

UPSC Civil Services Examination

History

Topic: Santhal Rebellion

Peasant revolts of the 18th and 19th centuries are a very important segment of the modern Indian history syllabus for the IAS exam. Santhal Rebellion is one such revolt against the oppression of Santhals (agricultural people) settled in Rajmahal Hills in Bihar.

The topic, 'Santhal Rebellion' is an important segment of Modern Indian History. This article will provide you with relevant details on Santhal revolt, helpful for civil services exam.

Who were the Santhals?

They were the agricultural people settled in Rajmahal Hills of Bihar. British turned to them for the expansion of the revenue through agriculture. Santhals agreed to clear forests to practice settled agriculture. In 1832, a large number of areas were demarcated as Damin-i-Koh or Santal Pargana. However, gradually the exploitation started from the British side and to such an extent, that it gave rise to Santhal Rebellion.

Santhal Rebellion - The Uprising of Santhals

The Santhal Revolt took place in 1855-56. Santhals are a tribal group concentrated in the state of Jharkhand. This was the first peasant revolt that occurred in India. The revolt can be attributed to the introduction of the Permanent Land Settlement of 1793.

The aforesaid settlement pattern by the British snatched lands that the Santhals had been cultivating for centuries from them. The zamindars, moneylenders, Europeans and the British government officials raised the land tax and exploited farmers. They were so oppressed that they resolved to rebel against the landlords and the government.

The Santhals engaged in guerrilla warfare. This was a new occurrence for Bihar. The Santhals formed their own armies composed of peasants marching against their oppressors. The Santhal army dismantled the railway and postal communications. Surely, the Santhal revolt was very effective for a while but it could not succeed against the absolute power of the government and was suppressed.

Facts about Santhal Rebellion for UPSC Prelims

Santhal Rebellion	
Who were Santhals?	Agricultural People
What did Santhals Practise?	Settled Agriculture
Where did Santhals reside?	Rajmahal Hills
When did the Santhal Rebellion start?	In 1857
Who led the Santhal Rebellion?	Four Brothers - Sindhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairav

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