

1. With the help of suitable examples, comment upon the characteristics of tribal movements during British rule in India.

Approach

A straightforward question where in you need to dwell upon the characteristics of tribal movements during British rule in India with the help of some relevant examples.

Introduction

The tribals of India, like other social groups, participated in the anti-colonial movement where the important tribes involved in revolt in the colonial period were Mizos (1810), Kols (1795 and 1831), Mundas (1889), Daflas (1875), Khasi and Garo (1829), Kacharis (1839), Santhals (1853), Muria Gonds (1886), Nagas (1844 and 1879), Bhuiyas (1868) and Kondhas (1817), etc.

Body

- The tribal groups were an important and integral part of Indian life. Before their annexation and subsequent incorporation in the British territories, they had their own social and economic systems. These systems were traditional in nature and satisfied the needs of the tribals.
- The British policies proved harmful to the tribal society. This destroyed their relatively self-sufficient economy and communities. The tribal groups of different regions revolted against the Britishers. Their movements were anti-colonial in nature because they were directed against the colonial administration.

In this regard, the characteristics of tribal movements during British rule in India can be understood from the following points –

- The tribal anti-colonial movements were of two types – 1. The movements against their oppressors i.e., landlords, money-lenders, traders, thekedars (contractors), government officials and Christian missionaries and 2. The movements which were linked to and merged with the Indian National movement.
- The first type of movements can be termed as anti-colonial because these movements were directed against those classes which were the creation of British colonialism and who collaborated with the tribals. These classes were considered outsiders by the tribals.
- When tribals were unable to pay their loan or the interest thereon, money-lenders and landlords usurped their lands. The tribals thus became tenants on their own land and sometimes even bonded labourers. The police and the revenue officers never helped them.
- The courts were not only ignorant of the tribal agrarian system and customs but also were unaware of the plight of the tribals. All these factors of land

alienation, usurpation, forced labour, minimum wages, and land grabbing compelled many tribes like Munda, Santhals, Kol, Bhils, Warli, etc., in many regions like Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra to revolt.

- They launched movements against their oppressors in their respective regions. Their agitations against the outsiders could be called anti-colonial. For example, Birsa Munda identified their enemies in the outsiders (dikus) - landlords, money-lenders, thekedars and missionaries and European government officials while promising a golden age to his tribe after removing the outsiders from their land.
- On the whole, these movements had social and religious overtone but they were directed against the issues related to their existence. For example, the Jatra Bhagat and Tana Bhagat Movement (1914), started by Jatra Bhagat. It was a movement for monotheism, abstention from meat, liquor and tribal dance. The Jatra Bhagat and Tana Bhagat movements stressed both anti-colonialism and internal reforms.
- The management of forests also led some tribes to revolt, as forests in some regions are the main sources of their livelihood. The rules not only deprived the tribals of several forest products but also made them victims of harassment by the forest officials. This led tribes in Andhra Pradesh and some other areas to launch movements. For example, Rampa rebellion under Alluri Sitaramaraju.
- These 'movements were launched under the leadership of their respective chiefs. Although the movements initially began on social and religious issues and against the oppression of outsiders, in course of time, they merged with the National movement and with the no-tax campaign.
- The tribals fought against their enemies with their traditional weapons i.e., bows, arrows, lathis and axe. Their movement often took a violent turn resulting in the murder of oppressors and the burning of their houses. For example, the revolt of the Ramoshi's in the areas surrounding Bombay.
- Most of the movements were ruthlessly suppressed by the government. The tribals had to comply with British policies which were detrimental to their interests. But after these setbacks, the government introduced protective administration in tribal areas. The government passed I Scheduled District Act (1874) and categorised the tribal areas as excluded areas the Govt. of India Act of 1935.

Conclusion

Tribals formed part of the exploited social groups during the colonial period. As a result of the annexation and subsequent incorporation of tribal areas in the British territories, the tribal movements in India remained confined to some regions only but nonetheless they formed part of the larger national struggle against imperialist powers.

2. Examine the contribution of Bengal in India's freedom struggle.

Approach

Students are expected to write about the contribution of Bengal in India's freedom struggle.

