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Freedom Struggle to Statehood

History of Himachal Pradesh — Complete Exam Notes

From the first anti-British stirrings in the hills, through the Praja Mandal movements and the integration of princely states, to full statehood on 25 January 1971.

Anglo-Sikh Wars

Revolt of 1857

Praja Mandal Movements

Integration of States

Road to Statehood

COMPREHENSIVE • EXAM-ORIENTED • HPAS / HPPSC / ALLIED & HP TET

1 Overview & National Context

The history of Himachal Pradesh would remain incomplete without the various movements launched by the hill folk for liberation from the **colonial yoke** and the **oppressive, undemocratic rule of the princely rulers** among whom this territory was divided and subdivided. Though the intensity of the struggle was not as deep-rooted as in other parts of the country, it was well-directed and **indigenous in nature**. Many young men and women took part at both the local and national levels.

*"To let you live another day, he had the guts to fight and die.
To keep the freedom you live by, by his dying your life he buys.
But who cares if a soldier dies!" — Rachel*

★ Birth of the Indian National Congress

The first opposition to the British was expressed the very day they landed on Indian soil, but organised struggle began with the founding of the **Indian National Congress (INC)** on **28 December 1885** at Bombay. The idea was given by a retired British civil servant, **Mr. A. O. Hume**, from his residence **Rothney Castle, Shimla**. In its early years the INC worked as a **"safety valve"** against anti-British feeling, but later became the sole force uniting people of all shades of opinion.

The battle waged against the policy of *political mendicancy* ended with the clarion calls **"Quit India"** and **"Do or Die"** by **Mahatma Gandhi**. The **Jallianwala Bagh tragedy (1919)** shook the world and drew Gandhiji wholly into the struggle. Major movements he launched include:

Movement	Year	Place
Champaran Movement	1917	Bihar
Ahmedabad Mill Workers' Strike	1918	Gujarat
Khilafat & Non-Cooperation Movement	1920	All-India
Civil Disobedience (Salt Satyagraha)	1930	All-India
Quit India Movement	1942	All-India

✚ Gandhiji's visits to Shimla

Mahatma Gandhi visited Shimla in the years **1921**, **1931**, **1939**, **1945** and **1946**. In **1945** he stayed at the residence of **Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur** in **Manorville**, and in **1946** at **Chadwick** in Summer Hill. **Till 1915, every leader followed the policy of the INC; thereafter the Congress began following Gandhiji.**

2 Background — Anglo-Sikh Wars & British Paramountcy

The rulers of the Punjab hill states were tired of **Maharaja Ranjit Singh's** policy of annexation and extinction and were looking for an opportunity to be rid of the Sikhs. That chance came after Ranjit Singh's death, during the war between the Sikhs and the British in autumn 1845.

Hill chiefs turn against the Sikhs

- **Raja Shamsher Singh of Guler** raised a force and turned the Sikhs out of Haripur fort.

- **Bir Singh of Nurpur** rallied his men and laid siege to Nurpur fort.
- **Raja Narain Pal of Kuthlehr** expelled the Sikhs from Kotwalbah.
- **Ugar Sen of Suket** and **Balbair Sen of Mandi** also joined, tendering allegiance to the British for the expulsion of the Sikhs from the hills.

✂ Key battles & treaties (1846)

- The Sikhs were defeated in the **Battle of Sabraon** on **10 Feb 1846**.
- A peace treaty — the **Treaty of Lahore** — was signed on **9 March 1846** between the Sikhs and the British. The Sikhs ceded all territory **south of the Sutlej** together with the Jalandhar Doab (between Sutlej and Beas).

The Punjab hill chiefs who had supported the British expected their territories to be restored — as had happened with the Shimla hill states after the **Anglo-Gurkha War (A.D. 1815)**. But their hopes were belied. The British retained the portion between the Sutlej and the Ravi, and handed the rest to **Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu**. Thus the states of **Kangra, Guler, Jaswan, Datarpur, Nurpur, Suket, Mandi, Kullu** (except the Jagir of Waziri Ruppi confirmed to Thakur Singh with sovereign powers) came under direct British control. **Lahaul-Spiti**, though it fell under Gulab Singh, was exchanged with him for other territory and came under direct British control.

👉 War indemnity & the Treaty of Amritsar

- The Lahore Durbar paid a heavy war indemnity of **1.5 crore rupees** (50 lakh in cash, the rest by ceding hill districts between the Beas and the Indus, including Kashmir and Hazara).
- Mandi & Suket tendered allegiance at **Bilaspur** on **21 Feb 1846** and were granted a separate *Sanad* on **24 Oct 1846** (fixed yearly tribute, abolition of transit duty).
- **Treaty of Amritsar** signed **16 March 1846** — placed Gulab Singh in possession of the hilly area between the Ravi and Indus (incl. Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit, Chamba — excluding Lahaul). In return Gulab Singh paid **Rs. 75,00,000** to the British.

Chamba saved & rewards to loyal chiefs

The Ravi divides the state into two parts, raising the question of how much of Chamba was to be transferred to Jammu. Finally, Gulab Singh acquired **taluka Lakhanpur** in exchange for the *cis-Ravi* portion, preserving Chamba's ancient integrity. Chamba was saved from being annexed to Jammu by the patriotic zeal of **Wazir Bhaga**, who pleaded the State's case before **Sir Henry Lawrence**. On **6 April 1848** a *sanad* restored the Chamba Raja to full possession of the State (annual tribute Rs. 12,000).

- **Raja Narain Singh of Kuthlehr** — awarded a life grant of Rs. 10,000 (later confirmed to his heirs in perpetuity, subject to a *nazrana* of Rs. 1,188).

Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848) & the Nurpur Revolt

Anti-British feeling developed among the disappointed hill rulers. In the **Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848)**, the rulers of the Kangra hill states decided to support the Sikhs (who promised restoration of their territories). The hill rulers who revolted in 1848 were mainly from **Nurpur, Kangra, Jaswan and Datarpur**. A force under **Mr. Lawrence, the Commissioner** suppressed the revolt; rebels were captured and transported to **Almora** as political prisoners, where they died.

🔥 Wazir Ram Singh Pathania of Nurpur

Ram Singh, the Wazir of Nurpur, proved difficult to subdue. He was finally defeated with great difficulty at "**Dalle Ki Dhar**", a rocky ridge of the Shivaliks north-west of Shahpur. He was **betrayed for gold by a Brahmin, "Pahar Chand"**,

whom he trusted as a friend, and was transported to **Singapore**, where he died. His exploits are still sung by the hill bards. Because Nurgpur was the first state to revolt, the British dealt generously with **Raja Bir Singh of Nurgpur**: his minor son **Jaswant Singh** was conferred an annual jagir of Rs. 5,000, and Nurgpur state was merged with Kangra.

3 The Revolt of 1857 in the Hills

When the **First War of Independence (1857)** broke out in central and northern India, it did not much affect the hill territories. The people of the hill states were socially, economically and intellectually far less advanced than those of the plains; political rights mattered little to them, and economic exploitation was more a feature of the native rulers and *Jagirdars* than of the British. There was no interference by Christian missionaries by the time the revolt began. The first news of the revolt reached Shimla on **12 May 1857** from Ambala.

