



UPSC HUB

POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIA • 1947–1960

Post-Independence India: Integration of Princely States & Linguistic Reorganisation for UPSC

Post-independence India for UPSC 2027: Partition, Patel's integration of 552 princely states, Hyderabad, Junagadh, J&K accession, Goa 1961, linguistic reorganisation 1956 and first-decade nation-building — 50 topics with tables, tips & FAQs.

FREE PDF NOTES

100% original exam-oriented notes • UPSC Prelims & Mains

Table of Contents

Part I: Partition & Its Aftermath

1	1. Independence: 15 August 1947	5
2	2. The Radcliffe Line & the Boundary Award	6
3	3. Partition Violence & the Refugee Crisis	6
4	4. Rehabilitation of Refugees	7
5	5. The Constituent Assembly & the New State	7
6	6. Rebuilding the Steel Frame: IAS & IPS	8
7	7. The First Cabinet: Nehru–Patel Partnership	8
8	8. The Assassination of Gandhi: 30 January 1948	9
9	9. Early Foreign Policy: Non-Alignment Takes Shape	9
10	10. The Constitution: Adopted 1949, In Force 1950	10

Part II: Patel & the Princely States

11	11. 552 Princely States: The Problem Patel Inherited	11
12	12. The Instrument of Accession & Standstill Agreement	11
13	13. Junagadh: The Nawab & the Plebiscite	12
14	14. Hyderabad: The Nizam & Operation Polo	12
15	15. J&K: The Instrument of Accession, 26 October 1947	13
16	16. The First Kashmir War & the UN Ceasefire	13

17	17. Article 370: Origins in 1949	14
18	18. Bhopal, Travancore & the Last Holdouts	14
19	19. The Privy Purses & Their Abolition (1971)	15
20	20. Sardar Patel: The Iron Man's Method	15
21	21. V. P. Menon: The Bureaucrat Behind Integration	16
22	22. Why Integration Succeeded: The Factors	16

Part III: The French & Portuguese Pockets

23	23. The French Settlements: Pondicherry & Others	17
24	24. The 1954 De Facto Transfer of Pondicherry	18
25	25. Treaty of Cession 1956 & De Jure Transfer	18
26	26. Portuguese Goa: The Long Standoff	19
27	27. Operation Vijay: Liberation of Goa, December 1961	19
28	28. Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu	20

Part IV: Linguistic Reorganisation

29	29. The Language Question at Independence	20
30	30. The Dhar Commission & the JVP Committee	21
31	31. Potti Sriramulu's Fast & Death, December 1952	22
32	32. Andhra State: The First Linguistic State, 1953	22
33	33. The States Reorganisation Commission, 1953	23
34	34. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956	23
35	35. Bombay Bifurcation: Maharashtra & Gujarat, 1960	24

36	36. Punjab Reorganisation: Haryana, 1966	24
37	37. Nagaland 1963 & the Northeast Reorganisation	25
38	38. The Official Languages Question & the Anti-Hindi Agitation	25
39	39. The Three-Language Formula	26
40	40. Linguistic Reorganisation: Assessment for Mains	26

Part V: The First Decade of Nation-Building

41	41. The Planning Commission, 1950	27
42	42. The First Five-Year Plan, 1951–56	28
43	43. The Second Plan & the Mahalanobis Model	28
44	44. Bhakra Nangal: "Temples of Modern India"	29
45	45. Land Reforms: Zamindari Abolition	29
46	46. The Community Development Programme, 1952	30
47	47. The First General Elections, 1951–52	30
48	48. Universal Adult Franchise: The Boldest Gamble	31
49	49. The Hindu Code Bills, 1955–56	31
50	50. Science & Institutions: IITs, Atomic Energy	32

Post-Independence India: Integration of Princely States & Linguistic Reorganisation for UPSC

Independence did not arrive as a finished product. On 15 August 1947 India woke up free — and broken. A subcontinent had been cut in two, nearly 15 million people were on the move, over 550 princely states had to decide their future, and the French and Portuguese still held pieces of

Indian soil. The next decade was one long emergency of state-building: Patel folding the princely states into the Union, the trauma of Partition being managed, Goa being taken back by force, and the map of India being redrawn on linguistic lines in 1956.

UPSC treats this period as the foundation of everything that follows. GS Paper I asks directly about post-independence consolidation and reorganisation. Prelims picks dates, commissions, and operations with surgical precision — Operation Polo, the States Reorganisation Commission, Potti Sriramulu's fast. Mains wants your judgement: why did integration succeed, was linguistic reorganisation a strength or a risk, how did Partition shape India's early choices? These 50 topics give you the facts in exam-ready form: what happened, why it matters, the details aspirants mix up, and exactly how UPSC tests each one. Read them in order the first time — the story builds on itself — and then use the tables at the end for revision.

Part I: Partition & Its Aftermath

The first task of independent India was not building — it was rescue. Before a single five-year plan could be written, the new state had to stop the killing, settle millions of refugees, and prove it could govern at all. This part covers those opening months: the terms of the transfer, the violence of Partition, and the institutions — the Constitution, the civil services, the first cabinet — that carried India through its most dangerous hour.

1. 1. Independence: 15 August 1947

What it is: At the stroke of midnight between 14 and 15 August 1947, India became independent under the Indian Independence Act 1947, passed by the British Parliament in July 1947. The Act created two dominions — India and Pakistan — and ended British paramountcy over the princely states, leaving each free to join either dominion or remain independent. Jawaharlal Nehru's "Tryst with Destiny" speech in the Constituent Assembly marked the moment. Lord Mountbatten stayed on briefly as the first Governor-General of independent India, and the national flag was hoisted at the Red Fort on 15 August morning. Mountbatten's continued presence was itself a compromise — Nehru kept him partly to reassure the princes and the British establishment. The choice of 15 August was Mountbatten's own: the second anniversary of Japan's surrender in 1945, a date he considered auspicious.

Why it matters: Everything in post-independence history flows from the terms of this transfer. The lapse of paramountcy — not its transfer — is what created the princely-states problem. The dominion status explains why India initially kept the King as head of state and why the Constitution later made India a republic. UPSC treats 1947 as the hinge of modern Indian history.

Key facts: The Independence Act received royal assent on 18 July 1947. India chose 15 August as its independence day; Pakistan celebrates on 14 August. C. Rajagopalachari later became the first and only Indian Governor-General (June 1948). Do not confuse the date of the Act (July 1947) with the date of independence (15 August 1947).

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the provisions of the Indian Independence Act 1947 — lapse of paramountcy, the two dominions, the office of Governor-General. Mains asks why 15 August was chosen and what dominion status meant for the early republic.

2. The Radcliffe Line & the Boundary Award

What it is: The boundary between India and Pakistan was drawn by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, a British lawyer who had never visited India before and was given barely five weeks to divide Punjab and Bengal. The Boundary Commissions worked under the terms of reference that "contiguous majority areas" of Muslims and non-Muslims would decide the division, with "other factors" also to be weighed. The award was ready by 12 August 1947 but was announced only on 17 August — two days after independence — to avoid marring the celebrations.

Why it matters: The Radcliffe Line is the textbook example of a hasty colonial exit creating decades of conflict. It split villages, farms, rivers, and railway lines. The delay in announcing it meant millions did not know which country they were in until after independence — a direct trigger for the violence that followed. Kashmir's access, Punjab's canal colonies, and Bengal's division all trace back to this line.

Key facts: Radcliffe chaired two commissions — one for Punjab, one for Bengal — each with two Congress and two Muslim League nominees. Gurdaspur district's award to India (giving the only road link to Kashmir) remains one of the most debated decisions. The Bengal award left the Chittagong Hill Tracts with Pakistan despite a non-Muslim majority, fuelling a long insurgency there. The commissions' terms of reference mentioned "other factors" alongside religious majorities — a vague phrase that let Radcliffe weigh communications, rivers, and irrigation. In Punjab this meant the canal colonies and the headworks of the Upper Bari Doab canal became boundary questions, not just demographic ones.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks who drew the line and when the award was announced (17 August 1947). Mains uses it to discuss the consequences of hurried decolonisation and its link to the Kashmir dispute.

3. Partition Violence & the Refugee Crisis

What it is: The division of Punjab and Bengal triggered one of the largest forced migrations in human history. Roughly 14 to 15 million people crossed the new borders — Hindus and Sikhs moving east and south into India, Muslims moving west and east into Pakistan. Communal violence erupted across Punjab, with organised attacks on refugee trains and columns. Estimates of the dead range from several hundred thousand to about two million; no exact figure was ever established, and UPSC expects you to present the range, not a single number.

Why it matters: Partition's violence shaped the Indian state's DNA: its commitment to secularism, its suspicion of communal politics, its refugee rehabilitation machinery, and even its early foreign policy caution. The trauma explains why the Constitution's framers were so determined to build a secular republic with strong minority protections.

Key facts: Punjab saw the worst violence; Bengal's migration was slower and stretched over years, even decades. Women suffered targeted violence on a massive scale — abductions, forced conversions, and killings — and both governments later ran recovery operations. The violence also destroyed the syncretic culture of undivided Punjab almost overnight.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks for a critical assessment of Partition's causes and consequences, and why Punjab and Bengal experienced it so differently. Prelims occasionally asks about the scale of migration — stick to "about 14–15 million displaced" as the widely cited figure.

4. 4. Rehabilitation of Refugees

What it is: Faced with millions of destitute arrivals, the government created a Ministry of Rehabilitation in September 1947 under K. C. Neogy (later handled by Mohanlal Saksena and Mehr Chand Khanna). Refugee camps sprang up across Delhi, Punjab, and West Bengal. The government set up evacuee property laws to allot abandoned homes, shops, and farmland to incoming refugees, and built new townships — Faridabad near Delhi and Nilokheri in Punjab were planned partly as refugee rehabilitation projects.

Why it matters: Rehabilitation was the first great administrative test of the new state, and it largely succeeded — a fact UPSC loves to contrast with the failures elsewhere. It also created lasting institutions: the "displaced persons" colonies of Delhi (Lajpat Nagar, Karol Bagh, Kingsway Camp) and the resettlement colonies of Kolkata still shape those cities. The experience built India's disaster-management and camp-administration capacity.

Key facts: The Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act 1954 gave the legal framework for settling claims. In the east, rehabilitation was harder — refugees kept arriving from East Pakistan through the 1950s and 1960s, and many were settled in Dandakaranya (Madhya Pradesh/Odisha) and the Andaman Islands. The Liaquat–Nehru Pact of April 1950 tried to protect minorities on both sides of the eastern border.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks you to evaluate the rehabilitation effort as an early success of Indian administration. Prelims may ask about the Ministry of Rehabilitation or the Dandakaranya project.

