

## Evolution and development of Mussoorie City

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### Abstract

This research journal delves into the comprehensive evolution and development of Mussoorie City, tracing its history from ancient times to the present. The study explores Mussoorie's origins, including its early significance and its transformation under British colonial rule when it was established as a strategic hill station. It details key phases of development, including the establishment of pivotal institutions such as the Himalayan Club and the American Hospital, and the city's growth during the post-independence era with the influx of refugees and the establishment of new educational and civic facilities. The research further examines the modernization of Mussoorie from the late 20th century, highlighting the rise of luxury accommodations and infrastructure improvements. By integrating historical data with contemporary developments, the journal provides a thorough understanding of how Mussoorie has evolved, reflecting broader trends in urbanization, tourism, and economic growth in hill stations.

**Keywords:** Origin, evolution, development, mussoorie

### Introduction

The history of cities is very ancient and interesting. Since the time cities were formed, their functions have been changing. Some cities still hide their entire ancient history in themselves due to their prominent position and political circumstances. Some cities have lost their existence over time, while some have been revived. Thus, the development, rise and fall of cities has been taking place with the changing values of time. Most hill stations were built during the British period, and even today new cities are being built as hill stations. There have been some cultural and environmental reasons for setting up hill stations, but these reasons or desires could not be fulfilled due to the political dominance of the British. Mainly hill stations were established between 1815 and 1870. Due to social development, the earlier rural and agricultural society was replaced by the new urban and semi-industrial society and new social behavior was separated from each other and started being seen as different firsts. The British first organized these activities for trade and profit and such an urban system developed. The important aspect of this arrangement was that an institutional form of leisure appeared parasitic.

It first appeared in the calendar (season, weekend) instead of the year. Then it developed as new urban farms (hotels, grading houses) and produced new types of economic activities (business and entertainment). The immediate purpose of hill stations was to station troops to protect the borders. Roads and means of transport were built for defense purposes. When the British population also started settling here, the hill stations began to develop and expand.

Exploitation of local population and resources began for the construction of roads, railways, bridges, barracks, hospitals, hotels, schools, and cinema halls etc. On one hand, European institutions opened by exploiting the hill population, while on the other hand, exploitation took place through the trade of oil, minerals, and other natural

resources. Hill stations developed in view of unfavorable climate and health. The form of hill areas changed for the residences of the British, barracks of soldiers and hospitals. In the first decade and a half after 1820, the British and Europeans who laid the foundation of present Mussoorie as a hill town included not only 'Captain Young' but also many military and administrative officers and with the contribution of traders, this rugged hilly area came into existence as a city. The origin and development of Mussoorie city have been analyzed through the headings below.

### Ancient History and Nomenclature

The name Mussoorie is not related to any religious or historical event. Although people have different beliefs, historians believe that the only basis behind this name is that Mansoor plants (Gariori and palenesis) were found in abundance on the hills here, on the basis of which it was called 'Massura'. Therefore, its name became 'Mansoorie'. It is true that Mansoorie was called Messoorie and later it got distorted and became famous as 'Mansoorie'. In English address it is called 'Mussoorie' while in local it is also called 'Mansoorie' (Singh, Manish K. 2008) <sup>[1]</sup>. There are many arguments behind the name Mussoorie, whose Prakrit nomenclature is that the origin of the word Mansoorie is the gift of the Muslim ruler, it is said that the commander is called Masoor as a nickname and then it became Mussoorie due to pronunciation. The second argument is that in 1825, Doon's Superintendent Captain F.J. Shore came to this area to spend his free time and then he came to know about Mussoorie because bushes called Mansoor were found in abundance here. Which the hill people used to graze their animals. Due to the plant called Mansoor, Mansoor became famous as Mussoorie and later became Mussoorie. Before the British rule, the present Mussoorie area had its own hill names which the local people have been pronouncing. Before 1825, the old names of the present Mussoorie city

were - Kumaitri (Kumaiti), Dunkol, Sitari ki Tonkri, Satrawadi, Kholri, Bijotri, Joorapani, Kolri, Johar, Kingad and Surada Pani etc. Apart from these, Binog, Hathi Paon, Jabar Khet, Bata Khat, Suwakheli, Bhilhadu, Landhor, Tibba, Bhadrar Hubli, etc. remained in use even after the arrival of the British, due to which the local people also call Pari Tibba as Achhari Banda. During the Gorkha Raj (1803-15) on Badbal, the easiest route for the British to visit Mussoorie was Kalsi, Shailakui and the present Premnagar area. Another reason for visiting is that there was a Bhadrar temple in the hills above the Doon Valley and a temple of Surkanda in the east parallel to this hill range. Earlier

