

6

People's Resistance Against British Before 1857

Most of us think of the 1857 Revolt as the first major show of resentment against the British who were represented by the rule of the East India Company. However, 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: Meaning

In the context of people's resistance against the British rule, the word 'people' encompasses several sections of the Indian society who were affected by the alien rule. 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. The agitation in Benares in 1810 against a house tax imposed by the colonial government, the Surat riots in 1814 against the salt duty, the rising in Bareilly in 1816 against police tax and municipal taxes, are some examples of urban movements in which people from lower strata like artisans, petty shopkeepers, and

the urban poor fought together with the prosperous urban gentry. The interests of these resistances differed in the sense that each section had different grievances, but converged on a common objective—to end the British rule.

According to Bipan Chandra, people's resistance took three broad forms: **civil rebellions**, **tribal uprisings** and **peasant movements**. We have also considered **military revolts** as a form of people's resistance, which involved Indians employed in the Company's forces, to make the study of people's resistance more comprehensive.

Genesis of People's Resistance

In pre-colonial India, people's protests against the rulers and their officials were not uncommon—high land revenue demand by the State, corrupt practices and hard attitude of the officials being some of the instigating factors. However, the establishment of colonial rule and its policies had a much more annihilative effect on the Indians as a whole. There was no one to hear their grievances or pay attention to their problems. The Company was merely interested in extracting revenue.

The colonial law and judiciary safeguarded the interest of the government and its collaborators—the landlords, the merchants and money-lenders. Thus the people left with no options, chose to take up arms and defend themselves. The conditions of the tribal people were not different from those of the people living in the mainland but the encroachment by outsiders into their independent tribal polity made them more aggrieved and violent.

■ Causative Factors for People's Uprisings

The major factors responsible for the people's resentment and uprisings against the Company rule are as follows.

- 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 money-lenders.
- 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.

Civil Uprisings

The word 'civil' encompasses everything which is not related to defence/military, but here we have included those uprisings which were generally led by deposed native rulers or their descendants, former zamindars, landlords, *poligars* (—in South India, holders of territory or *palayam*, consisting of a few villages granted to them by the rulers—mainly the Nayakas—in return for military service and tribute), ex-retainers and officials of the conquered kingdoms, or sometimes by religious leaders. The mass support generally came from rack-rented peasants, unemployed artisans and demobilised soldiers, although at the centre of these uprisings were erstwhile power-wielding classes.

■ Major Causes of Civil Uprisings

- Under the Company rule, there were rapid changes in the economy, administration and land revenue system that went against the people.
- Several zamindars and *poligars* who had lost control over their land and its revenues due to the colonial rule, had personal scores to settle with the new rulers.
- The ego of traditional zamindars and *poligars* was

hurt due to being sidelined in rank by government officials and a new class comprising of merchants and money-lenders.

- The ruin of Indian handicraft industries due to colonial policies impoverished millions of artisans whose misery was further compounded by the disappearance of their traditional patrons and buyers—princes, chieftains, and *zamindars*.

- The priestly classes instigated hatred and rebellion against alien rule, because the religious preachers, priests, pundits, maulvis, etc., had been dependent on the traditional landed and bureaucratic elite. The fall of zamindars and feudal lords directly affected the priestly class.

- The foreign character of the British rulers, who always remained alien to this land, and their contemptuous treatment of the native people hurt the pride of the latter.

■ General Characteristics of Civil Uprisings

These uprisings in most cases represented common conditions, though separated in time and place.

The semi-feudal leaders of civil uprisings were backward looking and traditional in outlook. Their basic objective was to restore earlier forms of rule and social relations.

These uprisings were the result of local causes and grievances and were also localised in their consequences.

■ Important 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. Originally peasants, even some evicted from land, these sanyasis were joined by a large number of dispossessed small zamindars, disbanded soldiers and rural poor. They raided Company factories and the treasuries, and fought the Company's forces. It was only after a prolonged action that Warren Hastings could subdue the sanyasis. Equal participation of Hindus and Muslims

characterised the uprisings, sometimes referred to as the Fakir Rebellion. Majnum Shah (or Majnu Shah), Chirag Ali, Musa Shah, Bhawani Pathak and Debi Chaudhurani were important leaders. Debi Chaudhurani's participation recognises the women's role in early resistances against the British. *Anandamath*, a semi-historical novel by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is based on the Sanyasi Revolt. Bankim Chandra also wrote a novel, *Devi Chaudhurani*, as he saw the importance of women too taking up the struggle against an alien rule that posed a threat to traditional Indian values.

Revolt in Midnapore and Dhalbhum (1766-74)

The English took hold of Midnapore in 1760 and at that time there were about 3,000 zamindars and talukdars having cordial relations with their ryots. But this harmonious scenario changed after the introduction of new land revenue system by the English in 1772. According to the British governor Vansittart, the zamindars of Midnapore sided with the ryots in case of conflict between the ryots and the English revenue collecting officials. The zamindars of Dhalbhum, Manbhum, Raipur, Panchet, Jhatibuni, Karnagarh, and Bagri, living in the vast tract of Jungle Mahals of west and north-west Midnapore—were ultimately dispossessed of their zamindaries by 1800s. The important leaders of the uprisings were Damodar Singh and Jagannath Dhal.

