

NOTE

With the approval of the Commission, I visited the state of Himachal Pradesh from 22 to 24 July, 2015 to report on the status of NMHP/DMHP in the state. I took this opportunity to assess the status of human rights too in districts of Bilaspur and Kangra in the state.

Enclosed herewith is my report on visits to the two districts. I shall be grateful if the same is placed before the Commission early.

Secretary General, NHRC

S. Jalaja,

Special Rapporteur, NHRC

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REPORT ON VISIT TO BILASPUR AND KANGRA DISTRICTS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH FROM 22 to 24 JULY, 2015

-S. Jalaja, Special Rapporteur, NHRC

The state of Himachal Pradesh is known for its natural beauty, but today it is also being appreciated for ensuring basic quality of life to its people. The World Bank Report released on 28-1-2015, highlights how Himachal Pradesh has effectively balanced economic growth with good human development outcomes and has made great strides in reducing extreme poverty. Life expectancy is 3.4 years longer than an average Indian expects to live; and, per capita income is the second highest in India. Educational attainment in Himachal Pradesh is stated to be among the best in the country. However, the Report also has captured issues of concern such as decline in female child sex ratio, under nutrition in children and an aging population.

As per directions of the Commission I visited Shimla, Bilaspur and Kangra districts of the state to report on the status of mental health care under the National and District Mental Health Programs (NMHP and DMHP) with reference to *Upendra Baxi Vs the state of UP* pending before the Supreme Court in which Commission is also a party. I utilized that opportunity to find out the status of human rights in Bilaspur and Kangra districts which I had not visited earlier. In the two districts I essentially visited health facilities. I had detailed discussions with District Magistrates, Superintendants of Police, Civil Surgeons and other senior officials. I also visited District Jail Dharamshala. Reports on mental health care and visit to

District Jail, Dharamshala have already been submitted to the commission separately. Given below are details of visits made to the two districts.

Profile of the districts

Bilaspur district is situated in Shivalik range of lower Himalayas and has a hilly terrain, with Bilaspur town as its headquarters.

Kangra is the most populous district of Himachal Pradesh, with Dharamshala as its administrative headquarters. Dharamshala is also the headquarters of the Tibetan Government-in-exile.

Demographic details

Demographic details in respect of both the districts are given in the table below:-

| District | Area in Sq km ² | Population- in lakhs | | | Literacy% | | | Sex ratio Per 1000 male |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------|------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| | | T | M | F | T | M | F | |
| Bilaspur | 1,167 km ² | 3.8 | 1.92 | 1.89 | 84.59 | 91.16 | 77.97 | 981 |
| Kangra | 5,739 km ² | 15.10 | 7.50 | 7.59 | 85.67 | 91.49 | 80.02 | 1012 |

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(Census 2011)

From a cursory look sex ratio appears to be normal and well above the average at all India level .But it is leaned that in some areas adjoining Punjab in Bilaspur sex ratio has fallen *to a level of even 400*. Women's literacy being high in the state that appeared to be a paradox. But the explanation given was that in the state/district TFR being almost at the level of replacement level, people prefer to have only boys. This distortion needs to be corrected by creating awareness among parents, expanding career opportunities for woman, paying attention to their security etc

Administrative divisions

Bilaspur district is divided into two subdivisions (Sadar, Gumarwin) and four tehsils and five blocks, Ghumarwin, Bilaspur Sadar, Jhandutta and Sri Naina Devi, with 151 panchayats and 1080 villages.

Kangra district has eight sub divisions - Kangra, Palampur, Dharamshala, Nurpur, Dehra Gopipur, Baijnath, Jwali and Jaisinghpur.

Criminal justice system

Himachal has one of the highest ratio of policemen per one lakh population (209) as against that for all India-138; Punjab 274; Delhi 398; UP 89 and Bihar 67 as reported by the Police Dept of Himachal in 2012.