historians have considered the Manligar building of 'Captain Young' as the first building of Mussoorie. In 1823 AD, the first hunting house was built on Gun Hill by Joint Magistrate and Superintendent F.J. Shore. In 1826, Captain Young constructed a residential building called 'The Malingar.' Around the same time, to cater to the British in India who sought a summer resort, as well as to provide a sanatorium for British soldiers, a sanatorium was established on December 24, 1827, in the Landour area near Malingar. By early 1828, the Landour depot had evolved into a small market for soldiers.

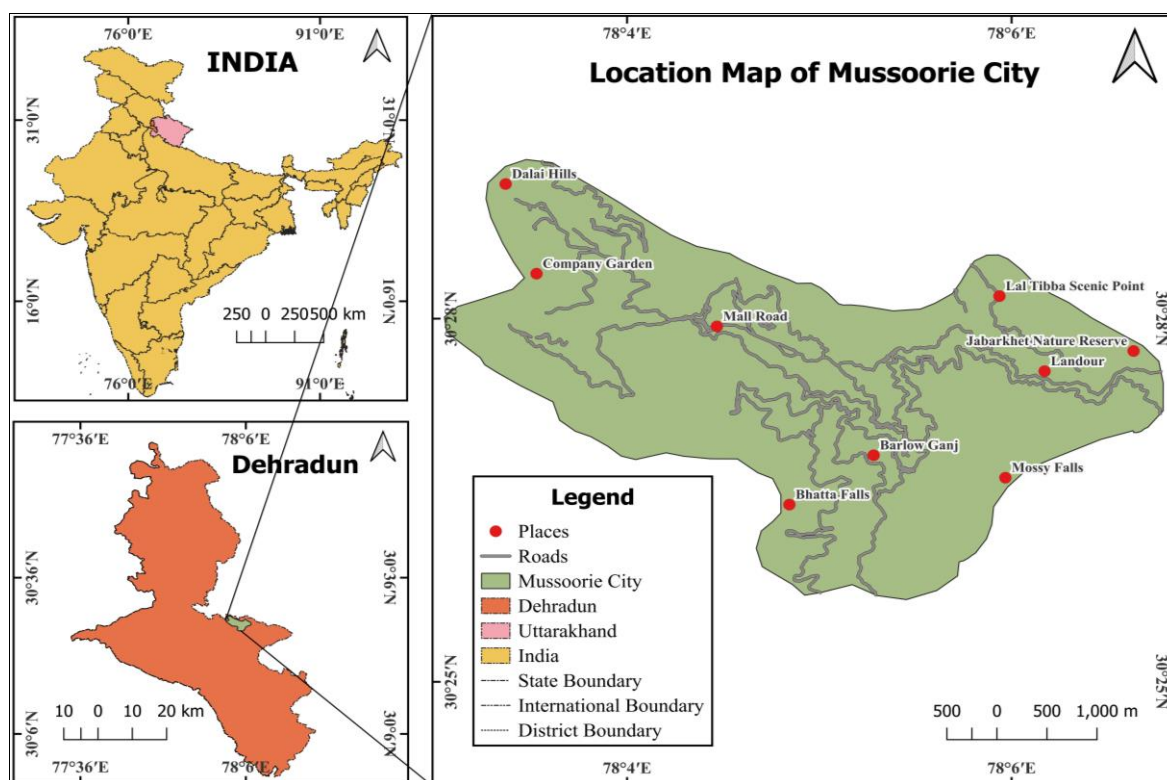


Fig 1: Location map of Mussoorie City

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Malingar. By early 1828, the Landour depot had evolved into a small market for soldiers.

The name "Landour" is thought to have originated from the words "Land + Over," meaning "our land," which became popularly known as "Landhor." The British eventually changed the name to "Landour." Another explanation for the name is the phrase "Land over," which was also adapted into "Landhor." In 1830, Landour was officially declared a cantonment.