Introduction

Bengal, as West Bengal is popularly known, enjoys eminence for its immense contribution to Indian Independence Movement. In the early 20th-century, Bengal emerged as a hotbed of the Indian independence movement, as well as the epicentre of the Bengali Renaissance. Revolutionary nationalism emerged as a potent political force in Bengal in the wake of the Swadeshi Movement in the first decade of the 20th century. The Swadeshi Movement was the expression of the outrage triggered in Bengal by the partition of the province of Bengal in 1905.

Body

Contributions of Bengal in India's freedom struggle:

- From 1763 to 1800 we witnessed the Sanyasi rebellion in Bengal. It was basically a peasant rebellion starting from Dhaka (now the capital of Bangladesh), and spread up to Bihar the number of the rebels reached up to fifty thousand.
- The Indigo revolt was largely non-violent and it acted as a precursor to Gandhiji's non-violent satyagraha in later years. The revolt was made immensely popular by its portrayal in the play Nil Darpan and also in many other works of prose and poetry. This led to the revolt taking centre stage in the political consciousness of Bengal and impacted many later movements in Indian freedom struggle.
- Bankim Chandra Chatterjee raised nationalism to the level of religion by identifying the Motherland with the Mother-Goddess. It was in Anandamath, he wrote the poem 'Vande Mataram'.
- Bengal Renaissance created many journal houses and associated with many newspapers, journalistic publications like Tattwabadhini Patrika, samprakash, sarbashubhankarr Patrika and Hindu patriot to bring social and educational reforms with regards to the women. This gave the larger social base to Indian national movement.
- Bengal rose into national consciousness on the back of Swadeshi movement and also further became the hub of leftist, socialist elements predominantly the Bengal Intelligentsia (The Bhadraklok).
- The leftists under MN Roy also influenced the development of Democratic, civic libertarian polity with socialist policy that the Indian state finally developed itself into.
- Farmers also became the key stake holders in the freedom struggle as the National Movement took upon itself the ideology of Radical Agrarian Reform

as one of its core principles which was also influenced by the Communist struggles in Bengal.

- Movements in support of Bengal's unity and the swadeshi and boycott agitation were organised in many parts of the country. Tilak, who played a leading role in the spread of the movement outside Bengal, saw in this the ushering in of a new chapter in the history of the national movement. He realised that here was a challenge and an opportunity to organise popular mass struggle against the British rule to unite the country in a bond of common sympathy.
- Bengal School of Art promoted a distinctly Indian modernism which blossomed throughout India during the British Raj of the early 20th century. By synthesizing folk art, Indian painting traditions, Hindu imagery, indigenous materials and depictions of contemporary rural life, artists of the Bengal School of Art celebrate humanism and bring a dynamic voice to Indian identity, freedom, and liberation.
- The Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar would serve as the two main organisations that would mark what was termed as the "Agni Yug" (the era of fire). Underground cells sprung up to train Indians in weapons and bomb-making. Assassinations of anti-Swadeshi officials, who brutally crushed protests, became commonplace. Such tactics and their success would subsequently inspire revolutionaries all across the nation from Bhagat Singh in Punjab to Surya Sen in Chittagong and, of course, later Subhas Chandra Bose.
- The revolutionary activity emerged as the most substantial legacy of swadeshi Bengal which had an impact on educated youth for a generation or more. Moreover, it encouraged quixotic heroism. No involvement of the masses was envisaged, which, coupled with the narrow upper caste social base of the movement in Bengal, severely limited the scope of the revolutionary activity.
- However, Lord Curzon had perfected his divide and rule policy by providing a substantial sum of money to Nawab Salim Ullah, one of the founders of the Muslim League, not to participate in the boycott. The rise of separatism and discontent among Muslims would later be promoted through separate electorates and often Muslim League leaders would not cooperate with the Indian National Congress as seen during the Quit India Movement of 1942.
- It can be fairly concluded that the events of 1905 contained the seeds that shaped the future of the subcontinent for years to come in terms of nationalism, economic policy and educational reforms. Unfortunately, it also sowed the seeds of division, which culminated in the Partition of the country in 1947.

