consider it very sacred to take a *parikrama* (circumambulation) of the Dilbari mountain (*dharma mudra chaitva*) which is situated above the Guru Ghantal monastery. People go round through the Rangcha Gali and come back via Gondhla.

Guru Ghantal is the oldest monastery established by Padmasambhava. It is more than 800 years old and contains wooden idols as distinguished from the clay idols which are common in the monasteries of Lahul and which were introduced by Lotsawa-Rinchhin Zangpo, a famous lama of Kinnaur who came here 800 years ago. The monastery is situated on a hill at the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers. It appears that this was a Hindu temple once, as there is still a statue in black stone of a goddess identified as Kali. Rana of Triloknath, a Hindu who was also a follower of Buddhism, used to be its Kardar. He handed over this monastery to his Buddhist Guru Nawang Namgial of Bhutan who was also the king of that country, on the condition that a lama would be deputed by him for a period of every three years. The abbot of Bhutan monastery afterwards asked the lama of Tagna monastery in Ladakh which also was affiliated to the Bhutan monastery to send a lama to Guru Ghantal. The paintings are in stone colours. The main idols represent Lord Buddha, Nawang Namgial and Padmasambhava, the last is held in great esteem and his biggest statue is in Tayul monastery. The monastery owns land in several *kothis* of Lahul. The Kardar of the monastery is appointed by the Collector. All the land holders of Lahul used to pay a fee to this monastery but it is no longer being paid. With the decline of religious influence, the importance

of this monastery has also gone down. The Pattanites who were the main visitors, now seldom go there and as for the people of Chandra and Bhaga valleys they have their own monasteries.

There is another oldest monastery, the Shashur *gonpa* above the village of Keylong. It was founded in the 17th century A.D. by lama Deva Gyatshao of Ladakh whose idol is still kept there. The lamas are of Drugpa sect. In June a fair is held and then a sort of miracle play is enacted annually by the lamas. The performers wear rich dresses of silk, and the orchestra of drums and cymbals is led by the abbot of the monastery clad in his robes and mitre. The acting consists entirely of pantomime and dancing, except that a chorus is occasionally chanted. The solemnity of the proceedings is relieved by the action of a clown who appears on the stage (an open space in front of the monastery) and creates laughter among the audience performing buffoon tricks and pursuing obstreperous small boys. This dance originated in the 10th century A.D., when it was held to kill King Lang Darma of Tibet who was a sworn enemy of Buddhism. Since then it is held as a festival to dispel the anti-Buddhist elements. The attendance at the fair is fairly large.

Kardang monastery was founded about 900 years ago; but it lay in ruins till 1912. The revered lama Norbu, a resident of Kardong village, renounced his worldly goods and took up the life of a mendicant. He travelled on foot to distant places and visited Bhutan, Tibet, Lhasa, Kham, etc., and made a deep study of holy books. For some time he lived with the great Togdan Rimpoche in his cave in Kham, and practised yoga exercises. He acquired the power of freeing his soul from his body at will, and attained the status of a true saint. Then this saint came home, bringing with him the wisdom for the good of his people. He preached the gospel of *dharma* throughout Lahul, and the lamp of his teaching infused new light into this dark and gloomy region. His example and the force of his teachings converted the sons of many families in Kardang; they entered the holy order and became his disciples. In 1912 he renovated the monastery. This monastery has the distinction of having the largest number of lamas and *chomos* and a biggest library on religious books.

Kye (*Gonpa*) monastery consists of a large irregular heap of low rooms and narrow corridors, interconnected by dark passages and tortuous staircases, built on what must be the crater of a now extinct volcano. The instruments here deserve mention. There are two trumpets, two or three smaller brass instruments with squeaky notes, a pair of large cymbals, a big deep-voiced drum and a pair of smaller ones. The trumpet, which is about three metres in length; rests on a triangular block of wood, placed on the ground, and rises in a long sweeping curve to the mouth of the player who

remains standing and blows into it with all his might. The sound produced by this magnificent instrument is surprisingly feeble. It is distressing to see that almost the entire energy generated by the trumpeter's red face and distended cheeks is being dissipated in such an unproductive way. The dance here is worth about writing.

In the Kye monastery mask dance the music begins with a slow-moving chant which has a distinct rhythm, emphasized by the beats of the large drum and the clanging of cymbals. The melody is mournful and ranges over not more than two or three notes, sounded by the brass instruments. Two masked dancers make their appearance. They wear gowns of rich silk and cloaks of gold brocade. These rich robes are costly beyond imagination, or extraordinary brilliance and design. The gowns are embroidered with brightly coloured figures of demons and dragons. The heads and faces of the dancers are hidden beneath huge masks, representing hideous monsters. In their hands they carry lacquered batons. They begin to move with slow, even steps. Soon they are joined by two more dancers, dressed even more gorgeously and wearing even more grotesque masks. They are armed with queer-looking weapons. Two more arrive, and the group of six moves round the courtyard. The tempo of the music becomes gradually faster and livelier. The dancers represent the demons or forces of evil, making merry and extending their sway over the world. The triumph of the demons and the tyranny over mankind are symbolized by a variety of gestures and dance movements which are repeated so many times and over so long a period that one begins to tire of the performance.

While on the subject of monasteries it may be worth-while to write something on the institution of *buzhens*. Every son of a lama or monk becomes a *buzhen*, which is the name given to a low order of strolling monks or friars. Sometimes the younger son of landholder becomes a *buzhen* in preference to going into the monastery. The Pin *buzhens*, are a curious set of people. They dress much like other monks, but instead of shaving their heads, wear their hair in long straight twists, which gives them a very wild appearance. According to a legend the *buzhen* order was founded by one Thang-teong Gyalpo (King of the desert) under the circumstances that a certain king of Lhasa the famous Langdrama, converted the people of Tibet from Buddhism to a new religion of his own. The Gyalpo succeeded so well that in the course of fifty years the old faith was quite forgotten, and the *Om Mane Padma Hum* or sacred ejaculation, quite disused. To win back the people Chan-re-zin, the divinity worshipped at Triloknath caused an incarnation of himself to be born in the king's house in the person of Thang-teong Gyalpo. The child grew up a saint and a reformer; he saw that it was impossible to reclaim the people by books, and he, therefore, adopted the dress since worn by the *buzhens*, and spent his life in wandering from village to village, offering to amuse the people by acting miracle-plays

on condition of their repeating after him the chorus *Om Mane Padma Hum* wherever it occurred in the recitation. In this way the people became again accustomed to repeat the sacred sentence, their mouths became purified, and the religion of Buddha revived. They have impressive ceremonies in which *Om Mane Padma Hum* is enchanted with great favour and zeal. Frequently the *buzhens* perform a conjuring trick in which a huge stone is split into two on the bare stomach of another *buzhen*.

Generally only the younger sons of the landowning class are admitted into a monastery; but of late this rule has been relaxed by the Kye monastery which admits younger sons of the landless sections also. When the boy is seven years old, his guardians take him to a monastery. A special ceremony presided over by the head lama and attended by at least four full-fledged priests is held. A three-fold change is supposed to take place in the initiate, the change of his name, the change of his garments and the supposed change of his mental attitude. The initiate solemnly affirms to abide by thirty-six vows and directives, the more important ones being promises not to commit violence nor to keep company of woman nor to indulge in wine nor crime nor lying. After the ceremony the boy becomes a *Gayachhul* literally meaning being 'who has religion'. Henceforth he spends the winter in the monastery and the summer at his home. Once in every three years, his lay guardian goes to the monastery to affirm solemnly that the *Gayachhul* did not, during his stay at his parent's place, infringe any of the sacred vows and directives. There have been some instances of *Gayachhul* being expelled from the monasteries on account of his behaviour.

For thirteen years, the *Gayachhul* studies, generally under the tutelage of an elder inmate of the monastery, and when he attains the age of twenty he is considered fit to become a Gayalong i.e. a fullfledged lama or literally one who abides by religion. An auspicious day is chosen to mark this occasion of his graduation, and in the presence of the head lama and four other important lamas, he affirms to stand by 253 vows, and directives, which are divided into the following six groups: (1) The Basic Four; (2) the Remaining Thirteen; (3) The Binding Thirty; (4) the Particular Ninety; (5) the Personally Forgivable four; and (6) the Peccadillo Prohibitive One Hundred and Twelve.

These 253 govern the principles of religion as also the personal conduct of a lama. Every Gayalong carries on his person an idol of the Lord Buddha at all times and prays to it for forgiveness whenever a minor deviation occurs from the chosen path.

Every monastery has a head lama *Khanpo*, a second lama *Uzat* and a third lama *Gaygo* who with the help of a committee of three *Chisova*, run the affairs of the institution. The second lama is a sort of a general

assistant to the *Khanpo* : on the other hand the third lama's duties make him a sort of police chief of the monastery : he is responsible for the safety of the property and for checking delinquent behaviour of the monks.

In all monasteries, except those at Dankhar and Tabo, the head lama is elected by the general assembly of the villages falling under their spiritual jurisdiction ; most suitable lama is generally chosen and there is rarely a contest. The second and the third lamas are the nominees of the head lama. The term of office is not fixed and the head lama can continue working at his pleasure ; but usually he retires after a tenure of five to ten years.

In the monasteries of Tabo and Dankhar there is a fixed tenure of three years in the case of a head lama ; on his retirement the second lama is promoted ; different rules, however, exist for the promotion of the third lama to the post of a second lama.

As between themselves the head lama, the second lama and the third lama have definite duties assigned to each one of them, and avoid encroaching upon each others field of duties except at the peril of committing sacrilege.

Apart from the presents given by the devotees, which, it must be confessed, are not considerable in this area the main income of the monastery accrues from the grain revenue of certain villages allotted to it and from the land under its ownership. To this occasionally is added some compensatory money paid by a lama to the monastery when he does not want to do the duty assigned to him by the head lama or wants to leave the monastery for ever and the minor fines imposed rarely on an inmate for his misconduct. Thus we come almost to the end of the sources of the monastery's income. It must, however, be remembered that the *Khangchangpa* relative of every lama residing in the monastery are responsible for providing means of subsistence to him. Also, every lama keeps to himself whatever he earns by performing *kurim* i.e. the chanting of holy scriptures in order to prevent or remove evil and disease from a house. Thus he does not have to look up to the monastery for any economic assistance. Though the common fund of the monastery is not very impressive, its common expenses are also very small.

There is no daily collective prayer ritual prevalent in the monastery. The head lama appoints a competent *Gaylong* for a term of one year to perform the daily prayer in the monastery temple. He spends about two hours each in the morning and in the evening reading from the scriptures. Occasionally one hears the sound of a bell or a drum punctuating his periods, but nothing more.

In this connection one must keep in mind that every lama stands separate and alone as far as his spiritual welfare is concerned. Consequently he goes through his prayers in his residential cell. Also, he carries an image

of Lord Buddha on his person and seldom lets an idle moment skip without enriching it with the famous prayer-exclamation, '*Om Mane Padma Hum*' which means, "Oh, thou jewel in the lotus". But it is clear that *Manepadma* is the vocative of *Manepadma*, the deity of the jewel lotus, the *Shakti* of *Manepadma* who must be identical with *Padmapani* or *Avalokiteswara*. The formula goes back to the times of *Sron-btsan-gam-po*.

One can rarely find an elderly lama in the monastery who is not telling beads and mumbling this mantra, when he is not busy with any other work. The words in the mantra are as the essence of worship and have a magic hold on every mind. The single fact that establishes this conclusively is the installation in the monastery of a *dhungguer* i.e. the worship-cylinder.

There is no doubt that the people of this area particularly the *Spitians* are a deeply religious people ; an atmosphere of worship pervades the entire valley. It is an unconscious atmosphere, the result of centuries of tradition, the result of always living at a level which, by being simple and yet sufficient seems, at least to an outsider, to be very near God. Wherever one goes, no matter what one does, one constantly hears and reads the Buddhist prayer *Om Mane Padma Hum*. It flutters forever in the wind on a thousand prayer-flags it is there on a million carved stones comprising long **mani-walls* on either side of the villages ; it is constantly instoned in the house, in the field and in the monastery ; it pervades life itself.

Apart from the monasteries and their chapels and the chapels in private houses, some villages contain small temples sacred to demons or *Ihas*, and hence called *Iha-khang*, unpretentious externally like small one roomed houses, and furnished inside much in the same manner as a private chapel. One or two of the village fields are set apart for the maintenance of the *Iha-khang*. Even less pretentious shrines are to be found on the summits of small hills, or sometimes in the fields in the shape of niches cut in rocks, or left open in the sides of large masonry pillars. The niche is occupied by a small image with a brass vessel for burning oil in front of it, and occasionally a lama comes and chants prayers before it.

A Sadhu named *Brahma Prakash* came into Lahul in 1940. It is not known where from he came. He again visited Lahul in 1942 and stayed at *Gushal* for three or four months. He preached non-violence, vegetarianism,

*Every village has its *Mani* or stone dyke, sometimes nearly a kilometre long, on which are flung small pieces of slate inscribed with mystic formulae—"These slabs are votive offerings from all classes of people for the attainment of some particular object. Does a childless man wish for a son, or a merchant about to travel hope for safe return ; Does a husbandman look for a good harvest, or a shepherd for the safety of his flocks during the severity of the winter ; each goes to a lama and purchases a slate, which he deposits carefully on the village *mani* and returns home in full confidence that his prayer will be heard."

obstinence from alcohol and abandoning of superstitious practices of animal sacrifice, etc. His influence has been particularly strong in Gushal and Tandi *Kothis* and in other villages like Lote and Rapey in Pattan and Thorang and Tagla in Chandra valley.

Communities

Bodh, Swangla, Shipis and Lohars are the principal communities in Lahul. The word used in Lahul for a clan or tribe is *rus*, which means bone, and as applied to a class denotes those descended from a common ancestor. The tribes and castes in Lahul are distributed by race, religion, and occupation, and differ from each other in all these respects. Bodhs are generally of Mongoloid stock and profess Buddhism. Swanglas, Shipis and Lohars are Aryan and their religion is Hinduism. Bodhs and Swanglas are Scheduled Tribes and both are principally agriculturists. Shipis and Lohars are originally from Kulu and Bara Bangahal. Hesis and Balras are insignificant in numbers.

Bodhs

Bodhs have been described as Kanet in the records drawn up at the settlements before 1950-51. The change from Kanet to Rajput was made during this Settlement. The mis-description of Bodhs as Kanets has come down from very early records and in 1910—7,508 were counted as *Hindus*, 30 Muslims, 32 Christians and only 190 Buddhists. This was probably because the Buddhists here did not realise the implication of being classed as Kanets and matter was clarified to the enumerators. It was during 1961 Census that the error was rectified and Bodhs were recorded as such. Bodhs are universal in Bhaga and Chandra valleys. They appear also in Pattan where they are overshadowed by Swangla Brahmans. The Swanglas predominate in Pattan valley.

Shipis

Shipis, the cultivators are Aryans. They assist Swanglas and Bodhs at marriages and funerals and are given food and clothes on these occasions.

Lohars

Lohars are called Gara in the local language of Keylong and Khoksa? villages, Domba in Bhaga and Chandra valleys and Lohar only in Pattan valley. They have land which was originally given to them by the village people in consideration of their customary service as blacksmiths. This allotment of land was called *grazhing*. They are given food for smith's work, and grain at harvest according to the size of the holding of their

employer. There is a legend, which has been written down in Bunan dialect by the Moravians, that Garas were imported from Kulu, with corn-seed. The Garas are the local jewellers and musicians as well as blacksmiths.

Caste taboos have loosened greatly. Swanglas who despised Bodhs as *bhot-zat* no longer do so. They now do not mind eating, drinking and smoking with Bodhs and accept Bodh girls in marriage. Similarly, Shipis regarded themselves as superior to Lohars and did not in the past eat with them or give their daughters in marriage. They smoked with Lohars and accepted their daughters in marriage. Now these distinctions have disappeared and Shipis eat and drink with Lohars and also give their daughters in marriage to them. There is a legend that Swangla and Shipis belong to the same caste. According to this legend when two Swangla brothers started for Lahul from Chamba their rations gave out on the way and some one offered them beef. The elder brother did not accept it but the younger brother took it. On reaching Lahul the elder brother called him *chandal* and refused to eat with him. The legend does not appear to be true since the mother tongues of both the castes differ materially. Had they been brothers they would have spoken the same language. Shipis and Lohars who are Harijans are not treated as untouchables by Bodhs and Swanglas.

Hesis

Hesis (the minstrel caste) are Mongoloid by origin but over the years have got mixed up. Earlier they were maintained by the Thakurs and were given food while performing domestic service. They are not cultivators and are not at all numerous. They have now taken to muleteering.

Balras

Balras are basket makers in Pattan valley where they own a little land.

Thakurs

During British regime the Thakurs of Keylong, Gumrang and Gondhla occupied a position of great importance in society. The Thakur family of Barbog had lost its importance even earlier since the annexation of Lahul by the British. The decline in importance of the Barbog family, it appears, was the result of its having been suspected by the British to be aligned with Sikhs.

The Thakurs claim to have originally come from Bara Bangahal. They support their claim by the common genealogy of certain *devatas* with those of Bara Bangahal. Many Hindu names occur in the genealogical table of the Keylong Thakurs. They say that their ancestor came from Bara Bangahal as *Khana-damad* to a ruling family in Todpa and settled there. Before the abolition of the jagir they formed the aristocracy of Lahul and considered themselves superior to other Bodhs of the valley but now they are also

commoners, though financially a little better off. Marriages among them are also no longer restricted within Thakur families. In Spiti, there is no such caste distinction as is among Hindus, and the use of different terms to describe people these are indicative of classes rather than castes. In families, which once formed the local nobility, the males enjoyed the title Nono and the females that of Jho Jho or Shema; at present there are five such families living at Kyuling, Mane, Gue, Gooling and Geumal. The Nono of Kyuling was given limited powers by the British; even now he enjoys some rights and privileges, as for example, getting 6/16th of the land revenue of five *kothis* of the valley, the powers, however, ceased to operate when full-fledged administration moved into the area after Independence.

The great mass of the peasantry are called *ch'a-zhang* or middle class, i.e. midway between the Nono families above and the menial and artisan classes below. The descendants of the married monks of Pin, known as *buzhens* or *pozhenas*, are regarded as *ch'a-zhangs*. As all are Buddhists, there is supposed to be no caste, but the influence of Hinduism is noticeable in a class etiquette. Each class contains many clans, and marriage within the clan is forbidden. Among *ch'a-zhang* clans are (to mention only the more important) Naru, Gyazhingpa, Kyongpa, Lonch'enpa, Hasir, Nyerpa. Marriage brings a woman into her husband's clan and the children belong to the same.

The menial classes are collectively known as 'Outsider' (*pyipa*) and include, in order of precedence, carpenters (*shing-zopa*), smiths (*zo*) and musicians (*beta*). There are carpenters only in Pin *Kothi*: there is no weaver as such and weaving is done by *ch'a-zhang* women. A *ch'a-zhang* will eat from a Lohar's hand. It is considered no social crime to eat with the lower classes, but marriage is not permitted. A *ch'a-zhang* will marry a *ch'a-zhang*, but having regard to relationship, that is they will not intermarry within the same clan (*rus* or *haadi*). This is the rule also with Lohars and Hesis. Should a *ch'a-zhang* take a Lohar woman into his house he will be considered as having done wrong, but other *ch'a-zhang* will still eat from his hand. The offspring of such a marriage is called Argun, and an Argun will marry with a Lohar. It is said that it is not common for a *ch'a-zhang* to eat with a Hesi, but should the latter touch the food it is not thereby defiled. All other classes avoid eating food cooked by the Betas who are not treated at par. Also, they would not admit them to the equality conferred by the common use of the same pipe, or by dipping the hand in the same dish.

It is common among Bhots generally to consider all the body below the waist as polluted, and if the skirt or foot of Bhot were to touch food or water, it is defiled and thrown away.

Servant classes

Some of the richer landholders have permanent men-servants (*yogpo*) who have no land, but are married among their class and live on the estate,

or the servants may be temporary, engaged for one year only and called *lapa*. These do not marry but usually keep some unmarried women of their own class or neighbourhood. The permanent servants of the monasteries, who light fires, etc. are called *toboche*.

Religious ceremonies connected with agriculture.

The Lahulas observe certain ceremonies of a religious nature in connection with the cultivation of their fields. A lama, names the auspicious day in which ploughing should be commenced (this day falls always between the 8th and 22nd of May). After the fields have been ploughed and sown, a procession goes round all the fields, preceded by one or two *lamas* and two drummers, some of the company carrying at the same time several large religious books on their backs; this done, the whole company sits down in the field near the villages, and feasts on cakes and *chhang* supplied jointly by all the landholders. All this is done to secure the sprouting up of the seeds sown; after the water-course for irrigating the fields is repaired, on which occasion a sheep is offered upto the *Lha* which is supposed to have special care of the water-course. Again, as soon as the seeds have sprouted, another ceremony is performed; this consists in sticking small branches of the pencil cedar here and there in the fields, and burning them as incense, while some members of the family sit down, eat and drink a little, and murmur some prayers. This is to ensure that each grain which has sprung up may prosper and produce many ears. When the fields are nearly ripe, a goat or sheep is killed in honour of the *Lha*: in several villages horse-races are held at the same time. Till this festival of the ripening grain has been celebrated no body is allowed to cut grass or any thing green with a sickle made of iron, as in such case the field-god would become angry and send frost to destroy or injure the harvest. If, therefore, a Lahula wants grass before the harvest sacrifice, he must cut it with a sickle made of the horn of an ox or sheep, or tear it off with hands. Infractions of this rule were formerly severely punished. At present a fine of one or two rupees suffices, which is spent on *chhang* consumed by the villagers assembled in council. The iron sickle used as soon as the harvest has been declared to be commenced by the performance of the sacrifice.

Birth customs

In Chandra and Bhaga valleys no birth customs are observed except *gotsi*. In Pattan when the first son is born in a family, all the villagers go to that house and offer flowers or *chhang*. After a few days all the villagers are invited to a feast. *Mundan* ceremony takes place after one year of the birth. The maternal uncle of the boy is called on that occasion and lamp is burnt before the village god. A young boy from the village whose parents are alive, performs the *mundan* ceremony.

At the time of the birth of the first son and the first daughter in a Khangchan family, the women from the houses of the landed class assemble there and perform some ceremonial rites. This custom is not in vogue among the lower classes.

Death customs

The funeral customs of Bodhs and Swanglas including Shipis and Lohars are different. When a Buddhist dies, the dead body is covered with a cloth and is not touched until the lama arrives. The lama whispers into the ear of the corpse directing the transmigration of the soul. This sacred saying is known as *phua*. The dead body is then placed in a sitting posture on an iron tripod or on a wooden chair and put in the corner of the room behind a curtain. A butter lamp is lit before it. Then follow the prayers by the lamas in that room. The corpse is retained in the house for two or three days depending on the family status. At the time of cremation determined by the lama, the corpse is taken out of the house and a *kafan* (shroud) laid on it. The chair carrying the dead body is placed on a wooden bier. The corpse is then covered by coloured silken cloth. In the case of a woman, it is also decorated with ornaments. The lamas play on their prayer band and *garas* beat the drums while the relations weep. The body is then taken to the cremation ground. Villages do have their separate cremation grounds, but some people prefer cremating the dead in their own fields. In the funeral processions two persons, one carrying a flag and the other a conch-shell, follow the bier. Sometimes a person holds an umbrella over the corpse. On the way the bier is placed on the ground and *garas* and the persons carrying the flag and conch-shell circle round the bier. The *garas* are paid some money. The process is repeated till the procession reaches the cremation ground. The clothes and ornaments on the dead body are then removed and the naked body put on the pyre. The *kafan* is torn into five pieces, four of which are tied to sticks to serve as flags on the four corners of the pyre and the fifth is placed over the head of the dead body. The head lama then chants *mechhud* (*agni mantra*) and the *garas* light the pyre. The lamas then throw in it small quantities of ghee, barley, mustard, rice, incense, etc. The lamas then leave the place while the *garas* continue beating the drums. After cremating the body the villagers go to the house of the deceased and disperse after meals. The lamas say their prayers the next morning and the *garas* accompanied by one person from the village go to the cremation ground to collect the ashes of the deceased. Prayers by the lamas go on for three to eight days, after which they take the ashes to the confluence of the Chandra and the Bhaga at Tandi for immersion. On the last day of the prayer the lamas are given some money, clothes, and utensils. On the 49th day of the death a *puja* is performed where the villagers are invited. This ceremony may either

consist of *geva* when only a cake of *sattu* is given to the invitees or it may be *tolmoo* when all the relatives are invited to a feast on the first death anniversary.

Under the Swangla custom, the dead body is bathed and clothed and laid in a corner, covered with a *kafan* and kept behind the curtain. A *bhat* (priest) and a Shipi are sent for. The *bhat* brings with him a conch-shell which is placed near the head of the corpse and then lights a lamp. When it is time to take the dead body out, the *bhat* draws the shape of a human being on the ground with barley flour. A line is drawn from the head of the corpse to the door. This line is also drawn with barley flour. The dead body is then dragged along with line which is effaced in the process. The dead body is placed on an *arthi* (bier) and tied to it with coloured strings. A pot of milk and a cow are then brought before the dead body and on the hoofs of the cow some money is placed. The *bhat* ties the little finger of the deceased to a cotton thread, keeps in his hand and worships the cow. The milk is sprinkled on the cow by the relatives. After the cow worship is over, the *bhat* snaps the thread. The cow is then taken round the corpse three times clock-wise and three times anti-clock-wise. The *bhat* blows conch-shell and the *arthi* (dead body) is lifted. The Shipis beat the drums. On way to the cremation ground the body is placed on the ground and the *bhat* and Shipis are paid some money. On reaching the cremation ground Shipis prepare the pyre upon which the dead body is placed after removing the clothes. The son of the deceased lights the pyre. After the body is burnt, Shipi picks out a bone which is carried by the son of the deceased, who accompanied by the *bhat*, goes to throw it into the river. The *bhat* is then given some money and clothes. The relatives go back to the house, after bathing and take their meals. On the following morning the relatives and *bhat* go to the cremation ground, collect the ashes and consign these to the river. A *havan* is performed after 13 days of the death. For the first 7 days the relations are fed by the family of the deceased.

The death rites of Shipis and Lohars are the same except that they do not feed the villagers and invite only Shipis instead of a *bhat*.

The Spitian customs regarding the disposal of the dead is very quaint and peculiar. When a person dies, those responsible for the disposal of the body consult a *jhova* i. e. an astrologer who directs whether the body should be burnt or buried or thrown into the river or cut up and exposed on a hill side for the benefit of wild birds. All the classes abide by the *jhova's* directions. The Khangchanpas, however, invite lamas who recite scriptures and pray for the dead. The villagers are also invited and served with salted tea and meals. Drinks are avoided on this occasion. If any member of the lower classes has a full purse, he also arranges such a function.

Superstitions

The people have some religious beliefs founded on superstitions. One of these is that if a dead body is kept without vigil, an evil spirit enters the body and gives it life. The dead body then dances and does some abnormal things, and affects other living human beings by making them look like itself. This is called *rolance*. Readers interested in this phenomena of *rolance* will find interesting account of this by Shri M. S. Gill in the book "*Himalayan Wonderland*".

When medicine and sorcery have failed and the death of a beloved person appears inevitable, a sham funeral is sometimes arranged in order to deceive the angel of death. A complete life size effigy of a small youth is made on a wooden frame, plastered round with dough of barley-meal. This is painted and dressed up with the clothes and ornaments of the sick persons so as to present as close a likeness as possible. After much reading of *chhos* by the lamas and after firing guns and letting off fire works, a funeral procession headed by the *gara* and lama bands is formed at night and the effigy is solemnly burnt after being cut to pieces. The clothes and ornaments go to the lamas. Meanwhile a man engaged for the purpose bewails the death of the person who is lying sick and crying out the name, shouts again and again that he (or she) has been dead now for nine years. For this he is given the straw shoes of the effigy. Sometimes, it is said the trick answers, sometimes not and in the latter case there are two funerals, a sham one followed by a real one, both expensive.

People also believe that if religious books are taken round the cultivated fields there is a bumper crop. The ceremony performed is called *bumb skor*. The villagers go to the nearby monastery and from there bring the religious books on their backs and take them to the field. They are also accompanied by the lamas. They then sit in the fields where the owner offers them *chhang*. Thus they go from field to field and assemble in one house where puja is performed by the lamas. This ceremony is performed only in Gaher and a few villages of Gondhla *kothi* after the seeds have sprouted.

The people that live in these parts were equally strange and wonderful. During a lunar eclipse they come out with their guns and sticks and shoot at Rahu, the demon who had caught the face of the moon in his unclean hands. They throw stones and other missiles at him and shout as loudly as they can : 'Rahu, you miscreant, let go'.

Joint family system

The joint family system is very strong in Lahul, as the system of polyandry persists and holds the family together. In Pattan valley where the Hindu element prevails in the population and where the holdings are somewhat larger and productive, the trends towards monogamous marriage is

noticeable. A very few have married separately in Gaher and Ranglo also. However, by and large polyandry still prevails and the brothers who seldom divide, live on with wife, land, house and cattle in common.

In Thakur families the custom of primogeniture prevails. On the death of the father the eldest son succeeds and the other brothers are given some land as subsistence. There is no bar to the younger brothers acquiring property of their own and living apart. Thus the rule of primogeniture among Thakurs of Lahul is different from that in Spiti where younger brothers have hardly any independent status or share in land even by way of maintenance.

Transfer of property through wills as a sign of weakening the old joint family tie.

The wills executed yearwise commencing from 1955 are as under :—

Years	Lahul	Total number of registered deeds	Spiti	
	1955 to 1956	Nil	1955-61	Nil
" 1957		1	1962	1
1958		9	1963-65	—
1959		4	1966	1
1960		2	1967	1
1961		3	1968	1
1962		9	1969	4
1963		5	1970	1
1964		1	1971	1
1965		9		
1966		8		
1967		4		
1968		10		
1969		5		
1970		10		

In Lahul such transfers do create some heartburning among the legitimate successors but in Spiti the wills do not tend to weaken the ties of joint family system because the system itself does not exist here. In the district as a whole the number at wills are increasing because of literacy and social awakening among the people. In Spiti prior to 1960 there was no execution of wills oral or documentary for the reasons of non-existence of a sub-Registrar and a document writer to help in the matter. In the absence of the registration and documentary writing facilities the people desirous of bequeathing the legacy to those who were not natural heirs would get it done through mutation procedure. The increase in execution of wills is due to

the fact that these are now coming into the notice of authorities. Wills are generally found being executed where there are no natural heirs and testators; some one is adopted as his or her son and in order to give the property to newly adopted son the wills are executed lest it should go to the collaterals. There is no instance where wills were executed to prevent the weaker sex to get the share.

Succession by Pagwant

Among the commoners, the succession is open to all male lineal descendants. In the case of a deceased person having male issues from more than one wife, the sons succeed in equal shares and the succession is governed by the rule of *pagwant*. In case a person dies issueless, his wife inherits his property for her life time. The property of a man dying without leaving a widow or male issue devolves on the daughters. If the daughter marries and settles in her in-law's house, she is dis-inherited and the property goes to the male collaterals of the deceased. But if she takes the husband to her late father's house, she remains the owner of that property. If such a couple dies issueless, the collaterals of the father of the deceased girl succeed. The *khana d. mid*, if admitted after the customary ceremonies, does not inherit his ancestral property. The *Hindu Succession Act, 1956*, does not apply to the Scheduled-Tribes (Bodhs and Swanglas) and the Scheduled-Castes of this area and inheritance is regulated by custom.

Customs of inheritance

The constitution of the Spiti family has justly been described as a system of primogeniture whereby the eldest son succeeds in the lifetime of his father. As soon as the eldest son marries a wife he takes over the family estate and the ancestral dwelling, or the 'big house' (*Khang-ch'en*), as it is called locally, whence its occupant, the head of the family, is known as *Khang-ch'enpa*. On the succession of the son the father retires to a smaller house (*Khang-ch'ung*), and so is called *khang-chungpa*: he receives a definite plot of land for his maintenance, and has nothing more to do with the family estate and its burden. His younger sons, the brothers of the *khang-ch'enpa*, are sent in their childhood to Buddhist monasteries in which they spend their lives, unless in the event of the *khang-ch'enpa*, failing to beget issue, one of them elects to abandon the monastic life and takes his eldest brother's place in the family. In addition to these two kinds of estates the large holdings which descend intact from eldest son to eldest son and the smaller plots which similarly descend from ousted-father to ousted-father there are still smaller (*yang-ch'ung*) plots held either by the grandfather if he survives the ousting of his eldest son by his eldest grandson, or by female or illegitimate relatives of the family, or by the tenants. The holders of these plots are called *yang-chungpas*.

Devolution of property on eldest daughter

In the circumstances mentioned above when the parents have despaired of being blessed with a male heir, they marry the eldest daughter to a man who agrees to reside with the girl in her parental home. Such a lucky husband, who is generally a younger son of some land-owning family of equal or higher status, is known as *makpa*. The property is transferred to the girl and if the girl predeceases her husband, he takes another wife from amongst her younger sisters, or other eligible female relatives: and their children succeed to the estate.

Spitian adoption

The Spitian custom of adoption differs considerably from the one prevalent amongst Hindus. An issueless couple simultaneously adopt a boy (*putot*), from out of the husband's relatives, and a girl (*puntot*) from out of the wife's relatives, of marriageable age; they are married and made joint owners of the estate.

Inheritance amongst the others

If a younger son or daughter sets his or her face against social custom and marries, he or she and his or her descendants are called *survas*. The *survas*, the Bhuzhens and the *Dhut-tul-las* sometimes come to own some fields as by breaking of virgin land, and then the father and the son live on together as the land is too small to be divided, and there are no responsibilities which the father could transfer with the land to the son. In the same way two or more brothers of this class live on together, often with a wife in common. Similar customs of common living and common inheritance prevail among the other landless classes as the Zows, the Betas and the Zillas.

Miscellaneous

The rights of ownership of the *Khangchangpas* and the *Yangchungpas* are limited to a life interest even the seemingly absolute right of the *Khangchangpa* is limited by a number of customary checks and counter-checks, for instance, he cannot sell any major portion to discharge a debt; similarly he cannot gift away a portion of the estate, although a small field or two may be given, for life, to a poor relative on compassionate grounds. Sometimes a person in debt farms out a big portion of his land to the creditor for a number of years; the creditor recovers his credit by utilising the proceeds of the farm and the land is returned to the debtor after the expiry of the period.

Morality and morals

The lamas practice rituals with a degree of sophistication whereas the common people perform the ceremonies in their simple way. Thus it is more

in the means employed to attain it than in their concept of the nature of the ultimate good.

An analysis of the Spitian's moral concepts begins with the examination of the idea of merit, where in every morally negative action or *Digba*(sin) decreases this store. The addition and subtraction is just mechanical; at a man's death an account is made, which finally determines his fate in the next world. There is no promise of reward in this life as a result of *sonam* (merit) collecting actions, but the promise of bliss or release in the world beyond. All do not attain *nirvana*, the entry into a kind of super-paradise; there are some who can attain *nirvana* but do not and instead come to earth as reincarnate lamas, they are supposed to retain the knowledge and wisdom of their previous births.

The nature of behaviour, as per Spitian informants, which can lead to more *sonam*, is as follows :-(a) Religious and ritual acts : reading of religious books ; distribution of clothes, money to monasteries ; paying for the saying of prayers by lamas ; making of *mani*-walls (the good goes to the credit of the person who pays for it) ; making of clay idols ; saying of prayers ; saying *Om Mane Padma Hum* ; visits to holy places ; (b) treating all other persons civilly (*Betas*, *Zows* and *Zillas* may however, not be treated as equals) ; feeding those who are hungry. On the other side is the examination, on the basis of a spontaneous evaluation by an average Spitian, of acts which he regards as sins (or *sonam-lopsing*) :

1. to kill anything,
2. to abuse parents,
3. to be cruel towards animals,
4. to burn a jungle,
5. to have sexual inter-course with another's spouse, or a *chome* (nun),
6. to indulge in back-biting,
7. to quarrel,
8. to destroy *mani*-walls, *chok-dins*, etc. etc., and
9. adultery by a married woman.

The whole sphere of sexual behaviour according to Spitian ideology is only partly subject to ethical sanctions. Basic to the Spitian's attitude to sex is the view that sexual relations between those bound neither by marriage ties nor monastic vows are morally neutral. They have a healthy outlook on life as neither a sense of sin nor a sense of shame attaches to pre-marital sexual relations, and even extra marital relations do not provoke severe condemnation on the part of the society. The boys and girls freely mix, but

a girl of the land owning class may not mix with *zows*, *zillas* or *betas* without causing social disapproval. The younger brothers are also allowed to share the bed of their sister-in-law, now and then, if she does not object ; the elder brother usually does not mind, but his right to have exclusive company of the woman is recognised. Spitians are not indignant about adultery or killing of animals, but reserve their indignation for such acts as the flaunting of an order of the village assembly or a breach of the custom of every younger son of the land-owning class going to a monastery. Certain actions are prohibited because they arouse social disapproval, while others are interdicted and considered as sin because they result in a loss of *sonam* and possibly punishment in the world beyond. The idea of contagious pollution is virtually absent ; another vital feature is the equation of knowledge and virtue. The greater a lama's learning, the greater his claim to sanctity, for the Spitians' believe that an intellectual grasp of the true doctrine will normally result in virtuous behaviour.

Types of marriages

In Lahul there are two types of marriages, namely, *ta-bhagston* and *kunmai-bhagston*. *Ta-bhagston* means big marriage and *kunmai-bhagston* means marriage by theft. In the former the wedding is preceded by a betrothal whereas in the latter the ceremony of betrothal is skipped.

In the big marriage negotiations for betrothal is conducted by the father and the maternal uncle of the boy. They alongwith two or three elderly persons go to the parents of the girl, taking with them a pot of *chhang* or a bottle of *arak*. The negotiations proceed and a final date is fixed for the wedding. The custom of receiving the marriage party (*barat*) and other ceremonies are almost the same as in other forms of marriage among Buddhist and Hindus. In Pattan, people used to throw a live sheep down the roof of the house to the accompaniment of *mantras* and whistling. The members of the party seized the sheep, tore its heart and liver and ate its raw meat. This custom has now almost died out.

In the marriage by theft (*kunmai-bhagston*) which is common in Gaher and Chandra valleys, the boys and the girls are left to choose their partners. The choice is made after a period of courtship. There is no interference from the parents in the free relationship between boys and girls. After the boy has made his choice, he proposes to the girl. If the girl agrees, the boy gives her some money by way of *niys* (diminutive of *niyaths* which means a hook for catching fish) and the matter is settled. If the girl refuses to accept *niys* it connotes rejection.

The complete marriage ceremony in the Spitian society, consisting as it is of the performance of a number of complicated rituals, involves a great deal of expenditure and therefore, the landless classes generally avoid it ;

even in the case of Khangchangpas the entire rituals, or most of these, are performed in the case of only the eldest son and possibly the eldest daughter.

When the parents of a marriageable boy have a particular girl in mind they consult a *jhoya* (astrologer) about the astrological suitability of the union of the boy and the girl; special attention is also paid to the birth of children and the prevalence of peace in the family, and if need be clarifications with respect to these are obtained from the gods through some lamas. The boy's father again and again visits the girl's place always taking with him presents of *chhang* and *khataks* before the engagement is finalised at a function known as *migeur chhang*, literally meaning the ceremony after which there is no backing out; on this occasion relatives of both families as also the village folk of the girl's place are regaled with gallons of *chhang* and *arak* by the boy's family. Sometimes it so happens that the parents of the boy cannot afford the cost of a full fledged marriage ceremony and take the girl to their house immediately after the *migeur chhang*; the marriage ceremony is deemed to have been postponed to be celebrated at the convenience of the boy's parents and in the meanwhile the girl lives just as a wedded wife in the house of her in-laws.

Curiously enough, neither the bridegroom nor his father accompany the party to the bride's place; instead it is led by a village notable (*nyervon*) selected for his qualities of repartee, humour and song, and not necessarily a relative. The party (*chhivaya*) consists of a treasurer, (*dhatmia*), a *jhaya* and some *khangchangpas* of the village. The party leaves the village early in the morning after a night-long session of *chhang* drinking and feasting, dressed in gay and colourful clothes, taking with them two ceremonial arrows. Historical traditions with respect to arrows goes to the hoary past of Tibetan mythology are a must for the party, one of these is to be given to the bride's mother as a souvenir when the girl is formally taken over.

Normally marriages are, as in the rest of the country, arranged by the parents; but sometimes an adventurous younger son, who is aware of the celibate fate reserved for him by the society, sets his face against the world and marries a girl of his choice of course he loses all social privileges and has to stand on his own. Similarly if an elder son or a daughter were to marry against the will of the parents, he or she loses all rights. If the parents decide to bless the marriages and rehabilitate their son or daughter such a marriage is known as *khadim*. No civil marriages, as usually understood, have been solemnised here so far in Lahul but in Spiti two such marriages were performed during the last 10 years.

Traditional restrictions on marriage alliances and loosening of the hold of old ideas

In Lahul among the brahmins, marriage with father's sister's daughter, mother's sister's daughter and mother's brother's daughter is prohibited by

custom and in all other tribes marriage with father's sister's daughter and mother's brother's daughter is not prohibited. Marriage to wife's mother, wife's sister's daughter, wife's father's sister is not permitted. All tribes marry within their own castes and sub-castes and no caste can marry within their own *gotra*. Only one degree on the side of would-be wife and husband is left and they can marry in second degree. Rarely there are inter-marriages in Swanglas and Bodh communities but in the sub-castes of Lohars and Shipis the other sub-castes cannot marry. Marriage with maternal uncle is prohibited but is permissible with his son or daughter.

In Spiti there are only two classes—the high castes and low castes. Buddhism in fact does not admit of any caste system. There is a customary law in force which may be called as Law of Primogeniture according to which the parental and maternal property devolves upon the eldest son or in his absence on the daughter. Spitian society is divided into those who inherit parental/maternal property and those who do not inherit. In local languages they are called 'Khangchen (*Bara Ghar*) and Khangchang (*Chhotta Ghar*). Generally *Khangchen* marriage alliances are made within *Khangchen* community. There is one more class called as 'Nonos'. This class is now a vanishing nobility and has only five families. They give their daughters in marriage to good 'Khangchen' families but do not accept their daughters in their families. Among the low castes two sections viz. *Betas* (*Hesi*) and *Zows* (blacksmiths) claim superiority over each other. Their marriages take place within their respective classes. *Betas* are dancers and singers i.e. community of entertainers. There is a restriction on marriage alliance among the descendants of common ancestor upto second degree. *Nono* community prefers marriages within *Nonos* and similarly *Khangchen* community prefers marriages within *Khangchen* community. There are instances of marriage alliances between the daughters of *Nono* community with *Khangchen* community boys. Also marriages both ways between *Khangchen* and *Khangchang* communities are performed. Out of lower castes *Betas* marry with *Betas* and *Zows* marry with *Zows*. All the communities or sub-castes are endogamous having few exceptions. Marriages with maternal uncles' sons are permitted but marriages with maternal uncles are strictly prohibited. At least a dozen of cases of intercaste marriage occurred during the last few years and these were mostly by the *Khangchang* community boys. Conservative people react unfavourably to the interclass marriages. The parents do not like inter-class marriages but can do nothing except give vent to their feelings in grumbling.

Civil marriage

Civil marriages do not occur frequently. In Lahul no such marriage was performed during the last ten years but in Spiti two such marriages were performed.

Economic dependence of women and their place in the society

A woman does major part of work in the fields as well as in household affairs. Thus the woman wields authority in the house. She possesses personal material goods in the shape of ornaments and garments which she passes on to her eldest daughter. These ornaments are passed on to the lamas after her death. A widow gets *Teu* (maintenance) from the person who inherits the property of her deceased husband to the tune of approximately five per cent of landed property. Such maintenance is for the life time of the widow.

Dowry system

The dowry system does exist and is considered socially desirable, but is not at all onerous and the value of the dowry given is dependent entirely upon what the parents can afford. In fact where the parents are not in a position to give any dowry initially, a second wedding ceremony known as *baelog* or *pherom* is performed later when the parents of the girl find themselves in a position to give dowry. This ceremony of a second wedding is sometimes held even after the marriage couple have crossed their forties and have children.

In Spiti the eldest daughter, on her marriage gets all the ornaments of her mother plus a number of dresses and other articles collectively called *zwan*. In Kothi Totpa, the parents of the girl have also to give an agreed dowry, settled at the time of betrothal, in the form of land, cash or cattle; on the other hand in the other areas of the sub-division it is the parents of the boy who pay to the girl's parents an amount equal to half the value of the ornaments brought by her. It is not obligatory, even if they may sometimes do it, for the parents of a younger girl to give her anything as her dowry; in landless classes, moreover, the custom of dowry does not exist and it is only a very rare parent who is rich and good enough to bestow something on his daughter.

Polyandry

Polyandry, a common feature, is necessitated by the severely limited land and the need to keep it undivided. In a polyandrous family, the eldest brother marries and the younger, if any, share his wife. Some have condemned this practice while others have justified it. In a country where a man is always on the move the wife must have people to look after her and she in turn should be able to look after the children. The woman decides the paternity of the child. The system of polyandry is inconvenient both to the men and the women folk, especially to the latter since it means a large number of girls having to remain un-married and dependent first on their parents and then on the brothers. They have to work hard on the fields

with little hope of leading a comfortable life. Still it will be a long time before polyandry can be ended. Not only the economics of agricultural land but also the desire of the parents of the girl lend support to polyandry because that gives a status to their married daughter which would be lost if there was monogamy. Under polyandry the married woman has a privileged position as the entire control over the household affairs rests with her.

Age considerations are not strictly taken into account. The girl is generally older than the boy. This is due to the fact that parents want more working hands in the family. The boys are, therefore, married at the age of 15, although now the trend is towards late marriages. The Lahulas do not marry within their own *gotra*. They marry the daughter of a maternal uncle or the daughter of the father's sister.

Normally a Spitian believes in a monogamy, but landowner (*khang-chanpas*) do go in for polygamous marriages; such marriages are however, rare and are justified either when the wife is barren or unable to bear a male child, or when there is shortage of women labour in the house, or when the man is infatuated by a fresher and younger face. The status of the second wife is far below the status of the senior one and her children have no rights in the property as against the children, if any, of the senior. It follows from the above that monogamy is the rule in Spiti and that a husband takes a second wife during the life-time of his first only under exceptional circumstances. On the other hand, polyandry is not practiced, except among the *dud-thulpas* and among the Bhuzhens, the descendants of the monks of the Pin monastery which requires no vow of celibacy from its members.

Marital age

The majority of the marriages take place between the ages of 15 and 25 years, however, isolated cases of child marriage do occur, the reason being that the parents of the boy wanted an additional working woman in the house. But no case has been noticed in which the girl was not nubile or the boy was below ten; similarly marriages of persons above 25, though rare, do take place. A general but erroneous impression formed by some outsiders is that the Spitian wife is almost invariably older than her husband; this is not a fact and in the majority of cases, say 60 per cent, the husbands are older.

Widow re-marriage

There is no bar to widow re-marriage but in a society where there is polyandry, the number of widows is naturally extremely small. Despite the fact that a large number of girls remain un-married the standard of chastity cannot be regarded low. Socially the Lahulas are very exclusive

people and are highly antagonistic to outsiders mixing with their women-folk. Thus widow-remarriage is permissible but in Lahul it is customary and in Spiti it is otherwise.

Place of a widow

A widow can under certain circumstances become the owner of her husband's estate, but generally the eldest living brother of her husband leaves the monastery to cohabit with her. In case no such brother is living or if living but not willing, to cohabit with her, the parents-in-law, and falling them the widow herself, would try to find a husband for her. She has, if she be not too old, a fair chance of being re-married. The widow is not looked down upon by the society or by her relatives.

Divorce

In case either spouse finds it difficult to keep the marital relations, divorce is not difficult to obtain. If the divorce is initiated by the man, he has to return the dowry and in addition pay a sum of money which may amount to Rs. 500. On the other hand, if the woman wants to separate she also has to pay an equal amount. The amount of compensation depends on the economic condition of the parties. A divorce is completed when the ceremony of *kudpa chacha* or *tshud thawaqtsi* is performed. The couple hold a thin thread of wool by the little finger and pull it apart, saying that from henceforth they will have no more to do with each other. They may then remarry.

The Bhoti word for divorce is *thakchathay*, which means severing of things joint. If both the husband and the wife agree to separate, a meeting of the prominent and respectable villagers is called and the factum of separation published; a husband can obtain a divorce by providing unfaithfulness of his wife before such a meeting; similarly a wife may also obtain a divorce if the meeting holds that the husband has grossly neglected her and has developed pernicious habits like gambling and opium-eating that are bound to injure the interests of the household. In the latter case the wife is entitled to a suitable maintenance and a separate shelter.

Prostitution, gambling and drinking

Prostitution has never existed, but the same cannot be said of gambling. Some people are fond of a game of stakes, called '*cholo*' which is played with dice; but it is not common enough to become a social vice, only those who possess some surplus wealth can indulge in it, and such persons are not many. As regards spirituous drinks the harsh climate and the racial tradition both have been instrumental in making these a part of the valley's staple food. Drinking here does not lead, as in other parts to quarrels or crime or any other social vice. It does account for idleness and lethargy. In the

publication entitled '*Himalayan Circuit*' by G. D. Khosla, the following account occurs:

*'The *chhang* had a sickly taste and a strong, unpleasant odour, not unlike the odour of bad gin and methylated spirit. One sip from each bottle was as much as I could stomach; and the liquor was given away to the servants. They assured us the next day that the stuff was better than anything they had drunk before. The food was undoubtedly palatable. Thin *chappatis* of barley flour served crisp and hot and copiously buttered, *dal* of dried peas and spinach made excellent fare.

'A more efficacious protection against cold is provided by *chhang* (beer made from barley water) and *arak*, the local whisky, which is a kind of distilled spirit not unlike vodka in appearance, odour and taste. Every house has its own still, and everyone brews his own beer. So, in a single village, you may taste thirty different kinds of ale, and enjoy the varying bouquets of as many brands of whisky. As might be expected, the quality differs from house to house the flavour of some is so strong and nauseating that they cannot be imbibed without doing violence to one's organs and senses, while others are quite palatable and their consumption is a pleasant experience, 'of the state to quarrel or crime or any other social vice, is one of the most important causes of idleness and lethargy.'

Home life

Dwellings are comfortable and commodious having smooth and attractive exteriors. They are designed to lodge with comfort joint families in summers, which are rather mild, and in winter, which are very severe. Houses remain the sole areas of activity of residents when there is about two metres of snow all around. In winter, these tiny habitats hum with life while all without is cold and still. Houses present a beautiful look and are grouped together. They lie on a level ground and are three storeyed, double storeyed and single storeyed. The services of masons and carpenters for constructing a house are obtained from outside the village. The custom of mutual help prevails. All types of manual labour is offered by relatives for eight to ten days and by co-villagers for about five days. Good meals are served to the persons rendering help. Enquiries reveal that, on an average, a three storeyed house in fifties cost about seven thousand rupees as detailed below:—

1. Carpenters' wages	Rs. 1,200/-
2. Mason's wages	Rs. 2,000/-
3. Unskilled labourers	Rs. 2,100/-
4. Timber	Rs. 1,300/-
5. Iron goods	Rs. 250/-
7. Glass panes	Rs. 150/-

Total : Rs. 7,000/-

*Khosla G. D. *Himalayan Circuit* pp. 157-58 and 83.

Houses are very well maintained. They are repaired twice a year. The walls are plastered with mud from outside in summer on the occasion of the *Shegtsum* festival. The interior of the house is plastered in winter a few days before the *Kuns* (*Phagli*) festival.

The account left behind by Reginald Rankin who passed over the district as far back as 1898 may be of some interest to the readers and is reproduced below :—

.....“I got as far as Koksir proper, the village of that name, and a funnier village I never saw. It consists of one single building with a flat roof and stone walls about fifteen feet high. It covers the area of a fair-sized country-house in an irregular fashion, jutting out into a square tower here and receding in an embrasure there. There were about two doors in the whole building; and I could only count three windows, all of which were about a foot square. The whole had the appearance of a fort, and such in good sooth it is—a fort constructed solely with a view to resisting the attack of king Winter and his myriad white-clad men. Within those strong walls and underneath that solid roof I suppose two or three hundred human beings are snowed up every year for three or four months, without ever catching a glimpse of the sun or breathing a breath of fresh air.....”

