

Post-Independence Consolidation

- During 1946-47 there was a new upsurge of the State People's movement demanding political rights and elective representation in the Constituent Assembly.
- Nehru presided over the All-India State People's Conference sessions and declared that the States refusing to join the Constituent Assembly would be treated as hostile.
- In July 1947, Vallabh Bhai Patel took charge of the new States Department and V P Menon as its secretary.

Stage 1 of consolidation:

- Patel was fully aware of the danger posed to Indian unity by the possible intransigence of the rulers of the states.
- He took the following approach toward princely states:
 - He appealed to the princes whose territories fell inside India to accede to the Indian Union in three subjects that affected the common interests of the country, namely, foreign relations, defense, and communications.
 - He also gave threats he would not be able to restrain the impatient people of the states and that the government's terms after 15 August would be stiffer.
 - Hence, all states except Kashmir, Hyderabad, and Junagarh had signed an 'instrument of accession' with the Indian government, acknowledging central authority over defense, external affairs, and communication.
 - Due to these efforts, from June to August 15th, 1947, 562 of the 565 India-linked states signed the instrument of accession.
 - The Prince agreed because they knew that they were not real rulers (they were ruling under British paramountcy) and still they were getting fair compensation.
- For instance, Prince got a handsome privy purse, the amount was linked to the revenue earned by each state.
 - There was no change in the internal political structure.

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UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- People of these states wanted to become part of India.

Integration of Junagarh:

- Junagarh was situated in the Kathiawar region of western India.
- Though over 70% of its population was Hindu, Junagadh was ruled by a Muslim nawab Muhammad Mahabat Khanji III.
- Despite the fact that its boundary did not touch Pakistan, yet, its Nawab announced the accession of his state to Pakistan on 15 August 1947 even though the people of the state, overwhelmingly Hindu, desired to join India.
- People organized a popular movement, forced the Nawab to flee, and established a provisional government.
- The Dewan of Junagadh, Shah Nawaz Bhutto now decided to invite the Government of India to intervene.
- A plebiscite was held in the state in February 1948 which went overwhelmingly in favour of joining India.

Integration of Kashmir:

- It shared a border with both Pakistan and India. Here, a Hindu king Maharaja Hari Singh ruled over a population that was overwhelmingly Muslim.
- The king was reluctant to join both India and Pakistan.
- The popular political forces led by the National Conference and its leader Sheikh Abdullah, however, wanted to join India.
- The Indian political leaders took no steps to obtain Kashmir's accession and, in line with their general approach, wanted the people of Kashmir to decide whether to link their fate with India or Pakistan.
- But Pakistan refused to accept the principle of plebiscite in this case, unlike Junagarh and Hyderabad.

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UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

- On 22 October, with the onset of winter, several Pathan tribesmen, led unofficially by Pakistani army officers, invaded Kashmir and rapidly pushed towards Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir.
- On 24 October, the Maharaja appealed to India for military assistance.
- Nehru, even at this stage, did not favour accession without ascertaining the will of the people.
- On 26 October, the Maharaja acceded to India and also agreed to install Abdullah as head of the state's administration.
- Even though both the National Conference and the Maharaja wanted firm and permanent accession, India, in conformity with its democratic commitment, announced that it would hold a referendum on the accession decision once peace and law and order had been restored in the Valley.
- After the accession, Indian leaders immediately took steps to fly troops to Srinagar.
- Srinagar was first held and then the raiders were gradually driven out of the valley.
- To establish lasting peace, The Indian government approached the UNSC against the aggression undertaken by Pakistan in Kashmir.
- Following a resolution of the UNSC, both India and Pakistan accepted a ceasefire on 31st December 1948 which is still prevailing.
- In 1951, the UN passed a resolution providing for a referendum under UN supervision after Pakistan had withdrawn its troops from the part of Kashmir under its control.
- The resolution has remained infructuous since Pakistan has refused to withdraw its forces from what is known as Azad Kashmir.
- Since then India has regarded Kashmir's accession as final and irrevocable and Kashmir as its integral part.

