



Sambhav

Day 49

Question 1: Analyze the various forms of people's resistance against British rule in India prior to the 1857 rebellion. What were the effect of these movements? (250 Words)

Question 2: Examine the causes and consequences of revolt of 1857? Do you think this revolt was a first Independence movement of India. Discuss. (250 Words)

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

Answer 1

Approach

- Briefly introduce the people's resistance against British rule in India prior to the 1857 rebellion.
- Discuss the factor behind these movements with examples and challenges & effect of these movements.
- Conclude suitably

Introduction

- There were many incidents before the 1857 revolt that indicated all was not well and that there was a building resentment against the alien rule. This resentment manifested itself in several bouts of resistance by different groups of people in different regions of India.
- people's resistance against the British rule, encompasses the revolt by several sections of the Indian society who were affected by the alien rule like the peasants, artisans, tribals, ruling classes (active or dispossessed), military personnel (those under the Company as well as the demobilised soldiers of ex-rulers), religious leaders (Hindu and Muslim), etc., fought for the protection of their interests, at times separately and at times together.

Body

- People's resistance took three broad forms: **civil rebellions, tribal uprisings, and peasant movements.**

Factor behind these movements:

- Colonial land revenue settlements, heavy burden of new taxes, eviction of peasants from their lands, and encroachments on tribal lands.
- Exploitation in rural society coupled with the growth of intermediary revenue collectors, tenants, and moneylenders.
- Expansion of revenue administration over tribal lands, leading to the loss of tribal people's hold over agricultural and forest land.
- Promotion of British manufactured goods, heavy duties on Indian industries, especially export duties, leading to devastation of Indian handloom and handicraft industries.
- Destruction of indigenous industry leading to migration of workers from industry to agriculture, increasing the pressure on land/agriculture.

The CVaried form of Movements were:

- **Civil Uprisings: Sanyasi Revolt (1763-1800):** The disastrous famine of 1770 and the harsh economic order of the British compelled a group of sanyasis in Eastern India to fight the British yoke. These sanyasis were joined by a large number of dispossessed small zamindars, disbanded soldiers, and rural poor. Anandamath, a semi-historical novel by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is based on the Sanyasi Revolt.
- **Tribal Revolts: Jungle Mahal Revolt or the Chuar Uprising** Jungle-or Jungal-Mahals is the name given to an indefinite administrative unit lying between the Chota Nagpur and the plains of Bengal.
 - Chuar held their lands under a kind of feudal tenure, but were not strongly attached to the soil, being always ready to change from farming to hunting, at the bidding of their jungle chiefs or zamindars.
 - One could say there was a clash of ways of life. The rebels had so far been living in an agrarian society, in a closed community. The intrusion by colonial forces into their lands exposed them to a new situation which upset their way of life. Also, they were not prepared to accept the outsiders (or non-Adivasis). (The term 'Chuar' is considered derogatory by some historians who call this the Revolt of the Jungle Mahal, instead.)
- **Peasant Movements: Moplah Uprisings** - Hike in revenue demand and reduction of field size, coupled with the oppression of officials, resulted in widespread peasant unrest among the Moplahs of Malabar.

These movements had several challenges:

- These uprisings drew a large number of participants but were, in fact, localised and occurred at different times in different regions.
- They mostly arose out of local grievances.
- The leadership was semi-feudal in character, backwardlooking, traditional in outlook, and their resistance did not offer alternatives to the existing social set-up.
- If many of these revolts seemed similar to one another in wanting to oust the alien rule, it was not because of some 'national' impulse or common effort, but because they were protesting against conditions that were common to them.
- These rebellions were centuries-old in form and ideological / cultural content.

Effect of these movements:

- Some of the grievances of the tribals and peasant were recognised and addressed. Like: The Paika Rebellion succeeded in getting large remissions of arrears, reductions in assessments, suspension of the sale of the estates of defaulters at discretion.
 - Followed by the Assam movement - Company handed over Upper Assam to Maharaja Purandar Singh Narendra and part of the kingdom was restored to the Assamese king.
 - After the Santhal Revolt of 1855-56 that the Santhal Pargana was created out of the districts of Bhagalpur and Birbhum. The pargana was to have special laws within it.
- Britisher used the policy of divide and rule on the basis of caste, creed and locations.,
- The autonomous areas of the north-eastern and in other areas were followed by the similar movement to .

Conclusion

The revolt of 1857 was the aggregation of these small revolt, mutiny and skirmish which called as a major 'Revolt', which was a product of the character and policies of colonial rule after 1757, and after which noteworthy changes took place in the British policy of ruling over India.

Answer 2

Approach

- Briefly introduce about the revolt of 1857.
- Examine the causes and consequences of revolt of 1857. Discuss whether the revolt was first independence movement of India.
- Conclude suitably

Introduction

The Revolt of 1857, also known as the Indian Rebellion of 1857 or the Sepoy Mutiny, was a major uprising in India against British rule. It is considered one of the first and most significant movements for independence in India's history.

Body

Causes of the movement:

- **Discontent among the sepoys:** The sepoys were unhappy with their low pay, poor living conditions, and lack of opportunities for promotion (not eligible for king's commission). They were also resentful of the cultural and racial superiority that was often exhibited by eEast India Company (EIC) officials.
- **Oppressive policies of the EIC:** The EIC had implemented a range of policies that were unpopular among the Indian population, including the Doctrine of Lapse (in case of Jhansi), which allowed the EIC to annex the territories of Indian princes who died without a male heir.
 - This policy was seen as a threat to the rights and privileges of the Indian nobility. The takeover of Avadh/Oudh on the ground of mismanagement.
- **Economic exploitation:** The EIC was heavily involved in the exploitation of India's natural resources and the exploitation of the Indian people. This included high taxes and the forced cultivation of opium, which was exported to China.
- **Social and cultural factors:** The EIC had introduced various social and cultural reforms, such as the prohibition of sati and the promotion of western education, which were seen as a threat to traditional Indian values and customs.

The Consequences of Revolt:

- **Dissolution of the East India Company:** The EIC was replaced by the British Crown, which took direct control of India and established the British Raj.
- **Annexation of princely states:** The revolt led to the annexation of several princely states by the British. These states, which had previously enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy, were brought under the direct control of the British Raj.
- **End of the Mughal Empire:** The last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah II, was exiled to Rangoon (now Yangon) in present-day Myanmar and prince was shot dead on the spot by the English Army.
- **Changes in British policy:** The revolt led to a reevaluation of British policy in India and the introduction of several reforms. These reforms included the appointment of Indian officials to high-ranking positions in the administration, the establishment of a system of public education, and the introduction of measures to improve the living conditions of the Indian people.
- **Impact on the freedom struggle:** The Revolt of 1857 is often seen as the first step in India's struggle for independence from British rule. It was a major turning point in India's history and inspired future generations of freedom fighters to continue the fight for independence.
- **Changes in the nature of the British Raj:** The British Raj became more interventionist and began to implement policies aimed at modernizing and "Westernizing" India.

Conclusion

It inspired future generations of freedom fighters and contributed to the shift in the nature of the British Raj, eventually, it leads to the freedom struggle of India on a more organized, peaceful and comprehensive national wide scale.

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