

## **WOMEN WELFARE SCHEMES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH GOVERNMENT**

In our society women have been given a special place since ages. In the present day women are progressing more and proving their mettle in every arena whether it be education, politics, health, govt. jobs, and agriculture or household jobs. Himachal Pradesh government has been honoured at the national level for its excellent steps and programmes undertaken for the empowerment of women In Himachal. Women in Himachal are employed in vocational jobs; education of females in rural areas has taken an edge in Himachal Pradesh. Earlier the women who used to be busy with household work are now working in anganwadis, handlooms, learning sewing, weaving etc.

The Himachal government is giving a serious concern towards the upliftment of the women in the society like education, funds to widows and poor women, strict punishments against female infanticide etc. The result of all these initiatives by Himachal government towards growth of women in society has made Himachal to top the list among all the other states in terms of empowerment of women.

A survey done by India's renowned magazine and electronic channel revealed that Himachal excels in working for women empowerment and has been awarded as the 'Diamond State' award. Himachal Pradesh has come out to be the first state in the nation in which 50 % reservation is given to the women in Panchayati Raj institutions and other urban jobs. Moreover, all the Panchayat in Himachal Pradesh having large female population are provided with extra fund of Rs. 5 lacs for the progress and empowerment of women.

Himachal Pradesh has been honoured with the prestigious '**Diamond State Award**' for its tremendous work on the upliftment and empowerment of the women in Himachal. Several schemes have been started by Himachal Pradesh in the last three years(2008-2010) keeping in view the welfare of widows, divorced women, destitute and below poverty line women in Himachal. When it comes to empowerment of women, Himachal leaves behind many states in the country.

## **Welfare Schemes for Empowerment of Women in Himachal:**

**Reservation in Political Bodies:** Women of Himachal have been provided with 50% reservation in the political bodies like Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies in the State. This has definitely helped the women to come forward and explore themselves.

**Beti Hai Anmol Yojana:** Under this Yojana, for all the families lying below the poverty line in Himachal and having one or two girls, a sum of Rs. 5100 will be deposited in the name of girls at the time of their birth. Moreover, to help in the education of such girls, scholarship ranging from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1500 will be given to them from class I to class XII.

**Mukhaya Mantri Bal Udhar Yojana:** Under this Yojana, Himachal govt. Decided to provide free education, accommodation, professional guidance and several other essential facilities to the orphans whether a girl or a boy.

**Mukhaya Mantri Kanyadaan Yojana:** Under this Yojana, the daughters of below poverty line families or widows or destitute were given a sum of Rs. 11,001 for their marriage by Himachal govt.

**Widows Pension Incremented in himachal:** Earlier, the widows in Himachal were given a monthly pension of Rs. 200 which was increased to rs. 330.

**Mother Teresa Asahaya Matri Sambal Yojana:** under this Yojana, the women who are helpless in upbringing their children (like widows, destitute) are provided with financial assistance of Rs. 2000 per child for two children.

The key objective of the Himachal government has always been the welfare and growth of poor, downtrodden and women of the state. Growth of all these people will certainly help in the overall growth and development of the state. Himachal Pradesh government has started various schemes and programmes for the welfare, benefit and empowerment of women in Himachal Pradesh.

## Women Welfare Schemes of Himachal Government

### Mukhyamantri Kanyadaan Yojana:

90% of the Himachal population lives in the rural areas and many have to earn their livelihood from the meagre pieces of land and some do not possess that even. For such poor families it is very difficult to spend thousands on the wedding of their daughters. Under Mukhyamantri Kanyadaan Yojana, Himachal govt. will provide a sum of Rs. 11,001 for the marriage of girls in poor families. The Mukhyamantri Kanyadaan Yojana, was not just a misnomer but in 2008-09 around 1056 marriages were done with the sum provided by this scheme and about 1.16 crore of total money was spent.

### Mother Teresa Matri Sambal Yojana:

It becomes very difficult for widows and poor women to uplift their children and provide them food, shelter, necessary education etc. In order to provide financial relief to such poor mothers who are finding difficulty in the upbringing of their children, Mother Teresa Matri Sambal Yojana started by Himachal government benefitted them a lot. Such poor and weak mothers having children below 14 years of age were given a sum of Rs. 2000 by Himachal government under Mother Teresa Matri Sambal Yojana. Under Mother Teresa Matri Sambal Yojana, about 1.07 cores were given for the upbringing of about 13060 children.

### Balika Samridhi Yojana:

Under Balika Samridhi Yojana, for the girls belonging to the Below Poverty Line Families (BPL), a sum of Rs. 500 will be deposited in their name in the bank till they attain 18 years of age.

### Indira Gandhi Balika Suraksha Yojana:

Under Indira Gandhi Balika Suraksha Yojana, the families adopting the family planning after the birth of first female child will be given a sum of Rs. 25,000 and those adopting family planning after the birth of two female children will be given a cash of Rs. 20,000.

Himachal Pradesh government has always been industrious when it comes to women empowerment or to provide services to the women. Yet moving a step ahead, health department of Himachal Pradesh has launched a **free of cost transportation service to the pregnant women to the hospital for delivery on 15th September, 2010.**

Either taxi or ambulance will be provided by the health department for carrying the pregnant women to the nearest medical hospital.

Under this scheme, pregnant women of any category can avail this free transport facility to the hospitals for delivery. Another important feature of this scheme is that the person accompanying the pregnant women will be allowed to enter inside the labour room and build the confidence of pregnant women during delivery. Earlier only doctors were allowed to enter the labour room and no relatives of the pregnant women. This will surely help to get rid of the **cases of infants being kidnapped or exchanged and will also avoid unskilled deliveries.**

This cash less delivery scheme will be soon available in **75 medical hospitals in Himachal Pradesh.** Earlier, the scheme was planned to be launched on 15th August, 2010 but was postponed and launched on 15th September, 2010. This scheme will be launched in district hospitals Nahan, Poanta Sahib, Dadahu, Shillai, Sarahan, Rajgarh and Nohradhar initially and later in other prominent health institutions of Himachal Pradesh.