



## Shaheed Diwas

**For Prelims:** Shaheed Diwas, Bhagat Singh, Hindustan Republican Association, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Kakori Case

**For Mains:** Indian Freedom Movement, Bhagat Singh and his contributions to the Indian Independence movement.

### Why in News?

Every year, [Shaheed Diwas](#), also known as **Martyrs' Day or Sarvodaya Day**, is observed on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

- This Day should not be confused with the [Martyrs' Day](#) observed on 30th January, the day [Mahatma Gandhi](#) was assassinated.

### What is the History behind Shaheed Diwas?

- It was on this day that [Bhagat Singh](#), **Sukhdev and Rajguru** were executed by the British government in 1931.
  - They were **hanged to death for assassinating John Saunders**, a British police officer in 1928. They had mistaken him for British police superintendent James Scott.
    - It was Scott who had ordered lathi charge, which eventually led to the death of [Lala Lajpat Rai](#).
  - While Bhagat Singh, who had publicly announced avenging Lala Lajpat Rai's death, went into hiding for many months after this shootout, **he resurfaced along with an associate Batukeshwar Dutt**, and the two, in April 1929, set off two explosive devices inside the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi.
    - Allowed themselves to be arrested, while shouting the famous slogan: **"Inquilab Zindabad"**, or **"Long live the revolution"**.
- Their lives **inspired countless youth and in their death, they set an example**. They carved out their own path for independence, where **individual heroism** and their aggressive need to do something for the nation stood out, departing from the path followed by the Congress leaders then.

### Who was Bhagat Singh?

- **Early Life:** [//](#)



- Born as Bhaganwala on the **26<sup>th</sup> September, 1907**, Bhagat Singh grew up in a petty-bourgeois family of Sandhu Jats settled in the Jullundur Doab district of the Punjab.
  - He belonged to a **generation that was to intervene between two decisive phases** of the Indian national movement - the phase of the '**Extremism**' of **Lal-Bal-Pal** and the **Gandhian phase of nonviolent mass action**.

#### ▪ **Role in Freedom Struggle:**

- In 1923, Bhagat Singh **joined the National College, Lahore** which was founded and managed by **Lala Lajpat Rai and Bhai Parmanand**.
  - The **College was set up as an alternative to the institutions** run by the Government, bringing to the field of education the idea of Swadeshi.
- In 1924 in Kanpur, he became a member of the **Hindustan Republican Association**, started by **Sachindranath Sanyal** a year earlier. The main organiser of the Association was **Chandra Shekhar Azad** and **Bhagat Singh** became very close to him.
  - It was as a **member of the HRA that Bhagat Singh began to take seriously the philosophy** of the Bomb.
    - **Revolutionary Bhagwati Charan Vohra** wrote the famous article **philosophy of the Bomb**. Including the philosophy of bomb he authored three important political documents; the other two were **Manifesto of Naujawan Sabha** and **Manifesto of HSRA**.
    - **Armed revolution** was understood to be the only weapon with which to fight British imperialism.
- In 1925, **Bhagat Singh returned to Lahore** and within the next year he and his colleagues started a militant youth organisation called the **Naujawan Bharat Sabha**.
- In April 1926, **Bhagat Singh established contact with Sohan Singh Josh** and through him the '**Workers and Peasants Party**' which brought out the monthly magazine Kirti in Punjabi.
  - For the next year **Bhagat Singh worked with Josh** and joined the editorial board of Kirti.
- In 1927, **he was first arrested on charges of association with the Kakori Case**, accused for an article written under the pseudonym Vidrohi (Rebel). He was also **accused of being responsible for a bomb explosion** at Lahore during the Dussehra fair.
- In 1928, Bhagat Singh **changed the name of Hindustan Republican Association to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**. In 1930, when Azad was shot, the HSRA collapsed.
  - **Naujawan Bharat Sabha** replaced **HSRA in Punjab**.
- His time in the prison was spent **protesting, seeking better living conditions for inmates**. During this time, he gained the sympathy of the public, especially when he joined fellow defendant Jatin Das in a hunger strike.
  - The strike ended with **Das' death from starvation in September 1929**. Two years later, Singh was convicted and hanged at the age of 23.

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