★ Officials & troops at Shimla (1857)

- **Commander-in-Chief of Shimla hills:** General Anson
- **Deputy Commissioner, Shimla:** Lord William Hay
- The 1st & 2nd Fusiliers and the **Gurkha regiment known as the Nasiri Battalion** were in the hill cantonments. The Gurkha battalion refused to comply with the order to move to Ambala.

The Kasauli Guard & the Jutogh panic

The soldiers of the **Kasauli Guard** (about **80**) revolted and marched off with a huge sum of government money to join their fellow soldiers at **Jutogh (Headquarters)**. A rumour that the Gurkha regiment at Jutogh had mutinied and was coming to loot Shimla created panic; many English women and children became nervous, and some army officers also failed to show courage. To pacify the mutineers, Deputy Commissioner William Hay sent a message through **Mian Rattan Singh, uncle of the Raja of Mandi** — but the mission did not succeed.

Hill chiefs shelter the Europeans

The **Raja of Keonthal** came to the rescue of the European inhabitants, sheltering them first at his Shimla palace and later at **Junga**. Others stayed with the Thakurs of **Koti** and **Balsan**, or in the hill cantonments of **Dagshai, Subathu and Kasauli**. The hill chiefs remained loyal to the British:

- 50 well-armed soldiers from **Bilaspur** stationed at Boileauganj Bazar.
- 60 **Sirmauri** soldiers under **Kanwar Bir Singh** (uncle of the Raja of Sirmaur) posted in Bara Bazar.
- 60 men from the Ranas of **Keonthal, Dharni and Bhajji**.
- **Mian Jai Singh of Baghal** with ~250 followers ready to meet any emergency.

🏆 Rewards to loyal chiefs

- **Raja Hari Singh of Bilaspur** — salute of **eleven guns**, a valuable *Khillat* and gifts.
- **Raja Sri Singh of Chamba** — sent troops to Dalhousie under Mian Avtar Singh.
- **Rana Krishan Singh / Jalandhar** — guarded the road from Shimla; conferred the title of "**Raja**"; he and his brother **Jai Singh** rewarded with *Khillat*.
- **Rana Govardhan Singh of Dharni** — half tribute excused.
- **Thakur Jograj of Balsan** — valuable *Khillat* in a public durbār.

Suppression of disturbances

Order at Nalagarh was restored by Lord William Hay with the support of **Mian Jai Singh of Baghal**. **Ram Prasad Bairagi of Subathu** was arrested for writing seditious letters, sent to Ambala and **executed**. On **10 June 1857**, troops at Jalandhar mutinied and moved towards Pinjaur but could not get beyond **Nalagarh**, where they were captured or killed. As a precaution, the 4th Native Infantry stationed in the forts of Kangra and Nurpur was disbanded. The **Wazir Gashaon of Mandi** supplied 125 matchlockmen and escorted men to Jalandhar.

The Kullu uprising — Pratab Singh

Early in June 1857, **Pratab Singh** (who pretended to be the rightful Raja of Kullu), assisted by a **Negi of Seraj**, tried to incite rebellion. Within three days Pratab Singh and his brother-in-law **Veer Singh** were arrested and deported to Dharamshala; both were **hanged on 3 August 1857**. Other supporters were given rigorous imprisonment.

The only hostile Raja

The only Raja who acted with hostility and discourtesy towards the British was **Raja Shamsher Singh of Bushahr**. He held back his tribute, offered no aid, and treated officials with discourtesy. A force was planned against him but abandoned due to scarcity of troops; his behaviour was overlooked after the revolt.

Queen Victoria's Proclamation — the "Magna Carta"

The revolt was suppressed but brought far-reaching changes — most importantly the **transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown**. On **1 November 1858** a proclamation was issued by **Queen Victoria**, popularly known as the "**Magna Carta of Indian Civil Liberties**", assuring just, democratic and unbiased rule. For their cooperation during the revolt, a favourable attitude was adopted towards the hill rulers:

- **Raja Ram Singh** (son of Raja Jai Singh of Jaswan) allowed to return from Almora and restored (1877).
- **Mian Dev Chand** (son of Raja Jagat Chand of Datarpur) allowed to return, but jagir not restored.
- Pension of the Raja of Nurpur doubled (1861).
- By the *Sanad* dated **11 March 1862**, Chamba chiefs were granted the **right of adoption** on failure of direct heirs.

4 Imperial Durbars & Cases of Misrule

Imperial event	Year	Notable attendees from the hills
Delhi Durbar (Viceroy Lord Lytton)	1877	Raja Sham Singh of Chamba, Raja Bajai Sen of Mandi, Raja Hira Chand of Bilaspur
Coronation Durbar of Delhi (Delhi made capital in place of Calcutta)	1911	Raja Amar Chand (Bilaspur), Raja Amar Prakash (Sirmaur), Raja Bijai Sen (Keonthal), Raja Bhim Sen (Suket), Raja Bhuri Singh (Chamba), Raja Dip Singh (Baghat), Rana Bagat Chand (Jubbal)

The principle of deposing for misrule

The principle of deposing a ruler for misgovernment was applied in Himachal only in the case of **Rudra Sen of Suket** — he succeeded Ugar Sen in **1876** and was **deposed in 1879** when his rule became oppressive. Other states where the British had to interfere on account of misrule included: **Dusht Nikandan Sen (Suket, 1902), Rana Bir Pal Singh (Bhajji, 1940),**

Raja Karam Chand (Jubbal, 1859–62), Raja Gopal Singh (Chamba, 1873), Raja Samsher Singh (Bushahr, 1866), Raja Balbir Sen (Keonthal, 1899), Baghal (1875, 1902, 1905) and Kumharsain (1914, under Hira Singh).

First World War (1914–18)

Almost all hill chiefs remained loyal during WWI and rendered valuable service in men and materials. Each ruler tried to provide as many recruits as possible — the princes earned the gratitude of subjects (who gained employment) and the goodwill of Political Department officers.

5 Roots of Political Awakening

After WWI, returning army men had come into contact with the free and dignified life of people in other countries. This knowledge generated discontentment; hill people began talking of "**liberty**", "**equality**" and "**justice**" — common features of democratic rule. Thus the fire of liberation began brewing slowly but surely, ultimately resulting in local movements against tyrannical and undemocratic rule.

Early revolts against rulers & officials (well before mass politics)

Year	Place / Cause
1859	People of Rampur Bushahr revolted against high-handedness in the recruitment of forced labour.
1862 & 1876	People of Suket revolted against the ruler and his minister Narottam .
1876	People of Nalagarh rose against atrocities committed by minister Ghulam Qadir Khan .
1883 & 1930	Subjects of Bilaspur revolted against oppression and injustice of State officials.
1905	People of Baghal revolted against their chief.
1909	Mandi — Sobha Ram struggled against corruption; a pitched battle between Mandi Raja's forces and a 20,000-strong force of local people.

Sobha Ram & the Mandi battle (1909)

In the pitched battle, state forces were defeated and corrupt officials including the **Wazir** were jailed by the volunteers. The Raja sought help from the British Commissioner at Jalandhar; armed forces from Jalandhar, Kullu and Kangra rushed to Mandi. **Sobha Ram was caught, tried for treason and deported to the Andamans.** Twenty-three persons were sentenced to seven to fourteen years' imprisonment and sent to Lahore Jail.