Integration of Hyderabad:

- Hyderabad was the largest state in India and was completely surrounded by Indian Territory. Still, Nawab of Hyderabad claimed an independent status and, encouraged by Pakistan, began to expand its armed forces.
- Without Hyderabad, there would be a large gap in the centre of the Indian Territory, potentially posing a constant threat to India's security in the future. Thus, Hyderabad was essential for India's unity.
- After several rounds of negotiations, India signed a "Standstill Agreement", a temporary and year-long agreement, maintaining the status quo.
- India signed an agreement hoping the Nizam would establish a democratic government.
- But, Nizam's intentions were to delay the process and expand his military strength so as to force India to accept his independence or succeed.
- By June 1948, Sardar Patel was getting impatient as the negotiations with the Nizam dragged on. By June 1948, Sardar Patel was getting impatient as the negotiations with the Nizam dragged on.
- Finally, on 13 September 1948, the Indian army moved into Hyderabad.
- The Nizam surrendered after three days and acceded to the Indian Union in November.
- With the accession of Hyderabad, the merger of princely states with the Indian Union was completed, and the Government of India's writ ran all over the land.

Stage 2 of Consolidation:

- The second phase involved a much more difficult process of 'integration of states with neighbouring provinces or into new units like the Kathiawar Union, Vindhya and Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan or Himachal Pradesh along with internal constitutional changes in states which for some years retained their old boundaries (Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore-cochin).
- This was accomplished within a year.

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UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

- A large number were consolidated into five new unions, forming Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), Saurashtra and Travancore-Cochin; Mysore, Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir retained their original form as separate states of the Union.
- The rapid political unification of the country after independence was Patel's greatest achievement.

Reorganization of India:

- At the time of independence in 1947, India consisted of 571 disjointed princely states that were merged together to form 27 states.
- The grouping of states at the time was done on the basis of political and historical considerations rather than on linguistic or cultural divisions, but this was a temporary arrangement.
- On account of the multilingual nature and differences that existed between various states, there was a need for the states to be reorganized on a permanent basis.
- Back in the 1920s, the Indian National Congress – the main party of the freedom struggle – had promised that once the country won independence, each major linguistic group would have its own province.
- However, After independence, Congress did not take any steps to honour this promise.
- Shortly after independence, movements for the linguistic reorganization of states gained momentum in several states.
- After partition, the then Prime Minister Nehru was wary of further separating the country on the basis of language following the painful religious partition.
- However, as evidenced by the movements for Ayikya Kerala, Samyukta Maharashtra, and Vishalandhra, calls for a distinct state based on linguistic identity gained traction.
- In 1948 the Linguistic Provinces Commission, headed by
- Justice S.K. Dhar, to enquire into the desirability of linguistic provinces, was appointed by the Constituent assembly.

S.K. Dar commission, 1948:

- The Dar Commission advised against the step at the time for it might threaten national unity and also be administratively inconvenient.
- Consequently, the Constituent Assembly decided not to incorporate the linguistic principle in the constitution.

JVP Committee, 1948:

- With the Dhar committee recommendation, Public opinion was not satisfied, especially in the South, and the problem remained politically alive.
- To appease the vocal votaries of linguistic states, the Congress appointed a committee (JVP) in December 1948 consisting of **Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, and Pattabhi Sitaramayya**, president of the Congress, to examine the question afresh.
- This committee advised against the creation of linguistic states, for the time being, emphasizing unity, national security, and economic development as the needs of the hour.

Groups of States after Independence:

- In 1951, India had 27 states divided into four parts: Part A, Part B, Part C, and Part D.
- **Part A:** Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh (formerly Central Provinces and Berar), Madras, Orissa, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh (formerly United Provinces) were among the nine states in Part A.
- **Part B:** Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, Saurashtra, Mysore, Travancore-Cochin, Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, Patiala, and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), and Rajasthan were the nine Part B states.
- **Part C:** Delhi, Kutch, Himachal Pradesh, Bilaspur, Coorg, Bhopal, Manipur, Ajmer, Cooch-Bihar, and Tripura were among the ten Part C states. Except for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Part C states included both former Chief Commissioners' provinces and other centrally administered areas.