Conclusion

Bengal's contribution to the freedom movement has been immense starting from Battle of Plassey in 1757, up to the strike of 700000 workers in Calcutta in solidarity with the revolt of Indian navy in February 1946. India's struggle for freedom against British Imperialism is incomplete without mentioning the pivotal role of Bengal.

3. How did Jallianwala Bagh massacre change the perception towards British rule in India? Discuss.

Approach

Candidate is expected to give a brief summary of incidents that led to Jallianwala Bagh massacre in the first half and in the second half its effects on Indian psyche and overall perception about British rule can be given.

Introduction

On April 13, 1919, Gen Reginald Dyer led a group of British soldiers to Jallianwala Bagh, a walled public garden in the Sikh holy city of Amritsar. Several thousand unarmed civilians, including women and children had gathered to celebrate Sikh new year. Viewing the gathering as a violation of the prohibitory orders on public assembly, Gen dyer ordered his troops to open fire without warning.

Body

What led to Jallianwala Bagh massacre?

- In 1859, the British Crown assumed direct control of the colony. Forever fearful of sedition and conspiracies, the colonial government used the opportunity offered by the First World War to introduce the Defence of India Act in 1915. The wartime legislation gave the government extraordinary powers of preventive detention, to lock up people without trial and to restrict speech, writing and movement.
- In March 1919, it introduced the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, popularly known as the Rowlatt Act, which extended its wartime emergency powers into peacetime.
- Not long after the war began, Gandhi had returned to India after 21 years in South Africa. Gandhi was loyal to the British Empire and supported Britain in the First World War. Upon his return to India, he spent the first few years leading nonviolent struggles on local grievances.
- The news of the impending Rowlatt legislation became public, Gandhi immediately expressed his opposition and called for a nationwide general strike on April 6, 1919. He asked people to engage in nonviolent struggle, or satyagraha: Observe a daylong fast and hold meetings to demand the repeal of the legislation.
- Punjab was already heating up. The unrest was of particular concern to the British because Punjab was a vital economic and military asset. By World War I, soldiers from Punjab constituted three-fifths of the British Indian Army, which was extensively deployed in the war.
- To restore normalcy to the region, dispatched to Amritsar, General Dyer took control from the civil authorities on April 11. He issued a proclamation prohibiting public assembly and warning that such gatherings would be dispersed by force.

- On April 13, several thousand gathered in Jallianwala Bagh in defiance of General Dyer's orders.
- General Dyer fired upon unarmed civilians. Shooting continued for ten minutes. The government estimate was 379 dead, other estimates were considerably higher.

Effects of Jallianwala Bagh massacre

- The brutality of massacre stunned entire nation. Gandhiji overwhelmed by atmosphere of violence withdrew movement on April 18. Mahatma Gandhi gave up the title of Kaiser-i-Hind, bestowed by the British for his work during the Boer War.
- Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and Nobel laureate, returned his knighthood in protest. Winston Churchill condemned the shooting as "monstrous."
- Jallianwala Bagh also shook faith in British justice. Hunter commission committee formed by the government on India on October 14, 1919 to inquire the events at Punjab
- The purpose of the commission was to investigate the disturbances in Punjab, find the cause and bring measures to cope with the effects
- According to the report submitted by the commission the action of General Dyer was strongly condemned but no action was taken against him.
- Jallianwala Bagh massacre marked the beginning of the resistance against the exceptional laws of colonial governance.
- It marked a turning point in India's modern history, in that it left a permanent scar on Indo-British relations and was the prelude to Mahatma Gandhi's full commitment to the cause of Indian nationalism and independence from Britain.
- In December 1919, the congress session was held at Amritsar. It was attended by a large number of people, including peasants. It was clear that the brutalities had only added fuel to the fire and made the people's determination stronger to fight for their freedom and against oppression.

Conclusion

Jallianwala Bagh massacre marks a turn for revolutionary violent resistance against British raj. Series of new revolutionary leaders justified violence and started new organisations for the execution of the same. A new beginning in the freedom struggle can be witnessed in the incidents of April 1919.