6 Two Types of Areas, Two Types of Movements

Present-day Himachal Pradesh consists of **two types of hill areas**, and accordingly there were two distinct (yet overlapping) movements:

Praja Mandal Movement	Freedom Movement
In areas ruled by native princes . Influenced by the nationalist movement but not a freedom movement, since its aim was never	In hill areas under direct British administrative control (which came to HP in 1966). People here struggled with the specific objective of overthrowing alien British rule .

to overthrow the princely rulers. Main aim: "**democratisation of the administration.**"

🔗 **Overlap, not separation**

The distinction did not mean separation. Praja Mandal workers joined agitations in British-administered areas, and members of political organisations in British areas crossed into the state territories to help Praja Mandal workers in their agitation.

Social & religious reform bodies

In the beginning, people organised against social and religious evils. Bodies that came up included **Rajput & Brahman Sabhas, Sanatana Dharam & Arya Samaj Sabhas, Sewak Sanghs, Sudhar Sammelans, Prem Sabhas** and **Seva Samitis**. Evils campaigned against: "**Reet**" (sale/purchase of women), untouchability, child marriage, ban on widow remarriage, the "**Begar**" (forced-labour) land-tenure system, and arbitrary levies imposed at marriages, deaths and accessions in the princely houses.

★ **Early federal & reform initiatives by rulers**

- Shimla Hill States rulers formed an **executive council** with the **Raja of Baghat (Solan)** as chairman.
- Rulers of **Sirmaur, Bilaspur, Baghat & Mandi** contemplated the idea of an "**All India Federation**" in 1935.
- **Mandi** was the **first princely state to enact a Panchayati Raj Act** (its Legislative Council passed a **Panchayat Act in 1933**); Sirmaur and Bilaspur followed on the same model.
- The Raja of Bilaspur later opposed the idea of "grouping," wanting each state to be sovereign once British paramountcy lapsed — which is why Bilaspur **merged last** with HP.

7 INC Policy Towards States & the AISPC

Before 1920, INC participation was confined to elite sections. With Gandhi's leadership it became a mass movement, and its activities began to "trickle down" to hill people. Whenever it was not possible to organise inside a state's territory, adjoining British territories were made centres of political activity. In Himachal, for instance, **Pt. Padam Dev of Bushahr made Shimla his headquarters** to launch struggle against hereditary rulers.

- In its resolution of **September 1920**, the Congress for the first time asked the princes to grant their people **full responsible government**, while refusing to interfere in the internal affairs of the states.
- The INC continued its policy of "**non-interference**", but after forming ministries in **1936**, shifted to a more "**activist**" policy of open encouragement to agitation.
- The **Haripur (1936)** and **Tripuri (1938, Jabalpur district)** sessions called for the "ever increasing identification of the Congress with the state's people," boosting the Quit India Movement in the hill states.
- In **1945**, the INC appointed a subcommittee of **Jawahar Lal Nehru, Bhulabhai Desai, Vallabhbhai Patel and J. B. Kripalani** to bring the people of the states within the Congress fold.

🔗 **All India States People's Conference (AISPC)**

- The Indian States Committee under **Sir Harcourt Butler** was appointed on **16 Dec 1927** to coordinate the activities of the various Praja Mandals.
- The **first meeting of the AISPC** took place on **17 Dec 1927**, attended by **700 delegates** — however **no delegate from the Hill States attended**.

- **Aim:** to influence the states as a whole to initiate administrative reforms by the force of collective opinion of the people.

Launching grounds (British districts feeding the hill movements)

The Praja Mandals drew sustenance from adjoining British districts:

- **Dehradun** (United Provinces) → Sirmaur & Bushahr
- **Shimla** → Shimla Hill States & Bilaspur
- **Kangra & Gurdaspur** → Chamba
- **Kangra & Hoshiarpur** → Mandi, Bilaspur & Suket

8 Popular Movements — State by State

The Praja Mandals, organised on **Gandhian principles**, became "breathing images" of the people's aspirations. The following are the major popular movements against the native rulers and the British.

8.1 Mandi Conspiracy (1914–15)

First signs of resentment surfaced in **1909**. The chief cause of agrarian disturbance was the acute discontent with the administration of **Wazir Upadhyia Jiwa Nand** — his atrocious attitude towards the *kisans* amid bad crops and scarcity, and the system of "**Begar**" forced inhumanly. The smouldering fire burst into flame when a suitable leader emerged in **Sobha Ram of Sarkaghat**.

The conspiracy & the Ghadar link

The Mandi Conspiracy of 1914–15 resulted from the influence of **Ghadar Party** members who had returned from America and were active in Punjab. They spread into Mandi and Suket, reading out extracts from "**Ghadar-Ki-Gunj**", "**Ghadar Sandesh**" and "**Ailan-e-jung**". **Mian Jawahar Singh** and the **Rani of Khairgarhi** came under their influence and helped them financially. Meetings held in **December 1914 & January 1915** decided to: *murder the Superintendent and Wazir of Mandi, loot the treasury, blow up the Beas bridge, seize the states of Mandi and Suket, and join the Punjab revolutionaries.*

- Except for the **Nagchala dacoity**, the revolutionaries failed in their objectives; the conspiracy was soon unearthed.
- Five men — **Naryal, Mian Jawahar Singh, Badri Sidhu and Kharara** — were arrested, tried and sentenced to long imprisonment. The **ex-Rani of Khairgarhi, Mandi**, was exiled.
- **Bhai Hirda Ram** played an important role; he did commendable work for the Ghadar Party in close association with **Ras Bihari Bose, Dr. Manthra Singh, Kartar Singh** and **Bhai Parmanand** at Amritsar and Lahore.

8.2 Bilaspur Struggle

The land revenue settlement of **1905** had already doubled the incidence of land revenue compared to the adjoining British districts of Kangra and Hoshiarpur. In **1930** (a year of economic slump), some *kisans* of **Bhadarpur Pargana** refused to supply free firewood to the newly-set-up settlement staff — the **Bhoomi Bandobast Abhiyan**. Grievances also included high *Nazarana*, *fishing licence fee*, indiscriminate policy of forest officers, and high-handed behaviour of revenue staff (publicly accused of molesting village ladies).

Repression & the BRPM

- Armed police was called from Punjab; a crowd demanding the release of leaders was beaten up; troops sent on flag march for three months; 19 more leaders arrested; a collective fine of **Rs. 25,000** imposed on villagers.
- On **9 Jan 1933**, **Raja Anand Chand** was invested with full powers; he followed a twin policy of **repression and reform**.
- A few young men — **Daulat Ram Sankhyan, Narottam Datt Shastri, Devi Ram Upadhyay** — secretly attended the **Udaipur session (1945)** of AISPC and founded the **Bilaspur Rajaya Praja Mandal (BRPM)**.
- Demands were rejected; "**Satyagraha**" launched on **21 Dec 1946**, suppressed with a heavy hand.

🔗 Reforms & merger of Bilaspur

Raja Anand Chand introduced basic education through Hindi up to Matriculation, complete prohibition, Panchayati Raj, a Harijan Upliftment programme, and rigid enforcement of the Child Marriage Act. He was the **only prince to give up his title of "His Highness", the salute of guns and the K.C.I.E.** Yet his "**Hands off Bilaspur**" slogan openly challenged the INC and AISPC, and he raised an army called the "**Swadheen Kahloor Dal**". After several rounds of discussion, he was persuaded to merge; the **merger agreement was signed on 15 April 1948**. (Bilaspur was finally merged with Himachal Pradesh on **1 July 1954**.) Credit for integration of states goes to **Sardar Patel**.

