

Landslips in Himachal Pradesh

What is the issue?

- Himachal Pradesh faces rising instability from environmental factors such as climate change, heavy rainfall and landslides.
- The rising threat calls for a renewed approach to the developmental designs in the State.

What is the recent happening?

- Landslip/Lanslide in the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh killed at least 14 people and buried several others.
- Severe catastrophe as mud, rocks and debris rained down on vehicles.
- A fortnight back, a similar disaster killed a group of tourists.

What are the recurring threats and the causes?

- **Landslips** - They have become more common.
- Seismic events threaten to increase their frequency and aggravate the impact.
- The Landslide Hazard Zonation Map of India marks over 70% of Himachal Pradesh as 'high risk' and 14% as 'severe' to 'very high risk'.



- **Earthquakes** - Mountains here are geologically young and therefore active (unstable).
- 32% of the State is categorised as a high damage risk zone for seismicity.
- **Causes**
 1. Himachal's mountain slopes experience seismicity and rain-induced stresses.
 2. Heavily engineered structures such as dams and hydropower (involve rock blasting, tree felling and inundating large spaces), building roads.
 3. With greater rainfall and cloudburst activity, Himachal Pradesh is bound to face greater uncertainty.

What does this call for?

- A new and redesigned development paradigm.
- Greater caution in pursuing disruptive projects, particularly hydropower.
- An updated action plan on climate change that goes beyond disaster management.
- Long-term remedial measures for the key hazards.
- Harnessing the available support among local communities for sustainable tourism and expansion of the farm-based economy, particularly apple growing.



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