5. 5. The Constituent Assembly & the New State

What it is: The Constituent Assembly, elected indirectly in 1946 under the Cabinet Mission Plan, doubled as India's first Parliament after independence. It had 299 members after Partition (down from 389), with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as President and B. R. Ambedkar chairing the Drafting Committee. Beyond writing the Constitution, it passed the first laws of independent India, adopted the national flag (22 July 1947), the national anthem, and ratified the Commonwealth decision of 1949.

Why it matters: The Assembly is where the ideals of the freedom movement were converted into institutions. Its debates — on fundamental rights, federalism, language, and minority safeguards — are the original source material for GS Paper II. UPSC expects you to know not just what the Constitution says, but why the framers chose it.

Key facts: The Assembly met for 2 years, 11 months and 18 days across 11 sessions. The Objectives Resolution moved by Nehru on 13 December 1946 became the Preamble's backbone. After the Constitution came into force, the Assembly continued as the provisional Parliament until the first general elections. Its most visible acts were symbolic but deliberate: adopting the tricolour on 22 July 1947, with the Ashoka Chakra replacing the charkha, and adopting Jana Gana Mana as the national anthem on 24 January 1950. These choices — an ancient emblem, a Tagore song — were arguments about what kind of nation India would be, made in the language of symbols.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the Assembly's composition, key committees, and dates. Mains asks about the nature of the Assembly — was it truly representative? — and the influence of its debates on later constitutional developments.

6. 6. Rebuilding the Steel Frame: IAS & IPS

What it is: At independence the Indian Civil Service (ICS) — the "steel frame" of British rule — was divided between India and Pakistan, and many British officers left. Sardar Patel, as Home Minister, fought to keep an all-India service, arguing that only a service with an all-India character could hold the country together. The ICS became the IAS and the Indian Police became the IPS in 1948–50, recruited through the new UPSC and allotted to state cadres but liable to central deputation.

Why it matters: The all-India services are the administrative glue of Indian federalism — the one institution where the Centre and states share the same officers. Patel's famous 1949 speech defending the services ("you will not have a united India if you do not have a good all-India service") is quoted in Mains answers on federalism and governance to this day.

Key facts: Article 312 of the Constitution provides for all-India services. The first UPSC examination for the IAS/IPS was held in 1950. The Indian Forest Service joined as the third all-India service much later, in 1966. Officers are allotted cadres but serve both the Centre and the states through the deputation system.

How UPSC tests it: This is personal — you are joining this story. Prelims asks about Article 312 and the year of the first exam. Mains asks about the role of all-India services in national integration and the current debates around cadre allocation and lateral entry.

7. 7. The First Cabinet: Nehru–Patel Partnership

What it is: Independent India's first cabinet, sworn in on 15 August 1947, paired Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister. It was deliberately broad-based: B. R. Ambedkar (Law), a Dalit leader who had opposed the Congress; Shyama Prasad Mookerjee (Industry), a Hindu Mahasabha leader; John Mathai (Finance); and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Health). Patel handled the princely states, the civil services, and internal security; Nehru handled foreign policy and the economy.

Why it matters: The Nehru–Patel division of labour defined the early republic's two great projects — democratic institution-building and territorial integration. Their differences (on

Kashmir, on economic policy) were real, but the partnership held. UPSC uses this cabinet to test your understanding of how the early leadership balanced ideology with the urgent demands of governing.

Key facts: Patel died on 15 December 1950, barely three years into the project — which is why his integration work was done at such speed. Mookerjee resigned in 1950 over the Liaquat–Nehru Pact and later founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. Ambedkar resigned in 1951 over the Hindu Code Bill.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks who held which portfolio in the first cabinet. Mains asks about the Nehru–Patel relationship and what their partnership reveals about leadership in a new nation.

8. 8. The Assassination of Gandhi: 30 January 1948

What it is: On 30 January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was shot dead at Birla House in Delhi by Nathuram Godse during the evening prayer meeting. Godse, a former RSS member associated with the Hindu Mahasabha, held Gandhi responsible for Partition and for what he saw as appeasement of Muslims. The government banned the RSS in February 1948 (the ban was lifted in 1949 after the RSS gave a written constitution). Gandhi's death at the hands of a Hindu extremist devastated the communal forces and delegitimised religious extremism in public life for a generation.

Why it matters: The assassination is the moral bookend to Partition. It discredited the politics of religious hatred at the exact moment the new republic was defining itself as secular. Patel, as Home Minister, used the moment to act against communal organisations across the spectrum. For UPSC, it connects Partition, secularism, and the early state's handling of extremism.

Key facts: Godse was tried and hanged on 15 November 1949. The RSS ban lasted from February 1948 to July 1949. Gandhi's last fast (January 1948) had been for communal harmony in Delhi and for Pakistan's share of the sterling balances — both facts Godse cited as grievances.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the date and the assassin's name. Mains asks about the impact of the assassination on communal politics and the secular character of the Indian state.

9. 9. Early Foreign Policy: Non-Alignment Takes Shape

What it is: Even before independence, the interim government set up an External Affairs Department, and Nehru laid out his foreign policy vision in a September 1946 broadcast: India would stay out of power blocs, support decolonisation, and befriend all nations. The Asian Relations Conference in Delhi (March–April 1947) announced India's ambition to lead Asia's newly free nations. After independence, India stayed in the Commonwealth (1949 decision), recognised the People's Republic of China early (December 1949–January 1950), and refused to join either Cold War camp.

Why it matters: Non-alignment was not moral posturing — it was a strategy for a poor, newly independent country that needed aid and technology from both blocs while avoiding

entanglement in their wars. It shaped India's Kashmir diplomacy, its China policy (Panchsheel, 1954), and its leadership of the Third World. UPSC's IR questions routinely start here.

Key facts: India was among the first non-communist countries to recognise the PRC. The 1949 London Declaration let India remain in the Commonwealth as a republic — a formula invented for India's case. Krishna Menon's diplomacy at the UN over Korea (1952–53) gave non-alignment its first global stage.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks for the rationale of non-alignment and whether it served India's interests. Prelims asks about the Asian Relations Conference and the early recognition of China. Link this forward to the dedicated IR book.

10. 10. The Constitution: Adopted 1949, In Force 1950

What it is: The Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution on 26 November 1949 — celebrated since 2015 as Constitution Day (Samvidhan Divas). It came into force on 26 January 1950, a date chosen to honour the 1930 Purna Swaraj declaration; India became a republic and Dr. Rajendra Prasad its first President. The original document had 395 articles and 8 schedules — the longest written constitution in the world — blending parliamentary democracy, fundamental rights, directive principles, and a strong federal tilt toward the Centre.

Why it matters: The Constitution is the operating system of the Indian state, and its adoption marks the moment India moved from a transferred dominion to a republic of its own design. Every post-independence topic — reorganisation, emergency, land reforms — plays out inside this constitutional frame. UPSC's Polity questions all trace back here.

Key facts: 26 November 1949 (adoption) vs 26 January 1950 (commencement) is a classic Prelims trap — learn both. Some provisions (citizenship, elections, provisional parliament) came into force immediately on 26 November 1949. The Constitution drew on the Government of India Act 1935 for its administrative skeleton.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims loves the two dates and the "longest written constitution" fact. Mains asks about the philosophical foundations — the Preamble, the balance between rights and directive principles — and whether the Constitution has lived up to the Assembly's hopes.

Part II: Patel & the Princely States

If Partition was the crisis, the princely states were the puzzle: 552 separate sovereignties scattered inside the new nation's borders. Solving it in about a year — with a blend of law, persuasion, and force — was the early republic's greatest administrative achievement. This part walks through Patel's method state by state, from the easy accessions to Hyderabad and Junagadh, and ends with the one case, Kashmir, where the formula did not fully work.

11. 11. 552 Princely States: The Problem Patel Inherited

What it is: At independence, 552 princely states covered about two-fifths of India's land and a quarter of its population. They ranged from Hyderabad (the size of France, with its own currency and army) to tiny estates of a few villages. The Indian Independence Act ended British paramountcy without transferring it — so legally, every ruler became independent on 15 August 1947. Some, like the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Bhopal, openly dreamed of sovereign statehood; a few flirted with Pakistan. Without integration, India would have been a patchwork of enclaves.

Why it matters: This is the single most important fact of early nation-building: India was not born united — it was united, state by state, in about a year. UPSC treats integration as the proof that the Indian state could act decisively, and contrasts it with Partition's chaos. The legal point — lapse, not transfer, of paramountcy — is the hinge of every question on this topic.

Key facts: The Cabinet Mission Plan (1946) had proposed that the states join the Union on only three subjects — defence, foreign affairs, communications. Patel's States Ministry, created in July 1947 with V. P. Menon as Secretary, offered the same three-subject Instrument of Accession. The figure usually cited is 552 states (some counts say 562 — both appear in books; 552 is the number used in this series).

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks what happened to paramountcy under the Independence Act. Mains asks: "Was the integration of princely states the greatest achievement of the early republic?" — argue with Hyderabad, Junagadh, and Kashmir as your evidence.

12. 12. The Instrument of Accession & Standstill Agreement

What it is: The Instrument of Accession was the legal document by which a ruler ceded to the Dominion of India just three subjects: defence, external affairs, and communications. Everything else — internal administration, law and order — stayed with the ruler for the time being. A separate Standstill Agreement kept existing practical arrangements (railways, posts, customs) running unchanged during the transition. Menon drafted both documents; Mountbatten personally carried them to several rulers to add pressure.

Why it matters: The genius of the Instrument was its modesty — it asked for so little that refusal looked unreasonable, yet it gave India the legal hook for everything that followed. Kashmir's Instrument (26 October 1947) is the legal basis of India's entire claim, and its three-subject limit is the origin of Article 370's special arrangement. UPSC expects you to know the three subjects cold.

Key facts: The three subjects: defence, external affairs, communications. Accession was meant to be by the ruler's signature alone — no plebiscite was legally required, though Mountbatten added a conditional offer of plebiscite in Kashmir's case. Most states signed by 15 August 1947; only Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir held out.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks directly: which subjects did the Instrument of Accession cover? Mains connects it to Article 370 and to the debate over whether Kashmir's accession was "conditional".