8.3 Rampur Bushahr Movement

In **1906**, the people of Rampur Bushahr started "**DUJAM**", a form of non-cooperation movement against state officials and exploitation of state forests by the British. In the 1920s a Brahmin youth, **Pt. Padam Dev**, waged a struggle on behalf of the low castes against social practices such as "**Reet**", untouchability and child marriage. He was instrumental in the conversion of **Samuel Evans Stokes** to Hinduism.

★ Satyanand Stokes & the Begar struggle

In Kotgarh, **Satyanand Stokes (S. E. Stokes)** launched a struggle against "**Begar**" — a system of forceful labour without just wages.

🔗 HRRPM & the Bhai Do Na Pai Movement

- The "**Himalayan Riyasti Praja Mandal**" (HRRPM) was organised in **December 1938** to direct political & social work in numerous hill states.
- **Founder-members:** Sarvshri Chiranji Lal Verma, Bhag Mal Sautha, Pt. Padam Dev, Govind Singh, Gian Chand Totu, Surat Parkash (Theog), Devi Dass Musafir (Madhan), Bhaskra Nand (Bhajji), Mansha Ram Chauhan, Hira Singh Pal, Sita Ram, etc.
- **Pt. Padam Dev** was Secretary of HRRPM. Entry of Praja Mandal workers was banned by Ranas of small states like Ghund, Theog, Balsan, Baghal, Bhajji, Beja, Darkoti and Keonthal.
- The HRRPM followed the famous "**BHAI DO, NA PAI MOVEMENT**" — giving the British army **neither recruits ("bhai") nor money ("pai") for war funds** — in a way an extension of the civil disobedience movement.

The activities of the Praja Mandal, suppressed under severe repression, were re-activated in **1945**. Other organisations — **Sudhar Sammelan, Sewak Mandal Delhi, Bushahr Prem Sabha** — were also organised. The "**Bushahr Praja Mandal**" (Satya Dev group) launched a Satyagraha in **March 1947**, followed by large-scale arrests and firing by state police. Low-paid employees established a "**Bushahr Rajya Karamchari Sangh**." Finally the Raja conceded a representative assembly on **18 April 1947**, but his sudden death prevented concrete shape. The Praja Mandal (PM) won all the seats in the October 1947 elections to the Vidhan Parishad. On **15 April 1948**, the state became part of Himachal Pradesh and merged with India.

8.4 Chamba Agitation

The first agitation against the **unjust revenue collection system** and "**Begar**" was made by the people of "**Bhattiyat Wazzirat**" in **1896**. The government suppressed it heavily and cowed the people for nearly four decades. Finally, in **1922**, state subjects working in Lahore urged the Raja to set up a representative advisory council.

★ Organisations in Chamba

Body	Year/Place	Focus
Chamba People's Defence League	1932 , Lahore	Highlighted monarchical regime, irresponsible administration, exorbitant taxes & restrictions on the economic and civil liberties of peasants.
Chamba Sewak Sangh (CSS)	March 1936	Social-service body to help victims of a devastating fire in Chamba city; soon emerged as vanguard of the people's movement (Begar, "sons of the soil" jobs, separation of judiciary from executive, medical facilities). Banned; shifted activities to Dalhousie .
Chamba Riyasti Praja Mandal (CRPM)	banned towards end of 1944	Sent a delegation (Vidya Sagar, Vidhya Dhar, Gulam Rasool, Prithi Chand) to the AISPC session at Ludhiana; shifted HQ to Chamba town in 1944.
Chamba State People's Federation	1947	Another association formed before merger.

Leading lights of CRPM: **Sarvshri Jaswant Rai, Daulat Ram, Vidya Sagar, Vidhya Dhar Negi** etc. A number of articles on Chamba's condition were published in papers such as *The Kesari*, *Inquilab*, *National Congress*, *Ghadar*, *Paigaimi Sulah*, *Ahsaan*, *Eastern Times*, *Tribune*, *Daily Herald* and others. **Chamba was merged with the Indian Union on 15 April 1948** and became part of the Chief Commissioner's Province named Himachal Pradesh.

8.5 Dhimi Tragedy (1939)

Dhimi — a small principality ruled by a "**Rana**" — lay about 16 miles west of Shimla and 6 miles from Jutogh. A "**Prem Pracharini Sabha**" organised in **1937** converted into the "**Dhimi Riyasti Praja Mandal**" on **13 July 1939**, led by **Shri Sita Ram**. The demands placed before **Rana Dalip Singh of Dhimi** were:

✚ Demands of the Dhimi Praja Mandal

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) Abolition of Begar | (e) Removal of bar imposed on the activities of the people |
| (b) Reduction in land revenue | (f) Restoration of confiscated property of Prem Pracharni members |
| (c) Recognition of the Dhimi Praja Mandal | (g) Establishment of democratic government with responsible executives |
| (d) Restoration of civil liberties | |

🔥 The firing at Ghanahatti

The Rana rejected all demands. On **16 July 1939**, a deputation of seven headed by **Bhag Mal Sautha** proceeded towards Dhimi to present the charter by hand. At "**Ghanahatti**", Bhag Mal Sautha was arrested and the **Congress flag was snatched away and burnt**. Without any warning or order of dispersal, police started a **lathi charge, volleys of stones and**

bullets on the peaceful crowd. **Two persons — Shri Uma Dutt and Durga — were killed** and many injured. This is regarded as the **first firing on a peaceful crowd in the hill states**.

People demanded an independent enquiry; letters were written to M. K. Gandhi and Jawahar Lal Nehru. A deputation (Sita Ram, K. S. Sautha, Bhaskara Nand, Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur) met Gandhiji. **Gandhiji and Nehru did not approve of demanding a responsible government in so small a state at such short notice**, but Gandhiji felt the firing was uncalled for. Nehru sent **Shri Shanti Swarup Dhawan** for an on-the-spot report. A non-official enquiry committee under **Lala Duni Chand Ambalvi** (members: Dev Suman of Tehri-Garhwal, Shyam Lal Khanna) recommended: enquiry by a High Court judge, punishment for the unprovoked firing, and improvement in civil administration. The Dhami firing gave a great boost to the freedom struggle in the hills.

8.6 Kunihar Struggle

Kunihar was a small state near Shimla (area ~7 sq miles). The first voice against the autocratic behaviour of the Rana was raised in **1920** by **Hardev Singh**; leaders charged with sedition and imprisoned. On their release in **1928**, they made Shimla their headquarters. The **Kunihar Praja Mandal** was organised in Shimla in **1939**; chief leaders were **Shri Babu Kanshi Ram** and **Gauri Shankar**.

★ First victory of democratic forces

On **13 June 1939**, the Kunihar Praja Mandal was declared unlawful by the Rana. On **8 July 1939**, a deputation placed demands: (a) release of political workers, (b) 25% reduction in land revenue, (c) lifting the ban on the Praja Mandal, (d) setting up a Reforms Committee. The Rana agreed and presided over a Praja Mandal meeting on **9 July 1939**. This was the **first victory of democratic forces against an autocratic ruler**, emboldening the Dhami Praja Mandal.

