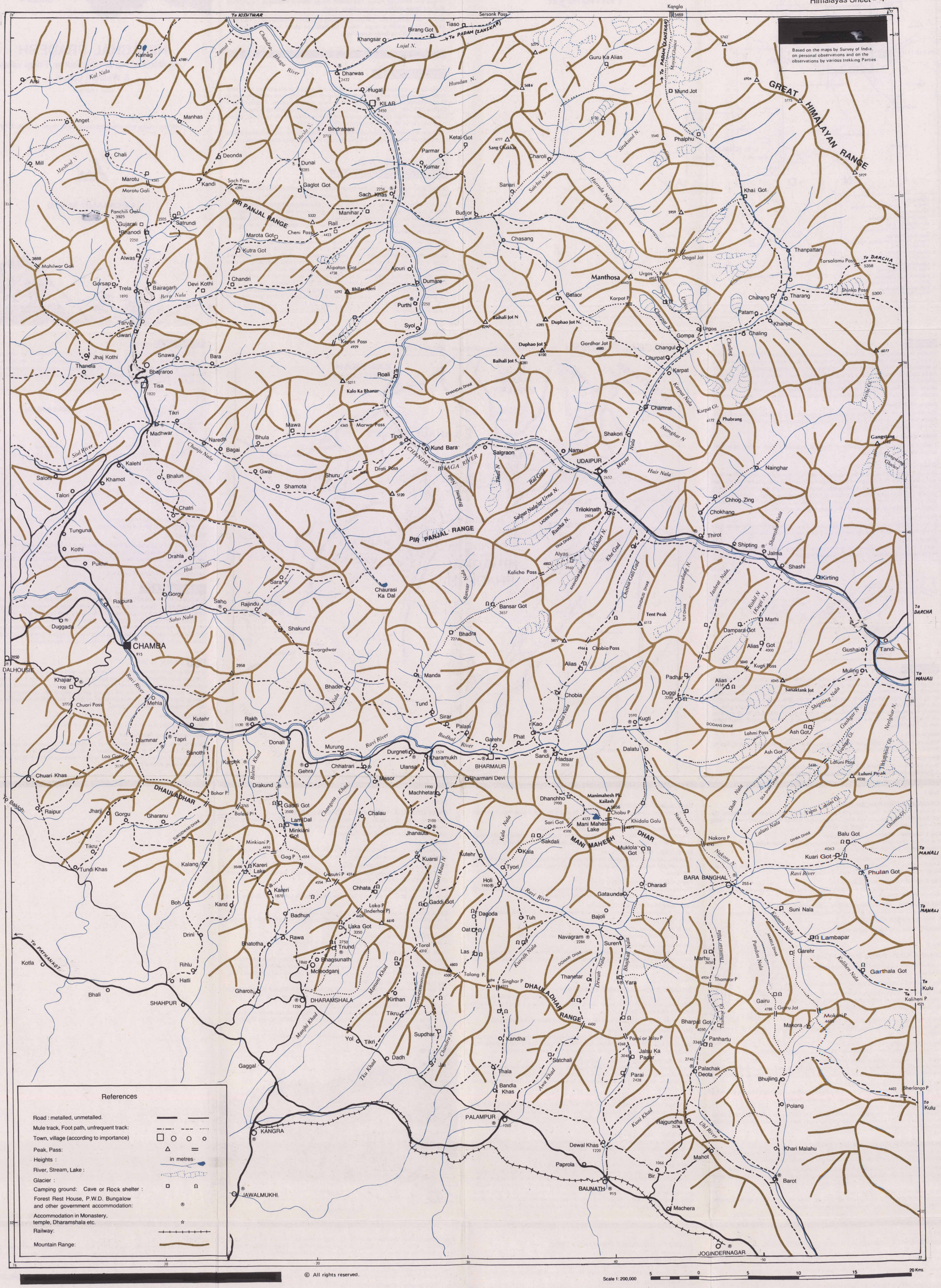
HIMACHAL PRADESH Trekking Routes

Chamba, Passes of Dhauladhar, Pangi Valley & Western Lahaul

Himalayas Sheet - 4



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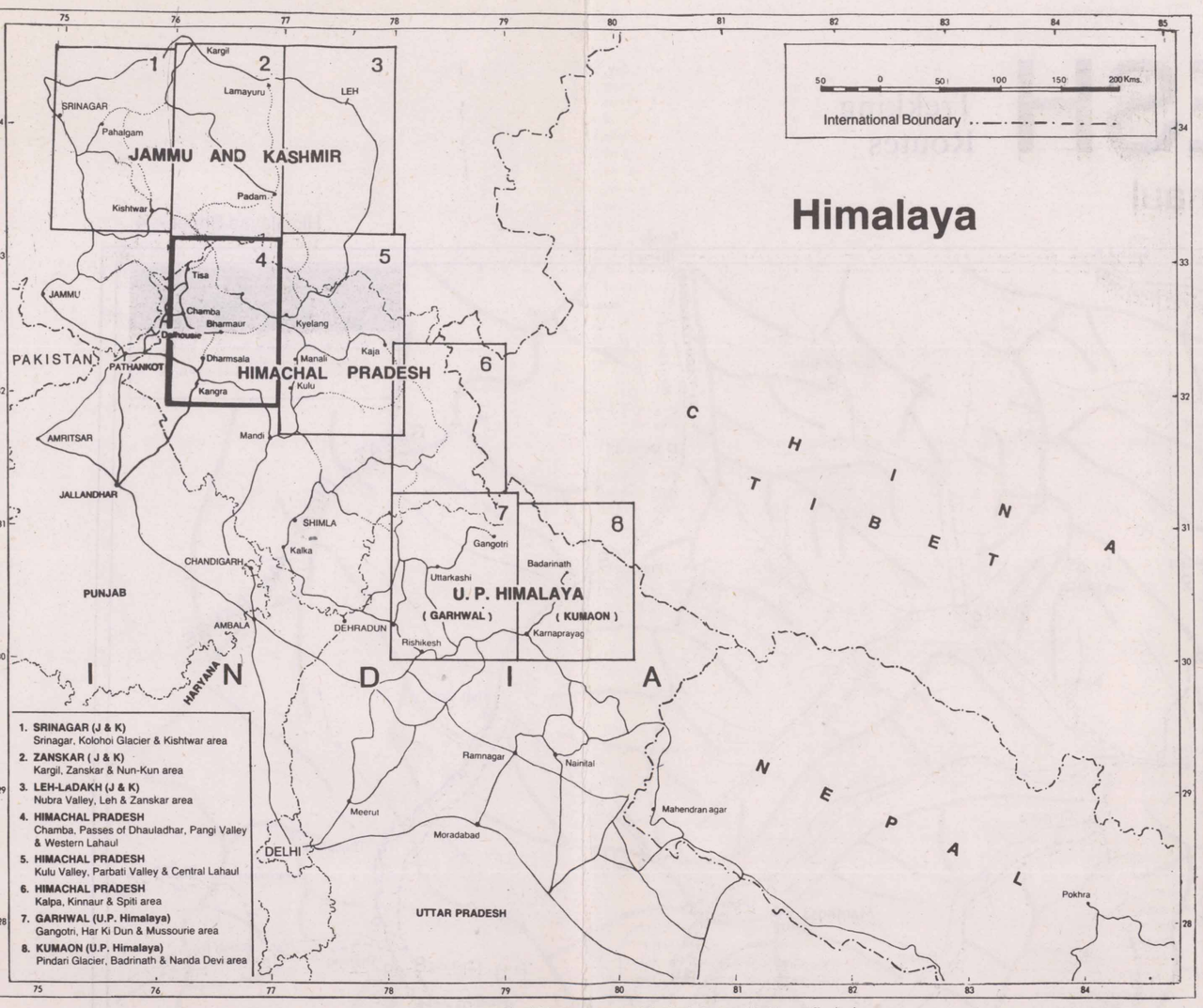
Glossary of terms

Jot, La, Got	=	Pass
Parbat, Giri, Tibba	=	Peak
Nala, Nal, N. Chu, Gad, Lungpa	=	River, stream
Thach, Th. Tapra, Got	=	Meadow, Grazing ground
Dhar	=	Range
Gl.	=	Glacier



The administrative headquarters of Chandigarh, Haryana and Punjab are at Chandigarh.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh, with its snowbound recesses, its vistas of unsurpassable beauty, green meadows, Forests rich with fauna, mountain peaks of stark grandeur, green and rugged valleys, is a paradise for trekkers and mountaineers. Himachal Pradesh extends from the plains of Punjab and Haryana to the snowy mountains seperating it from Ladakh and Tibet. The elevation varies from 350 m in the foothills to 6975 m in the higher ranges. Between these ranges there are a number of mountain ranges of different heights traversing the tract and enclosing between them valleys of varied width and length. The main valleys are: Kulu-Manali valley, Lahaul Valley, Spiti Valley, Kalpa Valley, Chamba Valley, Pangi Vallev and Kangra Valley. The main mountain ranges are: Pir-Panjal Range, Dhauladhar Range, Central Himalayan Range, Bara Bhangal Range and the Great Himalayan Divide.

Most of the trekking trails lead from one valley to another crossing one or more passes of 4000 m to 5200 m height. Many of the trails also lead to the adjoining areas of Ladakh, Zanskar and Garhwal Himalaya.