Furniture

Household accessories possessed by the villagers are articles of utility rather than of decoration. They are just enough to meet the requirements of a household. Other houses are normally all undecorated. Almost every house has one or two *galichas* (woollen carpets) and normally one or two of the following items which are normally used on auspicious occasions :—

(a) *Thultan* (folding mats filled with straws):— These are designed on the pattern of cushion mats normally 50 mm x 75 mm thick, about 6 m x 0.9 m in length and breadth.

(b) Woollen and cotton mats :— These are made of wool and cotton like Burmese straw mats.

(c) Rugs :— These are mostly of Tibetan origin or Tibetan style. These are beautifully designed and are of good quality.

(d) *Sulta* (small wooden carved and painted table):— It is about .3m high, about .9m long and .3m wide with three sides joined with wooden planks and the fourth side open. These are made out of pencil cedar and pin wood.

Originally the utensils were made out of local stones but now alumi-

*Rankin, Lt-Col Sir Reginald—*A Tour in the Himalayas and Beyond*. p. 26.

nium, copper, brass and few stainless steel utensils as detailed below are also in use :—

(a) *Degchi*:—*Degchis* of copper and brass are also in use.

(b) *Kunpad* (*Patila*) :—These were made out of stone and now these are found in few houses as at present nobody can make utensils out of stones now.

(c) Silver cups with stands and lids :— These are normally found in average house for drinking saltish tea and are made out of pure silver.

(d) *Dongmo* :—It is used to prepare saltish tea and consists of a cylindrical wooden pipe. Wooden pipe is used for mixing butter for tea. In well-to-do-families there are brass strips around this cylinder.

(e) Pressure cookers :—These are also now in use and are becoming popular day by day.

(f) *Tawa* is used for preparing chapaties.

The receptacles of foodgrains, clothes etc. are called as under :—

Receptacles and other articles	Name in English	Name in Bhoti
(a) Foodgrains	(i) Grain reservoir	<i>Bang</i>
	(ii) Bags	<i>Fad</i>
	(iii) Skin bags	<i>Pakpa</i>
(b) Clothes	Wooden Trunk	<i>Singam Chagam</i>
(c) Handmill	Handmill	<i>Lakhur</i>
(d) Milk churn	Milk churn	<i>Tarkhur</i>
(e) Spinning	(i) Spinning rod	<i>Fang</i>
	(ii) Spinning wheel	<i>Charkha</i>

Grain-reservoirs are made of wood in the shape of square or rectangular big boxes and of wooden and stone slabs. The bags are made like normal bags out of wool and goat hair and skin-bags are made out of skins of goats and sheep. Wooden and iron-boxes are of the same shape and style as are in plains. Spinning rod is a simple wooden small stick like 'takli' of plains and rugs are normally called *sabdan* in *Bhoti* and *Kuli* in other dialects.

All the family members sleep on mats spread on the floor and the use of cots is not common. *Thobis* (matting) woven with thick yarn made of goat and yak hair, *chlultan* (cloth cushions stuffed with grass and straw), *planza* (cushion stuffed with small cloth and sack-pieces), and *chaklas* (*moohras*

made of grass) are the articles of furniture commonly found in every household. All these are manufactured at home. *Thulpa*, skin of sheep, is used as a sheet for spreading over the mat as a quilt and as a bed sheet. People own *ghalichas* (woollen carpets). These are spread in the drawing rooms. They are pretty durable but their colours are not fast. Most households have very good tea-sets and also have silver cups for drinking *chhang* and salted tea. The Lahulas are getting fond of the battery set radios which quite a few local households now possess.

In residential houses normally the walls are undecorated except in very few cases where one may find pictures of Buddhist deities, Hindu deities and in very few cases of Sikh Gurus also. The latest addition to these are film stars calendars. In temples the walls are decorated with *thankas* and murals. In residential houses no painting is done and painting is done only in temples. Normally there are no decoration on the roofs with the mantras printed on them. Windows and doors are painted with multi-coloured paints of all types. Woodwork is simple but in some cases carvings are in Tibetan style.

A Spitian house is singularly deficient in items of furniture, and no wonder because the valley lacks timber to make it. There are no beds, nor chairs, nor tables, the people sit and sleep, as in other Mongol-inhabited countries, on the floor. The rooms, except the one which houses the *gonpa* (chapel), are rather dull, the walls being bare and blackened with soot; utility, and not satisfaction of any aesthetic taste, govern the keeping of articles; clothes, large wooden trunk-type containers to store grains, utensils and implements. The people use mattresses known as *thulden* made of padded straws and rags. On these mattresses, carpets known as *subden* are used. In place of table a small box known as *chokshe* is made use of. The utensils used for cooking are of brass, copper and aluminium. The various vessels used in the houses are : —

DOLTOG

This is used for cooking '*thukpa*' which is porridge made from *sattu*, meat pieces and adding sufficient quantity of water in it. The vessel is made of soft stone which previously used to be brought from Ladakh. The *doltog* is not being used now and in its place *degchi* is used.

The other useful vessels are *bithi* used for cooking, *khachudma* for preparing saltish tea, *ardig*, for distilling liquor. Household aids are *chhagtal* a sort of long spoon to serve from dishes and *chaag-geth* for burning coal and fuel.

The pressure cookers which admittedly are of great value in this region are now being used by most of the households.

Receptacles for foodgrains

In local language these are known as *paun* which are made of unbaked clay bricks in a room neatly mud plastered and is holed at the top. These receptacles are covered with a wooden lid, in some cases provided with hinges. From fields the foodgrain is transferred to *pana*. In almost all houses, there is one special room called *chom* which remains under lock and key and is meant for keeping clothes and valuables. There are no boxes and almirahs or boxes kept in this room. Inside an improvised device called *dang* is used. The *dang* is made by tying two strings firmly to beams to *chom* with a long pole which is called *dangshing*. All clothes, garments and ornaments are hung on the *dangshing* which is a scene by itself in some of the *choms* maintained by well-to-do families. Handmill or *chaki* is called locally as *ranthak* and is just like the *chaki* available in the plains with the difference that the two parts of *chakis* are very light and small one. Now the water-mills have come up in the area so the use of handmills has almost been abandoned. This is only in use during winter when water-mills are not working. Milk churner in local language is called *shom-chog*. It consists of bigger vessels for churning curd/milk. The churner is known as *subma* and the rope for pulling the churner as *shoblang*. For spinning *phang*, which is similar to *takil* is used. Another *takli* used for spinning single yarn is known as *shud phang*.

Decorations

All the households irrespective of rich or poor maintain a separate room which is called *chokhang*. This room is used for daily prayers, worship and also serves as a drawing room for the use of guests. In this room statues, busts and holy scriptures are kept. Only in the *chokhangs* of well-to-do families certain crude wall paintings are seen. All the paintings have bearing to the Buddhist mythology. The statues are also that of Buddha and some photos are of the Dala Lama and Panchen Lama. The paintings on the walls are those available in the market. Only inner walls are painted. The paintings in the Kye and Tabo Gonpas are of high standard and are being preserved as the valuable treasure. The roofs of all houses are decorated with small holy multi-coloured (except black) flags printed with holy hymn like *Om Mane Padma Hum*.

Dress

The Lahuli dress consists of a long woollen coat, more or less, like a gown and made of a thick dark cloth and woollen trousers. The dress of the women is also practically the same except that the men's robes are buttoned on the right and women's robes have strings in front in place of buttons. The robe is secured at the waist with a *skyerag* (sash or girdle).

Women's trousers resemble more or less a *churidar pyjama* but those of men are a little loose. The women's favourite colours are red, crimson or black and the men prefer light cream or grey or dark blue. The women always wear a green or yellow jacket over the robe. In summer the men wear ordinary cotton wear and women use coats made of *shanil*. When it is warm, they wear silken Punjabi *kamiz* (shirt) which has become popular with the women in recent past. The men wear a Kulu type cap. Both women go bare-headed while Swangla, Shipi and Lohar women wear round caps almost as flat as disks. The un-married girls do not wear any head dress.

The ordinary Spitian dress of men consists of a fur-lined skull cap, (*lingzima*) a long loose frock or coat of wool (*rihoay*) or of sheep/goat skin (*lhakpa*), or of cotton lined with sheep/goat fur, (*charlak*), girt in at the waist by a long broad sash (*kira*), a pair of tight woollen trousers (*suton*) and a pair of boots with untanned leather soles and felt tops reaching to and gathered below the knee, known as *lham*. The trousers are tucked into the boot-tops which are gathered below the knees and fastened with a string to keep the cold out. The woollen rope coiled round the waist, plays an important part in the attire. It serves to keep the internal organs, especially the stomach, liver and kidneys, warm; it gives support to the spinal column and prevents backaches; and it converts the upper part of the coat into a blouse with a pair of roomy pockets which serve as receptacles for almost anything. Indeed, a Spitian going on a journey will carry in this manner everything he needs on the way. His prayer box, his prayer-wheel which he will take out every now and then and rotate in a clockwise direction by a gentle swaying movement of his hand, his wooden, copper or silver cup for his tea or water, his tobacco pouch, his bag of *sampa* (parched barley flour), a spare garment, a newly born lamb can all be accommodated in these pouches and their proximity lends warmth and comfort to his person. A few who can afford also wear a silk or cotton undercoat (*tochay*), it is generally the natural colour of wool. When new the other garments are red, maroon or black. A bright iron pipe (*gangzag*) and a knife (*dri*) in the belt are stuck in the belt, from which hang also by steel chains the tinder box, called *mehchag* which contains a metal spoon, a pair of tweezers, engraved pictures of divinities, and a bunch of the most fantastically shaped keys (*kulig*). The locks are shaped like those used in China and Japan, the key pushes the bar by pressing out the whole of the interior of the lock. Many of the *Khangchangs* wear pigtails also. It is a common sight to see a man constantly whirling the prayer-wheel and repeating 'Om Mane Padma Hum' at every pause in the conversation. The monks when not engaged in religious functions, go bare-headed, and wear a rosary (*thanga*) of beads, usually of wood, glass or bone. Astrologers dress in red from head to foot.

The ordinary dress of women consists of a collar-less button-less full-sleeved cotton shirt (*hoojuk*), a loose frock of cotton or corduroy

(*tochay*) or a frock coat of wool (*rihoay*) having a colourful striped sewn border (*thuchak*) girted in by a bright striped silken sash (*kira*), they also wear loose black trousers and a shawl of wool (*lingchay*) or of fur-lined wool (*lokpa*). In the winters they also put on picturesque round high-topped caps lined with fur (*shamo*), otherwise they go about bare-headed displaying their intricate hair-do-consisting of a number of plaits inter-woven with yak's hair and hanging down their backs to below their waists, near the bottom it is plaited together with an intricate design of yak's hair and turquoise beads.

Footwear

A bare-footed person is an unfamiliar sight. All kinds of footwear are worn by the people—boots with or without soles, canvas shoes, slippers, hunter shoes and *paulah* (the ordinary *juta* made by the shoe-maker). These are brought mostly from Kulu and Manali. In winter straw-shoes called *poolah* made from barley straw and twisted *bhag* (*cannabissativa*) fibre are commonly worn. Barley straw is used for the sole and coloured strings of *bhag* fibre are used for the upper portion. These shoes are very warm for walking in the snow but are not durable and their life is extremely short i.e. one to three days only. Women make these at home in a large number.

Ornaments

Most of the women wear ornaments, very few men do so. Men wear gold rings, gold ear-rings called *murki* and *kyanti* are worn by the old folk but are being discarded by the younger generation. The following account occurs in the publication entitled 'A tour in the Himalayas and Beyond' by Reginald Rankin. "They all wear a silver ornament like an inverted toadstool on the top of their heads; and a bundle of bangles over their ears; their hair is plaited in countless rats' tails and elongated by means of dyed sheep's wool. They wear tight trousers and a long loose coat, like the men; and some have yellow stones, like bits of well-worn soap, stuck over with turquoises, protruding from the sides of their heads. A fashionable finish to the long plaits is a string of blue yellow beads, terminating in a little ball. I like these tiny Lahoulis, with their musical voices and their cheery ways; they remind me of the Japanese."

Ornaments of Lahuli women are profusely embedded with beads which are mostly red, green or blue in colour. Both women adorn their heads with ornaments. Lohar, Shipi women do not put any ornaments on heads. Among them married women merely cover their heads with a round cap known as *montsi*.

*Rankin, B.E. Lt Col. Sir Reginald-A tour in the Himalayas and beyond, pp-77-78.

Different ornaments in use in Lahul are described below :—

Dungkri

The women tie with pigtail a square shaped piece of silver or shell called *dungkri*. Beneath the *dungkri* are tied strings of small beads of silver or brass which are passed through the *skyerag*. At the end of these strings of beads are tied small brass or silver bells.

Kyir-Kyirts

A few plaits of hair are separately collected at the centre of the top of the head to fasten down *kyir-kyirts* (a saucer-shaped silver ornament) which sometimes has a turquoise set in the middle of it. Instead of the *kyir-kyirts*, *nanqtsi* (bracelets) made of silver, brass or pewter are also worn. A few women in the villages near Darcha used to wear the *berag* or crimson cloth pigtail studded with turquoise. The *berag* has now altogether disappeared.

Kirkitsi

It is a cup shaped ornament having two clips at the bottom. It is worn by women, married as well as un-married, on festive occasions. Old women wear it always. These are sometimes of silver and rarely of gold.

Tarka

It is a clip like silver ornament used on either side of the forehead to keep the hair in position. A pair of *tarka* weighs sixty to eighty grams of silver.

Poshel

It is a pair of round balls made of a substance known as *kapur*. There is only one hole in the ball in which is fixed a small piece of gold or silver. One ball is worn on either side of the forehead and is tied with the help of a red thread to the plait at the back of the head. *Poshel* is worn by women of all ages. It is not made in Lahul.

Phans

It is a silver ornament weighing about fifty five grams. It is available locally. It is fixed by women of all ages on either side of the head to hide the red thread used to tie the *poshel* with the plait.

Along

There are gold or brass ear-rings embedded with white and coloured imitation-beads used by women of all ages and castes. A pair of *along*

weighs 15 to 25 grams made of brass, silver or even gold. These are made in Lahul.

Yutod

It is a round cap, 76 mm tall. Its interior is made of thick cotton cloth over which is stitched red cotton cloth. Four pieces of golden *patti* 12 mm wide and 76 mm long are stitched on to the red cloth. *Zari* work is done on the golden *patti*. The remaining space is embedded with turquoise. In the front there are a silver moon and a sun joined together with short silver chains hanging down to produce sound. Some imitation-beads are also embedded in it. This portion hangs over the forehead when the cap is worn. The ornament weighs about one to one and a half kilogram. It is worn only by Bodh women of all ages, married as well as un-married except widows. It is worn for a very short duration. This ornament is very expensive.

Chhota phuli

It is a gold nose-pin weighing about 5 grams worn by all women of all castes except widows. It is made in Lahul.

Bara phuli

It is a gold nose-plug embedded with imitation-beads. It is worn by all women of all castes except widows.

Dunkertsa

It is a solid, about 127 mm square, silver ornament with an imitation-head in the centre. There are various designs on its face. It weighs about 225 grams. It is made by local Lohars and is worn by Bodh women of all ages, even by widows, on festive occasions. This is worn at the back near the waist where all the ends of different plaits are gathered.

Pholunu

It is a silver chain about 0.77 m long embedded with imitation-beads attached with the *dunkertsa*. Different ends of the *pholunu* are again gathered to which is attached *chabu* from which are hanging different silver chains producing sound. There is a hook with which the *pholunu* is twisted and attached with the *cholu*. *Pholunu* weighs 150 to 250 grams. It is worn only by Bodh women of all ages except widows.

Mutig kanti

These are white beads knitted in threads interspersed with sets of coral and turquoise. Hanging down in the middle is a star-shaped gold piece

in which are embedded imitation-beads. It weighs about 150 grams and is very costly. It is worn by women of all castes and of all ages, even by widows. It is an ornament of daily use and is made locally.

Tuk kanti

It is a long necklace consisting of beads of coral knitted in a thread having in the lower centre *zee* made of some special kind of stone. It weighs about 130 grams and is locally made and worn by women of all castes including widows.

Shamsham

It is a silver ornament weighing about 70 grams prepared by local Lohars. It is a collection of five to seven chain-like silver strings in which are embedded imitation-beads. At the lower end of each string there is a *chahu* which produces sound. From the *chahu* hang differently shaped small and thin silver pieces used separately for cleaning ears, teeth, nails, etc. It is worn by all women including widows of all castes and ages. It is attached with *chahu* in the front.

Nang

It is a pair of silver bangles weighing about 250 grams. It is locally made and is always used by women of all ages and castes.

Guithah

It is a gold or silver ring weighing about six grams embedded with imitation-beads worn by males as well as females.

Nurki

It is a gold ornament always worn by males of all castes. It weighs about six grams.

Shub

It is a silver purse used for keeping money and fastened with *kerag*, the waist-belt. It is carried by women of all castes.

Kyanti

It is a sort of ear-ring made of gold weighing about sixteen grams and is made locally.

The Spitians wear a number of ornaments, but the precious metals, like gold, find little favour with them. The chief ornaments worn by men are ; a necklace (*ulik*) of turquoises, corals, ambers and mother of pearl ;

an ear pendant (*gaklong*) of turquoise and amber set in silver ; a silver ring (*surdup*) ; a flat rectangular pendant hanging from the neck (*the ghiyee*) of silver inset with turquoise and coral ; and a silver bangle worn on the right arm (*doo*). The *bhavarak*, the most striking ornament, worn by married women only, consists of a strip of padded cloth generally red, hanging from the fore-head nearly half way down the back, studded with turquoises and square silver talismans, and sometimes a sapphire or two ; the *bhavarak* is secured by tying it to side hair with a number of silver threads, from the base of the ornament which lies on the fore-head. There hang flat, the sun and the crescent moon made of silver. The earrings (*konta*) worn is similar to those of Kulu women, with similar tassel pendants (*chabu*). Of the other ornaments worn by women some are ; a multistringed necklace (*ulik*) of the same pattern as the one worn by men ; a safety-pin type hook (*dikra*) used for tying and holding together the free ends of a shawl, the front portion is made of stone in-laid silver, several threads of silver also hang on the right side of the plate and are tied with the *kira* ; a large hollowed shell (*dhung-lak*) worn as a huge bangle ; a string of small tinkling bells and beads (*chinkut*) worn in the hair ; a bunch of tinkling silver bells tied to the *doo*, *surdup* and the *ghiyoo* as in the case of men ; a silver plate inlaid with a few stones *pichoon* and hooked to the dress near the abdomen ; a *ghyool*, worn in the case of unmarried women only, is a ring of turquoise threaded on the hair near the parting. The following account occurs in the publication entitled, "*The Himalayan Circuit*".

*"The Spiti women are very fond of jewellery, and nearly everyone we saw wore several necklaces, earrings of elaborate design, bangles and head ornaments. The necklaces consist of silver discs, glass beads, lumps of coral, amber, or mother of pearl, and turquoises, strung together singly or in various combinations. The earrings and pendants, as also the bangles, are made of silver, studded with turquoises or other stones which are imported from Tibet. Similar ornaments manufactured in India are now seen as part of the stock-in-trade of Tibetan pedlars who offer them for sale in Simla and Delhi, with the assurance that they were imported from Tibet.

The *berag* worn by married women is the most striking and the most picturesque ornament ; if, indeed, a thing of such magnitude can be called an ornament, though there can be no doubt that it is delighted to adorn and embellish. It consists of a large piece of felt or padded cloth, two feet long and nine or ten inches broad, covering the head and hanging down the back over the hair. It is studded with turquoises, silver talismans and glass beads ; it is attached to the forehead and to the ears by means of small silver tubes and chains. The *berag*, covering and concealing, as it does, the wearer's hair, gives the impression of an elaborate coiffure, whereas it is more like a

*Kloss G. D. *The Himalayan Circuit*, 1956, pp. 78-79

headdress worn over the hair. Unmarried girls do not wear the *berag*; they wear a single turquoise on the forehead, at the point where the parting of the hair begins. That is how we learnt that there were quite a few old maids in Spiti, and we observed that, like old maids elsewhere, they were disposed to become coy and giggly at the approach of strange men. It is possible of course, that they had heard of the three unmarried men in our party."

Food and dietary habits

Lahulas are non-vegetarians: they do not consider any food or drink as taboed. *Kathu* (buckwheat) and barley constitute the staple food of the people and are consumed throughout the year. Potatoes and turnips in summer (May to September) and meat soup in winter (October to April) are taken in large quantities. Salted tea and *lugri* (an intoxicant locally known as *tsagti*) are very common and are widely consumed. The principal food is buckwheat (*kathu*) boiled whole and eaten as gruel, or roasted and made into flour which is thus baked into cakes or mixed with *chhang* beer and formed into dumplings. Parched barley flour or wheat flour boiled with butter and green herbs or vegetable or meat made into a kind of soup is also eaten. *Chhang*, a kind of beer brewed from rice and barley is drunk generally. Tea added with salt and butter or *sarson* oil is commonly taken. Potatoes originally introduced by the missionaries are a regular item of diet now.

A description of some of the food preparations common in the villages is given below.

Lowad

Buckwheat flour is diluted with water and fermented with butter-milk or sodium bicarbonate or *phaphla* (a fermenting material purchased from the nomads). Once flour is fermented a portion of it is retained for use as yeast for subsequent preparations. The liquid is spread on an iron griddle and is baked into *lowad*. As some roots and leaves are normally used as fuel, the griddle gets black with the smoke of the burning leaves. The *lowads* are baked on that side of the griddle which is blackened with smoke. When the accumulated smoke on the side is exhausted, the other side is turned. This is done to avoid burning of the *lowad* and sticking of liquid with the griddle. Though, in this way, the *lowads* get black yet the smoke does not impart any bad taste.

Tishkori

Hush of buckwheat and grains of barley are powdered into flour which is kneaded and baked into *tishkori*, a thick cake. It is taken with some vegetable, soup, sauce or salted tea.

Aktori

Green leaves of buckwheat are boiled in hot water, and then mixed with buckwheat flour. Salt is added to this mixture which is kneaded and *aktori* cakes are baked on the iron griddle. These are taken with butter-milk.

Ganthur

Green leaves of buckwheat, cabbage, turnips, etc., are boiled in hot water and then fried in *ghee* or *sarson* oil, or the fat of goat or sheep. Condiments are then added. When the vegetable gets cold, a large quantity of butter-milk is mixed with it to make it a soup which is generally taken with *lowads*.

Kani

Rice is cooked along with some leafy vegetable, and fried in *ghee*, vegetable oil or fat. Salt, chillies and spices are added. It is taken without butter-milk.

Dagdeg tshati

A small quantity of barley flour added to boiling water is stirred with a bundle of *siski*. Salt is added. Sometimes it is fried in vegetable oil or fat. The cooked preparation is taken with *lowad*.

Phempra

Flour of *sarvora*, some rice and potatoes or peas are boiled in water to make a hotch-potch soup. Salt is added and the preparation is fried in oil or fat. It is taken by itself or with *lowad*.

Thungpa

It is meat soup generally prepared in winter. Meat is cut into small pieces and boiled in water, which is diluted with butter-milk. Then *sattus* of barley are added to this soup. The preparation is fried in vegetable oil or fat. Salt, chillies and spices are added to improve the taste and lend flavour. *Thungpa* is taken with *lowads*.

Tru tshati

Some quantity of rice is boiled in water. Pieces of potatoes and cheese are added. The hotch-potch soup is fried in vegetable oil or fat and condiments are added. It is taken with *lowads*.

Mixed preparations

Doo-sattus

Coarsely ground grains of barley are boiled in water and stirred with

a bundle of sticks. Salt is added. The cooked preparation called *doo* is taken with sauce or *ghee*.

Boti-Kulu

Buckwheat flour is boiled in butter-milk and salted. It is taken with different soups, sauce or hotch-potch. *Boti-Kulu* is mainly a substitute for *lowad*.

Tshampa-Kulu

Buckwheat flour and *sattus* of barley are boiled in water and stirred with a bundle of sticks. Salt is added. The preparation is made into solid balls which are taken with butter-milk or dry potato vegetable sauce. *Gangthur*, *Kani*, *boti-Kulu*, *aktori* and sauce are prepared only in summer, whereas *phempra* and *thungpa* are prepared only in winter.

Beverage

Salted tea : Stick-tea is boiled in water and then, mixed thoroughly with butter and milk, in a vessel called *dongmo*. Salt is added. It is taken hot, once a day generally in the morning, but sometimes in the afternoon also. Ordinarily tea is taken occasionally to entertain a guest.

Lugri or tsagti or chhang:—*Tsagti* also known as *lugri* or *chhang* in other parts of Lahul, is the favourite intoxicant. Barley grains are boiled and spread on a *thobi* or sack, to dry. These are then mixed with *phab*, in the ratio of about 30 gram to one kilogram. The boiled grains are kept in sack for a day for fermenting, when they take the shape of a sour and soft substance. This substance is kept in an earthen vessel having a tight lid. Whenever the intoxicant is needed, some of this substance is taken out of the vessel, diluted with water and strained in order to remove the dregs. The preparation is known as *tsagti*.

Teekesri : The fermented material preserved in the earthen vessel for preparing *tsagti* is boiled in hot water. It is not stirred with a stick. After a shortwhile, the liquid is filtered through a coarse cloth. It is much more intoxicating than *tsagti*, and is known as *teekesri*. Some liquid oozing out of the material placed in the vessel is also used as *teekesri* after suspended particles have settled at the bottom.

Arak or Sara :—From *teekesri* is prepared a wine known as *sara* (also called *arak* in some parts of Lahul) by the indigenous processes of distillation. This wine is frequently used on ceremonial occasions.

Potatoes, cabbage, peas, buckwheat leaves and different varieties of turnips are grown in the villages and cooked as vegetables. Pulses are taken but rarely. Butter-milk is consumed in large quantities. It is taken daily with almost every meal. Butter is used in salted tea. Vegetable oils and

fats are the cooking medium. Five or six sheep are slaughtered by each house at the beginning of the winter season. The meat dries and keeps good in the bitter cold. Meat soup, called *thungpa* is prepared every morning in winter. Sugar and *gur* are used in limited quantities. Sugar is used only while preparing regular tea to entertain a guest. No sweet dish is prepared by any household. A sauce is prepared from *tsong* (a plant having leaves resembling those of onion but without root), *labuk* (a variety of radish), and *boti* (butter-milk). The sauce is consumed mostly in summer. Pickles are not used. Asafoetida, garlic, coriander seed and *zira* (cumin) are frequently added to cooked vegetable.

In Spiti the staple food is meal made from barley which is parched before being ground, in taste not unlike oat-meal. It is called *sampa*. At the morning and evening meals it is consumed in the form of soup or thin porridge called *thungpa*. Water is boiled in a cauldron, and *sampa*, salt, and, if procurable, vegetables like peas, *sarson* leaves, fresh or dried, are stirred in; lumps of *sampa* dough are also put into the mixture to bake floating on the top and to be eaten with the soup. On special occasions meat is added to the soup to give it flavour, but is eaten separately. At mid-day round balls (*polda*) of *sampa* dough are eaten with butter. Wheat flour when consumed is made into cakes or lumps of dough which are prepared with *thungpa*. Peas are eaten in the form of piecemeal, mixed with the *sampa* or wheat or buckwheat flour. From mustard seed, oil is extracted which is sometimes added to the *sampa* or wheat flour dough. The oil is also used to supply the light which is kept perpetually burning before the altar, not only in the monastery chapel, but in the private chapel which is maintained in each *khang-ch*, *enpa* house. The refuse of mustard seed from which oil has been extracted is carefully kept and is valuable cattle food.

Because of the stoppage of trade with Tibet, Tibetan tea-bricks and yak butter have become scarce as such some of the people have started taking the ordinary Indian tea with sugar. No account of the food items would be complete without a description of the two intoxicants *chhang* and *arak*. To prepare *chhang* take a lot of parched barley and add about double the weight of water; put in a pinch of a kind of dried yeast called *phay* and leave it to ferment for two to three days. This is the basic material for both the drinks; distil and get *arak*, add water and leave as before and you have *chhang*. As *chhangs* and whiskies go, Spiti stuff is quite poor but it suits the Spitians and they consume vast quantities, especially in winter when they are house-bound for six months at a time.

Fairs

The only important fair is an annual trade fair, *Ladarcha* held near the village of Kibber. Traders from Ladakh, Lahul, Bushahr and Spiti meet

in the month of July to barter their respective produce; with the closure of Tibetan trade, this fair has lost most of its clientele.

Of recent introduction are the fairs and exhibitions arranged by the Government on important occasions like the Republic Day, the Independence Day and the Gandhi Jayanti; besides, village community melas are also getting popular.

Festivals

In Lahul *Halda*, *Phagli* (*kuns*, *kunh*) and *Gotsi* (*gochi*) are the important festivals.

Halda is the new year day of Chandra and Bhaga valleys and *Phagli* of Pattan. *Halda* is known as *Losar* in Keylong and Khoksar. The date of *Halda* is fixed by the lamas and generally falls in the month of January. At the appointed time, on the *Halda* day, two or three persons from every house burn sticks of pencil cedar and take them towards the west and pile these sticks at one place where a bonfire is made. They then throw the burning sticks towards Gushal and Kardang saying, "*guspa rana shosha la*," "*Kardang rana beba la*" (let the Rana of Gushal have it in his heart and let the Rana of Kardang have it in the goitre). After this they disperse and go back to their houses where they worship Shiskar-apa (the goddess of wealth) and feast with *chhang* and meals. The following morning youngsters wish good luck to the elders. The festival goes on for two to three days during which time nobody visits other houses. If anybody happens to call on others, it is considered a bad omen. They come out to meet friends and relatives after the worship period and wish a happy New Year to each other. *Halda* is followed by *Phagli* within a fortnight. On this day people offer flowers as a token of greetings for the New Year.

Gotsi (*gochi*), a festival of Chandra and Bhaga valleys, is celebrated in the month of February in the houses where a son was born during the preceding year. The villagers gather in that house in the morning and take *chhang*. A dough is made of *sattu* and placed in a big wooden plate. It is then lifted by four men to the place of the village god which is generally an idol of stone, a tree or a bush. A young girl dressed in her best clothes and decorated with all kinds of ornaments accompanies them. The girl carries a pot of *chhang*. She is followed by two men, one carrying a burning stick of pencil cedar and the other bearing pencil cedar leaves tied in a lamb's skin. The woman giving birth to the first son in the year, dressed in her best, accompanies them to pay homage to the village god. The other woman to whom a son was born subsequently in the year follow. *Labdagpa* (the village priest) worship the god with a bow and an arrow. The dough is then broken and thrown away to appease the gods. The lamb's skin is placed on a tree or a bush near the idol of the village god and is hit by arrows. I

some villages the arrows are aimed at birch leaves on which the figure of a yak is drawn. *Chhang* is then taken. Lohars beat the drums during the ceremony. When the ceremony is over, people disperse snow balling the people on the way in jest and fun. The villagers then go from house to house where sons have been born, drinking *chhang* and spending the whole night in this revelry. During the night the men and women dance.

A Spitian loves dancing, singing and drinking; he may do some work in the summer but the winter, during which he has to be confined indoors, is indulged into with a series of festivals, celebrations and rituals—each of which is a sort of carnival with plenty of *chhang*. Sometimes, hours of slow and monotonous group dancing to the accompaniment of a song relating a story from either Spitian history or folk-lore or the glories of lamaistic worship are passed in blissful ignorance. Drinks are sipped slowly, the cup is filled after every sip or two; its getting empty is supposed, superstitiously, to disturb the continuity of the celebration. The celebrations are conducted with all the leisure in the world.

Of the winter festivals, *Losar*, the festival of the new year is held sometimes in November, or December and lasts for three days; *Gyalto*, the ringing out of the old year is held towards the end of December; *Chhishu* or *Shishu*, the festival of the good time is celebrated on the 10th of every month; *Nyainay*, takes place on the 15th of the first Bhoti month, to celebrate the birth-day of Lama Chan Ri Zi, by keeping a long fast and 36 hours silence by a few zealots and in feasting by the others; *Da Chang*, the festival of the arrow, in which a young healthy boy shoots one arrow from a roof top towards the river to symbolise the victory over all evil and disease, is exclusively celebrated by the men-folk in the month of February in every village and continues for six days; *Thon Thon* or the celebration of completion marks the end of winter, just before the sowing of the crops in April; *Yane* is celebrated in the second week of June every year, all the old men and women of the village assemble together to worship the god Triloki Nath and ask for forgiveness of the sins committed by them during the preceding year and all participants observe fast for one day; *Namgan* is celebrated on the occasion of ripening of the harvest in the month of September to organise horse race; *Chho Thong* is celebrated by calling a lama from *gonpa* for reading Tanjures consisting of 108 holy scriptures; and *Bhingri* is celebrated on the birth of a son or first daughter.

Some of the important summer festivals are; *Lapsol*, the worship of the deities, held after the sowing of fields; *Namkhar*, the festival of horse-riding and hitting of targets of a sun, a lamb and a shoulder-bone, all made of barley flour with stones, takes place in September, October each year.

No enumeration of festivals would be complete without mention of two important festivals of the monasteries *Gutor* and *Chakhar*. *Gutor* is held

in every monastery on the 9th or 10th or 11th month of the Spiti calendar generally in the month of November. Two or three days are spent in joint worship or prayer, on the fourth day the lamas perform the famous devil-dance. The abbot and superior monks, dressed in full canonicals, sit round the courtyard of the monastery, clanking huge cymbals to a slow time or measure. Bands of other monks dressed in brilliant silk robes, with hideous masks or extraordinary head dresses, and with strange weapons in their hands dance in tune with the instruments, advancing and retreating, turning and whirling with the demons. The latter had become too powerful and tyrannical over mankind, so the gods descended from heaven, took the shapes of strange beasts and in that guise fought with and destroyed them.

In the monastery of Tabo after every four years the festival of *Chakhar* is celebrated instead of the *Gutor* and is attended by people from the entire valley.

In the valley of Pin a peculiar festival *Sonchok* (post-death ceremony), is celebrated by each *Khangchan* once in every six or seven years; festivities last for four or five days, lamas pray. Meat and *chhang* are liberally served to all and sundry.

Entertainment and amusement

Horse racing and shooting with the long bow are amusements which were common both to Lahul and Spiti and were practised at meetings held during particular season. Both these amusements have altogether gone out of vogue in Lahul.

The children in Spiti seldom play with toys. They keep busy with games the names of which are, *mugloo*, the game played with bones; *da*, game of arrows; *kay*, game of pebbles; *chhot-tay*, game of guessing; *thank-khuls*, played with striking fingers; *shumti*, played by girls with pebbles; and *lumboo* played by girls with small shells. The young folk are fond of playing indoor game known as *chholo* in which they arrange fifty to seventy pieces of straws or other things.

The youth keep busy by having separate girls and boys week-long excursions into the country-side in summer, known as *chhur dui*; the unmarried girls of the village organise general week-long merry-making in the winter. *Dhuvor* (arrow-shooting competitions) are also held by the youth in the valley of Pin. Betas and Bhuzhens, also do their bit for keeping the Spitians in good cheer. The usual bed side or fire side stories are listened with great interest.

Communal life

The people of Lahul visit Shashur Gonpa, Tayul Gonpa, Gemur Gonpa and Gondhla temple for pilgrimage. People visit these pilgrim centres nor-

mally on important Buddhist days i. e. *Ashtami*, *Puranmashi*, 22nd of every month and on *Amavas*. Mainly they visit these places during October and normally in annual functions. These centres, cater the gathering of 500 to 1000 at the time of annual fair. People go to these temples to pay homage to their deities to achieve *nirvana*.

In Spiti the important pilgrimage centres are Kye Gonpa, Tingued Gonpa, Dankhar Gonpa, Tabo Gonpa and Kungri Gonpa. These religious centres are visited any time of the year but during November every year a religious fair called *Guithor* is celebrated in all five centres. This fair is purely religious and is observed to dispel the evil spirits for the coming year.

Dance

Whenever the people get leisure they amuse themselves with dancing especially during marriages and community pujas in winter. In Lahul the following dances are performed by the inhabitants: -

(a) **Chham or devil dance**—This is a religious dance normally performed in the *gonpas*. The dancers are dressed in bright and gaily coloured costumes and gorgeous masks of different animals, birds and demons. The dancers follow repetitive pattern with rhythmical stamping of feet and slow movement laterly in a circle. The embroidered banners and the movement of the dancers mingled with the humour of buffoons create a fantastic, unforgettable picture and most unusual experience for the visitors. Colours that predominate in this dance are turquoise blue, scarlet, green, yellow and pink. Normally lamas take part in it and enchant mantras as the dance proceeds.

(b) **Griphi** It is a group dance performed jointly by ladies and gents. The dancers move in a circle with the beating of drums and the playing of flute.

(c) **Shon** This dance is without music but with stamping of feet and slow movement and with linking arms in a circle.

(d) **Shini**—This is almost like *Shon* dance. Sometimes dancers give loud cheers accompanied by the clapping of hands.

(e) **Chhodpa**—It is a pantomime performance, with masks and is performed with the beating of drums.

Music instruments are played in these dances. The traditional music of Lahul which usually has four to six instruments is mostly heard at religious and community festivals. It is a weird combination of trumpets, some almost two and a half metres in length, conchshells, horns, cymbals, gongs, flutes and the beating of drums.

In Spiti people amuse themselves and dance on every occasion of festivals or marriages. Except lamas all dance together irrespective of their social or economic status. Ladies and gents dance together.

There is one community known as *Betas* who are professional dancers. Their numerical strength is about 50. They belong to low caste and their economic condition is poor. Following important dances are performed by them.

(i) **Gar**—This dance is performed by males or females separately with slow pacing. The music is given by the Hesis.

(b) **Jabru**—This is a group dance by males and females without music or musicians. The hands are crossed over the backs and thus linked to form a long chain. First half of this chain consists of men and the other half of ladies. The gents sing a line of the song which is answered by the ladies.

(c) **Munkar**—This is performed by ladies and gents separately accompanied by music. Hesis give one line of the song, which is then sung by the dancing party.

(d) **Bukum**—This is done by the lamas only. The music and songs are given by the Hesis. This resembles very much with *gar* within a slight difference.

(e) **Shon**—This is just like *jabru* but has got some bearing towards Kinnauri dance.

(f) **Bhuchan**—This is performed exclusively by a community known as Bhuzhens. The main feature of this dance is the display of swordsmanship and a sort of jugglery.

(g) **Devil dance**—The name given to this dance is a misnomer. As a matter of fact this is a religious dance done by holy lamas on the occasions of *Guithor* fairs only. The dancers wear the masks resembling some devil/spirits and dance with *khukharis*.

Some of the important songs sung by the Spitiens are as under:-

(a) *Tocha loti songan to ne chin ursang parma*
Sai Lama oola seri shantog dok e'ha jong.

This song is sung by the locals in praise of the head lama of Kye Gonpa. The lines mean that the famous Kye Gonpa is just like *gonpa* of Tibet surrounded by water. The head lama of this *gonpa* having golden incarnation on his head is glittering like gold. The boys and the girls dance together with accompaniment of music and keep on singing the above song.

(b) *Kaa tak ribo tala lai singh*
khorma malui den goae che re ji
kal kyang miko dig chenmins

This song contains all the 33 alphabets of *Bhoti* language. First line starts with consonant *ka*. The second line starts with *kha* for *khorma*. The above two lines mean that the good deeds are sacred one and they are like a mountain which always keeps its head high. The second line with *khorma*

means that one should earn merit so that after death he attains heaven and not hell.

(c) *Girl-Achho gun thon po la kyod na*
Nommo nil du ni oc dra zung
Boy-Achho gan toe thon po la kyod na
Nomo tar sang karmo rang dra zung

This is a famous love song sung by the boys and girls of Spiti and is accompanied by dance of *jabru* style. A line is sung by a girl to which the boy replies. The above lines compare the lover with the moon brightly shining high in the sky. The boy compares the girl with the moon-light which spreads on the ground while the moon is shining in the sky.

(d) **Ploughing**

Tangpo kalba chee taroom chha
Tangpo kalba un chhopi tarun chha
chhopi tarum dul chik jong shug chha

This is a song of the farmers at the time of ploughing and harvesting of the crops. The song indicates the process as to how the earth came into existence. According to it this world is situated at the head of the sea. The earth came into existence after the settlement of dust on the sea level. When the dust continued to gather it formed mountains on which we have got our houses.

(e) **Birth of a child**

Tangla lamool serva lamo la
phoo chig aane chhao chhog
Tamai tanyi shagla bhangari la
Kyod
Kesar gialoo tanvi ja la chhao
Bhangari la kyod

This song is sung at the time of birth of a son by the relatives of the parents. In this song there is invitation to the fairy from heaven to come on the occasion and bless the child who is in the image of God.

(f) **Marriage**

Chhoo de gaehhoo ram guna gola
Utot namkan gia jam yoti
Te de nomo gomri gyan ba pinshak chid dug

This is sung at the time of marriage of a girl. The central idea in the song is that the marriage party has come after crossing the river and every body is clad in precious clothes and ornaments. The girl says that the party

has come to take her and she will go with them only if the house of her in-laws has got a golden gate, valuables and such like things.

(g) **Daachang**

*Gan rang gialoo tanvi gan tung gani
shag la jam bouling hot ki
khyaa baa rang jaai*

This is sung at the time of *daachang* festival to the glory of the ex-rulers, Nonos. The central idea of the song is that when the king takes birth all the world is illuminated and when the king commands the troops he always embraces victory and never allows his *kirpan* to fall in the hands of his enemies.

Recreation clubs and associations

Within recreation, song and dance provided for each occasion all the year round every small community has its own body. There are no recreation clubs and associations as we understand in the modern age in the district. The Public Relations Department of Himachal Pradesh has supplied 48 radio sets to the various *panchayats*.

CHAPTER IV

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Land utilisation statistics

In Lahul and Spiti district agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Out of the total estimated area of 5.19 hectares, 2.51 hectares are cultivable. As the district is mountainous and rugged, major part of the area is barren and uncultivated.

The position in 1971-72 was as follows :—

	Hectares
I. Total Geographical Area.	1,201.50
(a) By professional survey conducted by Surveyor General of India.	5.19
(b) By village papers.	Nil
II Forests.	0.73
III Not available for cultivation.	0.17
(a) Barren and unculturable land.	0.56
(b) Land put to non-agricultural uses.	1.94
IV Other un-cultivated land excluding current fallows.	0.19
(a) Culturable waste.	1.65
(b) Permanent pastures and other grazing lands.	0.10
(c) Land under miscellaneous tree crops and groves not included in net area sown.	0.13
V Fallow land.	0.13
(a) Current fallows.	—
(b) Other fallows.	2.39
VI Net area sown.	2.51
VII Total cropped area.	0.12
VIII Area sown more than once.	

The noticeable difference in the total area figures supplied by the Surveyor General of India and the Director of Land Records is due mainly to the different methods of measurement adopted by these agencies. The area has hardly any inhabitation when the tract is rugged and inhospitable for kilometres together. The figures used in this chapter are those supplied by the Director of Land Records, Himachal Pradesh.

No forests worth the name are to be found here. The few thorny trees used for fuel wood and bushes seemingly staggering in the vicinity of the villages and valley areas present a dismal apology for a forest. In fact the terrain and the climate are violently opposed to the growing of forest in this area.

Almost the entire district is barren and only about 2770 hectares i.e. 25% of the total area is under cultivation. The economic distress of the people can very well be imagined in view of the meagre and limited quantity of land available for cultivation. The valleys are extremely narrow with steep mountains and rivers running through deep gorges. In proportion to its vast area, whatever land fit for agriculture is available lies in small flats, sixty to one hundred metres above the river beds. What hampers the extent of agricultural operations is not only the shortage of flat lands or lands with gentle slopes, safe against erosion, but also the non-availability of adequate sources of water for irrigation.

The cultivated area according to the records drawn up at the last settlement in 1950-51 measured to 5831 acres (3457 and 2374 acres for Lahul and Spiti sub-divisions respectively), whereas at the earlier settlement of 1912 it stood at 5243 acres (2871 and 2372 acres for Lahul and Spiti sub-division respectively). Thus in the interval of 39 years between the two settlements the cultivated area registered an increase of about 11%.

According to the Central Statistical Organisation the total area of this district is 12210 square kilometres and there is no description of surveyed and unsurveyed area. According to the village papers the area of the district during the year 1970-71 is 5191 hectares.

IRRIGATION

Means of irrigation in this district are *kuhls* (small water channels) drawn from streams/*khads*. All the irrigation channels could not run satisfactorily due to non-availability of sufficient water from nullahs/*khads*. This is because of scanty snowfall during the winter months.

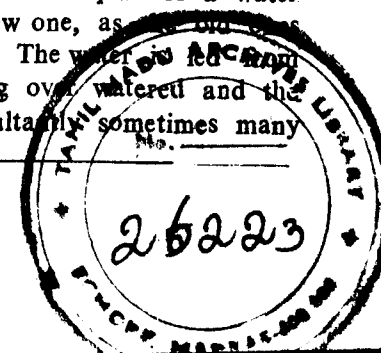
Rain is almost unknown, falling erratically and whimsically like angel's visits, and even then so untimely and sparingly as to be of little benefit to lands except to subside the clouds of dust for a few hours. Average rainfall is about 127 mm per annum. The monsoon rains reach Lahul and Spiti

fitfully in the form of a misty drizzle. The only season, in which moisture is obtained, is precisely that when no vegetation can be produced, namely, in the winter months, when snowfall is both heavy and frequent and continues often, more or less from September till April. Snow does not lie permanently at lower elevations than 5334m except in a few crannies. Glaciers are also not very large. The swing in the climate either way is rather extreme and may drop or rise upto 45 degrees or more in twelve hours. In this context the observations made by Andrew Wilson deserve mention. **"In the Spiti sub-division there is very little rainfall from November to April when all the streams remain frozen up and it is rather a mystery to me how the people obtain sufficient fuel to support life in such circumstances during the long severe period must be a mystery to outsiders."*

This being the position cultivation throughout Lahul and Spiti thus becomes dependent entirely on irrigation. The majority of the hamlets, which lie on the plateaux on the sides of the main river get water from the streams which trickle down from the cliffs over-hanging the plateaux. These hamlets are the worst off for water, for in the year of scanty snowfall, the streams dwindle quickly and dry up in the beginning of August. Should the snowfall in winter be deficient, there is less water in natural springs in summer and consequently crops suffer. Another method is by collecting spring water into small reservoirs scattered at intervals on the high uplands and then drawing water from these ponds when required. This is a common method in the area fed by the Shilla and the Sampa streams. A negligible portion of land is irrigated from the rivers themselves as they flow between steep high banks. The fields lie either on naturally level plateaux on the banks of the torrents, or in terraces on the hill side wherever a channel can be brought from the nearest side stream ensuring safe side from the danger of its being injured by avalanches or falling rocks. Some villages have reservoirs above their cultivated lands, from which earth is taken to strew over the snow before the fields are raked in early summer.

A few villages get water for irrigating their lands from some perennial torrents. Irrigation is thus almost synonymous with cultivation. Irrigation channels are fairly long and considerable labour is spent every year in repairing them after the snow has melted. Usually all the beneficiaries get together to help in repairing them. If a person happens to be ill or otherwise absent then a substitute has to be provided by him and in some cases payment in lieu of a substitute has to be made. The repair of a water channel almost amounts to the construction of a new one, as the old ones are in many cases, wholly destroyed by avalanches. The water is carried field to field. This results in the upper fields being over watered and the lower ones receiving scanty supply of water. Resultantly sometimes many

*Wilson Andrew. *The Abode of Snow*.



tracts of alluvial soils, capable of producing bountiful crops remain unexploited. These alluvial deposits being all high above the rivers' course and unavailable for use from the precipitous nature of the rocky banks, provide no gain to the farmers. Hundreds of hectares cultivable land have thus remained barren and desolate. A number of difficulties will have to be encountered and surmounted to harness all the possible sources to utilize such lands. Scarcity of manual workers for the commission into service of projects due to the low density of population and also the limited working season are the main impediments. Lack of enthusiasm and backwardness of the people coupled with the isolation of the illaqua from the developing current in the areas outside stand to retard the pace of improving the irrigational facilities on modern lines.

The entire area, both under fields and meadows, is irrigated by nearly 326 small and big *kuhls* which are laboriously brought along the contours of the mountains from the snow or glacierfed nullahs that pour into the main rivers. In most of the *nullahs* the discharge is steady and abundant while in some it is inadequate either throughout or during the later half of the sowing season. Inadequacy at the point of supply can also result from seepage or over-flow on the way in which case the *kuhls* have to be deepened and their beds plastered with wet earth mixed with grass or paved with slates.

While the system of *kuhl* irrigation limits the extent of a cultivated area, its big advantage is that the harvests are initially secure except in a few hamlets where water is scarce and has to be carefully conserved in small tanks (*yuns*) from where its flow is regulated. The net irrigated area is 2391 hectares.

During 1959 the Government anxious to overcome the short comings got nearly all the irrigational channels surveyed. Funds were provided for the repairs of such channels as could not be repaired by the beneficiaries as also for the repair/construction of new *kuhls*. A body known as Technical Organisation was also formed during the year 1961 for the execution of all such schemes. The Irrigation Wing of the Public Works Department maintains all *kuhls* of more than 5 km in length. *Kuhls* less than 5 km in length are maintained by the beneficiaries. No *abiana* is charged where the beneficiaries maintain and carry out repairs of the *kuhls*. *Abiana* at the flat rate of Rs. 5 per acre per crop in respect of barley, wheat and *kuth* and Rs. 3 for all *rabi* crops is charged in other cases. Twenty-two *kuhls* costing about sixteen lacs of rupees have been completed so far. They irrigate over 2833 hectares of land in the district.

The district is otherwise full of seasonal streams, steady rivulets and gushing torrents and irrigational potentialities if developed are very rich. Concerted efforts to harness these will not go unrewarded and will, in fact, pay rich dividends in the course of time. There are good prospects for the

installation of hydro-electric plants and the power generated therefrom could be used, among other things, for lifting water from the beds of the streams. The government is taking all possible steps to ameliorate the lot of these people of the backward illaqua.

No mentionable damage is caused by floods. However, efforts to preserve the good agricultural lands from erosion are made by pursuing new and scientific methods to conserve the soil.

AGRICULTURE

There are five principal valleys Spiti, Peeno, Chandra, Bhaga and Pattan. The glens have loam, clay, gravel and pebbles as if these had been under water.

Most of the soils in Spiti may be called alpine sward as the upper stratum of earth and vegetable mould is filled with incompletely decomposed roots of grass and other small plants; depth of the fertile undisturbed horizon varies from .3 m to .6 m. Due to melting of the snows from the upper slopes soil has been carried down to the lower slopes where the depth of the soil is deeper. The land in Spiti is fertile and most suitable for growing crops like barley, wheat, peas and mustard. The nature of soil varies from place to place. The soils may be classified as under:

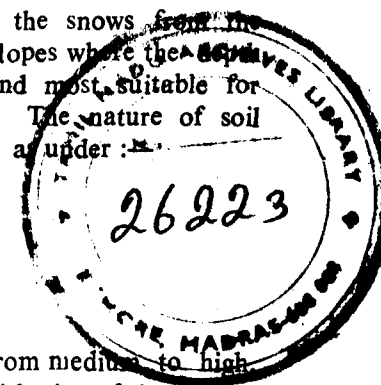
- (i) Clayey loam ;
- (ii) Sandy loam ;
- (iii) Grave-sandy loam ; and
- (iv) Silty loam.

The nitrogenous and phosphatic contents vary from medium to high. This is due to the scarcity of rainfall, high altitude, withering of the mountain rocks from where water emanates for irrigating the fields.

In Lahul the quality of land and its produce is wonderfully homogeneous throughout the tract. The nature of the soil varies little and it may be described as a light sandy loam, singularly free, as a rule, from stones but dotted over in many places with large boulders.