4. What was the source of philosophical guidance for India's freedom fighters against the British rule? Explain.

Approach

As the derivative is explain you have to give a clear account as to How/Why something happens. You are expected to clarify with relevant facts and implications.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, Rani Laxmi Bai, Bhagat Singh and Sarojini Naidu; these brave men and women of India's freedom struggle may have represented differing philosophies, espoused, at times, contradicting ideologies. They all however came to a common point wherein principals they stood for and philosophical source they had, were the same.

Body

THE SOURCE OF PHILOSOPHICAL GUIDANCE FOR INDIA'S FREEDOM FIGHTERS AGAINST THE BRITISH RULE

- **STANDING FOR THEIR BELIEFS**
From Gandhi protesting being unfairly disembarked from a Train, to atrocities of civil rights at the hands of the British that poetess Sarojini Naidu wrote about, to discriminatory treatment meted out by the imperialists that Bhagat Singh & Subhash Chandra Bose fought against, to the entirely forced and hostile advances of the British army to usurp Rani Laxmi Bai's kingdom - each of these brave men and women, when confronted with a moral dilemma, took it on, head on, and took a brave, bold, unafraid stance irrespective of the situation.
- **TEAM-WORK**
On Examining any of the freedom fighter's individual lives one will find that each worked purposefully to construct a team of trustworthy, loyal, devoted and philosophically aligned men and women, who fought and furthered their causes right alongside them. Be it generals and friends in the armies of Bhagat Singh, Laxmi Bai and Bose, or an intellectual coterie of guides and advisors always with Gandhi & Naidu. The power of team-work was evidently important to each of them.
- **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
From Gandhi's well-attended speeches to Bhagat Singh and Bose's surreptitious networks of pan-India soldiers. From the power of the written word to the power of the spoken word, as practiced by Naidu & Laxmi Bai respectively. Each was using communication skills to their best efficacy, a vital lesson for children of today, who have a plethora of communication tools at their disposal, to use, correctly, rather than go astray and abuse these resources.

- **STEADFAST**
Steadfastness of purpose is yet another element that unites our group of freedom fighters. They might have begun their individual battles, fought for the common cause of liberating India from the clutches of British tyranny. But had they NOT been steadfast, stubborn, with a dogged persuasion and self-motivation, they would have fallen by the wayside, having lost sight of their goal.
- **SELF SACRIFICE**
What is also painfully clear is that all freedom fighters believed in a purpose far bigger and greater than themselves. That they willingly sacrificed their own lives, families, careers, safety, security; putting everything on the line for the greater good, the good of a nation in distress, inspires us with their courage of conviction and their do-good nature. If they hadn't bothered, who knows we might still have been an English colony, and not the free nation we so assume to be our birth right.
- **FIERCELY PATRIOTIC**
The philosophy we ought to clearly see reflected in the lives of Gandhi, Laxmi Bai, Naidu, Bhagat Singh and Bose is their intense and immense patriotism. If it wasn't for their overarching sense of belongingness to the country and motherland, few amongst them would have gone to the extent that each of them did, fighting for the cause of freedom. It was this sense that NOTHING, not even their own lives, was bigger or greater than Country, which made each of them garner the strength and resolve to fight against all odds.
- **ACTION-ORIENTED**
The freedom fighters believed that plans they drew up in their lives, they had the courage, the will, the strength, and the sheer guts, to execute them.

Conclusion

It wasn't only brute force of stubbornness of purpose that drive each of these five freedom fighters to achieve their goals. It was, in each individual's case, a well thought out, well considered, guiding light - a principled philosophy that each of them believed in, that made them be successful freedom fighters. It was this philosophy of "fighting for what was rightfully their own" that united them into a common mission, although their methods or means to that common end might have been different from each other's.

5. How did Gandhi's arrival change the discourse of national movement? Examine.**Approach**

As the directive in the question is examine, it demands thorough understanding of the nature of Indian national movement before and how Gandhi's arrival changed discourse, what changes were made and strategies adopted by Gandhiji and how it finally led to freedom.