CHAMBA VALLEY

Surrounded by mountains on all sides, the valley of Chamba is 55 km wide and 65 km long. To the south, the great wall of the Dhauladhar range divides it from the valley of Kangra; to the north stands the Pir-Panjal Range with its many peaks and passes. Thus the town of Chamba (32⁰ 34′N, 76⁰ 06′E) is a spring-board for several treks leading to Pangi Valley, Lahaul Valley, Kangra Valley or to Jammu and Kashmir (well to the north). It is still unspoilt by outsiders and it offers excellent opportunities of real adventure.

There are more than ten passes over Dhauladhar Range and the trails over these passes form very good trekking routes from Chamba valley to Kangra valley and vice-versa.

KANGRA VALLEY AND PASSES OF DHAULADHAR

Situated at the foot of the Dhauladhar Range, Kangra Valley combines the charm of a Devonshire combe with the steep silhouette of the Dolomites soaring up into the sky.

On the Southern slopes are situated the towns of Dharamshala, Palampur, Baijnath and Kangra. Dharamshala (32⁰ 12′N, 76⁰ 19′E) is the place where the Dalai Lama resides and is a convenient point to commence the treks to Laka Pass and Minkiani Pass. An institute of mountaineering is also situated at Mcleodganj (Upper Dharamshala) which can provide assistance and information.

The Dhauladhar Range runs almost parrallel to the River Ravi and forms a boundary between Chamba and Kangra Valleys. The north side of the Dhauladhar facing Chamba is studded with alpine pastures and is less precipitious where as southern side facing Kangra Valley is very steep, rising almost perpendicularly from the low ranges at its base. The trails leading over several of the passes situated on the Dhauladhar start from Dharamshala, Palampur or Baijnath and terminate at various points along the River Ravi in Chamba Valley. The most popular passes are: Laka Pass (32⁰ 18′N, 76⁰ 22′E), Minkiani Pass (32⁰ 21′N, 76⁰ 18′E) and Parai Jot (32⁰ 10′N, 76⁰ 41′E). Similarly there are several passes over Pir-Panjal Range that connect Chamba Valley with Pangi and Lahaul Valleys. Sach Pass (33⁰ 01′N, 76⁰ 14′E) and Kugti Pass (32⁰ 32′N, 76⁰ 49′E are the more frequented ones, These treks can also be extended to Lahaul Valley, Kulu Valley or to Zanskar (in J & K)

Indian Himalaya Maps

Sheet 4

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Chamba, Passes of Dhauladhar, Pangi valley & Western Lahual

Scale 1:200,000

Trekking routes with short description and physical topography

LEOMANN MAPS

Chamba (32⁰ 34′N., 76⁰ 06′E)

Situated at a height of 915m, 53 km from Dalhousie and 122 km from Pathankot railhead, the tiny town of Chamba hangs suspended high above the River Ravi on a flat mountain shelf. It is famous for its richly carved ancient temples and Bhuri Singh museum, which is a rich storehouse of Chamba's cultural heritage. The mountainous situation of Chamba made it difficult for the occassional conquerors to establish their supremacy over the local rulers and people. There was, therefore, no interference in the social and religious structure of the people. Thus the valley of Chamba has been able to preserve its ancient cultural heritage.

How to reach Chamba

The small hill town of Chamba, at 915m, is connected by a direct bus service with Delhi. Alternatively, one can reach Pathankot by overnight train journey from Delhi; from Pathankot it is a six hours bus journey to Chamba.

Where to stay

There is a variety of accommodation at Chamba, including a Youth Hostel, Tourist rest-houses and P.W.D. rest-houses.

DALHOUSIE (32⁰ 32′N., 76⁰E)

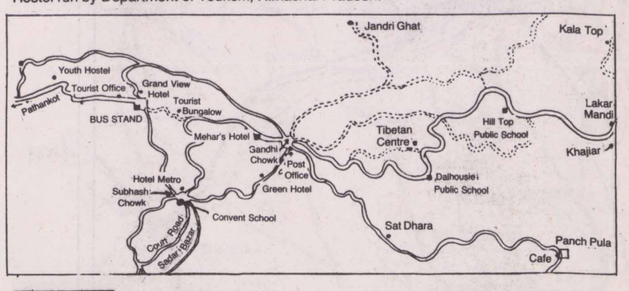
At the foot of the main spurs ot the Dhauladhar and built upon and around five hills, covered with a thick growth of oak, conifers and a large variety of other trees and shrubs, Dalhousie is situated at an elevation of 2050m above sea-level. The place is named after a former Viceroy, Lord Dalhousie. The first settlers of Dalhousie were members of Lord Dalhousie's staff and over a period of time it gained importance as a cantonment with the influx of British army personnel escaping from the scorching heat of the plains.