5
Strength of police force in Bilaspur was reported as 609 (08 inspectors; 21 SI; 46 ASI; 98 HC and 436 Con) in 2012 and that of Kangra district 1387 (12 Ins; 45 SI; 105 ASI 217 HC and 1008 Con).

There is only one police district in Bilaspur with 07 thanas. It was stated that a Woman's Care Unit has also been set up. It was learned that all *thanas* have buildings with toilets. General Law and order was stated as normal. The percentage of conviction reported was 15-20 %.

Crime profile-IPC Crimes-Bilaspur district

| Year | Category | Registered | Admitted | Convicted | Acquitted | Pending in courts | Inves |
|------|--------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-------|
| 2012 | Murder | 08 | 08 | 01 | 02 | 02 | - |
| 2013 | | 04 | 04 | Nil | 01 | 02 | - |
| 2014 | | 04 | 03 | nil | nil | 02 | 01 |
| 2012 | Cul.Homicide | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 2013 | | Do | Do | Do | Do | Do | Do- |
| 2014 | | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2012 | Kidnaping | 07 | 04 | Nil | Nil | 02 | - |
| 2013 | | 51 | 10 | 01 | 01 | 06 | - |
| 2014 | | 46 | 11 | nil | nil | 01 | 08 |
| 2012 | Hurt | 37 | 36 | Nil | 02 | 27 | - |
| 2013 | | 62 | 56 | Nil | 02 | 47 | - |
| 2014 | | 62 | 58 | nil | nil | 52 | 02 |
| 2012 | burglary | 55 | 54 | Nil | Nil | 04 | - |
| 2013 | | 69 | 69 | 01 | nil | 12 | - |
| 2014 | | 45 | 42 | - | - | 08 | 03 |
| 2012 | IPC | 1098 | 1005 | 53 | 34 | 761 | 01 |

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|------|------|----|----|-----|----|
| 2013 | crimes | 1238 | 1112 | 29 | 15 | 939 | 01 |
| 2014 | | 1301 | 1156 | 23 | 03 | 939 | 69 |

From the data given in the above table it appears that number of IPC crime has increased from 1098 in 2012 to 1238 in 2013 and further to 1301 in 2014. Moreover, the number of convictions in 2012 was 53 in 2013, but it got reduced to 29 in 2013 and in 2014 it got further reduced to 23 only. As far as acquittals are concerned that showed a decreasing trend. Dacoity and robbery cases were reported as nil. Other IPC crimes showed an increasing trend from 482 in 2012 to 566 in 2013 and 620 in 2014.

Crime profile- Kangra district

According to SP Kangra law and order in the district is peaceful and status of crime stable. It was stated that Kangra has only one police district with 17 police stations. All have buildings. While a Mahila P.S is set up, no separate P.S has been set up in the district for dealing with crimes against the SC/ST. Although there are no fast-track courts, designated courts have been set up. Main issues reported in the district were drug related problems especially in schools and pretty crimes.

| Year | Category | Registered | Admitted | Convicted | Acquitted | Pending in courts |
|------|--------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| 2012 | Murder | 24 | 16 | 01 | - | 13 |
| 2013 | | 28 | 18 | Nil | - | 16 |
| 2014 | | 26 | 25 | nil | nil | 20 |
| 2012 | Cul.Homicide | 02 | 02 | Nil | Nil | 02 |
| 2013 | | 01 | 01 | Do | Do | 00 |
| 2014 | | 02 | 01 | - | - | 01 |
| 2012 | Kidnapping | 52 | 22 | nil | 04 | 17 |
| 2013 | | 61 | 18 | - | -- | - |
| 2014 | | 32 | 11 | nil | nil | 01 |
| 2012 | Hurt | 187 | 181 | Nil | 32 | 147 |
| 2013 | | 152 | 144 | Nil | 14 | 129 |
| 2014 | | 197 | 190 | nil | 03 | 187 |

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|------|----------|------|------|-----|----|------|
| 2012 | | 224 | 219 | 03 | 03 | 23 |
| 2013 | burglary | 139 | 133 | 01 | 02 | 29 |
| 2014 | | 141 | 139 | - | - | 27 |
| 2012 | IPC | 1414 | 1303 | 200 | 69 | 961 |
| 2013 | crimes | 1544 | 1453 | 218 | 41 | 1132 |
| 2014 | | 2698 | 2515 | 38 | 24 | 2056 |

Encounter deaths

Encounter deaths were reported as Nil in both the districts.

