



## Children's Day and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

**For Prelims:** [Simon Commission](#), [Non-Aligned Movement](#), [Objective Resolution](#), Tribal Panchsheel, [Hindu Code Bill](#), [Bandung \(1955\)](#), [Sino-Indian war](#)

**For Mains:** History and Significance of Children's Day, Contribution of Pt. Nehru in India's Freedom Struggle and Post-independent India

**Source:** [IE](#)

### Why in News?

**Children's Day 2024 (Bal Diwas)**, is celebrated annually on 14th November to honour the **birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru**, the first Prime Minister of India, born on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1889.

- **Nehru (affectionately called Chacha Nehru)** is remembered for his strong bond with children and his significant contributions to their welfare.

### What is the History and Significance of Children's Day?

- **Children's Rights and Development:** The day is observed to raise awareness about the rights and welfare of children, focusing on their **education, health, nutrition, and overall development**.
- **Earlier Observance of World Children's Day:** World Children's Day was first **established in 1954 as [Universal Children's Day](#)** and is celebrated on **20th November** each year to promote international togetherness, and awareness among children worldwide to improve children's welfare.
  - **20<sup>th</sup> November** is notable for the [UN's](#) adoption of the [Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959](#) and the [Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989](#).
  - Following the death of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1964, the **Government of India** decided to dedicate **14th November** as **Children's Day** to honour Nehru's legacy and his commitment to children's issues.
- **Significance of Children's Day:**
  - Children's Day underscores the importance of children's rights, including education, protection from exploitation, and healthcare, while emphasising quality education and programs like the [Right to Education Act, 2009](#), [Integrated Child Development Services \(ICDS\)](#) for holistic development.
  - India's policies on child welfare align with international conventions such as the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

### What are the Contributions of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru?

- **Pre-Independence Era (1889-1947):**
  - Nehru entered politics in 1912, attending the **27th Congress session** at **Bankipore Congress** as a delegate and became [Home Rule League Secretary in 1919](#).

- He organised the **first Kisan** March in Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh, in 1920 and was twice imprisoned during the 1920-22 **Non-Cooperation Movement**.
- He became **General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC)** in **1923**.
- In 1926, Nehru committed the Congress to independence at the Madras Congress. In 1928, he was lathi-charged while leading a procession against the **Simon Commission** in Lucknow.
- In 1928, Nehru played a crucial role in **drafting and signing the Nehru Report (drafted by Motilal Nehru)**, which was a proposal for constitutional reforms in India.
- Nehru also established the **Independence for India League in 1928**, aiming to advocate for full independence from British rule.
- In **1929**, at the **Lahore Congress**, Nehru was **elected President**, and the Congress officially adopted complete independence as its goal (known as the **Purna Swaraj Resolution**).
- On **7th August 1942**, Nehru moved the **Quit India Resolution** at the **All-India Congress Committee (AICC) session in Bombay**.
- **Achievements of Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister:**
  - **Vision for Modern India:** During his tenure as **India's first Prime Minister** (1947-1964), Nehru established a modern democratic state, promoted secularism and scientific advancement, and laid the foundations for industrialisation.
  - **Social Reforms:** At its core, the **Hindu Code Bill** aimed to replace religious laws with a secular civil code. It sought **to outlaw polygamy, grant women property and divorce rights**, amend inheritance laws, and introduce inter-caste marriage provisions.
    - **Tribal Panchsheel:** Jawaharlal Nehru's **Tribal Panchsheel emphasised self-development, respect for tribal rights**, minimal external imposition, local participation in administration, and human-centred outcomes over financial metrics.
  - **Economic Development and Institutions:** Nehru established key institutions like **IITs**, the **Indian Institute of Management**, the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**.
    - These institutes are essential for India's economic growth and emphasise industrialization through the **Five-Year Plans** for self-sufficiency.
    - He championed the development of a scientific temperament to fight religious obscurantism and superstition, continuing the legacy of social reformers like **Raja Ram Mohan Roy**.
  - **Institutionalisation of Democracy:** Nehru's '**Objective Resolution**' guided the **Constituent Assembly** in drafting the constitution, shaping the preamble and significantly deciding the philosophy of the **Constitution of India**.
  - **Foreign Policy of Nonalignment:**
    - **NAM:** Nehru's nonalignment policy aimed to keep India neutral during the **Cold War**. He was pivotal in forming the **Non-Aligned Movement**, promoting global peace at the **Bandung (1955)** and **Belgrade (1961)** conferences.
    - **Panchsheel Principle:** Also known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, are a set of principles that were jointly formulated by India and China in the 1950s. It includes
      - Mutual Respect for Each Other's Territorial Integrity and Sovereignty.
      - Mutual Non-Aggression.
      - Mutual Non-Interference in Each Other's Internal Affairs.
      - Equality and Mutual Benefit.
      - Peaceful Coexistence.
- **Criticisms of Nehruvian Policy:**
  - **Kashmir Dispute:** Nehru's foreign policy focused on the Kashmir issue, seeking UN support **post-1947 partition**, but struggled to resolve the conflict with Pakistan.
  - **Goa Liberation:** In 1961, Nehru's military action to liberate Goa from Portuguese rule faced international criticism but was seen as a justified anti-colonial step.
  - **The 1962 Sino-Indian War:** Nehru's failure to modernise or upgrade Indian forces before the **1962 Sino-Indian War** highlighted the need for enhanced defence measures, forcing a reevaluation of India's military preparedness and strategic approach.
- **Legacy:**
  - Nehru's **secular, socialist approach** shaped India's post-independence trajectory, laying