13. 13. Junagadh: The Nawab & the Plebiscite

What it is: Junagadh, a small state in Kathiawar with a Muslim Nawab ruling a largely Hindu population, acceded to Pakistan in August 1947 — against geography, since it had no border with Pakistan. India responded with a blockade and refused to accept the accession. When the Nawab fled to Pakistan in October, his dewan invited Indian administration, and Indian troops moved in during November 1947. A plebiscite held in February 1948 voted overwhelmingly for India. Pakistan has never formally withdrawn its claim — Junagadh still appears on some Pakistani maps.

Why it matters: Junagadh set the template: India would use the logic of geography and the people's will against a ruler's paper accession. It is also Pakistan's mirror argument on Kashmir — "if Junagadh's Muslim ruler could not join Pakistan against his people's will, how could Kashmir's Hindu ruler join India?" UPSC loves this symmetry; a strong Mains answer handles both sides.

Key facts: The Nawab, Muhammad Mahabat Khanji III, signed accession to Pakistan on 15 September 1947. India took over administration on 9 November 1947. The February 1948 plebiscite recorded an overwhelming vote for India. Two of Junagadh's vassal states, Mangrol and Babariawad, had already acceded to India, complicating the Nawab's claim.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the year and the plebiscite. Mains uses Junagadh to test your grasp of the "ruler vs people" tension that runs through the whole integration story.

14. 14. Hyderabad: The Nizam & Operation Polo

What it is: Hyderabad was the largest princely state — 82,000 square miles, 16 million people, its own army, currency, and postal system. The Nizam, Osman Ali Khan, wanted independence and stalled through a Standstill Agreement signed in November 1947. Meanwhile the Razakars, a Muslim militia led by Qasim Rizvi, terrorised Hindu villagers and attacked Indian territory. After months of negotiation failed, India launched Operation Polo on 13 September 1948 — a five-day "police action" (India avoided calling it a war). The Nizam surrendered on 18 September, and Hyderabad acceded to India.

Why it matters: Hyderabad was the hard case that proved Patel's method: negotiate first, keep the legal position clean, and use force only when talks collapse. It also left a difficult legacy — communal violence followed the police action, and the official Sunderlal Committee report on the killings was suppressed for decades. UPSC expects a balanced answer: the strategic necessity and the human cost, both stated plainly.

Key facts: Operation Polo ran 13–18 September 1948 under Major General J. N. Chaudhuri, who became Hyderabad's military governor. The Nizam was retained as Rajpramukh (a ceremonial governor) — Patel's typical blend of firmness and conciliation. The Razakars' leader Qasim Rizvi was jailed and later allowed to migrate to Pakistan. Before the operation, India had signed a Standstill Agreement with Hyderabad in November 1947 — and then watched the Nizam use it to buy time, importing arms and building up the Razakars. An economic blockade and the collapse of talks through the summer of 1948 convinced Patel that force was the only remaining option.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the year and the operation's name ("police action" is the phrase to remember). Mains asks you to evaluate the use of force — was there an alternative? Keep the Sunderlal report's existence in your answer for depth.

15. 15. J&K: The Instrument of Accession, 26 October 1947

What it is: Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir, ruling a Muslim-majority state, dreamed of independence and signed Standstill Agreements with both dominions. In October 1947, Pakistan-backed tribal invaders (with Pakistani army support) swept toward Srinagar, looting and killing along the way. On 26 October 1947, Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession to India — on the standard three subjects — and Indian troops were airlifted to Srinagar the next morning, 27 October. That airlift, led by the 1st Sikh Regiment, saved the Kashmir Valley.

Why it matters: The accession is the legal foundation of India's Kashmir position: a lawful act by the sovereign ruler, identical in form to every other state's accession. Pakistan disputes it, arguing the Maharaja acted under duress and that the people's will was never tested. Every India–Pakistan war, every UN resolution, and Article 370 flows from this document. This topic is the doorway to the dedicated Kashmir book in this series.

Key facts: 26 October 1947 (signing) and 27 October 1947 (troops land) — learn both dates. Sheikh Abdullah, the popular National Conference leader just released from jail, supported accession to India. Mountbatten accepted the accession "provisionally", adding that the final status should be settled by a plebiscite once order was restored — the sentence Pakistan quotes ever since.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the date of the Instrument. Mains asks you to lay out India's legal case and Pakistan's counter-case fairly — the examiner rewards balance, not slogans, on Kashmir.

16. 16. The First Kashmir War & the UN Ceasefire

What it is: The tribal invasion of October 1947 became the first India–Pakistan war, fought through 1948 across Kashmir's mountains. Indian forces pushed the invaders back from Srinagar, held the Valley, and fought brutal battles at places like Zoji La — where tanks were used at 11,500 feet, a military first. On 1 January 1948 India took the issue to the UN Security Council; a UN-brokered ceasefire took effect on 1 January 1949, freezing the front line as the Ceasefire Line (later the Line of Control). Roughly a third of the state remained under Pakistani control — what India calls PoK.

Why it matters: The 1948 war created the territorial and legal status quo that has lasted 75+ years: the Ceasefire Line, the UN Military Observer Group (UNMOGIP), and the UN resolutions promising a plebiscite. Nehru's decision to go to the UN — rather than finish the war militarily — is one of the most debated calls in Indian history, and UPSC asks about it repeatedly.

Key facts: The UN Commission (UNCIP) resolutions of August 1948 and January 1949 laid down a three-step plebiscite formula: Pakistan withdraws, India reduces forces, then plebiscite. The steps

were never completed. Major Somnath Sharma, killed at Badgam in November 1947, became independent India's first Param Vir Chakra recipient.

How UPSC tests it: Mains loves "Was taking Kashmir to the UN a mistake?" — answer with the 1948 context (Britain's pressure, the Commonwealth factor) rather than hindsight. Prelims asks about the ceasefire date and UNMOGIP.

17. Article 370: Origins in 1949

What it is: Because J&K's Instrument of Accession covered only three subjects, its constitutional relationship with India needed a special bridge. That bridge was Article 370, moved in the Constituent Assembly in October 1949 by N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar (Kashmir's representative in the Assembly, since J&K had no elected constituent assembly members of its own). It provided that Parliament could legislate for J&K only on the three accession subjects plus whatever the state government concurred with, and that the President could extend other constitutional provisions to J&K only with the state's agreement.

Why it matters: Article 370's origin story is essential: it was drafted as a temporary provision for a state whose final status was tied to the plebiscite promise. Understanding the 1949 logic — a wartime accession, a promised plebiscite, a popular leader in Sheikh Abdullah — is what lets you write a serious Mains answer about its 2019 abrogation instead of a sloganised one. The full Kashmir story continues in this series' dedicated book.

Key facts: Article 370 was titled "Temporary provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir". The Delhi Agreement of 1952 between Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah worked out the practical application. Article 35A, which defined "permanent residents", came later through a 1954 Presidential Order — not through Parliament.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks when Article 370 was adopted and who moved it. Mains asks about the constitutional relationship it created — and, post-2019, whether the "temporary" provision's removal followed constitutional procedure.

18. Bhopal, Travancore & the Last Holdouts

What it is: Not every ruler surrendered quietly. Travancore's dewan, C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, declared the state would be independent in June 1947 — until an assassination attempt in July changed his mind and Travancore acceded. Bhopal's Nawab Hamidullah Khan, as chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, encouraged holdouts and delayed until 1949. Jodhpur's young Maharaja Hanwant Singh briefly flirted with Pakistan, which offered him generous terms, before Mountbatten and Menon talked him round. One by one, through a mix of persuasion, pressure, and the demonstration effect of Hyderabad, they all signed.

Why it matters: These episodes show Patel's method in miniature: isolate the holdout, apply every lever (the ruler's privy purse, popular movements inside the state, the threat of what happened in Hyderabad), and always leave the ruler a dignified exit. UPSC uses these cases to test whether you understand integration as politics, not just as a map being coloured in.

Key facts: Travancore acceded in July 1947 after the attack on its dewan. Bhopal acceded in April 1949 — among the last. The Chamber of Princes, the rulers' collective body created in 1921, simply dissolved as its members signed away their sovereignty. Popular movements inside states (like the Praja Mandals) gave Patel democratic cover for pressure.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims occasionally names a ruler and asks about their state. Mains uses the holdouts to ask how Patel combined persuasion with coercion.

19. 19. The Privy Purses & Their Abolition (1971)

What it is: As the price of accession, rulers were promised privy purses — tax-free annual payments scaled to their state's revenue — plus palaces, titles, and gun salutes. The purses cost the exchequer about ₹6 crore a year, a modest sum, but they symbolised that sovereignty had been bought, not surrendered. In 1971, Indira Gandhi's government abolished them through the 26th Constitutional Amendment, ending the last formal privilege of the princes. The Supreme Court had earlier struck down a presidential order attempting the same thing (1970), so the government went the amendment route.

Why it matters: The privy purse story spans the whole arc: the 1947 bargain that made integration possible, and the 1971 repudiation that completed the democratic revolution. It is a perfect Mains case study in how constitutional promises can be revisited — and in the tension between the right to property and social justice that defined Indira Gandhi's era.

Key facts: The 26th Amendment (1971) deleted Articles 291 and 362, which had protected the purses. The Supreme Court's Madhav Rao Scindia judgment (1970) had blocked the executive-order attempt, teaching the government to use Parliament instead. A few rulers, like the Maharaja of Dhrangadhra, challenged the abolition and lost.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks which amendment abolished the privy purses (26th, 1971). Mains links it to the Indira Gandhi era's constitutional battles and the Keshavananda Bharati case that followed.

20. 20. Sardar Patel: The Iron Man's Method

What it is: Vallabhbhai Patel, as Minister of States, integrated 552 princely states in roughly a year — a feat with few parallels in history. His method had four parts: a generous opening offer (keep your throne, your purse, your dignity — just sign three subjects); a hard deadline (15 August 1947); the implied threat (Hyderabad showed what happened to those who refused); and Mountbatten as the closer for the proudest rulers. Patel died on 15 December 1950, before most of his work's results were visible — which is why his reputation rests almost entirely on these three years.

Why it matters: Patel is the administrative hero of the UPSC syllabus — the model of decisive, non-partisan statecraft. His method is taught as a case study in negotiation: firm on the objective, flexible on the terms, and always giving the other side a face-saving exit. National Unity Day (31 October, his birthday) keeps him in current affairs.