Deaths in police custody

No deaths were reported in police custody in both the districts.

Extremism

It was learned that there are at present, no extremist activities in the state.

Communal problem

It was stated that communal problems are not serious in the two districts.

Crimes against women

Details regarding important crimes against women as reported by the police administration in the two districts are summarized in the tables given below. It is seen from the data given that action is tardy in cases under different categories of crime in Bilaspur district. Percentage of conviction is very low. Investigation needs to be fast and effective. Out of 12 cases of rape registered in 2012 03 cases ended in acquittals. In 2013 13 cases were reported but 03 cases ended in acquittals. As far as cases in 2014 are concerned no action seems to have been taken by the police. Cases relating to cruelty and outraging the modesty of women too are not different. No convictions seem to have been secured in these cases.

Bilaspur- Number of crimes against women

| Type of crime | 2012 | | | 2013 | | | 2014 | | |
|-------------------|------|----|----|------|----|----|------|-----|-----|
| | A | C | A | A | C | A | A | C | A |
| Rape | 12 | 03 | 03 | 13 | 02 | 03 | 15 | --- | --- |
| Dowry deaths | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Cruelty | 22 | 01 | - | 32 | - | 01 | 25 | - | - |
| Outraging modesty | 21 | - | - | 32 | 01 | 01 | 56 | - | - |

C- conviction: A- acquittal

According to SP, Kangra crimes against women were not alarming in the district.

As far as crimes against women in Kangra district are concerned no /few convictions have been secured in cases relating to rape/cruelty to women and outraging the modesty of women. A good number of cases have ended in acquittals. Most of the cases relating to kidnapping in Kangra district (47/52) pertain to women and children.

There appears to be no urgency in dealing with cases against women. Perhaps no fast-track courts have been set up for dealing with these cases. Due to difficult terrain and distance many times crimes do not get reported. A pro-active action is required on the part of administration. The only positive point noticed was absence of dowry deaths in both districts.

Crimes against women in Kangra district

| Type of crime | 2012 | | | 2013 | | | 2014 | | |
|-------------------|------|----|----|------|----|----|------|-----|------|
| | C | A | | C | A | | C | A | |
| Rape | 26 | 02 | 08 | 33 | 02 | 01 | 43 | --- | ---- |
| Dowry deaths | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Cruelty | 43 | - | 01 | 53 | - | - | 46 | - | - |
| Outraging modesty | 45 | - | - | 100 | - | - | 82 | - | - |

C- conviction: A- acquittal

Trafficking cases

No case of human trafficking was reported by either of the districts.

Crimes against children

In Bilaspur district JJ Board is yet to be set up. However, Welfare Committee under the JJ Act has been constituted. In Kangra district JJ Board as well as Welfare Committees has been constituted. It is not clear as to how many cases have been dealt with by them and whether any periodic review is being conducted on their functioning. Functioning of Observation Homes and Protection Homes for children also ought to be monitored.

Crimes against SC/ST

In Bilaspur district 03 cases in 2012 and 05 each in 2013 and 2014 were filed. None of the cases (in all three years) ended in conviction. There were not any acquittals either.

In Kangra district 18 cases of atrocities against SC/ST were reported in 2012; 15 cases in 2013 ended in acquittal. 13 cases were filed in 2014 under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. No convictions could be secured in any of the cases in the last three years.