The mass of the cultivation, and consequently of the population is grouped in the fertile valley of the Chandra-Bhaga which is known as Pattan. This is the lowest and warmest portion of Lahul. From Pattan the villages spread upwards on either side in the valley and as the floor of this valley rises, the cultivation steadily dwindles until its limit is reached just above Khoksar in the Chandra valley and Dareha in the valley of Bhaga.

Agriculture as elsewhere in the Pradesh, is the main occupation of the people. Buckwheat and barley wheat constitute the main food crops.



They compete with one another in so far as the area under cultivation is concerned. Peas, *sarson* and *cheena* are the other crops grown in the district.

Snow lies over the whole of the district generally from December till the end of April and during that time no agricultural work is possible. In Pattan valley where the practice is to raise two crops, one of barley and the other of buckwheat in one season, snow has to be melted off the fields by throwing earth over it. This enables the land to be ploughed and for the seed to be put in good time. In the upper portions of the Chandra and the Bhaga valleys where the snow lasts longer than in the rest of Lahul, and the crops are liable to be damaged by an early fall of snow; ploughing and sowing operations have to start late. In the Pattan valley which has a somewhat longer summer on account of its slightly lower elevation, it is possible to sow barley in March end or early April and reap the crop in July. This is immediately followed by the sowing of buckwheat which ripens towards the end of September. *Kuth* is sown in November before the snowfall and also during April. The November sowing is however preferred as the seeds, get more time for stratification which is essential for better germination. Harvesting begins with the moving of the hay in the middle of the August and buckwheat, barley and wheat are reaped in succession. In the areas under double crop both barley and buckwheat are pulled out by the roots, which would otherwise sprout into weeds and affect the succeeding buckwheat crop. Another advantage of pulling these crops by the roots is to allow the soil to become porous and, thereby to get aerated. The effect of pulling out the buckwheat crop where it has been grown in close succession to barley does not adversely affect fertility as the double cropped fields are given a little heavier dose of farm-yard manure initially. Where, however, a single crop of barley, wheat or buckwheat is obtained, the practice is to cut it as close to the ground as possible, leaving the roots in the soil so as to restore humus. All the crops are sown almost simultaneously, although wheat, barley, peas and *sarson* are considered as *rabi* crops and buckwheat and *cheena* as *kharif* crops.

Yield per hectare of crops

After the last settlement held in 1950-51, no crop cutting experiments have been conducted in Tahsil Spiti of this district and such crop cutting experiments have been conducted during 1970-71, only in respect of principal crops grown in Tahsil Lahul. The current yield has been shown in respect of Tahsil Lahul on the basis of these crops cutting experiments and that in respect of Tahsil Spiti standard yield has been taken into account.

Total out-turn on crops

The out-turn has been calculated on the basis of average yield of this

district. Details of total out-turn of principal crops as compared to average of preceding 5 years from 1972 are as under :-

S. No.	Name of crop	Total out-turn during the year under report in metric tonnes.	Normal out-turn in metric tonnes.
1.	Wheat	666	327
2.	Barley	1204	897
3.	<i>Kathu</i> (buckwheat)	331	263
4.	<i>Cheena</i>	6	9
5.	Peas	83	89
6.	Potatoes	443	18
7.	<i>Sarson</i>	11	9

Thus it would be seen from the above table that considerable increases have been caused in the out-turn of various crops with the exception of *cheena*, peas and *sarson*. This is because of calculation of out-turn of crops on the basis of crop cutting experiments conducted in Tahsil Lahul, in respect of principal crops during the year, under report.

Methods of cultivation

There has almost been no departure from the age old methods of cultivation. Unlike the other parts of the Pradesh, where ploughing is done two to three times before sowing, here the practice is to plough the soil only once at the time of sowing. This is because of the very short growing season, which leaves little time for any preliminary ploughing. There being small holdings the people generally do not keep yaks. Only a few farmers with comparatively larger holdings keep their own yaks, and readily lend them on hire to others.

The fields are ploughed after the summer crop is harvested in September. It is, however, completed before the snow falls in November-December. As soon as snow melts the upper surface is stirred up with a rake or hoe and the seed is sown. If the snow is heavy, there is plenty of moisture for the seed to grow, otherwise watering from water channels is resorted to. The sowing usually finishes in the month of May, and if it is late then by early June. Ploughing is done by men and the rest of the work including the thrashing of the crop, is done by women.

When the seed has been sown, watering is necessary once a fortnight, and is given even once a week, if adequate supply of water can be obtained. This practice is prevalent in Lahul. In Spiti forty days after sowing, the field is weeded and the first watering is given; thereafter the land is watered

once a week till the crops are almost ready and a week or so is left for the harvesting operations.

Earlier gazetteers speak of different methods for the levelling of the soil and record the absence of an implement like *suhaga* (leveller). The position is a little different today in Pattan valley where every village has a few *suhagas*, which are used at the time of sowing buckwheat. Normally, they use a home made implement called *boskar*. In the valleys of Gaher and Chandra, neither a *suhaga* nor a *boskar* is used and levelling is done with a single bladed pick (*sumnod*) by women. In these valleys, unlike in Pattan valley where sowing begins early, the problem of conserving moisture during the interval between sowing and germination is not acute. Temperature during May is not high and the evaporation of moisture is, therefore, low. A few light showers are also recorded during this period. Germination is, therefore, generally good.

Various ceremonies are also observed in connection with the cultivation. The ploughing operations start on an auspicious date fixed by some lama skilled in astrology. When the seed has been sown the fields are likewise blessed; the lamas are led to the fields in a procession to the accompaniment of the local orchestra. Prayers are also held and the proceedings terminate with a small feast. To ensure that every seed that has germinated may produce cornears, yet another ceremony is held, in which the fields of sprouting corn are dotted with small springs of juniper stuck into the ground.

Major and subsidiary crops

Snow covers agricultural fields over the whole of Lahul from December till the end of March; in Spiti the snow lasts even further till the end of May. No agricultural operations are possible during this period. Barley, wheat, buckwheat, peas and *sarson* are the important crops raised in the district. A brief reference to each crop may be of interest here.

Barley

This is the most important crop as it forms the staple food of the people. There are three kinds of barley, peculiar to this region and are locally named *sermo*, *dzad* and *thangdzad*. *Sermo* is remarkable for its compact ear. *Thangdzad* is considered inferior to *dzad*, but does not differ from it in appearance. It ripens early towards the end of July and is followed by another crop of buckwheat. The barley is first parched and then grinded to make flour called *sattu*. The flour is then added to soup to make it thick and nourishing. It is called *Thupha* (a delicacy). *Sattu* is also added to salted tea and eaten in the form of semi-liquid paste.

Buckwheat

It is sown in succession to barley and is locally known as *basatar* and that sown as a first and only crop being called *kathu*, *bhresa* or *brapo*; but both of them appeared to be of the same variety and species *fagopyrum esculentum*. The yield from buckwheat is inferior, but is considered better and less bitter than that grown in the adjoining district of Kulu. Buckwheat is grown only at lower levels and ripens earlier than other crops. It takes about 40 days time. It is eaten for a variety in place of wheat.

Wheat

Wheat does not differ materially from what is grown elsewhere in the Pradesh and is of good quality. It is grown as a food crop and is eaten in the form of chapaties, but due to its paucity does not form part of the daily meals. After a coarse food wherever a change is needed, chapaties with *dal* (pulse) out of peas are relished.

Peas

These are grown almost all over the district and are eaten both as a vegetable and as a pulse after these are fully ripened and dried.

Another important crop grown here is that of *kuth* (*saussurea lappa*). It has many uses. It is an insect repellent. It is used in the manufacture of perfumery. *Kuth* has medicinal value also for the application of its green roots is efficacious in curing ulcers; a few drops of *glee* (in which *kuth* has been previously dried when dropped in the ear relieves it of pain and dries up the pus; a poultice prepared from *kuth* helps in ripening the boils. *Kuth* ground in oil lessens rheumatic pain by massaging; it serves as a cure for frost bite; *kuth* when smoked with tobacco, relieves cough and cold. It is exported not only to other districts of the Pradesh but to other states of the Indian Union and even outside the country. Its plant stays on the land for three years; the crop sown in October, 1968 was harvested in September, 1971. In areas where the land is of poor quality, *kuth* is allowed to stay on for yet another year if the roots have not acquired proper size. In some years when snow falls earlier than in the middle of October, sowing of *kuth* is deferred till May next and is sown broad-cast mixed with barley. In September barley is taken off and thereafter the young plants of *kuth* which are then three months old are properly spaced and manured. From May to September five to six waterings are given and the land is kept moist. At suitable intervals the weeds are taken out of the fields. In the second year some farmers give another dose of manure to the plants. In the third year the land is again intercultured in July. At this stage the plants flower and turn into seed balls and ripen by September. The seed balls are then cut and dried in the sun and beaten gently with sticks so that seeds are dropped. These are picked out. Some plants bear seed even in the second year.

Subsidiary crops including garden crops

Cheena (*panicum miliaceum*) and tobacco are some of the additional crops raised here. *Cheena* is the last crop to be sown, and reaped. It is a coarse foodgrain and is consumed in place of barley and wheat. Tobacco grown here is of an inferior quality and remains green even after being dried. Potatoes are also grown on an extensive scale and are of a good quality. The credit for the introduction of this popular vegetable goes to the Moravian Mission. The soils and the climate of the district are so favourable that the potato grown here is of a very high quality even without following the latest and improved agricultural practices. Rye, also introduced by the Mission, is not eaten by the people. But its straw is used for making *poolahs*. *Sarson* is grown in small quantities in the villages situated at low elevations and is used for extraction of oil. *Bhang* (*cannabis sativa*) and a few other vegetables are also grown near the home steads, but their quantity is so little that can hardly suffice to meet the local needs. The vegetables grown here are radish, turnip, carrot, french-bean, beet root, cabbage, cauliflower and tomatoes. Soya-been also flourishes.

Amongst fruits, the Moravian Mission tried apples, apricots and pears, but with little success. In the high altitude tract of the district, fruit culture cannot be a profitable venture. Crab apple, small in size and poor in taste, is commonly found. The pear grown here is very delicious and juicy, but is of a very small size. Apricot grows mostly wild. The size of this fruit is small but it lasts for a longer period. Oil is extracted out of the kernels and is used for cooking. Almond was successfully tried in the Jalma area, but the snowfall of 1955 annihilated the species. Around Thirota a good number of walnut trees are considered valuable.

A few other wild fruit plants also grow here. Mentionable among them are *nankey* a thornless shrub of 1.2m to 1.5m, which bears a red berry type fruit. Another thornless shrub found is *rastes*. This is almost of the same size as *nankey* and bears a black round berry. There is yet another thorny shrub which bears red and sour berries. *Lizo* and *rizo* varieties of wild cherry are also found. Alpine straw-berry, small in size, but very tasty and goose-berry bushes having a fruit little larger than grapes are also found.

Progress of scientific agriculture

As in other fields, no perceptible progress has been made in the introduction and popularisation of the modern type of implements. This is due mainly to the craggy terrain and extremely different weather conditions. Moreover the method of cultivation, cropping pattern in the tract is unlike the one followed elsewhere. The modern improved methods do not hold good for this peculiar terrain and topography. New inventions in all the fields particularly in the context of the needs of the illaqua is the need of the

hour and efforts have been made in this direction. A beginning has been made and a few agricultural research stations have been established. Through the agency of Development Blocks, *meston* plough (improved country plough) with seed drills, improved sickles, hand hoe, bill hooks, roller type levellers etc. are made available to the farmers at subsidised rates.

Implements

The local ploughs though age-old are still largely in vogue. Their number has also gone up considerably as compared to earlier times when only one plough would suffice for a cluster of hamlets. The description afforded to the local plough in the earlier gazetteer of 1917 is worth reproduction here. "The plough (*shul*) at Keylong has a wide and heavy head shaped like a half moon, and set in a socket at the front of the plough..... It measures 11' wide and 8' long and does not point downwards. The body of the plough is a straight piece of birch wood into which is set the pole and a vertical post with handle framing the tail of the plough. The handle is less than two feet from the ground and entails much stooping."

"The Gondhla plough (*bhot-shul* or plough") resembles more closely that of Spiti..... It is slightly smaller than the Keylong plough and measures 9½' wide and 4' long. The body of the plough has a bevel on each side which makes it come to a sharp ridge at the top and this formation is useful for casting the earth aside. The Gondhla plough has a better direct pull than that used at Keylong."

"The Spiti plough (*thong*) is very like the Bhot (*shul*) of Ranglo in Lahul. The head is 6' wide and five inches long and is saddle-backed, hollow underneath, and points downwards to below the level of the body of the plough. Pedy and tail are of one piece of birch wood, curved, and the handle is set on top of the tail. There are two flanges, set one on each side of the body, and about one inch wide, to guide the plough to the proper depth. The shaft (*sholda*) is seven feet long, to suit the yak....."

Some of the other implements in use in the district are detailed in the following table alongwith the life enjoyed by each, cost, utility etc.

Local name	English version	Use	Approximate Value. (Rs.)	Useful life. (years)
Chagwal	Spade	Carrying the earth.	13	5
Chutsa	—	Chiselling.	5	3
Dranti	Scythe	Harvesting the crop.	4.25	4

*Gazetteer of Kangra District, part III—IV pp. 215, 283.

Gunti	Pickaxe	Kuhl making, harvesting of kuth and digging out stones.	18	4
Jhabbal	A big iron rod with a sharp end.	Digging out big stones.	22	10
Jathugza	Sharp blade fitted to a wooden crooked handle.	Harvesting the crop.	4	3
Kahni	Mattock	For making kuhl, for making embankments.	4	2 3
Karji	Axe	Cutting wood.	16	3
Khawangsling	Yoke, or <i>punjali</i> Similar to one in the plains.	Yoking the bullocks for ploughing.	15	3
Ngal	Wooden plough with an iron blade.	Ploughing	35	2
Okthan	The same as <i>kudal</i> .	Clod-crushing and levelling of land.	6	2
Surmn	Iron hook provided to a wooden handle.	Hoeing and weeding.	8	2
Thowa	Hammer	Breaking big clods.	6	12

New type of implements

During 1961, meston ploughs were introduced by the Community Development Department and so far as many as fifty such ploughs have been distributed at 75% subsidy. This plough weighs between five to seven kilograms and is slightly heavier than the local one. It cuts the soil deeper and turns it better than the indigenous plough. The plough is of course getting popular with the farmers, but will yet take some more time to replace the local plough completely or at any rate to a large extent.

For demonstration purposes bullock driven potato ridges have been provided to village level workers. They are useful inasmuch as they have a good deal of time in making ridges, which otherwise have to be done by hand. But these too could not become very popular, for the practice of sowing potatoes in ridges is not very popular in Lahul. This is more so

because of a very high yield of potato in this tract. Moreover, the potato produced here is not exported and as such there is little incentive to the farmers and for obvious reasons therefore, they do not bother to devise ways and means aimed at augmenting the potato produce.

Bullock driven automatic *rabi* drill was also tried but owing to its heavy weight and a higher cost it did not find favour with the farmers. On account of its heaviness, it sinks deep in the light sandy soil and the traction effort is exhausting for the bullocks. Seeds also go deep, resulting in non-germination. All these factors contributed towards the disfavour of this implement.

The peculiarities of the terrain and the small size holdings are some of the impediments that cry down the onward march towards popularity of the modern types of implements. The efforts are being made therefore, to devise ways to start manufacture of such implements that may be modern and yet suited to the local needs. Of course such implements may cost a little more, for their use shall be restricted to this particular tract but they will certainly help in augmenting the agricultural production of the area.

Farm harvest prices

During the last settlement held in 1950-1951 no farm harvesting centres have been fixed in this district for ascertaining harvesting prices. The crops grown in this district are hardly sufficient to meet the requirements of the cultivators/peasants and in fact no sales of principal crops take place at the time of farm harvesting or thereafter, only some vegetables are sold in retail.

Agricultural wages

This type of labour is not common in this district. Generally the cultivators attend to their field work themselves. The agricultural labour engaged is generally paid in kind according to the local grain measure which is also not in uniform scale in the entire district. Amongst, skilled labour only carpenters are paid daily rates in cash and others are paid in kind according to the local grain scales.

Seeds

In sowing a liberal amount of seed is used. The reasons advanced for the high seed rate which in the case of wheat is as high as two maunds per acre are that in April and May if there is inadequate moisture for want of snow or showers, germination might fail or be scant if a large quantity of seed is not sown. In any case they have to give big margin of tolerance to ensure reasonable crop.

Seeds of barley, wheat, *kuth*, potatoes and buckwheat are generally preserved at home by the farmers out of the domestic produce. Wheat C-285 tried by the Block Development Department has gained a good response from the cultivators and augurs well for the popularisation of this variety of wheat. Vegetable seeds at 50 per cent subsidized rates are also supplied by the Block Development Department. Both red and white varieties of potato are cultivated and regarded equally good.

Seed rates and out-put per acre are as under

Name of crop	Seed rate in Kgs.	Out-put in Kgs.
Wheat	35 to 50	250 to 280
Buck wheat	50 to 65	440 to 550
Barley	70	550
Potato	70	3000 to 4000
<i>Kuth</i>	8	2000

Line sowing has failed to catch the eye of the cultivators. However, potatoes and *kuth* are sown in rows.

Rotation of crops

Lahuli farmers are not averse to the high dividends that flows from the rotation of crops and the rotations followed here are barley the first year, buckwheat the second and wheat the third year. The rotations however, depend to a large extent on the quantity of manure available with the cultivators. Ordinarily 1/3rd of the total holding is thoroughly manured during a year and that portion is sown with barley, for it requires a heavy dose of manure. The following year retains a good deal of fertility and is sown with buckwheat. No additional manure is required to be applied to the crop of buckwheat. In the third year the same fields are sown with wheat. The remaining two thirds of the holdings are similarly treated in succession. Area under wheat is much less as compared to the other crops. This fact is supported by the following observations made in the earlier gazetteer of 1917.

"But wheat is little valued, and as much land as possible is put under barley as is shown by the following figures, [which give the percentage borne by the area under different crops to the total cultivated area]."

Wheat	18.6 per cent.
Barley	47.6 per cent.
Peas	.6 per cent.
Sarson and other crops	.4 per cent.
Buckwheat	37.3 per cent.

*Gazetteer of Kangra District, Part-III, Lahul p. 210.

Double cropping is not possible due to the inadequacy of manure. Even under favourable aspects, only a portion of the land can be cropped with barley which is followed by buckwheat in the same year. Wheat is usually sown in the fields, in which during the preceding year a double crop had been raised. In fact the rotation of crops is governed by the discreet and restricted use, as best as possible, of the available farm-yard manure which is scarce because the people cannot keep a large number of cattle owing to the lack of adequate fodder. Manure is not procurable even in the shape of rotten vegetation from the forests which are also scarce and far from the cultivated lands, if any.

The practice followed, in the Spiti valley in so far as rotation of crops is concerned is that in the holdings located in the higher reaches, where barley alone can be produced, three varieties are sown in successive years and the fields are left fallow during the fourth year. In areas where wheat can be grown the rotation begins with the sowing of *sermo* or *nviu* (superior varieties of barley); the following year the inferior varieties *sowa* is sown; followed by wheat. The fourth year is fallow. In the fifth year the fields are sown with peas or mustard. Below 3658 m the land is never left fallow and the crops of wheat, mustard, *nviu* or *sermo*, *sowa*, and peas are raised. The quality of the produce differs markedly in the upper and lower valleys of the district.

Mutual assistance and employment of casual labour

There is no class of landless agricultural labourers. Even the poorest owns a small patch of land. The people, therefore, render mutual assistance in various agricultural operations on reciprocal basis. Generally women bear the brunt of the agricultural operations and undertake to do works like dressing of the fields, weeding, harvesting, potato digging and cutting of grass. Male workers are employed only for harvesting and ploughing. When labourers are engaged they are paid in kind. Where they are paid daily wages which go on varying from time to time, the workers male as well as female get in addition three meals a day. Generally casual labour is employed for short durations during busy seasons.

Crop disease and pests

The crops are generally immune from various crop diseases due to intensity of the cold climate. The diseases noticed here are loose smut, ear cockle, bunt and rust. At times late blight may also affect the potato crop. The introduction of rust resistant wheat seed of C-285 variety has solved the problem of any kind of rust effecting the wheat crop. In regard to barley, no improved seed has been evolved yet and therefore, suffers from brown rust, but the extent is not very high. Smut, black or white is not very common, as is the case with apple mildew. Among the entomological diseases cut worms (under surface) damage the crops. Root borers and *Kuth* fly are the other insects which attack *Kuth* roots.

Use of insecticides

No traditional devices are employed to scare away the insects and pests and check the spread of, or loss due to these diseases. Of late an effort has been made to popularise insecticides and pesticides, and the people have exhibited enough interest in its use. The Development Department has provided foot sprayers to village level workers and Panchayats, besides a few villagers and the wealthier ones have their own sprayers. Ordinarily the sprayers cost around Rs. 250 each and is not therefore, within the money spending capacity of an ordinary farmer. The sprayers available with the Panchayats, village level workers and other people cater to the entire needs of the illaqua and the sprayers are plied in turn. A team comprising one Agriculture Sub-Inspctor and two Beldars also visit the district every summer for spraying. The insecticides are supplied by the Development as well as Agriculture Departments gratis. Bucket pumps are also in use, but they are yet to become popular with the local farmers. An adequate number of plunger dusters, useful for dusting vegetable plants has also been supplied to the village level workers. The following statistics speak for the work done and achievements made in this direction.

Manures

Chemical fertilizers such as ammonium sulphate and super phosphate etc. have yet to gain popularity. A beginning has however, been made and in the years to come, more of chemical fertilizer may be used in the district. So far the manure locally available is the only fertilizer that has to be taken recourse to. This is either farm-yard manure or night soil. The cultivators have enough of it and about one third of their land is thoroughly manured once a year. The process to raise farm-yard in sufficient quantity is that all cattle dung and urine is stored in compost pits dug for the purpose. In certain villages it is either stored in one corner of the shed or in the adjacent rooms. These heaps are frequently covered with fodder waste, dry leaves and earth. Every house has a pit latrine of its own in which night soil and urine is deposited. A layer of dung mixed with earth is then poured on it to avoid foul smell. These improvised latrines are cleaned every six months and the manure so prepared is usefully applied to the crops.

In the manured portions, barley which requires a heavier dose of manure is sown. In the following year the land remains rich enough to yield a crop of buckwheat. During third year wheat is sown. In areas under double cropping the practice of pulling the crops by roots is followed, for this helps in aeration. When a single crop is taken during the season, the roots remain in the soil and under favourable moisture and temperature conditions, the roots get converted into valuable manure. Double cropping was in practice in *Kothis Gmrang* of Bhaga valley, *Kothis Gondhla* and *Gushal* of

Chandra valley from 1947 to 1954, but was given up in 1955, when Lahul experienced a pre-mature and unprecedented snowfall in the month of September. Another reason for the discontinuance of this system was that neither of the two crops matured well. The soil here is already rich in nitrogen and the application of highly nitrogenous fertilizers like urea has unfavourable effects. The following table depicts the quantity of fertilizer consumed in the district during some past years :

	1959-60	1960-61	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64
	(Figures in quintals)				
Ammonium Sulphate	146.68	79.13	3.97	42.58	107.02
Super phosphate	24.26	44.79	14.64	42.08	63.23
Urea	133.24	84.72	13.99	2.05	...
Can	...	...	211.19	37.08	167.47

Till 1959, chemical fertilizers were almost unknown. A little quantity was used for the *kuth* crop alone. The impediments in the rapid popularisation of chemical fertilizers like other improved agricultural practices, are due to the lack of price incentive, for the agricultural produce which, apart from *kuth* is grown exclusively for domestic consumption. Moreover, the district remained cut off from the rest of the country as well as the Pradesh, for a long time due to its peculiar topography and difficult means of conveyance. The rapid and commendable achievements in the sphere of various developmental activities, aimed at the amelioration of the lots of the people inhabiting the rural India reached here a little late and then too the seclusion of the people from what had been happening elsewhere worked for the non-too good response from Lahulies and Spitians. Lack of education was yet another reason. During the year 1959-60 the distribution of fertilizers on loan basis and its subsequent application to cereal crops in a greater measure was launched and a gradual improvement in its popularisation was noticeable though the pace is still very slow.

Activities of the Agriculture Department to secure scientific methods of cultivation

Research is still in its initial stages. People are so far averse and reluctant to stake their limited lands in uncertain ventures, risky on account of unpredictable weather, especially when they are satisfied with the handsome income from *Kuth* which despite its unstable market yields good returns. There is however, some scope for the popularisation, and a little more vigorous application of improved horticultural practices in areas of lower elevation. The prime obstacle in the popularisation of improved and scientific methods of cultivation is the apathy of the people inhabiting the district who have to be brought home the revolutionary improvements made

in the sphere of agriculture and horticulture. With the opening up of the hitherto locked terrain, the gradual dissemination of the improved and scientific methods is gaining ground. A beginning has been made and a few research stations and experimental farms opened. The research conducted at these centres and the results obtained and people are being educated. New agricultural implements have also found their entry into the district and with the passage of time they are likely to replace the traditional and cumbersome type of implements. Some of the research centres that merit description are :

Seed Farm, Gorma :—It was established during 1960, in Pattan valley for multiplying improved seeds of cereals. The farm is spread over an area of 5.2 hectares of land. Improved vegetable seeds are also multiplied on this farm. The new varieties of seeds raised in the farm after successful experimentation are popularised in the adjoining areas. The farm was however, transferred to the agricultural wing of the University for making further intensive research.

Kuth Research Station, Keylong :—Research in *Kuth* cultivation was initiated in the year 1960, with the establishment of this research station. Several experiments viz. varietal trial, methods of sowing, viability of seed, seed rate, irrigation, time of sowing, manurial trials and spacing trials have been conducted at this research station. This station has also been transferred to the agricultural wing of the University.

Dry Fruit Research Station, Keylong :—It was established in 1959 with a view to conduct experiments in the growth of dry fruits and evolve suitable varieties of fruit plants. It has a sub-station and nursery at Thiroi. The sub-station aims at supplying 2000 fruit plants annually to the people. Besides this a Raisin Grape Research Centre has also been established at Thiroi. The progress achieved at the centre is encouraging.

Seed Farm, Tabo :—Spread over an area of 11 acres this farm was set up during 1961-62. Research on wheat, barley and millet was carried out at this farm. The new varieties of seed evolved here are propagated in the near by villages. But the farm was running in loss so it was discontinued by the Agriculture Department on 12-7-1972.

Raisin Grape Research Sub-Station, Thiroi :—Bearing in mind the suitability of the Pattan valley for the cultivation of raisin grapes, for it enjoys a cool and dry climate which is most congenial for the cultivation of raisin grapes, a raisin grape research sub-station was established at Thiroi. It is primarily concerned with the carrying out of research on raisin grapes. A good number of varieties have been successfully evolved here and are being propagated further in the adjoining illaquis, which have ideal weather for the growth of raisin grapes.

The Development Department has also set up two small experimental farms in Lara and Kyuling villages of Spiti Sub-Division, for producing different types of vegetable seeds. Research on cabbage, turnip, radish, carrot, *palak*, *kabuli* gram and cauli-flower, has been carried out successfully at these farms.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Fodder Crops :—Agriculture and Animal Husbandry are inter-related more particularly in hill terrain. But for each other they cannot have a smooth sailing in their respective fields. The number of animals domesticated by a farmer relatively speak for his affluence in the field of agriculture, and to sustain the live-stock an adequate quantity of fodder is required. The cultivation of grass for hay is therefore, as important here as the raising of agricultural crops. The peculiar climatic conditions of the district i.e. its remaining snow bound for almost six months in a year, necessitate the storing of a large quantity of fodder, to support the farm stock during winter months when the pasture lands are under snow. During winters a man's load of hay fetches a handsome price of Rs. 20 or so in Chandra valley where grass lands are abundant; in Pattan valley, there being shortage of grass lands, the price is still higher. On the dry mountain slopes no grass grows and the grass of the sheep runs on the ridges is not suitable for hay making. Each cultivator therefore, has to keep a sizable portion of his holding for raising fodder crops or grass. Of course the land earmarked for such purposes is steep and unsuitable for the production of cereals. Such hay fields are known as *dang*. In the sloping banks (*piri*) falling between the terraced fields also, hay is raised. When water is let on to such lands a spontaneous growth of various kinds of grass and herbs spring up. A lucerne like plant with a yellow flower, locally called *chunpo* is also grown here. It is considered quite nutritious and therefore, much valued by local peasants. Its seed is said to have been brought from Ladakh in Kashmir. Hay collecting operations generally commence after the cereal crops have been gathered. A few meadow weeds that grow wild and are locally called *mushutsi* and *khayan* also supplement the fodder requirements. On the borders of fields also a few weeds crop up, they though hamper the progress and yield of cereal crops, yet stand in good stead in-as-much as the fodder needs are concerned. The straw and husk of barley and wheat etc. is thoroughly crushed and preserved for winter, when due to heavy snowfalls it becomes scarce. No wastage is allowed to occur and the crops are cut very close to the roots.

An area measuring about forty-one hectares is under pastures and meadows. During summers the cattle are left to graze in the pastures near about the villages. Sheep and goats are sent up to the high lying sheep runs, where they remain practically all through the summers. A short fine

grass of a dull bluish-green colour locally called *niru* grows on these runs and has in it such highly nutritive contents that even the wretchedly thin sheep going to these runs in summer arrives back in splendid condition. The other popular kinds of grass are called *mat* and *morar*. The goats depend very much on the leaves and twigs of the birch and bush willow.

Despite these runs it is not possible to maintain bigger flocks because of the difficulty of feeding them in winter, when there is a heavy snowfall. In winter about 90 per cent of the mules migrate to lower elevations; the cattle and sheep, however, remain there. *Berseem* and *bhabbar* grass have yet to be introduced here.

Live-stock

Live-stock is the chief wealth of the hill man and in fact his status symbol. He endeavours to keep them in a much bigger number than the facilities at his command allow. They serve the multipurpose needs viz., the dung of the cattle is used for manure purposes and also baked into *chapaties* and then used to warm the cold hearths. Their milk in whatever quantity it is available, has a perfect good use. Meat of sheep and goats is very much relished here. They also serve as pack animals. Even after death their hides are used for making shoes and the skins are used as cloaks, coats and sleeping mattresses. In a way the live-stock form an indispensable part of the life of the Lahulas and Spitians. The live-stock here comprise yak, cow, equine, mule, donkey, sheep and goat and a little poultry. The following table depicts the relative strength of the live-stock enumerated during the quinquennial census of 1956, 1961, 1966 and 1971.

Year	Cattle	Yak	Total Bovine	Equine	Mules	Donkeys	Goats	Sheep	Poultry
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1956	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
1961	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
1966	6138	1795	1933	1213	124	1544	5579	33933	2694
1971	6784	2202	8986	1128	421	1816	9336	33535	2184

Cattle

The animals in the district are of the local hilly breed and are rather poor. In the absence of the availability of fodder in adequate quantity, the cattle often starve. Resultantly the cows are poor milchers. Cross breeds, considered strong and superior are therefore, reared. They are generally a cross between the Tibetan Yak and the Kulu cow. The cow locally called *raa* is crossed with the yak and the progeny of this cross is *Churu* (male) and *Churi* (female). The *Churu* is smaller than the bullock of the plains, hairy all over, with a long tail in black or white colour. It is very hard for the plough, but does not procreate. *Churi* too is not a high yielder of milk, and gives approximately, three kilograms of milk daily. The off springs born out of the matings of the yak and *Churi* are given the nomenclature of *garu* in the case of male and *gari* for female. *Garu* is not utilized for further breeding. *Churi* and *bangda* (another local breed of ox) gives birth to *tolfo* (male) and *tolmo* (female). The cross breeds of *gari* and yak, and *lari* and yak are respectively known as *laru* (male) and *lari* (female) and *brimd-a* (male) and *bree*. *Garu* and *laru* like *churu* do not procreate. The cows are generally brought from Kulu and yaks from Zangskar in Ladakh. Yaks are maintained by the *kothis* (a group of villages) for breeding purposes. There are some 80 community owned yak-bulls in Lahul. The maintenance of nearly fifty per cent of these yaks is partially subsidized by the Animal Husbandry Department. In winter any one of the household, maintains the yak and the cost is proportionately shared by the entire village.

In Spiti yaks are not bred locally and are obtained from Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. Previously they used to be imported from Tibet as well. But with the cessation of trade links with Tibet the practice has ceased. Yaks have a bisonlike appearance, with a girth of about 1.9 m and short strong legs. They are slow movers and have to be led literally through nose by a man during the ploughing operations. Over steep hill sides this hefty animal can gallop like a equine. They are usually black with a white tale. According to some local superstitions, the yak's tail has the potency of warding off the influence of any evil spirits and is therefore, set up on almost all house tops. The long hair on the haunches of the yak are shorn periodically and woven into large bags. Yaks do not thrive below 3374.8 m. The yak-bulls are mated with cows brought from Lahul area.

To help the farmers, the Government has made available fifteen yaks *gratis* to various Panchayats. Another five bulls are partially maintained by the Government and a monthly stipend of Rs. 20,- each bull is made available. There are, now 1795 yaks in Lahul and Spiti district.

The cattle are tethered as a rule at night in the *po* (ground floor of the house). During summers, there being ample grass on the hills and alpine pastures the cattle are let loose to graze. For this purpose graziers

and shepherds called *phogala* in local parlance is employed by the villagers and is paid one *patha* (a local measurement equal to about one kilogram) of grain per sheep or goat for the season, by every house-hold. He also gets a days meal from each house-hold in turn, which sends ten or more sheep and goats. The grazier of cattle is given the nomenclature of *rotari*. He gets thirty *pathas* of grain from every house-hold for the season in addition to one loaf of bread per day. *Kurtsarantagcha* is responsible for the grazing of lambs and calves and gets the same compensation as in the case of *phogala*. During the winter season the extent of snow and consequent cold is such that not only the cattle but the people have to immune themselves from the biting chill outside. The people therefore, resort to stall feeding of the cattle and they are in most cases rendered to mere skeletons and are well nigh horrible to look at.

In Pattan valley some people own good cow-bulls and cows. These cows are comparatively good milchers. However, the people prefer the *churi*, despite its low milk yield. The reasons advanced for the *churis* taking precedence over the cows are that the former are considered much hardier than the latter and can sustain themselves on the bare minimum and also have a longer calving period. The cattle here as elsewhere in the Pradesh is the chief wealth of the people and serve their multifarious needs. The unique feature here is that they serve as pack animals also. The total bovine in the district is 10116 (2183 males and 7933 females).

Equines

Horses, ponies, donkeys and mules are the pack animals commonly made use of in the district. Gradual improvement in the means of communication has worked for a tremendous increase in the number of equines. The number of horses and ponies is 1544 in this district. The ponies bred here are very much in demand in other districts of the Pradesh. Ordinarily they have a little bony frame, but are very sure footed and used to living in steep and rocky hill terrains. They fetch handsome prices in the famous *lavi* fair of Rampur Bushahr in Simla district. The other possible markets for the disposal of these ponies are Kulu, Mandi and Kangra in Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. Besides using them for riding purposes, these beasts of burden are the hillmen's automobiles. Eatables and other items of import or export are transported on them. But with the opening up of the road traffic in most parts of the district the utility of these animals has become of lesser importance. However, the question of their complete extermination is out of question for the present for the vehicular roads are seasonal and it may take a long time before interior is connected; even then village to village communication will be linked by these animals. The asses which are of a fair stamp find favour with the people for the carriage of manure from the grazing areas to the fields and also for carrying building material.

To improve the breed of ponies the Government has provided one horse stallion. A start has also been made for the breeding of mules and two donkey stallions imported from Hissar in Haryana have been kept at Gue and Cheecham respectively. The coverings have however, not been very encouraging as the people did not exhibit much interest in improving the breed. One horse stallion located at Tozing, has also been in use, but the coverings in this case also have been none too good. There is a good demand for mules and people prefer buying them from Poonch. The reason advanced for the lack of interest in breeding these animals is the inadequate quantity of fodder.

Sheep

They are an important part of the economy of the people, and are depended upon mainly for mutton requirements, wool and skins. They are also used as pack animals. The number of sheep owned by Lahulas is a little more than their brethren in Spiti. In winters the flocks of sheep are migrated to warmer regions of the Pradesh and a little number left behind is stall fed. The sheep take precedence over goats and are reared in a much bigger number than the goats. The reasons advanced for this preferential treatment are that the sheep do not eat away the tender and sprouting plants while tree leaves and bushes constitute the main fodder of the goats. The latter being lesser in quantity and pastures and grassy hill sides being in abundance the liking of the Lahulas as well as Spitiens for sheep over goats is therefore, understandable. A short fine grass, dull bluish-green in colour locally called *niru* is said to be highly nutritious and is the pet food of the sheep here. The other grasses that grow here are locally christened as *mat* and *morar*. It is said that with the advent of summer, when the flocks of sheep start coming back they are spectre thin but the rich grasses that grow in the district reinvigorate them and by the time the occasion for their migration to lower altitudes starts they are filled with flesh and blood and are in splendid condition. There are, in all, 33932 sheep in the district.

Goats

They are next to sheep in numerical order and though their number is no where near the number of sheep reared by the agriculturists, they too have multifarious uses for the inhabitants here. It supplies milk and *pasham* (goat hair). The latter is much valued every where. The number of *chigu* goats that yield *pasham* however is very small. The hair of ordinary goats is used for making *gochies* (woollen plaids) and other coarse clothes as also for making ropes and bags. The goats reared here are of a good quality. Like sheep, it also cater for the mutton needs and is used as a pack animal for transportation of eatables and other victuals through precipitous terrains. In the past even the bare existence of the people rather depended very much

on such quadrupeds. But with the opening up of new vistas in road transport the importance of these mute animals, has become secondary. The goat is a destructive animal and damages trees and shrubs thereby creating problems of soil erosion. The Government has not therefore been encouraging the rearing of goats. In view of the loss which goats do and as a small compensation therefore, the Panchayats have imposed a tax on each goat tended by the people. But their complete extermination can not be prognosticated for they are also a poor man's *churies* (a local cow) and purveys their milk needs. There are 5579 goats in the district. During the winter months goats also migrate to warmer regions of the Pradesh.

Poultry

Poultry was almost unknown to the people here and the credit for its introduction undoubtedly goes to the Moravian Mission which imported some *desi* birds from the neighbouring Kulu area and started breeding them. Gradually the people developed a liking for poultry, but the number of birds raised still remained woefully small and their number is only 2694. Poultry development got the real fillip during 1959-60 when the Development Department took up the distribution of birds on a large scale at subsidized rates. The breeds successfully propagated were white leg horn, red rhode and new hampshire.

The usual practical difficulties, the extreme rigours of cold dry climate which accounted for the slow pace of progress in almost all fields, also stood in the augmentation of the number of poultry birds. The hens do not ordinarily lay off and incubate during the months of December, January and February. They are therefore, kept in the cosy warm cattle sheds. For the development and propagation of poultry an experimental poultry farm at Kaza has been started by the Animal Husbandry Department wherein some 50 birds of the new hampshire breed have been kept. For the Lahul region to facilitate hatching an electric incubator has also been installed at Key-long. Eggs now are frequently used as a part of the diet by the sophisticated and are relished by the local people.

Measures to improve quality of breed

The live-stock here is of a poor quality. No mentionable work to improve the quality of breed has yet been undertaken. The cows are poor milchers and on an average yield two to three liters of milk. During winters even this yield shrinks to nought. The main reason for this poor state is the barrier imposed by nature in the form of huge snowfall, which keeps the district cut off from the rest of the world for a major part of the year. The hindrances imposed by nature are however being surmounted with constant and repeated efforts to improve the breed and provide necessary veterinary

needs. With the development of modern scientific methods live-stock in the area is bound to improve.

A seasonal veterinary dispensary was opened at Keylong as far back as 1946 and even earlier to that the illaqua used to be frequented by a Veterinary Assistant from Kangra, for purposes of vaccinations and other medical aid to animals. Till then there were no veterinary institutions and the people depended on the local lamas for the treatment of sick animals, who instead of administering any medicines indulged in religious ceremonies for the purpose. Gradually this belief is waning and the people eagerly resort to and look forward to the new and more useful methods. The dispensary at Keylong was upgraded into a full-fledged veterinary hospital in the year 1949. Now there are four veterinary hospitals at Keylong, Kiriting, Gondhla and Kaza and six dispensaries at Hansa, Sagnam, Gemur, Gushal, Sissu and Poh. Village level workers coordinate with the government staff and during emergencies when it becomes rather impossible to visit the dispensaries due to heavy snow out side, these village level workers help the needy people in providing first aid to their suffering animals.

Efforts are apart to improve the quality of local cows and to realize this end an experimental yak breeding farm is contemplated to be opened at village Gemul. According to yet another proposal the milk yield is to be improved by mating a few jersey cross bred cows with the yak bulls on an experimental basis. To improve the quality of the local sheep the department is making concerted efforts. In 1942, 18 rams and 2 ewes of merino breed procured from the Government Live-stock Farm, Lahore (Pakistan), were distributed amongst the people of the Pattan valley. This experiment proved successful and now the breeding in this valley is almost through the progeny of these rams. During 1949 some 50 Hissar dale rams, a cross between Australian rams and Bikaneri ewes were distributed free of cost. Another 72 and 100 dale merino rams were distributed in subsequent years. The wool yield of the improved variety of sheep is quite encouraging. A sheep and wool extension centre has been started at Lote. Pattan valley is now an important centre of sheep breeding and supplies rams to almost all parts of the district for breeding purposes.

During the years after November 1966 when Lahul and Spiti became a part of Himachal Pradesh, tremendous improvement has been made in the all round development of live-stock and their care.

Animal diseases

Among other common animal diseases that make their appearance here are scabies affecting sheep and horses, foot and mouth disease among cattle and sheep and strangles attacking mules and horses. Other diseases;

such as rinderpest, anthrax and haemorrhagic septicaemia are very rare. During winter months the live-stock generally suffer from mal-nutrition and fall an easy prey to the diseases detailed above. With the advent of summer months and good season when the live-stock can easily frequent the pastures and grazing lands, most of the diseases gradually disappear and the animals improve in health, shedding off debility and gain resistance against the above crippling diseases.

Rinderpest broke out during the winter of 1948 affecting some villages in the Bhaga valley. It however remained restricted to this valley. A few villages were effected in the adjoining Pattan valley but the extent was less severe compared to the Bhaga valley. There has been no out-break of this epidemic thereafter, though as a precaution the cattle are often vaccinated.

The foot and mouth disease generally enters the district with the incoming of Gaddis whose flocks bring the infection from places in the lower hills and plains of the Pradesh. These flocks pass, from village to village, thereby contaminating the pastures and water resources which accounts for the further spread of the disease among the local animal stock. The mortality from this disease is not very high and is estimated between two to three per cent, but it has other adverse effects on the milch animals, whose yields reduce considerably. In the absence of a good vaccine, it has not been possible so far, to completely exterminate this disease from the district. However, as a preventive measure against contagious diseases the flocks of sheep and goats, migrating to pastures in Lahul and Spiti are drenched at Manali in Kulu district every year.

Sporadic instances of strangles locally called *khaglo* are also noticed. This is a contagious disease and effects horses and ponies. In this the animals are considerably emaciated, the symptoms are a sharp rise in temperature, catarrhal inflammation of the upper respiratory tract and formation of abscesses in the adjacent glands. The mortality from this disease is two per cent. Cases of *rani khet* diseases are unknown. However, to ensure safety against any such out-break, the poultry birds are vaccinated periodically.

The progress made during the five year plans in respect of animal husbandry is given as follows :—

1. First Five Year Plan record is not available.
2. Second Five Year Plan record is not available.
3. Third Five Year Plan.

Rams supplied	46	Progeny of rams	1694
Yak bulls supplied	46	Progeny of yak bulls	899
Jersey bulls supplied	9	Progeny of Jersey bulls	239
Jersey cows supplied	4	—	—
Poultry birds supplied	2234	—	—

4. Fourth Five Year Plan
 Rams supplied 45 Progeny of rams 81
 Yak bulls supplied 8 Progeny of yak bulls 41
5. One artificial insemination centre at Kirting, two sub-centres at Civil Veterinary Hospital, Gondhla and Civil Veterinary Hospital, Keylong are functioning.
6. Four veterinary hospitals at Keylong, Gondhla, Kirting and Kaza and six veterinary dispensaries at Hansa, Sagnam, Gemur, Gushal, Sissu and Poh are functioning.
7. Rinderpest Vaccination done 500
 Black Quarter Vaccination done 1968
 Haemorrhagic Septicaemia Vaccination done 205
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CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIES

The district remains under snow for almost half the year round and is lacking in raw materials, minerals and power. Except the recently opened fair weather bus service to the headquarters of the district it remains mostly isolated because of poor means of communication and is, therefore, extremely poor industrially. This mountain locked, sparsely populated tribal area, which was neglected till recently is now receiving due attention of the Government for its rapid development. Various schemes have been initiated by the Government with a view to improving the economic condition of the people. Cottage industries especially, wool spinning and weaving are receiving special attention.

The economy of the district based on pastoral and hand to mouth agricultural operations remained static for generations. Whatever small industries existed and still exist are confined to producing necessities indispensable to life because of the intensity of the cold climate and the heavy cost of import.

Carpentry :— There are some skilled carpenters who have engaged themselves in carvings on wood or stones in the monasteries, making little Tibetan guest-tables and riding and pack saddles since the time immemorial. These wooden goods frequently carry the emblems of dragons or lotus flowers or lion's head designed by lamas.

Black-smithy :— Local traditional blacksmiths (*garas*) engage themselves in rough iron work beating the iron to mould it into agricultural tools and implements. They also work on inferior qualities of silver, copper and gold and specialise in the making of silver amulets set with turquoises, silver rings etc. by crude methods.

The cleverest handicraftsmen are still to be found in Spiti where excellent blacksmith's work could be obtained. The steel bits, buckles and stirrups being specially worthy of note, as are the straight fluted steel pipes, occasionally ornamented with gold, the engraved steel cases for pens, and the brass and copper ink bottles.

Painting :— The lamas are the principal exponents of various arts including paintings, printing and stone carving. The subjects of their art

creations have always been religious or mythological and the styles rather stereo-typed. Printing is done by using simple wooden blocks. The ink for printing is made by mixing kerosene oil soot with glue water. When supplies of writing ink give out, rice is roasted to nearly burning point, and then boiled with little water. Paper manufactured by Kinnauras is imported from Kulu. The lamas cut and carve very elegant inscriptions on stones, especially the mantra—*Om Mane Padma Hum*.

Spinning and weaving:—Wool spinning and weaving, and *poolah* (straw shoes) making is carried on almost in every house. The isolation of the area ensured survival of the ancient household activity of wool spinning and weaving and *poolah* making. The wool and hair raised out of the flocks of sheep and goats, maintained in almost all the households, is spun and woven into cloth. Goat hair is spun and woven loosely into a coarse texture of about twenty five centimetre width, and is called *thobi*. When sewn together this material provides serviceable carpets, bedding and strong bags for conveying merchandise. Ropes are made from hair of goats and yak. Woollen cloth, of a coarse and loosely woven texture and narrow width, is twined out by almost every household. Spinning is done on spindles and weaving on throw-shuttle looms.

Poolah are manufactured out of stalks of wheat, barley and *sheelum* (a type of grass). The stalks are beaten up into fine fibres to be twisted by hands. Fibres thus obtained are then cut and stitched into a shoe. The sole is made of sheep or goat skin. *Poolahs* are useful during winter on account of their warmth and convenience of their grip on the slippery snow covered paths. Though they wear out quickly they are still common throughout the district. The idle winter months provide enough time for the cottage industries like the *poolah* making. This industry has not undergone any substantial change since a long time in its technique. In order to mechanise the process the National Extension Service Block has purchased *ban* making, straw softening and crushing machines.

Mining

Quite a large number of occurrences of minerals like copper, gypsum, sulphur, limestone and antimony seems to be available in the district. Except antimony in Bara-Shigri area no detailed work has been done for assessing the economic potential of these deposits. Though the deposits are situated at a high altitude over 4000 metres above sea level and the working season in the area is hardly three to four months in a year the importance of these deposits lies in their strategic use and in being the only deposit of its kind in the country.

Printing Press—The leading lamas are skilled in the art of printing.

A printing press was started in the area by the Moravian Mission. Early in the century in 1914 it brought out some school books and in 1910 printed census forms. Subsequently the press came to a close.

New Industries

The old methods and implements employed in spinning and weaving are undergoing a gradual change for the better. Wooden spindles have been replaced by spinning wheels bearing Rani, Raja and Ambar trade marks. Even before these spinning wheels reached the valley, a wooden paddle-driven spinning wheel, first designed by one Palmo of Mallang village about forty years ago, started replacing the wooden spindles. Though extremely noisy, the spinning wheel was a crude form of its modern counter-part. Despite the introduction of spinning wheels, the indigenous spindle, due to its negligible cost, continues to find favour with people. During the long wintry months the female members of the family usually chat and sit around fire when spindles and spinning wheels work ceaselessly. Since a family can hardly afford to purchase more than one spinning wheel, the rest have to be contented with spindles. Besides, Deshkar and Merino wool is of short fleece and difficult to be spun on improved wheel without expert skill, the old spindles have to be constantly issued. It is along the *biang* wool, imported from Ladakh (previously imported from Tibet also) which has a longer fleece and can be spun on the modern spinning wheels.

The indigenous throw-shuttle looms locally called *keercha*, are time consuming and produce cloth of narrow width and inferior weave and are, therefore, being gradually replaced by the improved type of fly-shuttle looms. The first fly-shuttle loom was brought in the district in Pattan valley some thirty years ago. The throw-shuttle looms, however, are still in vogue with those who cannot afford fly-shuttle looms. Spinning is completed in winters whereas weaving is taken up usually in summers. The designing of a yarn twisting machine by one Dola Ram of Rauling in 1965 marked another development in the field of spinning and weaving industry. In an eight-hour working day, about four kilograms of yarn can be twisted on this machine in comparison to a more quarter kilo with ordinary spindle. The machine is a little heavy and does not find favour with the people. However, 1964-65 during 1964-65, the Government purchased eight yarn twisting machines costing Rs. 4,800 of which machines have been distributed to industrial cooperative societies at Rowaling, Shansha and Gushal.

Until 1952 carding of wool was done by the Shipis or Lahul or some people visiting from Kulu. It was costly and slow process. Since 1952, ten water-driven carding mills nine in Pattan valley and one at Keylong, have been established. These mills, though better suited for carding of cotton than short fleece wool are, nevertheless, useful and the carding is

cheaper, quicker and better than that done by the Shipi carders. The first carding mill with an attached oil extracting unit was established by Thakur Lal Chand of Phura.

The oil extracting mill was used for extracting oil from cumin seeds and apricots kernels. The oil from the latter is used by women as hair oil. The apricot trees having perished in the severe snowfall of 1966, the oil mill remains idle most of the time. The water-mills cater to the demand and need of the local people. The mills are installed over the small perennial nullahs flowing near the habitation.

The art of knitting was introduced by Mrs. Hyde, a Moravian Missionary during the middle of 19th century. Consequently the local women have perfected themselves in the art of knitting, particularly socks which are both durable and colourful. The visitors do make it a point to purchase these specimens of local skill. The *gara* or *zo* (blacksmiths) are skilled workers in iron and turn out pipes, locks and keys, knives, hammers etc. They have now taken to the manufacture of room heating ovens introduced by the Moravian Mission. These ovens provide suitable heating arrangements on hygienic lines.

For the promotion of wool weaving and spinning a Government Wool Spinning and Weaving Training Centre was opened in 1953 at Tandi with its two sub-centres at Shansha and Gemur. The centre imparts training in spinning, weaving, finishing and dyeing. The main centre subsequently was shifted to Keylong. Later, the training centre was converted into training-cum-production centre. The ex-trainees who wanted to work in their homes, are supplied wool and designs. They are paid wages while the marketing of the goods is handled by the Industries Department through the emporia situated at various stations. The spinning course is of six months duration and that of weaving runs to one year. The trainees of these courses are given monthly stipends of twenty-five and forty rupees respectively. The National Extension Service Blocks have popularised new tools by providing 281 improved spinning wheels, 94 dozen hand carding brushes for wool and 45 fly shuttle looms at subsidized rates.