Key facts: Born 31 October 1875; died 15 December 1950. The Statue of Unity (2018), the world's tallest statue, honours him at Kevadia, Gujarat. His correspondence with Nehru on Kashmir and China is mined by historians for the "what Patel thought" debates — handle these carefully in answers, attributing claims to specific letters.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks you to evaluate Patel's role in integration and national unity. Prelims asks about National Unity Day and the Statue of Unity's location. Pair him with the "Iron Man of India" title — Prelims loves epithets.

21. 21. V. P. Menon: The Bureaucrat Behind Integration

What it is: Vapal Pangunni Menon, the Malayali ICS officer who served as Secretary of the States Ministry, was Patel's instrument — the man who actually sat across the table from hundreds of rulers. Menon drafted the Instrument of Accession, flew from capital to capital with Mountbatten, and personally negotiated the trickiest accessions, including Kashmir's (he was in Srinagar on 26 October 1947). His memoir, "The Story of the Integration of the Indian States" (1956), remains the primary source on how it was done.

Why it matters: Menon is the answer to the Mains question "individuals vs institutions" — integration needed Patel's authority, but it was executed by a civil servant's patience and paperwork. UPSC rewards answers that remember the bureaucrats, not just the ministers. His book is also the source examiners implicitly draw on for this topic's questions.

Key facts: Menon was the highest-ranking Indian in the pre-independence administration (Reforms Commissioner, then Secretary). He later served as Governor of Odisha. His memoir names names — which rulers threatened, which wept, which bargained — making it the most readable primary source on 1947–49.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims has asked about Menon's role and his book. Mains can use him to discuss the contribution of the civil services to nation-building — a natural link to the IAS/IPS topic above.

22. 22. Why Integration Succeeded: The Factors

What it is: Historians credit five factors for the speed of integration: Patel's leadership and Menon's execution; the Congress's popular legitimacy — Praja Mandal movements inside the states meant rulers faced pressure from below too; Mountbatten's personal influence over the princes; the demonstration effect of Junagadh and Hyderabad; and sheer timing — the rulers knew the British were truly leaving this time. Against these, the princes had only their titles and the hope that Britain might protect them — a hope Mountbatten himself extinguished.

Why it matters: This is the synthesis topic — the one that turns twelve narratives into a single Mains answer. UPSC's favourite question on this period is essentially "account for the success of the integration of princely states", and the examiner wants structure: leadership, popular movements, British withdrawal, and the legal instruments, weighed against each other.

Key facts: Do not present integration as bloodless — Hyderabad involved military force and communal violence followed. Do not present it as purely Patel's work — the popular movements

in states like Travancore, Mysore, and Hyderabad's Telangana region mattered. And note the exception that proves the pattern: Kashmir, where integration remains incomplete, is the one case where the formula failed.

How UPSC tests it: This is a ready-made 150-word Mains answer. Structure it as: the problem (552 states, lapsed paramountcy), the instruments (accession, persuasion, force), the factors (leadership, popular pressure, timing), and the verdict (a success with one great exception — Kashmir).

Part III: The French & Portuguese Pockets

Independence in 1947 did not end colonialism on Indian soil. France and Portugal clung to their enclaves, and removing them took years more — of negotiation in one case, and a short war in the other. This part covers the three different methods India used to finish decolonisation: talks for Pondicherry, volunteers for Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and the army for Goa.

23. The French Settlements: Pondicherry & Others

What it is: France held four tiny settlements in India: Pondicherry (the capital), Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam — plus a few trading lodges. Together they covered barely 200 square miles, but France treated them as a matter of national prestige and refused to leave in 1947. The settlements had elected municipal councils and sent a deputy to the French National Assembly, which Paris used to argue they were part of France itself. India, committed to ending all colonial enclaves, insisted on their return from day one.

Why it matters: The French case shows India's preferred method — patient negotiation backed by popular movements and economic pressure — working exactly as designed. It is the peaceful counterpoint to Goa, and UPSC pairs the two to test whether you understand India's different approaches to different colonisers.

Key facts: The four settlements: Pondicherry, Karaikal (Tamil Nadu coast), Mahe (Kerala coast), Yanam (Andhra coast). France's 1946 constitution had declared them overseas territories of the French Union. Indian leaders like Nehru raised the issue with Paris repeatedly from 1947 onward. The merger movement's strength showed in the 1948 municipal elections, when pro-merger candidates won across the settlements despite the French administration. Leaders like V. Subbiah organised labour and students against the French regime, giving India the "popular will" argument that made diplomacy work.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks you to name the four French settlements. Mains asks you to compare the French and Portuguese decolonisation — negotiation vs force — and what the difference reveals about Indian foreign policy.

24. 24. The 1954 De Facto Transfer of Pondicherry

What it is: By 1954, pro-merger movements had taken over the municipal councils of the French settlements, and India had cut off economic supplies to pressure Paris. In October 1954, France agreed to a de facto transfer: on 1 November 1954, the French flag came down and the Indian administration took over Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam. The transfer was "de facto" — actual control — because the French parliament still had to ratify the legal cession, which took years.

Why it matters: The 1954 transfer is the textbook case of decolonisation by negotiation: popular agitation inside the territory, diplomatic pressure outside, and a face-saving formula for the coloniser. It also created a useful legal distinction — de facto vs de jure transfer — that Prelims has tested.

Key facts: The agreement of October 1954 was signed between India and France after the municipal councils voted for merger. 1 November 1954 is celebrated as Liberation Day in Puducherry. Edouard Goubert, the French-Indian leader who switched sides to the merger movement, became Pondicherry's first chief minister. France had earlier promised a referendum on the settlements' future, then stalled for years — which is why the municipal councils' pro-merger votes in 1954 mattered so much: they gave Paris democratic cover to concede, and Goubert's crossover made the transfer politically smooth on the French side too.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the year of the de facto transfer (1954) and the de facto/de jure distinction. Mains uses it as the "negotiation model" of territorial integration.

25. 25. Treaty of Cession 1956 & De Jure Transfer

What it is: The legal cession came through the Treaty of Cession signed on 28 May 1956, under which France formally ceded its Indian settlements to India. But the French National Assembly did not ratify the treaty until 1962 — so de jure (legal) transfer happened only on 16 August 1962, eight years after India had actually been administering the territory. In 1963, the former French settlements were constituted as the Union Territory of Pondicherry (renamed Puducherry in 2006).

Why it matters: The eight-year gap between control and legal title is a favourite Prelims trap, and it illustrates how international law moves slower than facts on the ground. It also explains Puducherry's unusual status: a Union Territory with a legislature, scattered across four non-contiguous pieces in three states.

Key facts: Treaty of Cession: 28 May 1956. De jure transfer: 16 August 1962. UT formed 1963; renamed Puducherry 2006. The 1956 treaty guaranteed the French language and the existing administrative system would be preserved — which is why Puducherry still has French street names and a French consulate. The UT's unusual constitutional position — a Union Territory with an elected legislature — was settled by the 14th Amendment (1962) and Article 239A. The treaty's cultural guarantees mean French remains an official language of the UT, a living trace of nearly three centuries of French presence.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks for the treaty year and the de jure transfer year — learn 1956 and 1962 as a pair. Mains may ask about Puducherry's scattered geography as an administrative challenge.

26. Portuguese Goa: The Long Standoff

What it is: Portugal, under the dictator António Salazar, refused to negotiate at all. Lisbon declared Goa an "overseas province" of Portugal — legally part of the motherland, not a colony — and amended its constitution to say so. India tried diplomacy through the early 1950s, then closed its consulate in Goa (1953), imposed an economic blockade, and allowed satyagraha volunteers to march into Goa (1954–55), some of whom were shot by Portuguese police. By 1961, with African colonies also in revolt, Portugal's position was isolated — but Salazar would not move.

Why it matters: Goa is the case where negotiation failed and India chose force — the exception that defines the rule. It tested non-alignment (the US and Britain criticised the action; the USSR supported it) and established that India would use military power to complete decolonisation. UPSC frames Goa as the hard-power bookend to Pondicherry's soft-power story.

Key facts: Portugal's Goa comprised Goa, Daman, and Diu. The 1955 satyagraha saw Indian volunteers killed at the border, hardening Indian opinion. In 1961, Portugal fired on the Indian passenger ship Sabarmati and reinforced its garrison — the immediate trigger for military action. NATO allies quietly sympathised with Portugal, which is why India timed the operation carefully.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks why India used force in Goa but not in Pondicherry — answer with Salazar's intransigence, the failed diplomacy, and the 1961 provocations. Prelims asks about Portugal's "overseas province" claim.

27. Operation Vijay: Liberation of Goa, December 1961

What it is: On the night of 17–18 December 1961, Indian forces launched Operation Vijay — a combined army, navy, and air force operation against Portuguese Goa. The Portuguese garrison of about 3,000 men, under Governor-General Vassalo e Silva, was overwhelmed within 36 hours; the formal surrender came on 19 December 1961. Indian casualties were light; Portuguese resistance collapsed faster than expected. Goa, Daman, and Diu became Indian territory, initially administered as a single Union Territory.

Why it matters: Operation Vijay completed India's territorial unification — 14 years after independence, the last European colony was gone. Internationally, it was India's first post-independence use of force for a political objective, and the criticism from Western powers taught India lasting lessons about timing military action. Domestically, 19 December is celebrated as Goa Liberation Day.

Key facts: 18–19 December 1961; surrender on 19 December. Major General K. P. Candeth became the first military governor. The operation's name — Vijay (victory) — was reused for Kargil in 1999. Portugal recognised Goa's integration only in 1974, after the Carnation Revolution overthrew the dictatorship. The operation was genuinely tri-service: the army moved in three

columns, the navy blockaded the coast and shelled Portuguese positions, and the air force struck Dabolim airfield to ground the Portuguese aircraft. The speed of the collapse — about 36 hours — surprised even the Indian command, which had planned for a longer fight.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the year and the operation's name. Mains asks about the international reaction — why the US condemned it, why the USSR vetoed the UN resolution against India — as a case study in Cold War diplomacy.

28. Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu

What it is: Dadra and Nagar Haveli, two small Portuguese enclaves surrounded by Gujarat and Maharashtra, were liberated in 1954 — not by the Indian Army, but by volunteers of the United Front of Goans and allied groups, with quiet Indian support. They were administered as a de facto free territory until formally merged as the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli in 1961. Daman and Diu were taken with Goa in December 1961 and became part of the Goa, Daman and Diu UT; in 1987 Goa became a state, and Daman & Diu continued as a separate UT until merged with Dadra & Nagar Haveli in January 2020.