Revolt of Moamaris (1769-99)

The revolt of the Moamaris in 1769 was a potent challenge to the authority of Ahom kings of Assam. The Moamaris were low-caste peasants who followed the teachings of Aniruddhadeva (1553-1624), and their rise was similar to that of other low-caste groups in north India. Their revolts weakened the Ahoms and opened the doors for others to attack the region, for instance, in 1792, the King of Darrang (Krishnanarayan), assisted by his band of *burkandazes* (the demobilised soldiers of the Muslim armies and zamindars) revolted. To crush these revolts, the Ahom ruler had to

request for British help. The Moamarias made Bhatiapar their headquarters. Rangpur (now in Bangladesh) and Jorhat were the most affected region. Although, the Ahom kingdom survived the rebellion, the weakened kingdom fell to a Burmese invasion and finally came under British rule.

Civil Uprisings in Gorakhpur, Basti and Bahraich (1781)

Warren Hastings, in order to meet the war expenses against the Marathas and Mysore, made a plan to earn money by involving English officers as *izaradars* (revenue farmers) in Awadh. He involved Major Alexander Hannay, who was well acquainted with the region, as an *izaradar* in 1778. Hannay secured the *izara* of Gorakhpur and Bahraich to the amount of 22 lakh rupees for one year. In fact, it was a secret experiment by the Company to see for itself just how much surplus money was accessible in practice.

However, Hannay's oppression and excessive demand of revenue made the region, which had been in a flourishing state under the Nawab, panic-stricken. The zamindars and cultivators rose against the unbearable exactions in 1781 and, within weeks of the initial uprising, all of Hannay's subordinates were either killed or besieged by zamindari guerilla forces. Although the rebellion was suppressed, Hannay was dismissed and his *izara* forcibly removed.

Revolt of Raja of Vizianagaram (1794)

In 1758, a treaty was made between the English and Ananda Gajapatiraju, the ruler of Vizianagaram, to jointly oust the French from the Northern Circars. In this mission they were successful but the English, as was usual in their case in India, went back on their word to honour the terms of the treaty. Anand Raju died before he could seriously tackle the English. The East India Company went on to demand a tribute of three lakh rupees from Vizayaramaraju, the Raja of Vizianagaram and asked him to disband his troops. This angered the raja as there were no dues to be paid to the Company. The raja

supported by his subjects rose up in revolt. The English captured the raja in 1793 and ordered him to go into exile with a pension. The raja refused. The raja died in a battle at Padmanabham (in modern Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh) in 1794. Vizianagaram came under the Company's rule. Later, the Company offered the estate to the deceased raja's son and reduced the demand for presents.

Revolt of Dhundia in Bednur (1799-1800)

After the conquest of Mysore in 1799, the English had to confront many native leaders. Dhundia Wagh, a local Maratha leader, who was converted to Islam by Tipu Sultan and put into jail due to his mis-adventures, got released with the fall of Seringapatam. Very soon, Dhundia organised a force which consisted of anti-British elements, and carved out a small territory for himself. A defeat by the English in August 1799 forced him to take refuge in Maratha region from where he instigated the disappointed princes to fight against the English and he himself took on the leadership. In September 1800, he was killed while fighting against the British forces under Wellesley. Though Dhundia failed, he became a venerated leader of the masses.

Resistance of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja (1797; 1800-05)

Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja, popularly known as *Kerala Simham* (Lion of Kerala) or 'Pyche raja', was the de facto head of Kottayam (Cotiote) in Malabar region. Apart from resisting Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, Kerala Varma fought against the British between 1793 and 1805.

The Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92), extended English paramountcy over Kottayam in violation of an earlier agreement of 1790 which had recognised the independence of Kottayam. The English appointed Vira Varma, the uncle of Pazhassi Raja, as the Raja of Kottayam. The new raja, to meet the revenue target fixed by the Company, levied exorbitant rates of tax on the peasants. This led to a mass

resistance by the peasants under the leadership of Pazhassi Raja in 1793. Pazhassi Raja fought bravely using guerilla warfare, and in 1797 a peace treaty was made. But a conflict over a dispute on Wayanad in 1800 started an insurgent warfare. Pazhassi Raja organised a large force of Nairs which was supplemented by Mappilas and Pathans, the latter being demobilised soldiers of Tipu who had become unemployed after Tipu's death. In November 1805, the *Kerala Simham* died in a gun-fight at Mavila Todu near present day Kerala-Karnataka border.

Civil Rebellion in Awadh (1799)

Wazir Ali Khan, the fourth Nawab of Awadh, with the help of the British, had ascended the throne in September 1797. But very soon his relations with the British became sour and he got replaced by his uncle, Saadat Ali Khan II. Wazir Ali Khan was granted a pension in Benares. However, in January 1799, he killed a British resident, Geogre Frederik Cherry, who had invited him to lunch. Wazir Ali's guards killed two other Europeans and even attacked the Magistrate of Benares. The whole incident became famous as the **Massacre of Benares**. Wazir Ali was able to assemble an army of several thousand men which was defeated by General Erskine. Wazir Ali fled to Butwal and was granted asylum by the ruler of Jaipur. Arthur Wellesley requested the Raja of Jaipur to extradite Wazir Ali. Wazir Ali was extradited on the condition that he would neither be hanged nor be put in fetters. After surrender in December 1799, he was placed in confinement at Fort William, Calcutta.