The shortage of raw material owing to the limited number of sheep in the district, is proposed to be overcome by purchasing wool from Gaddis at the end of the grazing season. *Biang* wool imported from Ladakhis, on their way to Kulu is purchased in Lahul. The development in the means of communication is likely to enable cheaper carriage of finished products. The installation of electric machines for carding and finishing will radically improve the quality of the product.

Sources of power

For power, people have depended either on manual labour, animal power, or water power. There is no thermal generation of power due to the prohibitive cost of transportation of equipment to the area. The flour and carding mills, as mentioned earlier also, are driven by water.

Two hydro-electric generators with a capacity of 50 kw each were installed in 1963. The second hydro-electric generating plant came into operation in the year 1966 with a generating capacity of 50 kw. Another power-house with the same generating capacity is under construction in the district. Two villages namely, Kyuling, Beling, Kardang, Barbog, Namche, Pasprak, Lapchang, Chhehing, Gumling, Yornath, Gushiar and Shashur Gonpa have so far been electrified under the former generators and villages namely Shansha, Kirting, Jalma, Roprang, Kothi, Phusa, Gorma, Jibrang, Rashal, Rope, Rawaling, Meling, Telangway, Ruding, Lot, Karing, Rangwey, Lapshak, Tozing, Yangtosin, Waring, Marbal, Mareing, Tandi, Gushal and Sunnam under the latter one.

Industrial Units

The Industries Department established Felting and Chain Stitch Embroidery and Carpet Weaving Centre at Keylong in 1959. The centre imparts training in carpet-weaving.

An electrically run carding plant has been established at Keylong and has started functioning recently. The carpet weaving centre established in 1959-60 was, in 1961-64, merged in and shifted to the building of the Government Wool Spinning and Weaving Centre, Keylong. The carpets have mass popularity and these have fast colours and good designs.

The following table shows the location and the staffing pattern of the production and training centres in the public sector :—

1. Carpet Weaving Training Centre, Keylong, with Sub-centre at Kwaring	Demonstrator	1
	Carpet Technician	1
	Weaving Master	1
2. Government Wool, Spinning and Weaving Centre at Keylong with sub-centre at Junda.	Demonstrator	1
	Spinning Demonstrator	1
	Dyer-cum-Finisher	1
	Weaving Master	1
	Mechanic	1
	Spinner	1

3. Government Wool (<i>Pashmina</i>) Spinning and Weaving Centre in Spiti at Chhiljam with sub-centre at Hikkam.	Spinning Supervisor Weaving Master <i>Pashmina</i> Weaver Dyer	1 1 1 1
4. Carpet Weaving Training Centre in Spiti	Since closed with effect from December 10, 1956.	

The activities of these centres include, to impart training in spinning and weaving to the trainees; to distribute wool for spinning to local artisans; to advance loans to the industrialists of the area; to provide dyeing facilities; to distribute yarn for weaving to local artisans; to distribute Ram wheels to ex-trainees and to provide technical guidance to local artisans. Number of persons trained in the district between 1960 and 1966 was 103 in spinning, 236 in weaving, twenty-seven in *namda* felting craft, fifteen in chain stitching, fifteen in carpet weaving and 130 in spinning and weaving both.

The table given below indicates the activities of the Industries Department from 1960 to 1966 in the district.

Sl. No.	Product	Quantity produced (in yards)	Sale proceeds (in rupees)
1.	Cotton cloth	9975.4	14,645.13
2.	Bed sheets	48 Nos.	306.47
3.	Towels	260 Nos.	457.55
4.	Napkins	59 Nos.	40.12
5.	Handkerchieves	11 Nos.	26.33
6.	Table covers	8 Nos.	20.50
7.	<i>Patti</i>	1952	14,726.05
8.	Woollen cloth	528.11	798.55
9.	<i>Gudmas</i>	39 Nos.	3,225.91
10.	Baby <i>gudmas</i>	2 Nos.	14.86
11.	Mufflers	49 Nos.	219.13
12.	Blankets	56 Nos.	2,728.29
13.	Ruffle shawls	52 Nos.	1,368.83

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14. <i>Chadars</i>	18 Nos.	565.08
15. Scarves	13 Nos.	120.92
16. <i>Pashmina</i> shawls	2 Nos.	38.40
17. <i>Pashmina chadars</i>	25 Nos.	415.26
18. Carpets of different size	53 Nos.	5,508.63
19. <i>Darri</i>	4 Nos.	119.64

According to the census of 1961 out of the total population of 20453 only 56 persons are registered as engaged in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing and allied industries, 216 in household industry, 28 in manufacturing other than household industry, 3262 in construction, 88 in trade and commerce, 100 in transport, storage and communication and 851 in other services.

Six Industrial Co-operative Weavers Societies have been organised at Tandi, Shansha, Rawaling, Keylong, Gondhla and Gushal. Efforts are being made to provide them with greater technical facilities in order to improve their working.

The Punjab State Aid to Industries Act, 1935, was extended to the district in 1961 and the people are availing themselves of the loan facilities. Loans under the said Act were granted to the tune of Rs. 10,000 in the year 1964-65 and a sum of Rs. 12,000 was advanced in the following year. Details of the loans and subsidies advanced to the industrialists are indicated in the following tables.

Table gives details of the loans advanced.

Sl. No.	Unit	Amount of loans advanced (Rs.)	Year
1.	Dyeing	(1) 2,000	1964-65
2.	Poultry Farming	(1) 2,000	—do—
3.	Milling Machine	(1) 2,000	—do—
4.	<i>Kohlu</i>	(1) 2,000	—do—
5.	Dairy Farming	(1) 1,000	—do—
6.	<i>Atta Chaki</i>	(1) 1,000	—do—

7. Hand Loom Weaving	(2)	2,000	1965-66
8. Carding Machines	(1)	2,000	-do-
9. Dairy Farming	(5)	8,000	-do-

Table gives details of the subsidies advanced

Sl. No.		Amount of subsidy advanced (Rs.)	Year
1. Dyeing	(1)	500	1964-65
2. Blacksmithy	(1)	400	-do-
3. Poultry Farming	(1)	1000	-do-
4. Clay modelling	(1)	500	1965-66
5. Carpentry	(3)	450	-do-

Note :—The figures shown with in brackets indicate the number of units.

CHAPTER VI

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

BANKING AND FINANCE

History of indigenous banking

There was no circulation or use of money till as late as 1930. The population of the district was mostly engaged from the earliest times in agriculture but for a small section of the community which carried on trade. This trade was also on barter basis. As such there was hardly any need for money. For agricultural purposes too, the demand was negligible. There was, therefore, no substantial demand for money and hence absence of a class of people having large loanable funds. Nevertheless, whatever little demand there was for credit, it was met by the traditional village money-lender. Even to-day, this is the only general credit agency although he does not practise money-lending as a profession. No indigenous banking is known to have ever existed in the area.

General credit facilities

The people of the district lived mostly in immediate need of daily necessities and all their exchanges were in barter. Currency notes were then neither needed nor available as now. Nevertheless, some of the locals still continue to be poor as before and their indebtedness continues to be a problem which the Government is committed to remove.

Beside money-lenders, there are co-operative credit societies which lend money to their members for productive purposes. This is the only available form of institutional credit agency and is of very recent origin.

Till the close of 19th century, money-lending used to be done without charging any interest and was depended wholly upon the mutual confidence of the borrower and the lender. It was a close secret between the two, not even their families being told about the transaction. This was so informal that nothing was reduced into writing. Nor was any third person called in as a witness.

With the passage of time, these simple and informal practices gave place to written agreements testified by witnesses and the money-lender

started charging interest. The interest charged by the private money-lender varies between 10 to 16 per cent per annum but usually it is 12 per cent per annum.

Despite development and allotment of land to landless nearly 20 per cent Spitians do not possess any land. They mainly live as agricultural labourers to win their bread. This down-trodden section of the population is the main victim of the prevailing usury. Their debt consists of foodgrains and money as well. Their source of income, on the other hand, are too meagre to let them repay the debts wholly.

Role of private money-lenders

Co-operative credit in Lahul is of as recent origin as 1951 when only a beginning was made. The private money-lender continues to be important in the field of indigenous finance because interest charged by him, though not at all low, is by no means usurious. Moreover, they ignore the consideration of purpose or period for advancing money. If the borrower is unable to repay the loan in time, the period of loan is suitably extended, and unless the borrower altogether repudiates his debt, which seldom happens, no pressure, legal or otherwise, is exerted on him. If the borrower is unable to repay on account of genuine distress, the land or its produce is availed of by the lender for a period the witness to the transaction think it fit. Formal mortgage or other formalities such as keeping valuables in satisfaction of the debt are not resorted to.

Private money-lending is neither professional nor hereditary. Well-to-do businessmen do not find it very profitable to invest their funds in money-lending since the comparative returns from business are high. But other well-to-do persons do lend money. Sometimes social considerations have predominated over business instincts in lending or loaning articles of use. When cultivation of *Kuth* started in Lahul persons having surplus seeds lent them to their friends and relatives who returned the seed loan after their crops matured. No interest was charged.

In Spiti one or two comparatively richer locals in each village undertake lending of foodgrains and some little money. Customarily the needy ones would approach the local foodgrain lender for debt with the gift of *topag* of wine (about two bottles of wine). The nature and extent of debt and its terms and interest are finalized over a cup, rather bottle, of wine. Such debts are taken during lean months (April and May) and are repayable immediately after the harvest season (October and November). Generally prevalent rate of interest is 25 per cent of the quantity of foodgrains given in debt. It is needless to add that this system of debt is as old as the indigenous people themselves. The foodgrains lender is not supposed to

refuse debt to a needy coming to his door for that purpose unless, of course, the needy happens to be disreputed person well-known for not repaying the debts in time. The only document bearing witness to such debts is the note book of the lender and no instance has so far come to light where the debtor may have proved dishonest. This tribal honesty of the debtor continues to be sound as before. In many cases it is, however, unfortunate the debtor does not have so much produce as to repay the foodgrains lent to him with interest. Customarily the lender realises the difficulties. Barring certain exceptions the debts are repaid in as full a settlement as possible. In some cases the poverty is so much that the debtors do not have enough means to repay such debts with the interest as high as 25 per cent. Generally compound interest is exacted by the lender and the main debt kept due for realisation in another harvest season. Interesting again is the custom of offering wine or *chhang* in proportion to the debt by local debtors. But this time the appeal for excusing some portion of interest mainly features during the moment of drinking, which generally does not go unheard.

Co-operative credit societies and banks

The co-operative credit movement was launched in this district in July, 1949, with the organisation of one co-operative store at Keylong. In 1951 co-operative societies were formed at Shansha, Tandi and Jahlman. By June 1964 (co-operative year) the number of co-operative credit societies rose to 23. There are in all 85 living co-operatives in the district (as on 30.6.1970) and one bank branch at Keylong. The kindwise break up of co-operative is as follows :—

Agriculture co-operatives	55
Kuhl irrigation	8
Dairy	1
Marketing	2
Non-agriculture credit	1
Stores	3
Transport (Muleteer)	2
Industrial	8

All the societies borrow from the Kangra Central Co-operative Bank, Keylong. A sum of rupees thirty-eight thousand was advanced by the bank during the year i.e. from 1.7.1969 to 30.6.1970 to meet the increasing requirements of co-operatives of the area. Co-operative stores are also

playing a vital role in the area and achieved wide popularity by supplying consumers' goods at cheaper rates to the inhabitants of the area. Lahul Kuth Growers Co-operative Marketing Society was established on 15.5.1959. The co-operative consumers' stores were organised on the dates mentioned against each : -

Pin Valley Co-operative Consumers' Store	1.6.1962
Hansa Co-operative Store	27.5.1963
Spiti Co-operative Consumers' Store	3.10.1958
Tabo Co-operative Consumers' Store	20.10.1964
Pattan Valley Co-operative Consumers' Store	16.10.1961
Siffu Co-operative Consumers' Store	20.10.1964
Gondhla Co-operative Consumers' store	28.5.1966
Lahul Co-operative Consumers' Store	21.9.1949

Two muleteers co-operative transport societies exist in the district which are doing carriage work to the far flung areas to the benefit of the inhabitants.

Despite the absence of usury or exploitation by money-lenders, co-operative credit has still an important role to play in the economy of the district. This is because the money-lenders are not numerous and their area of operation is limited to villages in which they reside or to villages nearby. Their willingness to lend is also limited to the people whom they know intimately. The private money-lenders, therefore, cannot meet the increasing demand for credit.

Hitherto the handicap with the co-operative credit societies was that they had to depend for loans on the Kulu branch of the Kangra Central Co-operative Bank Ltd., Dharamsala. It was, therefore, not practicable for them to obtain loans easily. Also, the Co-operative Department until 1960 had a limited staff. Now there is district staff comprising inspectors assisted by a number of sub-inspectors. A branch of the Kangra Central Co-operative Bank was opened at Keylong in July, 1961. This has strengthened the finances of the co-operative credit societies which also do the job of service co-operatives and as such handle sale of foodgrains, fertilizers, sugar, etc., to supplement their resources. With the establishment of the branch of Kangra Central Co-operative Bank at Keylong, there has been noticeable increase in the loans granted to the service co-operatives. Loans granted by the

Keylong branch from 1961 onwards are shown below year-wise t—

Year	Loan granted (Rs.)
1961-62	5,990
1962-63	1,690
1963-64	4,000
1964-65	26,460
1965-66	4,590
1966-67	23,250
1967-68	10,900
1968-69	2,900
1969-70	—
1970-71	10,500
1971-72	—
1972-73	20,000
Total	1,10,280

In the years to come, the movement is expected to make a decisive impact. The Co-operative Department has ensured maximum flexibility in its approach, consistent with financial safeguards, so that the societies do not suffer from top heavy administration and under-finance.

The demand for credit is for a variety of purposes. The service co-operatives give both short and medium-term loans. The short-term loan is for a year and the medium-term loan is for two years. These loans are given for the purpose of purchasing implements, seeds, fertilizers and animals, reclamation of land, purchase of land, etc. The service societies, depending upon their resources, also advance loans up to Rs. 900 for house building.

The interest charged is 9½ per cent per annum. The societies get short-term and medium-term loans from Central Co-operative Bank at 6½ per cent and 6¼ per cent per annum respectively. The societies have to charge a higher rate in order to meet their own expenses.

There are no joint-stock banks or loans and investment companies

except the branch of the Kangra Central Co-operative Bank at Keylong. It functions as a central agency for financing rural co-operative credit institutions. Ordinarily, the State Government subsidizes the managerial expenses to the extent of 100 per cent in the first year, 60 per cent in the second year and 33 per cent in the third year after which no subsidy is given. In regard to this district, however, Government have, as a special case, agreed to give 100 per cent subsidy for all the three years and continues to give this subsidy. This is unavoidable since business is not adequate on account of the small size of the population. This bank is the only institution providing banking facilities in this area.

The Keylong and Lote sub-post office provide facilities of savings bank accounts.

General and life insurance

Life insurance institutions have never existed in this area. An agent of the Hindustan Co-operative Insurance Ltd., came here for the first time in 1945. People did not come forward for life insurance. After 1957, Field Officers of the Life Insurance Corporation from Kulu have been visiting the area to insure people. In the seven years (1957-63) insurance policies worth about Rs. 5 lakhs were sold. This business is limited to a small section of the population though gradually attempts are being made to obtain more business. The life insurance idea has not yet caught the imagination of the people. There does not seem to be much scope for general insurance companies.

State assistance to industrial development

The Punjab State Aid to Industries Act, 1935, was extended to this district in 1961. Industrial loans are given not only by the Industries Department directly but also by the Kangra Central Co-operative Bank, Keylong, which lends money to industrial co-operatives at 3 per cent per annum interest. However, loan assistance has not been availed of by the people in any considerable measure since the scope for industrial development is extremely limited for reasons other than those of finance.

The Government Wool and Pashmina Weaving Training Centre is functioning in Spiti since August, 1959. The scheme which aims at imparting training in use of modern spinning implements to the people of Spiti Valley came into existence during the year 1959-60. Since its inception the centre is working quite satisfactorily. The sources of livelihood of the people of Spiti area are quite limited and they mostly depend upon wool and pashmina trade. Hence the development of the industry in this area is essential to improve their economic condition. The above said scheme

has covered Kyuling, Rangrik, Langcha, Kibber, Chicham, Khoorik, Losar, Hanse, Hikam, Mane and Dumul villages of the valley.

Twenty students are trained every year under this scheme and each student is paid a stipend of Rs. 40 per month. In addition to it 51 Rani-wheels have been distributed to the ex-trainees of the centre free of cost, so that they may be able to develop this trade. Before the functioning of this scheme in this sub-division, the people used their old implements for spinning and weaving purposes. A very rough texture of woollen *patties* etc. was produced having no design and colour. The Government is granting industrial loan to the people to develop the small-scale industries.

Currency and coinage

The introduction of decimal coinage in 1957 caused some confusion in the beginning in the minds of the people who were mostly illiterate. But the gradual replacement and ultimate disappearance of the old coins removed whatever little inconvenience was caused by the simultaneous working of the two systems. The new system soon got quite popular with the people.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

A fair at Patseo is held on the right bank of the Bhaga river, on a large plain where stone shelters are built. Here the wool, salt and borax are unloaded, the sheep shorn and barley, wheat, *pohee* or green tea, metals, cloth, sugar, tobacco and other products are exchanged. The trade port has now been moved to Keylong from Sultanpur and trade is more fully recorded. Lahulas take their wool all over Kulu and the other hilly areas and make comfortable incomes by their winter trading. The Sarajis usually pay for their wool in May, at the Banjar fair, the Kulu people pay cash down or at the Pipaljatra fair at Kulu in April. There is some trade with Spiti. There are four trade routes from Spiti, the Parangla connecting with Ladakh, the Spiti river leading to Bushahr, the Bhaba Pass to Bushahr, and the Kunzam Pass to Lahul, Kulu and Ladakh. The only route open all the year round is by the Spiti river, the Bhaba Pass is usually open but is high. The Parangla is very cold in winter and the Kunzam is blocked by snow.

TRADE CENTRES

Part of Lahul's trade with Ladakh was carried on at the annual fair at Patseo. This fair used to be held every year in August on the right bank of Bhaga river. There Ladakhi traders bartered their wool, salt and borax for barley, wheat, green tea, metals, cloth, sugar, tobacco and other products. Lahulas took the wool all over Kulu and hills nearby and made comfortable incomes by their winter trading. Potatoes are being grown in

increasing quantity, and the Lahul potato is now a much-sought-after commodity on account of its larger size and better taste.

The loss of this trade has not upset the economy of Lahul. If any thing this has proved a boon in disguise as the State Government (first Punjab and now Himachal) have taken special care to raise the economy of this area. Himachal Government particularly has deployed huge finances towards the development of the area with liberal assistance of the Government of India. In fact the number of traders was never so high as to affect a large section of the population and the traders did not, moreover, depend exclusively on their trade with Tibet for their livelihood. They had their lands also to fall back upon.

Far more important than the customary trade with Tibet, and involving a much larger section of the population has been Lahul's trade in *kuth* the seeds whereof were brought from Kashmir by some enterprising Lahulas and experimentally grown for the first time in 1925. The cultivation of *kuth* rapidly increased after 1935 and has become a singularly important source of cash income for Lahulas whose lot it has steadily improved. It is also exported to countries like the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Switzerland, Japan, and lately Malaya. In Spiti the main trade centre is at Ladarcha near village Chicham. At this above mentioned trade centre outside traders used to assemble for trade in the month of July every year. Outside the district, the trade centres at Rampur, Kulu and Manali carry the trade of goods produced in Lahul and Spiti District.

Co-operation in trade

At the outbreak of the World War II, *kuth* prices fell sharply because of unstable conditions in China and the shortage of cargo space and insecurity on the seas. In order to protect the price against unhealthy competition and manipulations of the middle men a co-operative marketing society was formed in 1959 with headquarters at Manali. The society had received liberal assistance from the Punjab Government by way of Rs. 5,000 per annum as managerial subsidy since its inception. It had also been given a loan of Rs. 1,60,000. In addition to this, Rs. 15,000 had been given as subsidy and Rs. 30,000 as loan for godown construction. The Himachal Pradesh Government has not only kept up the tempo but has actually increased subsidies of all types for trade purposes.

State trading

Aware of crucial importance of *kuth* for the economy and its value as a foreign exchange earner, the Punjab Government had always tried to ensure that Lahulas get the maximum price for their *kuth*. The Punjab State Small Industries Corporation had come to their rescue by taking over trading in

kuth and had bought all the accumulated stocks with the society at a provisional price of Rs. 240 per quintal.

While helping the export of *kuth*, the Punjab Government had also taken steps to finance research for finding out if it could be exploited domestically as a commercial proposition. Fellowships for a period of two years had been created by the Government at the National Chemical Laboratories, Poona. *Kuth* oil is used as a base in high grade perfumes. It is said to be useful in the manufacture of some drugs also. Whenever it becomes possible to process it domestically, the market for this commodity will become far more stable than at present. According to a survey of *kuth*, entitled *Kuth Cultivation in Lahul Valley and its Marketing*, conducted by the Economic and Statistical Organisation, Punjab the uses of *kuth* are as below :—

Kuth contains an essential oil which is insect-repellent. On account of this property small bits of the roots are placed in folds of shawls and woollen clothes by some families to protect them from insects and to impart to them a characteristic perfume. *Kuth* is reputed not to tarnish gold braids and embroidery on woollen clothes when placed in contact with them as is the case with naphthalene balls. *Kuth* is also used in the manufacture of perfumery, especially for the hair. It has also some medicinal uses, also as ascertained from some *vaid*s during the course of inquiry, and these are mentioned below :—

- (i) Application of green root is efficacious for ulcers both in the case of human beings and animals.
- (ii) A few drops of ghee in which *kuth* has been previously fried, when dropped in the ear relieves it of pain and dries up any pus.
- (iii) A poultice prepared from *kuth* is used for opening the boils.
- (iv) *Kuth* ground in oil is applied on joints affected by rheumatoid arthritis.
- (v) As a cure for snow bite, the face is exposed to the fumes of *kuth*.
- (vi) When smoked with tobacco it is stated to relieve cough and cold.

The quantity of *kuth* used for the above and other purposes within the country is a fraction of the entire production. A bulk of the crop is exported from India in the form of dry roots.

Retail trading

Retail trade in items of daily needs is carried on by petty shopkeepers at many places. These shops do not have much stock or a wide range of

commodities. As most Lahulas keep on visiting Manali and Kulu they bring along with them the few things of their daily use. On account of distances and the consequent problem of carriage, these petty shops cannot have a customer larger than that of a few local persons and that too of poorer class.

Merchant and consumer associations

There are two co-operative consumers' stores, one at Keylong established in 1949, with its sub-centre at Gondhila opened in 1960, and another at Lote which was started in 1961. These supplement the retail trade and are doing well. Keylong has quite a few shops and is the main shopping centre for Lahul. During winter months prices of things do tend to rise but are held in check through the influence of the civil authorities. The problem of price control does not present itself. No special measures have been necessary for the regulation of trade and prices by the State. However, since the area is not entirely self-sufficient in wheat and does not produce any rice, the Food and Supplies Department provides wheat and rice to a large extent every year. These are subsidized by the Himachal Pradesh Government and distribution is effected through Government depots. The subsidy is mostly towards the carriage of foodgrains the Government contributing more than half the carriage cost. Sugar is also distributed by the Food and Supplies Department through the co-operative complex and so are fertilizers issued, both-sugar and fertilizers being substantially subsidized by the Government. With all these measures, prices remain in check and the consumer does not undergo undue hardship.

Another important item of necessity, specially during the winter months, is fuel. The local population meets its requirements of fuel both of heating and cooking purposes from their own willow plantations and to some extent from the local forests where they have the rights for the collection of firewood. However the demand for firewood rose sharply after the formation of the district, when a large number of Government officials had to stay there. Firewood in large quantities was required for heating offices and to meet the personal requirements of Government employees. This meant enormous pressure on the local resources and heavy cost both for Government and also for Government employees. The price of firewood rose from Rs 3 per maund in 1958 to Rs. 8 and sometimes even Rs. 9 per maund in 1961. This heavy demand often led to illicit felling of trees from forests by some local people. Government, therefore, decided in 1962 to send enough coal for heating purposes, particularly to the offices throughout the winter months. The price of firewood thereafter registered a decline from Rs. 8 or so per maund to Rs. 6 or below per maund. More important than the fall in the prices of firewood has been the check on the drain on Lahul's meagre forest resources.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

As late as the end of the 19th century, the system of weights in vogue was known *charha* in Pattan and *nyaga* in Chandra and Bhaga valleys. The *charha* or *nyaga* was a crude version of the lever balance consisting of a wooden rod about two feet long at one extreme of which was hung a cloth bag as a scale-pan. The fulcrum, unlike in the normal balance of two scale-pans, is not in the centre but close to the extreme from where the scale-pan is hung. A weight of 12 tolas is placed in the scale-pan and a stone hung from the rod is slid along the rod and wherever the lever balances the rod is graduated. For each 12 tolas of weight the graduation mark proceeds to the other extreme until the whole rod is graduated.

In Pattan valley, where the Chamba influence had been strong, the Chamba weight was practised. The Chamba maund equals 16 ordinary seers. The Chamba seer, therefore, is $\frac{2}{5}$ of the ordinary seer. The Chamba seer of 6 *chhatanks* is called *kachcha* seer as distinguished from the *pakka* seer of 16 *chhatanks*. In regard to foodgrains, the measure was a wooden vessel called *patha*. One *patha* contained one seer of foodgrains. The *patha* is known as *bre* in Chandra and Bhaga valleys and *dre* in *Bhoti*. However, the usual weights of the plains in terms of *maunds* and *seers* have been common in Lahul since the beginning of this century. There was no special measure in regard to cloth of which there was little sale. Cloth was, however, measured by hand and the system was called *hatha*.

Thus indigenous weights and measures are used for weighing. *Nyaga* as called in local language is used for weighing. *Nyaga* is made of one stock marked in equal distances just like foot rule. Each mark signifies one *pore* equal to about six tolas. This stick supported by a piece of cloth connects the stick by thread. A piece of iron or stone about 35 to 40 tolas is hanging with the stick. Weighing table is as under :—

One <i>pore</i>	= $6\frac{2}{3}$ tolas 76 grams.
10 <i>pore</i>	= One <i>mare</i> —64 tolas—768 grams.
25 <i>pore</i> or 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ <i>mare</i>	= One <i>buti</i> —160 tolas=1 kg. 920 grams

In this sub-division for measuring and mutual transaction of foodgrains is used a *tey* which is made of wood in the shape of pot. The capacity of *tey* is equal to 500 to 600 grams and 20 *tey* make a *khal*. For measuring clothes and other things the locals are using *tho-thoo* and *domba*.

The metric system of weights & measures has now been introduced and the people are gradually adapting themselves to such measures increasingly. With the opening up of the area and ready communications it is becoming all the more easier and quicker for people to understand and adopt the metric system.

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNICATIONS

OLD TIME TRADE ROUTES AND HIGHWAYS

The region of Lahul and Spiti now called a district by that name, until the recent past was the land of explorers, mountaineers and traders. These travellers and other courageous adventurers used to visit this region during the summer months, crossing high passes and tramping through narrow paths precariously built on the mountain sides frequently looking into deep gorges. The communications were so inadequate that even the people of the twin valleys of Lahul and Spiti remained cut off for generations and thus growth of separate customs, conventions and cultures. The physical barriers forced the people to live in isolation from the rest of the country. They have, in some cases, yet to see and avail themselves of the benefits of the present day development in the country, but the almost phenomenal growth of development in communications, after Independence, has wiped out centuries of backwardness.

In the past the narrow tracks which had been carved by the herds of sheep and goats were also not safe to traverse. Vehicular traffic of any kind and carriage of heavy items like machinery were impossible. The commodities which were taken into and out of the district used to be transported either on sheep or goats or yaks, or on the backs of sturdy ponies locally known as *ghoents*. In the most difficult terrains the goods were carried on human backs. No attention was ever paid towards building good roads in the district. The old gazetteer mentions* : "There was no road properly so called in Spiti, and there were no road making tools until a few were sent there in 1916." It was only after the country gained freedom that attention was paid towards these mountain regions. But after the Chinese invasion of the country, a great deal has been achieved and lines of communications have or are coming up speedily, opening up the district to the outside world.

Lahul was cut off from Chamba, Bara Bangahal (Kangra) and Kulu by the Mid-Himalayan chain which was crossed by Kukti Pass between

* Kangra District Gazetteer, 1917, p. 289.

Jobrang and Kukti (Chamba), Bara Bangahal Pass between Goshal and Bara Bangahal, Nilghar Pass between the ravine of that name (dividing Gondala and Ghantal) and Bara Bangahal, Rohtang Pass between Khoksai and Palchan and Hamta Pass between Hamta and Chatru. But the most important route lay through the Rohtang Pass that used to be one of the most difficult passes on the old Simla-Leh trade route which extended even farther to Yarkand. On either side of the pass rise precipitous mountains with the height of more than 4,800 metres and, within twenty kilometres to both the sides rise high peaks of more than 6,000 metres in elevation.

Spiti was entered through three traditional routes beyond the Great Himalayan Range. One is via Manali, crossing the Rohtang Pass through Lahul and thence over Baralacha and Balamo Passes. Yet another route, takes off from Manali crossing the two passes, namely Hamta and Kunzum which has been termed by one as the gateway to Spiti. The third route emanates from Wangtu in Kinnaur district.

Peter Holmes, in his travelogue "*Mountains and Monastery*"* has placed on record an interesting legend about the Rohtang Pass heard by him from the Gaddis from Kulu :—

"Many ages ago, when men were godly and crops were good and there was peace, the pass that we will cross to-morrow, was not a pass at all. There was a great mountain barrier right across the land, running from where the sun rises to where the sun sets. This barrier was high and cold and ice bound, and no man knew a way across it. Some tried to find a way, but these either died from the cold and airlessness or else they gave up and returned to their homes."

"The people who lived to the north of this barrier, in what is now called Lahul, were exceedingly sad at this barrier, for the winds and certain birds had told them of another world on the other side, where good things could be traded for. But what could they do? They had tried to discover a way, and there was none. Perhaps, they thought, the Lord of Creation does not wish us to venture beyond the mountains."

"But then they remembered what the winds and the birds had told them, of how there were many good things to be traded for in the south. So they said among themselves: let us ask our Lord Shiva if indeed He does not wish us to go out of our valley beyond the barrier."

"So they sacrificed a young virgin as it was the only way to get in direct touch with Lord Shiva. Then the Priest left his body, and went in his

*Holmes, Peter, *Mountains and Monastery* p.p. 30—31

soul to speak to Lord Shiva. And he asked if the people of Lahul might be allowed to cross the barrier. But in spite of the sacrifice Lord Shiva was angry, for had not the people tried to find a way first, and only after they had failed turned to him? So he said nothing."

"The priest was greatly disturbed, and lamented, for it was not good that Lord Shiva should be angry, and men in these were pious. A young boy and another virgin were sacrificed, and the priest asked again, begging for an answer. For if no answer was given the second time then the priest would be discredited and disgraced, for such was the custom."

"Lord Shiva put aside his anger when He saw these good men so entreating His help, and He said, 'Yes, you and your people may go beyond the barrier if you wish.'

"And the priest said" "O Lord, there is no way. For we have been wrong and we have searched, and found none. How shall we go?"

"Lord Shiva answered, 'Indeed you have been wicked to look for a way. But nevertheless I will give you a way, a path to the plains.'

"But beware', Lord Shiva said, 'Of the winds which my whip will make then I strike down the barrier. These winds will be sudden and great, and will last for all times. Beware lest you get caught up in these winds.'

"The priest thanked Lord Shiva, and his spirit returned to his mortal body, and he told the people all that had been told him. And Lord Shiva sent messengers to warn the people to the south, and everyone, both in Kulu and Lahul, lest they should see the awful might and majesty of Lord Shiva and be withered as they stood."

"Lord Shiva took his whip, and smote the mountains, again and again. There was a rushing and a terrible crushing, and storms, and winds so strong that mountains swayed before them, and many rocks fell from the mountains. Then there was a great silence over the land, and with it a great darkness. For everything, even the nullahs and the sun and the birds stopped and stood still before the majesty of Lord Shiva."

"When life became normal again, and the people had sufficiently recovered their courage, they came out and behold, there was the Rohtang La. The people of Lahul rushed to the top to look over but when they got there they were afraid to go down, for there was no path, and they did not know where or how to go. So Lord Shiva, to show them the way, stood on the Rohtang La and gave a mighty leap, telling them to watch where he went. For He was disguised as a mortal man, lest people should be blinded by his magnificence. And as He went through the air a path sprang up below him on the ground, and this path led to Manali."

"Many people hurried over the new pass, in both directions. But some were foolish in their haste, and forgot Lord Shiva's warning about the winds made by the whip. For the pass seemed so safe and easy. And many died, being frozen and burnt by the wind. And even to this day many die for their foolishness. Within my father's lifetime more than seventy men died on the pass in a single day. They were not careful. They did not heed the signs in the skies, such is the folly of man."

The pass is not safe even to-day on inclement days. Almost every afternoon, a noisy and chilled wind sweeps the pass.

Major Roads

The traditional Simla—Leh trade route is the main artery of Lahul. National Highway No. 21 continues from Manali crossing the Lahul sub-division to reach its destination, Leh. This is the highest mountain road in the world and is fit for vehicular traffic during the summer season. From Manali heavy vehicles ply up to Keylong and from Keylong buses ply to short distances roundabout. Due to the sudden breaking of avalanches the road is blocked for short intervals, even during the summer season.

A district road from Tandi to Thiro, has been constructed and is fit for heavy vehicles. Buses can ply right up to Udaipur, distant about 46 km from Tandi. Following the right bank of the Chandrabhaga, the road, when extended further, will join Lahul with Jammu and Kashmir. This road also connects Pangi area of Chamba with Lahul.

The road from Lahul towards Spiti takes off from the National Highway No. 21 at Gramphoo, near Khoksar. This is a *kutch* road so far and vehicles can ply only in fair weather up to Kaza, the sub-divisional headquarters.

From Kaza a mule track leads to Sumdo, along the Spiti river to join National Highway No. 22. This is that main road through which the Spiti people enter Kinnaur. National Highway No. 22 is a metalled road, fit for heavy vehicular traffic. Construction of a vehicular road between Kaza and Sumdo is in progress which ultimately will usher in an era of prosperity in the backward Spiti.

Besides these three roads, there are many inter-village and inter-valley paths through which the movement of men and material goes on, but most of these paths are liable to obstructions due to landslides, avalanches and snowfalls. During the winters, from December to February even inter-village communications are paralysed.

In the past rivers were crossed by suspension rope bridges locally called *tehham*. Rivers and streams that fall on the main routes have, however, been bridged now. Some bridges are laid temporarily and are removed during the winters for fear of their being swept away by the avalanches.

Bus services were run by the Mandi-Kulu Road Transport Corporation now merged with Himachal Pradesh Transport Corporation. For the transportation of goods, trucks of this Corporation ply on the roads. During the potato season private trucks are acquired, in addition, to carry the produce out of the district before the onset of the winter season.

Bus services operate between Manali and Keylong, Keylong and Jispa, Keylong and Udaipur and Khoksar and Kaza.

Due to the alpine configuration of the district vehicular traffic can not serve the people throughout the year. Besides the road blockade during heavy snowfalls, soil erosion, sudden floods in the nullahs caused by the melting of snow and slipping of the huge and innumerable avalanches disrupt the traffic. Many a time the streams are swelled very suddenly, and wash away the crossings and road tracks. A stream, a few kilometres onwards from Khoksar, is famous for such floods and has acquired the name '*pagal nalla*' i. e., the mad torrent. Therefore, so far, vehicular traffic is not reliable. For the transportation of material like foodgrains, consumers' articles, cash crops etc. horses, mules and yaks are used as the beasts of burden. Lahul and Spiti horses are very sturdy and ascend and descend the precipices with ease. Where horses can not move, yaks are used. Yaks are short legged but very sure-footed animals treading the narrow paths with confidence.

Flocks of sheep and goats visit Lahul pastures during summer season. Some shepherds carry their foodstuffs on the back of their flocks. In the narrowest paths and over the snowy passes goods are carried by human beings.

The rates for the hire of pack animals and labourers are fixed by the Deputy Commissioner from time to time.

TRAVEL AND TOURIST FACILITIES

Hitherto, on account of poor means of communications, there was very little scope for tourism in the district. After Independence, the Punjab Government started the construction of roads in the district. On the eve of the transfer of the district to Himachal Pradesh there were a few jeepable roads but after 1966 Himachal Pradesh Government have constructed the main lines of communications. The road from Manali to Baralacha Pass

is a part of the National Highway No. 21 and its construction is the responsibility of the Border Roads Organisation. The construction of these roads has rendered the district accessible and it is now possible to take up, in an organised way, the promotion of tourism because the peculiar topography of the district has considerable tourist attractions. The landscape has unique beauty and charm and the high peaks and glaciers attract mountaineers and trekkers. In the past mountaineering expeditions could not take place due to the lack of roads upto the base camps. Now equipment and provisions can be carried on automobiles and further on horse back up to the base camps. The area has attractions for peace loving holiday makers coming from the bustling crowds of the plains as also for the worshippers of the nature. A large number of tourists visit Manali every year and from there many of these reach Rohtang Pass. With the opening up of the area, they can now go deep into the Chandra, Bhaga and Pattan valleys on the one side and, after crossing the Kunzam Pass, go into the Spiti valley and return to Simla via Kinnaur.

Lahul and Spiti has been a big attraction for foreigners. Many expeditions to the Bara Shigri glacier have been undertaken successfully in the years 1956, 1958 and in 1971 already mentioned in chapter I. Many more have crossed the district on foot and even to-day, foreigners are frequently found walking on the roads with their baggage on their backs. Entry of foreigners into the Spiti sub-division is allowed only on authorised permits obtainable either from the Deputy Commissioner or Superintendent of Police, Lahul and Spiti district, or the Chief Secretary, Himachal Pradesh at Simla or the Superintendent of Police, Kulu.

For the convenience of Government servants and other travellers various rest-houses have been constructed by the Government. There are Public Works Department rest-houses at Khoksar, Sissu, Gondhla, Keylong, Kirting, Jispa, Patseo, Batal and forest inspection hut at Jalma. Comparatively, Spiti area has so far been able to attract only such tourists who are interested in mountaineering, geology and other natural sciences for travelling in Spiti can be undertaken only by those who are physically tough. With the construction of Khoksar (Gramphoo)-Kaza road and other tracks, some increase in the tourist traffic is expected. In this sub-division there are Public Works Department rest-houses at Losar, Kaza and Poh. At Kaza there is a forest inspection hut also.

To look after the tourist facilities in the district there are two Assistant Public Relations Officers, at Keylong and Kaza who keep every information required by the strange visitors. The Tourist Office at Manali also provides pamphlets etc. to the visiting travellers.

POSTS, TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

Up to the late nineteenth century there existed no organised postal system in the district. In 1889 a branch office was opened at Keylong. The mail used to be exchanged twice a week between Keylong and Kulu in summer season only. Later on, in 1917 it started to be exchanged on every alternate day for six to eight months every year, depending upon the weather conditions. The second Post Office was opened at Lote, in Pattan valley of Lahul, in 1935. After the attainment of Independence the postal facilities have been extended to various corners and at present there exist Post offices at the following places and the dak runs daily now except in bad weather :—

Lahul sub-division

Sub offices

1. Keylong with savings bank
2. Lote with savings bank

Branch post offices

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| 1. Gemur | 6. Sissu |
| 2. Gondhla | 7. Jalma |
| 3. Goshal | 8. Shansha |
| 4. Jispa | 9. Thiro |
| 5. Malang | |

The postal deliveries reach Lahul via Manali and with the first snow-fall over the Rohtang Pass, which occurs any time in November or December, the flow of the mail ceases. Thereafter the dak to the valley is taken by a helicopter every fortnight.

In Spiti area, the first branch post office was opened at Kaza in 1939 which has been upgraded as Sub Post Office since 1961. Now the following post offices exist in the area :—

Sub office at Kaza with savings bank.

Branch offices

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Khorik | 8. Hansa |
| 2. Tabo | 9. Kibber |
| 3. Hoorling | 10. Losar |
| 4. Kito | 11. Rangrik |
| 5. Sagnam | 12. Man Yogma |
| 6. Lara | 13. Lailung |
| 7. Geeling | 14. Hull |

The mail normally takes ten to fifteen days to reach the addressee in this sub-division, sent from outside the district. The usual route of the mail is via Puh in Kinnaur district but in summer it is taken via Manali also.

There exists no telegraph office or telephone exchange in the district. A network of radio wireless system exists for the communications of urgent messages. These wireless stations are working under the Posts and Telegraphs and Police Departments. The Posts and Telegraphs wireless stations cater to the needs of the public whereas the Police wireless stations are meant for Government purposes.

Because there are a few lines of vehicular traffic in the district, the number of vehicles is meagre. Within the district there exists no union either of the employers or of the employees in the field of transport. The interests of the employees are watched by the organisations of the employees working outside the district.

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

Adequate material is not available, which can justify a separate chapter, therefore, the information pertaining to occupations has been dealt with in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER IX

ECONOMIC TRENDS

LIVELIHOOD PATTERN

Agriculture is the only mainstay of the people of this valley. Due to high altitude and very cold climate only *rabi* is raised during the summer season. They grow mainly barley, wheat, peas, potatoes and vegetables. Buck-wheat is also grown in certain villages of the lower valley. The entire population is dependent on agriculture. A small percentage of the population migrate to the plains outside the valley to earn their livelihood during winter season. Most of them do manual labour and the remaining few carry small business.

The improvement in the means of communications have considerably relieved the people from treading on foot the hazardous and stark ascends and descends during the summer months. Transport facilities enable the people very frequently to visit outside places. On the other hand this once land-locked area is also frequented by visitors and tourists. The impact of Independence in the modelling and reshaping of traditional living patterns and results in the assimilation of the culture and habits of the outside world. With this the educational standard of the people has considerably improved and the cumulative effect of all this has in a long way ameliorated the general standard in all directions for the inhabitants of the district.

The Lahulis keep only a few sheep and goats, as the snow lies for too long and too deep in the winter for the flocks to live out of doors. They are very industrious and generally intelligent. They work harder than the people of other parts of the Pradesh. They are most enterprising traders. The limitation on the prosperity of the traders is due to the fact that trade routes to Kashmir, Ladakh and other outside trade markets are very hazardous and difficult. In the past this area had a trade traffic with Tibet and China, which following the aggression of China on India in 1962 resulted in suspension of all trade and commerce. *Kuth* formed an important trade article which was sold to Kulu traders till 1960 who in turn sold it at Amritsar. In order to avoid the middle man's profit the Lahulas have now formed a *Kuth* Growers Association, who purchase the *kuth* direct from the growers and sell it at Amritsar.

The handicraftsmen of Spiti produce some fine articles in the district. Captain Harcourt mentions their steel bits, buckles and stirrups as specially worthy of notes; and Mr. Louis Dane remarks that the puzzle locks made by the Spiti blacksmiths are very ingenious. The Spiti cloth, too, is particularly good. It is of several descriptions. The strongest and thickest is made in narrow lengths furred or flushed on one side, and is very durable and wonderfully cheap. Moorcroft records that 2,752 pieces of cloth were annually fabricated in Spiti, of which 1,600 were used in home consumption, and the rest exported to the extent of 13,140 yards. This held good in 1820, but for years thereafter the manufacture had not at all retrograded. Shoes were imported into Spiti from the plains, but winter boots were made locally. Sheepskins with the wool on were prepared very skilfully.

The people of Spiti eke out a miserable existence from the produce of the land. It is not enough for the whole population of the Sub-Division. A large number of persons, therefore, migrate to lower heights and work as labourers. A good number of Spitians are found in winter in Kulu and Mandi. In the Pin Valley, horses are bred and sold for considerable sums in Rampur Buhahr during Lavi fair. The climate and the rich grass produce extremely sturdy horses which though small in size, are very sure-footed, and able to climb heights well. There are plenty of grazing plateaus on both sides of the Spiti and Pin rivers, where these horses feed and grow well.

According to 1961 census enumeration, the occupational distribution of the district was as follows.

Workers and Non-Workers Classified by Sex and Broad Age Groups

	Persons	Male	Female
Total Population	20,453	11,519	9,934
Total workers		8,196	6,157
As cultivators		4,103	5,178
As agricultural Labourers		199	272
In mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities		53	3

At household industry	78	138
In manufacturing other than household industry	22	6
In construction	2,743	519
In trade and commerce	85	3
In transport, storage and communications	99	1
In Other services	814	37
Non-workers	3,323	2,777

PRICES

In the ancient past, trade in this area was transacted on barter system. Money was scarcely put into circulation, more so because this was a land-locked area, which precluded the outside traders from any activity of trade and commerce. There was no market of any note or significance where the local inhabitants could dispose of and exchange their surplus produce or purchase commodities for their requirements. Mandi and Rampur-Bushahr markets catered to the demand of the Lahul and Spiti area respectively. Due to inadequate means of communications and the isolation of the area, wholesale trading was conspicuously unknown.

In the bygone days, due to the absence of any regular market, price statistics were not maintained which could reveal the ebb and flow of the price index of the district. However, scarce and scanty information recorded in old reference books is entirely based on the data collected from the villagers. The pastoral nomads and peasants reckoned the values of their commodities in terms of money, but generally, the transactions were effected on barter system.

*The earliest written reference dates back to 1898, when in Lahul and Spiti money to pay the revenue was generally raised by trading or by employing themselves as labourers outside the valley mostly at Simla. The produce from land was hardly sufficient to meet their own requirements and no surplus from land was available to raise any money from the sale thereof. Barley plus grain was available to raise any money from the sale thereof. Barley was bartered for salt brought by Tibetans from Rodok at the rate of five seers of barley to four seers of salt. Traders, pilgrims, Batu labourers and Gaddi shepherds obtained their supplies in Lahul. The Moravian Missionaries who raised their own crop got 16 seers per rupee for the wheat grown in their own farm. In Spiti all kinds of grain were sold to Bushahris and Tibetans, who visited that area, in exchange for salt, wool, cotton cloth, and Chinese tea. The scale of prices prevalent in the beginning of the century (1910) in these sub-divisions were as follows :—

Grains	Price in standard seers per Rupee	
	Lahul	Spiti
Barley	25	18
Wheat	20	18
Peas	15	20
Mustard seeds	12	10
Buck wheat	50	18
Chiena	...	24
Potatoes	32	...
Tobacco	8	...

There is a reference in the Kangra Gazetteer compiled in 1917 that there was very little surplus for sale in Lahul. In 1907 a rupee was reckoned to fetch 13 to 16 seers of wheat, 16 to 30 seers of barley and 8 to 10 seers of peas. In 1913, stock of agricultural produce was appraised for the purpose of land revenue assessment which revealed that wheat, barley, peas and buck-wheat were marketed for Rs. 2/8/-, Rs. 2/-, Rs. 3/12/- and Rs. 2/8/- per maund respectively. In Spiti too, negligible surplus of local produce

*Diack, A.H., I.C.S., *Final report on the revised settlement of the Kulu sub-division of the Kangra district*, 1898, p. 18.

found entry in the market at Rampur (in Bushahr). In 1913, Mr. Coldstream a Britisher, who conducted settlement operation in this region observed that barley, wheat, peas, sarson, buck-wheat and chiena were sold for Rs. 3/1, Rs. 3/5/-, Rs. 7/-, Rs. 2/11/- and Rs. 2/4/- per maund respectively.

In the subsequent years, the rise in prices steadily revealed an upward trend with the consequential deflation in the purchasing power of a rupee. After the World Wars I and II there was a great boom in the prices of various commodities. *The Assessment report of Spiti Sub-division* compiled in 1951 gave a passing reference to the price structure of some important commodities indicating soaring trend all over.

The Assessment Report of Spiti Wazieri of Kulu Sub-Division of Kangra District compiled and printed in 1951 contains price statistics with comparative study of prices current in 1951 to the one obtaining in 1911. The prices of wheat, barley, peas and chiena registered an increase of 8, 9, 23, and 61 per cent to those prevailing in 1911.

As already stated there were neither markets nor any shops in Spiti. The crops were never sold by the Zamindars as the yield was hardly sufficient for their own consumption. The assumed prices recorded were mostly of the grains marketed in Manali or Rampur Bushahr. Grains were sometimes imported into Spiti from Manali. The prices of imported grains invariably shot up. The prices during the first World War remained at the raised level till 1925. Then the slump came which continued till 1931. On the breaking out of the second World War the prices again shot up and were almost doubled in 1944-45. The price trend in the plains and in Kulu and Manali affected the price levels of Spiti also. The cost of agriculture operations had also registered simultaneous increase with the prices of foodgrains.

The following table will show the curve in the price line in respect of retail trade in the district since 1939 to-date. The statistics tabulated is based on the information ascertained from the petty shop-keepers and village elders. In 1960 when developmental activities gained momentum all over, this border area had to be given its share long over due and was thus upgraded to a full fledged district.

**STATEMENT SHOWING THE RETAIL
PRICES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES
IN THE DISTRICT**

STATEMENT SHOWING THE RETAIL PRICES

Year	Wheat per 37.3 kg.	Rice per 37.3 kg.	Barley per 37.3 kg.	Maize per 37.3 kg.	Ghee per 37.3 kg.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
1939	7.00	10.00	4.00	5.00	80.00
1940	8.00	14.00	5.00	6.00	82.00
1941	8.00	16.00	6.00	6.00	84.00
1942	9.00	18.00	7.00	7.00	85.00
1943	11.00	21.00	9.00	8.00	86.00
1944	12.00	21.00	10.00	9.00	86.00
1945	14.00	24.00	11.00	11.00	88.00
1946	15.00	26.00	11.00	11.00	90.00
1947	15.00	28.00	12.00	14.00	91.00
1948	17.00	30.00	13.00	15.00	93.00
1949	20.00	32.03	13.00	18.00	94.00
1950	21.00	34.00	14.00	20.00	100.00
1951	23.00	36.00	15.00	23.00	105.00
1952	24.00	36.00	19.00	25.00	110.00
1953	26.00	37.00	20.00	25.00	115.00
1954	28.00	39.00	25.00	27.00	130.00
1955	32.00	40.00	30.00	29.00	140.00
1956	35.00	50.00	30.00	30.00	150.00
1957	34.00	50.00	32.00	30.00	175.00
1958	35.00	50.00	33.00	30.00	200.00

OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES IN THE DISTRICT

Mustard oil per 37.3 kg.	Milk per seer.	Sugar per 37.3 kg.	Firewood per 37.3 kg.	Kerosene oil per tin	Tobacco per 37.3 kg.
7	8	9	10	11	12
Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
20.00	0.25	16.00	0.25	6.00	10.00
35.00	0.25	18.13	0.25	7.00	11.50
45.00	0.25	20.45	0.50	7.00	11.50
50.00	0.25	25.00	0.50	7.00	13.50
65.00	0.25	30.00	0.50	8.00	14.00
75.00	0.31	35.00	0.50	9.00	15.00
90.00	0.37	38.00	0.50	11.00	16.00
90.00	0.50	42.00	1.00	11.00	18.00
95.00	0.62	46.00	1.00	12.00	20.00
100.00	0.75	51.00	1.00	13.00	22.00
102.00	1.00	57.00	1.00	14.00	25.00
104.00	1.50	60.00	1.00	14.00	26.00
110.00	1.50	65.00	1.00	14.00	28.00
10.00	1.50	65.00	1.00	14.50	30.00
115.00	1.50	65.00	1.50	15.00	35.00
120.00	1.50	66.00	2.00	15.00	37.00
120.00	1.50	68.00	2.00	15.00	38.00
122.00	1.50	69.00	2.50	16.00	40.00
125.00	1.50	70.00	3.00	17.00	45.00
125.00	1.50	70.00	3.00	17.00	47.00

Year	Wheat per 37.3 kg.	Rice per 37.3 kg.	Barley per 37.3 kg.	Maize per 37.3 kg.	Ghee per 37.3 kg.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
1959	35.00	50.00	34.00	30.00	250.00
1960	37.00	50.00	34.00	30.00	300.00
1961	37.00	50.00	34.00	30.00	320.00
1962	37.00	50.00	34.00	30.00	360.00
1963	37.00	50.00	34.00	30.00	360.00
1964	...	...	...	...	...
1965	...	...	...	...	...
1966	...	...	...	...	...
1967	...	...	...	...	...
1968	...	...	...	...	...
1969	...	...	...	1.56 per kg.	17.00 per kg.
1970	...	...	...	...	17.00 per kg.
1971	1.10 per kg.	...	...	...	17.00 per kg.

