

History Of Jammu & Kashmir

Describe the circumstances that led J and K state to come into being?

Maharaja Gulab Singh is considered as a chief architect of J and K State. He entered the services of Ranjit Singh in 1809. He defeated Main Digo, a chief in Jammu. In 1820, the Province of Jammu was granted to him by Ranjit Singh as a Jagir and was given the title of Raja. Subsequently, Kishtiwari, Rajouri, Ladakh and Baltistan were annexed to Jammu on 16th March, 1846, British made a treaty with Maharaja Gulab Singh at Amritsar transferring J and K to him for 75 lakh of rupees. Gulab Singh entered Kashmir on November 9, 1846.

Comment on the reorganization and reformation of the administration during the period (1846-1947):

The period between (1846-1947) was the rule of Dogras in J and K. Maharaja Gulab Singh was succeeded by his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh. He introduced a number of reforms in the administration of the state. He set up three main departments for the revenue, the civil and the military. New subdivisions were created for both civil and revenue administration. The judicial system was reorganized and penal code was drawn up. Appeal courts were set up both in Jammu and Srinagar. Educational institutions were established.

After his death, Maharaja Pratap Singh carried out several progressive reforms. New Departments of accounts, public works, police, forests and revenue were established. A food control department was established to supply rice to the people.

Maharaja Hari Singh ascended the throne in 1925. He adopted the policy of moderation. He granted concession to the people and entertained their claim for representation in the legislature and the executive. He also constituted an administration council to assist him in administering the state. A legislature called the Prajasabha having 75 members was constituted and elections were held to elect its members.

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What were the developments in the field of communication under the Dogra rulers?

Before the commencement of the Dogra rule, the state of Jammu and Kashmir had no roads. The Dogra rulers constructed the Jhelum Valley Cart Road from Kolcala to Baramulla and Srinagar in 1890. The construction of this road greatly helped in the development of means of communication. The Jammu Srinagar highway was thrown open for public transport in 1922. A railway link was also opened between Jammu and Sialkote in 1890.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh laid Telegraphic lines in the valley and Ladakh. The postal service was also started. Telephone connection between Jammu and Srinagar was also setup. The introduction and development of means of communication and transport helped the people to come close and have direct contact with the people living outside the state. It brought economic activity and facilitated and increased the flow of trade.

Sketch on the progress in the sphere of education and medicare facilities:

a. ***Sphere of Education:*** - During the 19th century, education was only meant for the rich affluent people that too in Maktabas, Patshalas or through private tuition. The courses of study included vernacular languages, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. The rulers didn't pay attention towards the development of education. The first school imparting modern education was opened in 1886 during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh. It was also in 1880 that Rev. J.H. Knowles laid the foundation of Christian Missionary Society (CMS). Only a few students enrolled in the school. In 1890, the state authorities permitted the CMS to shift to a large house in Fateh Kadal. The number of students increased to 250, when Tyndale Biscoe joined the school. The school introduced subjects like English, Urdu, Hindi, Persian, Mathematics, Science and Art. A girls school was also started by CMS, and under the guidance of Miss Mallinson was instrumental in bringing about enough education and cultural advancement among the women of Srinagar.

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By 1905, the first college called Sri Pratap College was established and the number of state schools rose to 133. Expansion of education witnessed tremendous development after 1925. In 1945, there were 2157 educational institutes in the state and the number of students had risen to 1, 34, and 457. The first Kashmir University was established in 2nd April 1948.

b. Sphere of Medicare: - Modern Medicare system saw its emergence during the Dogra Rule. It was the advent of Christian Missionaries in Kashmir that helped in the development of health care measures. Rev. Robert Clark opened the first dispensary in Srinagar on 2nd May, 1864. The Christian Missionaries had to start in tented rooms. However, in 1874 Maharaja Ranbir Singh granted a site to the Mission Hospital. The Hospital building was constructed by the state government. It came to be known as Drugjan hospital. Another hospital exclusively for women was established at Rainawari by the Church of England. The devotion and skill of the medical missionaries brought about a great change in the outlook of the people.

Describe the revenue structure and reforms during the period:

The main contributors to the state revenue were the agriculturists. They had to pay about one half of the produce. The revenue was paid partly in cash and partly in kind. Tax was also levied on everything except air and water. There was tax on sale of wood, marriage tax, taxation on circumcision etc.

It was Sir Walter Lawrence, (The revenue settlement officer) who introduced reforms in the revenue system. The land revenue was reduced to one-third. Maharaja Hari Singh granted proprietary rights to the peasants.