NDPS

Drug addiction is a serious problem in the adjoining state of Punjab. Therefore there is a need to take preventive action against this menace. Schools/colleges ought to be targeted for actions like

13 49
creation of awareness, detection and early treatment, booking those who promote drug abuse by children etc.

From the data provided it is seen that 21 cases were reported in Bilaspur in 2012, 31 in 2013 and 24 in 2014. 04 cases ended in conviction in 2012, 02 cases in 2013 and none in 2014. Only 06 cases have been reported in 2015.

37 cases were filed in Kangra district in 2012; 46 in 2013 and 58 cases in 2014. Only one case ended in acquittal in 2012 and none in 2013 and 2014. Only 02 cases ended in conviction in 2012 and none in 2013 and 2014.

03 cases were acquitted in 2012, one case in 2013 and none in 2014.

Excise

It was stated by the SP, Bilaspur that not many cases are registered under the Excise Act in the district. As per data furnished by the administration 96 cases were registered in 2012; 41 cases in 2013 and 57 in 2014. It is learned that 06 cases each ended in conviction in 2012 and 2013 and 17 in 2014. 06 cases ended in acquittals in 2012. There were no acquittals in 2013 and 2014.

In Kangra district 541 cases were registered in 2012 under the Excise Act; 167 in 2013 and 294 in 2014. 230 cases ended in convictions in 2012; 53 cases in 2013 but none in 2014. 44 cases ended in acquittals in 2012; 05 cases in 2013 and none in 2014.

Forest Act

In 2012 in Bilaspur district, only 03 cases were filed; 04 cases in 2013; 09 cases in 2014. Only one case in 2014 ended in conviction. There were no acquittals in any of the three years under report.

In Kangra district 33 cases were registered under Forest Act in 2012; 22 cases in 2013 and 16 cases in 2014. *No convictions could be secured in any of the cases in last three years.* No acquittals were reported in any of the cases.

Other Special Laws

In Bilaspur district under other Special laws 14 cases were registered in 2012; 24 cases in 2013 and 19 cases in 2014. Police could not get convictions in any of the cases. No acquittals were reported.

In Kangra district 66 cases were registered out of which 03 ended in convictions and none in acquittals in 2012; in 2013 69 cases were registered; 02 ended in convictions and none in acquittals and in 2014 88 cases were registered with 05 convictions and no acquittals.

NHRC Complaints

Only one case was reported in Bilaspur district. It was stated that the same has been complied with. No complaints were received from NHRC in Kangra district.

Complaints against the police

It was stated that no serious complaint has been received against the police in Bilaspur district. Not many complaints are received against the police also in Kangra district.

Grievances of police personnel

SP Bilaspur stated that every Monday complaints /grievances of the police personnel are heard in the district. It was stated that not many complaints are received in Kangra district. The ones received are dealt with promptly.

Prisons

Country's first open air jail was set up in Bilaspur district nearly 27 years ago. The state is set to extend the facility to six other jails at Dharamsala, Nahan, Solan, Mandi, Chamba and Kanda districts. Besides the Open Jail, Bilaspur also has a sub jail. According to IG, Prisons, Open Jail, Bilaspur has altogether eighty male inmates. Sub jail Bilaspur accommodates 84 prisoners (74 male; 10 female). District Jail Daramshala has a prison population of 265 (257 male and 08 female).

Besides setting up Open Jails the State Government also has introduced many other reforms including video-conferencing for production of witnesses, meeting between prisoners and their families through video-conferencing, a liberal parole system, innovative vocational activities etc.

As mentioned earlier, I visited District Jail, Dharamshala and have already submitted a detailed account of the welcome measures taken by the state Government in the area of prison reforms.

Literacy and education

Educational attainment in Himachal Pradesh is stated to be among the best in the country. Experts suggest that now that the state has achieved a high level of literacy for its citizens it needs to concentrate on improving the quality of education. Due to want of time I could not visit any school.

