

Eka Movement – UPSC Notes

The Eka Movement is a peasant movement that started in Lucknow, and soon spread to Hardoi, Unnao, and Sitapur districts and became a strong force. The movement erupted in November 1921 to last till April 1922.

Background

- The end of the Non-cooperation movement in 1922, was the beginning of a new peasant movement in Awadh which is known as the Eka movement. This movement was led by a lower caste leader, MadariPasi.

About Eka Movement

- The Eka movement in Barabanki district, led by **Madari Pasi**, rattled the Congress by its violent ways.
- Such radical tendencies did not accord well with the official non-violent policies of the Congress, leading to the withdrawal of the Congress leaders.
- Initially, the movement was supported by Indian National Congress and Khilafat leadership.

Objectives of Eka Movement

The objectives of the Eka Movement or Unity Movement are as follows:

- Refusal to pay more than recorded rent;
- Demanding receipts for the rents paid; and
- Refusal to pay nazrana or to do begar (forced labour).

Results of Eka Movement

- The reason for the failure of the Eka movement is the lack of proper organisation and leadership.
- Yet, it served the purpose of making the government realise the graveness of the agrarian situation.
- The government promptly came forth with the Oudh Rent (Amendment) Act of 1921, which came into force in November 1921 and was designed to contain the agrarian unrest and redress some immediate grievances of the peasants.

- A few peasants withdrew from the movement due to the increased government repression, and few were satisfied with the benefits provided in the Oudh Rent (Amendment) Act of 1921.

Provisions of Oudh Rent (Amendment) Act of 1921

The main provisions/features of the Oudh Rent (Amendment) Act of 1921 are as follows:

- It had removed the exaction of nazrana (renewal fees). A check was put on the payment of nazrana by a provision that such payments paid on admission to a holding shall be regarded as illegal and the tenant shall be entitled to compensation.
- The statutory period of tenancy was raised from seven to ten years.
- Instead of having a statutory base for seven years at the expiry of which the tenants were liable to arbitrary ejection, every resident tenant was given life tenure, subject to revision of rent after the expiry of 10 years' period, either by a written agreement between the landlord and the tenant or as sanctioned by the settlement officer.
- A roaster year system was evolved for the determination and sanction of fair and equitable rent rates for each district by a special officer every tenth year.