How to reach

It can be reached from Pathankot railhead by bus or taxi and is 80 km from Pathankot. It is a convenient and pleasant point to start the treks into Chamba Valley and beyond.

Where to stay

Apart from several inexpensive or luxury hotels, there is a Tourist Bungalow and a Youth Hostel run by Department of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh.



Bharmaur (32⁰ 27′N, 76⁰ 31E)

Located 77 km from Chamba is Bharmaur (2194m). Once called Brahmpura, it still retains its ancient temples and the monuments of its one time glory, some of which dates back to the seventh century. Bharmaur is known as the homeland of the Gaddis, who reside exclusively on the snowy ranges which divide Chamba from Kangra. Shepherds by tradition, the Gaddis are a semi-nomadic and semi-pastoral tribe, who spend the summer on the alpine pastures grazing their sheep and goats and move down to some regions of Kangra, Mandi and Bilaspur in winter. Bharmaur is the gateway to many adventurous treks leading to Lahaul Valley over Pir-Panjal Range.

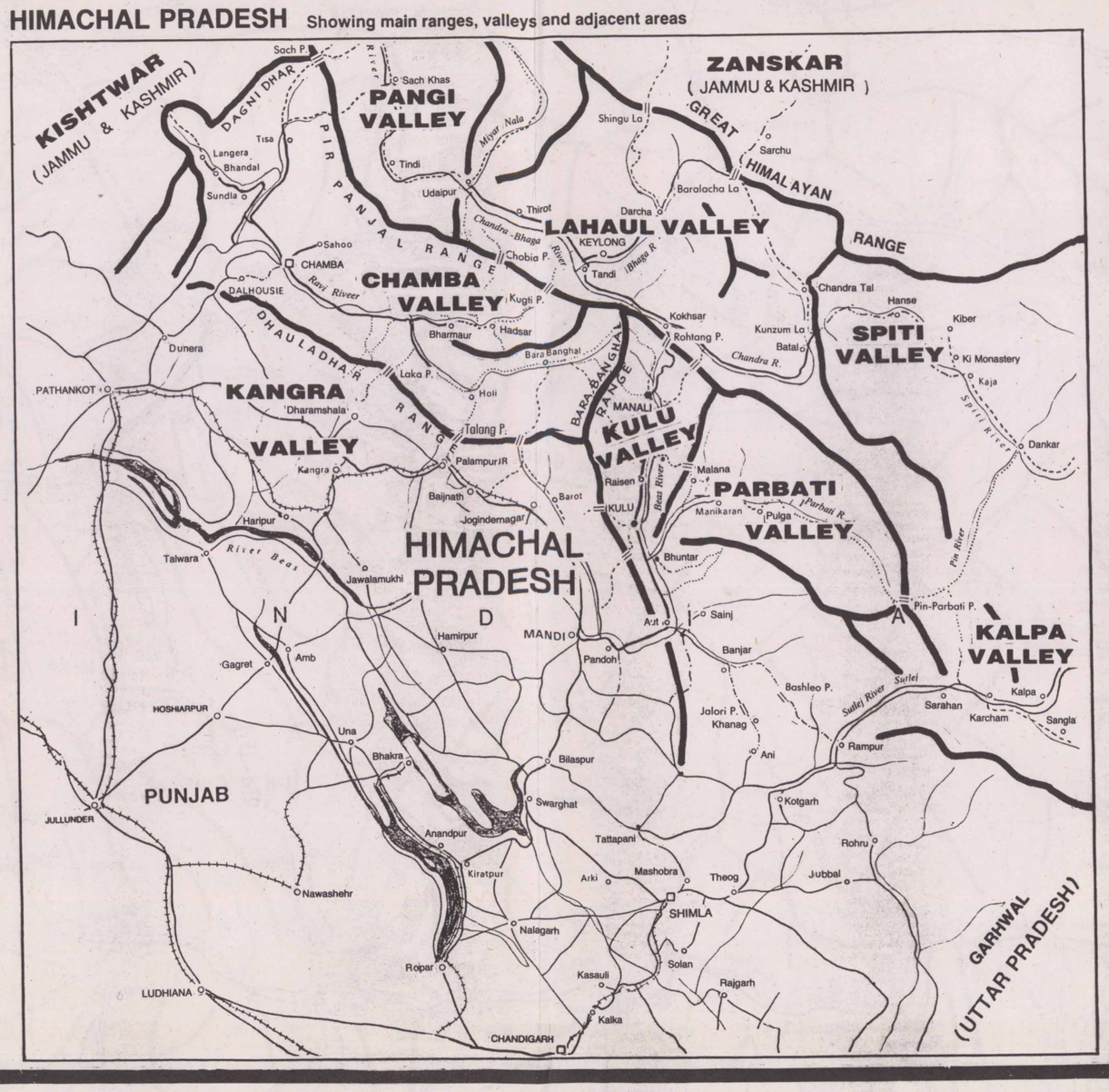
How to reach

There are regular buses plying between Chamba and Bharmaur which take about 5 hours to cover a distance of 69 km. One can also hire a jeep from Chamba.