Health rights

In Himachal, apart from the Himachal Hospital of Mental Health and Rehabilitation, Boileauganj, Shimla, I visited Indira Gandhi Medical College Shimla, Zonal Hospitals, Bilaspur and Dharamshala and Medical College, Tanda in Kangra district. I also visited PHC, Dhabhol in Bilaspur and PHC, Ichi in Kangra district. A detailed report has already been submitted to the Commission on the implementation of DMHP/NMHP in the state.

Himachal Pradesh is one state, which like Kerala, has achieved very low health indicators. Kangra district has slightly higher indicators than Bilaspur as noted below:-

~~14~~

| Indicator | Bilaspur | Kangra | Himachal Pradesh | India |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--------|------------------|-------|
| Infant Mortality Rate (SRS 2013) | 35 | 36 | 35 | 40 |
| Maternal Mortality Rate (SRS 2010-12) | 150 | 152 | NA | 178 |
| Total Fertility Rate (SRS 2012) | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 2.4 |

Source: (State Health Dept.)

PHC, Dhabol

In Bilaspur district I visited PHC at Dhabol. The PHC has 03 Sub centers under it and are stated to be in good condition.

Dr. Abhineet Sharma is in charge as M O. Posts of Lady Medical Officer (LMO) / Gynecologist are vacant. Among the supporting staff only a Pharmacist and an ANM are available. No technicians are posted .One more ANM is to be deputed. Only two class IV personnel are working in the PHC.

Daily OPD attendance is stated to be around 60 out of which 35 are women and 25 men. The PHC has no indoor facility.

Institutional delivery is stated to be 90%. One day is kept for anti-natal check up. No deliveries or family welfare operations are conducted in the PHC. Immunization was claimed to be 100%. No case of malnutrition of children under 05 was reported.

4-5 old cases and 1-2 new cases of RNTCP are reported per month. However, no technician is posted to conduct the tests. No lab is set

45

18

up in the PHC. No testing facilities are available for diabetes. The nearest CHC is 4 Km away. Leprosy cases were reported as nil; only 08 cases are reported in the district as a whole. No Malaria case is reported. Only isolated incidence swine flu is reported. No HIV/AIDS cases are dealt with in the PHC; references are made to the nearest CHC.

An ambulance is available with a designated number (108). With funds available under RKS furniture and medicines fans were purchased. General cleanliness is maintained in the PHC. Engagement of ASHAS, improvements in health infrastructure availability of equipment and furniture were pointed out as achievements under NRHM.

PHC Ichi

In Kangra district I visited PHC, Ichi. Besides the MO in charge one Ayurveda doctor is also posted. However, no LMO or specialists are posted. Only 01 Nurse, 01 Pharmacist (on maternity leave) and one Class IV and sweeper each is the supporting staff present. Services of a male and female Health Supervisor each are available. Although a Path lab is available, no technician is posted on regular basis. A technician is on 03 days duty in Civil Hospital. Only routine tests are therefore conducted at the PHC. Purchase of an Analyzer has been sanctioned by RKS.

Daily OPD attendance was stated to be 42-45 of which 70% are women. No indoor facility is available. AYUSH facilities are also not available.

165 cases of Malaria and 12 old and 05 new cases of DOT were reported. No case of HIV/AIDs has been reported. Since no ART center is set up in the PHC no testing for HIV/AIDs is carried out. Swine flu cases have not been reported. Cases when reported in the PHC are usually referred to Medical College, Tanda.

Institutional delivery is stated to be around 95% in the area. However, no deliveries are being conducted in the PHC. 95% immunization was also reported.

It may be noted that 10 years have passed after the launch of NRHM (NHM). Although the state has very good, health facilities are not up to the mark. Both PHCs I visited had acute shortage of staff. Testing facilities were not available. Indoor facilities are absent. No delivery or family planning operations are conducted. Chronic diseases receive very little attention. Implementation of NHM ought to be closely monitored.