8.7 Sirmaur Satyagraha

The first signs of political awakening in Sirmaur appeared in **1920**, when a **Secret Society** was formed by those inspired by the revolutionary activities of terrorists in Punjab. Its leader was **Chaudhary Sherjang**, who was involved in a train dacoity and later apprehended and imprisoned. To carry on the struggle in an organised manner, the **"Sirmaur Praja Mandal" (SPM)** was set up in **1939**.

- **Leading lights of SPM:** Chaudhary Sherjang, Shivanand Ramaul, Devinder Singh, Nahar Singh, Naginder Singh, Harish Chander, etc.
- Two false cases (conspiracy to murder the Raja; stone-throwing with intent to kill) were concocted against the workers (Devinder Singh, Harish Chander, Nahar Singh, Jagbandan Singh).
- The **Session Judge — former Chief Minister Dr. Y. S. Parmar — discharged the accused** in the conspiracy case; the annoyed authorities transferred the case to a special tribunal, which convicted them. The **"Jehlami Police"** was deployed to suppress the Satyagraha.

➡ Pajotha Movement & Sirmaur bodies

The **"Pajotha Movement"** — an extension of the **Quit India Movement (1942)** — started in **October 1942**. Main leaders: **Surat Singh Vaid** (and wife Sunahari Devi), Matha Ram (and wife Atma Devi), Deep Ram, Daya Ram, Sita Ram Sharma, Shiva Nand Ramaul, etc. A **"Sirmauri Association"** and **"Sirmaur Riyasti Praja Mandal"** were established in **1944**; the office shifted to Nahan in **1946**. The problem was settled in **1948** with the merger of the state with Himachal Pradesh.

8.8 Suket Satyagraha

Like Mandi, Suket came under the influence of the **Ghadar Movement in 1914**, but Ghadar supporters were convicted and the opposition silenced. When maladministration, high taxes and "**Begar**" became unbearable, spontaneous uprisings occurred in **1924**, forcing the Raja to flee to Dehra Dun; intervention of the Political Department restored order and the Raja to the throne.

★ The decisive Suket Satyagraha

- The Praja Mandal inside the state was recognised in **1945**; **Mian Rattan Singh** was its President. By 1947 it was ready to launch Satyagraha; the Raja set up a "**Rajya Sabha**" (which the Suket Rajya Praja Mandal boycotted).
- The Provisional Government leaders met at "**Suni**" (**Bhajji State**) in **February 1948** and chose Suket as the **first target** for a movement.
- On **18 Feb 1948**, a **non-violent attack** was launched on Suket under the leadership of **Pt. Padam Dev**. Within five days, **three-fourths of the state** fell to the satyagrahis; even police did not resist.
- On **23 Feb 1948**, **Raja Laxman Sen** requested the Indian Government to send army to end the revolt. On **25 March 1948**, the States Ministry ordered the takeover of Suket; thousands marched into **Sunder Nagar**. On **15 April 1948**, Suket was merged with Himachal Pradesh.

9 Freedom Movement in Kangra, Kullu & Lahaul-Spiti

The strategic importance of **Kangra, Kullu and Lahaul-Spiti** impelled the British **not** to restore these areas to their erstwhile rulers after the Anglo-Sikh war of 1846 (unlike other hill states). The Rajas were pensioned off and the areas brought under direct British control, grouped into one district of **Kangra with headquarters at Dharamshala**. **Ram Singh Pathania of Nurpur** raised his voice but was suppressed; he fought bravely but died in the attempt.

★ "Dogra Regiments" & British sensitivity

With an appeal to the martial traditions of the hill people, the British turned these hills into a fertile recruitment area for their "**Dogra Regiments**". They were therefore very sensitive to any growth of nationalist feeling and were extra-vigilant in suppressing it.

Despite all precautions, nationalist feeling spread, especially after Gandhi transformed the INC into a mass movement. Many people from Kangra working/studying in Amritsar, Lahore and Delhi came under Gandhi's call for **boycott** and **non-cooperation**, gave up their jobs and studies, returned to their villages, organised INC branches, enrolled workers and held conferences.

✚ The Tal Conference, Sujanpur Tira (1927)

In **1927**, a conference took place at "**Tal**" in **Sujanpur Tira**, attended by prominent local workers such as **Thakur Hazara Singh, Baba Kanshi Ram (PAHARI GANDHI), Gopal Singh and Chatur Singh**. **Mela Ram Tair** and **Master Kundan Lal** were sent from Lahore. **Baba Kanshi Ram took a pledge to wear only black clothes until the country became free**. The "**Baluchi**" police mercilessly beat the people, snatched their Gandhi caps and looted shops and houses.

★ Baba Kanshi Ram & Thakur Hazara Singh

Both were convicted and sent to prisons at Gurdaspur, Lahore, Attock and Multan. **Baba Kanshi Ram** was given the title "**Pahari Gandhi**" by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru at the "**Ghadriwala**" conference (some historians have disputed this fact). By **1930**, the foundation of the national movement had been firmly laid in the Kangra district.

Congress won all four seats from Kangra in the **1937** elections to the legislative assembly — **Thakur Pancham Chand, Thakur Dalip Singh, Shri Beli Ram and Pt. Bhagat Ram**. When the Congress ministries resigned in **1939**, Congress workers launched a large-scale movement and dissuaded people from joining the army. An **Individual Satyagraha (1940)** was conducted very successfully in Kangra. The **Quit India Movement (1942)** received great response.

Luminaries of Kangra's freedom struggle

Mangat Ram Khanna, Hem Raj Sood, Comrade Ram Chandra, Paras Ram, Sarla Sharma, Brahma Nand and **Pt. Amar Nath Sharma**. Pt. Amar Nath Sharma (a freedom fighter from Lahore) came to Palampur, concentrating on social and educational work — he opened many educational institutions and **Aushadhalayas (dispensaries)**, helped by **Shri Kanahaiya Lal Butail** (famed as a large-hearted host to national leaders).

Contribution to the Indian National Army (INA)

INA personality	Place	Honour / fate
Major Mehar Dass	Naharpukhar	Awarded "Sardar-i-Jung"
Captain Bakshi Pratap Singh	Chadhiyar	Awarded "Tagma-i-Shatrunash"
Shri Durga Mal & Shri Dal Bahadur Thapa (two Gurkha brothers)	Dharamshala	Executed in Delhi
Shri Hari Singh	Sarkaghat, Mandi	Decorated "Sher-i-Hind"
Lt. Amar Chand	Hamirpur	Medal for exceptional courage

Una area & the call for a hill state

The spirit of the national movement was kept alive in the **Una** areas by **Baba Laxman Dass, Bakshi Satya Parkash 'Bagi', Satyamitra, Pt. Hari Ram and Tirath Ram**. **Thakur Hazara** was one of the Kangra leaders who, as early as **1946**, gave a call for the creation of a separate hill state.

Theog–Madhan Movement (1926–28)

The first sign of revolt in the erstwhile princely states of **Theog and Madhan** became visible in **1926–28**. Here too the "**Baluchi**" and "**Jehlami**" police were deployed to suppress the movement, perpetrating large-scale atrocities. **Mian Kharak Singh** provided good leadership to the people of Theog, assisted by his wife **Dewati**. Similar movements continued in Madhan, Kumharsain, Ghanahatti, Ghund, etc. With freedom on **15 August 1947**, the Praja Mandal captured Theog and set up an independent government — **Surat Parkash as Chief Minister, Dr. Y. S. Parmar as advisor, and Shri Devi Dass as Secretary**. After five-six months the Rana made an armed attack and looted the treasury; the news was conveyed to **Sardar V. B. Patel** by Dr. Y. S. Parmar, who sent police; the Rana was arrested and exiled.