Between 1825 and 1829, the development of hunting houses, such as Jeffer Cottage, and the establishment of a market began. In 1829, the first shop opened in what is now the Railway Out Agency and Post Office area. Some of the earliest notable constructions in Mussoorie include The Park (1829), "Phoenix Lodge" (1829), "Everest House" (1832), Devri (1832), and the "Himalayan Club" (1841). On October 1, 1940, the homeowners formed the Mussoorie Committee to oversee and promote the development of Mussoorie.

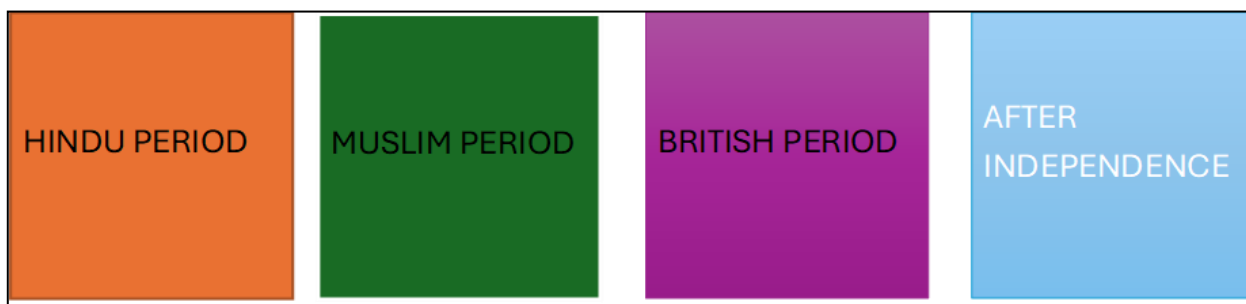
In 1842, Mussoorie was recognized as a 'town' and in 1843, the present Library Bazaar was settled by Janskat and E.A. Petties. Which is also known as Gandhi Chowk after independence. In 1843, Rajpur Mussoorie Marg in Mussoorie was known as Cart Road. Between 1828-42, a building called Kickeng Cottage was built by Captain McGee. In 1852, 'Charleville Hotel' was built by 'General Wilkinson' where Lal Bahadur Shastri National Administrative Academy is located today. During this period, Waverley Convent, School, St. George College, Wood, Weinberg were established in Mussoorie. Many institutions were established during the period from 1850-1900. Police system was established in Mussoorie in 1828, but police post was established in 1840 and after 1850, civil and municipal police were divided into two types. In 1857, Tehri King 'Sudarshan Shah' helped the British during the

days of rebellion and gave shelter to a British family in Mussoorie. John Mackinnon (Mussoorie Municipality President) gave Municipal Fund and Crown Brewery to the British families who took refuge. In 1858, Hersey built a bungalow in Barlowganj in which Wajid Ali Shah lived till his last breath. On 29 May 1986, a social worker lawyer Jyoti Swaroop established Arya Samaj in Landhor Chowk and before independence in 1902, the Prime Minister of Nepal built Fairlawn Palace in Jhadipani. 'Waverley Convent of Jesus and Mary' in 1845 and 'St. George's School' in 1853, 'Waverley Convent of Jesus and Mary' in 1854 and 'St. George's School' in 1853, 'Woodstock School' in 1854, 'Hampton Court' in 1878, 'Wynberg Allen' and 'Oakgrove School' in 1888 and after independence, in the period of 1969-84, Modern School Public School, Mussoorie International School were established.

Ancient History Mussoorie is one of the ancient hill stations of India. The founder of Mussoorie city was an Irish officer working in the Bengal Army of the East India Company. On 4 March 1820, Tehri King 'Sudarshan Shah' leased the present land of Mussoorie city to the East India Company through a charter. Earlier English historians gave the credit of settling Mussoorie to 'Captain Young' of the then Seymour Rifles. The British first came to the forests of Mussoorie through Bhadraj area after 1810. The British thought of settling Mussoorie city in Bhadraj, Binog Hathi Paon area of this area, but here due to lack of water supply, they could not settle the city of Mussoorie. Later, water springs are seen in many parts of the present Mussoorie area, which shows that the present Mussoorie was settled by the British due to the availability of water.