Uprisings in Ganjam and Gumsur (1800, 1835-37)

In the Northern Circars, Ganjam and its adjoining regions rose in revolt against the British rule. Strikara Bhanj, a zamindar of Gumsur in Ganjam district, refused to pay revenues in 1797. In 1800, he openly rebelled and defied the public authorities. Snodgrass, an oppressive and corrupt collector, was replaced to suppress the insurrection. Strikara

was joined by Jlan Deo of Vizianagar (Poddakimedi) and Jagannath Deo of Pratapgiri (Chinakimedi). In 1804 Jagannath Deo was captured and sent to Masulipatnam. But the English had to assign certain districts to Strikara Bhanj. In 1807-08, Dhananjaya Bhanj, son of Strikara, forced his father to leave the estate. Dhananjaya rebelled against the English but was forced to surrender in June 1815.

Strikara, who had returned to Ganjam, was reappointed as the zamindar in a compromise with the government. He managed the estate between 1819 and 1830 but, failing to liquidate the arrears, retired in favour of his son, Dhananjay. However, unable to pay the enormous arrears, Dhananjay Bhanj rose in rebellion for the second time when the British forces occupied Gumsur and Kolaida in November 1835. The revolt greatly reduced the government's authority but Dhananjay died in December 1835 and his followers continued the resistance. The government appointed Russell, with full discretionary powers, to deal with the situation. The struggle lasted till February 1837, when Doora Bisayi, a formidable leader, was arrested. The zamindari of Gumsur was forfeited.

Uprisings in Palamau (1800-02)

The political situation of Palamau was complicated by the crises of agrarian landlordism and feudal system. In 1800, Bhukhan Singh, a Chero chief, rose in rebellion. Colonel Jones camped for two years in Palamau and Sarguja to suppress the rebellion. Bhukhan Singh died in 1802 and subsequently the insurrection calmed down.

Poligars' Revolt (1795-1805)

The poligars (or palayakkarargal) of South India gave a stiff resistance to the British between 1795 and 1805. The main centres of these strong uprisings were Tinneveli (or Thirunelveli), Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Sivagiri, Madurai, and North Arcot. The problem started in 1781, when the Nawab of Arcot gave the management and control of Tinneveli and the Carnatic Provinces to the East India Company. This

arrangement caused resentment among the poligars who had, for long considered themselves as independent sovereign authorities within their respective territories. The first revolt of the poligars against the Company was basically over taxation, but had a larger political dimension in that the English considered and treated the poligars as enemies. **Kattabomman Nayakan**, the poligar of Panjalankurichi, led the insurrection between 1795 and 1799. After a fierce battle in which the Company forces were defeated by Veerapandiya Kattabomman, a price was put on the latter's head. This led to greater rebellion by the poligars. With reinforcements the Company forces were finally able to defeat Kattabomman. Kattabomman fled into the Pudukottai forests. Once again a betrayal—this time by Ettappan, the Raja of Pudukottai, who entered into an agreement with the British—led to the capture of Kattabomman. Kattabomman was hanged in a conspicuous place. A close associate, Subramania Pillai was also hanged and Soundara Pandian, another rebel, brutally killed. The *palayam* of Panjalankurichi and the estates of five other poligars who had joined the rebellion were confiscated and the prominent poligars executed or sent to prison.

The second phase, which was more violent than the previous one, started in February 1801 when the poligars imprisoned in the fort of Palamcottah were able to escape. The rebels took control of many forts and even captured Tuticorin. The British forces were soon reinforced from Malabar. The fugitives led by Oomathurai, brother of Kattabomman, who fled to Sivaganga in Ramnad joined the rebellion of the 'Marudus' led by Marathu Pandian which was suppressed in October 1801. The fort of Panjalankurichi was razed to the ground and the name of the place was expunged from all the documents of the district. Meanwhile, the nawab surrendered the civil and military administration of all the territories and dependencies of the Carnatic exclusively to the Company in perpetuity.

Between 1803 and 1805, the poligars of North Arcot

rose in rebellion, when they were deprived of their right to collect the *kaval* fees. (*Kaval* or 'watch' was an ancient institution of Tamil Nadu. It was a hereditary village police office with specified rights and responsibilities.) The region was in a lawless condition particularly in the palayams of Chittur and Chandragiri. The poligar of Yedaragunta, who proved most daring and desperate among the insurgent chiefs, was joined by the dispossessed poligar of Charagallu. By February 1805, the rebels were suppressed. Several chiefs were ordered to reside in Madras while some others were granted an allowance of 18 per cent upon revenues of their estates.

The poligar rebellion spread over a vast area of South India. The proclamations by the rebels, says A. Shunmugaiah, indicate that they believed in a mass movement against the alien rule, seeking independence of them.