Mustard oil per 37.3 kg.	Milk per seer	Sugar per 37.3 kg.	Firewood per 37.3 kg.	Kerosene oil per tin	Tobacco per 37.3 kg.
7	8	9	10	11	12
Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
130.00	1.50	70.00	4.00	18.00	52.00
130.00	1.50	70.00	6.00	20.00	60.00
140.00	1.50	70.00	6.00	21.00	60.00
140.00	1.50	70.00	8.00	21.00	60.00
140.00	1.50	48.00	6.50	21.00	60.00
...	...	...	...	..	...
...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...
7.00 per kg.	...	4.00 per kg.	...	26.00	...
7.00 per kg.	...	4.50 per kg.	...	26.00	...
5.40 per kg.	...	...	...	27.00	...
7.00 per kg.	...	...	...	27.00	...
5.75 per kg.	...	...	...	27.00	...

The study of the above table will reveal a steady upward trend of prices in all the commodities. The flow of currency within the district has also contributed considerably to the unprecedented rise in prices. Now with the opening of the area for vehicular traffic traders and business men have started looking to the supplies and demand in the area and prices are controlled by the market forces outside the district.

WAGES

Like prices, records pertaining to wage statistics in the past were not maintained in this area. Strictly speaking, wages were not paid in cash and the skilled as well as unskilled labourers received their share in kind. The Kangra District Gazetteer 1917, reveals that wages were almost unknown in the area. Generally, village artisans and other service class were governed by customs and mutual understandings prevailing at the time. The village officials too were remunerated in kind. *Begar* (forced labour) in road repairs, carrying Government letters, travellers baggage etc. was prevalent. There is a brief mention in the *Assessment Report of Spiti Sub-Division* (compiled in 1951) that the people of Spiti eked out a miserable existence from the produce of their land. Therefore, large number of able bodied persons migrated to Kulu and Mandi and engaged themselves as labourers. Some of them used to visit far off places and solicited alms for their existence, mostly by singing and dancing to the accompaniment of a small drum and a prayer wheel. It is mentioned that there were no other domestic services except Lohars. All labourers were paid individually by the owners or cultivators for service rendered to them. The *Assessment Report of Spiti** mentions that entries in the *Wazib-Ul-Arz* showed that there was an established custom to carry letters and luggage of officials and travellers, in the form of *begar*. These entries were deleted from the *Wazib-Ul-Arz*, on the statement of the persons concerned because *begar* (forced labour) was no more in existence, it being against the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of India.

The element of cash wages for performing the agricultural operations and in the other allied odd jobs is almost non-existent in this district. The villagers themselves accomplish the job on reciprocal basis. The skilled labourers, however, are now invariably paid in cash. But the village services like black-smith, cobblers etc. are remunerated in kind. With the creation of the district and its comparative backwardness, many developmental projects are afoot and are being expeditiously executed. These projects have provided much employment potentials to local inhabitants. These projects have also brought in their wake more opportunities to improve their lot by earning cash wages.

Wages and prices are relatively co-relative. With an upward trend in

*Assessment Report of Spiti Wazieri of Kulu sub-division, Kangra District by S. Bachittar Singh B.Sc., P.C.S., Assistant Settlement Officer, Kulu page-8.

price index demand in wage increase is correspondingly pressed for. Thus the entire increase is neutralised by this process, and propensity to save is nil. But the consumption of articles hitherto unknown is also a sign of progressive change, particularly in this inaccessible part of the Pradesh which mainly, excepting for the summer season, remains closed for the vehicular traffic. During the short season porters, muleteers and labourers make good money by charging exorbitant wages for carrying the luggage and other necessary requisites to various parts of the district. Till 1967, wages in the district were not fixed by the Government, therefore, no record is available, which could reveal the prevailing rates in the district. However, statistics collected from agriculturists would indicate that the following wage rates were prevalent in the rural areas before 1967. The following two tables will illustrate the wages of different categories of workers in respect of Lahul and Spiti areas respectively :—

LAHUL

Particulars	Common rate	Minimum rate	Maximum rate	Unit of payment	Normal working hours
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Casual labourer.	3.12	2.50	5.00	In Cash	Approximately 8 hours.
Porter.	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
Domestic servant.	750.00 Per annum	750.00 Per annum	750.00 Per annum	In Cash or kind	Whole time.
Wood-cutter.	3.50	3.50	5.00	In Cash	8 hours.
Chowkidar.	30.00 Per month	20.00 Per month	40.00 Per month	In Cash	Part time and therefore free to do other work.
Carpenter.	5.00	5.00	7.00	In Cash	8 hours.
Tailor.	5.00	5.00	7.00		

Herdsman. A herdsman is engaged by the village community on a contributory basis. He is given two kilos of foodgrain per sheep or goat per year. Moreover, he is provided with daily meals by each owner of the sheep turn by turn during the season.

Blacksmith	Not engaged daily. Blacksmiths are engaged only for making and sharpening of agricultural tools. They are paid in kind on each harvest. They are provided with meals and <i>chhang</i> at the time of making and sharpening of tools.	Paid in kind on each harvest	Not fixed hours. It depends upon the quality and quantity of work.
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SPITI

Particular	wages paid per day or per month	Hours of work	Rest/interval in hrs.	Method of payment	Period of payment
Weeders	Rs. 2.50	Eight to ten hours a day	One to two hours a day	Partly paid in kind and partly in cash.	Cash payment is made immediately and kind payment is made on the harvesting of the crop
Reapers	Rs. 2.50				
Irrigators	2.50				
Transportation	4.00				
Ploughing	2.50				
Carpentry	9.00				
Blacksmithy	9.00				
Herdsmen	2.50				

Note :—Payment in kind includes barley, wheat, peas and ghee.

Subsequent to the year 1967, agricultural wages in the district were fixed by the Government. The following table will indicate the wages of skilled and unskilled workers in the district :—

Agricultural Wages

Year	Field Labour	Other Agricultural Labour	Herdsmen
1968	Rs. 5/- per day for unskilled labour and Rs. 6/- per day for skilled labourer.	Rs. 5/- per day	
1969	-do-	-do-	
1970	-do-	-do-	
1971	Rs. 6/- skilled and Rs. 5/- per day for unskilled labourer.	No rate fixed for field labour	Rs. 5/- per day for agricultural labourer.

STANDARD OF LIVING AND ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION

In the past, no socio-economic survey was conducted to ascertain the general standard of living of the people inhabiting this, hitherto, land-locked area. Therefore, very little is known about the material condition of the people. Etymologically, "standard of living" connotes the mode of dwelling of the people, how they dress, eat and in it are included the cultural and civilized strata of the people. However, from the prevailing conditions, we could safely infer that the standard in this area was rather outdated and ancient. All this could be attributed to the geographical hindrances which have till now precluded the local people from contacts and association. Even the people who migrated from the area during winter remained aloof and did not assimilate and mix up with other people. The agricultural operation in this terrain are confronted by many odds like abnormal snowfall high altitude and precarious short working season and rugged soil. The shortage of irrigation facilities all the more limit the extent of cultivated area. The rain-fall here is so scanty that not to speak of crops, even trees have to be regularly watered to keep them green and growing. Before 1960, the district was not easily traversed and in the early century even mule tracks were extremely narrow. But now particularly after 1967, it is remarkable to note that the Keylong, the district headquarters has been opened up for vehicular traffic and interior connected by roads. It is equally a great achievement that people have become conscious of their rights and duties and are taking part in development programmes. This border track with an international boundary is being accorded all top priority in every sphere of development plans by the Himachal Pradesh Government. These developments improved the lot of

the local people and now many of the local inhabitants have purchased landed property down below in Kulu district. In Mandi quite a number of prosperous and progressive orchardists and business men hail from Lahul. This intermixing has developed their mental horizon and more so the influx of plain inhabitants in the district have far reaching impact and influence over the local populace. The old and orthodox people are now modulating and adjusting themselves to the changing circumstances and have on the whole done well. They will prosper far more is certain. The houses in Lahul valley are commodious with attractive appearances. The Moravian missionaries instilled in the people the hygienic sense and building skill. Keylong once being the centre of this mission has, therefore, the best houses in the entire district. It is a fashion throughout the district to construct open houses with plenty of windows. The reasons for it is to avoid suffocation and leave ample scope for indoor activities. During the close winter season these houses are different in appearance from those of Kulu or Kangra. There are two and in some cases three storeyed houses with flat roofs. The lower storey is occupied by the cattle, horses, sheep and goats and the upper one are living rooms for the family. The roofs are composed of rafters laid rather closed together. These are covered with thick layers of reed grass with another thick layer of earth on top. The roof is edged with flat stones which keep out the weather very well. All roofs are cleared of snow immediately after every fall in winter. Generally harvested stocks of wheat, barley and even green grass are stretched on it for drying. But now with the spread of education and general enlightenment among the people, improvement in house designs is frequently seen in the district. The affluent people are taking a lead in the general awakening among the masses to live in hygienic and healthy environment. It is customary here to construct a close compact house merely with one entrance in the first floor. During the winter ample air and light are needed and, therefore, windows are generally preferred. All the villages, surrounding Keylong are now electrified. Almost every house provides an improvised commode, an opening in a corner of the second storey through which the nightsoil drops and accumulates in a small enclosure on the ground floor.

The houses of the Spitians are much less attractive than the Lahulas. The building material is quite inferior and general design too lacks hygienic condition. The main stress being on keeping away the cold rather than letting in light and air. The separation between cattle and human beings is not as complete as in Lahul valley. The houses are flat roofed like the Lahuli ones.

The furniture and decoration pieces in the ordinary houses of district are non-existent. People have an yearning but can ill afford these luxuries. However, few rich houses are exceptions to this rule. The house-hold

articles of the commoners are just sufficient to meet the routine requirements of the family. Chairs, tables, charpoys and other furniture articles are not found in the house in the village. But one queer and quaint feature is the common use of the store and the pressure cookers. These have become common now and are extensively used. Stove, because it saves fuel which is in short supply and pressure cooker-because it has proved extremely handy in this high altitude where hours are otherwise needed for cooking.

For centuries primitive socio-economic conditions prevailed in this district and the people had to struggle hard to eke out their livelihood resulting the very slow improvement in their standard of living. The major event which tremendously improved the economy of the people started in 1930, when the *kuth* cultivation was introduced and popularised among the local inhabitants. The cash crop decisively changed the local economy and instilled an urge to improve their standard of living. The prosperity brought by the cultivation of *kuth* not only raised the standard of living of the people, but also changed their outlook by creating a desire for a better and prosperous life. Later along with a developed scientific outlook, enlightened agriculturists have produced improved disease free varieties of potato, cauliflower and other vegetable seeds in this high altitude area. The Central Government Agricultural Farm at Gondhla has contributed to the development of agriculture by providing improved wheat and barley seeds for supply to other parts of the country. Thus, it is hoped that the entire area would be in a position to convert itself to seed producing farms. Due to the opening of the district for the automobiles, people could now export their products to the markets to supplement their cash income. Cultivation of medicinal herbs is yet another factor finding favour among the people to strengthen their economy.

In the context of the developmental activities consumption standard has substantially undergone a change. Though many artificial things are being substituted for wholesome and unsophisticated articles, yet the general propensity is to improve the standard of living. The district now presents a picture of significant social and economic change.

GENERAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONS

Classification of population that are either fully employed or under-employed or unemployed is not practicable on account of peculiar nature of the economy. During the agricultural working season the local population mainly is in full state of employment. Therefore, the local labour is hardly available even for executing the Government projects despite the handsome wages offered to them. In winter on the contrary, practically all the able-bodied persons migrate down to Mandi or Kulu for seeking employment. Such persons total about 1/12 of the entire population. In fact, local inhabitants do not stay at home except during the agricultural operation.

The table that follows compiled on the basis of the census figures of population occupied in

Educational Level	I		II		III		IV		V	
	Total Population				As Agricultural Labourer		In Mining, Quarrying, Livestock, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Plantations Orchards and Allied Activities.			
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Total	20,453	11,519	8,934	4,103	5,178	199	272	53	3	
Illiterate	16,874	8,272	8,602	3,054	5,117	196	271	24	3	
Literate (with-out Educational level)	2,271	2,002	269	666	42	3	1	14	...	
Primary or Junior Basic	1,021	961	60	357	19	...	...	12	...	
Matriculation and above	287	284	3	26	...	...	...	3	...	

1961, illustrates, generally, the employment level of the district various trades.

Workers										Non-workers			
VI		VII		VIII		IX		X					
At Household Industry		In Manufacturing other than Household Industry		In Construction		In d and Commerce		In Transport, Storage & Communications		In other services.		Non-workers	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
78	138	22	6	2,743	519	85	3	99	1	814	37	3,323	2,777
53	123	15	5	2,285	503	28	3	68	1	223	27	2,326	2,549
15	5	2	1	291	16	34	...	12	...	192	...	773	204
10	10	5	...	93	...	21	...	16	...	227	8	220	23
...	...	...	...	74	...	2	...	3	...	172	2	4	1

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES

Before this district came into being, there was no employment exchange in this area. The nearest employment exchange was then at Kulu. Since October, 1960 an employment exchange has been set up at Keylong. The employment market information was then collected by the District Employment Officer, Kulu at the end of each quarter of a year. The work done by the Employment Exchange Keylong since its inception will be evident from the following two tables.

TABLE-I

Year	Number of candidates registered.				No. of vacancies Notified.
	Clerical	Skilled	Unskilled	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1960	...	21	6	27	6
1961	3	128	90	221	314
1962	...	46	112	158	78
1963	...	47	59	106	95
1964	...	60	108	168	162
1965	...	51	118	169	67
1966	...	140	113	253	157
1967	...	158	74	232	132
1968	...	95	34	129	45
1969	...	131	44	175	85
1970	3	168	76	247	129
1971	4	139	102	245	47

TABLE-II

Year	No. of applicants (employment seekers) on the Live Register at the end of year
1960	26
1961	150
1962	100
1963	127
1964	207
1965	75
1966	111
1967	103
1968	129
1969	86
1970	162
1971	187

NATIONAL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The attention and concern of the Government for development of the area in the post-Independence period, particularly after its being notified as a Scheduled Area, has been so concentrated that it has more than made up for all the neglect it may have suffered in the past.

The Five-Year Plans have opened out better employment opportunities both on the projects and in Government Offices. Educational and training facilities both within and outside the district have been made available in great measure. Extension and improvement of roads, construction of bridges, construction of new *kuhls* and repairs of old ones, execution of water-supply schemes, poultry development and extension of medical care have improved the living conditions of people. Large-scale imports of material for the projects have made muleteering a profitable occupation. With the creation of the district and stationing of the offices of the Government Departments, the demand for housing accommodations, milk, eggs, firewood etc., has also been a good source of income to the people.

The outstanding result of national planning during the past decade has been the overcoming of the major barriers that hindered development in the past, namely, illiteracy and the physical isolation of this area from the rest of the State. The phenomenal progress achieved in the sphere of education has been discussed in Chapter XV. With the spread of education, the superstitions and static outlook has been replaced by a forward looking attitude through the efforts under national development planning instilled among the people. Equally striking has been the progress in respect of communications within the valley.

The community development scheme was started in October, 1958. With the launching of the pre-extension block at Keylong (Lahul) which was converted into a N. E. S. Block Stage I with effect from April 1, 1959. The block covers the entire sub-division of Lahul. Spiti sub-division was made a pre-extension block on 2nd Oct., 1960 and it too was upgraded and converted into a National Extension Service Block in 1961. The entire district is classed as "scheduled area" and is being developed under the Tribal Blocks Scheme.

Each N. E. S. Block is headed by a Block Development and Panchayat Officer. They are under the administrative control of the Sub-Divisional Officers (civil). The B. D. & P. O. are mainly concerned with the promotion and execution of development schemes besides being the Panchayat Officers in their respective blocks.

A Block Development and Panchayat Officer has a number of Extension Officers belonging to various Departments to assist and advise him in their respective spheres. At the lowest rung of the extension service scheme are the village level workers who attend to development and social education plans aiming at improving the social, economic and health conditions of the rural people.

During the currency of the N. E. S. Lahul Block Government of India sanctioned a Tribal Development Block with effect from October, 1961, with an allotment of Rs. 10 lakhs over a period of 5 years. A uniform allotment of Rs. 2 lakhs was provided every year.

Community Development is a part of the effects under national planning and its results form a part of the overall achievements that have been made in the district. The success of community development programme is to be judged not only in terms of the schemes successfully implemented under it, but also in terms of the consciousness it has aroused among the people. It has been greatly responsible for bringing about a change of outlook in almost all spheres of life in the villages. After the launching of the community development programme, the panchayats, as

agencies for rural administration and development, have been strengthened in the district. The people still retain the tribal traits of collective efforts, mutual help and self-reliance. The community development programme through the panchayats has utilised in an organised way these social traits of the people. The development costs being high the public contribution in absolute terms is also very high. In order that people are not unduly burdened, Government have reduced the public share to 25 per cent of the total cost of a scheme. The public response, however, has been so encouraging that in many cases the share of public contribution has been much higher than 25 per cent.

CHAPTER X

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The ancient administrative history of this remote area hitherto land-locked is in folk lores and legends which till now has escaped the ken of historians. After the break up of the great Tibetan empire in the tenth century Lahul and Spiti became a part of the kingdom of Ladakh. Later, Lahul became a tributary of the Raja of Chamba and passed under British rule in 1846. Spiti on the other hand formed a part of Kulu in 1845, which after the conclusion of the first Sikh War passed into British hands.

A sketchy account of the general administration prevailing during the British regime would provide a good background and contrast to what obtains now. Due to the peculiar circumstances of the area, the administrative set up was somewhat different to what prevailed in the other areas. After the British took over from the Sikhs, Lahul and Spiti were two *waziris* of the Kulu Sub-division of Kangra district. Thus in 1846 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Kangra was appointed to assist the Deputy Commissioner Kangra to administer this hilly area (Lahul and Spiti). The first Assistant Commissioner was Captain Hay. The Official under him was the *Negi* (head man) who was made responsible for the collection of land-revenue. In 1853 Tara Chand of Kolong was appointed as *Negi*. He was also appointed as honorary magistrate whose jurisdiction extended throughout Lahul. He enjoyed the powers of a Magistrate III class, Sub-Judge IV class, Sub-Registrar, and also acted as the Forest Agent. Captain Harcourt visiting this area in 1869 observed that Tara Chand was appointed as *Negi* of Lahul and he enjoyed a jagir worth Rs. 55/- per annum. Besides, there were three Thakurs in Lahul namely Devi Chand, Hira Chand and Beli Ram who were in possession of considerable jagir lands.

The whole of the sub-division was divided in thirteen *kothis*. They followed no particular boundary lines, comprised compact limits. *Negi* was

assisted by *lambardars* and village watchmen. Generally each *kothi* was divided into two or more *phatees*. Every *phatee* was put under the charge of a *lambardar*. *Lambardar* occupied a superior position to the rest of the people. He was exempted from all sorts of *begar* and received remuneration varying from time to time vis-a-vis the collection of land-revenue. *Lambardars* were appointed with the consent of the majority of the people, but the office of the *Negi* was hereditary. Each *Lambardar* was responsible to meet all demands for *begar* and supplies that had to be furnished from his *phatee*. *Negi* was responsible for enforcing due performance of duty from all those working under him.

Thakur Hari Chand of Kolong took over from Thakur Tara Chand in 1876. He was conferred with the title of wazier of Lahul. The office of wazier thereafter practically remained hereditary. He was also in charge of general administration in addition to the powers mentioned above. He was empowered to grant *nautors* in the waste lands of *khalsa* and also attested mutations and *jamabandis* not concerning him or his relations. In short he was completely incharge of the entire administration of Lahul. Some of the later waziers exercised higher criminal powers as Magistrate II class.

In about 1917 Lahul was divided into three *ilaqas* each consisting of from four to six *kothis* which in their turn were made up of villages, assessed separately to land-revenue. The revenue staff consisted of two *patwaris* who were under the control of Thakur Mangal Chand, younger brother of Thakur Amar Chand of Kolong, exercising the powers of a *Naib-Tahsildar* in regard to mutations and *jamabandis* which did not concern his family. The general control vested in Thakur Amar Chand who had a court at Keylong working in an honorary capacity and was called the Wazier. He had to arrange for all supplies for officials and other travellers and was in charge of the collection of the *tirni* or grazing fees in *khalsa* sheep runs. His brother managed the forests. The tract for revenue purposes was united with the Kulu Tahsil.

There probably always existed a certain amount of self Government in the *kothis*. The monasteries had their funds and there were periodical meetings of the villagers to settle various matters, such as the levying of

funds for common purposes of the *kothi*. But the district was always ruled by Thakurs, or *Jows*, as they used to be called.

One change in the economic arrangements of the *waziri* since the revision of settlement of 1891 was the abolition of the forced labour. This labour was paid for only when exacted on the more remote parts of the roads. Those who wished to work earned from three to six annas a day at times convenient to themselves. The obligation to supply carriage for travellers remained unchanged. This was the most irksome burden for the *kothis* which attended the remote Khoksar stage though it was no less oppressive elsewhere. Generally travellers passing through Lahul employed mules hired in Kulu and the *begar* in *Khalsa kothis* generally was certainly not excessive in comparison with that in *waziri* Parol. The demand however, occurred in summer months when many landholders were either absent on trading journeys or occupied in farming operations. The burden was distributed equally keeping in view the land holdings. For ordinary journeys within Lahul each *kothi* supplied parterage at the stages within Lahul limit. For the passes, the four *kothis* of Rangloj had to employ themselves for carrying the luggage over the Rohtang Pass to Kulu. The zemindars of Jagatsukh were responsible for the journey over the Hamta Pass to Spiti, while the ten *kothis* of Gara and Pattan arranged on a common roaster for accounts of work done were maintained for each holding and for each *kothi* and the contributions were balanced. Common accounts of the *kothis* were kept by the *lambardar* and supplies were collected at stages by contractors who were given advances by the landholders, except at Zingzinbar and Keylong, where Rs. 200 was paid annually by Government to contractors during the autumn trading season. The Dagis of Pattan held *muafis* on conditions which compelled them to collect wood at certain stages, to carry *dandtes* or *palkis* when necessary, and to take 12 loads to Kulu.

The only Court in Lahul was that of the wizer, sitting as honorary Munsif and Magistrate of the III class. The criminal cases rarely resulted in sentences to accused and the civil cases were usually compromised. The incidence of robbery and thieving was very rare. The Wizer was also the Sub-Registrar and his work was light. There was some demand for a Court with higher powers owing to the difficulty in travelling to court in Kulu.

For about 1917 in Spiti Sub-Division, there were five *kothis* namely Todpa, Barshing, Sham and Oh (Ozhi and Pin) in the main valley and the fifth Pin included the whole valley of the Pin river. Geographically Pin valley is shut off from the rest of Spiti by high mountains, except where the river forces its way through a deep narrow gorge to join the main stream. Pin thus had well-defined boundaries in the waste, and it is the only one of

the five which is so situated. Each *kothi* is made up of a number of hamlets: and there was no division into *phatees* as in Kulu. The hamlets of Sham *Kothi* composed in a fairly defined area on both sides of the Spiti river below its junction with the Pin and forming the south-eastern corner of Spiti as Pin forms the south-western. The villages of Barshing stretching on both sides of the main river above its junction with the Pin, included the valley of the Lingti on the left bank of the Spiti. The Todpa villages lie to the north of Barshing in the valleys of the Shila and the Sampa, and along the banks of the main river between those valleys. *Kothi Oh* (Ozhi) comprised a cluster of villages in the north-west corner of the valley, and a number of others or portions of other scattered among those of Todpa, Barshing and Sham. Boundaries were recognised. The *Nono* of Spiti exercised jurisdiction as a Magistrate under the *Spiti Frontier Regulation* (I of 1878), with powers to try all offences except murder, and to punish with fine only. His register showed only one or two cases annually. He was not empowered to try civil cases which were heard by the Assistant Commissioner as Sub-Judge under the *Civil Procedure Code*. The same officer was competent to try revenue cases in the capacity of a Collector. The administrative set up described above was adequate in those days for the area so remote, landlocked and strategically unimportant. Certain amount of self-government prevailed in the *kothis* and petty disputes were decided by village Panchayats. The wizers who were from the influential stock had sufficient control over the smooth running of administration of the area.

The prosperity brought by the cultivation of *kuth* described by Mr. Arthur S. Lall, then Assistant Commissioner, Kulu, as the agricultural romance of Lahul and the decline in the influence of Thakurs on account of dissension among themselves coupled with the unpopularity of some of them among the people, created an atmosphere of discontentment against the established authority. In 1938, Mr. Arthur S. Lall was far sighted enough to assess the needs of the area and thus fully analysed the socio-economic requirements of Lahul in his report. Keeping these factors in view he recommended to Government for the posting of a *Naib-Tahsildar* in Lahul for winter months. This recommendation brought forth two benefits, firstly it filled the vacuum created by the absence of the then wizer from Lahul for army duty. Secondly the seasonal appointment of *Naib-Tahsildar* paved the way for his permanent appointment eventually without giving the wizer a feeling of any abrupt corroding of his powers. He further proposed to utilize the services of the *Naib-Tahsildar* in summer months for controlling the civic life at Manali—a place which had started growing in popularity as a summer resort to tourists. His recommendations were not accepted. Later his successor Mr. Azime Hussain in a report in 1940 re-emphasized the need for a change in the administrative set up. He observed that the

atmosphere of Lahul was with intrigue, uncertainty, terror and fear, and felt that arrangements conceived by Mr. Lall were no longer adequate because the circumstances had altered to such an extent that a more drastic remedy was called for. Concluding his report Mr. Azime Hussain felt that a stage had no doubt been reached when a change in administration could not be regarded as premature. Government accepted these recommendations and the *wazarat* came to an end in 1941 with the appointment of a *Naib--Tahsildar* and a seasonal police post in 1943. With this machinery the limited objective of tackling law and order situation through a direct and imperial agency was achieved, all the same it did not fulfil the task of initiating a comprehensive and rapid development of the area. That task was taken up much later with the establishment of a separate district of Lahul and Spiti. Now the importance of this area has considerably increased due to its situation on international border of Tibet. Moreover to carry out normal developments in such a remote area were not possible from Kulu or Dharamsala. Keeping all these factors in view Government decided to create Lahul and Spiti as a district in 1960. The district was split up into two sub-divisions *viz* Lahul and Spiti in the same year when it came into existence. The boundaries of these two tahsils and development blocks are conterminus. These sub-divisions are further split up into Panchayat circles as a rule co-extensive with Patwar circles.

Deputy Commissioner

The chief administrative authority within the district vests in the Deputy Commissioner, who more due to single line administration is not only District Magistrate and Collector but for all intents and purposes is also the head of all the district level offices. In addition to the usual and traditional role as Deputy Commissioner he has multifarious duties. As Deputy Commissioner, he is the executive head of the District looking after development, Panchayats, local bodies and civil administration. As District Magistrate, he is responsible for the maintenance of law and order and is the head of Police and prosecuting agency in the district. As Collector he is at the apex of the revenue administration and is responsible for the collection of land-revenue and all dues recoverable as arrears of land-revenue. He is also revenue-judicial authority. He ensures the successful execution of plan-schemes and co-ordinates the functions of all development departments and in fact due to the peculiar circumstances and situation of the area his functions are largely those of a Development Officer. In order to avoid procedural delays and in the interest of early disposal of work, he has been given special and enhanced powers. He has been declared Head of Department for his own office.

In addition to the above the Deputy Commissioner has been invested

with so many other administrative and financial powers. He can effect transfers of non-gazetted staff within the district in respect of staff of all the departments. The Deputy Commissioner is also the punishing authority and is competent to take disciplinary action in matters concerning non-gazetted staff posted in the district. He can order any punishment, short of dismissal and removal from service. This arrangement has been made to ensure smooth working in the area because of its remoteness and peculiar nature.

The concentration of powers in the Deputy Commissioner is primarily due to ensure the speedy disposal of work and execution of development schemes. These arrangements have worked very well. The people, who were hitherto unused to the immediate presence of a high powered executive and were, therefore initially apprehensive that the induction of such an elaborate administrative machinery might mean a certain curtailment of their idyllic freedom, are now convinced that from small *waziris* to a sub-tahsil and then to a full-fledged district, the change has been all along for the better.

There are two tahsils and two sub-divisions in the district namely Lahul and Spiti which are conterminus. The Deputy Commissioner in the district is assisted by the usual complement of ministerial and executive staff. But due to scarce and migratory population the work load is rather light and the employees comparatively are few in every department as compared to other districts. Two Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil) each posted at Keylong and Kaza are invested with powers of Magistrate 1st Class and Collector 1st Grade. The two Tahsildars posted in each tahsil have the powers of the Magistrate Second Class and Assistant Collectors. They have to assist the Sub-Divisional Officers both in Magisterial and in revenue work. Tahsildars in turn are assisted in the revenue work by the field revenue staff.

The following district level officers are the incharge of their respective departments, and work under the supervision and direction of the Deputy Commissioner.

Sl. No.	Department	Designation	Headquarters
1.	Police	Superintendent of Police	(Keylong)
2.	Medical	Chief Medical Officer	(Keylong)
3.	Forest	Divisional Forest Officer	(Keylong)
4.	Development	Block Development Officers	one each at Kaza & Keylong
5.	Panchayat	Panchayat and Development Officer	(Keylong)
6.	Education	District Education Officer	(Kulu)
7.	Public Relations	District Public Relations Officer	(Keylong)
8.	Public Works	Executive Engineer	(Keylong)
9.	Industries	District Industries Officer	(Keylong)
10.	Veterinary	District Animal Husbandry Officer	(Kulu)
11.	Agriculture	District Agriculture Officer	(Kulu)
12.	Co-operation	Assistant Registrar	(Kulu)

CHAPTER XI

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

History of land revenue assessment and management :—The two sub-divisions of this district have their own separate land revenue history. Each of these were settled and assessed to land revenue demand at different dates. Being geographically different from each other they had their own administrative set up in the past.

Nature of rent or land-tax under the Rajas

The whole of Lahul appears to have been, at one time, portioned out among a few petty barons or Thakurs, who were the over lords of whom the villagers held their holdings. Four of these baronial families survived up to the attainment of Independence, two in full and two in partial possession of their estates; the rest are said to have been gradually extirpated by the Rajas of Kulu. Under the Rajas, Thakurs were allowed to exist supreme in their own estates, but had to pay heavy annual tribute or *nazrana* in the form of a certain number of ponies, pieces of cloth, etc. In the rest of the *wazieri* i. e. the *khalsa kothis*, the Raja took the place of the extinct Thakurs and managed the affairs through an official of the rank of a Wazier. The Thakurs, with a following of their tenants, and one man each from holding in the royal *kothis*, were compelled to attend on the Raja at his capital, Sultanpur, for six winter months in a year, and were to do any service, menial or military, that they may be charged with. This was the origin of the present annual emigration of a very large part of Lahul population to their winter quarters at Akhara, a suburb of Sultanpur. The *thal* or land-revenue of Lahul was taken in fixed items of cash, grain and cloth, levied at equal rates on all the *jeolas* in each *kothi*. Generally this was the rule; but sometimes some small differences over rates prevailing between different villages owing to variations of soil or water-supply existed. Another item of revenue was the colt, a filly belonged to the owner of the mare, but all colts born in Lahul went, to the raja in *khalsa kothis* and to the Thakur in *jagir kothis*.

Sikh revenue administration, and arrangements made at summary and Regular Settlement :—

When the Sikhs in 1840 ousted the raja of Kulu, they collected revenue in cash as well as in grain from the *khalsa kothis*, and the *nazrana*

from the Thakurs as before. This area remained under their suzerainty till 1846. They did not demand any other service from the Thakur or landholder in lieu of which they imposed an additional cess, under the name of *betangna*, of Rs. 6 per *jeola*. When three years later the British took over the part of the country from the Sikhs, they found it nominally assessed at Rs. 5,000, which included grazing dues on foreign sheep and fines, besides land-revenue, and excluding the revenue of jagir *kothis*. This was reduced to Rs. 4,200 at once, next year to Rs. 3,200 and at the regular settlement of 1871, to Rs. 2,150 of which Rs. 240 was in the form of a tribute payable by the Thakurs, and Rs. 1,910 as regular land-revenue. When, however, this last sum came to be distributed by the people among themselves over the *jeolas* of the *khalsa kothis* it was found in excess of the old fixed cash assessment. The landholders were not apparently informed that the old grain assessment and other items were abolished. They, therefore, argued among themselves that the excess must be considered as part of the Sikh *betangna*, and distributed it equally on all the *jeolas*, whether in jagir or *khalsa kothis*. In this way on account of this excess, a sum of Rs. 150 out of Rs. 1,910 was made payable by the Thakurs, who raised the money by imposing a new cess on the *jeolas* in their jagirs. The *khalsa jeolas* paid their share of the old cash assessment, plus a rateable share of the rest of the excess. No notice was taken in practice of the *khewat* or rent roll, which had been made out by the Tahsildar of Kulu under the order of Mr. Barnes. All old cesses were lawfully collected, as before, in jagir *kothis*, and in *khalsa* the *Negi* without authority kept back the amount towards requisite of his office. Mr. Barnes had appointed a *Negi* for the whole of Lahul (in place of the *Wiziers*) and one *Lambardar* for each *kothi*. *Pachotra*, or fee ordinarily assigned to the *Lambardars*, was divided between them and the *Negi*. It is not surprising that the *Khewat* was not accepted by the Lahulas for it was in fact in every way a very inaccurate document and was in a form not easily to be understood by them. Two or three hill *Patwari*, were sent over the passes, and brought back to the Tahsildar at Kulu what purported to be appraisements of the arable lands held by the several landholders of each *kothi*. From them the *khewat* was prepared out at Sultanpur. The old cesses were maintained at first even in *khalsa kothis*. After sometime the grain dues ceased to be collected; but the cloth, and the *dharkar* or *rig-gi-tul* (rents of sheep-runs paid by Gaddis) still continued to go into *Negi's* pocket. In 1862, the rents of the sheep-runs were formally granted to *Negi* in recognition of his services. With regard to the colts no definite orders were given; but by about 1868, when the Government directed the *Negi* of Lahul to discontinue a certain tribute which the Lahulas had been customarily paying through him to the representative of the Maharaja of Jammu in Ladakh, *Negi*, of his own accord, ceased taking colts from *khalsa kothis*, on the ground that hitherto he had taken them only as a set-off against the expenses of the tribute in question.

First Revision of Settlement (1871)—At Revision of Settlement in 1871 the sum of Rs. 150, which had erroneously been made payable by the jagir *kothis*, was redistributed over the *khalsa kothis*. It was also found necessary at revision to make a general re-distribution of the land revenue owing to alteration in holdings, but no increase or reduction was made in the amount of the *khalsa* land revenue. At Regular Settlement the actual revenue fixed, including the assessment of the jagirs and all assignments, amounted to Rs. 3,624. The revenue of the jagirs was collected by the *jagirdars* partly in cash and partly in kind, and the value of the payments in kind was included in this sum. Land brought under cultivation subsequent to the Regular Settlement was in the jagir *kothis* assessed as it was broken up and the revenue was collected by the *jagirdars*. In the *khalsa kothis* such land was also assessed as was brought under cultivation, but the revenue went to the common fund of the *kothi* instead of to the Government, as it was considered that the assessment made at the Regular Settlement was fixed for the term of settlement. This was noted in the administration paper prepared at revision. The area brought under cultivation between Regular Settlement and Revision was 83 acres in cultivated land and 94 acres in hay fields, and owing to the enhancement of the revenue of the jagir *kothis* on this account, the actual revenue of the *wizieri* after revision was Rs. 3,744, an increase of Rs. 120.

In the second revision in 1891 the revenue was raised to Rs. 3,024 in the *khalsa kothis*; the jagir *kothis* were assessed at Rs. 1,892, and thus the total revenue came to Rs. 4,916. The cultivated area was roughly measured for the first time. The system by which the jagir revenue used to be partly collected in kind was left unchanged. The *Jagirdars* were considered superior owners and the payments made to them were held by Government to include both revenue and *taliquidari* dues.

In 1911 it was found that the conditions had not changed since 1891. The demand was raised to Rs. 5,762 because it was discovered that the existing demand was much less than what Government should have realised on the basis of half the net assets. It was further revealed that the *khalsa kothis* were lightly assessed as compared to the jagir *kothis*.

In the third revision of settlement the maps and records were revised in July and August 1912 by a small staff of *Patwaris* under two *Kamungos*. A general remeasurement was not attempted but all boundaries of old cultivations were rechaind and doubtful calculations tested by measurement on the spot and corrected where necessary. The work was checked by the Settlement Officer in September and assessment was completed in October.

The value of the gross produce of the *waziri* calculated by applying the

rates of yield and prices already mentioned to the area harvested in 191 was estimated to be Rs. 51,637 and the share to which Government was entitled (22 per cent, as assumed at the previous revision) amounted therefore to Rs. 11,360 or Rs. 3-15-0 per acre of cropped land.

The assessment of the *khalsa kothis*, a guiding *talqaa* rate of Rs. 2 per food-growing acre was adopted. This rate was not justified by any calculation of the value of the produce grown, but was fixed as apparently a fair rate in consideration of the circumstances of the people. But the majority of the hamlets were found to be so small and in many cases the discrepancies between the old and new records in respect of area were found to be so great, that in acreage rate was not a uniformly useful guide and the assessments were more by rule of thumb than by adherence to statistics. No separate assessment was imposed on account of hay fields, from which no direct profit was derived by the agriculturists. The result of the assessment of the *khalsa kothis* was an enhancement of their revenue by 22.26 per cent, from Rs. 3,024 to Rs. 3,697. The demand proposed for Pattan worked out at Rs. 1-8-0 per acre. The incidence of the revenue announced for the *khalsa kothis* on the cultivated (food-growing) area was Rs. 1-13-0 per acre.

The assessment of the *jagir kothis* in 1891 had been in great part only nominal. It included a valuation of the grain and butter taken by the *jagirdars* and also the nominal demand due from holdings held rent free. But the assessment recorded in the Settlement Officer's order was not put into practice by the *jagirdars*. The *jagirdars* kept no accounts and could not say what revenue was paid by each hamlet and could not distinguish between payments paid on account of released *begar* and on account of land revenue. The people expressed a strong desire in *jagir kothis* that the revenue taken in kind from them should be commuted into cash. Payment in kind meant that they had to buy grain for food in Kulu at high prices. The collection of *jagir* revenue in kind had, moreover, been sanctioned on the clear understanding that it was convenient both to the Thakurs and to the zemindars and that the former would always consent to commutation into cash at the rate of 26 seers of barley and 2 seers of butter per rupee. These conditions prevailed no longer, and cash was not always accepted by the *jagirdar*. Finally after discussions at public meetings, both sides agreed that the revenue in kind should be commuted into cash at a new rate of 16 seers of barley and 4 *kachcha* seers of butter per rupee, that is to say at rates 25 per cent higher than those assumed by the Settlement Officer in 1891. The new demand was calculated at the rates mentioned above, and a nominal assessment imposed on holdings belonging to the *jagirdars* which actually paid no revenue. The *jagirdar* of Kolong had already taken almost all his revenue in cash. The incidence of the new revenue on the cultivated fields of the *jagir kothis* (excluding hay fields) was Rs. 2-7-7 per acre.

Mr. Coldstream's assessment was sanctioned with effect from the *kharif* of 1913. The demand for the *waziri* amounted to Rs. 5,762 or 10 per cent more than the revenue sanctioned in 1891. The local rate amounted to Rs 10-6-8 of the land revenue and the *lambardari* cess was 5 per cent of the land revenue collected by each *lambardar*.

Revision of Settlement of 1945-52 :— The revision of record and the general re-assessment of Lahul was sanctioned along with those of Kulu in 1944. In the settlement of 1891-92, no elaborate field maps were prepared in this *waziri*. Each field was chained and the area was taken down in the field map out of the chain measurements. The map was prepared at the same time not conforming to any scale but showing roughly the relative position of the fields. At the settlement of 1912, no change in the records was made. The maps prepared were verified on the spot. In many cases they were found to be based on visual judgement and the *karkuns* (figures showing dimensions of fields) did not tally with the actual dimensions of fields. The Government at the very outset decided that correction in the map should be made where possible and re-measurement be done with the help of *chandras* (pillars) fixed by *Patwaris* in places where map correction was not possible. In actual practice it was revealed that map correction was not possible. Therefore, *chandras* were fixed in all the *kothis* by *Patwaris* and the fields were plotted in the maps with the help of a base line made in each village. The total area recorded in the measurement was 9,187 acres as compared with 7,163 acres at the last settlement. There was an increase of 574 acres in the cultivated area alone. This was mainly due to correct measurement as also due to large areas having been given on *nautor* leases by the Wazier of Lahul during the course of the settlement.

But for the three patches measuring five acres the whole land in Lahul is *abpash*. It is irrigated through small channels taken out from the streams or springs and or even swamps. The streams and the swamps are fed by glaciers. Two of the three *barani* patches are in *Kothi Jahlman*, and one in *Kothi Warpa*. The areas under grass have been classed as *dang*.

The cycle of ten years commencing from 1930-31 to 1940-41 was accounted for the purposes of produce estimate. Government was entitled to a maximum of one fourth of the net assets. While estimating the net assets a reduction of 25 per cent on account of the construction of irrigation channels and retaining walls was allowed. This was on the consideration that the entire cultivation in Lahul depended upon irrigation and the channels were, in many cases, brought from very long distances and required lot of reparation specially after the snow melts. Considerable expenditure is incurred both on construction and maintenance. Thus after deducting this allowance the net assets came to 37.5 per cent and the Government share at $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the net assets worked out roughly to 9.4 per cent. The net

asset estimates worked out to Rs. 53,048 of which maximum Government share at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the net asset was Rs. 13,262.

The soil rates for each class of land were worked out by taking into consideration the total number of crops per acre taken in a year on that particular class of soil and the average yield price assumed for that type of crop. Thus the soil rate in rupees for the *abpash* of Lahul came to be two rupees and four annas (Rs. 2.25). Lahul was formed into a single assessment circle.

After the conclusion of the settlement of 1912 cultivation was introduced in Lahul area. People then developed trade relations with Leh which brought prosperity to the local inhabitants. The standard of living had gradually risen during the previous forty years after 1912. Taking all these factors into consideration, an enhancement of land-revenue to Rs. 6,900 or 20 per cent increase over the old *jama* was considered justified. Leaving aside the income derived from *kuth* and other miscellaneous sources like collection of *karu* and *zira* from Government waste land and the breeding of ponies for hire and sale, the increase of Rs. 1,133 was worked out simply due to the addition in the cultivated area. The incidence of land-revenue on the cultivated area which was Rs. 2/1 per acre remained unchanged during this settlement. The land revenues of *Kothi Kolon*, *Gumrang* and *Gondhla* were assigned to the respective *Jagirdars*. The *Jagirdar* of *Gumrang*, in addition to the assignment of land-revenue of his own *waziri*, also enjoyed assignment of land-revenue of village *Reping*, *Kothi* and *Lindour* of *Shansha kothi*. As the *Jagirdars* were *ala-maliks* in their *kothis*, 15 per cent of the land-revenue assigned to them was appropriated as *taluaquadari* and the balance of 85 per cent as assignment and they paid to Government a *nazarana* of Rs. 300. Though the *kothi* was a revenue estate according to the *Land Revenue Act* but as the conditions differed from village to village in a *kothi*, the total demand was distributed village-wise.

Major Hay a British Revenue Officer described that there were certain discrepancies principally with regard to the grain revenue. Each holding was assessed with a fixed number of measures of grain. Those assigned to the monasteries paid in grain varying in quantity from fifteen to twenty *lakhs* each and formed *Ch'ozhi kothi*. The *khalsa kothis* paid the revenue demand partly in kind and partly in cash, cloth and paper, but the last two items were not assessed on all holdings. The cash assessment of all the holdings in a village was, with very few exceptions, the same though the holding seem to have always differed to some extent in size; the grain assessment varied from one to ten *khals* according to the amount and quality of the land held. The grain items in *khalsa kothis* also had in many cases been

from time to time assigned to monasteries. All the assigned grain was called *bon*, the unassigned grain was called *nethal* or barley tax. The amount collected under *nethal* on the King's account was more than 20 *khals*; but probably those figures represent correctly the amount which went to Ladakh, for the greater part of the grain collections were spent year by year in Spiti in the King's name on certain annual ceremonies and State charges.

From 1839 to 1846 the Sikh *Thanadar* at Ladakh realised the revenue of Spiti. For the first four years Rs. 2,000, plus two ponies and 25 sheep were exacted annually. For the next three years the cash was reduced to Rs. 1,031 but 100 iron crow-bars were added, and the number of sheep increased to sixty notwithstanding the wanton plunder of the valley by the Sikh forces. In the autumn of 1846 Mr. Vans-Agnew made a Summary Settlement, and fixed the amount of revenue demand at Rs. 753. But immediately after the lifting up of the pressure of Sikh exactions, the Spiti people reverted to their old fiscal arrangements. Mr. Vans-Agnew probably knew nothing of the grain revenue assigned to the monasteries, as he merely passed quickly through a part of this sub-division and if he knew of the unassigned grain, he no doubt, intended to abandon it. But the people considered Rs. 753 to be in place of the cash, cloth, and iron formerly paid to the kings of Ladakh, and divided it accordingly with strict regard to the old fixed assessment. The assigned grain or *bon* they paid as before to the monasteries, and the unassigned grain or *nethal* to the representative of the Government, who for the first three years was a wazier of the *Bushahr Raja* and after that was the hereditary wazier of Spiti, commonly called the *Nono*. Most of it the *Nono* expended in the manner customary in time of the King of Ladakh. The balance he appropriated as a perquisite of office. This balance was not very large, as the amount paid by each holding was some what reduced when the *Nono* took charge. At the Regular Settlement in 1851-52 Mr. Barnes maintained the Government demand, the amount fixed by Mr. Vans-Agnew, unaware of the grain payments, and relied upon Major Hay's report for his information, which in this respect was erroneous. He however, sent up a Tahsildar to make out a rough kind of rent-roll or *khewat*. He roughly divided Rs. 753 among all the five *kothis* with reference to the number of holdings in each. Presumably, he must have heard of the grain payment, but he in a huff passed over this item and without making any report to Mr. Barnes, he assessed the holdings in *Ch'ozhi* to pay as much cash as those of the other *kothis*, though they paid ten times as much grain. Not to pay the grain to the monasteries would have been a sacrilege, and would have been resented by the whole community, so the inhabitants of *Ch'ozhi* paid in grain as before, though with much grumbling, which no officer of Government heard or understood.

In 1862 Mr. Lyall submitted a report, in which he recommended *taht*

the *bon* or assigned grain with that part of the *nethal* or unassigned grain which was annually devoted to religious purposes, should be lumped together, and the sum total redistributed equitably by the people on all holdings, that the remainder of the *nethal* should be remitted, and the *Nono* remunerated for the loss of this and other unauthorized collections by an *inam* or grant out of the revenue of Rs. 100 or 150. These proposals were not fully understood by officers who had never seen this area, and no definite orders were passed for some years. Eventually, the *Nono* was given an *inam*, and informed that he must not collect the *nethal*; the monasteries were left to collect the *bon* as before, but it was not formally recognised as assigned revenue. This did not relieve the Ch'ozhi inhabitants of their grievance, but in fact made it worse by comparison for it was the *khalsa kothis* to whom the *nethal* was remitted. Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Division, again represented their case to the Government in 1866, and as Revision of Settlement had then commenced, Mr. Lyall was directed to go to Spiti and redistribute the revenue so as to get rid of their grievances. Mr. Forsyth also recommended the revival of a part of the *nethal* (collections which had practically ceased only for a year or two) to raise a revenue from which to pay the *Lambardars* of *kothis*, and the grant of an increased *inam* at six annas in a rupee on the revenue of Spiti to the *Nono*. These proposals were approved. Eventually Mr. Lyall completely revised the *nethal* collections and drew up a plan for its expenditure which embodied ancient custom for the most part, but introduced an allowance of 40 *khals* to each of the five headmen of *kothis*. The grievances of the Ch'ozhi *kothi* were redressed by redistribution of the cash assessment. They were absolved from payment of more than half the cash revenue which was levied upon the other *kothis*.

At the second revision of the Settlement in 1891 it was found that while the total amount of cash revenue remained fixed at the level of 1871 there was difference in the amount of *nethal* and *bon* from the one fixed in 1871. As regards the *nethal*, the *kothi* Gad-post had been left to collect their annual allowance of 4 *khals* of barley per family themselves without assistance from the *Nono*, who collected the cash revenue and the remainder of the *nethal*, with the result that they were able to levy only 122 instead of 200 *khals*. Of the balance of the *nethal* only 243 *khals* were realized, so that the *nethal* collections amounted to 365 *khals* (cash value Rs. 183) in place of the 457 *khals* fixed at revision. On the other hand, the quantity of *bon* collected on account of the old cultivation was found to be more than the amount stated above by 264 *khals*.

The half net asset revenue was worked out at Rs. 3,726, or double the collections in grain and cash. But it was clear that such an assessment could not be imposed in an area like Spiti, where the crops were inferior

and the grazing ground, fuel, fodder and timber very scarce and scanty. The conclusion arrived at in 1891 after a careful inspection of the Spiti villages was that no increase on the revenue demand except on account of new cultivation was to be effected. The allowances to the monasteries were maintained at the amount they were existing then. Those of the Kye, Thanggyad and Dankhar monasteries had only been slightly modified since the revision of 1871. Where new cultivation was found paying a grain assessment to a monastery the payment was continued as *bon*, an allowance was made for this in the cultivation of the additional cash *khalsa* assessment. As the result of these changes and additions, the amount of assessment of assigned grain stood at 1,701 *khals*, valued at Rs. 851, as compared with 1,462 *khals* valued at Rs. 731, at the revision of 1871 (it may here be noted that *nethal* and *bon* are practically synonymous, the former meaning "grain tax" and the latter "debt, obligation.")

The cash assessment of 1891 amounted to Rs. 824, including the revenue on new cultivation and the sum at which the grain payment was commuted. The total value of the revenue was Rs. 824 as cash, Rs. 229 as *nethal* and Rs. 850 as *bon* making a total of Rs. 1,000. Thus the incidence of the revenue of 1891 was Rs. 1-7-9 per acre of cultivation.

In accordance with a universally expressed desire, not only the cash revenue, but also the *nethal* and the *bon* were distributed within the village with reference to area of the village and then according to the area of each holding. As a result of this it was arranged that the *bon* which had hitherto been collected direct from the people by the lamas should thereafter be collected by the village headman who was also responsible for the rest of the land-revenue.

Cesses were imposed at the revision of 1891 amounting to 8 per cent. On the land-revenue, of which 6½ per cent represented the *Nono's pachotra* and the remainder a school and *harkara* cess; subsequently, on the imposition of a local rate in the district, the amount due on this account on the revenue of Spiti was calculated and demanded, but as there was no *Patwari* or other revenue official in the area, and *Nono* effected the distribution of the rate, which was partly met by the *Nono* himself from his *pachotra* and realised the balance from the *kothi* common funds.

In the summer of 1912 measurements of the cultivated area were carried out for the first time in the history of Spiti. Maps were prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Settlement Officer. This mapping made a great impression on the Spiti people, and the Settlement Officer found that they were more ready to disclose facts, particularly regarding payments to monasteries than before. "Now that the measuring chain" they said, "has come to Spiti, nothing can possibly be hidden, and each *khang-ch'enpa* had been ordered to say what is true."