10 Coordination Bodies & Integration of States

Key conferences & councils at a glance

Body / Event	Date	Notes
Shimla Hill States Conference	5–7 June 1939	On suggestion of Lord Linlithgow ; attended by rulers of Bilaspur, Jubbal, Baghal, Kuthar, Baghat, Dhami, Bushahr, Keonthal, Kuniyar, Mahlog, etc.
Himalayan Hill States Regional Council (HHSRC) session	8–10 March 1946 Mandi	Attended by 48 princely states (Tehri Garhwal to Shimla); presided by Col. J. S. Dhillon ; trio of INA — Dhillon, Sehgal & Shahnawaz — present with Deshbandhu & Pattabhi Sitaramayya.
HHSRC fresh election	1 March 1947 Nahan	Dr. Y. S. Parmar elected President; Pt. Padam Dev General Secretary.

The HHSRC was established in **1946** to coordinate the Praja Mandals; an affiliate of the AISPC, with HQ at **Shimla**. Among its stalwarts: **Pt. Padam Dev (Bushahr)**, **Dr. Y. S. Parmar**, **Sada Ram Chandel**, **Daulat Ram Sankhyan** and **Mansa Ram**.

★ HHSRC Executive Committee (formed at Udaipur)

- **President:** Swami Purnanand of Mandi
- **General Secretary:** Pt. Padam Dev of Bushahr
- **Vice-President:** Shyam Chand Negi of Tehri Garhwal
- **Joint Secretary:** Pt. Shiva Nand Ramaul of Sirmaur

Praja Mandals were integrated into the HHSRC at the **Udaipur session of AISPC in 1946**. The office of the President was at **Mandi** and that of the General Secretary at **Shimla**.

Split & the HHSSRC

After mutual dissent over elections, six members of the Shimla & Punjab Hill States organised a **Himalayan Hill States Sub-Regional Conference (HHSSRC)** — a subordinate (not parallel) body — with **Dr. Y. S. Parmar (President)** and **Pt. Padam Dev (General Secretary)**. It approved merging all states into one union on lines similar to the "**Deccan States Union**" (all power vesting in a People's Assembly; rulers' boards only advisory).

🔥 The split into two camps

The leadership soon split into two groups:

- **Pro-merger group** (total elimination of princes) — led by **Dr. Y. S. Parmar**; supporters: Pt. Padam Dev (Bushahr), Pt. Shiva Nand Ramaul (Sirmaur), Daulat Ram Sankhyan & S. R. Chandel (Bilaspur), Sant Ram (Kangra), Swami Purna Nand (Mandi), Daulat Ram Gupta (Chamba).
- **Pro-confederation / conservative group** (association with princes in advisory capacity) — led by **Pt. Satya Dev Bushahri**; others: Surat Ram Parkash (Theog), Tej Singh Nidhark (Mandi), N. D. Ratra (Sirmaur), Bhaskara Nand Sharma (Bhajji), Bhag Mal Sautha (Jubbal), Kashmir Singh (Mandi).

11 Solan Constituent Assembly & Formation of HP

Deprived of British support and faced with the sympathetic attitude of the Government of India's States Department towards the people's movement, the princes had to "read the writing on the walls." After independence, a demand to merge the hill

states with East Punjab met strong opposition from both rulers and people. The Shimla Hill States princes planned a "**Confederation**" and met in Delhi in the first week of **January 1948**, resolving to constitute a "**Shimla Hill States Union**".

➤ **Solan Constituent Assembly (26–28 January 1948)**

The assembly of representatives of the Shimla Hills rulers and the Praja Mandal met at **Solan** from **26–28 Jan 1948** under the chairmanship of **Raja Durga Singh of Baghat**. Attended by Thakur Sen Negi and Satya Dev Bushahri (Bushahr), Bhag Mal Sautha (Jubbal), Hira Singh Pal (Baghal), Devi Ram Musaffir, Surat Ram Parkash, Devi Ram Kewala, S. D. Verma, Bhaskara Nand, and others.

- The assembly decided to set up a **Union of States** and an **eight-member negotiating committee** (Chairman: Raja Durga Singh of Baghat; Vice-Chairman: Thakur Sen Negi).
- The **announcement for the formation of Himachal Pradesh was made in a public meeting at Solan itself**.

However, a section of Praja Mandalists led by **Dr. Y. S. Parmar** and **Pt. Padam Dev** opposed this move (and were not allowed into the assembly by Organising Secretary Mahaveer Singh). On **26 Jan 1948**, at an AISPC meeting at Shimla, Dr. Parmar made it clear that the proposed union would be acceptable **only if power was transferred to the people** by creating a **unified Himalayan Province**. The constitution-making body fixed **15 March 1948** as the "**D-line**" for preparing the constitution.

★ **Provisional Government & the Delhi agreement**

Some called the Solan conference a "conspiracy to deprive the hill people of their share of freedom." Dr. Parmar and Pt. Padam Dev rushed to Delhi and apprised **Sardar Patel** of the princes' intentions. A **Himalayan Prant Provisional Government** was set up at **Shimla (HQ)** headed by **Shiva Nand Ramaul**; ultimatums were issued to rulers to merge.

- **President of Provisional Government:** Pt. Shiva Nand Ramaul (Sirmaur)
- **Members:** Sada Ram Chandel (Bilaspur), Padam Dev (Bushahr), Mukand Lal (Suket)
- The **Ministry of States (Union of India)** invited the rulers to a conference at **Delhi on 2 March 1948**. The rulers (led by **Raja Joginder Sen of Mandi**) were persuaded; an **agreement was signed by the rulers on 8 March 1948**. It was agreed that the new province be named **Himachal Pradesh** instead of "Himalayan Prant."

➤ **Merger of States — Birth of Himachal Pradesh**

Himachal Pradesh was constituted as a separate administrative unit (**Chief Commissioner's Province**) by merging **30 erstwhile princely states** — about **26 Shimla Hill States (except Nalagarh)** and three Punjab Hill States of **Sirmaur, Chamba and Suket** — on **15 April 1948** (Mandi following suit on **1 May 1948**).

- **The 30 states included:** Chamba, Mandi, Suket; Bushahr & its tributaries; Khaneti & Delath; Keonthal & tributaries (Koti, Theog, Madhan, Ghund, Ratesh); Baghal & Baghat; Jubbal & tributaries; Rawin, Dhadi, Kumharsain, Bhajji, Mahlog, Balsan, Dhami, Kuthar, Kunihar, Mangal, Beja, Darkoti, Tharoch, Sangri and Sirmaur.
- Divided into **four districts: Chamba, Mandi, Mahasu and Sirmaur**. (Mandi & Suket → Mandi district; rest of the Punjab Hill States → Mahasu district.)
- **Area at inception:** 27,018 sq. km; **Population:** 9,35,000.

📌 **The crowning events of the struggle**

The crowning events of the long-drawn struggle against the autocratic, feudal order were the **Solan Conference of Praja Mandals (26 Jan 1948)** and the **Suket Satyagraha (18 Feb 1948)**, when thousands marched into Suket state. In 1950, enclaves of Solan Cantonment, Kotgarh and Kotkhai (from East Punjab), villages of Dhar Kulag (from UP), and Kufri-area

villages from PEPSU were transferred to Mahasu district; some HP portions (Sanjauli, Bharari, Chakkar, Kasumpati, Patti Rihana) were transferred to East Punjab.

