

## **RURAL TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: IMPORTANCE, SCOPE AND CHALLENGES**

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### **Abstract**

***Keywords:***

Himachal Pradesh

Rural Tourism

Importance

Scope

Challenges

Due to being a permanent resident of Himachal Pradesh, I have chosen the title for the research as - Rural Tourism for Himachal Pradesh, its importance, scope, and challenges. Himachal Pradesh is an Indian state located in the Northern region of India. Himachal Pradesh state is established on 25 January 1971. The total area of Himachal Pradesh is 55,673 Km<sup>2</sup> including 55402.18 km<sup>2</sup> rural areas and 270.82 km<sup>2</sup> urban area with the population of 89.67% residing in rural areas and only 10.03% population residing in the urban area. Considering the above figures, it is easy to assess that if the state has to develop and deal with acute problems like migration, unemployment, then its action plan is of utmost importance, considering it very seriously about rural tourism. Nature has summed up this state with its beauty, it is necessary to develop and propagate new tourist sites similar to the already famous tourist sites. There is a possibility of tourism in every corner of this state. This is not so simple due to the odd geographical conditions of the State of Himachal Pradesh and due to natural calamities from time to time. But this task is completely possible by the strong political will and honest functioning. For this, we can learn from other states like Uttarakhand and Kerala and foreign technology

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can also be used for infrastructure development. Thus, untreated and unprecedented results can be achieved by keeping the soul of the village of Himachal Pradesh, its culture and delicious dishes, by propagating the air march and by entertaining the guest with a sense of hospitality.

**1. Introduction (12pt)** Swami Vivekananda said that” If India has to know then read the culture of their villages”. This utterance currently proves reality. The World Travel and Tourism Council determined that the travel industry created Rs.. 16.91 lakh crore (the US \$ 240 billion) or 9.4% of the nation’s GDP in 2018 and supported 42.673 million jobs, 8.1% of its total employment, but it was mainly the cities and the metropolis visited. In India, where almost 68.84% population reside in 6,38,000 villages were the greater part of the villagers are for the most part subject to rural exercises and are anxiously searching for elective occupation scope. Along these lines, on the off chance that we endeavor to extend the tourism to a remote, by not keeping the tourism restricted to the principal urban areas and spots, at that point we can make another record of business creation and outside trade income. Accordingly, the significance of rural tourism is enormously improved and with a more prominent spotlight on this. Numerous plans have been connected by the legislature for the advancement of rural tourism.

<b>LIST OF COMMISSIONED RURAL TOURISM SITES OF MINISTRY OF TOURISM</b>				
<b>S.No</b>	<b>Name of Rural Site</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>USP of site</b>
1.	Nagar	Kullu	Himachal Pradesh	Topi and Shawl weaving
2.	Paragpur	Kangra Valley	Himachal Pradesh	Himachal Heritage
3.	Baroh	Kangra Valley	Himachal Pradesh	Gurukul Culture

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

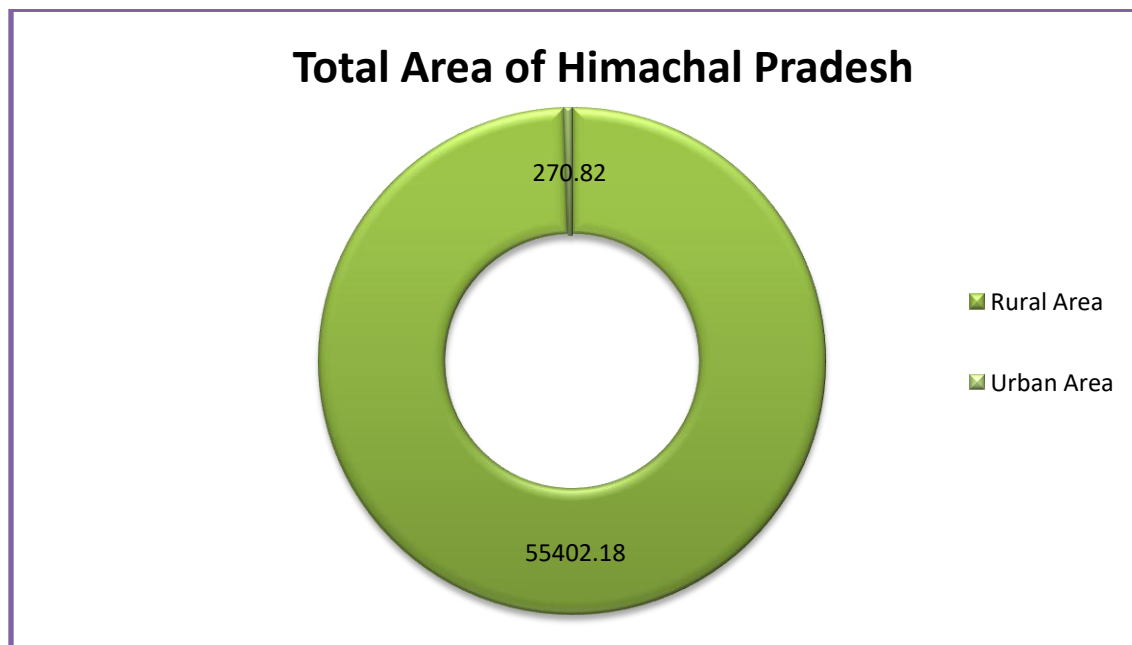
Research methodology - This research paper has been composed based on accessible information from the investigation of magazines, newspapers, web and different comparative research papers. For some data, information has been gathered through the neighborhood the travel industry office and direct collaboration with vacationers.

