

# Government Degree College Kaffota District Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

## Ranking of Government Colleges in HP – 2025

### Criterion 5: Best Practices, Innovation and Institution Distinctiveness

#### Key Indicator 5.4: Special New Innovative Initiatives Or Ideas Adopted in the College (Other than at Sr. No. 5.2)

##### Metric 5.4.3: Pahadon Re Pakwan — Student-Led Exhibition on Traditional Hatti Cuisine and Culinary Heritage



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## **RANKING FRAMEWORK**

### **5 BEST PRACTICES, INNOVATION AND INSTITUTION DISTINCTIVENESS**

#### **5.4. Special New Innovative Initiatives Or Ideas Adopted in the College (Other than at Sr. No. 5.2 above)**

##### **5.4.3. Pahadon Re Pakwan — Student-Led Exhibition on Traditional Hatti Cuisine and Culinary Heritage**

“Pahadon Re Pakwan” (Flavours of the Hills) represents an innovative institutional initiative aimed at preserving, documenting, and celebrating the traditional culinary heritage of the Trans-Giri Hatti tribal region through experiential and student-led learning.

##### **i. Objectives**

The practice seeks to:

1. Create awareness about the disappearing traditional cuisine of the Hatti tribal region.
2. Empower students, particularly girl students, to explore, prepare, and present indigenous dishes.
3. Document traditional recipes, ingredients, preparation techniques, and cultural significance.
4. Promote pride in indigenous culinary practices and strengthen cultural identity.
5. Facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer through engagement with elders.
6. Highlight the nutritional and ecological value of traditional Himalayan food systems.
7. Promote experiential and participatory learning through cultural exhibitions.
8. Encourage sustainable food habits based on local and seasonal resources.
9. Develop entrepreneurial awareness related to ethnic food and cultural tourism.

10. Strengthen institutional-community linkage in preserving intangible cultural heritage.

## **ii. The Context**

Government Degree College Kaffota is situated in the remote Trans-Giri region of District Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, predominantly inhabited by the Hatti tribal community. The region possesses a rich culinary tradition shaped by local agriculture, seasonal cycles, and socio-cultural practices.

However, increasing urbanization, migration, and the growing influence of processed food habits have led to a gradual decline in traditional food knowledge, especially among younger generations. Many indigenous recipes, once integral to daily life and cultural rituals, are now at risk of being forgotten.

Recognizing the urgency of preserving this intangible cultural heritage, the college conceptualized “**Pahadon Re Pakwan**” as a student-led exhibition and research initiative. The practice positions food as a medium of cultural education, sustainability, and identity, aligning with the vision of NEP 2020 and the promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems.

## **iii. The Practice**

The initiative is implemented as a “**Living Culinary Museum**”, transforming the campus into a dynamic space for cultural learning and community engagement.

### **a. Planning and Organization**

The exhibition was organized on **18 December 2025** under the guidance of the Principal, Dr. Kuldeep Singh, with active support from faculty members, NSS Unit, Eco-Club, and Cultural Committee.

### **b. Student Research and Documentation**

Students conducted household surveys and interacted with elders to collect authentic recipes and oral histories. They documented ingredients, preparation methods, seasonal relevance, and cultural significance of each dish.

### **c. Preparation and Display of Dishes**

Students, particularly girl students, prepared a wide variety of traditional Hatti dishes using indigenous ingredients and customary methods. Prominent dishes included Khinda, Pudhe, Askoli, Dhindhki, Ulowle, Kheer-Patande, Gulgule, Khablu, Badoli, Satule, Lohta, Moodha, and Shakuli.

### **d. Creative Presentation**

The exhibition area was designed as a “Heritage Kitchen” using traditional utensils such as earthen pots, brass vessels, and locally used tools. Students presented

their exhibits aesthetically and explained the cultural context of each dish to visitors.

#### **e. Academic Integration**

The activity was linked with academic learning, enabling students to relate culinary traditions with themes in history, sociology, environmental studies, and nutrition. The documentation was compiled into a **Culinary Heritage Register**.

#### **f. Community Participation and Sensory Learning**

Faculty members, non-teaching staff, students, and local community members actively participated. A collective tasting session enhanced experiential learning and cultural bonding.

#### **g. Reflection and Valedictory**

The Principal appreciated the efforts of students and emphasized the importance of such initiatives in reconnecting youth with their cultural roots and sustainable lifestyles.

### **iv. Evidence of Success**

1. Successful organization of the exhibition on 18 December 2025 with active participation of students and staff.
2. Display of a diverse range of authentic traditional dishes prepared and presented creatively.
3. Compilation of a **Culinary Heritage Register** documenting over 50 recipes and cultural insights.
4. Enhanced student awareness regarding the importance of traditional food systems and cultural preservation.
5. High level of student engagement, creativity, and teamwork.
6. Positive feedback and appreciation from faculty, parents, and local community members.
7. Strengthened cultural identity and pride among students.
8. Integration of experiential learning with academic understanding.
9. Improved communication, research, and presentation skills among participants.
10. Contribution to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage of the Hatti community.

### **v. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

**a. Problems Encountered**

1. Difficulty in sourcing rare and seasonal traditional ingredients.
2. Time constraints due to lengthy preparation processes of traditional dishes.
3. Maintaining hygiene and food safety during large-scale preparation and display.
4. Preservation challenges for perishable food items.
5. Variations in local names and preparation methods leading to minor inconsistencies in documentation.
6. Limited infrastructure for large-scale traditional cooking within the campus.

**b. Resources Required**

1. Modest financial support for ingredients, display materials, and logistics.
2. Faculty mentorship for cultural validation and academic integration.
3. Participation of local elders for authenticity and oral history documentation.
4. Basic infrastructure including exhibition space and traditional utensils.
5. Documentation tools such as cameras and recording devices.
6. Active involvement of students, staff, and community members.

**vi. Notes (Optional)**

“Pahadon Re Pakwan” is a low-cost, sustainable, and replicable best practice, particularly suited to rural and tribal institutions. It transforms culinary traditions into a powerful pedagogical tool for cultural preservation, gender empowerment, and sustainable living.

The practice aligns with:

- **NEP 2020** (experiential learning and Indian Knowledge Systems)
- **SDG 2** (Zero Hunger – sustainable food systems)
- **SDG 5** (Gender Equality)
- **SDG 11** (Sustainable Communities and Cultural Heritage)

**Future Plans:**

- Publication of a *Hatti Heritage Recipe Compendium*.
- आयोजन of an annual Food and Culture Festival.
- Collaboration with cultural agencies for documentation of tribal culinary heritage.

Overall, the initiative demonstrates how food can serve as an effective medium for connecting education with culture, sustainability, and community engagement, thereby transforming the institution into a custodian of local intangible heritage.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



**Figure 6**



**Figure 7**



**Figure 8**



**Figure 9**



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



**Figure 14**