ICDS

Although Himachal Pradesh outperforms its neighbors and other states on many human development indicators, about one third children under five in the state were reported to be under weight in NFHS survey in 2011. Anganwarris are to play a major role in improving the nutritional status of children under five. However no such urgency was noticed on the part of officials in the districts visited in the state..

I could not visit any Anganwari center in Bilaspur district as I reached there too late. All centers were closed by that time. I, however, visited a center at Ichi in Kangra district.

It was stated that the center was set up in 1997. Both Anganwari Worker (AWW) and Helper were present at the time of my visit. *Out of 28 children enrolled only 05 were present.* It was explained that low attendance was due to two marriages in the vicinity. Only one child belongs to SC community and one to minority. Only one pregnant woman attends the Center.

Immunization was claimed at 100%. This needs to be verified. ANC and PNC are done on every 2nd Wednesday.

It was stated that on that day Nutri-mix is served for breakfast and sweetened porridge for lunch. *It was stated that supply has not been coming from April, 2015.* As a part of its policy for reducing malnutrition and improving the nutritional status of children, functioning of Anganwaris needs to be closely monitored. Anganwari centers are not mere feeding centers. Here nutrition information is to be passed on to mothers. Their all-round functioning must be ensured

Poverty and employment

One of the main achievements of Himachal Pradesh is its success in reducing the level of poverty in the state. According to the World Bank Report cited earlier, between 1993-94 and 2011, poverty declined from 36.8 percent to 8.5 percent; poverty headcount is

nearly one-third of the national average. Further, the overall poverty decline benefitted all social groups across rural and urban areas.

Data on Rural families below poverty line in Bilaspur and Kangra district as per survey by the state Rural development Department is given below.

| District | Total RHH | BPL families | BPL % |
|----------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| Bilaspur | 75051 | 17337 | 23.10% |
| Kangra | 289185 | 63250 | 21.87% |

MNREGA is being implemented in both districts. It is reported by district administration, Bilaspur that 15769 households have been issued job cards which include 4071 Scheduled Caste (SC) households, 83 Scheduled Tribe (ST) households and 11642 other category households. During 2014-15, 145310 man days were generated out of which 61061 were by SCs, 354 STs and 191772 by others. Only 380 households have completed 100 days of employment. Out of Rs. 21.81 crores received under the program during 2014-15, Rs.21.19 crores was utilized.

In Kangra district 236721 households have been issued job cards which include 56018 Scheduled Caste (SC) households, 14862 Scheduled Tribe (ST) households and 165841 other category households. 54986 households were provided employment. During 2015-16, 1425005 man days were generated out of which 335705

were by SCs, 85538 STs and 1003762 by others. Only 262 households have completed 100 days of employment. Out of Rs. 47.99 crores received under the program during 2015-16, Rs.46.96 crores was utilized. The WB report of January-2015 also has pointed out with that female rural labor force participation in Himachal is almost at 63 percent (2011-12) significantly above the all-India average of 27 percent. However, female labor force participation in urban areas was much lower, at 28 percent in 2011. Men's employment rates are similar to the rest of the country.

Status of SC/ST

The State holds 2nd rank among all States and UTs in terms of proportion of SC population to total population. According to 2011 Census HP has 24.7% SC and 4.00% ST population The State has fifty six (56) categories notified as Scheduled Castes. Chamars have their major concentrations in Kangra, Mandi and Una districts.

As per 2011 Census Bilaspur has a total population of 98989 SC (male 50271; female 48718) and 10693 (male 5485; female; 5208) Scheduled Tribe population.

Kangra has a SC population of 319385 (Male 159697; female 159688) and ST 84564 (male 41745; female 42819).