### 1. Importance of Rural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is an Indian state situated in the Northern area of India. Himachal Pradesh State is established on 25 January 1971. The total area of Himachal Pradesh is 55,673 Km<sup>2</sup> including 55402.18 km<sup>2</sup> rural areas and 270.82 km<sup>2</sup> urban area with the population of 89.67% residing in rural areas and only 10.03% population residing in the urban area.

**Table 1: Total Area of Himachal Pradesh**

S.No	Name of State	Rural Area	Urban Area	Total Area
1.	Himachal Pradesh	55402.18 Km	270.82 Km	55,673 Km



**Figure 1: Total Area of Himachal Pradesh**

Like most of India, agriculture is one of the most significant sectors of the economy of Himachal Pradesh. The main cereals grown are wheat, maize, rice, and barley. Kangra, Mandi district and to some extent Paonta valley of Sirmur district are the major producers of the 1st three portions of cereal, while barley is mostly grown in Shimla district. Although the state is deficit in food grains, it has gained tremendously in other spheres of agricultural production such as seed-potato, ginger, vegetables, vegetable seeds, mushrooms, chicory seeds, hops, olives and fig especially vegetables and seed potato which is disease free and good quality are providing a good source of income to the farmers. Seed-potato is mostly grown in Shimla, Kullu and Lahaul areas.

Fruit cultivation is another field which has proved to be an economic boon to the farmers. There are vast tracts of land in Himachal suitable only for growing fruits. Fruit cultivation does not add to the problem of soil erosion and its employment potential is much more than Apples that of conventional farming. The yield per acre in terms of money is also much higher. Apples yield the maximum income. Fruit growing in Himachal is presently fetching over Rs.300crore annually. Special efforts are being made to promote cultivation of new crops like olives, figs, hops, mushrooms, flowers, pistachio nuts, Sarda melon, and saffron. Himachal has earned the name of the '**Apple State of India**'.

## **2. Can become a major source of state income**

Himachal Pradesh being the state has a number of beautiful places and hill stations is also a state of tourist attraction. Every year, thousands of tourists come and visit places like Shimla, Kullu, Manali, Dalhousie, Kufri, etc. People not only come from different parts of the country but from different parts of the world. Thus tourism is also one of the main sources of income and employment for the people of Himachal. Several hotels located at this tourist spots provide ease for the tourist to stay and enjoy the scenic beauty of Himachal. They provide comfortable service and thus earning handsome money from visitors. Himachal Pradesh government employs strict rules so as to keep the State clean and maintain its beauty so that it does not hamper the major business that is tourism.