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UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- **Part D:** The Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Part D) was a territory ruled by a governor appointed by the Indian President.

Formation of Andhra:

- On 19 October 1952, a popular freedom fighter, Patti Sriramalu, undertook a fast unto death over the demand for a separate Andhra which expired after fifty-eight days. The State of Andhra was created as the first linguistic state (Telugu speaking).

State Reorganisation Commission:

- In August 1953, the Then PM, Pt. Nehru appointed the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC), with Justice Fazl Ali, K.M. Panikkar, and Hriday Nath Kunzru as members, to examine ‘objectively and dispassionately’ the entire question of the reorganization of the states of the Union.
- SRC widely accepted language as the foundation for state reorganization. It did, however, reject the theory of ‘one language, one state.’
- The SRC recommended the conversion of the four kinds of states into two categories States and Union territories and the merger of the erstwhile Part B state of Hyderabad with Andhra.
- **States Reorganisation Act:** To give effect to the scheme of reorganization, the States Reorganisation Act, of 1956, was enacted by the Parliament under Article 4 of the Constitution of India.
- **7th Constitutional Amendment:** In order to implement the States Reorganisation Act, the Constitution introduced the 7th Constitutional Amendment, which received the Indian President’s assent on October 19, 1956.
- **Abolition of Part A, B, and D:** This amendment not only resulted in the formation of new states by altering the areas and boundaries of the then-existing states, but it also resulted in the abolition of Part A, Part B, and Part C states and the designation of certain areas as Union Territories.

**MANIDHANAHEYAM FREE IAS ACADEMY – TNPSC GROUP – PRELIMINARY EXAM
UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

- The States Reorganisation Act of 1956 reduced the number of states from 27 to 14.
- The states were Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.
- The six union territories were Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands, Manipur, and Tripura.
- SRC opposed the division of Bombay & Punjab; Therefore, Maharashtra, where massive rioting occurred, was the location with the strongest response to the SRC report.

New States and union territories created after 1956:

- The demand for the creation of some more states on the basis of language or cultural homogeneity resulted in the bifurcation of existing states.

Maharashtra and Gujarat:

- In 1960, The bilingual state of Bombay was divided (Bombay Reorganisation Act, 1960) into two separate states- Maharashtra for Marathi-speaking people and Gujarat (15th state) for Gujarati-speaking people.

Dadra and Nagar Haveli:

- The Portuguese ruled this territory until its liberation in 1954.
- Subsequently, the administration was carried on till 1961 by an administrator chosen by the people themselves.
- It was converted into a union territory of India by the 10th constitutional Amendment Act, of 1961.

Goa, Daman, and Diu:

- India acquired these three territories from the Portuguese by means of police action in 1961 and by the 12th CAA, 1962, they constituted a union territory later Goa was Statehood in 1987.

Puducherry:

- Former french establishments in India- Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam, and Mahe
- The French handed over this territory to India in 1954 and by the 14th CAA, it was made a union territory.

Nagaland:

- In 1963, the state of Nagaland out of Assam was created for the Nagas.
- It was meant to protect their culture and ethnicity.
- However, the division was also done based on geographical reasons.

Haryana, Chandigarh, and Himachal Pradesh:

- Punjab reorganization act was passed in 1966.
- According to this, the state of Punjabi-speaking areas was made Haryana, and the hilly regions joined with Himachal Pradesh.
- In addition, Chandigarh was made to serve as the joint capital for Punjab and Haryana.
- This followed the demand of ‘Sikh Homeland’ by Akalidal and on the recommendation of the Shah commission.
- The later union territory of Himachal Pradesh was elevated to a full-fledged State in 1971.

Manipur, Tripura and Meghalaya:

- On January 21, 1972, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Manipur became states under the North Eastern region reorganization act of 1971.

Sikkim:

- Till 1947, Sikkim was ruled by Chogyal. After the lapse of British paramountcy, Sikkim became a ‘protectorate of India’.
- In 1974, Sikkim has conferred the status of a new class of state called ‘associate state’ by the 35th CAA.