### Origin And Development

**The development of Mussoorie city from its origin to its present development can be divided into 4 periods**



#### 1. Hindu Rulers Period

During this period, the influence of Naga dynasty kings started increasing. Even today, from the inscriptions found at Lakhamandal, situated 75 km away from Mussoorie, it is known that there was a king of Yadavas in this Yamuna valley region. Whose reign is believed to have been till 460 AD. After this, the Katyuris ruled around 850 AD. During this reign, many temples, statues, and artistic buildings were constructed in the areas around Mussoorie. Lakhamandal temple is the gift of Katyuri (Nagar) style of rule. After the Katyuri rule, the entire Uttarakhand region till the Gorkha state remained under the rule of Panwar dynasty and Chand dynasty. Kunwar 'Kanakpal' is believed to be the founder of Garhwal state. The Panwar dynasty ruled till the 36th generation of King Kanakpal. The 37th king Ajaypal ascended the throne in 1500 AD and established a well

organized state. Thus, the following effects were seen in the development of cities during the Hindu period

Development of religious sentiments
Well-organized governance
Establishment of various empires
Construction of temples, statues, and artistic buildings
Center of culture, civilization, economic and political activities
Political Instability

#### 2. Muslim Rulers Period

The influence of Hindu kings ended by 1206. After 1206, the Muslim empire began which encouraged many cities to settle. The period from 1206 to 1707 is considered the Muslim period. During the Muslim period, these cities were encouraged which were equipped with facilities for

manufacturing handicraft items, trade, administration, and education institutions. During the Muslim period, due to constant fighting among Muslim rulers, the development of cities could not take place in a planned manner. They chose the present towns as capitals. The development of cities got maximum impetus during the rule of Akbar and Sher Shah. During this period, there was a lot of development in roads, inns, dharmshalas and markets. The country was divided into administrative units, provinces into divisions, divisions into districts and districts into parganas. Akbar gave the title Shah to the 43rd king of the Panwar dynasty, Balbhadra Shah. During the reign of Prithvi Pati Shah, to save his life from Aurangzeb, he took shelter from the Garhwal king Suleman.

After Prithvi Shah, his son Mandani Shah and then Fajeshah ascended the throne. During his rule, literature was promoted and spread due to his being a lover of literature. During the rule of Fajeshah, Sikh Guru Ramsarai camped in Dehradun, which led to the area being named Dehradun. Until 1820, Mussoorie was owned by Tehri's King Sudarshan Shah, while the Mahant of Gurudarbar was Swaroop Das.

Before Mussoorie was settled till 1820, there were village landlords who had extensive rights under the jagirdari of the king and the Mahant. The villages of Tehri King, Kyarkuli, Bhatta, Tuneta, Kolti, Ghandiyala, Rikholi-Bhitarli, Chamasari had the zamindar system. Kyarkuli landlords were called area government. Before the arrival of the British, Mussoorie used to be dense forest and there used to be only footpaths in the name of buildings and roads. There was a building of the Pandavas during their exile on Vinog Hill. From 1803 to 1815, there was Jaunpur Garhi above Aglad bridge which was destroyed by the time of the invasion of the Gorkhas. The following things influenced the development of the city during the Muslim period.

Construction of mosques, parks, and inns,
Production of handicraft items,
Political instability
Creation of administrative units
Development of religious sentiments
Development of literature and art,
Hindu cities given a recent look by Muslim craftsmen

### 3. British Period

The modern era of Indian history begins from 1707 when the East India Company began to set up political dominance over the country. The East India Company kept its dominance economically and politically from 1757 to 1857. If India remained under the influence of the company, it helped in urbanization in the coastal areas, but when the country came completely under the control of the British rulers, the development of cities got a special impetus. During the British period, the development of cities was influenced by the new British conditions. By the 19th century, some cities of Uttarakhand had ceased to exist because the British government tried to establish hill stations in these areas. In 1814-1816, the possibilities of development in the Himalayan region were opened by the British people. Dehradun was an exceptionally large urban center of the Himalayan region, which had come into existence in 1966. In the 19th century, the British government used hill stations as cantonments, summer camps and administrative purposes. Mussoorie first got