Where to stay:

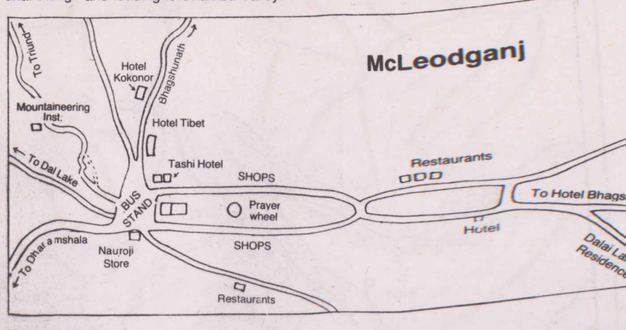
There is a P.W.D. rest house, and the reservation for it should be made at Chamba.
A Panchayat rest house. Tourist bungalow under construction.

HIMACHAL PRADESH Showing main ranges, valleys and adjacent areas



Dharamshala (32⁰ 12N., 76⁰ 19′E)

At 1500m, Dharamshala stands a lonely sentinel to the backdrop of snow-capp Dhauladhar Range. It is divided into two parts: Dharamshala proper and McLeodg (1860m) where also the Dalai Lama lives. The snow-line is more easily accessible from h than from any other hill resort. Dharamshala provides excellent trekking trails over Dha dhar Range and leading to Chamba Valley.



How to reach

Dharamshala can be reached by bus from Pathankot railhead (90km). There is also bus service between Delhi and Dharamshala.

Where to stay

Hotel Dhauladhar at Dharamshala and Hotel Bhagsu at McLeodganj managed by H Pradesh Tourist Development Corporation. Hotel Tibet at McLeodganj managed Lama Trust. Apart from these there are several inexpensive Tibetan hotels at McL Trekkers and mountaineers can stay also at the Minor Mountaineering and High Trekking Institute situated at McLeodganj.

PANGI VALLEY

At a distance of 137 km from Chamba is the scenic valley of Pangi, a sub-division headquarter at Kilar. The valley lies between two parrallel range, the heights of which v 4447m to 6402m. It is a valley of grandeur and majesty, both in appearance and Its rugged charm and austere beauty is spectacular. The most convenient ro trekking into the valley is over the Sach Pass, 4390m high. The valley remains the rainy season and attracts adventurers for mountaineering and trekking. There few virgin peaks, 6400m to 6700m high, challenging the mountaineers.

Kilar (33⁰ 06′N, 76⁰ 24′E)

Kilar, 137 km north east of Chamba, is situated in the deep and narrow gorge of t river (also called Chandra-Bhaga). It can also be reached via the Sach Pass. one can trek north-west to Kishtwar in Jammu and Kashmir, or turn east about Kishtwar and cross Umasi La into the Zanskar valley. One can also take south- Keylong. There are many rest houses managed by P.W.D. and Forest Departme able distances in the entire Pangi Valley.

Porters and mules

These are available at most of the starting points of the trekking trails.

Camping and Forest Rest Houses

Camping can be done at any suitable place in the wilderness. There are no desi as understood in Europe or on the North American continent. These trekking t dotted with cave shelters. There is too a net work of Forest rest houses (F.R.H Bungalows along some of the trails.

Trek 1

CHAMBA-MANIMAHESH TREK

It is an easy trek up the Ravi River and the Budhal River to Manimahesh lake at 4050m. The trail passes through the ancient town of Bharmaur, famous for its ancient temples dating back 1300 years. Best time: August to October.

Day 1: Chamba – Bharmaur (2194m) 58 km.
It is a three hours journey by jeep, or five hours by bus. Accommodation in a PWD rest-house. Engage porters from here or from Hadsar.

Day 2: Bharmaur-Hadsar (2000m) 16 km.
A road for jeeps has been constructed recently. It provides an almost level walk. Stay at the Sandi Forest rest house, situated 1 km before Hadsar.

Day 3: Hadsar – Dhanchho (2900m) 6 km.
A continuous and gradual climb. A temporary shelter and an excellent camping ground are to be found at Dhanchho.