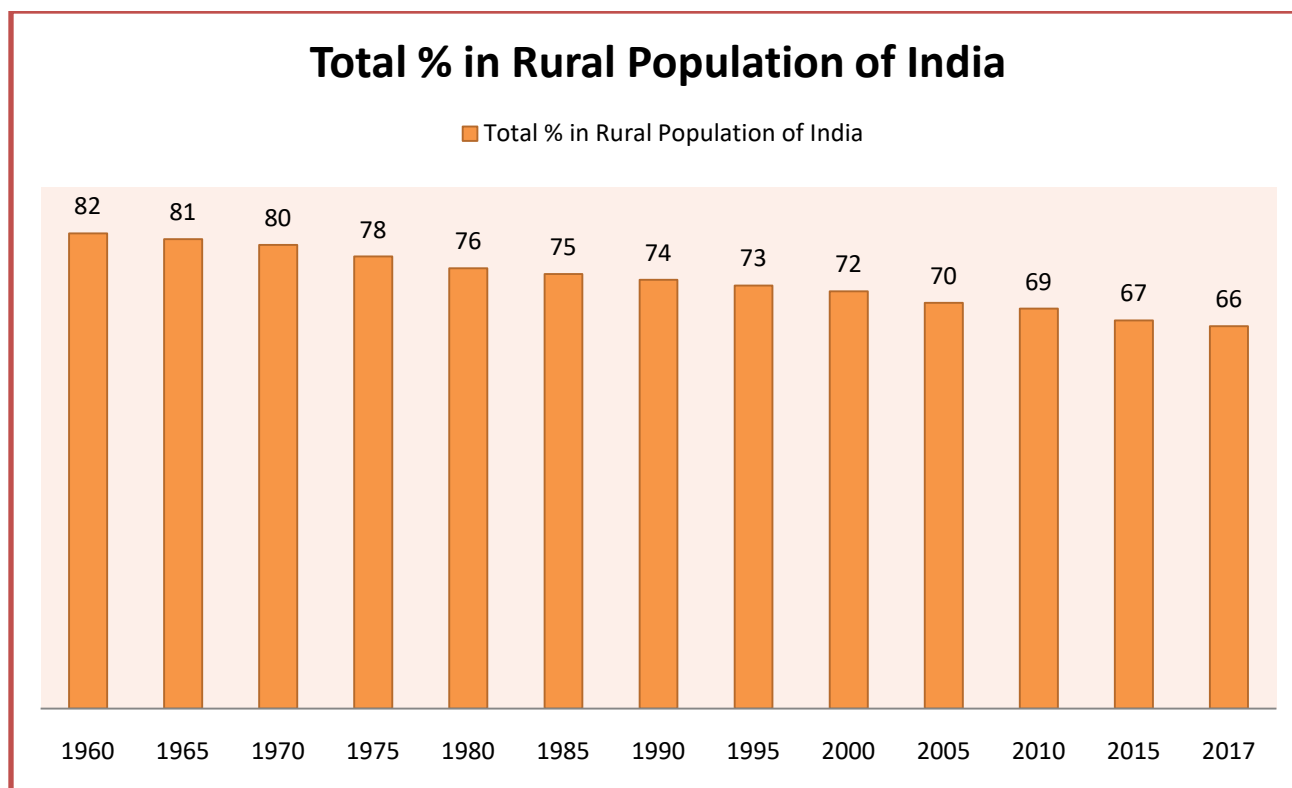
### To deal with the problem of migration

At present, migration is a major problem in Himachal Pradesh and the main reason for the migration is the absence of infrastructure in the mountainous areas, such as electricity, water, roads, education, and health facilities. The situation is so horrific due to the escape that some villages have been opened in such a way that they have been given the word "Bhootahaa Gaon".



**Table 2: Total % in Rural Population of India**

S.No	Year	Total % in Rural Population of India
1.	1960	82.076
2.	1965	81.215
3.	1970	80.24
4.	1975	78.668
5.	1980	76.902
6.	1985	75.652
7.	1990	74.453
8.	1995	73.393
9.	2000	72.333
10.	2005	70.765
11.	2010	69.07
12.	2015	67.223
13.	2017	66.4



**Figure 2: Total % in Rural Population of India**

#### **To avoid congestion on main tourism spots**

In visitor season in Himachal Pradesh, primary and popular places of interest bear a gigantic weight of the travel industry exercises, as a result of which ordinarily the voyagers face issues of rooms, sustenance, stopping, and so forth. Also, commonly visitors return with the negative picture of the state because of these bothers, which is an unsuitable state with regards to the travel industry and the travel industry advancement. The prominent traveler goals Himachal Pradesh, of have turned into very well known lately. Give us a chance to take a case of a celebrated place of interest Shimla. This year, traffic police guarantee that there isn't sufficient space of stopping for everyone who needs to visit Shimla. Accordingly, they redirected traffic to different spots. In the meantime, hoteliers of Shimla guarantee that they have 30 percent of their room empty in view of the visitor preoccupation by traffic police. For the accommodation business to return or occupy back is ungracious and there is no uncertainty that this makes an awful stroke the Himachal Pradesh notoriety as a vacationer well-disposed goal.