Why it matters: Dadra and Nagar Haveli show the third method — liberation by local volunteers with deniable state backing — completing the set with negotiation (Pondicherry) and open force (Goa). The 2020 merger of the two UTs is a current-affairs fact that Prelims has already begun testing.

Key facts: Liberated July–August 1954; UT from 1961. The 2020 merger created the UT of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (26 January 2020). Goa's statehood came in 1987 (56th Amendment) after the Opinion Poll of 1967, in which Goans voted against merging with Maharashtra.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the 2020 UT merger and Goa's statehood year (1987). Mains can use the Opinion Poll of 1967 as an example of democratic consent in territorial reorganisation.

Part IV: Linguistic Reorganisation

No decision of the early republic was feared more — or vindicated more completely — than redrawing the map on linguistic lines. Leaders who had promised linguistic provinces in the 1920s resisted them in 1947, terrified of another Partition. It took a martyr's fast to break the deadlock. This part traces the road from Sriramulu's death to the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 and the states it went on to create.

29. The Language Question at Independence

What it is: In 1947, India's internal map was a colonial leftover: provinces drawn for British administrative convenience, cutting across languages. The Congress had promised since the 1920s (the Nagpur session) that independent India would have linguistic provinces — and in 1921

it had already reorganised its own committees on linguistic lines. But at independence, leaders led by Nehru feared that linguistic states would feed separatism in a country just partitioned on religious lines. The question was postponed — and the postponement itself became the problem.

Why it matters: The language question is the great "what if" of early India: the leadership's fear of division delayed a demand the national movement had itself created. Understanding this tension — between the promise of linguistic provinces and the fear of Balkanisation — is the key to every Mains answer on reorganisation. It also explains why the demand exploded when it did.

Key facts: The Congress's 1921 linguistic reorganisation of its own committees is the origin of the promise. The British provinces (Madras, Bombay, Bengal, etc.) were multi-lingual by design. Telugu speakers, spread across Madras Presidency and Hyderabad, became the first organised claimants.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks why the national leadership resisted linguistic provinces at first despite the Congress's old promise. Answer with Partition's shadow and the integration crisis — the leadership wanted consolidation first, democracy's demands second.

30.30. The Dhar Commission & the JVP Committee

What it is: Under pressure from Telugu and other language movements, the Constituent Assembly appointed the Linguistic Provinces Commission under S. K. Dhar in June 1948. The Dhar Commission reported in December 1948 — against linguistic provinces, arguing that "administrative convenience" should rule. The Congress then set up its own committee — Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Pattabhi Sitaramayya (the JVP Committee) — which reported in April 1949, also rejecting linguistic states for the time being, though conceding the demand had popular force.

Why it matters: The two rejections are important because they show the establishment's genuine fear — and because their failure to settle the issue proves that commissions cannot substitute for political decisions. UPSC uses Dhar and JVP to test whether you know the sequence: demand → commission → rejection → agitation → concession.

Key facts: Dhar Commission: appointed June 1948, report December 1948. JVP Committee: report April 1949. Both opposed linguistic provinces "at present". The JVP report did, however, admit that public sentiment for linguistic states was strong — the sentence agitators quoted for the next three years. There was a sharp irony in the line-up: Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the "Pattabhi" of JVP, was himself an Andhra leader — yet the committee he sat on rejected the Andhra demand. The episode is often quoted to show how even sympathetic leaders feared opening the linguistic door in the shadow of Partition.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks you to expand JVP (Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Pattabhi Sitaramayya) and date the reports. Mains asks why both bodies said no — and why saying no did not end the matter.

31. 31. Potti Sriramulu's Fast & Death, December 1952

What it is: Potti Sriramulu, a Gandhian freedom fighter, began a fast unto death on 19 October 1952 demanding a separate Andhra state for Telugu speakers, with Madras as its capital. The government refused to act. After 56 days, Sriramulu died on 15 December 1952. His death set off riots across the Telugu districts — trains stopped, government offices attacked — and within days Nehru announced that Andhra State would be formed. One man's fast had forced the government's hand where three years of commissions had not.

Why it matters: Sriramulu's death is the hinge on which the whole reorganisation turned. It proved that the language demand could not be managed by delay, and it opened the door to the SRC and the 1956 Act. For UPSC, it is the classic example of how individual sacrifice can redirect state policy — and a staple of both Prelims dates and Mains analysis.

Key facts: Fast began 19 October 1952; death 15 December 1952 (56 days). Sriramulu had earlier fasted in 1946 for Dalit temple entry — he was a veteran Gandhian, not a newcomer. The riots after his death were the first large-scale linguistic violence in independent India.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the year and the demand (Andhra state). Mains asks about the role of fasts and self-sacrifice in Indian politics — from Sriramulu to the Telangana agitation — and whether the state should yield to such pressure.

32. 32. Andhra State: The First Linguistic State, 1953

What it is: On 1 October 1953, Andhra State was carved out of Madras Presidency as India's first linguistic state, with Kurnool as its capital (Madras city stayed with Tamil Nadu after a bitter dispute). It comprised the Telugu-speaking districts of the Madras Presidency — the princely Hyderabad's Telugu areas (Telangana) were not included yet. In 1956, Andhra State merged with Telangana to form Andhra Pradesh, the first state created under the reorganisation scheme.

Why it matters: Andhra was the proof of concept: a linguistic state could be created without the sky falling. Its creation made the SRC inevitable — once one language had its state, every other language demanded the same. The Madras-city dispute also previewed the capital-city fights (Chandigarh, Belgaum) that would recur for decades.

Key facts: Formed 1 October 1953; capital Kurnool. First Chief Minister: Tanguturi Prakasam ("Andhra Kesari", Lion of Andhra). The demand had deep roots: the 1937 Sri Bagh Pact between coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema leaders had already promised the two regions a fair deal in any future Telugu province. Kurnool served as capital only until 1956, when Hyderabad — freed from the Nizam — became the capital of the merged Andhra Pradesh. The 1956 merger with Telangana created Andhra Pradesh on 1 November 1956 — with a "Gentlemen's Agreement" protecting Telangana's interests, whose alleged violation later fuelled the Telangana movement.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks for the first linguistic state and its year (Andhra, 1953). Mains connects the Gentlemen's Agreement to the Telangana statehood demand — a long arc from 1953 to 2014.

33. 33. The States Reorganisation Commission, 1953

What it is: In December 1953, the government appointed the States Reorganisation Commission under Justice Fazl Ali, with K. M. Panikkar and H. N. Kunzru as members. Its mandate: redraw India's map objectively. After touring the country and receiving thousands of memoranda, the SRC reported in October 1955, broadly accepting the linguistic principle but balancing it with administrative, economic, and security considerations. It recommended 16 states and 3 centrally administered territories — Parliament eventually created 14 states and 6 UTs.

Why it matters: The SRC is the intellectual foundation of India's federal map. Its report is the source for the famous formulation that linguistic homogeneity strengthens unity rather than weakening it — the argument that defeated the Balkanisation fear. UPSC treats the SRC as the model of how a democracy can redraw its own boundaries peacefully.

Key facts: Appointed December 1953; report October 1955. Chairman: Justice Fazl Ali (former judge). Members: K. M. Panikkar (historian-diplomat) and H. N. Kunzru (parliamentarian). The SRC rejected the demand to split Bombay and opposed a separate Punjabi-speaking state at that stage — both decisions later reversed by agitation.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks for the chairman and the year (Fazl Ali, 1953). Mains asks about the SRC's criteria — language, yes, but also economic viability and national security — and whether the commission got the balance right.

34. 34. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956

What it is: Parliament passed the States Reorganisation Act in August 1956, and on 1 November 1956 India's map was redrawn: 14 states and 6 Union Territories replaced the old Part A/B/C/D classification. The four-fold classification of the 1950 Constitution (Part A: former provinces, Part B: princely unions, Part C: chief commissioners' provinces, Part D: Andaman & Nicobar) was abolished — all units became either states or UTs. New linguistic states included Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka (then Mysore), Kerala, and Madhya Pradesh in its new form.

Why it matters: The 1956 Act is the single most important territorial law in independent India's history — the moment the colonial map was finally replaced by a democratic one. It also settled a constitutional oddity: the Part A/B/C/D system, a hangover of the princely order, disappeared. For UPSC, 1 November 1956 is as important a date as 15 August 1947 for understanding India's federal structure.

Key facts: Effective 1 November 1956: 14 states, 6 UTs. The old classification (Parts A, B, C, D) was abolished by the 7th Constitutional Amendment (1956). Kerala was formed by merging Travancore-Cochin with Malabar; Karnataka (Mysore) united the Kannada areas. Bombay and Punjab were the big exceptions — kept bilingual/multilingual for the moment. The Act also dissolved Hyderabad State entirely — its Telugu areas went to Andhra Pradesh, its Marathi areas to Bombay, its Kannada areas to Mysore — ending the Nizam's territory as an administrative unit. The 7th Amendment that enabled all this also redefined India as a "Union of States", replacing the old description of territories in Parts A to D.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the number of states and UTs (14 + 6) and the effective date. Mains asks about the abolition of the Part A/B/C/D classification and what it signified — the final end of the princely order in the constitutional scheme.

35. 35. Bombay Bifurcation: Maharashtra & Gujarat, 1960

What it is: The SRC had kept Bombay as a bilingual state, but the Samyukta Maharashtra movement (demanding a Marathi state with Bombay city) and the Mahagujarat movement agitated through the late 1950s — with over 100 deaths in police firings in Bombay in 1956. In 1960 the government gave way: on 1 May 1960, Bombay was split into Maharashtra (Marathi-speaking, capital Bombay) and Gujarat (Gujarati-speaking, capital Ahmedabad). Bombay city went to Maharashtra, ending the fiercest capital dispute of the reorganisation era.

Why it matters: Bombay proves that the 1956 settlement was not final — organised agitation could reopen it. It also shows the capital-city problem in its sharpest form: Bombay's wealth and cosmopolitan character made both sides claim it. UPSC uses Bombay to discuss the limits of commissions and the role of popular movements in federal redrawing.

Key facts: Bifurcation: 1 May 1960 (Maharashtra Day and Gujarat Day). Leaders: S. M. Joshi and S. A. Dange on the Maharashtra side; Indulal Yagnik for Mahagujarat. The 1956 Bombay firings, in which 105 agitators died, are commemorated at Hutatma Chowk (Martyrs' Square) in Mumbai.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the year of the split (1960). Mains asks why the SRC's bilingual-Bombay solution failed — answer with the intensity of linguistic identity and the economic stakes of Bombay city.

