

UPSC Civil Services Examination

Political Science & International Relations

Topic: Peasant Movements: 1857-1947

Peasant Movements are a part of social movements against British atrocities in the 18th and 19th centuries of British Colonial Period. These movements had a sole purpose of restoring the earlier forms of rule and social relations. The peasant movements are an important part of modern Indian History which forms a significant subject of IAS Exam. UPSC has asked nearly 6-7 questions from freedom struggle portion.

This article will detail about Peasant movements in the 18th and 19th centuries to enhance your preparation for UPSC History that comes in both Prelims and Mains GS-I papers.

What caused the peasants revolt?

There were various reasons related with agrarian restructuring for peasants to revolt. The reasons are given below:

- Peasants were evicted from their lands
- The rent that the peasants had to pay for their lands was increased
- Atrocities by the Moneylenders
- Peasants' traditional handicrafts were ruined
- The ownership of land was taken away from peasants during Zamindari rule
- Massive Debt
- Colonial Economic Policies
- Land Revenue System was not favouring the peasants

List of Early Peasants Revolt

The list of Peasants Revolt is given in the table below:

Peasant Movement	Details
Indigo Revolt (1859-60)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigo was recognized as a chief cash crop for the East India Company's investments.• It is also known as 'Nil Bidroho'• All categories of the rural population, missionaries, the Bengal intelligentsia and Muslims.• This indigo revolt gave birth to a political movement and stimulated national sentiment against the British rulers among Indian masses.
Rangpur Dhing (1783)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rangpur uprising took place in Bengal• It is called the first tough peasant rebellion against the rule of the East India Company.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It evidently uncovered the evils like Ijaradari scheme related with the system of colonial exploitation. • It paved the way for formulating a land settlement that would be permanent in nature • The rebellion spread over a significant area, including Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum. • After two years of strong confrontation, they lost to modern weapons of the British.
Kol Rebellion (1832)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kols and other tribes enjoyed independence underneath their chiefs but the British entry threatened their independence. • The handover of tribal lands and the encroachment of moneylenders, merchants and British laws generated a lot of pressure. • The Kol tribal planned an insurgency in 1831-32 which was engaged primarily against Government officers and private money-lenders.
Mappila Rebellion in Malabar (1841-1920)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mappila uprising was sequences of rebellions by the Mappila Muslims of Malabar region of Kerala. • The main causes were, increase in land tax, security of tenure and exploitation of the poor peasantry by the landlords. • The revolt goes fell into the trap of Hindu-Muslim riot. • During this period there was Khilafat movement was raised for the fulfillment of freedom for Muslims. • The 1921 uprising was a manifestation of long-lasting agrarian dissatisfaction, which was only strengthened by the religious and ethnic uniqueness and by their political alienation.
Santhal Rebellion (1855)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a native rebellion in present day Jharkhand against both the British colonial authority and zamindari system by the Santhal people • It was planned by four Murmu brothers -Sidhu, Kahnu, Chand and Bhairav • The rebellion was suppressed thoroughly and largely shadowed by that of the other rebellions.
Deccan Uprising (1875)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along with the Permanent Settlement, British extended their presence beyond Bengal. • Ryotwari Settlement was the revenue system that was introduced in the Bombay Deccan region • The revolt started in Poona and henceforth it spread to Ahmednagar. • This uprising also involved social boycott of the moneylender.
Munda Ulgulan (1899- 1900)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birsa Munda-led this movement in the region south of Ranchi • The Mundas conventionally enjoyed a special rent rate as the original clearer (Khuntkatti) of the forest. But this was eroded by the jagirdars and thikadars arrived as traders and moneylenders.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">As a result of this rebellion, government enacted Chotanagpur Tenancy Act 1908, recognized Khuntkatti rights, banned Beth Begari (forced labor)
Narkelberia Uprising (1782-1831)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Led by Titu Mir/ Mir Nithar AliIn West Bengalagainst landlords, mainly Hindu, who imposed a beard-tax on the Faraizis, and British indigo plantersmerged into the Wahabi movement
The Pagal Panthis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Led by Karam ShahTo fight the oppression of the zamindars.
Faraizi Revolt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Led by Shariat-Allah and his son Dadu Mianto expel the English intruders from Bengal