**To generate livelihood and eliminating unemployment**

If various new villages and tourist sites are expanded under rural tourism, the pressure on the prevailing tourist sites will be reduced and more new tourist spots will develop. This development will result in new employment or business opportunity for the residence of a particular village and society. The Himachal Pradesh, the government has initiated a good scheme like “Home Stay” in the direction of some meaningful efforts to develop rural tourism. With this effort of the government, many people associated with this scheme have got the means of livelihood and employment.

**Tourism and Employment** Employment is one of the most important issues in a country. Since the tourism sector is labor augmented sector, it is relatively more effective in creating jobs than other sectors. Consumption expenditures of tourists provide direct or indirect employment opportunities in this sector. Tourism creates three types of employment in regional and national economies (Matheson and Wall)

**1. Direct employment:** It refers to the type of employment provided in tourism facilities such as accommodation, food, drink, transport, travel agents which exist in the tourism sector and meet touristic need directly

**2. Indirect employment:** It covers the employment in another sector which does not serve for touristic consumer directly but gets income from expenditure done in touristic relations, mainly the other sectors which provide input for the tourism sector.

**3. Induced Employment:** It refers to the additional employment in the economy arising from re-spending of the income which has been gained through direct and indirect employment method. The multiplier effect of tourism plays an important role in the emergence of induced employment.

**Village Based Tourism:** It is a type of tourism in which tourists share in village life and villagers gain economic and other benefits from tourist activities. Both villages are itself forms a source of the tourist destination. Tourists often come to witness the lifestyle of the people of this



village. The traditional way of life right from their traditional attire to their traditional food forms a delightful destination for tourists. Himachal Pradesh Government has launched a scheme known as “Har Gaon Ki Kahani”(story of every village), in addition to ‘Home Stay Scheme’, which is attracting hordes of tourists to lesser known and remote destinations of the State from last two years. Under ‘Har Gaon Ki Kahani’, fascinating tales, folklore, and anecdotes related to remote villages in Himachal Pradesh are set to lure tourists. This novel scheme aims at developing villages of historic importance as tourism villages by providing basic amenities and will provide tourists a peep into the rustic life of the hill State.

**Let us give a look at some of the most beautiful villages in Himachal Pradesh:**

**1. Chitkul village:** is a village in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh. It is near indo-china boarder. It is the place to view the spectacular snow clad mountains. Main attractions of this village are its houses with slate or wooden plank roofs, a Buddhist temple and a small tower. The powerful Goddess of Chitkul is the only non-Buddhist deity to which all people pray. Mathi temple is the local Goddess of the people here.

**2. Langza village:** is a small and remote village in Lahaul Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh. It has a huge golden colored Buddhist statue which is believed to be 1000 years old. The main attraction of this village is to collect fossils and to visit the monastery. If you are interested in fossils you can do fossil hunt here. If you are passionate about wildlife, you can spot here endangered species like snow leopard, Tibetan wolf, Himalayan Griffon.

**3. Komik village:** it is a remote village in the Spiti valley of Himachal Pradesh surrounded by cold clad mountains on all sides. Silence prevails in the place all times. Here travelers can enjoy stunning views for hours and experience the relaxed state of mind.

**4. Kaza Village:** it is a remote village in the Spiti valley of Himachal Pradesh surrounded by cold clad mountains on all sides. Silence prevails in the place all times. Here travelers can enjoy stunning views for hours and experience the relaxed state of mind.



**5. Malan village:** It is an ancient village, it is situated on a remote plateau by the side of Malana river at a height of 2652 met above sea level. Malana has its own lifestyle and people are strict in following their customs. Malana is also known as little Greece of H.P. The village has ancient temples. Jamlu temple built in the Kathkuni style with wooden carvings and deer heads. Rukmani temple is another temple worth visiting. The wonderful area of Malana is under the huge veil of alpines and outrageous hilly plants.

**6. Mane village:** Mane village is said to be the most beautiful village in Himachal Pradesh. If you want to spend a quiet serene time then it is the ideal place. It is located in the Spiti valley of Himachal Pradesh. It is located at the towering altitude of around 9537feet above sea level. Mane has no hotels or restaurants so the best way to stay here is to befriend locals and the spend the night with their families in their house.