12 The Road to Full Statehood (1948–1971)

Chief Commissioner's Province (1948–50)

The people were unhappy with the bureaucratic set-up. The **first Chief Commissioner was Mr. N. C. Mehta** (deputy: Mr. E. Penderal Moon). An **Advisory Council** of three erstwhile rulers and six people's representatives was set up on **30 Sept 1948** (members included Leela Vati, Dr. Y. S. Parmar, Avtar Chand Mehta, Swami Purna Nand, Sh. Padam Dev, L. Shiv Charan). People "bore with the Mehta-Moon misrule" hoping the constitution would bring relief.

Part 'C' State (1950–56)

With the inauguration of the Constitution on **26 Jan 1950**, Himachal Pradesh became a **Part 'C' State**. The old bureaucratic set-up continued: Chief Commissioner **Mr. E. Penderal Moon** (an Englishman) ruled autocratically from Jan 1950 to March 1951, hardly consulting the Advisory Council. In disgust, Congress members resigned, and an "**anti-Chief Commissioner day**" was observed; in March 1951 Moon was replaced by an Indian officer, **Mr. Bhagwan Sahai**.

→ Government of Part C States Act, 1951 & first elections

- The relentless struggle led to the **Government of Part C States Act (September 1951)**, conceding responsible government of a limited character.
- Elections to the **36-member Vidhan Sabha** were held in **November 1951**; the INC won **24 seats**.
- The first popular ministry headed by **Dr. Y. S. Parmar** was sworn in on **24 March 1951** (two other ministers: Pt. Padam Dev & Gauri Prasad). [Note: Dr. Parmar was first sworn in 24 March 1951, before the November 1951 elections, as per the chapter.]
- On **1 March 1951**, the Chief Commissionership was upgraded to **Lt. Governorship**; **Major General (Retired) Himmat Singh Ji** was the first Lt. Governor — he presided over Cabinet meetings, degrading the Chief Minister's authority.

★ Bilaspur becomes the 5th district (1954)

The popular ministry convinced the Centre of the incongruity of keeping **Bilaspur** a separate Part 'C' state. On **1 July 1954**, by the **H.P. and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954**, Bilaspur was merged into HP as its **fifth district**.

Union Territory phase (1956 onwards)

The **States Reorganisation Commission (SRC)** was set up on **29 Dec 1953** (headed by **Justice Fazil Ali**; members **K. M. Pannikar** and **H. N. Kunzru**). Its report (**30 Sept 1955**) recommended Himachal's integration with Punjab (the Chairman dissented). It was a shocking verdict. To save HP, it had to revert to the old bureaucratic pattern, losing its assembly and popular ministry.

*"No sacrifice is too great to save Himachal Pradesh," said Dr. Y. S. Parmar while laying down the office of Chief Minister on **31 October 1956**.*

The next day, **1 November 1956**, Himachal Pradesh became a **Union Territory**.

★ Territorial Council & "dyarchy"

The **Territorial Council Act** (passed late 1956) introduced a sort of "dyarchy", transferring some subjects to a popularly elected **Territorial Council** (40 elected + 2 nominated members). Elections were held in **May–June 1957** (Congress won a comfortable majority); the Council was inaugurated on **15 Aug 1957**, headed by **Karam Singh Thakur**. The regime was "a queer mixture of the Minto-Morley and Mont-Ford reform schemes." The **Ashok K. Sen Committee** (reported June 1962) recommended more powers; an official committee under **Ashok K. Sen** (then Union Law Minister) had examined the Union Territories question.

→ Restoration of the Legislative Assembly (1963)

Beyond the Ashok Sen recommendations, the Government decided to restore Legislative Assemblies and Ministries in HP, Manipur and Tripura — done by the **Constitution (14th Amendment) Act, 1962** and the **Government of Union Territories Act, 1963**. **Lal Bahadur Shastri** (then Home Minister) favoured democratisation. The Territorial Councils elected in **1962** were turned into Vidhan Sabhas. A three-man popular ministry headed by **Dr. Y. S. Parmar was sworn in on 1 July 1963** (ministers: Thakur Karam Singh & Hari Dass).

Punjab Reorganisation & the 1966 merger

As long as **Pratap Singh Kairon** remained in power, the demand for a Punjabi Suba was contained; after him, the Akalis gathered strength. A Parliamentary Committee under Speaker **Hukam Singh** (Sept 1965) favoured the Punjabi Suba; conceded in **March 1966**. A Boundary Commission (**J. C. Shah Commission**) was appointed in **April 1966**. The Punjab hill areas, similar to Himachal in development problems and culturally akin, strongly demanded integration with HP. On **1 November 1966**, the Punjab hill areas were integrated with Himachal Pradesh:

District	Tehsils / Sub-tehsils added
Kangra	Kangra, Palampur, Nurpur, Dehra Gopipur, Hamirpur and Una tehsils (Una was a tehsil of Hoshiarpur) and Pathankot tehsil of Gurdaspur transferred to Kangra.
Kullu	Kullu tehsil and Banjar, Anni, Nirmand sub-tehsils.
Shimla	Shimla, Kandaghat and Nalagarh (area of Ambala district).
Lahaul-Spiti	Lahaul and Spiti tehsils.

★ After the 1966 integration

The territorial area increased by **55,673 sq. km** and population to **28,12,463 (1961 census)**. The number of districts rose from **six to ten**. (Earlier, **Kinnaur** was carved out of Chini tehsil on **1 May 1960** as the **sixth district**, with sub-divisions Nichar, Kalpa and Pooh.) All MLAs representing the hill areas of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha were declared members of the Himachal Vidhan Sabha in January 1967; two more ministers (Lal Chand Prarthi, Bakshi Pratap Singh) were added. HP went to polls in **February 1967** for 60 seats (+3 nominated = 63). **Dr. Y. S. Parmar became Chief Minister for the third time on 14 March 1967**.

Achievement of Full Statehood (1971)

Now that HP had achieved its proper shape, it was natural to demand full-fledged statehood. The Pradesh Congress Executive Committee had, as early as **5 July 1965**, demanded that the final stage of constitutional development (as

envisaged in Sardar Patel's letter of 1948) be implemented. The offensive began on **24 January 1968**, when the Pradesh Vidhan Sabha **unanimously passed a resolution demanding statehood**. A negotiating committee headed by **Prof. Tapinder Singh** took up the matter with the Congress High Command. On **31 July 1970**, the bill for statehood was introduced in Parliament.

18th State of the Indian Union

The "**State of Himachal Pradesh Act**" was passed on **18 December 1970**. The new state — the **18th State of the Indian Union** — was inaugurated on **25 January 1971** by the then Prime Minister **Mrs. Indira Gandhi**. While inaugurating the historic statehood function on the **Ridge, Shimla**, she unveiled a marble plaque amidst snowfall and thrilled hill folk. Notably, the entire peaceful struggle saw **not even a single act of violence** or use of disgraceful language — reflecting the nature and culture of the people of the state.

