1. Title of the Practice

Revisiting Our Roots

2. Objectives of the Practice

- To reconnect students with **India's cultural heritage, traditional knowledge systems, and indigenous wisdom**.
- To instill a sense of **belonging, identity, and pride** in local history, language, arts, and culture.
- To promote **value-based education** through cultural immersion, traditional practices, and community interaction.
- To encourage students to appreciate and preserve **local ecology, customs, festivals, and folk traditions**.
- To bridge the gap between modern education and traditional wisdom by creating meaningful learning experiences.

3. The Context

In an era dominated by rapid technological advancement and global influences, young learners often move away from their cultural roots and local traditions. The institution recognized the need to strengthen students' connection with their **heritage, community, and environment**, reinforcing identity and fostering respect for diversity.

To cultivate scientific temper and intellectual appreciation, it becomes essential for students to learn about the invaluable contributions of great Indian scientists and philosophers. Understanding the achievements of figures such as C.V. Raman, S. Chandrasekhar, Homi J. Bhabha, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Aryabhatta, Adi Shankaracharya, Swami Vivekananda, and others help students recognize India's

historical strength in science, thought, and knowledge. This fosters a spirit of inquiry, pride, and respect for the nation's intellectual roots. "Revisiting Our Roots" was conceived as a practice to help students rediscover and celebrate indigenous knowledge, rural life, traditional crafts, folk culture, and local ecology.

The initiative aims to preserve **intangible cultural heritage** while integrating cultural understanding into the educational process.

4. The Practice

- Organising **heritage walks, village visits, and community interaction programmes** to help students understand local history, architecture, and rural living.
- Celebrating **local festivals, folk traditions, and cultural events** within the campus through performances, storytelling sessions, and thematic exhibitions.
- Conducting expert talks, seminars, and workshops on:
    - Folk music and dance
    - Handicrafts and traditional arts
    - Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)
    - Local cuisine and traditional agricultural practices
- Encouraging students to document:
    - Oral histories of elders
    - Traditional ecological knowledge
    - Local medicinal plants and home remedies
    - Historical sites and cultural landmarks

- Promoting **eco-friendly and sustainable practices** inspired by traditional lifestyles, such as:
    - Waste-free celebrations
    - Use of local materials
    - Plantation drives linked to sacred groves or cultural associations
- Incorporating traditional values of **respect, community living, harmony, and simplicity** into student life through awareness sessions and reflective activities.
- Creating student clubs such as *Heritage Club / Culture Club* to continue these initiatives round the year.

5. Evidence of Success

- Increased awareness and appreciation among students for **local culture, traditions, and heritage**.
- Enhanced student participation in cultural programmes, folk performances, and documentation projects.
- Development of digital and physical archives of oral histories, photographs, cultural essays, and village studies.
- Students reported greater understanding of **rural lifestyles, indigenous knowledge, and sustainable practices**.
- Revitalisation of local art forms, traditions, and forgotten cultural activities through campus events and workshops.
- Strengthened community-institution relationships as elders, artisans, and cultural practitioners actively participated in programmes.
- Recognition from stakeholders for promoting culture-based learning practices.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Problems Encountered

- Difficulty in coordinating village visits due to weather, transport, or academic schedules.
- Resource limitations for organising large cultural events or inviting multiple experts.
- Limited documentation skills among students initially (writing, recording, interviewing).
- Some traditional knowledge bearers hesitant to share information due to cultural sensitivity.

Resources Required

- Funding for heritage walks, cultural events, expert honorariums, and documentation equipment.
- Transport facilities for community visits.
- Training support for students in documentation and cultural research.
- Infrastructure for exhibitions and cultural performances.

Dr. Bhupinder Singh Thakur
Principal
Govt. College Theog

Principal
Govt. Degree College,
Theog, Distt. Shimla (HP)