Uprising in Bhiwani (1809)

In 1809, the Jats of Haryana broke into rebellion. The Jats fortified themselves in Bhiwani and made a strong resistance. A brigade of all arms, with a powerful battering ram, was required to suppress the revolt.

Diwan Velu Thampi's Revolt (1808-1809)

The East India Company's harsh conditions imposed on the state of Travancore, after both of them agreed to a subsidiary alliance arrangement under Wellesley in 1805, caused deep resentment in the region. The ruler was not able to pay the subsidy and fell in arrears. The British resident of Travancore was meddling in the internal affairs of the state. The high-handed attitude of the Company compelled Prime Minister (or Dalawa) Velu Thampi to rise against the Company, assisted by the Nair troops. Velu Thampi addressed a gathering in Kundara, openly calling for taking up arms against the British to oust them from the native soil. This was later known as the **Kundara Proclamation**. There was large scale rebellion against the British as a result. A large

military operation had to be undertaken to restore peace. The Maharaja of Travancore had not wholly supported the rebellion and defected to the side of the Company. Velu Thampi killed himself to avoid capture. The rebellion petered out.

Disturbances in Bundelkhand (1808-12)

The vast province of Bundelkhand, conquered by the British during the Second Anglo-Maratha Wars (1803-05), was put within the Presidency of Bengal. The Bundela chiefs offered resistance to the new government as long as they could fight from their forts numbering nearly one hundred and fifty. The first major resistance came from Lakshman Dawa, the killadar (fort commander) of Ajaygarh fort. Lakshman was permitted to retain the fort as a temporary arrangement for two years ending in 1808, but he wanted to continue his hold after the expiry of the term. He surrendered in February 1809 and was taken to Calcutta. The next resistance came from killadar of Kalanjar, Darya Singh, which was suppressed in January 1812. But the most serious threat came from a famous military adventurer named Gopal Singh, who had a dispute with his uncle who was supported by the British. For four years Gopal Singh eluded all vigilance and military tactics of British forces. To put a stop to these disturbances, the British had to adopt a policy of binding down the hereditary chieftains of Bundelkhand by a series of contractual obligations—*Ikarnamahs*.

Parlakimedi Outbreak (1813-34)

Parlakimedi, situated in the western border of Ganjam district (now in Odisha), witnessed resistance from the zamindars and rajas. When the Company acquired Ganjam, Narayan Deo was the raja of Parlakimedi, whose resistance forced the British to dispatch an army under Colonel Peach. Peach defeated Narayan Deo in 1768 and made Gajapathi Deo (son of Narayan) proclaimed zamindar. But Narayan Deo, supported by his son and brothers, revolted again. As the resistance failed to calm down, the Presidency of Madras appointed

George Russell as commissioner of the region in 1832. Russell, provided with full fledged powers to suppress the revolt, pacified the region by 1834.

Kutch or Cutch Rebellion (1816-1832)

There was a treaty between the British and Maharaja Bharamal II of Kutch in 1816, by which power was vested in the throne. There was, however, a power struggle between the maharaja and a group of chieftains.

The British interfered in the internal feuds of the Kutch and, in 1819, Raja Bharmal II raised Arab and African troops with the firm intention of removing the British from his territory. The chieftains ranged on his side. The British defeated and deposed the Kutch ruler Rao Bharamal in favour of his infant son. A British resident governed the areas as the *de facto* ruler with the help of a regency council. The administrative innovations made by the regency council coupled with excessive land assessment caused deep resentment. In the meanwhile, some of the chieftains continued their rebellion against alien rule. The news of the British reverses in the Burma War emboldened the chiefs to rise in revolt and demand the restoration of Bharamal II. After extensive military operations failed to control the situation, the Company's authorities were compelled to follow a conciliatory policy.

Rising at Bareilly (1816)

The immediate cause of upsurge was the imposition of the police tax which aroused the burning indignation of the citizens. The issue became religious when Mufti Muhammad Aiwaz, a venerated old man, gave a petition to the magistrate of the town in March 1816.

The situation aggravated further when the police, while collecting tax, injured a woman. This event led to a bloody scuffle between the followers of the Mufti and the police. Within two days of the event, several armed Muslims from Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur and Rampur rose in rebellion for the

defence of the faith and the Mufti. In April 1816, the insurgents murdered the son of Leycester (judge of provincial court of Bareilly). The uprising could only be suppressed with heavy deployment of military forces in which more than 300 rebels were killed and even more wounded and imprisoned. The upsurge seems to have been the product more of discontent than of actual grievance—the elements of discontent lying in the very nature of the alien administration.

Uprising in Hathras (1817)

Dayaram, a talukdar of several villages in the district of Aligarh, had a strong base in the fort of Hathras. The fort, considered to be among the strongest in India—a ‘second Bharatpur’—had walls of great height, and thickness, defended by a deep ditch and artillery mounted at the top. The English had concluded the settlement of Hathras estate with Dayaram as a farmer. But due to progressively increasing high revenues, Dayaram constantly failed to pay arrears and even committed many acts of hostility by giving harbour to government fugitives. So, the Company with a large army attacked Hathras in February 1817. Dayaram fought bravely for more than 15 days and escaped unharmed. But, ultimately, he was obliged to come back on condition of submission and settled down with a pension. Another noted rebel Bhagwant Singh, Raja of Mursan, frightened to dismantle his fort, submitted to the government.