the groundwork for a modern nation despite challenges like the **Kashmir issue** and the **Sino-Indian war**.

- Nehru's secularism fostered humanistic values and national development. His ideas, rooted in Indian tradition, emphasised religious equality, humanism, and universal ethics.
- Nehru unified India's diverse communities, promoting policies to balance traditional diversity with modern governance.
  - Nehru concluded that the government must sustain religious diversity, aligning with the idea of separating religion from politics.

## Conclusion

Children's Day (Bal Diwas) serves as a reminder of India's commitment to **child welfare** and **education**. It underscores the need for **comprehensive policies** for children's protection, **rights**, and **development**.

### Drishti Mains Question

How do Jawaharlal Nehru's ideas and initiatives continue to shape the nation's progress as a modern secular state?

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

### Prelims:

**Q. What was the exact constitutional status of India on 26th January, 1950? (2021)**

- (a) A Democratic Republic
- (b) A Sovereign Democratic Republic
- (c) A Sovereign Secular Democratic Republic
- (d) A Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic

**Ans: (b)**

**Q. The Preamble to the Constitution of India is (2020)**

- (a) a part of the Constitution but has no legal effect
- (b) not a part of the Constitution and has no legal effect either
- (c) a part of the Constitution and has the same legal effect as any other part
- (d) a part of the Constitution but has no legal effect independently of other parts

**Ans: (d)**

**Q. Who among the following were the founders of the "Hind Mazdoor Sabha" established in 1948? (2018)**

- (a) B. Krishna Pillai, E.M.S. Namboodiripad and K.C. George
- (b) Jayaprakash Narayan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay and M.N. Roy

(c) C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, K. Kamaraj and Veeresalingam Pantulu

(d) Ashok Mehta, T.S. Ramanujam and G.G. Mehta

**Ans: (d)**

**Q. Consider the following statements: (2010)**

1. The “Bombay Manifesto” signed in 1936 openly opposed the preaching of socialist ideals.
2. It evoked support from a large section of the business community from all across India.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: (a)**

**Mains:**

**Q.** Discuss each adjective attached to the word ‘Republic’ in the ‘Preamble’. Are they defensible in the present circumstances? (2016)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/children-s-day-and-pt-jawaharlal-nehru>