Day 4: Dhanchho – Manimahesh (4050m) – **Dhanchho** 14 km.
A strenuous climb to the lake. A big fair is held there annually in the month of August.
A small cave shelter at Manimahesh.

Days 5/6: Return journey by the same route.

Trek 2

CHAMBA-KUGTI PASS-MANALI TREK

An interesting trek via Lahaul Valley and over Kugti Pass (5040m).

Day 1 & 2 are the same as in the Manimahesh trek (no. 1)

Day 3: Hadsar – Kugti village (2590m) 13 km.
The trek from Hadsar to Kugti village involves many ascents and descents. Spend the night in tents or in a local school.

Day 4: Kugti village – Duggi (3200m) 7 km.
The trek starts with a very steep climb of 4 km up to the temple of Kelong, then 3 km up to Duggi camping ground.

Day 5: Duggi – Alias (4116m) 6 km.
The trail is rough and steep to start with. Alias is a vast grassy plateau.

Day 6: Alias – Kugti Pass – Alias Got (4000m) 14 km.
Alias means a small grassy area, usually situated below a pass. Alias to Kugti Pass is a very stiff climb over moraine and snow. Alias Got is situated in the other side of the pass.

Day 7: Alias Got – Jalma (2896m) 10 km.
The trail goes down to meet Chandra-Bhaga River, in Lahaul; it crosses the bridge, and turn left for shashi and Jalma situated on the tindi – Manali highway

Day 8: Jalma – Manali (1896m)
The bus journey from Jalma to Manali (32° 15′N, 77° 12′E) in the Kulu Valley, takes about ten hours and leads through Lahaul valley to Khoksar, then southwards over Rohtang Pass (3978m). (For reference see Himalaya Map sheet-5)

Trek 3

CHAMBA-SACH PASS -MANALI TREK

It is a very commonly used pass. Eating shops and local accommodation available at every halting point. Perfectly suitable for those who want to travel light & free.

Day 1: A motorable road heads northwards and it takes 5 hours by bus to reach lower Trela. Camping ground is situated between lower Trela and upper Trela. An alternative trail leads to Sach Pass via Bairagarh. The bus reaches Bairagarh. PWD rest house

Day 2: Trela – Bhanodi Gujarali 12 km.
A gradual climb upto Bhanodi village via Alwas. There are some eating shops at Alwas. Gujarali, 2 km beyond Bhanodi is an ideal camping area.

Day 3: Gujarali – Satrundi (3505m) 5 km.
A fairly steep and continuous ascent. Satrundi situated at the foot of Sach Pass, is an splendid camping ground. A few eating shops and a log hut near by.

Day 4: Satrundi – Sach Pass (4390m) – **Dunai** (3285m) 13 km.
The trek starts with a hard climb over slippery snow. Sach pass is reached in three hours. Dunai, a two-roomed construction in not very good condition, is about 10 km from the pass.

Day 5: Dunai – Kilar (2450m) 14 km.
A gradual descent to the Chandra-Bhaga River. The trail crosses the river by a ropeway, turns right and reaches Kilar, the chief town of Pangi valley. Accommodation in the Forest rest house.

Day 6: Kilar – Sach Khas (2256m) 13 km.
The trail continues to the south along the Chandra-Bhaga River. Sach Khas is reached after many ascents and descents. One can sleep in the Forest rest house.

Day 7: Sach Khas – Purthi (2256m) 16 km.
Passing through a thickly wooded region, one reaches Purthi in 6/7 hours. Accommodation in the Forest rest house.

Day 8: Purthi – Roali (2591m) 19 km.
This is quite a difficult stretch. Stay in the Forest rest-house for the night.

Day 9: Roali – Tindi 14 km.
A fairly easy trek. Tindi is the bus terminus for Manali. The bus goes down the whole Lahaul Valley as far as Grampho and after crossing Rohtang Pass (3978m), reaches Manali. (For map: see Himalaya sheet-5)

Trek 4

CHAMBA-SACH PASS -KISHTWAR TREK

This is a strenous trek of 9 days. The trail passes through Chamba to Pangi valley over Sach Pass (4390m) and goes to Kishtwar in Jammu and Kashmir. Maps 4, 2, and 1 are needed to follow the full length of this trek.

Day 1 to 4: These are the same as in the Chamba – Sach Pass-Manali trek (no. 3).

Day 5: Dunai – Dharwas (2422m) 17 km.
After 12 km of gradual descent to Chandra-Bhaga River the trail crosses the river by a rope bridge and, turning left, climbs up to Dharwas P W D rest house. The rest house is beautifully situated and comfortable and is the last rest house in Pangi valley on this route.