Paika Rebellion (1817)

The Paiks of Odisha were the traditional landed militia (‘foot soldiers’ literally) and enjoyed rent free land tenures for their military service and policing functions on a hereditary basis. The English Company’s conquest of Odisha in 1803, and the dethronement of the Raja of Khurda had greatly reduced the power and prestige of the Paiks. Further, the extortionist land revenue policy of the Company caused resentment among zamindars and peasants alike. Common masses were affected

by the rise in prices of salt due to taxes imposed on it, abolition of cowrie currency and the requirement of payment of taxes in silver, etc.

Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar had been the military chief of the forces of the Raja of Khurda. In 1814, Jagabandhu's ancestral estate of Killa Rorang was taken over by the Company, reducing him to penury. The spark was lighted by the arrival of a body of Khonds from Gumsur into the Khurda territory in March 1817. With active support of Mukunda Deva, the last Raja of Khurda, and other zamindars of the region, Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar led a sundry army of Paikas forcing the East India Company forces to retreat for a time. The rebellion came to be known as the Paika Bidroh (rebellion). The initial success of the rebels set the whole province covering Odisha in arms against the British government for some time. Jagabandhu, declared an outlaw, along with other rebels, was sheltered by the Raja of Nayagarh. Although Dinabandhu Santra and his group surrendered in November 1818, Jagabandhu evaded British vigilance. In spite of rewards offered, none of the people of the province betrayed their leaders. Though Khurda was back under Company control by mid-1817, the Paika rebels resorted to guerilla tactics. The rebellion was brutally repressed by 1818. Priests at the Puri temple who had sheltered Jagabandhu were caught and hanged. Paiks on the whole suffered greatly. In 1825 Jagabandhu surrendered under negotiated terms. (Some sources say he was captured and died in captivity in 1829).

The Paik Rebellion succeeded in getting large remissions of arrears, reductions in assessments, suspension of the sale of the estates of defaulters at discretion, a new settlement on fixed tenures and other adjuncts of a liberal governance.

Waghera Rising (1818-1820)

Resentment against the alien rule coupled with the exactions of the Gaekwad of Baroda supported by the British government

compelled the Waghera chiefs of Okha Mandal to take up arms. The Wagheras carried out inroads into British territory during 1818-19. A peace treaty was signed in November 1820.

Ahom Revolt (1828)

The British had pledged to withdraw from Assam after the First Burma War (1824-26). But, after the war, instead of withdrawing, the British attempted to incorporate the Ahoms' territories in the Company's dominion. This sparked off a rebellion in 1828 under the leadership of Gomdhar Konwar, an Ahom prince, alongwith compatriots, such as Dhanjoy Bongohain, and Jairam Khargharia Phukan. Assembling near Jorhat, the rebels formally made Gomdhar Konwar the king. Finally, the Company decided to follow a conciliatory policy and handed over Upper Assam to Maharaja Purandar Singh Narendra and part of the kingdom was restored to the Assamese king.

Surat Salt Agitations (1840s)

A strong anti-British sentiment resulted in attacks by the local Surat population on the Europeans in 1844 over the issue of the government's step to raise the salt duty from 50 paise to one rupee. Faced with a popular movement, the government withdrew the additional salt levy. Again in 1848, the government was forced to withdraw its measure to introduce Bengal Standard Weights and Measures in face of people's determined bid to resort to boycott and passive resistance.

Kolhapur and Savantvadi Revolts

The Gadkaris were a hereditary military class which was garrisoned in the Maratha forts. These garrisons were disbanded during administrative reorganisation in Kolhapur state after 1844. Facing the spectre of unemployment, the Gadkaris rose in revolt and occupied the Samangarh and Bhudargarh forts. Similarly, the simmering discontent caused a revolt in

Savantvadi areas. The people here had already revolted against the British in 1830, 1836 and 1838, the last because the British had deposed their ruler. The British authorities introduced many laws to bring the region under control.

Wahabi Movement

The Wahabi Movement was essentially an Islamic revivalist movement founded by Syed Ahmed of Rai Bareilly who was inspired by the teachings of Abdul Wahab (1703-87) of Saudi Arabia and Shah Waliullah of Delhi. Syed Ahmed condemned the western influence on Islam and advocated a return to pure Islam and society as it was in the Arabia of the Prophet's time.

Syed Ahmed was acclaimed as the desired leader (Imam). A countrywide organisation with an elaborate secret code for its working under spiritual vice-regents (Khalifas) was set up, and Sithana in the north-western tribal belt was chosen as a base for operations. In India, its important centre was at Patna though it had its missions in Hyderabad, Madras, Bengal, United Provinces and Bombay. Since Dar-ul-Harb (the land of *kafirs*) was to be converted into Dar-ul-Islam (the land of Islam), a *jihad* was declared against the Sikh kingdom of Punjab. After the defeat of the Sikh ruler and incorporation of Punjab into the East India Company's dominion in 1849, the English dominion in India became the sole target of the Wahabis' attacks.