**7. Rackham village:** Rakcham is a beautiful village to enjoy nature at its best. It is situated just before the Indo Tibet border. You can have a greater view of Himalayas here. It is situated on the bank of the river Baspa. It has virgin natural beauty. Lovely forests with orchards of apples, apricots, and peaches. It has snow clad mountains all around, lush green teak-wood forests, fresh atmosphere with deep blue skies. The people are as rugged as the land, and Buddhism prevails alongside Hinduism, a place dotted with Monasteries and Temples.

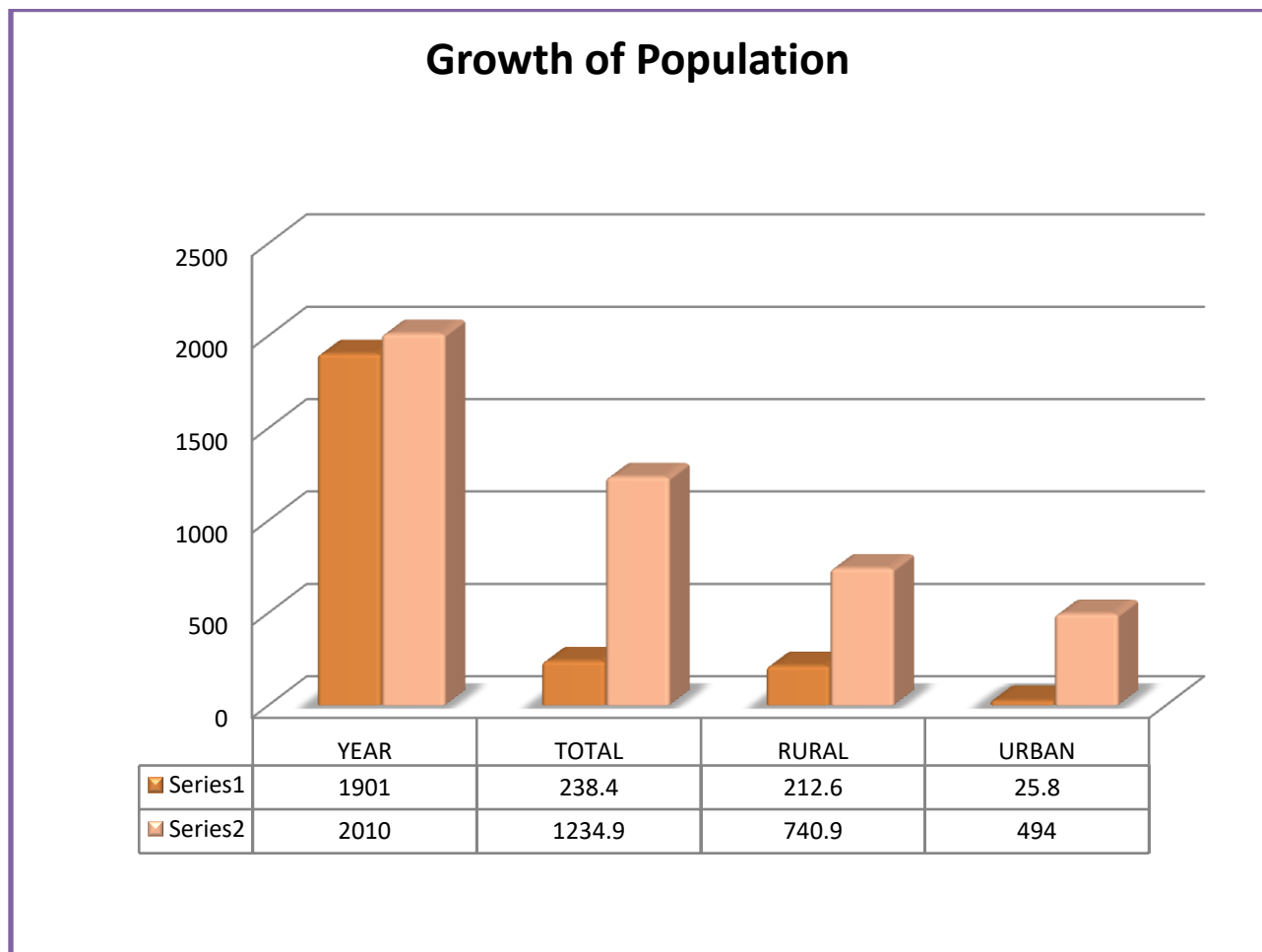
**8. Gada Gushaini:** Gada Gushaini is the very small but spectacular village in Banjar tehsil of Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh which can leave you ogling. It is a perfect place to unwind summer. Here nature is untouched and unexplored. The splendid beauty of mountains is bedazzling sight.