Day 6: Dharwas – Ishtyari (Tham) (2440m) 13 km.
The trail continues on the right bank of the river and, after crossing Sansari Nala, climbs up very steeply. Sansari Nala is the dividing line between Pangi Valley in Himachal Pradesh and Kishtwar Valley in Jammu & Kashmir. The Forest rest house of Tham is situated 2 km beyond Ishtyari village.

Day 7: Tham – Atholi (2245m) 20 km.
From Tham to Shol it is a strenuous trek of 11 km involving many ups and downs. After Shol there is comparatively good mule track to Atholi. It is small picturesque town with a small market and a Forest rest house. A trail branches off from here towards Padam, in Zanskar, along the Bhut Nala.

Day 8: Atholi – Shasho (2135m) 15 km.
This again is a difficult trek with many ups and downs. Shasho is not a village but just a Forest rest-house situated 100m above the track. A small eating shop with a few beds is also there.

Day 9: Shasho – Gulhar (1700m) 18 km - **Kishtwar** 30 km.
After seven to eight hours strenuous trekking, Gulhar bus terminus is reached. There is a forest rest house 1 km before Gulhar. Several buses leave from Gulhar for Kishtwar, a two-hours journey. A variety of accommodation at Kishtwar but P W D rest house is the best place to stay. From there one can get long-distance buses for Srinagar or for Jammu. Alternatively, one can continue the trek, crossing Sinthon Pass and reaching Daksum (33° 35′N, 75° 26′E) in Kashmir valley in three days. (For this trek see Himalaya Map 1-'Srinagar')

Trek 5

DHARAMSHALA - LAKA PASS - CHAMBA TREK

This is one of the most popular though difficult treks, requiring 7/8 days and leading to the ancient and picturesque town of Bharmaur, then to Chamba following Ravi River downstream. Best period-June 10 to October 15.

Mcleodganj (1860m)
Dwelling place of Dalai Lama. Stay at Hotel Tibet or Hotel Bhagshu Nath. Mcleodganj is also called upper Dharamshala. Dharamshala is connected by direct bus with Delhi.

Day 1: Mcleodganj – Triund (2750m) 13 km.
It is a gradual climb north-eastwards to Triund forest rest house. An ideal camping ground overlooking the entire Kangra Valley.

Day 2: Triund – Laka Got (3350m) 7 km.
A good camping ground at the foot of Laka pass. Mcleodganj to Laka got can be done in one day also.

Day 3: Laka Got – Laka Pass (4424m) - **Chhata** (3380m) 9 km.
A very strenuous climb of 4 km up to top of the pass, which may take 6 to 8 hours. From pass to Chhata camping ground it is a gradual descent.

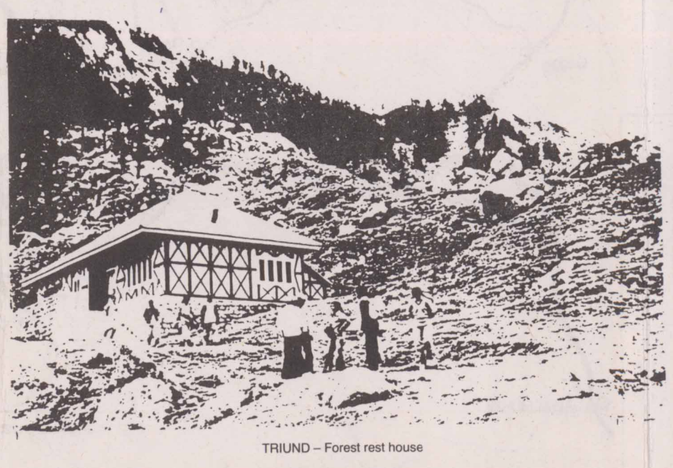
Day 4: Chhata – Kuarsi (2440m) 16 km.
A strenuous trek involving many ascents and descents. Night shelter at local temple.

Day 5: Kuarsi – Machhetar (1900m) 15 km.
The trail leads through Jhanauta village and goes down to Machhetar, situated on the newly built Holi-Chamba road. A few eating shops and a provision shop at Machhetar. From here one can go either to Chamba (76 km) by bus or carry on to Bharmaur on foot (about 5 km).

Day 6: Machhetar – Bharmaur (2194m) 8 km.
The trail crosses the River Ravi by a small bridge and reaches Bharmaur. Do not fail to visit the famous temples and brass sculptures. Stay at P W D rest house.

Day 7: Bharmaur – Chamba or Dalhousie (2050m) 9 hours.
Bharmaur to Chamba is a bus journey of six hours. Chamba is hot in summer. It is better to travel on as far as Dalhousie, a hill resort (about 58 km from Chamba). Variety of accommodation at both Chamba and Dalhousie.