**MANIDHANAHEYAM FREE IAS ACADEMY – TNPSC GROUP – PRELIMINARY EXAM
UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

- However, this experiment did not last long and in 1975 a referendum was held and the people of Sikkim voted for the abolition of the institution of Chogyal and Sikkim became an integral part of India.
- Consequently, Sikkim became a full-fledged state by the 36th CAA in 1976.

Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh:

- Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh in February 1987 also acquired the status of state.

Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, and Jharkhand:

- The 9th of November 2000 saw the separation of Uttar Pradesh into Uttarakhand (Uttanchal), which became India's 27th state.
- Lack of development in a geographically distinct region 93% of the land is hilly, and 64% of the overall area is forest and rising unemployment sparked the long-standing call for a separate state.
- After a prolonged struggle for their separate state demand, the central government made Jharkhand-28th state of India on November 15th, 2000.
- The demand for a separate state was later advanced by other tribal organizations and movements, including the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, led by Shibu Soren.
- Chhattisgarh was created out of the territory of Madhya Pradesh on November 1, 2000. Despite having such vast natural resource storage, the area was heavily underdeveloped, which was the main reason behind the demand for Chhattisgarh.

Telangana:

- In 1956, Telangana and Andhra combined to become Andhra Pradesh. The Telangana Praja Samiti, led by Marri Channa Reddy, started an agitation in the area in 1969. Long periods of time passed during the conflict with no breakthrough.
- Telangana finally became the 29th Indian state in 2014, under the Andhra Pradesh reorganization act.

Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh:

- Until 2019 Jammu and Kashmir exercised special powers under article 35A.
- It empowered the state's legislature to define permanent residents of the state and enable them to exercise extraordinary powers and privileges.
- On August 6, 2019, Parliament amended Article 370 of the Constitution, abolishing Jammu & Kashmir's special status and bifurcating and downgrading the state into Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, with Jammu and Kashmir having its own legislative assembly.
- This is the first time that Union Territories have been created within a state.
- Ladakh is made up of the Kargil and Leh districts, while the remainder of the region is part of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- There are still unmet requests for state formation based on a variety of factors, including ethnicity, lack of development, and administrative difficulties. Eg. Demand for Harit Pradesh, Bundelkhand in U.P., demand for Vidarbha and Saurashtra in Maharashtra etc.

Reasons behind reorganization:

- Emotional Integration of Different Language Groups
- Linguistically Homogeneous Units
- State Level Elevation (where it would be able to enjoy the powers and facilities that they believe they were denied.)
- Rising Consciousness Among Ethnic Minorities
- Easier Consolidation of Demands
- Widespread Sense of Discrimination (Ethnic minority communities that are agitated develop a sense of discrimination.)
- Economic Backwardness Eg. Formation of Chhattisgarh
- Availability of Fewer Opportunities
- Such movements gain traction when they are led by an effective and powerful leader.

Challenges:

- The states from which new states' demands emerge have not been very positive towards them because:

MANIDHANAHEYAM FREE IAS ACADEMY – TNPSC GROUP – PRELIMINARY EXAM
UNIT – VII – INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- It indicates a failure on the part of the state government to tackle the issue of prevalent regional inequalities.
- Lack of success to provide welfare and equal opportunities to its entire people within the state.
- Further, bifurcation would mean the division of monetary resources, water resources, assets, natural resources, and so on.
- Thus, the bifurcation of the state would hit hard on the economy of the state.
- Threat to national unity. Eg. Son of soil concept to form the State
- Such a division would also have an impact on the bargaining power of the state at the centre.
- In India, the number of seats allocated to states depends on the size of their population.
- Empirical evidence does not support the formation of the small state.
- The division of the population would have an adverse impact on the number of MPs going to the union government.
- Since, there is a growing demand for the creation of new states in India on various issues such as economic disparity, issues of governance, ethnicity, etc.
- There is a need to establish a **Second State reorganization commission** to solve the issue in a rightful manner without compromising the unity and integrity of India.