**9. Kasol village:** Kasol village is situated in Parvati valley on the banks of Parvati river in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh. It is located 42 km away from Kullu at the height of 1640 meters from sea level. Manikaran Sahib Gurudwara is just 3 km from Kasol. The Manikaran Sahib Gurudwara has a hot water spring located within the premise of Gurudwara. The devotees take a dip to wash away their sins and illnesses away. The langar is delicious. Parvati River is an ideal place for relaxing. One can also indulge in activities like river rafting.

**10. Janjehli:** it is located in Thunag Tehsil of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. It is about 90 km from Mandi of an elevation of 2170 meter above sea level. It is surrounded by pine forest and mountains. one of the best places for adventure activities like night safari, hiking, trekking, and mountaineering. At the distance of 10 km from this village, is the Shikari Mata temple.

**Table 2: Growth of Population in Rural Area**

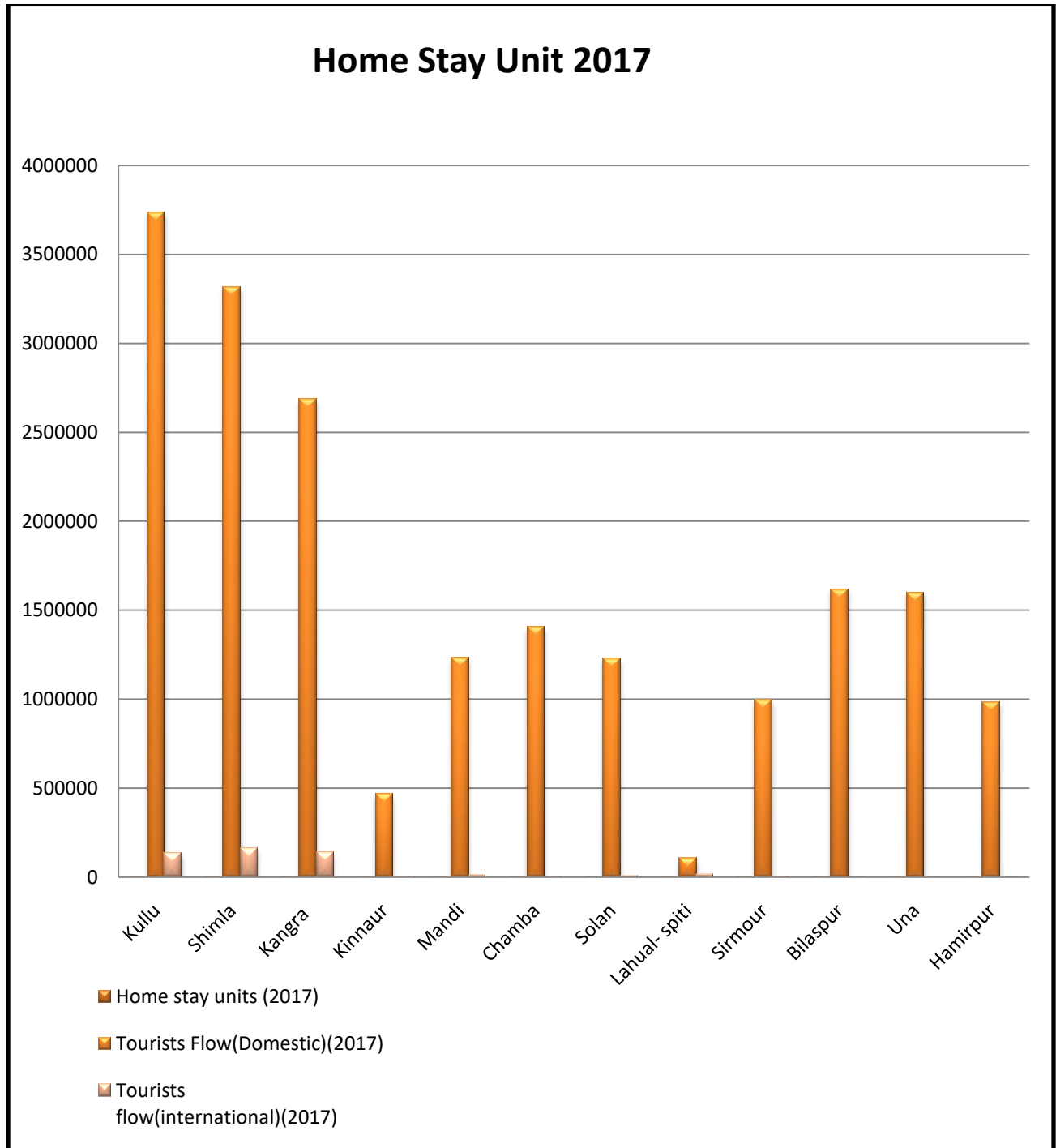
YEAR	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
1901	238.4	212.6	25.8
2010	1234.9	740.9	494