Introduction:

In the history of nationalism, a single individual is often identified with the making of a nation. Thus, for example, Garibaldi is associated with the making of Italy, George Washington with the American War of Independence, and Ho Chi Minh with the struggle to free Vietnam from colonial rule. In the same manner, Mahatma Gandhi has been regarded as the 'Father' of the Indian nation. In so far as Gandhiji was the most influential and revered of all the leaders who participated in the freedom struggle, that characterisation is not misplaced. However, like Washington or Ho Chi-Minh, Mahatma Gandhi's political career was shaped and constrained by the society in which he lived. For individuals, even great ones, are made by history even as they make history.

Body:**National movement before Gandhi's arrival in India-**

- Nationalist movement in India before the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi has been described by Judith Brown as "politics of studied limitations" and by Ravinder Kumar as "movement representing classes" as opposed to the masses. These descriptions essentially imply that nationalist politics until this time was participated only by a limited group of western educated professionals.
- The early congress politics was also limited in goals and rather unspectacular in achievements. The moderates after the Surat split in 1907 demanded colonial self-government, as against the extremist demand of complete independence. Their organisations were seemingly based on personality networks woven around prominent leaders like S N Banerjee, P M Mehta, G K Gokhale Bipin Chandra Pal, B G Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai.
- The constitutional politics of British had failed to impress the British which was amply reflected in the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909. Whereas Extremism was confined mainly to Bengal, Maharashtra and Punjab.

Age of Gandhian politics, how it changed the discourse of freedom movement-

- Gandhi arrived in India with his background of a successful encounter with the British in south Africa. Gandhi's novel political ideology, as Judith Brown has

argued “appealed to few wholly, but to many partially”, as everyone could find in it something to identify with. He was fully aware of Indian pluralism and took care not to alienate any of the communities or classes. He talked about swaraj as his political goal, inclusivism became identified as Gandhi’s unique style of politics.

- Gandhi believed that English have not taken India; we have given it to them his remedy was that India must eschew greed and lust for consumption and revert to village-based self-sufficiency of economy.
- Gandhi succeeded in uniting both moderates and extremists on a common platform he effectively claims for himself a centrist position without alienating anybody.
- Gandhi appealed directly to Indian peasantry and tap the vast reservoir of popular support among masses already afflicted with dislocations of war.
- With his idea of satyagraha and non-violence Gandhi immediately found success in the movements he started in Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda.

Other significant movements-

- **Khilafat Movement-**
Gandhi's influence on the Muslim population was remarkable. This was evident in his involvement in the Khilafat Movement. After the first World War, the Muslims feared for the safety of their Caliph or religious leader and a worldwide protest was being organised to fight against the collapsing status of the Caliph.
Gandhi became a prominent spokesperson of the All-India Muslim Conference and returned the medals he had received from the Empire during his Indian Ambulance Corps days in South Africa. His role in the Khilafat made him a national leader in no time.
- **Non-cooperation Movement-**
Gandhi had realised that the British had been able to be in India only because of the co-operation they received from the Indians. Keeping this in mind, he called for a non-cooperation movement.
- **Salt March-**
Also known as the Dandi Movement, Gandhi's Salt March is considered to be a pivotal incident in the history of freedom struggle. At the Calcutta Congress of 1928, Gandhi declared that the British must grant India dominion status or the country will erupt into a revolution for complete independence
- **Quit India Movement-**
During the Second World War, Gandhi was determined to strike the British Empire with a definitive blow that would secure their exit from India. This happened when the British started recruiting Indians for the war. Gandhi protested strongly and said that the Indians cannot be involved in a war that is in favour of democratic purposes when India itself is not a free country.

Conclusion:

Like other nationalist men in the world, Gandhi took as much time as necessary to develop and build up his strategies to guarantee that his activities had an effect. Gandhi's achievements were much more than driving the non-violent battle to accomplish India's freedom. He was an incredible visionary with a widespread idiom who realized syncretism of Indian society that exceeds contrasts of religion, class, dialect and ethnic diversities as its strength. He utilized it with large success to rally the masses in the freedom battle. Therefore, he strengthened India's national identity and empowered the general population to recapture their freedom as well as their pride and dignity, eroded by the colonial rule for two centuries.