36. 36. Punjab Reorganisation: Haryana, 1966

What it is: The SRC had rejected a Punjabi-speaking state in 1955, but the Punjabi Suba movement — led by the Akali Dal, with Master Tara Singh's fasts and Fateh Singh's agitation — kept the demand alive through the 1960s. In 1966, after the 1965 war (in which Punjab's loyalty was conspicuous), the government agreed: on 1 November 1966, Punjab was reorganised into Punjabi-speaking Punjab, Hindi-speaking Haryana, and the hill areas went to Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh became a shared capital and a Union Territory.

Why it matters: Punjab is the case where language, religion, and region overlapped most dangerously — the demand was linguistic in form but communal in suspicion. Its eventual settlement shows the Indian state's capacity to concede on language while managing the communal dimension. The Chandigarh dispute it left behind still poisons Punjab-Haryana relations.

Key facts: Reorganisation: 1 November 1966 (Punjab Reorganisation Act). Haryana became the 17th state. The Shah Commission (1966) drew the boundary. Chandigarh — Le Corbusier's planned city — became a UT and joint capital, a compromise that satisfied nobody fully. The timing mattered: the 1965 war had just shown Punjab's soldiers and farmers at their most loyal, which weakened the old argument that a Punjabi-speaking state would be a security risk. Sant Fateh Singh's threatened self-immolation in 1965–66 finally forced the decision. The Shah

Commission's boundary award left the Chandigarh question open — a dispute that still surfaces in every Punjab–Haryana negotiation.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the year (1966) and which states were formed. Mains asks about the communal overlay on the linguistic demand — how the state distinguished a language claim from a separatist one.

37. Nagaland 1963 & the Northeast Reorganisation

What it is: Linguistic reorganisation could not solve the Northeast, where the issue was tribal identity, not language. After years of Naga insurgency, the government created Nagaland as a full state on 1 December 1963 — the first state formed for a tribal community. In 1972, the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act carved Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura into full states and created the UTs of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (both became states in 1987). Assam, the old giant province, shrank to its present size.

Why it matters: The Northeast shows reorganisation as counter-insurgency by other means: statehood as the answer to alienation. Nagaland's creation — a state for a people in active rebellion — was a bold gamble that the democratic frame could absorb even armed dissent. UPSC's questions on the Northeast always start here.

Key facts: Nagaland: 1 December 1963 (16th state). 1972 Act (effective 21 January 1972): Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura became states; Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh became UTs. Article 371A gives Nagaland special protections for Naga customary law — the constitutional price of the settlement. The road to statehood ran through the 16-Point Agreement of 1960 between the government and the Naga People's Convention, which promised statehood in exchange for ending the insurgency. The hardline Naga National Council under A. Z. Phizo rejected the deal and kept fighting from exile, which is why statehood reduced but did not end the conflict.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about Nagaland's statehood year and Article 371A. Mains asks whether creating states has resolved or merely relocated the Northeast's conflicts — use the later Bodo, Karbi, and Naga-framework-agreement developments.

38. The Official Languages Question & the Anti-Hindi Agitation

What it is: The Constitution (Article 343) declared Hindi in Devanagari script the official language of the Union, with English to continue for 15 years — until 1965. As 1965 approached, the non-Hindi states, led by Tamil Nadu, feared Hindi imposition. The Official Languages Act 1963 provided for English to continue, but its wording was ambiguous. When 26 January 1965 arrived, Tamil Nadu erupted: students rioted, self-immolations occurred, and the DMK rode the agitation to power in 1967. Shastri's government clarified that English would continue indefinitely, and the 1967 amendment to the Act guaranteed it.

Why it matters: The anti-Hindi agitation is the great counter-example to the reorganisation success story — the one language conflict the Indian state handled badly at first. It ended the Congress's dominance in Tamil Nadu permanently and proved that language policy, unlike state

boundaries, could not be settled by redrawing maps. Every UPSC answer on language must mention 1965.

Key facts: Article 343: Hindi official language; English for 15 years from 1950. Official Languages Act 1963; amended 1967 to assure indefinite English. The 1965 agitation's leaders included C. N. Annadurai; the DMK won Tamil Nadu in 1967 on the back of it. Nehru's 1963 assurance — English would continue "as long as the non-Hindi people want" — is the political foundation of the settlement.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about Article 343 and the 1963 Act. Mains asks why the language-of-administration question proved harder than the linguistic-states question — answer with the difference between symbolic identity (states) and daily power (the language of jobs and exams).

39. 39. The Three-Language Formula

What it is: The National Policy on Education (1968) adopted the three-language formula: schools would teach the regional language, Hindi, and English (in Hindi-speaking states: Hindi, English, and a modern Indian language). The formula was a compromise — Hindi speakers would learn a southern language, non-Hindi speakers would learn Hindi — but it was never honestly implemented. Hindi states largely taught Sanskrit instead of a southern language, while southern states taught Hindi as required. Tamil Nadu rejected the formula outright and follows a two-language policy to this day.

Why it matters: The three-language formula is the standing monument to India's language compromises: agreed by all, implemented by none. It resurfaces in every education-policy debate (including NEP 2020) and every Hindi-imposition controversy. UPSC uses it to test whether you understand the difference between policy formulation and implementation.

Key facts: Adopted in the National Policy on Education, 1968. The formula: (1) mother tongue/ regional language, (2) Hindi or English, (3) one modern Indian language. Tamil Nadu's two-language policy (Tamil + English) dates to the 1968 rejection. NEP 2020 retained the formula in principle while stressing mother-tongue instruction.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks when the formula was adopted (1968). Mains asks why it failed — answer with the asymmetry of implementation and Tamil Nadu's rejection.

40. 40. Linguistic Reorganisation: Assessment for Mains

What it is: Seventy years on, the verdict on linguistic reorganisation is broadly positive, and UPSC expects you to argue it with evidence. The fear — that linguistic states would break India — proved wrong: linguistic states became the building blocks of Indian federalism, giving democracy a language people understood and defusing the separatist potential of language movements. The costs were real too: interstate water and boundary disputes (Belgaum, Chandigarh, Cauvery), the politicisation of language, and the neglect of tribal and smaller languages. But the alternative — suppressing the demand — would likely have produced the very Balkanisation the leadership feared.

Why it matters: This is the capstone Mains topic for the whole reorganisation story. The examiner wants a balanced judgement: the achievement (democratic deepening, administrative convenience, cultural confidence) weighed against the costs (disputes, linguistic chauvinism). The strongest answers compare India with Pakistan — which suppressed its language demands and lost its eastern half in 1971.

Key facts: Keep three numbers ready: 14 states + 6 UTs (1956), and the fact that every subsequent state creation (Gujarat 1960, Haryana 1966, the Northeast, Uttarakhand/Jharkhand/Chhattisgarh 2000, Telangana 2014) followed the same logic of democratic consent. The Belgaum dispute (Maharashtra–Karnataka) and the Cauvery dispute (Karnataka–Tamil Nadu) are the standard examples of reorganisation's unfinished business.

How UPSC tests it: This is a full 150–250 word Mains question: "Critically examine the linguistic reorganisation of states." Structure: the promise and the fear → Sriramulu and the SRC → the 1956 settlement and its extensions → achievements vs costs → the Pakistan comparison as your closing punch.

Part V: The First Decade of Nation-Building

With the territory secured and the map settled, the republic turned to its long-term project: planning the economy, holding the largest elections in human history, reforming land and personal law, and building the institutions of science. This part covers the first decade's nation-building — the dams, plans, ballots, and laws on which everything since has rested.

41. 41. The Planning Commission, 1950

What it is: On 15 March 1950, the government set up the Planning Commission with the Prime Minister as chairman, to steer India's development through Five-Year Plans. The idea drew on the Soviet example, the 1938 National Planning Committee under Nehru, and the 1944 Bombay Plan of Indian industrialists — planning was one of the few ideas on which socialists and capitalists agreed in 1950. The Commission had no constitutional status; it worked through persuasion, expertise, and control of central assistance to states.

Why it matters: The Planning Commission ran India's economy for 65 years (until replaced by NITI Aayog in 2015), and its Plans are the skeleton of every GS Paper III answer on Indian economic history. UPSC expects you to know why planning was adopted — poverty, the need for rapid industrialisation, and the belief that markets alone would not build a poor country's capital base.

Key facts: Established 15 March 1950; first chairman Nehru; first deputy chairman Gulzarilal Nanda. Replaced by NITI Aayog on 1 January 2015. The Commission's lack of constitutional or statutory backing was both its flexibility and its weakness — states often saw it as a centralising instrument.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the establishment date and what replaced it. Mains asks about the rationale for planning in 1950 and why the model was eventually abandoned — link to the 1991 reforms.

42. 42. The First Five-Year Plan, 1951–56

What it is: The First Plan, based on the Harrod–Domar model, gave priority to agriculture, irrigation, and power — a deliberate choice after the food crises of the 1940s and Partition's loss of fertile land. It launched the great dam projects (Bhakra Nangal, Hirakud, Damodar Valley), expanded community development, and aimed for a modest increase in national income. The Plan is generally judged a success: agricultural output rose, the monsoon cooperated, and its targets were met.

Why it matters: The First Plan's agricultural focus is the baseline against which the Second Plan's heavy-industry turn is measured — and UPSC's favourite Plan question is precisely that comparison. It also shows the early republic's pragmatism: ideology yielded to the urgent need to feed people.

Key facts: Period: 1951–56. Model: Harrod–Domar. Focus: agriculture and irrigation. Major projects: Bhakra Nangal, Hirakud, Damodar Valley Corporation (modelled on America's Tennessee Valley Authority). The Plan out-performed its targets, helped by good monsoons. Its total public-sector outlay was about ₹2,069 crore — a modest sum that shows how small the new state's resources were. The success also stored up a problem: the sterling balances built up during the war were nearly exhausted by the Plan's end, setting up the foreign-exchange crisis that would hit the Second Plan.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the model (Harrod–Domar) and the priority sector. Mains asks you to compare the First and Second Plans as competing visions of development.

43. 43. The Second Plan & the Mahalanobis Model

What it is: The Second Five-Year Plan (1956–61) shifted decisively to heavy industry — steel, machine-building, chemicals — on the strategy designed by statistician P. C. Mahalanobis. The logic: a poor country must first build the machines that make machines; consumer goods could wait. The Plan created the public-sector steel plants at Bhilai (with Soviet help), Rourkela (West German), and Durgapur (British), and launched heavy electricals and machine-tool factories. It also marked the high tide of the public sector's commanding heights.