The revision of the records disclosed great discrepancies between sanctioned arrangements and prevailing practice. In no case had the distribution over holdings, either of the cash or of the grain revenue, been acted upon. The cash revenue paid by each hamlet was the amount fixed in 1891, but it was paid in accordance with the people's ideas or the comparative value of the original holdings of the proprietors, which had long ago ceased to correspond with the area or value of the holdings at the time being. The *nethal* actually collected was found to amount to 308 *khals*. The *Nono's* account showed a total expenditure of 277 *khals* only, against 456 *khals*, as provided for in 1891. The most important divergence between record and practice was in respect of the *bon* collections, which instead of the sanctioned 1,676 *khals* 10 *de* amounted to 2,661 *khals* and 5 *de*.

Some sort of assignment was made in 1891 but ever since there the *Nono* had regularly been making up the deficiency out of his own pocket, a fact, however, of which he was unaware until, 1912. Lastly although by the revision of the assessment the *Nono's* remuneration (6 annas in a rupee) of land-revenue had been raised from Rs. 282 to Rs. 293 in 1891, this was discovered by the *Nono* only in 1905 when the Assistant Commissioner got refunded to him the excess paid into the treasury between 1892 and 1905.

All possible precautions were taken to verify the payments of *bon*. Every landowner was questioned separately and his statement got corroborated by the other owners in the hamlet. After some difficulty, the monastery records were procured and examined. These were found in a very confused state, being only a mass of tattered manuscripts packed without any order into leather boxes.

The heads of the monasteries declared they knew nothing about the records and that their own accounts were inaccurate. At Dankhar a *darbar* was held by the Settlement Officer at which the abbots of all the monasteries, the *Nono* and his servants, the *Patwari* and the majority of the landowners were present. Mr. Peter, Superintendent of the Moravian Mission, gave most useful help as an additional interpreter. Thus many doubtful matters were discussed and cleared up in public. It was asserted that so far as grain collections were concerned, the only significant change that had occurred since Spiti became British territory, was made in the time of Major Hay (1853-57) when certain monasteries agreed to collect a cess less than before because the people were very poor. The people also admitted that, whatever cash revenue was imposed, they would be bound by their religion to continue paying *bon* at the existing rates to the monasteries.

As regards the power to pay the revenue the *waziri* appeared to be in

the same condition as it was in 1891. The people were contented, had sufficient food, and spent nothing on litigation, or on the tours of subordinate officials. On the other hand they had no more surplus cash than they had before and the number of cattle, sheep and goats were not enough to meet their domestic requirements. Certainly prices of grain and ponies had risen, but on the other hand an equal rise had taken place in the price of tobacco, or other luxuries and grain. Circumstances were in short similar to those of the time when Mr. Barne's wrote, "Owing to the political position of the country, which is placed on the remote frontier of our territory, it is advisable to keep the *jama* as light as possible. Any increase would be so objectless."

Accordingly no attempt was made by Mr. Coldstream to raise the revenue generally above what he found it to be. While refraining from enhancing the demand in deference to the apparent increase in the net assets of the *waziri*, the Settlement Officer discovered the holdings hitherto not recorded to add small sums to the cash assessment of several villages. Thus the inequality in the distribution of the previous demand was to a small extent remedied. Unfortunately, however, more than half of the newly recorded cultivation was in *kothi* Ch'ozhi, the gross revenue of which was already comparatively high and adequate. The increase imposed was not with regard to any assumed *talua* rate, but was varied according to the incidence of the previous demand. The revenue demand in cash and kind imposed in 1912 was as follows:—

Kothi	Cash	Bon	Nethal
	Rs.	Khals	Khals
Ch'ozhi	121	1,577	6
Sham	207	261	113
Tod	173	195	91
Barshig	185	342	56
Pin	248	286	42
Total :-	934	2,661	308

The incidence of the nominal demand on the cultivated was area at Rs. 1-5-8 per acre. The incidence of local rate stood at Rs. 7-8-10 per cent of the land-revenue and *pachotra* to the *Nono* amounted to five per cent of the revenue collected by him.

After the expiry of the term of the second regular settlement of 1911-12, by the order of the Punjab Government, this area of the then Kangra district was assessed for the land revenue in 1951-52. This was not a summary settlement but a revision and assessment of then prevailing *jama*. The maps drawn in 1912, were, on scrutiny, found inaccurate; where the inaccuracies were appreciable, remeasurement was carried out. It was noticed that practically there had occurred no changes in the cultivated area, while on the contrary more land had gone *banjar* affording little justification for enhancing the grain contribution in the form of *nethal* and *pun*. The only reason for augmenting the cash demand was attributed to the price rise, since 1912. During the term of the previous settlement revenue demand in this *waziri* was collected without any difficulty. On account of failure of crops in 1917 Rs. 115 were remitted and again due to heavy slump in prices Rs. 142 were remitted in 1931.

In this *waziri* 89 per cent of the area was cultivated by owners themselves and five per cent were occupancy tenants paying half *batai*. The rule of primogeniture applies in this tract. By this rule the eldest son inherits the land, and younger ones are sent as monks, (lamas) to the monasteries. They worship and pray there and are fed from the income of these monasteries. More often when the land is enough, they are also given a small field, by the eldest brother who is called *khang chhenpa* or the great house-man. As soon as he marries, he generally succeeds to the family estate. His father drops to the position of *khang chherpa*, and is allotted a small piece of land with a small house. If the head of the family is tired of the family life and of holding the estate, he negotiates with his monk brother and they exchange places. The elder goes and lives in the monastery, while the younger inherits the property and also becomes the husband of the wife left, and father of the children produced by the former. But this is rare. The land held by monasteries is generally given to the tenants. The tenants-at-will pay half *batai*. There are some fields attached to the Dankhar Fort. These are cultivated by the *Nono*, who enjoys its produce and in return maintains the fort in good condition.

The Assistant Settlement Officer proposed not to interfere in cash *jama* of Rs. 934 and the figures of 2,661 *khals* were allowed to continue, the amount of grain collected as *nethal* was verified and 180 *khals* against 308 *khals* recorded with previous settlement were adopted for future realisation. Thus the total revenue in this assessment comes to Rs 934 as cash, 2,661 *khals* (grain collection) as *pun* and 180 *khals* as *nethal* commuting the grain collection into money valued at the rate of 12 seers per rupee. At that time the total value of grain collection was reckoned at Rs. 2,368. The local rate was levied at the rate of Rs. 15-1-8 per cent of the land revenue and the *Nonos* were allowed five per cent *pachotra* of the land revenue. There were

five *Lambardars* in the *waziri* and each one of them were paid Rs. 20 per annum as a fixed emolument.

The term of this assessment was fixed at 40 years and the new demand was imposed from *rabi*, 1952, which is collected in August-September.

System of Survey and collection of land-revenue.

The system of survey on which the last settlements in this district were effected was the plain table survey by triangulation, suitable for the hilly areas. During the previous settlements no assessment circles were created and every village was assessed on its own merits. Revenue rates are therefore different for each category of land in different villages. The new land (*nautor*) brought under cultivation is assessed on the pattern followed in the assessment which is in operation in the respective sub-divisions of the district.

The land-revenue in Lahul is collected once a year in August. At present it is collected through *Lambardars* under the immediate supervision of Tahsildar. The overall responsibility of collection lies with Deputy Commissioner as Collector. Originally Lahul was one of the two Kulu *wazieris*, which was designated as such because its administration was entrusted almost entirely to Wazier.

Lahul is divided into 14 *kothis*, 4 of which are situated in the Bhaga valley, 4 in Chandra valley and 6 in Pattan valley. The names of these *kothis* are given below :

Valleys	Kothis
Bhaga	Kardang
	Barbog
	Kolong
	Gumrang
Chandra	Khoksar
	Sissu

Pattan	Gondhla
	Goshal
	Tandi
	Warpa
	Shansha
	Ranika
	Jahlman
	Jobrang

A *kothi* comprises village separately assessed to land-revenue. The village here is not synonymous with revenue estate like in other parts of the Pradesh but it is just a hamlet with cultivation around it. It is the *kothi* which is a fiscal unit equivalent to the *mauza*.

In the district, the administration of land-revenue and maintenance of land records is under a Tahsildar, who also works as Superintendent in the Deputy Commissioner's Office.

In Spiti till 1917 there were two kinds of headmen, the *galpo ch'enmo* (headmen) *Lambardars* of *kothis*, and the *gadpo chungun* (little headmen) or *Lambardars* of villages. The *gadpo ch'enmo* received the land-revenue from the village *Lambardars* and authenticated the amount before that was passed on to the *Nono*. They also were in charge of the *begar*, and acted as a sort of privy council for the *Nono* in all matters which were brought before him. They commanded considerable influence and some of them held esteem of the people. They were selected by the *Nono* after obtaining verdict of the people as also of the village *Lambardars*, and such appointments were placed before the Assistant Commissioner for ratification. *Gadpo ch'enmo* held office at the pleasure of the people.

The remuneration of the *gadpo ch'enmo* was at one time the loan of a horse and 5 *dre* (or *de*) of barley meal daily, from their *kothi*, when on actual service: this was commuted in 1891 to 40 *khals* of barley per annum. This arrangement was not however accepted by the people and the *galpo ch'enmo* could only collect 20 *khals*. In 1917 Government made the loss good by assigning to them one-tenth of the land-revenue i.e. Rs. 20 each. The *gadpo ch'enmo* were provided 5 *de* of meal a day during actual service, and were exempted from the ordinary *begar*, but not from load-carrying across the passes.

The custom with regard to *begar* is much the same as in Lahul. Ordinary repairs of roads from village to village were at one time performed by the *khang-ch'enpa* or regular landholders only. It was decided at Revision of Settlement of 1871 that each house and not each holding should furnish a man for repairs of roads, as was the practice in Lahul. For the duty of carrying letters or travellers' baggage across the passes the regular land holders alone were liable, and a roaster or roll of turn-of-duty was maintained. In order to meet the demands of travellers for supplies, about a *khal* of grain was collected from each regular landholder at the commencement of the season. The rates were uniform, and did not vary with the rates of revenue for different villages. At the end of the season, when all the passes were closed, people assembled at Dankhar and settled the common accounts. It was attended by the *Nono* and *galpo* or *Lambardars*, and by some fifty deputies from the five *kothis*.

There are five *kothis* in Spiti namely Todpa, Barshik (pronounced as Barji'), Sham, Chhozhi and Pin. Each *kothi* is a revenue estate and is made up by joining a number of hamlets called *gaons*. The boundaries between the *kothis* in the waste land have not been fixed. A kind of boundary is found to be in existence between villages which are not separated by any large expanse of waste. The villagers tacitly recognised the limits within which they have rights of grazing or cutting grass or wood.

The Collector is assisted by two Tahsildars assisted by the office *Kanungo*, field *Kanungo's* and number of *Patwaris*. There are twenty *Patwar* Circles in the district each looked after by a *Patwari*. The collection of land-revenue is now made through the agency of village headman (*Lambardar*) on the payment of usual commission at the rate of 5 per cent of the collection. The commission is called *pachotra*. The total demand is recovered in one instalment i.e. in the months of August and September. The *Lambardars* take charge of their respective *bachh* papers from the village accountant (*Patwari*) and collect the land-revenue. During the process of collection he can seek the help of the Circle *Patwari* whenever any information is required and difficulty in accounts needs to be set right. The *Patwari*, however, is forbidden to receive any payment or to take any part in the collection of land-revenue. All he is required to do is to assist the *Lambardar* in giving acknowledgement for payments and furnish him with a memorandum commonly called *arzarsal* when the revenue has to be deposited in the Treasury. *Lambardar* deposits the total land-revenue in the tahsil or in the district Treasury as the case may be. He may seek the assistance of the revenue officer for the recovery of arrears, if any. The Tahsildars, Revenue Assistant and the Collector take necessary measures to recover the arrears according to the set procedure laid in the *Land Revenue Act*. The

following table will give yearwise idea of the land revenue demand in the district :—

Year-wise revenue collection (in Rupees)

1960—61	10989—04
1961—62	14272—00
1962—63	10822—00
1963—64	10822—00
1964—65	10798—25
1965—66	10779—35
1966—67	10779—35
1967—68	10779—35
1968—69	10779—35
1969—70	10701—56
1970—71	10679—24
1971—72	10679—24

Other sources of Revenue

In addition to the land-revenue there is among other sources of income the state excise, stamp duty and registration fee etc.

Due to the rigours of climate use of spirits has almost become a part of life and is also a part of rituals. It is most indispensable for the inhabitants of this highland area. So the Government has followed a liberalised excise policy for this district. Local people are allowed to ferment the *chhang* (beer made from barley and rice) and *aara* (wine) but these are strictly for their own consumption. However, there are two country liquor and one foreign liquor vend shops in the district. The following table will show the year-wise revenue earned from those shops from 1965 to 1971.

Year-wise excise revenue

Year	Country Liquor	Foreign Liquor
1965	3,200/-	—
1966	9,400/-	—
1967	22,000/-	14,000/-
1968	16,600/-	9,600/-
1969	14,200/-	12,000/-
1970	11,000/-	15,000/-
1971	11,000/-	15,000/-

The sale of stamps and registration of properties formed a considerable source of income. The following table will show the year-wise figures of income to the State exchequer.

Sl. No.	Year	Non-Judicial Stamps	Court-fee Stamps	Registration	Misc.
1.	1961-62	6933—50	691—25	699—83	245—00
2.	1962-63	9958—00	1725—00	753—85	129—69
3.	1963-64	10320—00	690—00	1860—15	114—75
4.	1964-65	11165—00	1075—00	1241—15	94—75
5.	1965-66	11004—00	850—00	1515—39	141—25
6.	1966-67	11820—00	100—00	2711—25	117—75
7.	1967-68	8460—00	1000—00	2108—65	96—25
8.	1968-69	14679—00	980—00	4347—90	173—25
9.	1969-70	10632—00	1415—00	2794—90	231—75
10.	1970-71	15629—00	1835—00	3978—50	233—75

CHAPTER XII

LAW AND ORDER AND JUSTICE

INCIDENCE OF CRIME

The people are by and large timid, non-quarrelsome and law-abiding, and in spite of their consuming huge quantities of *chhang* and *aara* and in spite of their being rather impulsive in behaviour, they rarely indulge in crime. It is, however, probable that a few minor cases, especially those occurring in the outlying villages in the winter, go unreported. In such cases people having effected compromises with respect to those in their villages, do not bother to bring these to the notice of the police even when some of cases do fall in the category of crimes or offences against the State. The crime has though registered some increase in this district but no special problem is experienced. However, difficulties crop up during investigation of the cases, as generally the local residents do not come forward to give evidence.

Till 1960 there was no police station nor was there any police post till as late as 1943. In the absence of regular departmental functionaries, police and magisterial duties, like most other administrative work, were entrusted to the wazier of Lahul. Lahul's small population homogeneous and peace-loving and traditionally accustomed to some what absolute and feudal authority of the wazier, presented no serious law and order problem. Heinous crime was rare. In view of all this, the institution of the wazier, though not very high-powered, was regarded adequate for the needs of this area which along with that of Spiti was in the jurisdiction of the police station at Kulu. The number of cognizable cases was small and that of non-cognizable cases a little larger, but even in regard to the latter the cases ending in conviction were not at all large as would be seen from Appendix I to this chapter. The statistical table given in Appendix II reveals the position of important crimes.

The bulk of the cases related to hurt and petty quarrels and a few comprised trespass or theft. Long distances and a tendency to settle disputes among themselves, which exists to a great extent even to-day, explains the reasons for such cases going un-noticed.

With the extension of regular police and civil administration after 1940, respect for the rule of law and correct procedure for the redress of

civil and criminal wrongs has progressively increased. In particular, after constitution of the district in 1960 there whatever insecurity and intrigue may have existed earlier on account of petty group domination or partisan or individual wantonness in the absence of authority has almost ended.

Due to the absence of any data prior to the creation of the district on June 30, 1960, crime figures can not be compared with the post 1960 figures.

Communications have improved greatly, civil consciousness among the people has increased and police and magisterial agencies with adequate powers now exist. It is not only the summer population which greatly increases on account of the influx of labour in thousands but Government personnel in larger numbers now reside in Keylong and elsewhere even during winter months. Criminal justice, therefore, is now sought and dispensed in a vastly different context and crime figures are, therefore, available for analysis.

The number of cognizable cases reported to the police has been the highest i.e. 39 in the year 1966 and the lowest i.e. 9 in 1962. Second in number comes the year 1964 when 34 cases were reported. In the rest of years the number of cases remained more or less the same. Generally crime is confined to hurt, burglary, theft and embezzlement of Government money. If these figures show a certain increase, it is because of a greater awareness among the people as to the need for reporting and the increased ability of the authorities to take prompt cognizance and not because of any deterioration in the crime situation. The experience of the last few years, notwithstanding the increase in figures, shows that the area continues to be as peaceful as in the past and the incidence of serious crime as low as before. The criminal litigation that has come up in the last few years does not point to any factional origin nor to any definite trend in the direction of particular types of crime.

Economic condition of the people is much better now than in the past because of opening of Manali-Keylong Road. People can now transport their cash crops at much cheaper rates to the other parts of the country and their better economic condition has had no effect on crime what-so-ever. While basically the area has always remained peaceful, it was during the decade 1931-40 that the even tenor of life in the district received perceptibly the tremors of the social unrest that was generated by the extraordinary prosperity which among others, *kuth* cultivation brought to the people. With that arose the challenge to the feudal authority of the *wizarat*. Notes by successive Assistant Commissioners of Kulu on the law and order and crime situation between 1935-40 indicate that criminal litigation of the time was largely an expression of the growing

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antagonism between the hostile camps, one siding with the established authority and the other opposing it. In 1935 was reported the first murder in Lahul in which complainants were the mission representatives and the opponents who were also the accused were certain leading Thakurs of Lahul. The case was not registered with the police station, Kulu. The District Magistrate, Kangra, however, arrested some Thakurs from Kolong and detained them at Keylong for a few days after which they were let off without any proceedings or trial as there was no evidence against them. The Thakurs contended that the deceased had died a natural death and the murder story against them was malicious and defamatory. They threatened to sue the complainants for damages but some of the complainants tendered written apologies and the matter ended there.

The methods for combating crime are modern and scientific. Finger prints are not indented in the district but are referred to the Finger Prints Bureau at Phillaur.

ORGANISATION OF POLICE

The above incident created once for all a situation which in subsequent years made Government think in terms of providing a direct police and magisterial machinery as part of a regular though small administrative set-up for Lahul. Eventually in 1943, a seasonal police post with one Assistant Sub-Inspector and six Constables was set up at Keylong where it functioned for the summer months till 1948 when it was made permanent. The Keylong police post was part of the District Police of Kangra under the Superintendent of Police at Dharamsala. This arrangement continued till 1960 when with the formation of a separate district of Lahul and Spiti, a police station was established at Keylong and a police post at Jispa. A Deputy Superintendent of Police for the district was posted at Keylong that year. In 1963 the post was upgraded and a Superintendent of Police was posted. At present the district has two police stations located at Keylong and Kaza and one police post at Jispa. The following statement will show the 1972 strength of police in the district.

	S.P.	Dy. S. P.	Inspectors	S. Is.	A. S. Is.	Head Constables	Constables	Steno/typist
Civil Police								
Permanent	—	—	—	2	3	6	44	—
Temporary	1	—	1	—	—	6	18	1
Emergency	—	—	—	—	1	13	56	—
Himachal Armed Police	—	—	1	—	4	15	105	—

The Himachal Armed Police personnel are posted at Kaza, Kibber, Lillung and Jispa. Their main duty is to check infiltration from Tibet. However, they are also liable to be called for law and order duty as and when the district police is inadequate to cope with any situation. The company though forms a part of Himachal Police Battalion but is under the administrative control of the Superintendent of Police. There is no prosecuting staff in this district which depends on Kangra district in this respect. The cases being very few prosecuting staff has not been felt.

The police administration manages two wireless stations. The total annual expenditure to maintain the district police force from 1960 onwards is as under :—

Year	Expenditure in rupees
1960	1,33,211
1961	2,76,380
1962	3,65,845
1963	4,63,166
1964	6,22,052
1965	6,48,652
1966	7,00,611
1967	14,06,729
1968	15,68,173
1969	18,52,902

FIRE SERVICES

Only two fire accidents took place in the year 1966 in which Block Development Officer's office and wireless station at Keylong were completely gutted. Property worth Rs. 37,305 was damaged. No fire service organisation exists in the district.

Anti-corruption Squad :

There is no anti-corruption organisation in the district and the work is being carried out by the Anti-Corruption Unit of Himachal Pradesh which is a state wide organisation. If any case comes to the notice of the district police, it is registered and investigated without consultation with Anti-Corruption Unit. For the time being there is no proposal to form anti-corruption cell as a part of the district police. The district police investigated two cases under the *Prevention of Corruption Act* in the year 1966.

JAILS AND LOCK-UPS

There is no jail in the district. However, there are judicial lock-ups at Keylong and at Kaza in the police station buildings. The accommodation is poor but non-bailable cases being few, the lock-ups have seldom been used. Earlier when the wazir of Lahul held charge of the administration, he was responsible for the safe custody of prisoners. A separate judicial lock-up is going to be shortly constructed along with other buildings at the headquarters.

JUSTICE

After the Sikh rule ended and the British rule commenced, there was no judicial authority for criminal and civil work till 1861. In 1861 the then *Negi* of Lahul was, for the first time, given the powers of a Magistrate III Class, and a Sub-Judge IV Class. Since 1876 the *Negi's* post was changed into that of a wazir and successive wazirs exercised these powers. After 1932 the wazir of Lahul was given the powers of a Magistrate II Class. Later the *Naib* Tahsildar who took over from the wazir was also given powers of a Magistrate II Class and of a Sub-Judge IV Class. Prior to the appointment of a *Naib*-Tahsildar justice was naturally not administered according to the coded laws. Cases were often decided by prominent persons of the area under the guidance of a wazir. Because of his lack of knowledge of law, the wazir did not always decide cases in the way a normal court would but it served the local purpose.

In Spiti before the year 1950, all criminal cases, except murder, were tried by the *Nono* and his council of five *Gadpo Chenmos*. The proceedings were never reduced to writing and all sentences were in the form of fines which were generally paid to the complainants. The proceedings were rather unorthodox and simple but provided rough and ready justice through protracted

negotiations between the council and the parties over scores of *lhumsas* (pitchers) of *chhang* and *aara*, and on payment of some amount of compensation to the party aggrieved. Compromises were effected in most of the cases. In other cases where statements on oaths of the parties could not decide matters, the court resorted to the drawing of lots for finding the party at fault. In 1950 the powers of the *Nono* were reduced to that of a honorary Magistrate III class, beyond which cases were supposed to be tried by the Assistant Collector, Kulu. With the creation of the district such cases are now a days being tried by the Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) as Sub-Divisional Magistrate and the Tahsildar (as Magistrate II Class). The present *Nono* is not having any criminal powers.

While passing through Spiti, Shri G. D. Khosla has described a very interesting and vivid account on the 'court of the *Nono*' in his book* which is reproduced here verbatim. ".....The *Nono* is the descendant of the titular chiefs of Spiti. Chhewang Tobge, the present incumbent of the post, has no real power or authority, though he enjoys certain privileges granted by the government, and commands a certain amount of respect and influence in the valley. Under the Spiti Frontier Regulation of 1878 he exercises the magisterial jurisdiction, and can try all offences except murder. But the only sentence he can award is a sentence of fine. He cannot deal with civil disputes. These must be heard by the Assistant Commissioner or by the subordinate judge of Kulu. The *Nono* is also responsible for the collection of the land revenue. In this work he is assisted by a kind of privy council, consisting of village headmen who receive the revenue from the cultivators before passing it on to him, and also advise him on a variety of matters. The headmen are appointed by the *Nono* in consultation with the villagers. The appointments require ratification by the Assistant Commissioner. Another privilege conferred on the *Nono* is the right to cultivate some government land in Dangkar village and take its produce. In return he is required to keep the Dangkar fort in repair. His personal holding, which is no inconsiderable, is situated in his home village Kyuling.

.....But despite these trappings of office and dignity, the *Nono* is what is usually called 'a dope' in more senses than one. He knows no Urdu or Hindi and could not talk to us without an interpreter. Even in his own language he is sparing of speech and we seldom saw him talking to anyone but the Tahsi *Nono*, a kind of *Pooh-Bah* who acted as his deputy, clerk, interpreter and general factotum.....

My chief reason for making an official inspection of his work was that he had been exceeding his powers and inflicting sentences of imprisonment in some cases. Not content with passing orders which were clearly illegal, he had carried them out in a most barbarous manner. The

*Khosla G. D. *Himalayan Circuit*, p.p. 118-23.

offenders, after conviction, were incarcerated in a horrible cell at Dangkar, which consisted of a small room built on the top of a tower of rock. Two sides of this cell were enclosed by a natural precipice several hundred feet high, and on the remaining two sides strong walls of stone had been built. There was no door to this room and a small hole looking over the precipice admitted a few rays of light and served as a ventilator. The prisoner was lowered into this dark hole through a small opening in the roof which was immediately covered with a large stone, and in this dungeon he served out his sentence, alone and unattended. His food was supplied by the complainant, who lowered it down to him once a day through the opening in the roof. The rations, it may be expected, were scanty, and not infrequently the complainant was guilty of gross negligence in discharging his obligation.

I was assured by every one I questioned that this practice had ceased, but my enquiries left me with an uneasy suspicion that a sense of loyalty to the Nono might have inspired a conspiracy of silence. I had no means of determining the truth of the matter. However, I consoled myself with the thought that nobody will suffer in silence beyond a certain limit, and had there been instances of cruel treatment the people would most certainly have spoken to us, for they knew that we represented the power of the State.

The Nono's court had no fixed location. He tried cases at the spot and dispensed a kind of rough and ready justice. Fortunately the Spitians are a peace-loving people and serious crime is a rare occurrence in the valley. During the years 1948 and 1949 the Nono had heard only eight cases of a petty nature. I turned over the pages of his register and read the entries: stealing a cloak-fine Rs 5; causing simple hurt-offence compounded; stealing sheep-fine Rs. 10; seducing a married woman-accused acquitted... There was not much to see in the court files. The Tashi Nono did all the work. He drew up the complaint at the instance of the aggrieved party; he recorded the complainant's statement wrote out the order of the court, took down the depositions of the witness and the plea of the accused person, and after the conclusion of the hearing he wrote out a judgment which the Nono pronounced. The Nono himself was little more than a silent spectator of the entire proceedings

Upto June 1960 the headquarters of the Deputy Commissioner remained at Chandigarh and it actually started functioning here from July, 1960. Before its formation there was sub-tashil Lahul at Keylong under the administrative control of the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra/Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil), Kulu. In the beginning five criminal courts functioned in the district. They are the court of the District Magistrate-cum-Magistrate Ist Class at Keylong; the court of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate Lahul with powers of Magistrate Ist Class at Keylong; the court of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Spiti with powers of Magistrate Ist Class at Kaza;

the court of the Tahsildar, Lahul with powers of Magistrate II Class at Keylong and the court of the Tahsildar, Spiti with powers of Magistrate I Class at Kaza.

Besides the Deputy Commissioner, Lahul & Spiti the Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil), Lahul & Spiti were also vested with the powers of Subordinate Judges of II and III class respectively. These powers were delegated to these officers in November, 1961 and since then powers were exercised by these officers by virtue of their offices. The Deputy Commissioner being the Subordinate Judge of the II Class can try civil cases upto the value of Rs. 5,000 while the Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil) Lahul and Spiti being the Subordinate Judges of III Class upto the value of Rs. 2,000. There are no separate civil powers of a Magistrate Ist Class. Lahul also exercised the criminal powers of a Magistrate Ist Class. Accordingly, Naib-Tahsildars for Spiti and Lahul were vested with the criminal powers of a Magistrate II Class for Spiti and Lahul Sub-Divisions respectively, from November 1967. The Naib-Tahsildar, Lahul exercised these powers upto 23.11.1969. The Tahsildar, Spiti at Kaza is exercising the powers upto 23.11.1969. In Lahul Sub-Division of a Magistrate Ist Class since January 22, 1969. In Lahul Sub-Division the Sub-Divisional Magistrate exercised the powers of a Magistrate Ist Class from 17.11.1966 to 16.12.1967. In Spiti, an I.A.S. Sub-Divisional Magistrate exercised the powers of Magistrate Ist Class from 30.11.1966 to 11.6.1967 and another I.A.S. Sub-Divisional Magistrate from 2.9.1967 to 29.6.1969. The present Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) Spiti is exercising the powers of Magistrate II Class since 23.1.71. In Lahul there is no Sub-Divisional Magistrate at present and the criminal courts functioning in the district are; the court of the District Magistrate-cum-Magistrate Ist Class at Keylong; the court of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate-cum-Magistrate II Class Spiti at Kaza; the court of Tahsildar-cum-Magistrate II Class Spiti at Kaza; the court of Tahsildar-cum-Magistrate I Class Spiti at Kaza; and the court of Tahsildar-cum-Magistrate II Class Lahul at Keylong.

Due to the existence of peculiar historical and traditional ideas about justice and its administration, people in Spiti still seem to rely on the solution of a compromise, effected through the village councils or other notables, instead of getting matters and disputes decided on strict legal principles. This is possibly due to the non-familiarity of the people with ideas, principles and methods of this rather alien and quite formal system of justice.

The following table in regard to the criminal cases tried in the district in the year 1961, the first year after the district was set up, gives an idea of the nature of offences :-

Cases	Convicted	Acquitted	Total
Hurt—323 I.P.C.	1	4	5
Criminal assault—352 I.P.C.	—	1	1
Theft—379-380 I.P.C.	1	5	6
Cheating—420 I.P.C.	—	1	1
Mischief 426 I.P.C.	—	1	1
Criminal trespass	—	5	5
Offences relating to marriage—498 I.P.C.	—	1	1
Indian Passport Act	—	1	1
Foreigners Act 14, 1946	—	2	2
Motor Vehicles Act	2	—	2
Breach of peace	1	1	2
(bound down) (discharged)			

Besides the above, 18 petitions for maintenance under section 488 of the Code of Criminal Procedure were tried in Lahul between 1961-64. These petitions are more in the nature of civil cases although these are disposed of under the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure. These petitions involved very old cases of neglect of wives by husbands or their refusal to allow them to stay in the house. Fifteen applications have been decided and three are pending. Of those decided, only one resulted in a maintenance order by the court, the rest having been compromised or dismissed. These proceedings have had a salutary effect in that in respect of the past cases. There has been an assertion and vindication of women's rights in many cases and for the future they are a deterrent against neglect or ill-treatment of married women.

The *Punjab Separation of Judicial and Executive Function Act, 1964* was not made applicable to the scheduled areas of Lahul & Spiti. Thus the judiciary has not been separated from the executive and these are still functioning jointly in this district.

Panchayat Adalats—*Nyaya* panchayats do not function here. However,

gram panchayats are empowered to entertain the criminal and civil suits. The number of panchayats are nine. The *sarpanches* are duly elected. Separate *nyaya* panchayats will be formed as soon as the election of *gram* panchayats are held in accordance with the provisions made in the *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act 1968*. The criminal jurisdiction of a *gram* panchayat is confined to the trial of offences specified in schedule II of the *Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act*. The panchayats can award maximum sentence or a fine not exceeding Rs. 100. An appeal and revision lie against an order passed by the panchayat to the District Magistrate or Collector of the district. The District Judge in respect of civil suits or the Collector in respect of revenue suits are exercising supervisory and administrative control. The territorial jurisdiction of a panchayat is entire *gram sabha* area in which offence was committed. The tenure of a panchayat is five years.

APPENDIX I

Statement showing the crime figures from the year 1958 to 1969.

Year	All reported crime	Nature of reported crime	Reported crime under classes I to V	Convicted	Acquitted	Percentage conviction to reported	Percentage of conviction cases tried out	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1958-59				Null				
1960	16	Class II 354 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class II 324/325/326 I.P.C.	3	2	—	66.66%	66.66%	
		Class V 379/380 I.P.C.	5	1	2	20%	33.33%	
		Class V 409 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Total	10	3	3	—	—	
1961	22	Class II 324/325 I.P.C.	3	1	—	33.33%	50%	
		Class III 451/448 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class III 454/457/380 I.P.C.	8	—	2	—	—	
		Class IV 337 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100	
		Class V 379/380 I.P.C.	5	2	1	40%	66.66%	
		Total	18	4	4	—	—	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1962	9	Class II 353 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II 326 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II 302 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class V 380 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class V 406 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Total	5	2	1	—	—	
1963	15	Class II 325 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class III 451/452/448 I.P.C.	2	—	1	—	—	
		Class V 379/380 I.P.C.	4	1	—	25%	100%	
		Class V 406 I.P.C.	4	2	—	50%	66.66%	
		Total	11	4	1	—	—	
1964	34	Class I 467/471 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class II 324/325/ 326 I.P.C.	3	—	1	—	—	
		Class III 392	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class III 457/380 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class IV-337 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class IV-337/286 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Class V-379/380 I.P.C.	2	1	—	50%	100%	
		Class V-406 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Total I:—	11	3	3	—	—	
1965	25	Class I 224 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II-302 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II-324 I.P.C.	2	1	—	50%	50%	
		Class II-354 I.P.C.	2	—	1	—	—	
		Class III-392 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class III 430 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class III-435/506 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class III-451 I.P.C.	1	—	1	—	—	
		Class III-457/380 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class IV-385/342/ 453 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class V-379/380/ I.P.C.	2	1	—	50%	50%	
		Class V-408 I.P.C.	2	—	—	—	—	
		Total	16	7	3	—	—	
1966	39	Class II 304-A I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class II 324 I.P.C.	4	2	—	50%	50%	
		Class II-353 I.P.C.	2	1	1	50%	50%	
		Class II-364 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Class V-379/380 I.P.C.	6	1	—	16.66%	100%	
		Class V-409 I.P.C.	5	1	—	20%	100%	
		Class V-420/465 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Total :—	20	7	1	—	—	
1967	21	Class II-304 A I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II-325 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class III-429 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class III-457/380 I.P.C.	4	1	1	25%	50%	
		Class V 379/380 I.P.C.	3	2	—	66.66%	100%	
		Class V 409 I.P.C.	3	3	—	100%	100%	
		Total :—	13	7	1	—	—	
1968	26	Class II 307 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class II 324 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class II 353/332 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class II 354 I.P.C.	1	1	—	100%	100%	
		Class III 454/380 I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Class V-379/380						
		I.P.C.	6	3	—	50%	100%	
		Class V-409						
		I.P.C.	3	1	—	33.33%	100%	
		Total :—	14	6	—	—	—	
1969	25	Class II 304 A						
		I.P.C.	1	—	—	—	—	
		Class 325						
		I.P.C.	4	—	—	—	—	
		Class III 457/380						
		I.P.C.	6	1	—	16.66%	50%	
		Class V 379/380						
		I.P.C.	3	2	—	66.66%	100%	
		Class V 409						
		I.P.C.	4	—	—	—	—	
		Total :—	18	3	—	—	—	

APPENDIX II

Important crimes

	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Murder												
Reported	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dacoity												
Reported	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Robbery												
Reported	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Riots												
Reported	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
House-Breaking												
Reported	—	—	—	8	—	—	1	1	—	4	1	6
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1
Acquitted	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—

	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Kidnapping												
Reported	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
House Trespass & Lurking												
<i>House Trespass</i>												
Reported	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
Serious Mischief & cognate												
Offences												
Reported	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Convicted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquitted	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Theft												
Reported	—	—	5	5	1	4	2	2	0	3	6	3
Convicted	—	—	1	2	—	1	1	1	1	2	3	2
Acquitted	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

CHAPTER XIII

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The departments concerned with general and revenue administration and with Law and Order in the District have been dealt with in Chapters X, XI and XII and those dealing with Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Co-operatives, Forests, Industries, Public Relation and Public Works are dealt with briefly here in respect of their organisational set-up, their activities having been discussed elsewhere in this volume.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT

At the district level there is a District Animal Husbandry Officer with his headquarters at Keylong to look after the Animal Husbandry work in the district. He is under the administrative control of the Director of Animal Husbandry H. P. Simla. The District Animal Husbandry Officer is assisted by 5 trained Veterinary Assistant Surgeons and 16 Trained Compounders Stock Assistants. The department looks after veterinary dispensaries, artificial insemination centres, welfare of animals, poultry farms, dairy farms etc. in the district and is responsible for bringing about an improvement in the quality of livestock and poultry. The department is chiefly responsible for the development and treatment of livestock and poultry and other animals. There are 4 Veterinary Hospitals at Keylong, Kiriting, Gondhla and Kaza and 6 dispensaries at Sissu, Goshal, Gemur, Hansa, Poh and Sangnam, with qualified Veterinary Surgeons and Veterinary Assistants. The various technical personnel of the department treat animals and poultry for ailment and attend to control epidemic, castration of scrub male animals and artificial insemination of cattle. There is a rural sheep breeding centre at Keylong. The object of this centre is to supply selected stud rams of woolly breed to the accredited shepherds selected in the several villages, to establish controlled flock among shepherds, to serve as rural stud producing units by offering subsidies and to introduce collective breeding for improvement of the stock.

Special achievements

In sheep development Hissar dale were distributed by the Animal Husbandry Department on 50% subsidy in Lahul valley and 100% subsidy

in Spiti valley. The result achieved specially in Pattan valley of Lahul are very encouraging. To up grade the local breed of cattle which is non descriptive uneconomical, due to poor milk yield, Jersey crossed bulls were supplied through block agencies and the results are encouraging. To give incentive to the people of the district for the yak breeding, male yaks were supplied free of cost.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

The District Agriculture Officer is responsible for the development of agriculture in the District. He is under the administrative control of the Director of Agriculture with headquarters at Simla.

The District Agriculture officer is assisted by a team of specialists in botany, chemistry, engineering, marketing and horticulture who are to take the result of research from their laboratories to farmers in the field and train the Village Level Workers and the Agriculture Extension Supervisors in the different blocks. The owner cultivators adopt the agricultural improvements suggested by the Department. Field demonstrations of the standing crops and other improved practices are held during every season. Publicity work is carried out by the Agricultural Demonstrators. The department has a depot wherein improved seed, manures etc., are stocked for sale. There is a small Agricultural Research Station at Keylong. The aims of this station are to do comprehensive plant breeding, agronomic researches on cereals and pulses and multiplication of improved varieties of seeds.

The Government have given certain general powers of superintendence and control to the D.A.O. who in his day to day work appoints by himself certain category of officials lower in rank than Agricultural Demonstrators. He has powers to transfer, grant leave and to sign contingent and travelling allowance bills of all subordinate staff lower in rank. In certain circumstances, the D.A.O. is empowered to sanction temporary advances from the G.P.F. He can incur expenditure on purchase of stores up to the extent of Rs. 150.

FOREST DEPARTMENT

The Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu is in charge of the forests in the District. He functions under the control of the Conservator of Forests, Kulu circle and exercises most of the powers of the Conservator of Forests. There are 2 ranges with their headquarters at Keylong & Jalma. The ranges are managed by the Range officers who are assisted by the subordinate staff.

The Revenue and Forest Departments are closely interconnected in their work. Afforestation and de-afforestation are practically the functions

of the Revenue Department owing to the fact that the public rights in land proposed for afforestation have to be settled by that department. Working plans for the management and development of forests are prepared solely by the Divisional Forest Officer. He is directly responsible for the protection, exploitation and regeneration of forests according to sanctioned working plans and also for execution of works under Five Year Plan schemes. He conducts sales, enter into contracts, realises revenue and controls expenditure. In short, he is responsible for forest administration and management in all matters relating to technical forest operations.

The Ranger is an executive in-charge of his range. He is responsible for carrying out with the help of Deputy Rangers and Guards all works under his charge, such as the marking, reservation and felling of trees, transport of timber, fuel, etc, to the sale depots, sowing, planting, tending and other silvicultural operations.

The Range officer and his staff protect the forests, detect forest offences, collect revenue from permit holders and generally supervise the work of the Forest Guards.

Next to the Range Officer, there are Forest Guards, and below the Forest Guards, there are the Beat Guards. They assist the Range Officer in the administration of the range.

They repair and maintain forest boundary marks, execute silvicultural works and perform other duties as ordered by the Range Officer.

There are no roads maintained by the Forest Department in the district.

CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT

The Co-operative Department in the Lahul and Spiti District is under the administrative charge of B. D. O. Keylong who is a gazetted officer. Administratively, he is responsible for the organisation of the Co-operative movement and for supervision and guidance of various types of societies in his charge. He is assisted by a number of Inspectors and ministerial staff. The societies are audited once in a year according to rules in force.

The Supervisors and Co-operative Extension Officers are expected to visit the societies often and inspect the accounts at the end of every quarter. The field staff attends to the supervision work of agricultural credit societies and also to the scrutiny of loan applications of the primary co-operative credit societies and to the loan disbursement work. The supervision and inspection of non-agricultural and agricultural non-credit societies is

attended to by the aforesaid officer. The B. D. O. Keylong who also functions the District Civil Supplies Officer has to attend the monthly meetings of the co-ordination committee held under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner.

The object of co-operative movement in the District has been to provide a regular and more resourceful agency for rural credit.

DISTRICT STATISTICAL OFFICE

The District Statistical Office, for two districts namely Kulu and Lahul and Spiti came into existence on 1st April, 1964 and started functioning in May, 1964. The District Statistical Officer is the head of office at the district level. He is assisted by the three Technical Assistants and other ministerial staff. He is responsible to the Director of Economics and Statistics. The Statistical Office remained engaged on co-ordination and improvement of statistics at the district level as collected by different offices and to make them readily available in a compact form for use of the Government and for reference by the public; and collection of data through periodic and ad-hoc surveys on various topics being conducted by the department.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The district is included within the jurisdiction of two Executive Engineers namely Chenab valley Division, Udeypur and Lahul and Spiti Division with headquarters at Kaza. These divisions have further 4 and 5 sub divisions in charge of Sub Divisional Officers (Assistant Engineers) respectively. These Sub-Divisional Officers (Assistant Engineers) are responsible to their respective Executive Engineers in charge of the division for the management and execution of works within the sub-divisions. The Chenab Valley division falls under the 6th Circle, H.P.P.W.D. Kulu. The headquarters of this division remains at Udeypur for 6 months (summer) and 6 months at Mandi (winter). Similarly the working season of the 2nd division namely Lahul and Spiti division is from June to September every year. Likewise the headquarters of this division is shifted to Kulu during winter months i.e. October to May. The sub-divisions are further divided into sections which are in the charge of Sectional Officers.

The Executive Engineer receives orders from the departmental superiors, the head of the administration, or other civil officers duly authorised, except in the case of works considered urgent. He is

required to report immediately to the Superintending Engineer any important accident or unusual occurrence connected with his division. He may transfer supervisions who are not incharge of the sections as he thinks best within his own jurisdiction. He is further responsible for seeing that the surveying and mathematical instruments in his division are properly cared for and reports on their condition to the Superintending Engineer at the end of each working season. It is the duty of the Executive Engineer to furnish to the Treasury Officer and Sub-Treasury Officers after due inspection certificates as to the security of strong rooms used or proposed to be used for the storage of cash. He in addition to his other duties, will be considered to be ex-officio Professional Advisor of all departments of administration within the limits of his charge.

The department is responsible for the construction of new plan scheme roads which, after completion, are ultimately handed over to the Public Works Department for maintenance, repairs and construction of Government roads, bridges and minor irrigation works. The department also takes the deposit works.

INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT

The office of the District Industries Officer came into existence in November, 1963. He assists the Deputy Commissioner as well as Director of Industries in industrial development of the district, specially in small scale and cottage industries sector. He enquires into the needs of various industrial units for controlled articles and also recommends for industrial loans. He is assisted by a team of experts. Two Extension Officers one in each block i.e. Keylong and Kaza are also assisting the District Industries Officer through the Block Agency for the development of small scale industries in the district. At the state level the District Industries Officer is responsible to the Director of Industries, Himachal Pradesh, Simla.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

On the formation of this district, all district level offices were created except the Public Relations Department. In 1961 a Cinema Operator cum Radio Mechanic with one class IV employee was posted. Thereafter in 1964 two posts of Field Publicity Assistants were created and filled in the year 1967, The posts of Field Publicity Assistants were converted into that of the Assistant Public Relations Officer. In February, 1970 a District Public Relations Officer, was also posted in this District. Now the staff position

of the Publicity Department in this district is as below :—

Sl. No.	Posts	Sanctioned Strength
1.	D.P.R.O.	One (Vacant)
2.	A.P.R.O.	Two (Keylong and Kaza)
3.	Assistant Radio Engineer	One (Vacant)
4.	Radio Mechanic	One
5.	Cinema Operator	One
6.	Peon	Three (one contingent paid)
7.	Clerk	One

This department is represented by the District Public Relations Officer who maintains a reading room-cum-information centre at the district headquarters where all leading news papers and periodicals are kept. He is assisted by two Assistant Publicity Officers, an Assistant Radio Engineer, a Radio Mechanic and miscellaneous office establishment. He keeps the state Government in direct liaison with the tribal people of the district by publicising its policies and programmes. He handles the distribution of Government publicity literature for the coverage and publication of Government news. Forty eight community listening sets were installed up to the end of 1971 and during the year 1971-72, 28 community listening sets were replaced by new transistorised sets and 5 new transistors sets were installed. The community listening sets installed in the rural areas under the community listening scheme are proving very helpful. He organises public meetings and rural conferences at which dramatic and cultural performances, cinema shows, and exhibitions are organised. He conveys public reaction to Government policies to the district and the state authorities.

CHAPTER XIV

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

There is no municipal or small town committee in the district. Formerly, Lahul formed a part of Kangra district and accordingly the District Board Kangra looked after the development and sanitary functions in rural areas. A network of schools was managed by the board till their provincialisation in 1957. Besides, the civil dispensary at Keylong was managed by the board which was taken over by the Health Department in 1953. The board maintained *serais* (inns) at Khoksar, Gemur, Sumdo, Zingzing Bar, Kinlung and Serchu which served as halting places for the traders going to Ladakh and Tibet. It also gave grant for minor repairs of paths and *jhoola* bridges over the rivers. After the formation of Lahul and Spiti as a separate district, the District Board, Kangra, ceased to have its control over this district.

PANCHAYATS

Before the Independence, the Government paid little attention to the administration of the area. In the Lahul sub-division it was run through the agency of a Wazir and this office was held by the Tnakur of Keylong. He was to look after the preservation of law and order, land revenue and forest management. The development work was negligible. Though he was vested with the full authority, but he generally referred cases of disputes to respectable persons of village concerned. These unofficial congregations of elders called panchayats have existed till present day. Though panchayats as understood now did not exist but there was a body of local men which used to settle most of the differences amongst the people. The process of law courts was very expensive and cumbersome. It was beyond the approach of the commoners. More so, the geographical location of the area forced the local inhabitants to resolve their disputes and differences in their own villages. Approaching the court for the settlement of any dispute was looked down upon by the local inhabitants. So in the olden days *sehna* used to dispense justice by properly hearing both the parties. An oath of Lord Buddha used to be administered to testify the truth of the statement. The verdict of the *sehna* was binding on the parties and in case of a breach the matter was referred to the police or the courts. This system was in vogue and embraced almost all sorts of disputes and quarrels. The accused

party was required to tender an apology and also compensate the aggrieved party. The *sehnas* were highly impartial people and men of integrity. However, regularly constituted panchayats did not exist till November, 1944, when 13 panchayats were formed. In October, 1945, another panchayat at Khoksar was constituted. During 1961 Panchayat Elections, Jhalman panchayat was bifurcated and another panchayat at Mooring was formed thus bringing the total strength of panchayats to 15.

The names and location of panchayats are as follows :—

- (1) Mooring, (2) Jalma, (3) Jobrang, (4) Shansha, (5) Ranika
(6) Warpa, (7) Tandi, (8) Gumrang, (9) Keylong, (10) Barbog,
(11) Kardang, (12) Gushal, (13) Gunghala, (14) Sissu and
(15) Khoksar.

The civil, administrative and judicial functions of panchayats were considerably enhanced in August, 1960, by an amendment to the *Punjab Gram Panchayat Act, 1952*. This provides for the establishment of a panchayat for a group of villages having population of not less than 500 persons. A joint panchayat for villages with a lesser population was formed by grouping together the contiguous villages, so as to make it a viable group of 500. This criterion has however, been ignored in Lahul on account of its sparse population. Till recently the Harijan and women *panches* were not nominated. The *Punjab Act, No. 26 of 1960* provided that if no woman is elected as a *panch* of any *sabha*, the women candidate securing the highest number of votes amongst the woman candidates in that election was co-opted by the panchayat as a *panch* of the *sabha* and where no such woman candidate was available the prescribed authority co-opted a woman member of the *sabha* who was otherwise qualified to be elected as *panch*.

The strength of *panches* was increased to 7 in 1953-54 and in order to facilitate giving representation to the Harijan population this number was again raised to 10 in 1961. Thus the Scheduled Castes are adequately represented in the panchayats. As far as the women *panches* are concerned, none of the women came forward to be elected as a *panch* till 1960. However, in 1961 elections, 7 women *panches* were co-opted as *panches* at Gumrang, Ranika, Gushal, Kardang, Shansha, Gondhla and Keylong. In the remaining 8 panchayats it has not been possible to induce women to come forward.

Income of the Panchayats

The panchayats have been authorised to levy taxes, duties and fees under section 82 of the *Punjab Gram Panchayat Act, 1952* (as amended up to August 31, 1960). The main sources of income of the panchayats are taxes, income from *shamlat deh*, land revenue grant, grants from the N.E.S. and T.D. (Tribal Development) Blocks, grant from the various departments of the Government, and voluntary contributions. The income from taxes, *shamlat deh* and land revenue grant is very limited on account of thin population and small cultivated area.

Judicial Functions

Panchayats have been given powers to try certain minor offences like petty thefts, lurking, affray, commission of public nuisance, and also are empowered to impose fines. They are not bound by the provisions of the *Indian Evidence Act, 1872*, and the lawyers are not permitted to appear in the proceedings before a panchayat. In their judicial functions, the panchayats are under the control of District Magistrate for criminal cases, who can hear appeals against their decisions and transfer cases from one panchayat to another. The panchayats have also been given powers for trying civil, revenue and judicial cases. For that matter they are under the control of the District Judge and the Collector respectively.

Before the advent of British rule in India, Spiti was divided into five administrative divisions locally called *kothis*. Each village had its headman chosen from among the chief landowners on the village council. However, in the olden days the headmen of each *kothi* in turn chose their chief and he represented the *kothi* on the *Nonos* Council. People were contented with occasional summer time tribute-exacting forays. This, coupled with the vast distances which separate one village from the other, led to the growth of a spirit of self reliance and therefore, autonomous, social behaviour and a near self-sufficient village communal life. These village communities were quite democratic and elected their own chiefs called *Gadpo chungun* (little headman). At least all the land owners of the villages participated in these elections. The *Gadpo chungun* of a *kothi* met and elected one *Gadpo chenmo* (the *Lambardar*) of the *kothi* but in this case the election was subject to the ratification, generally, by the *Nono* of Spiti. When Spiti became semi-Independent with the decline of the hold of Ladakhi Kingdom the descendants of the first *Nono* probably stayed on as a sort of hereditary rulers. Whatever the reason, by the time the British Raj took over Spiti in 1846 the *Nono* was securely ensconced as ruler of Spiti. For just over a century, until 1947, he had been allowed virtual independence. *Nono* was the Supreme Judge and all cases from petty thieving to assault and murder

came before him. When a criminal case or civil dispute arose the preliminaries and ceremonies that went with the preparation for entry of the *Nono* over-shadowed the trial of the case. When two men were accused of the same crime, and both protested their innocence convincingly, or when two parties brought a difficult dispute to court, the correct decision was left for the Gods to decide. A large urn of hot oil was prepared, the names of the two parties were engraved on stones, the stones were wrapped in flour and thrown into the urn; a functionary of the court, poor man, then plunged his hand into the urn, and the first name that came up was considered the guiltless person. Tossing a coin was considered a simpler and mild process. But this ceremony was the climax of the case. The hearing which led up to the urns might have taken almost any length of time; especially in civil cases, when custom decreed that the parties before the court of the *Nono* must supply him and his counsellors with *chhang* until the case had been decided. This often led to the most protracted proceedings.