The Wahabis played an important role in spreading anti-British sentiments. A series of military operations by the British in the 1860s on the Wahabi base in Sithana and various court cases of sedition on the Wahabis weakened the Wahabi resistance, although sporadic encounters with the authorities continued into the 1880s and 1890s.

Kuka Movement

The Kuka Movement was founded in 1840 by Bhagat Jawahar Mal (also called Sian Saheb) in western Punjab. A major leader of the movement after him was Baba Ram Singh. (He

founded the Namdhari Sikh sect.) After the British took Punjab, the movement got transformed from a religious purification campaign to a political campaign. Its basic tenets were abolition of caste and similar discriminations among Sikhs, discouraging the consumption of meat and alcohol and drugs, permission for intermarriages, widow remarriage, and encouraging women to step out of seclusion. On the political side, the Kukas wanted to remove the British and restore Sikh rule over Punjab; they advocated wearing hand-woven clothes and boycott of English laws and education and products. So, the concepts of Swadeshi and non-cooperation were propagated by the Kukas, much before they became part of the Indian national movement in the early twentieth century. As the movement gained in popularity, the British took several steps to crush it in the period between 1863 and 1872.

In 1872, Ram Singh, was deported to Rangoon.

Peasant Movements with Religious Overtones

Peasant uprisings were protests against evictions, increase in rents of land, and the moneylenders' greedy ways; and their aim was occupancy rights for peasants among other things. They were revolts and rebellions of the peasants themselves though led by local leaders in many cases. The peasant movements in India till the outbreak of the Revolt of 1857 (and in its immediate aftermath) are given below.

Narkelberia Uprising

Mir Nithar Ali (1782-1831) or Titu Mir inspired the Muslim tenants in West Bengal to rise against landlords, mainly Hindu, who imposed a beard-tax on the Faraizis, and British indigo planters. Often considered the first armed peasant uprising against the British, these revolt soon took on a religious hue. The revolt later merged into the Wahabi movement.

The Pagal Panthis

The Pagal Panthi, a semi-religious group mainly constituting the Hajong and Garo tribes of Mymensingh district (earlier in Bengal), was founded by Karam Shah. But the tribal peasants organised themselves under Karam Shah's son, Tipu, to fight the oppression of the zamindars. From 1825 to 1835, the Pagal Panthis refused to pay rent above a certain limit and attacked the houses of zamindars. The government introduced an equitable arrangement to protect these peasants, but the movement was violently suppressed.

Faraizi Revolt

The Faraizis were the followers of a Muslim sect founded by Haji Shariat-Allah of Faridpur in Eastern Bengal. They advocated radical religious, social and political changes. Shariat-Allah son of Dadu Mian (1819-60) organised his followers with an aim to expel the English intruders from Bengal. The sect also supported the cause of the tenants against the zamindars. The Faraizi disturbances continued from 1838 to 1857. Most of the Faraizis joined the Wahabi ranks.

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. Twenty-two rebellions took place between 1836 and 1854. None, however, proved successful.

(The second Moplah uprising occurred after the Moplahs came to be organised by the Congress and the Khilafat supporters during the Non-cooperation Movement. But Hindu-Muslim differences distanced the Congress and the Moplahs from each other. By 1921, the Moplahs had been subdued.)

Peasants' Role in the 1857 Revolt

Peasant participation was active only in some areas affected by the 1857 rebellion, mainly those in western Uttar Pradesh.

Moreover, the peasants united with the local feudal leaders in many places to fight against foreign rule. After the revolt, the plight of the peasants worsened with the British Government's decision to gain the support of the landed classes while ignoring the peasants. Occupancy peasants' interests suffered. In Avadh, for instance, land was restored to the taluqdars and they were given revenue and other powers as well, and the peasants could not avail of the provisions of the 1859 Bengal Rent Act. As a punishment for their participation in the 1857 revolt, the peasants had to pay an additional cess in some regions.

Tribal Revolts

Tribal movements under British rule were the most frequent, militant and violent of all movements.

■ Different Causes for Mainland and North-Eastern Tribal Revolts

The tribal movements can be analysed better if categorised into mainland tribal revolts and frontier tribal revolts concentrated mainly in the north-eastern part of India.

The mainland tribal rebellions were sparked off by a number of factors, an important one concerned with the tribal lands or forests.

The land settlements of the British affected the joint ownership tradition among the tribals and disrupted their social fabric.

As agriculture was extended in a settled form by the Company government, the tribals lost their land, and there was an influx of non-tribals to these areas.

Shifting cultivation in forests was curbed and this added to the tribals' problems. The government further extended its control over the forest areas by setting up reserved forests and restricting timber use and grazing. This was the result of the increasing demand from the Company for timber—for shipping and the railways.

Exploitation by the police, traders and money-lenders (most of them 'outsiders') aggravated the tribals' sufferings.

Some general laws were also abhorred for their intrusive nature as the tribals had their own customs and traditions.