Why it matters: The Mahalanobis strategy defined Indian industrialisation for a generation — and its critics blame it for the neglect of agriculture and employment that followed. UPSC treats the Second Plan as the decisive fork in India's economic road: heavy industry vs agriculture, public sector vs private, self-reliance vs trade. Your Mains answers on economic history will return to this fork repeatedly.

Key facts: Period: 1956–61. Strategist: P. C. Mahalanobis (Indian Statistical Institute). Steel plants: Bhilai (USSR), Rourkela (West Germany), Durgapur (UK) — the Cold War made all three blocs

compete to help India. The Plan underperformed its targets and contributed to the foreign-exchange crisis of the late 1950s.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about Mahalanobis and the steel plants' foreign collaborators. Mains asks for a critical evaluation: did the heavy-industry strategy serve India well? Argue both sides — the industrial base it built vs the agricultural and employment costs.

44. Bhakra Nangal: "Temples of Modern India"

What it is: The Bhakra Nangal project on the Sutlej — a 226-metre concrete gravity dam, among the highest in the world at the time — became the symbol of Nehruvian development. Construction began in 1948; Nehru famously called such dams the "temples of modern India" (the phrase is widely attributed to his speeches at Bhakra and similar projects). The dam irrigated millions of acres in Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan and powered the Green Revolution's takeoff in the northwest.

Why it matters: Bhakra is the physical embodiment of the early republic's faith in science and scale — and later, of the environmental and displacement critiques of big dams. UPSC uses it both ways: as the achievement of the First Plan era and as the starting point for debates on development vs displacement that run through the Narmada and Tehri controversies.

Key facts: Construction began 1948; completed 1963. Height: 226 metres. The project also built the Nangal fertiliser plant — linking irrigation to the coming Green Revolution. Punjab's agricultural transformation, which later fed India, began with Bhakra's waters. The reservoir submerged the old town of Bilaspur — its residents were relocated to a new township, an early and largely overlooked case of development-induced displacement. Decades later, when the anti-big-dam movements of the 1980s and 1990s gathered force, Bhakra's displaced were cited as the forgotten first victims of the temple-building era.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the river (Sutlej) and the "temples of modern India" phrase. Mains asks you to evaluate big dams — Bhakra's gains against the displacement question — as a balanced development debate.

45. Land Reforms: Zamindari Abolition

What it is: The first great social legislation of the republic was the abolition of zamindari — the intermediary landlord system the British had created. Uttar Pradesh led with its Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act (1950, effective 1951), and other states followed. When landlords challenged abolition in court, Parliament passed the First Constitutional Amendment (1951), creating the Ninth Schedule to shield land-reform laws from judicial review. Millions of tenants became landowners, though the reforms' reach varied hugely by state.

Why it matters: Zamindari abolition was the economic counterpart of political independence — freedom had to reach the village. It is also the origin of the property-rights vs social-justice battle that ran through the Kesavananda Bharati case and the 44th Amendment. For UPSC, land reforms connect the Constitution, the economy, and rural society in a single story.

Key facts: UP Act 1950 (effective 1951); First Amendment 1951; Ninth Schedule created. Later components — tenancy reform, land ceilings, consolidation — were implemented unevenly; ceilings legislation largely failed. The abolition succeeded where intermediaries were concerned but left the deeper agrarian structure mostly intact.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the First Amendment and the Ninth Schedule. Mains asks for an evaluation of land reforms: why did zamindari abolition succeed while ceilings failed? — answer with political will, litigation, and benami holdings.

46. 46. The Community Development Programme, 1952

What it is: Launched on 2 October 1952 (Gandhi's birthday), the Community Development Programme aimed to transform village life through government extension workers — the Village Level Worker — bringing better seeds, sanitation, roads, and schools to the countryside. It was inspired partly by the Etawah pilot project and partly by American community-development ideas. The programme expanded rapidly but soon ran into trouble: too much bureaucracy, too little local participation.

Why it matters: The CDP's failure taught India its most important rural-governance lesson: development cannot be delivered from above — it needs elected local bodies. That lesson produced the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) and the Panchayati Raj system. UPSC's local-governance questions trace their lineage directly to the CDP's shortcomings.

Key facts: Launched 2 October 1952. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957), appointed to review the CDP, recommended "democratic decentralisation" — the three-tier Panchayati Raj. Rajasthan (Nagaur, 1959) and Andhra Pradesh pioneered the Panchayati Raj system that followed. The programme's intellectual roots lay in the Etawah pilot project run in the late 1940s, which showed what a dedicated village worker could achieve. By the early 1960s the CDP covered nearly the whole country through development blocks — but evaluations showed the benefits flowing mainly to richer farmers, which is what pushed the Mehta Committee toward elected panchayats instead of bureaucratic extension.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the launch date and the Mehta Committee's recommendation. Mains asks what the CDP's failure revealed about top-down development — a ready-made answer on decentralisation.

47. 47. The First General Elections, 1951–52

What it is: Between October 1951 and February 1952, India held the largest democratic exercise in human history: 173 million voters, 224,000 polling booths, 1.9 lakh candidates' nominations for 4,500+ seats, conducted over four months. Sukumar Sen, the first Chief Election Commissioner, organised it with 16,500 clerks and an army of polling staff. The Congress won 364 of 489 Lok Sabha seats; the results were accepted by winners and losers alike.

Why it matters: The 1951–52 elections answered the question the whole world was asking: can a poor, illiterate, newly partitioned country run a democracy? The answer — a peaceful transfer of mandates, accepted by all — is the founding achievement of the republic, and the reason India's

democracy survived when most post-colonial democracies did not. UPSC treats it as the practical proof of the Constitution's promise.

Key facts: CEC: Sukumar Sen. Electorate: ~173 million. Congress: 364/489 Lok Sabha seats; the Socialist Party and the KMPP trailed far behind. Rammanohar Lohia's famous line — that the elections were "the biggest gamble in history" — captures the contemporary mood. The Election Commission's independence, under Article 324, was tested and held. Because most voters could not read, parties were allotted symbols — a practice that continues today — and indelible ink marked voted fingers to prevent fraud. The sheer logistics, from printing rolls for 173 million names to carrying ballot boxes by elephant in hill areas, became the stuff of Election Commission legend.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about Sukumar Sen and the electorate size. Mains asks why the first elections mattered — answer with the global scepticism they defeated and the institutional precedent they set.

48. 48. Universal Adult Franchise: The Boldest Gamble

What it is: The Constitution granted every adult citizen the vote — regardless of property, education, gender, or caste — at a stroke. In 1950, that meant enfranchising about 173 million people, over 80% of them illiterate, including millions of women voting for the first time. No country had ever attempted democracy on this scale: Britain had taken centuries to reach universal franchise; India did it overnight. The framers' confidence — that ordinary Indians were fit for self-rule — was the republic's founding bet.

Why it matters: Universal franchise is what makes India exceptional among post-colonial states: democracy preceded development, not the other way round. It explains the entire character of Indian politics — competitive, participatory, and periodically humbling to elites. UPSC's polity questions on the nature of Indian democracy all rest on this decision.

Key facts: Voting age was 21 until the 61st Amendment (1988) lowered it to 18. Women's enfranchisement at independence was itself revolutionary — many Western democracies had granted it only decades earlier. The framers rejected every proposal for literacy or property qualifications.

How UPSC tests it: Mains asks you to assess the decision — was universal franchise premature? The strong answer: it was the decision that made Indian democracy self-correcting, because every government had to face the poorest voter. Prelims asks about the 61st Amendment (1988).

49. 49. The Hindu Code Bills, 1955–56

What it is: Between 1955 and 1956, Parliament passed four laws reforming Hindu personal law: the Hindu Marriage Act (1955), Hindu Succession Act (1956), Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (1956), and Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956). Together they outlawed polygamy, gave daughters inheritance rights, permitted divorce, and set minimum marriage ages. Ambedkar, who had resigned from the cabinet in 1951 when the original bill stalled, saw his project completed by Nehru's government — in diluted, piecemeal form.

Why it matters: The Hindu Code Bills were the republic's first great social-engineering project — the state rewriting the personal law of the majority community. They are the permanent reference point for the Uniform Civil Code debate: the government reformed Hindu law but left Muslim personal law untouched, the asymmetry that fuels the UCC argument to this day. UPSC's questions on secularism and personal law start here.

Key facts: Four Acts: 1955 (Marriage), 1956 (Succession, Minority & Guardianship, Adoptions & Maintenance). Ambedkar resigned in October 1951 over the bill's postponement. The Succession Act's 2005 amendment finally made daughters coparceners — the reform's unfinished business, completed half a century later. The bills had faced fierce opposition even inside the Congress — President Rajendra Prasad threatened to withhold assent, and orthodox members called them an attack on dharma. Nehru pushed them through after his 1952 election victory, accepting dilution: the grand single code Ambedkar wanted became four separate Acts.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks the years and the number of Acts. Mains asks about the UCC debate's origins — the Hindu Code Bills are your historical anchor — and about Ambedkar's resignation as a question of principle vs pragmatism.

50. 50. Science & Institutions: IITs, Atomic Energy

What it is: The early republic invested heavily in science as an instrument of sovereignty. The Atomic Energy Commission was set up in 1948 under Homi Bhabha; the Trombay establishment (later BARC) followed. The first Indian Institute of Technology opened at Kharagpur in 1951, in the Hijli detention camp of the freedom movement — a deliberate symbol. The CSIR's national laboratories multiplied, and the 1958 Scientific Policy Resolution declared science the basis of national development.

Why it matters: These institutions are the reason India could later build nuclear weapons, launch satellites, and export engineers worldwide — the long-run payoff of Nehru's science bet. UPSC's S&T questions on the nuclear programme, space, and the IIT system all trace back to these founding decisions. The 1958 Resolution is also the ancestor of every subsequent science policy.

Key facts: Atomic Energy Commission: 1948 (Bhabha). First IIT: Kharagpur, 1951. Scientific Policy Resolution: 1958. Bhabha's three-stage nuclear programme — conceived in the 1950s — still guides India's nuclear strategy. The IITs were declared "institutions of national importance" by the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961.

How UPSC tests it: Prelims asks about the first IIT and the 1948 Commission. Mains asks about the role of state-led science in development — the achievements (space, nuclear, pharma) weighed against the critique (elite institutions vs mass education).