The village headman, whose jurisdiction extended over one village if it be a large one or two to three smaller villages, tried minor and trivial offences while the serious offences were tried by the *Nono's* court. In a village nothing could be done without the consent of the village body, which consisted of the persons, generally, land-owners, who could participate in the election of a *Gadpo chenmos*. Cases of disobedience were often punished severely; for instance, in some cases the offenders were thrown out, with bag and baggage, from the village and their houses set on fire. These headman held office at the pleasure of the people, who on occasions, not very often, deposed all the five *Gadpo chenmos* owing to embezzlement of public funds.

With the attainment of Independence all this was changed. The *Nono's* powers were taken away from him and was given as rightly deserved the powers of an honorary Magistrate.

Even though most of the functions of the former village councils have been taken over by the newly formed panchayats, the former bodies still exist and take part in matters with respect to participation in development works, organising melas and managing provisions etc. Most of the *Nono's* powers however have been withdrawn; *Gadpo chenmos* exist only as *Lambardars* of the *kothis* with their functions restricted to the collection of land revenue only.

In 1955 five *gram* panchayats were constituted and these were empowered to perform civil and administrative duties as prescribed by the *Punjab Gram Panchayat Act*, of 1952. These were also vested with judicial

functions as laid down under the said *Act* and were also supposed to raise some revenue by levying of house-tax, etc. In 1962, their number was increased to 9 and women members of the Scheduled Castes were also co-opted for the first time.

The names of the *gram* panchayats are, (1) Dankhar, (2) Damull (3) Gee, (4) Kaza, (5) Koongre, (6) Khuring, (7) Kibber, (8) Losar and (9) Tabo.

In addition to the regular constituted panchayats, the tribal people still cling to their traditional mode of deciding their disputes through the assembly of village elders. This is locally called *sehna* in which the village notables decide all the disputes regarding land and property arising in the village. If there is any case of manhandling, the aggrieved person approaches the village elders who are called *sehnas* to adjudicate the dispute. Then a particular *sehna* is sent to the home of the other party as a messenger where he is welcomed as an arbitrator. The messenger declares that he has been sent by the other party to settle the dispute. Subsequently he approaches the other village elders and a meeting is convened in the house of either of the two persons or in the house of a neutral person, who is impartial to both the parties. Then the discussions follow in which charges and counter-allegations are levelled by each person. After hearing both the parties judgement is pronounced in which, in certain cases, both the persons are also penalised by imposing fine. They have then to serve the *sehnas* with *chhang* or *aara*. All the parties get together and drink for their future understanding and help. Generally the findings of the *sehnas* are accepted by both the parties, because their verdict is based on truth. Being local persons they know all the details of the dispute. This mode of dispensing justice among the ruralites is still prevalent in this far flung Himalayan land. The panchayats do not have any sources of regular income and extreme poverty of the inhabitants, precluded the rural self Government to raise much of revenue by levy of various taxes etc. Thus to overcome this hurdle in the way of their progress, the Government provides grants in aid to meet the expenditure on the execution of various development schemes. The people of this valley are endowed with character and initiative. Here rivalries and factionalism are absolutely unknown. However the *panches* and *sarpanches*, with very few exceptions, primarily because of lack of education, cannot possibly prove of much help. The Harijans and women have a subservient role in these rural republics partly because of the illiteracy among them and mainly due to lack of organising and propagating capacity among them. Therefore any improvement in the working of panchayats has to depend necessarily on improvement in several other facts of the life of the Spitians, such as spread of education, dissemination of

progressive ideas like that of equal rights irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex.

Panchayat Samities

Under the *Panchayati Raj Act*, 1968 the panchayat samities are also functioning in the district and there are only two samities namely Lahul and Spiti and last election to these samities was conducted in October, 1974.

The powers of Panchayats include construction, repair, maintenance of public streets and paths, medical relief, sanitation including curative and preventive measures in the event of infections, diseases and epidemics, registration of births, deaths and marriages; regulation of fairs and markets except those managed by the State Government; management of common grazing pastures for the common benefit of the persons inhabiting within the panchayat jurisdiction; assisting the development of agriculture, commerce and industry and looking after the forests and State property within the panchayat circle.

Gram panchayats can pass any resolution to the State Government or to the concerned authority for the welfare of the people. Panchayat can recommend transfer of any Government official working within the panchayat circle. Panchayat can also recommend timber for the house construction or for fuel, grant of loan or subsidy and the grant of *nautor* land for cultivation to any applicant residing within its jurisdiction. Now with the implementation of the *Panchayati Raj Act*, 1968, the forthcoming panchayats will have enhanced administrative and executive powers. The Nyaya Panchayats will then try both civil and criminal cases. The coming elections in the district are being held under the Himachal Pradesh *Gram Panchayat (Election) Rules*, 1972. Each village with a population of not less than fifty electorates has been carved into a separate ward for representing the village by a *panch* in the panchayat. The election will be conducted on the same pattern as to the Legislative Assembly. The electoral roll of the Legislative Assembly for the time being in force pertaining to the *sabha* area shall be split up into the wards as delimited. Any person who is not disqualified under Sub-section (5) of section 9 of the *Panchayati Raj Act*, 1968 may become member of the panchayat. Each candidate aspiring to contest the elections shall deposit a sum of Rs. 30.00 and in the case of Scheduled Castes or Tribe Rs. 15/- with the Assistant Returning Officer—conducting the election. After the declaration of the result of the *panches*, the *sarpanch* will be chosen by them unanimously or by way of secret voting.

Then the discretionary power with Gram panchayat is to nominate members from the village to form the *nyaya* panchayat.

Like other districts, Lahul and Spiti district is under the overall charge of the Deputy Commissioner. He plays an important role in the Administration of the Panchayati Raj. Under the *Panchayati Raj Act*, 1968 and *Gram Panchayat Rules*, 1971, the Deputy Commissioner has specific powers about the functions of the gram panchayat/panchayat samities.

The following table will show the year-wise number of cases handled and disposed of by the Nyaya Panchayat.

Years	Registered	Decided
1962-63	8	8
1963-64	13	13
1964-65	—	—
1965-66	5	5
1966-67	—	—
1967-68	4	4
1968-69	4	4
1969-70	1	1
1970-71	6	6

The following statistics will show the year-wise

	1959-60	1960-61	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64
<i>Jhulas</i> and <i>dhipis</i> constructed	7	3	2	4	—
<i>Bawlis</i> constructed	4	—	—	—	—
Primary Schools constructed	2	7	5	6	—
Pavements of streets	—	1	—	—	—
Repair of <i>Kuhls</i>	—	1	9	—	—
Panchayat <i>ghars</i> constructed	5	—	1	2	10
School buildings repaired	—	—	—	1	2
Roads constructed	—	—	—	36 km	45 km
Roads repaired	—	—	—	5 km	18 km
Laterines constructed	—	—	—	8	4
Check dams constructed	—	—	—	—	—
Bath rooms constructed	—	—	—	—	—
Constructions of <i>kuhls</i>	—	—	—	—	—
Construction of health sub-centre buildings	—	—	—	—	—
Construction/repair of paths	—	—	—	—	—
Village lanes paved	—	—	—	—	—
Bridges constructed	—	—	—	—	—

Development works executed by the panchayats

	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
	3	—	—	2	4	1	5	—
	—	—	—	2	—	—	4	—
	1	3	—	1	—	2	2	—
	13 km	10 km	15 km	31 km	6½ km	8 km	20 km	—
	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—
	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	2	3	—	2	4
	—	3	1	2	3	—	4	—
	—	—	1	35 m	2	800	—	—
	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	10 km	8 km	—	3 km	7 km	7.5 km	13 km	17 km
	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	12 km	6 km	16 km	20 km	—	34 km	19 km	13 km
	—	4 km	150 m	—	—	—	—	—
	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—

1959-60 1960-61 1961-62 1962-63 1963-64

Irrigation tanks constructed

Community centre buildings
constructed

Land reclamation

Willow trees planted

Drains constructed

Jhulas repaired

Vegetable seeds distributed

1964-65 1965-66 1966-67 1967-68 1968-69 1969-70 1970-71 1971-72

—	—	1	—	1	3	5	4
—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	2 hac	6 hac	3 hac	7 hac	3 hac	—
—	—	—	5000	15,000	6,000	8,000	—
—	—	—	—	—	1	1	4
—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	12 km	—

CHAPTER XV

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Education in the sense as we understand it today was almost non-existent in this remote and rugged area where people eked out their livelihood from the hard nature for bare subsistence. For centuries no one paid any attention towards education and it came in the wake of religion as usually happens. In the beginning when the Buddhist missionaries traversed the area of Lahul and Spiti and the scholars of Nalanda and Taxila Universities of the ancient times visited this trans-Himalayan region their aim was to spread the teaching of Buddhism. One of the greatest scholars, whose name is given to us from generations, was Acharya Padamsambhava, also known as Guru Reimboche (the supreme guru). He has almost been deified and is worshipped and remembered affectionately almost with awe through-out the district even today. Thus education in the beginning was considered only essential to the religious part of life. When local monasteries cropped up they had to have some scriptures and those scriptures were written and taught in Bhoti language. The object thus was not so much education as to develop the all round personality but as the teaching of the language of Buddhist scriptures to help the people to know their religion intimately. Training in priesthood became an important part of that type of education. Subsequently, along with the religious education was added indigenous astronomy and quackery which were reduced also in writing and taught to the pupils going in for the monastic order. With the fanaticism and ecclesiastical-enthusiasm people started singing in praise of the Almighty Buddha and also started performing dancing in sheer abandon. Accordingly, music and dances were set within certain norms. The future lamas had, therefore, to attain proficiency in the performance of religious rites, cultural music and dances most meticulously. In course of time the curriculum became rigid and considerably rigorous. The future lamas or religious priests were kept in seclusion within the premises of the *gonpas* so as to keep them away from the material influences of the mundane. This type of education, in course of time, became the monopoly of the priesthood only. Lohars and Dagis who entered the area in search of livelihood later on were forbidden from entering monasteries and were consequently deprived of learning any language. This is the picture of the district which continued for years together so much so that even before the annexation of this area of Lahul and Spiti by the British, and in fact for many years

even thereafter, there was no educational institution of the conventional type as sprang in other parts of the country. The Moravian mission, led by Mr. and Mrs. Hyede, made a beginning by establishing the first primary school at Keylong and a branch school at Tholang in the Pattan Valley in 1861. The task of the mission, at the outset, was quite difficult because the people were understandably suspicious of their motives. Living in tribal primitiveness they could not realise and had no need in fact for the value of modern education. Nor possibly in the prevailing circumstances did they think it of much use. The knowledge of Bhoti acquired from the lamas was considered adequate by the people as it enabled them to read and write their scriptures and maintain accounts. The first school at Keylong was therefore, opened after overcoming considerable local opposition. In 1862, the mission opened seven branch primary schools and engaged lamas as teachers, presumably to allay local apprehensions. Later, two more schools were opened by the mission at Gushal and Shansha. All these schools had soon to be closed down for lack of response from the local public as also due to the missionaries feeling of unreliability of the lamas. In the meantime the mission also succeeded in having a few converts to Christianity who numbered only twenty-one. The schools at Keylong and Tholang were attended mostly by the Christians only. Even up to 1916 the number of children in these schools did not exceed 17 boys and 2 girls at Keylong and 16 boys and 4 girls at Tholang. Thus the efforts of the mission in this direction proved a failure although they achieved remarkable success in several other fields. Spiti area of the district remained altogether neglected in the field of education until 1932 when a teacher, for the first time, was deputed from Lahul for the purpose of establishing a regular school at Kaza. Keylong missionaries used to visit Spiti area but for providing medical aid only.

It was left to the District Board, Kangra, to surmount these difficulties which, over the years, it did with success. The Board opened its first school at Keylong in 1919. The number of schools rose to three in 1831 in the Lahul area. By 1947, the Board had six primary schools and one middle school with 190 boys and twenty-eight girls on rolls in Lahul and three primary schools with thirty-nine boys and ten girls on rolls in Spiti. The educational facilities within the district remained thus restricted to the primary level only, prior to the Independence.

After Independence rapid strides were made in the spread of educational facilities in this area. The District Board had by about 1951, 25 schools (twenty-two primary, three middle). It was only, in five schools that untrained hands were working. Majority of teachers were local and all schools were financed by the Central Government through the agency of the District Board, Kangra. The Central Government had also a scheme to grant scholarships to Lahul students who joined college for advanced studies. A few students, particularly from Pattan Valley took

advantage of this opportunity and to-day we have even I.A.S. officers from this area.

The administration of the schools in this district differs from that obtaining in the other districts. Lahul and Spiti has two Block Education Officers, one for Lahul sub-division and the other for Spiti sub-division. The Deputy Commissioner holds additional charge of the post of the District Education Officer, Lahul; likewise the Sub-divisional Officer (Civil) at Kaza holds the additional charge as District Education Officer, Spiti. The Block Education Officers are empowered to inspect middle and primary schools. These blocks started functioning from June, 1960. Previously the district was under the control and supervision of District Inspector of Schools, Dharamsala assisted by Assistant District Inspector of Schools at Kulu.

The district remains snow-bound during winter and it is thus not possible to hold the Middle/Matriculation/Higher Secondary Examinations in February/March in this district like in the rest of Himchal. The examinations are, therefore, held in June every year.

Sachar language formula is applicable to the district which is situated in Hindi Region. According to its provisions, teaching of Hindi as first language and as medium of instruction, begins from class I and Panjabi which was introduced from class IV as a second language has been replaced by Urdu since the merger of this district in Himachal Pradesh.

By September 30, 1957, i.e. the date of provincialisation of schools, the District Board Kangra had nineteen primary, four middle, and one high schools in the Lahul sub-division and one middle school and eight primary schools in the Spiti sub-division. In 1971-72, there were seventy-five primary schools, fourteen middle schools five high schools and one higher secondary school in the district. The progress made towards the opening of schools since 1919 is indicated in the table below :—

Year	Primary Schools	Middle Schools	High/Higher Secondary Schools	Total
1919	1	—	—	1
1931	3	—	—	3
1941	5	—	—	5
1947	8	1	—	9

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1950	8	2	—	10
1955	15	2	—	17
1960	23	5	1 (High)	29
1961	43	8	1 (High)	52
1965	36	7	2 (High)	45
1972	75	14	6 (5 high and one Hr. Secondary)	95

The Higher Secondary school is located at Keylong, high schools at Gondhla, Rangrik, Kolong and Jalma. The above table reveals that there were 52 schools for a population of 18429, above the age of 5 years i.e. one school per 350 persons. The number of scholars works out to 31 per school, in 1961.

According to the general policy three primary schools are opened, and one primary school is upgraded to the middle school, every year in the district. Of the three primary schools two are opened in Lahul sub-division and one in Spiti sub-division. Upgrading of a primary school is regulated and is effected alternately in these sub-divisions. At the very outset the district faced a problem of non-availability of trained teachers. Subsequently in 1930 when 6 teachers underwent J.B.T. course the problem was eased to some extent and now there is no dearth of trained staff.

This network of schools at present carries with it the big advantage of low teacher-student ratio, which is 1 to 18 at the primary level and 1 to 9 at the middle and high school level.

The maximum distance involved to be covered by a student in the case of primary schools is not more than about three kilometres from any one village. In regard to middle schools the maximum distance involved is eight kilometres in Pattan valley, thirteen kilometres in Chandra valley and eleven kilometres in Bhaga valley. The Government higher secondary school, Keylong, Government high school Gondhla and Middle schools at Sissu, alma, Lote and Kolong have boarding facilities also.

The intensive efforts, towards the spread of education, first by the District Board and subsequently with the provincialisation of schools by the Government have produced outstanding results. Of a population of 15,177 8692 males and 6,485 females) in Lahul 2,942 (2,634 males and 308 females) are literates according to the 1961 Census, thus indicating a literacy percentage of 30.3 for men and 4.7 for women in the Lahul area, Out of eth

total population of 5276 (2827 men and 2449 women) in Spiti 476 men and nine women are literate showing a literacy percentage of seventeen for men, 0.4 for women and nine for general. Only forty-six per cent of the school going children are attending schools in Spiti and fifty-six per cent in Lahul.

The first and the only high school of the area was opened in 1955 at Keylong. Later on during 1962, it was converted into a higher secondary school. For the first time in 1957, three students appeared in the Matriculation Examination from Keylong higher secondary school. The number of students appearing for Matriculation from this school has not increased a dozen in any year. This is because the students from this area usually preferred to study at Government High School, Kulu, and later on from 1958, the Lahul students were attracted to study all the more into Government Middle School, Manali, which was then upgraded to a high school with a free hostel and other educational facilities for students from the Scheduled Area of Lahul and Spiti. The number of seats reserved for them was hundred which was raised to 120 in 1963, to 200 in 1964 and to 300 in 1971-72 in the hostels attached to higher secondary school Keylong, high schools Manali and Rangrik and middle school Tabo. The entire expenditure on boarding, lodging, clothing, books etc. for students from the Scheduled Area is borne by the Government. Admission is given purely on the basis of income of their parents. Preference is given to the children of the lamas. The local higher secondary school, therefore, had little temptation to offer.

The enrolment of these students and expenses incurred in respect of free hostel accommodation, books, toilets, clothing etc. at Manali are shown below :

Year	Hostel enrolment			Total Expenditure Rs.
	Boys	Girls	Total	
1960-61	62	10	72	28,470
1961-62	83	17	100	25,997
1962-63	81	19	100	46,557
1963-64	94	26	120	58,643
1964-65	124	46	170	95,962
1965-66	130	56	186	95,091
1971-72	197	...	197	...

(Figures about the hostel attached to Middle School Tabo are not included).

These facilities attract Lahul students to Manali and explain for the low enrolment of Government Higher Secondary School at Keylong. Again, the preference to receive education at Manali saves the students from the rigours of cold. They also come in contact with the people of other area which widen their outlook of life.

Besides opening quite a number of primary and middle schools, the Government have also given liberal concessions and facilities to the children belonging to the Scheduled Area of Lahul and Spiti. These facilities include free education from the primary to the high school level; payment of monthly stipends to every student at the rate of two rupees to primary class student, four rupees to a middle class student, ten rupees to a high class student, fifteen rupees to each boarder of primary and middle classes, twenty-five rupees to each boarder of high classes, five rupees to primary, middle and high class students if they are to arrange for private lodging and for want of accommodation in the boarding houses; free text books and from 1962 free stationery to primary class students in addition to mid-day meals; Similar facilities have also been provided at Government High School Tabo in Spiti for 25 students. The expenditure incurred by Government on these concessions and facilities in the district from 1961-62 to 1965-66 is given below :—

Items	1961-62 Rs.	1962-63 Rs.	1963-64 Rs.	1964-65 Rs.	1965-66 Rs.
Payment of stipends	58,470	59,206	149,167	56,782	62,986
Cost of mid-day meals	26,073	32,538	24,700	35,992	21,893
Free text books	2,719	2,999	3,944	2,867	2,400
Free education scheme at Manali	35,996	46,546	58,642	95,962	95,091

At college level, a stipend of Rs. 45 per month and the facility of free tuition are given to students from this area.

All the primary schools have since been converted into the basic pattern to some extent as the students are trained in book-binding, clay

modelling, spinning etc. As there are no agricultural farms attached to the schools the subject of agriculture could not be introduced. Play method of learning is followed.

Since there is no college in the district a number of students from this area are staying at colleges in Kulu, Dharamsala, Solon, Chandigarh and Jullundur. No regular modern facilities exist for the cultivation of fine arts like music, painting etc. The lamas, however, are the only exponents of the art of painting. There are certain very interesting paintings in the monasteries. The subjects, of course, are religious and of stereotyped traditional nature.

It is not feasible to set up an institution for technical education in this district. However, every encouragement is given to individuals from this area seeking technical education to join such institutes in the other parts of Himachal Pradesh and even outside it.

Mrs. Hyede, a Missionary, started a crafts school sometime in the middle of nineteenth century where she taught knitting to the girls and women. This produced highly satisfactory results and continued to become popular. Even till today designs of socks etc. knitted by them are unique and a attractive.

Female education has comparatively lagged behind. This is not because the schools in the district are co-educational or there is social prejudice against co-educational institutions but because of the indifferent and conservative attitude of the parents towards girls education. The handicaps are that the ladies remained down to the agricultural operations and have to look after the daily chore of the house-hold. This hurdle, of late, has been undergoing a change as a result of which more and more girls are coming forward to receive education. According to 1961 Census only 2.6 per cent of women were literates in the district, 4.7 per cent of whom were from Lahul Sub-Division and 0.4 per cent from Spiti Sub-Division. By 1962, thirty per cent of the girls of Lahul Sub-Division and fifteen per cent of the Spiti Sub-Division attended schools; only three girls of Lahul could pass the Matriculation Examination and five girls did Junior Basic Teachers' Course in the district.

The Project Implementation Committee for the district has been in existence since September, 1963 in order to implement welfare programme for women and children. Also *Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh* was set up in January, 1964. These organisations are aided by the Central and State Social Welfare Boards. Three *balwadis* attended by about 75 children have been organised at Keylong, Kardang and Tholang under the Project Implementation Committee. Four *balwadis* viz. Teeno, Jundha, Sissu and

Gushal, were started by the *Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh* in May, 1964. Two more *balwadis* have been set up at Lower Keylong and Lote and these are being aided out of Block Agency funds.

Apart from the *balwadis*, there are no pre-primary schools. However, every school admits children at the pre-primary stage without formally enrolling them and prepares them for admission to the primary classes.

During 1962 an adult literacy centre was started at Ropang on voluntary basis. Subsequently the following 8 adult literacy centres functioned from October, 1963 to May 1966.

Number of adults who received education.

Place	Males	Females	Total
1. Keylong	1	15	16
2. Kerdang	2	17	19
3. Gondhla	1	19	20
4. Rualing	—	13	13
5. Shansha	—	22	22
6. Rapay	—	25	25
7. Gorma	4	12	16
8. Sissu	4	4	8
Total	12	127	139

New centres started from June 1966 are :—

Place	Number of adults receiving education.		
	Males	Females	Total
1. Kirting	8	7	15
2. Jalma	—	15	15
3. Nalda	20	10	

4. Keylong	8	27	35
5. Tinoo	1	14	15
6. Gushal	5	14	19
7. Linger	2	6	8
8. Kardang	—	15	15
Total	44	108	152

It is noteworthy that adult women of the area seem to be quite enthusiastic and desirous of receiving education and to become literate.

The facilities regarding physical education are limited. Not many games are possible as there is little space available for large play-grounds. There is one N.C.C. troop consisting of 12 cadets at Government Higher Secondary School, Keylong. Auxiliary Cadet Corps for middle schools have not yet been organised. Efforts are, however, afoot in this behalf. Many of the existing middle and high/higher secondary schools are manned by Physical Training Instructors.

LIBRARIES

No library is maintained by the Education Department in the district. There is, however, one information centre-cum-library at Keylong maintained by the Block Development Agency. A library is being maintained at Kaza by the Tribal Development Block. The Block Information Centre-cum-Library contains 350 books on the subjects pertaining to the development of the country. Besides, middle and high schools have their own school libraries providing text books only.

The Block Development Agencies have established twelve recreation centres at different panchayat headquarters. These centres have been provided with literary books, furniture, charts, musical instruments and community receivers and aim at providing recreation at the village level to keep the people in touch with the latest developmental programmes.

CHAPTER XVI

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

SURVEY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EARLY TIMES

A survey of public health and medical facilities was never carried out in the district. Neither is the history of institutional and historic growth possible to trace owing to the non-availability of source material. The area remained cut off from the rest of the country and hence was isolated from the current of social and cultural history of India. Buddhism in turn brought in its wake arts and sciences like mathematics, astronomy, painting, sculpture, dance and along with it medicine to these regions. Padma-Sambhava who spread Buddhism to Tibet, is believed to have been proficient in indigenous system of medicine himself. The Tangyur scriptures contain translations of Charak and Agastya. It was in the 11th century that one Ginpopa is credited with the authorship of some books on medicine. Whatever medical practice was there it was looked after by the lamas and such facilities, during the middle ages, revolved around the Buddhist monasteries in the district. Its ecclesiastical association originates from the fact that Buddha is considered *adi-vaidya* (the primeval-medicine man). The *adi-vaidya* is depicted as a blue bodied image of Buddha seated in the *padma-asana* holding *bajar* (the myrobalan) in his left hand.

The local system as at present contains a fair mixture of the Ayurveda and the indigenous system of medicines while its diagnostic part is based completely on Ayurveda, its *materia-medica* is to a large extent. Like Ayurveda the local system believes that a healthy human body contains an evenly balanced combination of phlegm, heat and wind. Deficiency or excess in any of these elements disturbs the equilibrium and causes disease. The curative process therefore consists in restoring this balance. As in Ayurveda the three major diagnostic aids in this system are: pulse-reading, examination of stool and urine, and questioning the patient. Its *materia-medica* consists of herbs, stones, wood, meat, earth and compounds of precious stones and metals. "*Triphala*" or the three fruits namely *harar*, *pahera* and *amla* (a kind of myrobalan) figure very prominently in all prescriptions. So much so that the *harar* is called *namgyal machhog* or the king of medicine.

Tantrism which deeply influenced Buddhism in Tibet during the middle ages left its imprint on the local system of medicine also. *Tana-Mana* or magic formulae are practised only by the lamas. Small human and animal figures made of baked barley flour (*sattu*) are circled over the head of the patient and are then thrown on the cross roads or buried or sometimes burnt. The whole ceremony is accompanied by reading from the scriptures.

In another ceremony called *mit-shale*, a *sham* funeral is sometimes arranged in order to deceive the angel of death. This is resorted to where medicine and sorcery have evidently failed and the death of some beloved person appears inevitable. "A complete life-size effigy of a small youth is made on a wooden frame, plastered round with dough of barley. This is painted and dressed up with the clothes and ornaments of the sick persons, so as to present as close likeness as possible. After much reading of the *chos* (from scriptures) by the lamas and after firing guns and letting off fire-works, a funeral procession headed by the Gara and lama bands is formed, at high-time, and the effigy is solemnly burnt, after being first cut to pieces. The clothes and ornaments go to the lamas. Meanwhile, a man engaged for the purpose feigns and bewails the death of the person who is lying sick, crying out the name and shouting repeatedly that he or she has been dead now for nine years. For this he is awarded the straw shoes (*bula*) of the effigy. Sometimes, it is believed the remedy works and sometimes not; and in the latter case there are two funerals, a *sham* one followed by a real one, both very *expensive.

The indigenous system of medicine is popular in Lahul and there are about 36 practising *vaid*s in the area.

In Spiti the local form of treatment, which has no particular name, is possibly based on the famous local system; but, surprisingly, quite unlike the latter is not very effective probably because of the non-availability of proper herbs and other constituents for the preparation of good medicines. The *vaid* or *imchis* as they are called locally, depend upon a number of reference books, all in Bhoti or Tibetan. The two most important authors are Sonchit Jumi and Yatuk Gunpo.

Almost all villages have one or two *medii* who are supposed to be capable of communicating with the Gods, on being suitably placated with *chhane* and sometimes even money. When a person gets sick, such a *media* is called. Amidst chanting of spells he goes into a trance and diagnoses the cause of illness usually due to the use of abusive language, disrespectful attitude towards monasteries or lamas or because of committing of theft or

* Kangra District Gazetteer, 1917, part III Lahul.

due to any social crime and suggests that the treatment should be obtained from the local *imchis*. These *imchis* who are hereditary village doctors belong generally to big households. There is one such person in each of the important villages and the services which they render are, by and large, honorary. The treatment may vary from blood-letting from the ear-lobe, to pouring of near boiling oil over parts of head and neck for curing insanity and other nervous disorders. Blood letting from a vein near the ankle is also resorted to for securing an abortion and it is supposed to be quite successful. Treatment may also be given in the form of oral pills, accompanied in most of the cases by recitations of spells and mantras.

Modern medicines i.e. the allopathic system entered Lahul along with the Moravian Missionaries who apart from proselytising, dispensed allopathic medicines. Under their influence neat and clean houses were built with proper ventilation and ever-clean dry latrines. The missionaries also demonstrated the practicability of growing varieties of vegetables and fruits which in turn changed to that extent the dietary pattern of the people. The mission established a dispensary at Keylong.

A civil dispensary was also opened at Keylong in 1929 which was run by the District Board, Kangra, till 1943 when it was taken over by Government. In the forties, sanitary teams started touring Lahul during the four summer months. Besides distributing medicines, spraying houses, delousing, derating and vaccinating, these sanitary teams used to educate the masses in the use of sanitation and hygiene. After Partition these teams included a doctor for providing medical facilities to people living in the remote corners of the Lahul valley who could not be served by the dispensary at Keylong. Similarly the Spiti area of the district, prior to the opening of a dispensary at Kaza in 1958, had nothing to offer to the sick but primitive medicine, magic, necromancy, with craft and sorcery.

The two systems of medicine namely Tibetan and the allopathic have continued separately and have influenced each other a little. Though the Tibetan system still holds its sway over the people, the modern system also has been steadily gaining popularity during the last few years.

Vital statistics—while considering public health, it is necessary to scrutinise general standard of health, population figures, vital statistics about occurrence and effect of diseases and incidence of control exercised by the public health programme. Generally, the people are healthy. The main reason being the dry and cold climate of the area. Another contributing factor to good health is that the people lead a care-free and contented life

unstrained by the worries and hectic pace of modern civilization. Fertility among women is rather above average and on an average a Lahuli woman bears four to five children. Childlessness is rare. Similarly the fertility of Spitian women is vital and the minimum average pregnancies, as observed and noted by the incharge, Primary Health Centre, Kaza, for married women are about four. If the delivery is normal there is no effect of a pregnancy on the health of the mother or the child. She resumes her normal work after about a week. Only a few of them get grey haired before their seventies, and nearly all of them are physically active, and not bed-ridden. In spite of the lack of calcium in the local diet, it is surprising to note the extraordinarily white and well formed teeth possessed by an average resident. The only sign of old age which one generally comes across is the wrinkled face. The steady increase in the population and infant mortality is reflected in the following table.

Year	Population	Births	Deaths	Infant mortality under one year
1961	20,453	425	119	15
1962	20,759	391	100	12
1963	21,060	352	150	21
1964	21,340	424	144	10
1965	21,591	408	157	12
1966	21,810	417	198	42
1967	21,983	396	223	29
1968	22,242	415	156	15
1969	22,414	332	160	11
1970	22,654	242	193	15
1971	22,307	269	123	10

In the Spiti Sub-Division of the district the average annual increase in population during the last sixty years works out to 2%. This is probably due to their peculiar social structure and greater death rate. Because of the absence of proper records which were never maintained, it is not possible to state the rate of births and deaths per thousand over the last sixty years. Similarly, it is not possible to tabulate information with respect to the cause

of mortality. It has been observed, however, that the chief causes of death in order of mortality are infant mortality, especially during abnormal deliveries due to lack of proper medical aid, old age, severe cold, especially in case of small children and the other respiratory diseases; bronchitis pharyngitis, etc. and gastro intestinal diseases, dysentery and diarrhoea. The following table denotes the important causes of deaths in the district during 1965 to 1971.

Year	Dysentery and Diarrhoea	Respiratory	Fevers	Accidents and injuries	Other causes	Total
1965	26	36	35	6	54	157
1966	20	68	37	8	65	198
1967	31	45	82	5	60	233
1968	19	39	66	3	29	156
1969	26	17	74	5	38	160
1970	38	31	79	6	39	193
1971	11	29	24	1	58	123

DISEASES COMMON TO THE DISTRICT

People are not subject to many diseases. The few diseases that may occur, are due primarily to the peculiar climate, terrain of the country and food habits of the people. According to the Chief Medical Officers diseases like round worm infection, gastritis (*thigpa*), upper respiratory catarrh, impetigo contagiosa, rheumatoid arthritis, eye diseases, deficiency diseases, tuberculosis, leprosy and venereal diseases and secondary amenorrhoea are common in Lahul Sub-Division.

Similarly in Spiti area almost all types of diseases are found but their spread is necessarily limited and controlled by the local weather conditions, as also the way the population is distributed in small and scattered groups which lie at considerable distances from one another. Contagious diseases like T. B. and leprosy have also been noticed. The T.B. of lungs, bones and glands have been noticed. Trachoma and its complicated forms, and diseases due to the deficiency of vitamins are very common.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH ORGANISATIONS

After re-organisation, the post of Civil Surgeon-cum-District Medical Officer has been re-named as elsewhere in the State as Chief Medical Officer. The Chief Medical Officer looks after the preventive as well as the curative side. The Chief Medical Officer who is a senior member of the State Medical Service, is the Superintendent of all the medical institutions in the district. He exercises professional control over the Government Medical Officers in the hospitals and dispensaries. He is also expected to guide the staff posted under him. He is also responsible for the enforcement of drug control measures, including issue of license for medical shops. He inspects the State dispensaries and also the health centres located in the district. He is under the administrative control of the Director of Health Services, Himachal Pradesh, Simla.

With the creation of Lahul and Spiti as a separate district in 1960, a Chief Medical Officer cum-District Medical Officer was posted at Keylong. The civil dispensary at Keylong was raised to civil hospital. Civil dispensaries were opened at Gondhla in 1960 and at Gemur in 1952. At Shansha also one dispensary has been functioning since 1952. The Gondhla dispensary converted into a primary health centre in 1961 has three sub centres at Sissu, Tholang and Gushal. These sub centres except Tholang which is manned by an Auxiliary Nurse (mid-wife), have on their staff one trained *dai* each and are useful in dealing with maternity cases. Medical facilities have thus been made available in all the three valleys of the district.

The Civil dispensary, now hospital at Keylong, established in 1929 has at present accommodation only for four indoor patients. With the completion of new buildings, already under construction, provision for 20 beds and various other adjuncts such as an X-Ray room a dental clinic, an operation theatre, a laboratory and mortuary will be available.

Apart from the civil surgeon designated as Chief Medical Officer, the hospital has a Medical Officer and a Lady Assistant Medical Officer, Dispensers and other staff. The posting of a Lady Assistant Medical Officer for the first time in 1963 has been much beneficial to the women of the area who in the past could not avail themselves of whatever medical facilities then existed as their modesty and shyness did not permit even to tell their medical history to a male doctor.

There is no blood bank in the area. Laboratory facilities to the extent of doing simple blood tests i.e. T.L.C., D.L.C. Hb, R.B.C's count; complete urine and stool tests are available in Civil Hospital Keylong.

The following medical institutions are manned by a Medical Officer and other usual staff in the district.

1. Civil Hospital, Keylong.
2. Primary Health Centre, Gondhla.
3. Civil Dispensary, Kaza.
4. Civil Dispensary, Gemur.
5. Civil Dispensary, Shansha.
6. Civil Dispensary, Hansa.
7. Civil Dispensary, Sangnam.
8. Civil Dispensary, Tabo.
9. Civil Dispensary, Kibber.

AYURVEDIC DISPENSARIES

Ayurvedic system of medicine was not in vogue prior to the year 1969. At present four Ayurvedic dispensaries are functioning one each at Khoksar, Muling, Peukar and Denul under the charge of a *vaid*.

Apart from the Government dispensaries and the indigenous *imchis*, no private or charitable dispensaries, hospitals etc. exist in the district. Witch craft necromancy for the cure of diseases, as mentioned earlier in the chapter is still practised; but tantrism, sexual perversions and tree worshipping is not resorted to for curative purposes. There are no quacks of the type usually found in other areas of the State. No regular societies exist which persuade people to minimise the use of medicines; but a few lamas exhort people to pray, instead of getting medical treatment.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH CENTRES

There is no medical and public health research centre in the district. There are however some arrangements for imparting training to *dais* in the Primary Health Centre Rangrik at Kaza. A provision for four indoor beds exists at the Primary Health Centre Rangrik.

Family Planning

The population explosion in the recent years made the Family Planning Programme effective in the country. The Family Planning Programme is undertaken in the Civil Hospital Keylong. Now various types

of contraceptives are distributed free of cost in all hospitals/dispensaries and primary health centres. Film shows are also conducted to enlighten the public on the need for planned parenthood. In each centre advice on contraception for spacing of births and general instruction for bringing about family welfare are given by qualified Health Visitors under the guidance of the Medical Officer.

Nutrition

The staple food of the people of Lahul consists of buck-wheat *chapaties* (*chilra*), potato, dry meat, *moong*, *mash* (pulses) and flour stew called *thupa*, parched barley flour mixed with *chhang* and *marchu* (prepared by buck-wheat). The general level of nutrition is not satisfactory. The diet is mainly carbohydrates with little proteins due to the very high cost of maintenance of the animals. There is an acute shortage of milk, fresh fruits, vegetables etc. Also copious quantities of country beer and salted butter tea are consumed at all times. Wheat *chapaties* with curried vegetables, mainly potatoes and rarely cabbage and turnips have also entered the diet of the people of Pattan valley. Fruits, eggs and milk are not much consumed as these are not available. The diet though not ideally balanced is nevertheless nourishing. The average diet of the Spitian comprises *sattu*, made from dried barley residue after extraction of *chhang*, salted butter tea, meat, peas and butter occasionally and green vegetables in the form of *kathu-ka-sag* rarely. Their diet, as noticed from above, is woefully lacking in vitamins and minerals. The position with regard to fats, carbohydrates and proteins can be termed as just-satisfactory. In addition *lugri*, produced by fermentation of barley a local type of beer, is very conducive to health because *lugri* is very much rich in vitamin "B" complex.

SANITATION

The important measure adopted to combat and prevent diseases are the extension of medical facilities, proper sanitation and sewerage, execution of several drinking water supply schemes, disinfection measures and educating the public in the basic principles of health and hygiene. With the posting of Sanitary Inspectors in each Primary Health Centre, steps have been taken to educate the people about health, sanitation and public hygiene. But not much has been achieved in this respect so far, for people continue practising insanitary habits and the houses, clothes and bodies of the Spitians still bear the age-old dust, dirt, grease and stench. In Lahul sanitation is no problem, houses are well built and ventilated. Cleanliness of houses and their surroundings is ensured by the provision of dry latrines. The dry latrine is made on the second storey of the house by digging a hole in the floor. Night soil accumulates in the room below and is collected after 4 or 5 months for use as manure. In some cases the unmarried girls and widows remove the shit from the latrines to be thrown in the pits in the farms.

Water supply :- Supply of safe drinking water presents certain difficulties. Water is obtained from springs. A number of gravity type water supply schemes have been executed in the past few years and about 10 villages have been provided with protected water supply for drinking purposes. The source of a spring usually lies high above the village along the sheep runs. The unprotected open channels are, therefore, contaminated by sheep droppings. This problem has been solved by providing sealed water tank at the source from which an underground alkathene pipe runs down to the village where a stand-post is provided for all. These schemes are simple to execute as they do not involve technical intricacies. People are, therefore, executing these schemes themselves with the financial assistance and technical guidance provided by the local administration. Almost all the villages in Lahul have been provided with piped water where pipe water supply schemes are technically feasible. The Executive Engineer (technical), with headquarters at Keylong is responsible for the execution of this scheme.

So far no epidemic has been broken out in the district. However every possible effort is made to check it by deputing the vaccinators and para-medical staff to perform the small-pox vaccination without any backlog. In 1963 anti small-pox drive was organised and about 1,600 persons were vaccinated. Sanitation teams consisting of a Sanitary Inspector, a Sanitary Supervisor and *Swasthya Sahyaks* are now permanently employed in Lahul Sub-Division of the district. The vaccination work is carried out through the said staff. The annual vaccination figure for the period from 1958 to 1971 are tabulated below :-

Year	Primary Vaccination	Per thousand	Re- vaccination	Per Thousand	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1958					
1959					
1960					
1961					
1962					
1963					
1964					

N. A.

1	2	3	4	5	6
1965	383	95	2066	61	2449
1966	465	100	2282	56	2727
1967	368	100	4678	41	5064
1968	374	N.A.	1712	N.A.	2096
1969	662	99	4910	83	5572
1970	434	100	4207	78	4641
1971	434	N.A.	5820	N.A.	6254

The following table indicates the medical institutions with number of beds and their staffing pattern.

1	2	3	4
Sl. No.	Name of Institution and its location	No. of Beds	Staff
1.	Civil Hospital, Keylong	4	1 Chief Medical Officer 2 Doctor
2.	Primary Health Centre, Gondhla	4	1 Doctor
3.	Civil Dispensary, Shansha, (Pattan Valley)	4	1 Doctor 2 Lady Health Visitors
4.	Civil Dispensary, Gemur	2	1 Doctor
5.	Civil Dispensary Kaza	4	1 Doctor
6.	Civil Dispensary, Hansa		1 Doctor
7.	Civil Dispensary, Tabo		1 Doctor
8.	Civil Dispensary, Kibber		1 Doctor

1	2	0	4
9.	Civil Dispensary, Sangnam	—	1 Doctor
10.	Ayurvedic Dispensary, Khoksar	—	1 Vaidya
11.	Ayurvedic Dispensary, Muling	—	do
12.	Ayurvedic Dispensary, Peukar	—	do
13.	Ayurvedic Dispensary, Demul	—	do
14.	Family Planning Centre, Keylong	—	1 Lady Doctor

CHAPTER XVII

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

LABOUR WELFARE

The bulk of the population is engaged in agriculture. During summer all able bodied are seen busy in their own fields. A negligible number of labourers are engaged by those who have bigger holdings on mutually agreed terms and conditions. Since there are only a few who do not possess their own landed property, spare hands are not easy to find. Those who offer their services for hire get the desired wages. As such there is no problem of labour welfare in this part. During the open season, whatever time is left on completion of their farm works, locals engage themselves on roads construction on daily wages. The P. W. D. provides adequate wages and ensures proper arrangements for the treatment of wounded labourers. In case of accidents, compensation is paid in accordance with the *Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923*, which is applicable throughout Himachal Pradesh.

According to the census of 1961, out of the total population of 20,453 persons only, 471 persons were returned as agricultural labourers. In construction, mainly the road building, 3,262 workers were found engaged. There are no large scale industries in this district. A family is a unit in itself of the cottage industry, such as weaving and spinning and as such large scale employment of labourers is out of question.

PROHIBITION

As has been said in the preceding chapters, the people of Lahul and Spiti frequently consume locally fermented and distilled spirits. This is an unavoidable item of daily dietary system due to the extreme cold and arid climate. For more than six months people are confined indoors. Non-availability of sufficient fuel, heating arrangements are also inadequate. Therefore, for physical stimulation, and as an antidote against the fever and colds, these liquors locally called *chhang* and *aara* are consumed. *Chhang* forms an inevitable item in all the social customs, religious ceremonies etc. Monasteries are situated on higher altitudes than the villages and as such to keep the lamas physically strong, people offer these liquors at the altar of Lord Buddha, ostensibly for the consumption of lamas.

Keeping in view these social, religious and climatic considerations, the Government have not, so far, imposed any restrictions on the production and consumption of alcoholic drinks as long as they do not indulge in commercial enterprise. Besides the locally produced intoxicants, some Indian made foreign and country liquor vend shops have also been opened within the district to cater to the extra requirements. Since the Government have imposed no excise duty on the production of local wines a bottle of *chhang* costs about five rupees and that of *aara* about eight to ten rupees.

WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

The entire district is a tribal area and as such either sheduled tribes or scheduled castes comprise the main portion of population. According to the latest census of 1971 out of the total population of 23,538 persons, 17,951 persons i.e. 76.26% were scheduled tribes and 241 i.e. 1.02% persons belonged to scheduled castes.

Due to these considerations, all the developmental schemes, launched by the Government, are welfare oriented. The lot of these tribal people is being improved speedily and large sums on the improvement of communications, education, public health facilities, electrification, methods of cultivation etc. are spent every year to develop the district and bring it at par with the other parts of Himachal Pradesh. Large sums have been, and are being, advanced to the people for the constructions of houses, orchards, cattle sheds, *kuhls* etc. These are either free grants or are interest-free loans. Improved varieties of seeds and fertilisers are distributed free of cost. Education is free and in the majority of institutions mid-day meals, free books and stationery and stipends are being given at the rate of Rs. 2/- per student for primary classes and Rs. 4/- per student for middle and high classes throughout the district. There is a free hostel for students at Keylong. For students who go for their further studies to Manali in Kulu, facility of a free hostel is available to them there also.

The Government of Punjab had constituted a body called Punjab Tribes Advisory Council, on which, among others, some prominent citizens from the district were included as members. This council had started an ambitious programme for the welfare of these tribesmen. The council, however ceased to function as in the meanwhile the area was transferred to Himachal Pradesh in 1966. The welfare schemes and activities, however, continue to be looked after mainly by the Deputy Commissioner as also various heads of departments in the district. There are two Tribal Development Blocks in the district one at Keylong and the other at Kaza. An idea of the work done may be had from the figures of expenditure, incurred by these blocks on various schemes of economic uplift, during the

past few years :—

	Spiti Block (Kaza)	Lahul Block (Keylong)
1965-66	Rs. 1,88,282	Rs. 1,98,473
1966-67	Rs. 2,00,126	Rs. 98,113
1967-68	Rs. 1,80,000	Rs. 1,00,009
1968-69	Rs. 1,99,075	Rs. 1,00,061
1969-70	Rs. 1,99,969	Rs. 1,00,000
1970-71	Rs. 1,00,000	Rs. 1,00,000

The schemes of the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and castes are mainly subsidised by the Government of India through the Government of Himachal Pradesh. To bring the economy of the district at par with the rest of the Pradesh, Government is determined to launch these programmes with more zeal. On the completion of the construction of Sumdo-Rangrik Road, the more backward sub-division of the district, Spiti, will open up and people will get opportunities which nature denied them till now. Efforts of the Government and the determination and hardwork of the people will soon usher in an era of happiness, and development for Lahul and Spiti.

CHAPTER XVIII

PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

REPRESENTATION IN THE STATE AND THE UNION LEGISLATURE

First General Elections

The new Constitution of India provided for a Parliamentary form of Government at the centre and in the constituent States. Accordingly it was provided that the Central and State's Governments would be formed by the elected representatives of the people. In 1952 the First General Elections were held throughout India which gave the people first-ever opportunity to exercise their franchise. The enthusiasm for this democratic opportunity penetrated throughout the length and breadth of the country. Lahul and Spiti, in 1952 were obscure tracts, included in Kulu Sub-Division of Kangra district of Punjab, but even here great enthusiasm was generated in the high mountains and the people flocked together to cast their votes. This area, during 1952 elections was included in the Kulu Assembly Constituency of the then Punjab Legislative Assembly. The political parties that entered into the areas were, the Indian National Congress and the Jan-sangh. Five candidates, one each belonging to these parties and three Independents, rivalled for the single seat which ultimately was won by an Independent, despite a tough fight by the Congress candidate. To give an idea of the elections, the table is given below :—

Name of district	Name of constituency	Total No. of Electors	Total No. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes polled on total number of electors	Party affiliations of contesting candidates	Votes polled by each	Remarks
			Valid	Invalid				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kangra	Kulu	40,134	13,477	—	33.58	1. Independent 2. Independent 3. Jan-sangh 4. Congress 5. Independent	4,820 419 2,005 4,274 1,959	elected

The polling was held, as elsewhere, in the months of December and January. A report, that was brought out on the First General Elections in the Punjab State recommended that the elections here should be held during the open season.

Only a few residents of Lahul and Spiti who were in Kulu during the winters could avail themselves of the opportunity for voting. The conscientious voters of these areas seem to have had raised their voice against holding of elections during the closed winter months.

Lok Sabha :—For the elections to the Lok Sabha the area falling in Kulu Assembly Constituency was included in the Kangra Parliamentary Constituency which, in all, consisted of 3,38,943 voters. In this election also Independents and nominees of the two parties viz. Congress and Jansangh, contested. The parties put up one candidate each alongwith four Independents. The seat was easily won by the nominee of the Congress Party. The table illustrates the following results :—

Name of District	Name of constituency	Total No. of electors	Total No. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes on total No. of electors	Party affiliations of the contestants	Votes polled	Remarks
			Valid	Invalid				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kangra	Kangra	3,38,943	1,59,053	...	46.92	1. Congress	1,02,669	Electe
						2. Independent	4,481	
						3. Independent	9,162	
						4. Independent	10,517	
						5. Independent	3,913	
						6. Jansangh	28,311	

Second General Elections—Vidhan Sabha (Punjab)—In 1957, the area was again included in the Kulu (double member) constituency. This time one seat was reserved for the scheduled castes. As such each voter had two votes. In fact this was the first election when the entire area was covered. Election parties braved the physical and weather hazards and reached remote corners. Some parties converged into the district from Kinnaur side and experienced many hardships during the long and tiring journey on foot, covering more than 500 kilometres. The discomfort in crossing the snow-bound passes and walking over the un-bridged rivers and wading through torrents was great, but the experience was helpful and polling peaceful as nothing untoward happened. The expenses were rather very high e. g. there were about 3,000 voters in Spiti and the cost of the transportation of election material alone came to about Rs. 35,000. The Election Commission appreciated the conduct of this polling venture there and the devotion to duty of the election parties was commended.

This time the election seemed to have attracted many aspirants. For the two seats there were fifteen candidates in the field, seven belonged to the scheduled castes and eight others. Two candidates each were sponsored by Congress and Jansangh. The Communist party sponsored one. Others were Independents. The fight was very close and both the seats were annexed by the Congress candidates.

The following table illustrates the final position :—

Name of district	Name of constituency.	Total No. of electors	Total No. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes on total No. of electors	Party affiliations of the contestants.	Votes polled.
			Valid	Invalid			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Kangra	Kulu	93,896	64,118	N.A.	34.14	1. Independent (SC)	431
						2. Independent (SC)	767
						3. Independent (SC)	3685
						4. Congress (SC)	9974
						5. Independent (SC)	1941
						6. Independent (SC)	2937

	7. Independent (SC)	1457
	8. Independent	8449
	9. Jan sangh	1495
	10. Communist	2889
	11. Independent	1459
Elected	12. Congress	13668
	13. Independent	8369
	14. Jan sangh	1798
	15. Independent	4295

Lok Sabha

In case of the elections to the Parliament the area again was a part of the Kangra constituency with a difference that as in the case of Vidhan Sabha it was a double member constituency with a reserved seat for the scheduled castes. As each voter had the right to cast two votes the number of votes was 8,46,795, twice the actual voters in the list. The enthusiasm towards the election to the Lok Saba seems to have been on the low side as only 16.94% i.e. 2,86,822 votes were polled. The Congress again put up two candidates. This time Jansangh did not come forward, but a new party, the Scheduled Castes Federation put up a candidate. There were three Independents, bringing the number of contestants to six, two of whom belonged to scheduled castes. The Congress Party was again on a winning spree and both the Parliamentary seats went to it without any stiff competition. Again, to have a clearer picture, the following table, may be glanced through :—

Name of district	Name of constituency	Total No. voters	Total No. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes on total No. of electors	Party affiliation of the candidates	Votes polled	Remarks
			Valid	invalid				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Kangra	Kangra	8,46,795	2,86,822	...	16.94	1. Independent	15,739	}}
						2. Independent	61,245	
						3. Congress (SC)	73,783	Elected
						4. Independent	10,794	
						5. Scheduled Caste Federation (SC)	53,730	
						6. Congress	71,531	Elected

Third General—Elections Vidhan Sabha :—After having participated in the two general elections, the process of electioneering gathered greater momentum this time. Voters were more conscientious and realised the value of their franchise

As usual Lahul and Spiti, though it had become a full-fledged district in 1960, was tagged with the Kulu Assembly Constituency due mainly to the meagre number of voters. This time it was a single-member constituency with an electorate of 52,270. Among the political parties only the Congress remained constant in sponsoring its candidate. Out of the total of five contestants, four belonged to no political party and contested as Independents. The seat was bagged by an Independent candidate. The details are as given in the succeeding table :—

Name of district	Name of constituency	Total No. of electors	Total No. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes on total no. of electors	Party affiliation of the candidates	Votes polled	Remarks
			Valid	Invalid				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Kulu and Lahul & Spiti	Kulu	52,270	20,773	5	39.74	1. Independent	536	
						2. Independent	1,490	
						3. Independent	3,608	
						4. Congress	6,862	
						5. Independent	8,282	Elected

Voting in Lahul and Spiti took place in the month of July because of its being snow-bound at the time of elections in the rest of the State. This time too the parties and material to Spiti had to be transported through Kinnaur district. Due to the upgradation of Lahul and Spiti to the district level, ample staff was available within the district and elections were completed with ease in about a fortnight. Out of the total voters of the district i. e., 9,686 about 22% exercised their right of vote.