The overall sex ratio of the SC population in Himachal Pradesh is 968 females per 1000 males which is higher than the national average of 936 recorded for all SCs. However disaggregated data relating to villages needs to be analyzed. The overall literacy rate among the SCs of Himachal Pradesh has increased from 53.2 per

cent at 1991 census to 70.3 per cent at 2001 census. This is 15.6 points higher than the national average (54.7 per cent) for all SCs. At 51.9 per cent, Himachal Pradesh has the highest work participation rate for SC/ST in the country.

Inter-group disparities are considered low in Himachal Pradesh. Even then there are complaints about caste discrimination against Scheduled Castes, displacements from lands occupied by them, atrocities against members of SC/ST families etc. District administrations need to ensure that matters relating to SC/ST receive high priority. It is seen that investigation of cases of atrocities against SC/ST are still pending for action. They ought to be monitored closely by the SP himself.

Bonded labour

District Magistrates of both the districts admitted that there are cases of bonded labor in their districts, especially in brick-kilns. 45 cases were detected in Kangra district. NGOs have been involved for detection and rehabilitation of bonded laborers.

It is necessary for district administration to take advance action before the season. The employers ought to be told to maintain proper records of payments made to the laborers and strictly follow the time schedule or made additional payments for extra work done. The documents maintained by the employer may be got verified properly. Basic facilities to migrant workers need to be ensured. A survey on child labor could be got done and action taken under the Child Labor Act.

General

In the discussions held with District Magistrates it was stated that in Bilaspur district problems of people displaced by Bhakra-Nangal project still persist. In addition problems are faced by people who have been affected by the construction of two new cement factories, power plants and National High Way. Land disputes are common. Another area of concern is the skewed sex ratio in the district. Domestic violence is an area given priority by the administration. Some excellent IEC materials have been developed by the lady DM herself. Institutional delivery was stated to be 90% and immunization around 100%. Maternal anemia is high in the district. The district faces shortage of health personnel, especially Gynecologists (only 03), Anesthetists (only two) and Radiologists (nil) apart from Para- medical staff. As far as MNREGA is concerned no funds were received in the previous three months and sanction worth Rs.03 crores is pending. SP Bilaspur stated that although the district has 25% minority population communal problems are under control. Police camps are organized to facilitate people to file their complaints.

DM Kangra also mentioned similar problems. The district has 30% SC population. Janta Durbars are being organized to hear and dispose of public grievances. SP, kangra stated that law and order is stable in the district and that there are only minor issues concerning human rights.

The way forward

As pointed out by the World Bank, the state has been able to bring down the level of poverty significantly.

Himachal Pradesh has also done remarkably well in the area of sanitation and is the first state in northern India that is close to being "open defecation free".

Further, Himachal Pradesh is ahead of many other Indian states in demonstrating a sense of environmental consciousness. Correcting the skewed sex ratio, reducing the number of under-nourished children under five and managing the aging population are suggested as areas of concern.

However after visiting the state, especially Bilaspur, one gets the impression that the development projects initiated in the state can cause irreparable environmental damage and displace people from their lands. Balancing environment issues with development is the chief challenge the state faces.

The following General Observations/Actionable Points of the Visit Report :

Crime against SC/ST

1. There is no separate P.S. set up in the district for dealing with crimes against the SC/ST. There are no fast-track courts in Kangra district. In Kangra district 18 cases of atrocities against SC/ST were reported in 2012; 15 cases in 2013 ended in acquittal. 13 cases were filed in 2014 under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. No convictions could be secured in any of the cases in the last three years. In Bilaspur District, 3 cases of atrocities in 2012 and 5 each in 2013 and 2014 were filed. None of the cases (in all three years) ended in conviction. There were not any acquittals either.

Discrimination against SC/ST

2. There are complaints about caste discrimination against Scheduled Castes, displacement from lands occupied by them; atrocities against members of SC/ST families etc. District Administrations need to ensure that matters relating to SC/ST receive high priority. The investigation of cases of atrocities against SC/ST are still pending for action.