Quick-Revision Tables

Table 1: Key Dates — Integration & Reorganisation

Event	Date	One-line fact
Independence	15 Aug 1947	Indian Independence Act; lapse of paramountcy
Radcliffe Award announced	17 Aug 1947	Boundary between India and Pakistan
J&K Instrument of Accession	26 Oct 1947	Three subjects: defence, foreign affairs, communications
Junagadh taken over	Nov 1947	Plebiscite Feb 1948 voted for India
Gandhi assassinated	30 Jan 1948	Nathuram Godse; RSS banned Feb 1948–Jul 1949
Operation Polo (Hyderabad)	13–18 Sep 1948	Called a "police action"; Nizam surrendered 18 Sep
Constitution adopted / in force	26 Nov 1949 / 26 Jan 1950	395 articles, 8 schedules at adoption
Planning Commission set up	15 Mar 1950	Replaced by NITI Aayog, 1 Jan 2015
Patel died	15 Dec 1950	National Unity Day: 31 Oct (his birthday)
First general elections	Oct 1951–Feb 1952	CEC Sukumar Sen; Congress 364/489 seats
Potti Sriramulu died	15 Dec 1952	After 56-day fast for Andhra state
Andhra State formed	1 Oct 1953	First linguistic state; capital Kurnool
SRC appointed	Dec 1953	Chairman Justice Fazl Ali; report Oct 1955
Pondicherry de facto transfer	1 Nov 1954	De jure transfer 16 Aug 1962
States Reorganisation Act	1 Nov 1956 (effective)	14 states + 6 UTs; Parts A/B/C/D abolished
Bombay bifurcated	1 May 1960	Maharashtra + Gujarat
Goa liberated (Operation Vijay)	18–19 Dec 1961	Portuguese surrender 19 Dec
Nagaland statehood	1 Dec 1963	First tribal-majority state; Art 371A
Punjab reorganised	1 Nov 1966	Haryana created; Chandigarh UT + joint capital

Privy purses abolished	1971	26th Constitutional Amendment
------------------------	------	-------------------------------

Table 2: Personalities to Remember

Person	Role	Exam hook
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	Deputy PM, Home & States Minister	Integrated 552 princely states; "Iron Man of India"
V. P. Menon	Secretary, States Ministry	Drafted the Instrument of Accession; memoir on integration
Lord Mountbatten	Last Viceroy, first Governor-General	Persuaded rulers to accede; added plebiscite offer in Kashmir
Cyril Radcliffe	Chairman, Boundary Commissions	Drew the India–Pakistan boundary in five weeks
Nizam Osman Ali Khan	Ruler of Hyderabad	Sought independence; surrendered after Operation Polo
Maharaja Hari Singh	Ruler of J&K	Signed Instrument of Accession 26 Oct 1947
Sheikh Abdullah	Leader, National Conference	Supported accession; Delhi Agreement 1952
Potti Sriramulu	Gandhian activist	56-day fast, died 15 Dec 1952; triggered Andhra state
Justice Fazl Ali	Chairman, SRC	Commission appointed Dec 1953
Sukumar Sen	First Chief Election Commissioner	Ran the 1951–52 general elections
Homi Bhabha	Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission	Three-stage nuclear programme
P. C. Mahalanobis	Statistician, ISI	Architect of the Second Plan's heavy-industry strategy

Table 3: Operations, Commissions & Agreements

Name	Year	What it was
Operation Polo	1948	Integration of Hyderabad ("police action")
Operation Vijay (Goa)	1961	Liberation of Goa, Daman & Diu
Dhar Commission	1948	Opposed linguistic provinces

JVP Committee	1949	Nehru–Patel–Sitaramayya; also said no for the moment
States Reorganisation Commission	1953–55	Fazl Ali; accepted linguistic principle with safeguards
Delhi Agreement	1952	Nehru–Sheikh Abdullah; J&K's constitutional arrangement
Liaquat–Nehru Pact	1950	Protection of minorities in India and Pakistan
Treaty of Cession (France)	1956	Legal cession of French settlements; ratified 1962
Shah Commission (Punjab)	1966	Drew the Punjab–Haryana boundary
Balwant Rai Mehta Committee	1957	Recommended Panchayati Raj after CDP review

Table 4: Acts & Constitutional Amendments of the Era

Act / Amendment	Year	Significance
Indian Independence Act	1947	Created the dominions of India and Pakistan; paramountcy lapsed
UP Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act	1950	First major land reform; triggered the First Amendment
First Constitutional Amendment	1951	Created the Ninth Schedule to protect land-reform laws
Hindu Marriage Act	1955	Outlawed polygamy; allowed divorce among Hindus
Hindu Succession Act	1956	Gave daughters inheritance rights (expanded in 2005)
States Reorganisation Act	1956	14 states + 6 UTs on linguistic lines, effective 1 Nov 1956
7th Constitutional Amendment	1956	Abolished the Part A/B/C/D classification of states
Treaty of Cession (France)	1956	Legal cession of French settlements; ratified 1962
Institutes of Technology Act	1961	Declared IITs "institutions of national importance"
Official Languages Act	1963	Provided for English to continue; amended 1967
Punjab Reorganisation Act	1966	Created Haryana; Chandigarh became a UT
26th Constitutional Amendment	1971	Abolished the princes' privy purses
North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act	1971	Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura became states in 1972

5 Exam Tips for Post-Independence India

1. **Learn dates in pairs, not singles.** UPSC's traps live in the gaps: de facto vs de jure transfer of Pondicherry (1954 vs 1962), Constitution adopted vs in force (Nov 1949 vs Jan 1950), SRC appointed vs reported (1953 vs 1955). Make two-column cards for every pair on this page. Keep a single timeline in your notebook from 1947 to 1966 — every date here sits on it, and UPSC's match-the-following questions are beaten by timelines, not by lists.
2. **Master the "three of everything".** Three subjects in the Instrument of Accession (defence, foreign affairs, communications); three methods of decolonisation (negotiation–Pondicherry, volunteers–Dadra, force–Goa); three parts to the standard integration answer (leadership, popular pressure, legal instruments). Triads are how toppers structure answers. When a Mains question asks about integration or reorganisation, open with one of these triads — it signals structure to the examiner in the first three lines.
3. **Keep Kashmir's legal chain in one line.** Standstill Agreement → tribal invasion Oct 1947 → Instrument of Accession 26 Oct 1947 → UN reference Jan 1948 → ceasefire 1 Jan 1949 → Article 370 (1949) → Delhi Agreement 1952. If you can recite this chain, every Kashmir question becomes manageable. Draw it as a flowchart once, by hand — the visual sticks better than a paragraph, and you can reproduce it in the exam hall in under a minute.
4. **Use the Pakistan comparison in Mains.** India's linguistic reorganisation vs Pakistan's suppression of Bengali (which ended in 1971); India's accepted election results vs Pakistan's coups. The comparison turns a good answer into a memorable one — but keep it analytical, not chest-thumping. Use it once per answer, not in every paragraph — a comparison is a spice, and too much of it makes the answer read like a debate speech.
5. **Revise with the tables in the last month.** Table 1 compresses the whole period into 20 dated rows — that is the exact density of Prelims statements. Cover the middle column and recall the dates; then cover the right column and recall the facts. In the final week, reduce this page to Table 1 alone — if you can fill all three columns from memory, you are ready for anything Prelims asks on this period.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many princely states were integrated into India?

The number usually cited is 552 (some sources say 562, counting the smallest estates differently). All but three — Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Jammu & Kashmir — had acceded by 15 August 1947. Junagadh was taken over in November 1947, Hyderabad integrated through Operation Polo in September 1948, and J&K acceded on 26 October 1947 under wartime conditions. If a Prelims option says 552 and another says 562, both refer to the same integration — read the question's framing before choosing.

2. What subjects did the Instrument of Accession cover?

Only three: defence, external affairs, and communications. Everything else remained with the ruler initially. A separate Standstill Agreement kept day-to-day arrangements (railways, posts, customs) running during the transition. Kashmir's accession used this same standard instrument — the three-subject limit is the origin of its special constitutional arrangement under Article 370. A common confusion: the Standstill Agreement was purely administrative — it kept the trains and post offices running while the political question was settled.

3. Why is 1 November 1956 important?

It is the day the States Reorganisation Act took effect: India's map was redrawn into 14 states and 6 Union Territories on largely linguistic lines, and the old Part A/B/C/D classification was abolished (via the 7th Amendment). It marks the final replacement of the colonial administrative map with a democratic one — as significant for India's federal structure as 1947 was for its independence. Note that reorganisation did not end in 1956 — Bombay (1960), Nagaland (1963), Punjab (1966), and the Northeast (1972) all came later, each following the same logic of democratic consent.

4. What was the difference between the French and Portuguese decolonisation?

France negotiated: popular movements plus diplomatic pressure produced the de facto transfer of Pondicherry in 1954 and legal cession in 1956 (ratified 1962). Portugal refused to negotiate, declaring Goa an "overseas province" — so India used force in Operation Vijay (December 1961). Dadra and Nagar Haveli were liberated by volunteers in 1954, a third method between the two. The lesson UPSC draws: India preferred negotiation, used force only when diplomacy was exhausted, and timed it to minimise international costs — a pattern visible again in later crises.

5. Did linguistic reorganisation weaken Indian unity?

The evidence says the opposite. The fear in 1947–53 was that linguistic states would Balkanise India; instead, they became the building blocks of Indian federalism, giving democracy a language citizens understood and defusing separatist pressure. The contrast with Pakistan — which suppressed Bengali and lost its eastern wing in 1971 — is the standard argument. Costs were real (boundary and water disputes), but suppression would likely have produced the very breakup that was feared. The strongest single piece of evidence is negative: the one great secession in South Asia happened in the country that refused linguistic accommodation, not in the one that practised it.

6. What is the connection between the Privy Purses and the 26th Amendment?

At accession, rulers were promised tax-free privy purses as the price of signing away sovereignty. In 1971, Indira Gandhi's government abolished them through the 26th Constitutional Amendment (deleting Articles 291 and 362), after the Supreme Court blocked an executive-order attempt in 1970. The abolition completed the democratic revolution that integration began — ending the last formal privilege of the princes. The episode is also a landmark in the executive-vs-judiciary story: when the Court blocked the 1970 order, the government went back through Parliament — the same Parliament-vs-court tension that produced *Kesavananda Bharati* in 1973.