Lok Sabha:—Kulu Assembly constituency, alongwith six other constituencies viz. Saraj, Palampur, Kangra, Dharamsala, Nurpur and Dera Gopipur, was included in the Kangra Parliamentary constituency which had an electorate of 4,31,812 voters. Two political parties i. e. the Congress and the Communist, put up their candidates. Two candidates contested as Independents. The seat this time also was won by the Congress Party candidate with a sizeable margin. Statistics of the poll are as under :—

Name of district	Name of constituency	Total no. of electors	Total no. of votes polled		Percentage of valid votes to total no. of electors	Party affiliations of the candidates	Votes polled	Remarks
			Valid	Invalid				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Kangra	Kangra	4,31,812	1,80,044	5689	41.69	1. Communist	36,566	
Kulu						2. Independent	25,976	
Lahul & Spiti						3. Independent	44,160	
						Elected 4. Congress	72,342	

Fourth General Elections-1967—Vidhan Sabha—Consequent upon the re-organisation of Punjab, the district of Lahul and Spiti, alongwith other hilly areas, came over to Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, the voters of the district were to elect their representative to the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly. There was a new zeal and optimism. Party convassers had penetrated deep into the most backward areas and were politically soliciting the mandate of the people. Again the Congress Party was the only organisation that put up a candidate to contest the seat alongwith two Independents. This time the district was not tagged with Kulu and formed an independent constituency reserved for the Scheduled Tribes because of the fact that almost the entire population belongs to sheduled tribes.

The electoral college consisted of 10,037 voters, out of which 6,412 votes were polled bringing the percentage of votes polled an amazingly high, 63.88%. In this closely-contested seat, an Independent candidate, succeeded in being elected.

Lok Sabha—In this year the Lahul and Spiti constituency was tagged with Chamba parliamentary constituency. The total electorate comprised 2,45,876 voters in which the voters of the district formed a very small percentage. For this seat, two new parties the Swatantra and the Communist party (Marxist) put up one candidate each beside the Congress candidate and three Independents. In this six-cornered contest the seat was snatched by the Congress nominee who was given a neck-to-neck fight by the Swatantra nominee. The final position is indicated in the following chart.

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Name of Constituency	Electors	Party of the Contestant	Votes polled	Percentage	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6
Chamba	2,45,876	1. Congress	39,063	32.95	Elected
		2. Swatantra	34,505	28.88	
		3. Independent	14,548	12.18	
		4. Independent	13,474	11.28	
		5. Independent	13,209	11.06	
		6. Communist	4,355	3.65	

Fifth-General Elections 1971 (Mid-term Poll)

Lok Sabha—Although the term of the 1967 General Elections was to end in 1972, the Parliament, at the centre, was dissolved and fresh elections were ordered. Assembly Constituency of Lahul and Spiti was tagged with the Mandi Parliamentary Constituency. The following table illustrates the final position :

Name of constituency	Electors	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled to total no. of electors	Votes rejected	Party affiliation of candidates	Votes polled	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mandi	4,49,572	1,64,193	36.52	4,429	1. Congress (N)	6,344	
					2. Independent	3,182	

3. Independent	4,914	
4. Lok Raj Party	25,780	
5. Independent	4,587	
6. Congress (J)	1,14,957	Elected

The Congress Party won the election with comfortable margin.

FIFTH GENERAL ELECTIONS-1972

Vidhan Sabha-1972—Lahul and Spiti Constituency remained intact, as it was in 1967. Elections were held in June, with comparative ease because there has been a considerable improvement in the communication in the area. The district experienced an influx of outsiders who visited it for canvassing for their candidates. During this election, for the first time, there was a straight fight between two candidates, one belonging to the Congress Party and the other to the newly formed Lok Raj Party. The seat was won, in a keen contest, by the Congress nominee. Out of the total of 10,130 as many as 8,204 persons turned up to vote. The percentage of valid votes against the total number was 81%. This indicates the popularity and the political consciousness of the voters as also the impact of the development era that was ushered in after the integration of the district with Himachal Pradesh from November, 1966.

Prior to the merger of the district in Himachal Pradesh, the district was not a separate constituency, but formed part of the Kulu constituency for the election to the State Legislature and for that matter there was no political parties functioning in the district. For the development of the tribes area there was a Punjab Tribes Advisory Council and the district being the tribal area, had representation to the Council. The people took major interest in the election of representatives to the Council.

POLITICAL PARTIES

The above details of the five General Elections, held so far, reveal that different political parties have penetrated into the district. Jansangh, Swatantra, Scheduled Castes Federation, Communist Party of India and the Communists (Marxist) are the parties that have put up candidates one time or the other in these elections. A new party, known as the Lok Raj Party, also entered the elections in 1972. But the impact of the ideology of the other parties except that of the Congress has not been very strong. The parties

except again the Congress have no organised agencies within this district and have not been able to grow any roots there. It is only during the elections that these parties send in their workers. Due to the peculiar nature of the area and scattered population, it is not practicable to remain in close contact with the voters. The independents who have won was because of their personal contacts and not because of the fact that they were able to present any organised welfare scheme etc.

The Indian National Congress is the most important and popular organisations so far. This party has some workers within the district who remain active during the intervening period also.

Before the dawn of the Independence there was no political party working in the district. Nevertheless the enthusiasm of the local public for the emancipation from foreign rule was no less evident. The famous revolutionary of Bengal, Bipin Chandra Bose, happened to visit this area to escape the dragon net of the British persecutors. Seeing his patriotic fervour people experienced a new awakening even in this remote place and hailed freedom. A statue was installed at Keylong recently to perpetuate the memory of this freedom fighter. The only other news of the turmoil and disobedience against the foreign power trickled through the shepherds who may have heard bits of news here and there while moving outside Lahul and Spiti.

NEWSPAPERS

Until the recent past, the postal facilities were meager and the mail reached there after weeks. Physically and by their very way of living, people remained ignorant about the outside world. Recent developments in the communications have eased the position and now the mail etc. reach much earlier. Due to this upheaval and change a craze for the outside news is evident among the masses, especially in those who are educated. The newspapers that find readership in the district are the *Tribune* in English, published from Chandigarh, *Daily Hindustan*, *Vir Pratap* and *Nav Bharat Times* in Hindi, published from Delhi and Jullundur. Besides these dailies there are a few weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies which are read by the people, such as *Himprastha*, *Krishi Soochna*, *Blitz*, *Filmfare*, *Illustrated Weekly of India*, *Madhuri*, *Dharmayug*, etc. These magazines are more popular amongst the Government servants, mainly at the district headquarters at Keylong.

No paper, journal or magazine is published from within the district.

VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

After Independence, Lahul and Spiti offered a good ground for carrying out welfare work by voluntary organisations, such as, *Bharat Sewak Samaj*, *Parvatiya Adim Jati Sewak Sangh* etc. These organisations have done some initial work but since none of these functions the whole year round on regular basis, no factual data is as yet available. For the preservation of the Buddhist culture, a society called the Himalayan Buddhist Society was established in early sixties and had its headquarters at Manali. Learning of Bhoti language is one of their aims and a considerable collection of books on this language has been established. Due to lack of funds, however, this society too is not getting a break through.

State Social Welfare Advisory Board—For the welfare of backward classes, this Board was constituted by the Government of Himachal Pradesh, in 1954 covering various projects with its branches all over Himachal Pradesh.

After 1966, this district was also brought under the activities of this board. Before this, the Punjab State Board was doing somewhat similar work. Through the agency of the Board, all the minor voluntary agencies, are getting funds for carrying on the work. These funds are contributed by the State as well as the Central Government.

The working of seven welfare extension centres in Lahul and Spiti district is enumerated in the succeeding table :—

Name of the Centres	Amount sanctioned			
	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70
1	2	3	4	5
1. Peokar	Rs. 59,180	60,758	56,681	56,885
2. Mooling				
3. Tholang				
4. Jispa				
5. Gushal				
6. Teeno				
7. Nalda				

As has been said elsewhere in this chapter the entire area of the district is a tribal one and many schemes have been launched under the Tribal Development Programme. Large sums are being spent through the Welfare Department. With the improvement of the communications, the district has become more accessible and devoted voluntary organisation can easily send in their workers among the tribal people. More and more work will be done in future.

CHAPTER XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

Nature has endowed Lahul and Spiti with every thing interesting, charming, fascinating and attractive. Here every stone has a meaning for its specialists or expert. The entire sub-division abounds in with natural scenery attracting the tourists and visitors to explore and write about its hidden grandeur. It offers opportunity of varied interest to every body. Its valleys, mountains, glaciers, rivers, pastures, forts, (*gonpas*) monasteries and ancient buildings of the once ruling dynasty, are the principal objects of study. The two lakes Chandratol and Surajdal, hold a charm of their own at that height. The Geologist visiting this will find enough material of value for carrying the research work. He can devote his time in collecting specimen for exploring the pre-historic, supposedly unbroken marine deposits. The tourists and travellers interested in natural and scenic beauty find the charm irresistible. The snow capped peaks excite the energetic hikers to undertake expeditions and face the challenge of climbing the high mountains. The ski enthusiast can enjoy skiing on these high passes even during the month of May. This tract also affords to a sportsman chance to shoot big game varieties of Himalayan antelopes, ibexes, snow leopards, ghurals and musk deer etc., and for the one interested in snow line birds, the snow-cocks, chukors, rock pigeons are there. The scholar or author visiting the area with the intention of writing about the local people will find exciting legends and folklores to write about. The area is sparsely populated, and the people living in it are simple and unsophisticated. Their customs, myths, convention, belief totems and taboos are worthy of study. A believer in the almighty will find every village or a hamlet replete with Buddhist prayer flags fluttering over the village shrine or the monasteries. These monasteries are the centres of the cultural life of the people and have influenced their religious beliefs for centuries. The archaeologist will discover material in the study of forts, old monuments and religious structures. Monasteries, (*gonpas*) *chortens* and old residential buildings with fresco paintings and carvings on their walls and ceilings revealing the constant art of the past. Besides that nature has bestowed on Lahul and Spiti, there are man made places of interest worth visiting. The prominent among them are described below.

Baralacha pass

Situated on the Manali-Leh road, at a distance of about seventy-five

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kilometres from Keylong towards Leh, Baralacha la (as it is locally called) is situated at a height of about 4890m from the mean sea level and is about eight kilometres long. The name means 'pass with cross roads on summit' (roads from Zangskar, Ladakh, Spiti and Lahul meet on the top of it). On the north-west of it is the Bhaga river, on the north the Yunan and on the south-east the Chandra.

Dankhar

This principal village and erstwhile capital of Spiti is located on the left bank of the river Spiti at a distance of 24km. down-stream from Kaza. It is situated at a height of 3870m above the mean sea level, and built on a spur which projects into the main valley and ends in a precipice. The valley of the Piti at this place is very wide, and is divided into numerous channels, leaving in between small islands of gravel. The whole width of the river is not less than half a mile. The village Dankhar, though 395m above the river, occupies both sides of a steep ridge entirely composed of alluvium. On the top of the hill is a large structure known as the fort, which is ancient in built and became notorious for housing a cavernous dungeon which the *Nono* used as prison. It contained a cell without doors, having only a small opening at the top through which the condemned person was lowered and received meals. On the point of a hill lower down is a large monastery, which accommodates about 100 lamas and Buddhist scriptures in Bhoti. Dankhar is certainly a curious old place and well worthy of a visit. The village has a primary school, a post office and a public health centre. In 1961, its population was 168.

Gemur

This small village is situated in the Bhaga valley at a distance of 18km from Keylong in the Lahul Sub-Division and is connected by a motorable road. It has a primary school, a civil dispensary and a veterinary dispensary. It also has a *gonpa*, where in the month of July a fair is held in which devil dance is enacted by the lamas. The place is fast gaining in importance. The population of the place was 16 souls according to the Census of 1961.

Gondhla

The village is situated at a distance of sixteen kilometres from Keylong along the right bank of Chandra river and is most ideally situated at a height of 3110m above sea level on a comparatively level expanse of land. Due to the location of royal houses here it is all the more interesting. Annually a fair is held here in the month of July when lamas dance and enjoy in commemoration of their victory over a demon king (Langdorma) of Tibet in a battle where the king lost his life. The village *gonpa* is of historical significance and the fair attracts a large number of visitors. Almost

immediately opposite the Gondhla the mountain slopes form a stupendous precipice, one of the finest in the world, 1525 m of almost sheer rock from river bed to a rugged crest, a thrilling and spectacular sight. The residence of the Thakur of Gondhla, probably the most frequently photographed building in the whole of Lahul, is eight storeys high. This striking, feudal edifice is built of stone and timber and is topped by an overlapping structure which protrudes several feet on all four sides. This unique building commands the passage of the valleys with a strong vantage point in the struggles that form part of the stormy history of this area while in the brief interludes of peace its loopholes must have been eyed with grave concern by all those who passed along the road, with the temptation of plundering this huge building. The tradition relates that the architect of the aforesaid castle was put to death to prevent him from building a similar construction for a rival baron. Mention may here be made of the incised huge boulder which are to be seen bearing human figures greater than life size. The painted crowns on the heads of some of these figures represent Buddhist deities.

Captain A.F.E. Harcourt, in 1869 happened to visit this place and he has recorded his impression about the beauty and artistic grandeur of the residential building of the Thakur. He says that the royal house of Thakur is worthy of some brief notice. That was the largest structure in Lahul, and quite unique in its formation. This structure huge and strongly built of timber and stones, cemented together with wet clay, was indeed in the style of the Lahul houses. The building with many rooms, some very large, certainly could comfortably accommodate 100 persons; there were other also, with open verandahs, hardly much smaller. The peculiar feature about this house is the high tower, which contains six or seven storeys, the stair case from one room to the other being constructed of notched logs.

In one apartment is shown a cooking place that was used by the Kulu Rajah Man Singh (cir. A.D. 1720) while proceeding on pilgrimage to Triloknath, and, on a beam in the roof is an order of this chief, in the *Nagari* character, but it is so defaced by age and smoke that it is now quite illegible. At the very top of the house were hung the winter supplies of warm clothing but the most interesting of all the chambers were the two devoted to the worship of Buddha. The outer chamber contains pictures suspended on the walls as also a couple of flat drums hung on the ceiling, and furnished with carved logs. In the inner apartment or oratory, which also was very neat and clean, and smelt most strongly of incense, were the array of family gods that were concealed in a recess in the wall, at the back of a shutter screen which the Thakur removed. This screen was painted all over some what tastefully and behind it were the idols, some of which had been brought

all the way from Shagatze and Lhasa. The author was shown an open cabinet, resembling in size and form an open backgammon board, filled with what appeared to be terra-cotta impressions of figures, which were most excellently and artistically finished. These, however, were not of native manufacture but were rather brought from Lhasa, as do most of the objects used in Buddhist worship, and many of the bell and brass implements were imported via Ladakh from Nepal. The wood carvings of this fort resemble those found at the Hadimba temple at Manali (Kulu). In the lower two storeys are stored weapons of olden times. The fort at present is in the custody of Thakur Fateh Chand.

The village is by the side of a jeepable road and has a Public Works Department rest-house encompassed by willows. The village possesses a high school, a civil dispensary, a post office, an agriculture farm and a provincial outlying veterinary dispensary. The tourist, if he happens to be interested in game birds, will find chukors though quite common in Lahul but considerably in greater number here than at other places. Population of Gondhla in 1961 was 229.

Guru Ghantal Monastery

It is situated on the right bank of river Chandra in the jurisdiction of village Tupchiling some four kilometres from the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers. It is the oldest *gonpa* in Lahul and has a wooden structure with pyramidal roofs, and interesting wood carvings. Some chroniclers associate it with Padma Sambhava, a renowned Buddhist Missionary of the 8th Century. The monastery preserves the idols of Buddha, Brajeshwari Devi and others. On the 15th lunar day (full moon night of *Asarhi*) (mid June) a festival called "Ghantal" is held at which visiting lamas and Thakurs feast for one day. During this festival number of pilgrims negotiate a circle, on foot, around Drilburi, the holy mountain; which involves a walk of about twenty-nine kilometres and a climb and descent of several thousand metres.

Jalma.

Some six kilometres from Shansha in Lahul, Jalma is situated in the Pattan valley along the Chandrabhaga. This village falls on the Khoksar Udeypur motorable road. It is considered to be a very sacred place as legends describe that all the deities of Lahul and Kulu have their residence here. The place contains a forest inspection hut, a post office and a high school. The population of the village came to 353 souls in 1961 census.

Jispa.

A little above where two nullahas join river Bhaga, is the beautiful spot

of Jispa having a vast dry river bed. The place has a small rest-house just on the edge of the river Bhaga. Near the rest-house, river is shallow and replete with trout fish which can be caught during June—August. The place, twenty-two Kilometres from Keylong is approachable by motor service during summer. The place has a middle school and a post office.

Kaza.

It is the Sub-Divisional headquarters of Spiti Sub-Division. Till sometime back it was headquarters of the *Nono*, Chief of Spiti. At a height of more than 3660 m above sea level, Kaza is situated at the foot of a chain of steep ridges and is on the left bank of Spiti river. It is known for its mine of asbestos, which owing to lack of transport facilities, has long since been abandoned. The place contains a middle school, a veterinary hospital, a civil dispensary, a post office, a forest inspection hut and a rest-house. In 1961 it had a population of 310.

Kardang Monastery.

The monastery is visible from Keylong over the Kardang village. Approaching it from Keylong side one has to cross a wooden bridge across the Bhaga which passes here through a deep gorge. The bridge is only about twelve metres long. The water is about twenty metres below. Across the bridge the path winds up a sharp slope ultimately reaching the monastery beyond which there is no habitation. The distance from Keylong is about five kilometres.

The site of the monastery is placed against the back drop of the bare mountain tops nesting in the lap of the Rangcha, "which rises above the valley like a giant cobra standing on its tail with hood outspread, ready to strike." This monastery is one of the latest but certainly the biggest in the Bhaga valley. It is believed that this monastery was built in the 12th century, but one Norbu Lama is said to have rebuilt it in the beginning of the current century.

One time capital of Lahul, Kardang village is mainly famous for its monastery. Inside this historical monastery are the barrel-like prayer drums which revolve to the touch of the devotees and lamas as they go round the passages saying their prayers. There are also valuable paintings of various types, weapons, musical instruments, lifesize statues of Buddha and other lesser divinities. The monastery has a big library of Kanzyur and Tangyur volumes of Buddhist scriptures in *Bhoti* which are being preserved carefully. The village has a small dairy farm and a primary school. The total population of the village according to the 1971 census, came to 236 souls.

Keylong

Keylong, at the height of 3,350 m. above the sea level, is situated on the main trade route between the Rohtang and Bara lacha passes, above the Bhaga river, only six kilometres from Tandi where the Bhaga meets the Chandra. Connected by a motorable road from Manali, it is the only place in Lahul which has a regular bazar with a line of shops on either side showing as a main trade market in the area and catering to the needs of the local people. It is ideally situated in the heart of the Himalayas in the lonely corner with high cliffs in front covered with snow. It is quite true, as Lieut-Colonel The Hon. C. G. Bruce, M. V. O. remarks in his book (1914), on Kulu and Lahul, that Keylong is like a barbaric jewel—a roughly cut emerald in a bronze and silver setting. In plain words, it is an oasis of green fields and willow-planted water-courses surrounded with brown hills and snowy heights. The climate of this place is dry and bracing but winters are very severe. The Moravian Missionaries, for a long time in the past had this place as their main base of their work covering all the neighbouring valleys of this district. It is now the headquarters of the district. Because of the building skills imparted by the Moravian Missionaries to the Lahulas, Keylong has the best houses in the whole of the district and a fine belt of poplar trees, another of the legacies of the mission. About half the population of Lahul outside the Pattan valley lives in Keylong, along with the best traders, the richest farmers and some of the leading Thakurs or the old barons of Lahul. Three of the best known monasteries of the valley are within a few kilometres from this village, so that in its streets may be seen not only the temporal but also the spiritual elite of Lahul. It has a police station, a telegraph office, a beautiful *serai*, a civil hospital, a P. W. D. rest house, a civil veterinary hospital and a higher secondary school. The total population according to the census of 1961 registered 779 souls.

Kibber.

Locally known as Khyipur, Kibber is one of the highest village in the world, being located at 4,205 m. above sea level in a narrow valley surrounded on all sides by lofty mountains, on the summit of a lime stone rock. The village is perched on a vast rocky-stretch of land, to which a very steep ascent of about thirteen kilometres from a stream down below. Kibber is rather a pleasant village, remarkable for its houses being all built of stone, instead of the mud or unburnt brick so commonly used in the valley of Spiti. Even at this height the village has plenty of cultivation. A track from here branches off to Parangla for Tibet. Here we have a middle school, a civil dispensary, a post office and the local monastery which is worth a visit. According to 1961 census the population of the place was 259.

Khoksar.

After an arduous trek of some twenty-one kilometres across the Rohtang pass from Manali side, Khoksar is the first place of shelter, situated at a height of 3,140 m. above the sea level. The habitation is on both the flanks of river Chandra. It is the highest village in Chandra valley, and is considered to be the coldest place in Lahul. During winter, it appears deserted and only one or two houses serve meals to the travellers. Khoksar raises nostalgic memories of the old trade route from Indian plains to the West Asia. One can imagine the long caravans, tinkling bells of the sheep and goats, the laughter and gaiety of the people and the patter of the trodding feet resounding in the deep gorges of this Himalayan hamlet. How enchanting and weird real and yet dread and fear of the abstract, must have been the thoughts in the minds of the those hardy travellers. As such memories haunt the modern travellers, he can only visualise the remote scene of the middle ages at the background of the today's advancement in communication, when machines and not men resound in these valleys. The village comprises scattered houses dotted on the road running to Keylong. The place is surrounded and enclosed all around by lofty mountains. Snow avalanches are invariably seen piled up near the river bed and in winter the river water frozen and covered with snow form a regular path for human beings as also for mule traffic.

A sanctum sanctorum erected above the village on the mountain side indicates the influence of Buddhism on the villagers. The village lama is appointed by rotation, after three years from amongst the villagers to perform the worship in the monastery. As every where the villagers dogmatically pin their faith on this deity. All the diseases are attributed directly to the wrath of the village god, and are cured by the lama by *tana mana*. Similar worship is performed for warding of the evil spirits inflicting injuries or diseases on the people.

The workshop and main station of Mandi Kulu Transport Corporation are located here and vehicles for Kaza, Jispa and Thirotply from this place. A P.W.D. rest-house, a *serai*, a primary school, an Ayurvedic dispensary, a post office and a good number of restaurants and catering places are located here. A seasonal police post to check the creditable of the foreign tourists is located here.

Kunzam Pass

This pass provides the main approach to Spiti from Lahul separated by the great Kunzam Range; and from where the Spiti, the chief river of the sub-division takes its source. It is situated at 60th kilometre from Gramphoo s Kaza on the Gramphoo-Kaza-Sumdo road. Unlike Rohtang, it

is safer, and though more in height (about 4,590 m), easier both in ascent and descent. It closes earlier and opens later than Rohtang. The panorama as viewed from the top of the pass is enthralling and inspiring. The high and mighty Shigri peak can be seen right in front in all its grandeur. The crest of the pass is marked by a *chorten* of stones erected in some unknown past. Recently the local people have built a temple dedicated to Goddess Durga and a hut for the people to stay on the pass.

Kye Monastery

This is the biggest monastery in Spiti Sub-Division and is situated between Kibber and Kaza just over the small village of Kye on the left bank of the Spiti river. It is approachable by a jeepable road and presents the appearance of a hill fort. Hundreds of lamas receive their religious training in the monastery which is also famous for its murals and highly valued books. Detailed account of the monastery appears in Chapter III of this volume also.

Losar

Losar a village of about 230 souls (1961 census) is in the Spiti Sub-Division, north-east of the Kulu district. It is situated near the confluence of the Losar and Peeno streams. This is the last inhabited spot which travellers find after ascending through the course of the Peeno stream. The village is worth a visit because of its location at an elevation of about 4085 m. Above this part of the valley, through which the river flows, the mountains rise in knurl cliffs so steep that no snow can rest on their faces, though it lies deeply on their tops, which are for the most part flattened, forming table-land. The general character of the soil and atmosphere is excessively arid; but in some places patches of fertility, at the bases of the declivities, are rendered productive by means of *Kuhl* irrigation. On one of these slips is situated the village of Losar; and the appearance of this singularly secluded place, as described by Gerard, is far from repulsive. "Lofty as the level of Losar is, there is little in the landscape to betray its position when viewed in summer, embosomed in flourishing crops and herds of *Pashmina* wool-goats. Yaks and horses meet the eye upon the high acclivities of the mountains, and an ardent sunshine keeps the air looming from the effect of mirage". The inhabitants are darker than those residing in the low and sultry plains. When the ground is covered with snow, their black figures contrast strikingly and somewhat grotesquely with the dazzling whiteness of the surface on which they move. The white-washed mud-houses in the village present a very neat and tidy appearance and waving green barley in the fields is also eye pleasing during the summer. A primary school and a post office exist in the village. There is no human habitation

from Losar to Khoksar across Kunzam Pass, a distance of some fifty-six kilometres.

Rohtang Pass

This pass forms the main gateway between Lahul valley and the rest of the southern area of Kulu-Manali. It is situated at the end of the habitable world (as described locally) and has formed the subject-matter of interesting description by various travellers through centuries. In Tibetan, Rohtang means 'a heap of dead bodies' and the pass stands true to this name. Though not very high (about 3,980 m), it is one of the most hazardous passes anywhere, and owing to the heavy toll of lives, it is notorious for its sudden blizzards and snow-storms which can overtake unwary travellers on or near the crest, anytime after 11.00 A.M. It is on record in Harcourt's book, *The Himalayan Districts of Kooloo Lahoul and Spiti*, that 72 labourers returning from bridge construction work in Lahul in 1862 lost their lives in a fearful snowdrift over the pass. Another major tragedy occurred in early sixties. Minor losses happen frequently and almost every year the Rohtang takes its toll of a few men and pack animals. The pass is rendered all the more difficult due to avalanches. Only the unburdened and strong mountaineers dare cross the pass the off season. The exquisite scenery and mountain caps on one side and the green fertile valley on the other make the ascent worth climbing. To the right are the steep gorges through which the Beas river flows in torrential fury and all around the snow peaks strike the viewer and the climbers. One goes on climbing to have a glimpse of the summit of the pass but it can be seen only on its attainment. During the season improvised hotels in tents crop up at the crest.

It is only after reaching the top that one has to face the difficulty in breathing which is often made more difficult by the strong winds. As we go up the intensity of wind increases. The crest of Rohtang is over one kilometre across but the views from the pass are somewhat obscured by the cliffs on either side of the gap.

The breeze generally blows through the pass for a few hours twice a day, with a calm interval in-between. There is no certainty in which direction these may blow. It is, of course, desirable to cross the pass during the calm interval, otherwise the traveller's pleasure in the march may be reduced to extreme torture and inconvenience. The local people, realising the vagaries of the wind and weather, know the most favourable hour to cross it. The summit of pass, fairly a level ground, is one of the most fascinating natural spots which presents a beautiful lush-green picture in summer studded here and there with violets and varieties of wild Himalayan flowers. At the highest

point, a little to the right, is a small stone enclosure and a small water spring which flows into Beas.

This site, it is said, was made sacred and christened by the sojourn of Beas Rishi. The site of the spring was subsequently improved by Lehna Singh, a General under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, when Kulu was overwhelmed by the Sikh troops. To the left of the pass is the little lake of Sarkund (also called Dashir). On the 20th Bhadon (early September) every year this small glacial lake is visited by a number of people from Kulu, Lahul and Spiti and even from other districts, the general belief being that a path in it at the daybreak, on this particular occasion, cures all ailments. Almost directly opposite, and seemingly only a few kilometres away, is the well defined Sonapani glacier; slightly to the left are the twin peaks of Gyephant, the higher of the two being visible from as far as the Ridge in Simla. The Beas river rises near the crest of Rohtang. Some religious minded travellers make it a point to throw a coin or two into the springhead known as Beas Kund. But how different is the most dreaded pass of the days of Moorcroft and Moravian Mission. Now amidst the wild and snowy scene there is constant rumbling of buses, cars and jeeps, P. W. D. trucks and other road building heavy machinery criss-crossing the pass with thunder and confidence. Except in winter when there is heavy snow, the pass is now crossed by the strongest mountaineers at every time of day and night. There are examples of the courageous few crossing over even in storm and snow.

Shansha

This village is situated on the right bank of river Chandrabhaga at a distance of twenty-seven kilometres from Keylong. One of the famous and most powerful Lahul deities named Gyephant (Gephant) is believed to have been born at this place. A shrine dedicated to the deity lies in the village and is visited by pilgrims from far and wide. Modern amenities like middle school, civil dispensary, veterinary hospital and post office are available in the village. The population of the village was 104 in 1961.

Shashur Monastery.

Shashur in the local parlance, means 'in the blue pines'. It is situated on a hillock about three kilometres away from Keylong towards north on the same slope and is approached by a steep, but no difficult path. Some very attractive views of the snowy ranges and the enormous glacial beds that stretch between them can be had from here. The building, a rectangular block, plastered over with mud and white-washed, has a flat roof ornamented with little flags, with verandahs projecting from the walls. Every year a fair is held here during the month of June/July drawing the visitors from even distant corners of the valley. The lamas of the monastery present a dance in which they put on various kinds of masks resembling queer shapes and sizes, like the one used in the Kathakali

dances. This dance is usually known as the devil dance. The upper most storey of the monastery has valuable wall paintings representing the brief history of the eighty-four Buddhas.

Sissu.

It lies on the Keylong-Khoksar road some twenty-nine kilometres from Keylong at a height of 3,100 m in Lahul Sub-Division. There is a small swampy plain on the river side where in September and April wild duck and geese, on their way back to Siberia (U.S.S.R.) from the Indian plains, are found resting. Bits of fishable water on this swamp holds snow trout. Across the valley is a big water fall clearly visible from this place. The water fall over the cliff from the high valley between two mountains and the long stream of water falling to the base is a memorable sight. A monastery perched on a steep rocky declivity is the only object which invariably attracts the tourists. This shrine reflects the strong influence of Buddhism in this area. It possesses a pleasant little rest-house surrounded by the willow trees, a primary school, and a maternity centre. The most awe-inspiring God is Geyphant at Sissu.

Tabo

An ancient village, more than 3050m above sea level, it has a small but beautiful hamlet on the left bank of the Spiti river. It is the second village in Spiti from the eastern approach. Flanked on either side by lofty hills, brown and sun-burnt, it is the seat of one of the most famous Buddhist *gonpa* regarded by many as only next to the Tholing *gonpa* in Tibet. The Tabo *gonpa* is the seat of about 50 lamas and preserves a very big collection of scriptures and pieces of art, wall painting and stucco sculpture. The murals of this *gonpa* have some similarity to Ajanta wall paintings. The total population according to 1961 Census came to 140 souls. Village has a post office, high school and a civil dispensary.

Tandi

Tandi is situated on a 305m high flat ground in the Pattan valley six kilometres to the west of Keylong, and about one kilometre above the Khoksar-Keylong road.

Tandi, and for that matter the entire Lahul Sub-Division, is connected by a road with Manali in Kulu district through the Rohtang Pass. Postal facilities are available in the village proper but telegraph facilities are available only at Keylong. Education upto the primary standard is available in the village.

According to revenue and settlement records, Tandhi seems to have been

founded by Raja Rana Chand Ram under the name of Chandi which name, with the passage of time, has changed into its present name of Tandi. However, people narrate legends associating the village with mythological personage. A section of the population believes that Dropadi, the wife of the Pandavas, gave up her mortal frame at this place and that Tandi means *tan-dehi*, giving up of the body. Another section of villagers believes that the dead body of Vasishtha, who meditated near the hot springs, north-east of Manali, was cremated near the confluence of rivers Chandra and Bhaga at the present site of the village and that this place has since been named as Tandi, i. e. body consumed. It can be reasonably surmised that the village is pretty old though no information as to its exact age is forthcoming. All the existing households were settled in this village more than five generations ago.

The village is situated at the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers. There is an interesting legend on this confluence. It is said that Chandra and Bhaga were two lovers, Chandra being the daughter of the Moon and the Bhaga the son of the God Sun. To perform the eternal marriage they decided to climb the Baralacha Pass and from there run in opposite directions, encircling a vast tract of Lahul. Chandra was more active and smart and easily meandered her way down the pass but when she reached Tandi, she felt concerned for her beloved and to find him, climbed up the valley towards the present village of Keylong. Soon Bhaga was found coming with great struggle through the narrow rocks. Seeing him coming Chandra also came back to Tandi where consequently the both met and the celestial marriage was performed. From the starting points on the Baralacha Pass the water followed both of them which gradually took the form of two rivers that are known to-day after their names. From this point of confluence, i. e. Tandi, the joint name was given to the rivers, Chandrabhaga, because Chandra and Bhaga had united into the eternal wedlock.

The Tayul Gonpa

The site of this *gonpa* is about six kilometres from Keylong. This is also one of the oldest monasteries of the valley. It has a very big statue of Guru Padmasambhava about 5 m. high and houses a library of Kangyur containing 101 volumes.

GLOSSARY

Local dialect	English equivalents
<i>Abpash</i>	Irrigated
<i>Adalat</i>	Court
<i>Adi-vaidya</i>	The primaeval medicine man
<i>Ala-malik</i>	Genuine land owner
<i>Amla</i>	A kind of myrobalan
<i>Araa</i>	Liquor
<i>Ardig</i>	Vessel for distilling liquor
<i>Arthi</i>	Bier
<i>Bachh paper</i>	Statement of revenue demand
<i>Baglog</i>	Second wedding ceremony
<i>Balwadi</i>	Nursery school
<i>Ban</i>	Rope made of grass
<i>Banjar</i>	Barren land
<i>Bara</i>	Big
<i>Barani</i>	Unirrigated
<i>Barar</i>	Myrobalan
<i>Batai</i>	Share
<i>Begar</i>	Free forced labour
<i>Beli</i>	Willow
<i>Beta</i>	Musician
<i>Betangana</i>	Cess
<i>Bhar</i>	Middle region

<i>Bhasha</i>	Language, dialect
<i>Bhat</i>	Priest
<i>Bhoj</i>	Birch
<i>Bigha</i>	Land measure
<i>Bon</i>	Grain
<i>Bre</i>	A wooden vessel for grain measurement
<i>Bula</i>	Straw shoes
<i>Bumlishor</i>	Taking of the religious books to the field
<i>Buzhen</i>	Monk of a low order or married monks
<i>Chadar</i>	Woollen shawl
<i>Chakki</i>	Hand mill
<i>Chaklas</i>	Chairs made of grass
<i>Chandal</i>	Menial
<i>Chandas</i>	Pillars
<i>Chanmo</i>	Snow partridge
<i>Charha</i>	System of weights prevalent in Pattan valley
<i>Chazang</i>	Great mass of the peasantry
<i>Cheena</i>	A grain
<i>Chhaggeth</i>	Household for burning fuel
<i>Chhagtal</i>	A sort of long spoon
<i>Chhang</i>	A strong liquor
<i>Chhiyaya</i>	Marriage party
<i>Chhulton</i>	Cushion stuffed with grass and straw
<i>Chilgoza</i>	Edible pine nut
<i>Choga</i>	A long coat of coarse wool
<i>Chokshe</i>	A small wooden box
<i>Chouro</i>	Nun

<i>Chungak</i>	Brown-beaked crow
<i>Chungin</i>	Little headman
<i>Dal</i>	Pulse
<i>Dandi</i>	Sedan chair
<i>Dang</i>	Grassy land
<i>De</i>	Grain measurement
<i>Deodar</i>	Pine species
<i>Degchi</i>	A vessel of brass or copper
<i>Dharkar</i>	Rent of sheep runs paid by the <i>gaddis</i>
<i>Dharma</i>	Religion
<i>Dhumgyur</i>	The worship cylinder
<i>Dhup</i>	A herb used for making incense
<i>Doltog</i>	A vessel
<i>Do ngmo</i>	Cloth measurement
<i>Dre</i>	Wooden vessel used for measuring grains
<i>Dun-thulpas</i>	descendants of monks
<i>Durta</i>	Colt
<i>Dzoz</i>	Hybrid yak
<i>Gaddi</i>	A nomadic tribe
<i>Gadpo</i>	Headman
<i>Gadpo chenono</i>	A penal of judges
<i>Gaon</i>	Village
<i>Gar</i>	Dance
<i>Gara</i>	Blacksmith
<i>Garpon</i>	Governor or administrator
<i>Garzha</i>	Daughter of the Himalayas and consort of Siva
<i>Gaygo</i>	Third lama

GLOSSARY

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LAHUL & SPITI

<i>Gena</i>	Little feast
<i>Gendun</i>	Clergy
<i>Ghoont</i>	Sturdy ponies of Lahul
<i>Golind</i>	Snow cock
<i>Gonpa</i>	Monastery
<i>Gram</i>	Village
<i>Gram Sabha</i>	Village assembly
<i>Grazhing</i>	Allotment of land
<i>Gudma</i>	Fine quality blanket of soft wool
<i>Gyachhul</i>	Who has religion
<i>Haddi</i>	Clan
<i>Harkara</i>	Messenger
<i>Hatha</i>	Cloth measurement by hand
<i>Hatse</i>	Himalayan fox
<i>Havan</i>	Sacrificial fire
<i>Inam</i>	Grant
<i>Imchis</i>	Hereditary village doctor
<i>Jama</i>	Revenue record
<i>Jamabandi</i>	Revenue record
<i>Jhatpo</i>	Snow leopard
<i>Jhoola</i>	Suspension ropeway bridge
<i>Jhooa</i>	An astrologer
<i>Jo</i>	Hereditary ruler
<i>Kacha</i>	Unmetalled
<i>Kafan</i>	Shroud
<i>Kagch</i>	Black beaked crow
<i>Kail</i>	Pine

Kanungo

A village revenue official

Karu

A medicinal herb

Karkuns

officials

Kathu ka sag

Green vegetable

Khachudma

Vessel for preparing saltish tea

Khadam(ratan jot)

A herb

Khampo

First lama

Khangchen

Big house

Khang chhenpa

Eldest brother

Khangchung

Small house

Khercha

Indigenous throw-shuttle looms

Kin

Ibex

Kokar

Porcupine

Kongmo

Himalayan snow cock

Kothi's

Group of Villages

Kunmai-bhagstan

Marriage by theft

Kunpad

Stone utensil

Kurim

Divorce ceremony

Kutpa chacha

Chanting of holy scriptures to remove evil

Kuth

A medicinal plant the roots of which are used in the manufacture of incense.

Lambardar

Village headman

Lapa

Servant

Lhakhang

Temple sacred to demons

Lhas

Local genius

Lho-yul

Southern country

Lhumsas

Pitchers

<i>Lugri</i>	Local beer produced by fermentation of barley
<i>Pachotra</i>	Share, fee ordinarily assigned to the village headman
<i>Pagal nullah</i>	Mad torrent, name of a streamlet in Lahul
<i>Pagwand</i>	Rule of succession
<i>Palki</i>	Palanquin
<i>Parikrama</i>	Circumambulation
<i>Pashmina</i>	Fine quality wool of apline goat
<i>Patti</i>	Tweed
<i>Patwari</i>	A village level revenue official
<i>Pethy</i>	Minor disputes
<i>Phatees</i>	Administrative sub-divisions
<i>Pheron</i>	Second wedding ceremony
<i>Phua</i>	Sacred saying
<i>Pika</i>	Mouse hare
<i>Pin</i>	Area lying on both sides of Pin stream
<i>Poolah</i>	Straw shoes
<i>Pore</i>	Equal of seventy-six grams
<i>Puntot</i>	Adopted girl
<i>Putoy</i>	Adopted boy
<i>Qyalpo</i>	A king
<i>Rabi</i>	Summer harvest
<i>Reason</i>	Snow rabbit
<i>Rig-rig-tal</i>	Rent of sheep-runs
<i>Rus</i>	Tribe or clan
<i>Sarson</i>	Mustard
<i>Sathen</i>	Flour of parched barley

<i>Saffoo</i>	Flour of parched barley or other grain
<i>Shakpa</i>	Partridge
<i>Sham</i>	Lower Region
<i>Sheelum</i>	A type of grass
<i>Shigri</i>	Glacier
<i>Shin</i>	Snow leopard
<i>Shingoo</i>	Snow wolf
<i>Shipt</i>	Drummer
<i>Shngu</i>	Ream
<i>Shruna</i>	Amulet
<i>Shungzop</i>	Carpenter
<i>Sonam</i>	Merit
<i>Subden</i>	Carpet
<i>Survas</i>	Descendants of socially boycotted
<i>Taluqadari</i>	System of land holding
<i>Tebhagston</i>	Big marriage
<i>Tengrol</i>	Ibex
<i>Tey</i>	Measuring wooden pot for good grains
<i>Thakchthay</i>	Divorce
<i>Thal</i>	Land revenue
<i>Thanadar</i>	A police official
<i>Thankas</i>	Paintings
<i>Theshw</i>	Cloth measurement
<i>Thobi</i>	Coarse texture woven of goat's hair
<i>Thukpa</i>	Porridge type of a dish
<i>Thulden</i>	Mattresses made of padded straw and rags
<i>Thulpa</i>	Sheepskin
<i>Thupa</i>	A dish prepared of buck-wheat
<i>Thuru</i>	Colt

<i>Tirni</i>	Grazing fee
<i>Tobache</i>	Permanent servant
<i>Togpo</i>	Streamlet
<i>Tolunoo</i>	Regular feast
<i>Tan dehi</i>	Giving up the body
<i>Topag</i>	Two bottles of wine
<i>Tshud-thawagtsi</i>	Breaking of thread by the couple in divorce ceremony
<i>Tud</i>	Higher region

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Travels 1819-1824,

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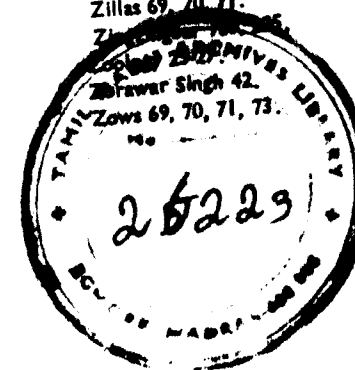
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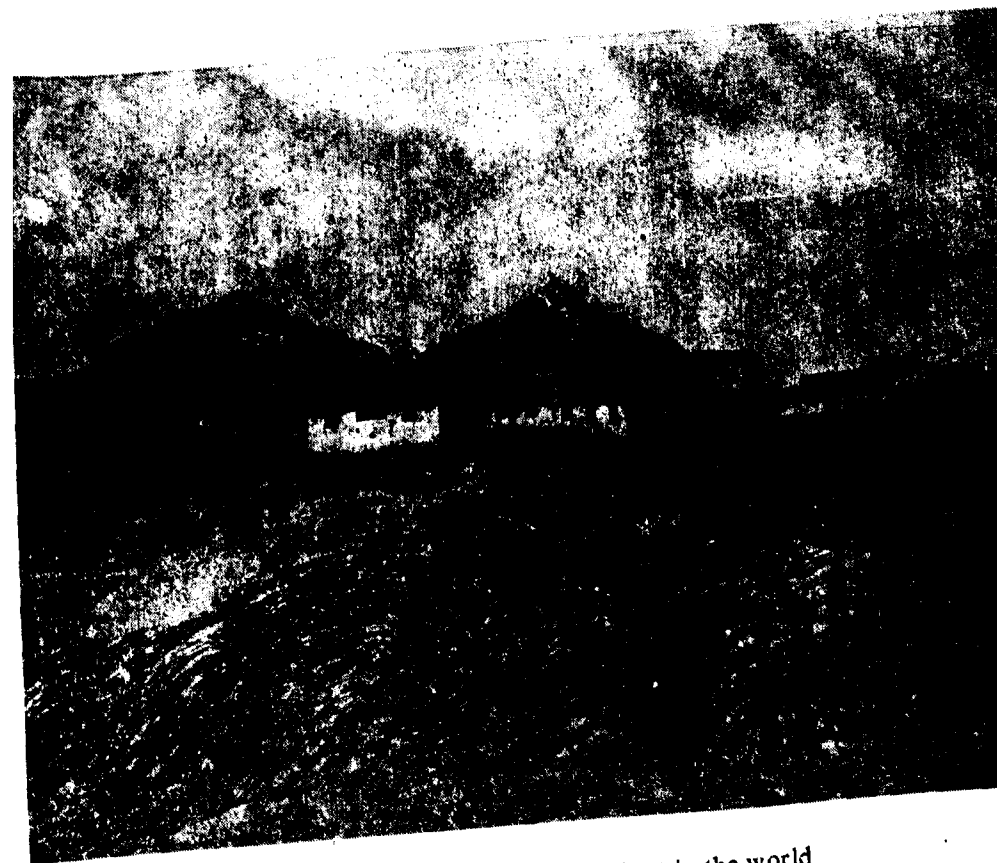
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Kibber village, one of the highest in the world



Lamas of Kye monastery with their musical instruments

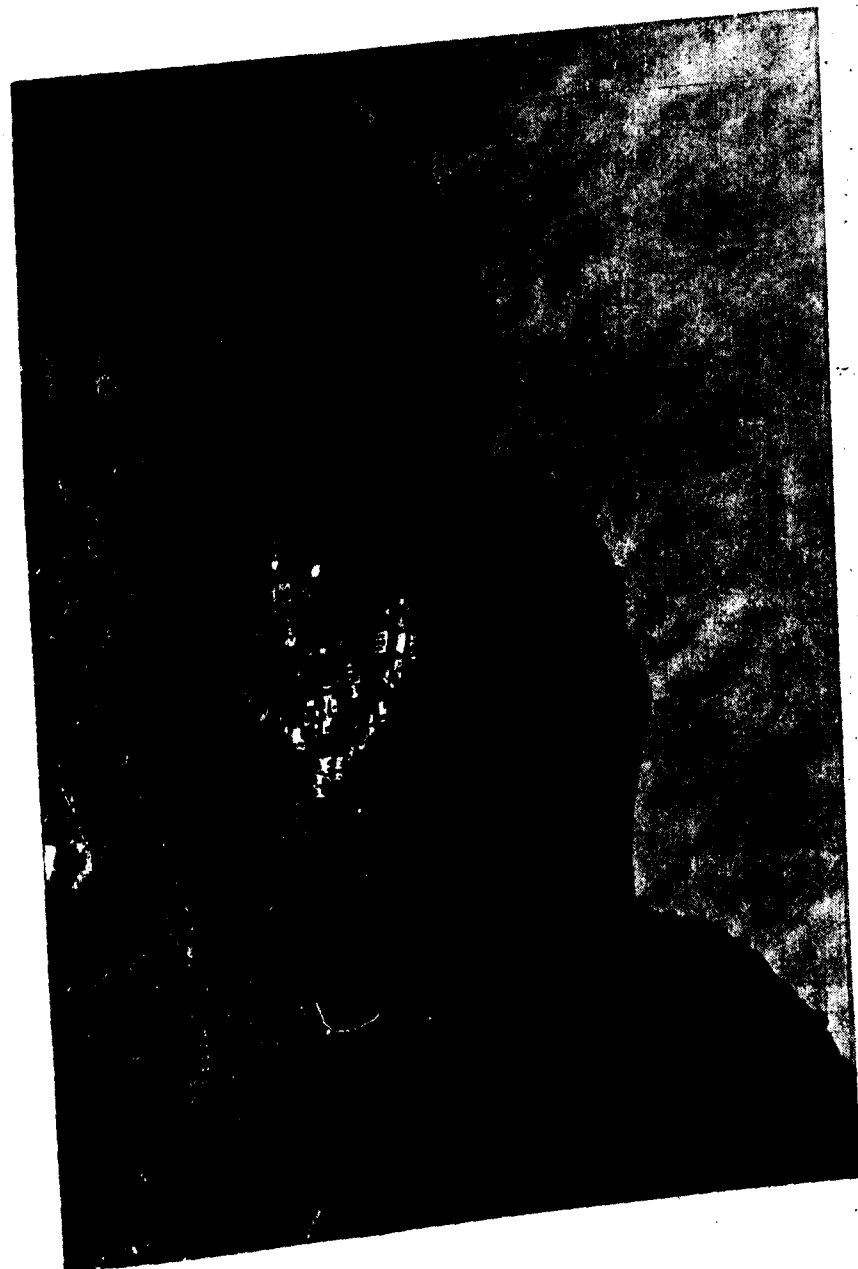


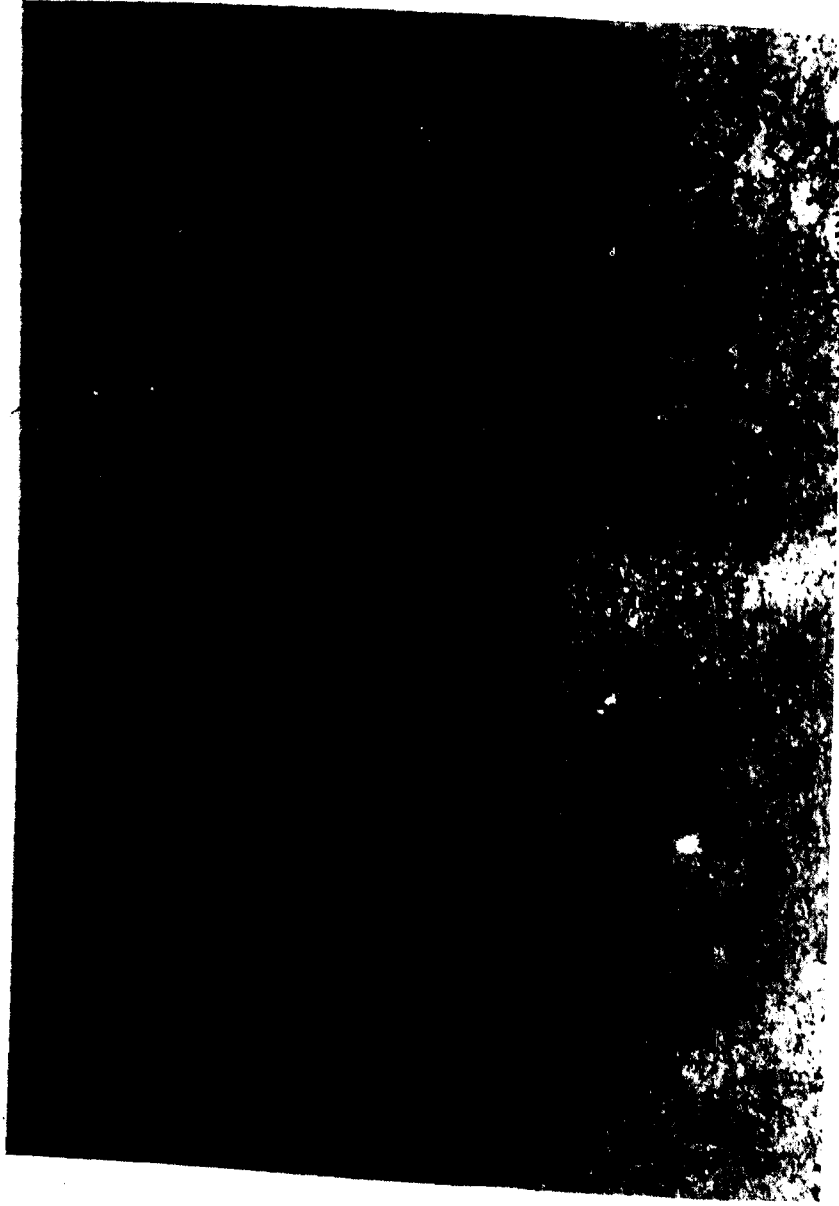
Spiti Women, with local costume & ornaments



Lahul women, bearing traditional ornaments
in festive occasion

Kye Monastery





A mule caravan in the Spiti Valley

Kaza, the headquarters of Spiti sub-division

