



50th Anniversary of Sikkim's Integration with India

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Why in News?

The **Prime Minister** congratulated [Sikkim](#) on the **50th anniversary** of its **integration into the Indian Union**, marking its official recognition as the **22nd state of India** on **16th May 1975**.

What are the Key Facts About Sikkim's Integration with India?

- **Monarchical Background:** Sikkim was a **hereditary monarchy** ruled by the **Chogyal dynasty** from **1642 to 1975**.
- **Sikkim's Autonomy:** It maintained its **autonomy** during British colonial rule and post Indian independence through:
 - **Treaty of Tumlong (1861):** Sikkim became a **protectorate state** of British India.
 - **Treaty of Titaliya (1817):** It gave the British authorities several **commercial and political advantages** in Sikkim.
 - **Calcutta Convention (1890):** It demarcated the **Sikkim-Tibet border**, signed by **Viceroy Lord Lansdowne** and **Qing China's Imperial Associate Resident in Tibet**.
 - **The Convention** was affirmed by the **Lhasa Convention (1904)**.
 - **Indo-Sikkim Treaty (1950):** It made **Sikkim** an **Indian protectorate**, with India controlling **defence, external affairs, and communication**, while Sikkim retained **internal autonomy**.
- **Merger with India:** In **1975**, a **referendum** saw participation from **two-thirds** of eligible voters, with **97%** voting to **abolish the monarchy** and **join India**.
 - **35th Amendment Act, 1974:** The status of Sikkim as a **protectorate state** was **terminated** and Sikkim was given the status of '**Associate State**' of India.
 - **36th Amendment Act, 1975:** It made Sikkim a **full-fledged state** in India.

What are Key Facts About Sikkim?

- **About:** **Sikkim** is the **smallest state** after Goa and is situated in the **northeastern** part of India in the **eastern Himalayas**.
 - It shares borders with the **Tibet Autonomous Region of China** to the north and northeast, **Bhutan** to the southeast, the Indian state of **West Bengal** to the south, and **Nepal** to the west.
- **New Developments:** **Soreng district** in **Sikkim** will be developed as **India's first organic fishery cluster**. To boost **tourism**, the **Pelling Ropeway** was inaugurated as part of efforts to make Sikkim a **global tourism hub**.
 - Notably, Sikkim became the **world's first fully organic state** in **2016**.



▪ **Geography:**

- **Mountains:** [Mount Kanchenjunga](#), India's highest peak and the world's third highest mountain lies in Sikkim.

- **Rivers:** Sikkim is drained by the [Teesta river](#) and its tributaries such as the **Rangit, Lhonak, Talung and Lachung**. Teesta river is a tributary of [Brahmaputra river](#).
 - Teesta river water conflict is one of the most contentious issues between **India and Bangladesh**.
- **Glaciers:** [Zemu glacier](#), Lhonak glacier, Changsang glacier, **Boktok glacier** etc.
- **Lakes:** **Tsomgo Lake (Changu Lake)**, Menmecho lake, Bidang Cho lake, Gurudongmar lake etc.
- **Passes:** [Nathu La](#), **Jelep La**, Dongkha La, Chiwabhanjang Pass.
- **Biodiversity:** Sikkim covering just **0.2 %** of the geographical area of the country has tremendous biodiversity and has been identified as **one of the Hotspot in the Eastern Himalayas**.
 - **Flora:** Oaks, Chestnuts, **Rhododendrons, Magnolias**, Japanese Cedar, Toona, Castanopsis etc.
 - **Fauna:** **Himalayan squirrel, Large palm civet, Yellow-throated martens, Flying squirrels**, Bar-headed geese, **Indian tortoiseshell, Golden sapphire**, Red panda, Blue Sheep, Gorals, Tibetan antelope.
 - **Protected Areas:** [Kanchenjunga National Park \(World Heritage Site\)](#) (2016), Biosphere Reserve (2018)), **Fambong Lho Sanctuary**, Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary, Maenam Sanctuary, **Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary** etc.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question

Q. Consider the following pairs (2019)

Glacier	River
1. Bandarpunch	: Yamuna
2. Bara Shigri	: Chenab
3. Milam	: Mandakini
4. Siachen	: Nubra
5. Zemu	: Manas

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) 1, 2 and 4
- (b) 1, 3 and 4
- (c) 2 and 5
- (d) 3 and 5

Ans: (a)

Q. With reference to river Teesta, consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The source of river Teesta is the same as that of Brahmaputra but it flows through Sikkim.
2. River Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is a tributary of river Teesta.
3. River Teesta flows into Bay of Bengal on the border of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

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