Crimes against Women

3. The action is tardy in cases under different categories of crimes against women in Bilaspur district. Percentage of conviction is very low. Investigation needs to be fast and effective. In the year of 2012, twelve cases of rape registered and only 03 cases ended in acquittals. In 2013 thirteen cases were reported but 03 cases ended in acquittals. As far as cases in 2014 are concerned, no action seems to have been taken by the police. Cases related to cruelty and outraging the modesty of women too are not different. No convictions seem to have been secured in these cases. Most of the cases relating to kidnapping in Kangra district (45/52) pertain to women and children. There appears to be no urgency in dealing with cases against women. Due to difficult terrain and distance many times crimes do not get reported. A pro-active action is required on the part of administration.

Juvenile Justice Act

4. In Bilaspur district Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) is yet to be set up. Child Welfare Committee under the Juvenile Justice Act has been constituted. It is not clear as to how many cases have been dealt with by them and whether any periodic review is being conducted on their functioning. **Functioning of Observation Homes and Protection Homes for children also ought to be monitored.**

Drug Addiction

- 5. Drug addiction is a serious problem in the adjoining state of Punjab. Therefore, there is a need to take preventive action against this menace. School/colleges ought to be targeted for actions like creation of awareness, detection and early treatment, booking those who promote drug abuse by children.

Health Issues

6. In the PHC, Dhabol

- Posts of Lady Medical Officer and Gynecologist are vacant.
- Among the supporting staff only a Pharmacist and ANM are available and no technicians are posted. One more ANM is to be deputed. Only two class IV personnel are working in the PHC.
- 4-5 old cases and 1-2 new cases of RNTCP are reported per month. However, no technician is posted to conduct the tests and no lab is set up in the PHC.
- No testing facilities are available for diabetes.

7. In the PHC Ichi

- No LMO or specialists are posted.
- A path lab is available but no technician is posted on regular basis.
- AYUSH facilities are not available.
- Since no ART center is set up in the PHC, no testing for HIV/AIDs is carried out.
- PHC has acute shortage of staff.
- Testing facilities were not available. No delivery or family planning operations are conducted. Chronic diseases receive very little attention. Implementation of NHM ought to be closed monitored.

8. In Bilaspur District

- Maternal anemia is high in the district. The district faces shortage of health personnel, especially Gynecologist (only 3), Anesthetists (only 2), and Radiologists (nil) and medical staff.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

9. Himachal Pradesh outperforms its neighbors and other states on many human development indicators. However, about one third children under five in the state were reported to be under weight in NFHS survey in 2011. Anganwaris are to play a major role in improving the nutritional status of children under five. **However no such urgency was noticed on the part of officials in the districts. Supply of Nutri-mix for breakfast and Sweetened Porridge for lunch has not been coming from April, 2015 in Anganwari.** As a part of its policy for reducing malnutrition and improving the nutritional status of children, **functioning of Anganwaris needs to be closely monitored.**

Bonded Labour

10. There are cases of bonded labour in district especially in brick-kilns. 45 cases were detected in Kangra district. The employers ought to be told to maintain proper records of payments made to the laborers and strictly follow the time schedule or made additional payments for extra work done. The document maintained by the employer may be got verified properly. Basic facilities to migrant workers need to be ensured. A survey on child labour could be got done and action taken under the Child Labour Act.

MNREGA Schemes

11. As far as MNREGA is concerned, no funds were received in the previous three months and sanction of Rs. 3 crores is still pending.

Other Important Issues of Concern

12. The main areas of concern in the State are:
- (i) Correcting the skewed sex ratio in the district
 - (ii) Reducing the number of undernourished children under five and
 - (iii) Managing the aging population are suggested as areas of concern.
 - (iv) In Bilaspur district problems of people displaced by Bhakra-Nangal Project still persist. In addition problems are also faced by the people due to the construction of two new factories i.e. power plant and national high way. Land related disputes are common in the district. These need to be addressed by the Administration.