



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Maharaja Hari Singh

Published On: 16-09-2022

Why is in news? J&K Govt to declare Maharaja Hari Singh's birth anniversary on Sept 23 as public holiday

- Hari Singh (23 September 1895 – 26 April 1961) was the **last ruling Maharaja of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir**, who the hindu ruler, ruled the muslim majority area.
- Hari Singh was the son of Amar Singh and Bhotiali Chib.
- In 1947, after India gained independence from British rule, Jammu and Kashmir could have joined India, joined Pakistan, or remained independent. Singh **wanted Jammu and Kashmir to remain as an independent kingdom.**
- **Pashtun tribe members from Pakistan then invaded Kashmir** in October 1947 and took control over a large area. Hari Singh appealed to the Governor General of free-India, Lord Mountbatten for assistance.
- **India assured help on condition Hari Singh should sign the Instrument of Accession.**
- Hence, considering the emergency, the Maharaja **signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947**, joining the whole of his princely state (including Jammu, Kashmir, Northern Areas, Ladakh, Trans-Karakoram Tract, and Aksai Chin) to the Dominion of India. These events triggered the **first Indo-Pakistan War.**
- Indian and Pakistani forces thus fought their **first war over Kashmir in 1947-48.**
- India successfully drove out most of the Pak-supported tribal militants from Kashmir occupation.
- However, one part of the State came under Pakistani control. India claims that this area is **under illegal occupation. Pakistan describes this area as 'Azad Kashmir'**. India however, does not recognize this term. **India uses the term Pak occupied Kashmir (PoK)** for the area of Kashmir under the control of Pakistan.

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