With the expansion of colonialism, Christian missionaries came to these regions and their efforts interfered with the traditional customs of the tribals. The missionaries, perceived as representatives of the alien rule, were resented by the tribals.

The movements of the tribes of the north-eastern frontier were different from the non-frontier tribal revolts in some aspects.

For one thing, the tribes which shared tribal and cultural links with countries across the border did not concern themselves much with the nationalist struggle. Their revolts were often in favour of political autonomy within the Indian Union or complete independence.

Secondly, these movements were not forest-based or agrarian revolts as these tribals were generally in control of land and forest area. The British entered the north-eastern areas much later than the non-frontier tribal areas.

Thirdly, the frontier tribal revolts under the British continued for a longer time than the non-frontier tribal movements. De-sanskritisation movements also spread among the frontier tribals. The Meiteis organised a movement during Churand Maharaja's rule (between 1891 and 1941) to denounce the malpractices of the neo-Vaishnavite Brahmins. Sanskritisation movements were almost totally absent in the north-east frontier region in the colonial period.

■ **Characteristics of Tribal Revolts**

There were some common characteristics of the tribal uprisings even though they were separated from one another in time and space.

- Tribal identity or ethnic ties lay behind the solidarity shown by these groups. Not all 'outsiders' were, however,

seen as enemies: the poor who lived by their manual labour or profession and had a socially/economically supportive role in the village were left alone; the violence was directed towards the money-lenders and traders who were seen as extensions of the colonial government.

- A common cause was the resentment against the imposition of laws by the 'foreign government' that was seen as an effort at destroying the tribals' traditional socio-economic framework.

- Many uprisings were led by messiah-like figures who encouraged their people to revolt and who held out the promise that they could end their suffering brought about by the 'outsiders'.

- The tribal uprisings were doomed from the beginning, given the outdated arms they fought with as against the modern weapons and techniques used by their opponents.

■ Important Tribal Movements of Mainland

Some important tribal movements are discussed below. It may be noted that most tribal movements, if we leave out the frontier tribal areas, were concentrated in central India, the west-central region and the south.

Pahariyas' Rebellion

The British expansion on their territory led to an uprising by the martial Pahariyas of the Raj Mahal Hills in 1778. The British were forced to usher in peace by declaring their territory as damni-kol area.

Chuar Uprising

Famine, enhanced land revenue demands and economic distress goaded the Chuar aboriginal tribesmen of the Jungle Mahal of Midnapore district and also of the Bankura district (in Bengal) to take up arms.

These tribes people were basically farmers and hunters. The uprising lasted from 1766 to 1772 and then, again surfaced between 1795 and 1816. The Chuars were prominent

in Manbhum and Barabhum, especially in the hills between Barabhum and Ghatsila. They 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. In 1768, Jagannath Singh, the zamindar of Ghatsila, went up in arms, alongwith thousands of Chuars. The Company government capitulated. In 1771, the Chuar sardars, Shyam Ganjan of Dhadka, Subla Singh of Kaliapal and Dubraj rose in rebellion. This time, however, they were suppressed.

The most significant uprising was under Durjan (or Durjol) Singh in 1798. Durjan Singh was the zamindar of Raipur from which he was dispossessed owing to the operations of Bengal Regulations. In May 1798, his followers, a body of 1,500 Chuars, indulged in violent activities in Raipur to halt the auction of the estate of Raipur. The revolt was brutally suppressed by the British. Other leaders of the Chuars were Madhab Singh, the brother of the raja of Barabhum, Raja Mohan Singh, zamindar of Juriah and Lachman Singh of Dulma.

(The term 'Chuar' is considered derogatory by some historians who call this the **Revolt of the Jungle Mahal**, instead.)

Kol Mutiny (1831)

The Kols, alongwith other tribes, are inhabitants of Chhotanagpur. This covered Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamau and the western parts of Manbhum. The trouble in 1831 started with large-scale transfers of land from Kol headmen to outsiders like Hindu, Sikh and Muslim farmers and money-lenders who were oppressive and demanded heavy taxes. Besides, the British judicial and revenue policies badly affected the traditional social conditions of the Kols. The Kols resented this and in 1831, under the leadership of Buddho Bhagat, the Kol rebels killed or burnt about a thousand outsiders. Only after large-scale military operations could order be restored.

Ho and Munda Uprisings (1820-1837)

The Raja of Parahat organised his Ho tribals to revolt against the occupation of Singhbhum (now in Jharkhand). The revolt continued till 1827 when the Ho tribals were forced to submit. However, later in 1831, they again organised a rebellion, joined by the Mundas of Chotanagpur, to protest against the newly introduced farming revenue policy and the entry of Bengalis into their region. Though the revolt was extinguished in 1832, the Ho operations continued till 1837. Nor were the Mundas to be quiet for long.

[In 1899-1900, the Mundas in the region south of Ranchi rose under Birsa Munda. The *Ulgulan* was one of the most significant tribal uprisings in the period 1860-1920. The rebellion which began as a religious movement gathered political force to fight against introduction of feudal, zamindari tenures, and exploitation by money-lenders and forest contractors. The Mundas claimed Chhotanagpur as their area in 1879. British armed forces were then deployed. Birsa was captured and imprisoned.]