Day 8: Dalhousie to Pathankot by bus and from there to Delhi by train.



TRIUND – Forest rest house

Trek 6

DHARAMSHALA - MINKIANI PASS - CHAMBA TREK

A short and adventurous trek of 5 days leading past many lakes. This trek can be combined with the Laka Pass trek No. 5 to make a round trek of 9 days.

Day 1: Mcleodganj (1860m) - **Kareri Village** (1870m) 13 km.
The trail descends steeply to a stream then climbs to Kareri Forest rest house.

Day 2: Kareri Village – Kareri Lake (3500m) 14 km.
A gradual but continuous climb. Kareri Lake, situated at the base of Minkiani Pass, is a picturesque spot set amidst green meadows.

Day 3: Kareri Lake – Minkiani Pass (4410m) **Minkiani Got** (3500m) 7 km.
The 3 km climb to the pass is very steep. Minkiani Got camping ground is another 4 km beyond the pass. From there one can visit Lam Dal, which is 3 km distant.

Day 4: Minkianni Got – Drakund (1860m) 17 km.
This is a long continuous descent to Drakund Forest rest house.

Day 5: Drakund – Donali (1130m) 17 km.
An easy descent alongside the Donali stream. Donali is situated on the Bharmaur-Chamba road. From there one can go by bus to Bharmaur or to Chamba.

Trek 7

BAIJNATH-THAMSAR PASS-MANALI TREK

This is one of the most adventurous yet unfrequented treks requiring 10 to 11 days. The trail heads north from Bir (32° 03′N, 76° 42′E) and crosses the beautiful 4924m high Thamsar Pass (32° 14′N, 76° 46′E), goes down to the secluded village of Bara Banghal, crosses Bara Banghal Range over Manali Pass (32° 16′N, 77° 02′E) and ends at Manali, in Kulu Valley.

Day 1: Baijnath (915m) – **Bir** (1066m)
The small town of Baijnath (32° 02′N, 76° 40′E) can be reached from Pathankot railhead. It is a 7 hours journey by bus from Pathankot. One can lodge in the beautifully situated Forest rest house at Baijnath. Or one can take another bus going to Bir village, which is one hour's journey from there.

Day 2: Bir Khas – Rajgundha (2625m) 16 km.
Mules can be hired from Bir Khas. Some basic provisions are available too.

Day 3: Rajgundha – Palachak – Panhartu (3348m) 17 km.
A gradual ascent up to Palachak Forest rest house (2740m), 10 km. An eating shop is also there. Panhartu is another 7 km up stream.

Day 4: Panhartu – Bharpal Got (4050m) 9 km.
The day starts with a strenuous trek, which reaches Bharpal Got camping ground.

Day 5: Bharpal Got – Thamsar Pass (4924m) – **Marhu** (3656m) 13 km.
This is a difficult trek of 17 km to the pass, over soft snow and ice. The cave shelter of Marhu is 6 km down from the pass. An ice axe or a long stick could be very helpful.

Day 6: Marhu – Bara Banghal (2554m) 8 km.
This is an easy walk downhill along the Thamsar Nala. Bara Banghal is a village and all the trails towards Chamba and Manali start from there. A Forest rest house for overnight stay.

Day 7: Bara Banghal – Kuari Got (4063m) 13 km.
The trail climbs gradually through mixed forest along the river Ravi and reaches Kuari Got camping ground.

Day 8: Kuari Got – Phulan Got (4063m) 7 km.
A difficult climb to the Phulan Got camping ground situated near the snout of the Tantgiri Glacier.

Day 9: Phulan Got – Manali Pass (4877m) – **Rani Sui** (4200m) 18 km.
This is the most difficult day of the trek; but an experienced trekker can do it with some effort. The trail climbs up the Tantgiri Glacier to Manali Pass, then drops down to Rani Sui camping ground.

Day 10: Rani Sui – Manali (1896m) 12 km.
A very steep decent to Manali through Rhododendron forests.

Season

Best period for trekking in this area is from the second w k of Some of the higher passes are accessible only in June or after months and unsuitable for trekking in Chamba Valley.

Some Useful Addresses

1. Himachal Pradesh Tourist Information Office Chan k
   New Delhi – 110001. Tel: 345320
2. Indian Mountaineering Foundation, Benito Juarez R d., N
3. Regional Mountaineering Centre, Mcleodganj, Dhar Dh
4. Himachal Pradesh Tourist Office, Dalhousie, Cham mba
5. Regional Mountaineering Centre, Bharmaur, Distt. C mba
6. H.P. Tourist Development Corporation, Ritz Anexe, dia
7. Manager, Himalayan Tourism, Air India, Hansalaya
   New Delhi – 110001. Tel: 3110491