**Figure 4: Growth of Population in Rural Area**

**Table 4: Tourist Arrival Flow (Domestic and, international)  
(In 2017 Lakhs) and Homestay in Himachal Pradesh**

S.NO	Districts	Home stay units (2017)	Tourists Flow (Domestic) (2017)	Tourists flow (international) (2017)	Total
1	Kullu	303	37,32,044	133,057	3,865,101
2	Shimla	273	33,18,829	162,168	3,480,997
3	Kangra	156	2,684,948	138,291	2,823,289
4	Kinnaur	47	463,471	2,609	466,080
5	Mandi	87	1,231,968	10,072	1,242,040
6	Chamba	73	1,403,600	828	1,404,428
7	Solan	84	1,225,105	6,454	1,231,559
8	Lahual- spiti	127	104,664	14,285	118,949
9	Sirmour	25	992,352	2,522	994,874
10	Bilaspur	14	1,616,925	446	1,61,6971
11	Una	9	1,598,393	218	1,598,611
12	Hamirpur	2	980,611	2	980,613
	Total	1220	19,352,910	471,002	198235129



**Figure 4: Tourist Arrival Flow (Domestic and, international) (In 2017 Lakhs) and Home stay in Himachal Pradesh**

## **CHALLENGES IN RURAL TOURISM:**

The real challenges need to save the earth and characteristic assets, the requirement for instruction, legitimate comprehension for the two voyagers and nearby individuals, and the need to produce a majority rule development which helps individuals at all dimensions to take an interest in the travel industry improvement. Additionally, they have to concentrate on occupation preparing, craftsmanship advancement, and improvement of both the scene and the fundamental foundation, to expand the townspeople's personal satisfaction by making a solid situation. Indeed, even today the most concerning issue in Himachal stays poor air and rail network and the state of streets not being excessively great, with the exception of a couple of national roadways. The framework required to advance Himachal as a worldwide goal is absent. The arrangement to set up a universal airplane terminal stays kept to papers, while the state capital has had no flights from the Jubbarhatti air terminal since September 2012. The flights from Bhuntar air terminal in Kullu too have been inconsistent. It is just the Gaggal airplane terminal in Dharamsala from where flights have been working all the time. The locale has extraordinary potential as a forthcoming place of interest. Yet, so as to convey it to a more prominent stage, sound business arranging must be made. The locale needs legitimate improvement of its excellence and assets skillfully to uncover it.

1. First of all, a strong and honest political will.
2. The infrastructure facilities to develop the destinations.
3. Better connectivity to Himachal Pradesh from other places and connectivity within intrastate.
4. Publicity of the advantage of rural tourism to locals and incorporating them by getting them benefited.
5. Executing plans with honest practices and for long term prospects or futuristic approach.