recognition in 1823 when the first shooting box was established in Mussoorie. After 1823, many residential houses were built here due to the establishment of rest houses, military cantonment, and it is becoming a place of attraction for many Europeans. In 1829, British merchant Lawrence opened the first shop here and in the same year 'Phoenix Lodge' and 'Park' were established. In 1823, the first survey office of India was established and in 1835, many residential houses were built in Mussoorie for the residence of British officers. In 1840, St. Paul Church was established under the management of pastor Wilson and about 100 houses were built. In 1814, the 'Himalayan Club' was established, providing accommodation for 148 members. In that same year, Wills, and later Major Brown in 1842, surveyed the settlements of Mussoorie, leading to the establishment of the Mussoorie Municipality. Alongside the Himalayan Club, the first library was founded in 1843, serving as a source of entertainment for the community. During the British rule, Mussoorie touched such heights that 'St. George's School' was established for admission in Roorkee College and Survey Department. Along with the school, banking services were started in Mussoorie in 1846, and Delhi Himalaya Bank was established in 1856. The British established the Charleville Hotel in 1861 for food, accommodation, and entertainment for tourists. In 1865, the first school for girls was opened in Maddox etc. under the management of Stokes School Mr. Archdeacon Part. In 1871, the Town Hall was built which the British people used for cultural programs and meetings. In 1876, British General Beadleigh established a Sainik School.

By the end of the 19th century, hotels, clubs, educational institutions, and administrative offices were established. And business centers were established in Jhadipani, Barlowganj, Mall Road, Happy Valley, and Library Bazaar. By the year 1900, due to the expansion of the railway line in Dehradun, Mussoorie city started expanding as a tourist destination, the number of tourists started increasing. Seeing the increase in tourists, 'Seway Hotel' was established in 1902. By 1907, due to the establishment of 'Gagoli Hydroelectric Powerhouse' (station capacity up to 6600 volts), Mussoorie city started shining with electricity. In 1911, the government built electric substations in Charleville, Library, Landour, Kuldi and Barlowganj. And in 1933, Bhatta and more reservoirs were built. By 1907, Mall Road had been widened and by 1940, Library Bus Station had been built. By 1933, Mussoorie-Dehradun motor road was built, because in 1843 John Mackinnon developed this route as a cart road. In 1856, John Mackinnon surveyed the laying of a railway line to Mussoorie Hill Station, but after his death the plan failed. In 1911, the PWD prepared a blueprint for the railway line from Rajpur to Mussoorie. But in 1921, due to the World War, the entire environment changed. Despite the economic recession, the Mussoorie Development Company took the 'Electric Tramway' in its hands and the work of laying the railway line was started. But later due to political instability and lack of funds, the 'Electric Tramway' failed. During the British period, Mussoorie Hill Station was established for health benefits. Therefore, the British people established the Graceville Nursing Home in 1857 and opened St. Mary's Cottage Hospital in 1904. Subsequently, 'The Mussoorie Senatorian' was established in 1915. In 1838, the American Hospital was set up, which significantly contributed to the city's development and introduced new dimensions to its growth.



Thus, Mussoorie was completely modernized due to the influence of western culture, and it got the credit of 'Queen of Hills'. During the British period, the following things influenced the development of Mussoorie city

<b>Establishment of educational institutions,</b>
Establishment of cantonments,
Establishment of health centers,
Electricity development,
Establishment of industries
Development of administrative work
Development of road routes
Development of business activities

#### 4. After Independence

Independence (1947 to present) After Independence, the factors that led to the establishment of cities during the British period got further impetus in the development of cities. India became independent in 1947. Mussoorie was going through a difficult phase at that time. The British had left and after independence, due to the economic crisis that hit Mussoorie, the entire economy collapsed. The hotels and boarding houses that the British had started were closed. In the middle of a decade of independence, the famous 'Chalinville Hotel' is known as Lal Bahadur Shastri National Administrative Academy. Which was built in 1959. Meanwhile, the owners of the hotels changed, and the names of the hotels also changed. Hindustan and Excelliar hotels are no more. By the 1970s, boarding houses like Vallabh, Summer House, Imperial, Luxmount, Sindh Punjab etc. and Plaza Haven Club Hotel in Kuldi also disappeared by 1970. After 1972, the number of hotels in Mussoorie started increasing and roads also started expanding as tourism increased. After 1980, Mussoorie saw the emergence of five-star hotels, like those in metro cities, leading to a rapid increase in luxury accommodations. One notable example is the JP Residency, which marked the city's growth as a premier tourist destination, catering to the needs of a more affluent visitor demographic and contributing to the local economy. This influx of upscale hotels further enhanced Mussoorie's reputation as a modern hill station with amenities comparable to those found in larger urban centers.