13 Key Personalities — Quick Recall

Personality	Significance
A. O. Hume	Retired British civil servant; idea of INC from Rothney Castle, Shimla (1885).
Wazir Ram Singh Pathania	Wazir of Nurpur; fought at Dalle Ki Dhar (1848); betrayed by Pahar Chand; exiled to Singapore.
Wazir Bhaga	Saved Chamba from annexation to Jammu by pleading before Sir Henry Lawrence.
Raja of Keonthal	Sheltered Europeans during the 1857 revolt at Shimla & Junga.
Raja Shamsher Singh of Bushahr	Only Raja hostile to the British in 1857.
Sobha Ram (Sarkaghat)	Led the 1909 Mandi agitation; deported to the Andamans.
Bhai Hirda Ram	Mandi Conspiracy; worked for the Ghadar Party with Ras Bihari Bose.
Raja Anand Chand (Bilaspur)	Only prince to give up "His Highness," gun salute & K.C.I.E.; "Hands off Bilaspur"; raised the Swadheen Kahloor Dal.
Pt. Padam Dev	"Lion of Himachal"; Secretary HRPM; led Suket Satyagraha; key integration leader.
Samuel Evans (Satyanand) Stokes	American converted to Hinduism; struggle against Begar in Kotgarh.
Bhag Mal Sautha	Led the Dhami deputation (1939); later CM of Jubbal's representative govt.
Chaudhary Sherjang	Leader of Sirmaur's Secret Society (1920); train dacoity; SPM leader.
Baba Kanshi Ram	"Pahari Gandhi"; vowed to wear black until freedom; Tal/Sujanpur Tira conference.
Thakur Hazara Singh	Kangra leader; early (1946) call for a separate hill state.
Mian Kharak Singh (& wife Dewati)	Led the Theog–Madhan Movement (1926–28).
Shiva Nand Ramaul	President, Himalayan Prant Provisional Government (Shimla).
Raja Durga Singh of Baghat	Chaired the Solan Constituent Assembly (Jan 1948).
Dr. Y. S. Parmar	Architect & first Chief Minister of HP; led the pro-merger group; "No sacrifice is too great to save Himachal."
Mrs. Indira Gandhi	Inaugurated full statehood on 25 Jan 1971 at the Ridge, Shimla.

14 Master Timeline

- **1846** — Battle of Sabraon (10 Feb); Treaty of Lahore (9 Mar); Treaty of Amritsar (16 Mar) — Gulab Singh.
- **1848** — Second Anglo-Sikh War; Nurpur revolt; sanad restores Chamba (6 Apr).
- **1857** — Revolt reaches Shimla (12 May); Kasauli Guard revolt; Pratab Singh of Kullu hanged (3 Aug).
- **1858** — Queen Victoria's Proclamation, "Magna Carta of Indian Civil Liberties" (1 Nov).
- **1877 / 1911** — Delhi Durbar (Lytton) / Coronation Durbar; Delhi made capital.
- **1885** — Indian National Congress founded (28 Dec, Bombay).

- **1906** — "DUJAM" non-cooperation in Rampur Bushahr.
- **1909** — Mandi agitation (Sobha Ram); deported to Andamans.
- **1914–15** — Mandi Conspiracy (Ghadar Party influence).
- **1927** — AISPC's first meeting (17 Dec); Tal Conference, Sujampur Tira.
- **1932** — Chamba People's Defence League (Lahore).
- **1933** — Mandi enacts Panchayat Act (first princely state).
- **1938** — Himalayan Riyasti Praja Mandal (HRPM) organised (Dec).
- **1939** — Dhami firing (16 Jul); Kunihar victory (9 Jul); Shimla Hill States Conference (Jun); SPM & Kunihar PM founded.
- **1942** — Quit India; Pajotha Movement (Oct).
- **1946** — HHSRC formed; Mandi session (8–10 Mar); BRPM founded; Udaipur session integration.
- **1947** — Dr. Y. S. Parmar elected HHSRC President (1 Mar); Bilaspur Satyagraha (21 Dec 1946 →).
- **1948** — Solan Constituent Assembly (26–28 Jan); Suket Satyagraha (18 Feb); Delhi agreement (8 Mar); **HP formed (15 Apr)**; Mandi/Suket (1 May).
- **1950** — Part 'C' State (26 Jan); Kinnaur becomes 6th district (1 May 1960).
- **1951** — Govt. of Part C States Act (Sep); Vidhan Sabha elections (Nov); Lt. Governorship (1 Mar).
- **1954** — Bilaspur merged as 5th district (1 Jul).
- **1956** — SRC report; HP becomes **Union Territory** (1 Nov); Parmar resigns (31 Oct).
- **1963** — Legislative Assembly restored; Parmar CM (1 Jul).
- **1966** — Punjab hill areas merged with HP (1 Nov); districts rise to ten.
- **1970** — State of Himachal Pradesh Act passed (18 Dec).
- **1971** — **Full statehood — 18th State, inaugurated by Indira Gandhi on 25 January.**

15 Quick Revision — One-Liners

⚡ Most-asked exam facts

- **First firing on a peaceful crowd in hill states:** Dhami firing, Ghanahatti, 16 July 1939 (Uma Dutt & Durga killed).
- **First victory of democratic forces over an autocratic ruler:** Kunihar (9 July 1939).
- **First princely state to enact a Panchayat Act:** Mandi (1933).
- **First state to revolt in 1848:** Nurpur.
- **Only prince to surrender his "His Highness" title, gun salute & K.C.I.E.:** Raja Anand Chand of Bilaspur.
- **Only Raja hostile to the British in 1857:** Shamsher Singh of Bushahr.
- **"Pahari Gandhi":** Baba Kanshi Ram (title by Nehru — disputed by some).
- **"Magna Carta of Indian Civil Liberties":** Queen Victoria's Proclamation, 1 Nov 1858.
- **Gandhiji's Shimla visits:** 1921, 1931, 1939, 1945, 1946.
- **HP formed (Chief Commissioner's Province):** 15 April 1948 — 30 states, 4 districts, 27,018 sq km.
- **Four initial districts:** Chamba, Mandi, Mahasu, Sirmaur.
- **5th district:** Bilaspur (1 July 1954); **6th:** Kinnaur (1 May 1960).
- **HP becomes Union Territory:** 1 Nov 1956.

- **Punjab hill areas merged:** 1 Nov 1966 (districts → 10; area + 55,673 sq km).
- **Full statehood / 18th state:** 25 Jan 1971 (inaugurated by Indira Gandhi; Act passed 18 Dec 1970).
- **First Chief Commissioner:** N. C. Mehta; **first Lt. Governor:** Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Himmat Singh Ji.
- **First CM:** Dr. Y. S. Parmar; **credit for integration of states:** Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- **INA honours:** Mehar Dass — "Sardar-i-Jung"; Bakshi Pratap Singh — "Tagma-i-Shatrunash"; Hari Singh — "Sher-i-Hind".
- **HRPM slogan:** "Bhai Do, Na Pai" (no recruits, no money to the British).
- **SRC (1955):** Justice Fazil Ali (members Pannikar & Kunzru) — recommended merger with Punjab; resisted by HP.

🔑 Terms to remember

Begar — forced labour without wages. **Reet** — custom of sale/purchase of women. **Nazarana/Khillat** — tribute/robe of honour. **Sanad** — royal charter. **DUJAM** — early non-cooperation in Rampur Bushahr. **D-line** — deadline (15 Mar 1948) for the constitution. **Dyarchy** — divided rule under the Territorial Council (1956).

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