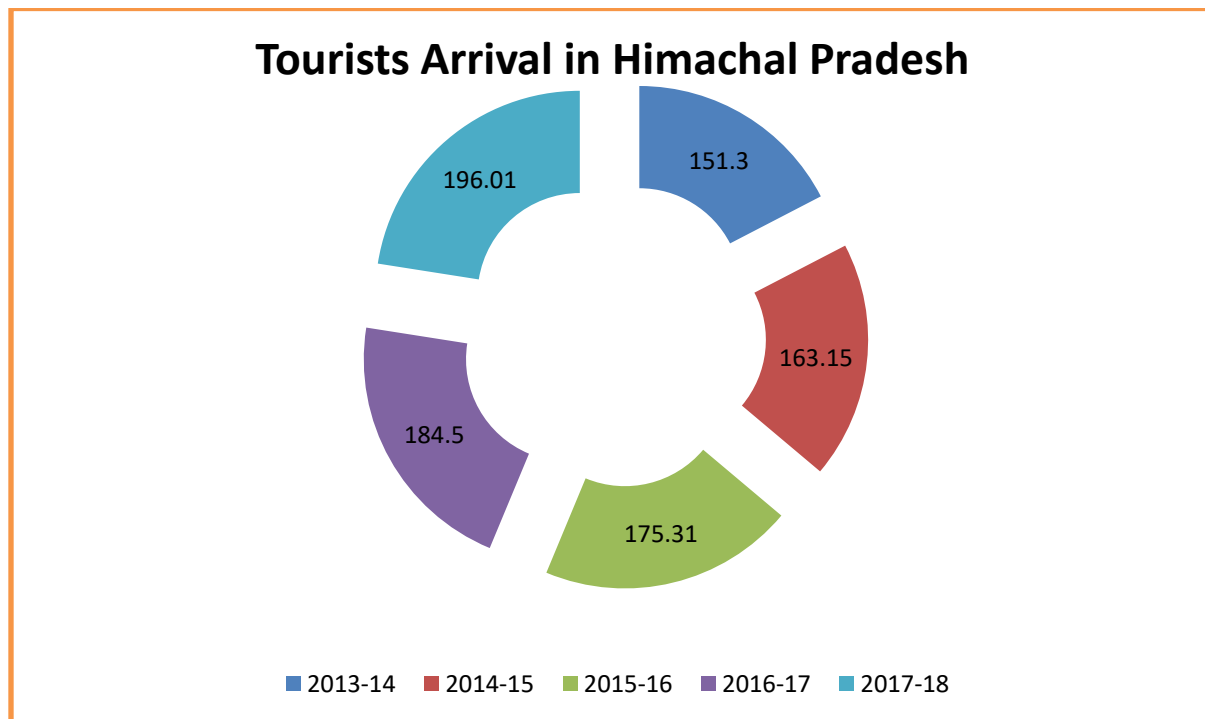
## **RESULT**

Rural tourism is defined as the experience of the countryside which includes a great number of attractions and activities that take place in non-urban areas. The most important purpose of rural tourism development is economic and social level development of the rural areas. Rural Himachal has much to offer beyond agriculture. It has a great potentiality for different growing segments of tourism like Ecotourism, Cultural tourism, agro-tourism, religious tourism, etc.

There is a scope of rural tourism in the study area. Both villages have the resources, manpower and a down-to-earth approach that is in sharp contrast with the five-star culture of tourism in city areas. Here, provincial the travel industry advances the neighborhood economy, socio-social changes, and way of life of the people residing in and around the village.

**Table 5: Tourists arrival in Himachal Pradesh (in lakhs)**

S.No	YEAR	NO. OF TOURIST
1.	2013-14	151.30
2.	2014-15	163.15
3.	2015-16	175.31
4.	2016-17	184.50
5.	2017-18	196.01



**Figure 5: Tourists arrival in Himachal Pradesh (in lakhs)**

**Imp Nation Park Wildlife Sanctuaries, Religious Sports, Historical and Heritage and Tourist Sports in Rural Himachal Pradesh.**

<b>National Park Wildlife Sanctuaries</b>	<b>Religious Sports</b>	<b>Historical &amp; Heritage</b>	<b>Other Tourist sports</b>
Great Himalayan National Park Pin Valley National Park Inderkilla National Park Khirganga National Park Simbalbara National Park	Jwalamukhi Temple Baijnath Temple Manikaran Naina Devi Temple Chintpurni Devi Temple Laxmi Narayan Temple Chamunda Mata Temple Hidimba Temple Baba Balak Nath Temple Bijli Mahadev Temple	Naggar Castle Kuthar Fort Kalka-Shimla Railway Dagshai Jubbal Palace Hatkoti Temple Bhimakali Temple Arki Fort McLeodGanj Dharamshala Shimla (Kufri) Kangra Fort Sujanpur Fort	Mashobra – A Well-kept Secret Palampur – Dotted With Tea Gardens Kinnaur – Apples And Colorful Ethnicity Kufri – The Snowy Retreat Chail – The Untouched Gem Chitkul – Last Village Of India Khajjiar – A Perfect Family Getaway Awaits Kasol – Trek To Your Heart’s Delight Spiti ,Tabo , Kaza – Offbeat Destinations



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