After independence, Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan started coming to Mussoorie. The government opened Dil-Aaram Estate (Kamal Beck Road) for the said refugees. The rule of kings, bawabs and jagirdars ended. After 1954, the process of selling the properties and palaces of kings and nawabs started in Mussoorie. In 1959, the Fairlawn Palace of the former Prime Minister of Nepal was given on rent to the state government. The buildings sold from 1954 to 70 saw a further increase in sales between 1985-94.

After independence, while many whites and Muslims migrated out of Mussoorie, Hindu refugees from Pakistan settled in the city. The population of Mussoorie grew significantly over the decades, reaching 9,849 in 1951, 18,038 in 1961, 26,424 in 1971, and 26,069 in 2001. Between 1947 and 1953, bus stands were constructed at Kitabghar and Masonic Lodge, with the Masonic Lodge Road being completed by the Municipal Chairperson in 1953. On December 31, 1969, the Jhulaghar-Jopatibba ropeway was inaugurated, a project that had been proposed in 1962. Most educational institutions in Mussoorie were established before independence, but between 1969 and

1984, new schools like Modern School, Public School, and Mussoorie International School were founded. Ghanananda Inter College was upgraded to a government college in July of an unspecified year. In 1960, Ramadevi School was relocated to its current site, having previously operated out of Raghushri Hotel. After independence, primary schools such as Charlibil and others were also set up in the city. In 1959, the Central School for Tibetans (CST) was set up for Tibetan refugees who had settled in Mussoorie. Mussoorie Municipal Post Degree College was inaugurated on August 8, 1963. In terms of infrastructure, a reservoir was built on Gun Hill in 1959, and in 1972, boosting pumps were installed in Jinsi, Kolti, and Landour, improving the city's water supply.

Thus, after independence, planned development of Mussoorie, cities getting new economic opportunities, establishment of industries, development of urban facilities, development of transport, establishment of new educational institutions, political peace etc. encouraged the origin and development of the city. The previously developed Barlow Ganj, Jhadipani and Vincent Hill areas remained only colonies of the city as a result of road transport, while physical development became rapid and disorganized with its establishment. Hussain Ganj, the area near Library Bazaar, Zafar Hall of Kuldi Bazaar, main part of Landour Bazaar and Tara Hall etc. were the most affected by disorganized construction. In 1984, dividing part of the huge estate of Mussoorie for sale and purchase by the royal states, industrialists and wealthy people accelerated construction work, which distorted the appearance of the city.

The following effects have been seen on the development of Mussoorie city after independence

<b>Development of road routes</b>
Establishment of various industries
Establishment of administrative works and buildings
Development of transport and communication means
Establishment of educational institutions
Development of military works
Construction and development of tourist places
Impact on business activities
Residential impact

As a result of the above effects and controlled felling of trees, residential settlements kept expanding in Mussoorie and this process of tree felling was given a new dimension by the mining of minerals like limestone, gypsum pyrite etc. available in the nearby areas at the best quality, which had a less positive effect on the economic base of the city but more positive effect on its physical development. Due to the increasing interest in tourism after independence, it has become famous as the 'Queen of Hills' among the tourist destinations of the public.

#### Conclusion

The evolution and development of Mussoorie City reflect a rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and socio-economic changes over the past two centuries. Initially established as a hill station during the British colonial era for strategic military purposes and as a retreat for European settlers, Mussoorie transformed significantly over time. The establishment of institutions like the Himalayan Club, American Hospital, and various educational centers played a pivotal role in shaping the city's infrastructure and social

fabric. Post-independence, Mussoorie continued to grow and diversify with the influx of refugees and the establishment of new educational and civic institutions, contributing to its unique character.

Mussoorie's evolution from a rugged hilly area to a bustling urban center illustrates the city's adaptability and resilience. This transformation has been influenced by numerous factors, including colonial interests, geopolitical shifts, and local cultural influences. Today, Mussoorie stands as a testament to the dynamic interplay between historical legacy and modern development, embodying a blend of colonial heritage, natural beauty, and contemporary growth. This research into Mussoorie's development not only highlights the city's historical significance but also provides insights into the broader patterns of urban development in hill stations across the Indian subcontinent.

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