

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE STATE

Haryana has a proud history dating back to the Vedic Ages. The state was home to the legendary Bharata dynasty, after which the country was named Bharat. The land of Haryana has been the cradle of Indian culture and civilization. Archaeological investigations performed by Guy E. Pilgrim in 1915 established that 15 million years ago, the early man lived in the Haryana Shivaliks. In Vamana Purana it has been described that King Kuru ploughed the field at Kurukshetra with a golden plough, drawn by the Nandi of Lord Shiva, and reclaimed an area of seven 'Kosas'.

Replete with myths legends and Vedic references, Haryana's past is steeped in glory. It was on the pious land of Haryana that saint Ved Vyas wrote Mahabharata epic. It was here that Lord Krishna delivered the celestial gospel of karam yoga to Arjuna enshrined in Siri Madbhagwad Geeta about 5000 years ago. It was here that the epic battle of Mahabharata was fought. Being the gateway to north India, the region has been the battleground of a number of wars. The Huns, the Turks and Tughlaqs invaded Haryana and decisive battles were fought on this land. At the end of the 14th Century, Tamur led an army through this area to Delhi. Later, the Mughals defeated the Lodhis in the historic battle of Panipat in 1526. Another decisive battle was also fought in 1556 at this very site, establishing the supremacy of the Mughals. Third battle between Marathas and Ahmed Shah Abdali was also fought at Panipat in 1761, in which the Marathas have been defeated. The region of northern Haryana, being in chaotic condition, the various Sikhs established themselves as rulers of Jind, Kaithal, Thanesar and Ladwa. These Sikh rulers, fearing of the encroachments by the Lahore ruler, Ranjit Singh, sought the protection of British Government. By the Treaty of 1809 of Amritsar between the East India Company and Ranjit Singh of Lahore, the region came under the protection of British Government, up to the advent of the British rule and the rise of Delhi as the imperial capital of India.

Bold in spirit and action, the people of Haryana have always formed a bulwark against the forces of aggression and anti-nationalism. In fact, the history of Haryana reads like a saga of the struggle of righteous, forthrightness and proud people of state which are known for their traits of bravery and valour.

An Adjunct to Delhi, Haryana practically remained anonymous until the First War of India's Independence in 1857. After the British crushed the rebellion, they deprived the Nawabs of Jhajjar and Bahadurgarh, the Raja of Ballabgarh and Rao Tula Ram of Rewari in Haryana region, of their territories. These were either merged with British territories or handed over to the rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, making Haryana a part of the Punjab Province.

With the reorganization of Punjab on November 1, 1966, Haryana was carved out as a full-fledged state. Strategically located, Haryana is bound by Uttar Pradesh in the east, Punjab in the west, Himachal Pradesh in the north and Rajasthan in the south. The National Capital of Delhi is surrounded by Haryana. With just 1.37 per cent of the total geographical area and less than two per cent of India's population, Haryana has carved out a special niche of distinction for itself, whether it is agriculture or industry, canal based irrigation or rural electrification, Haryana keeps marching towards modernity. The state enjoys the unique distinction of being among the first in the country to provide electricity, mettle roads and potable drinking water to all its villages.