The Santhal Rebellion (1855-56)

Continued oppression of the Santhals, an agricultural people, who had fled to settle in the plains of the Rajmahal hills (Bihar) led to the Santhal rebellion against the zamindars. The money-lenders who had the support of the police among others had joined the zamindars to subject the peasants to oppressive exactions and dispossession of lands. The rebellion turned into an anti-British movement. Under Sidhu and Kanhu, two brothers, the Santhals proclaimed an end to Company rule, and declared the area between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal as autonomous. The rebellion was suppressed by 1856.

Khond Uprisings (1837-1856)

From 1837 to 1856, the Khonds of the hilly tracts extending from Odisha to the Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh revolted against Company rule. Chakra Bisnoi, a young raja, led the Khonds who were joined by the

Ghumsar, Kalahandi and other tribals to oppose the suppression of human sacrifice, new taxes, and the entry of zamindars into their areas. With Chakra Bisnoi's disappearance, the uprising came to an end.

[A later Khond rebellion in 1914 in the Orissa region was triggered by the hope that foreign rule would end and they could gain an autonomous government.]

Koya Revolts

The Koyas of the eastern Godavari track (modern Andhra), joined by Khonda Sara chiefs, rebelled in 1803, 1840, 1845, 1858, 1861 and 1862. They rose once again in 1879-80 under Tomma Sora. Their complaints were oppression by police and moneylenders, new regulations and denial of their customary rights over forest areas. After the death of Tomma Sora, another rebellion was organised in 1886 by Raja Anantayyar.

Bhil Revolts

The Bhils who lived in the Western Ghats controlled the mountain passes between the north and the Deccan. They revolted against Company rule in 1817-19, as they had to face famine, economic distress and misgovernment. The British used both force and conciliatory efforts to control the uprising. However, the Bhils revolted again in 1825, 1831 and in 1846. Later, a reformer, Govind Guru helped the Bhils of south Rajasthan (Banswara, Sunth states) to organise themselves to fight for a Bhil Raj by 1913.

Koli Risings

The Kolis living in the neighbourhood of Bhils rose up in rebellion against the Company's rule in 1829, 1839 and again during 1844-48. They resented the imposition of Company's rule which brought with it large-scale unemployment for them and the dismantling of their forts.

Ramosi Risings

The Ramosis, the hill tribes of the Western Ghats, had not reconciled to British rule and the British pattern of

Tribal Movements: Period, Region, Causes at a Glance

1. Pahariyas' Rebellion by the martial Pahariyas (1778; Raj Mahal Hills); against the British expansion on their lands.
2. Chuar Uprisings by the Chuar aboriginal tribesmen (1776); against rise in demands and economic privation by the British.
3. Kol Uprisings by the Kols of Chottanagpur led by Buddho Bhagat (1831); against expansion of British rule on their lands and transfer of their lands to outsiders; the revolt was suppressed.
4. Ho and Munda Uprisings
 - (a) by Ho tribals led by Raja Parahat (1827; Singhbhum and Chottanagpur); against occupation of Singhbhum by British.
 - (b) by Ho tribals and the Mundas (1831); against the newly introduced farming revenue policy.
 - (c) by the Mundas led by Birsa Munda (1899-1900; south of Ranchi); Birsa was captured and imprisoned.
 - (d) the *Ulgulan* uprising, supported by Birsa Munda (1860-1920); against introduction of feudal, zamindari tenures and exploitation by moneylenders and forest contractors.
5. Santhal Rebellion by the Santhals led by Sido and Kanhu (1855-56; Bihar); against the practices of zamindars and moneylenders; the rebellion later turned anti-British and was suppressed.
6. Kondh uprisings led by Chakra Bisnoi (1837-56 and later in 1914; hilly region extending from Tamil Nadu to Bengal; in Orissa in 1914); against interference in tribal customs and imposition of new taxes.
7. Naikada Movement (1860s; Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat); against British and caste Hindus.
8. Kharwar Rebellion by the Kharwars (1870s; Bihar); against revenue settlement activities.
9. Khonda Dora Campaign by Khonda Doras led by Korra Mallaya (1900; Dabur region in Vishakapatnam).
10. Bhil Revolts (1817-19 and 1913; region of Western Ghats); against Company Rule (in 1817-19) and to form Bhil Raj.
11. Bhuyan and Juang Rebellions by the Bhuyans, Juangs and Kals; first uprising was led by Ratna Nayak; second uprising was led by Dharni Dhar Nayak (1867-68; 1891-93; Kheonjhar, Orissa); against the installation of a British protege on the throne after the death of their *raja* in 1867.

12. Koya Revolts by the Koyas and the Khonda Sara Chiefs
 - led by Tomma Sora in 1879-80
 - led by Raja Anantayyar in 1886 (eastern Godavari region Andhra Pradesh); against oppression by police, moneylenders; new regulations and denial of their rights over forest areas.
13. Bastar Revolt (1910; Jagdalpur); against new feudal and forest levies.
14. Tana Bhagat Movements among the Mundas and Oraon tribes led by Jatra Bhagat, Balram Bhagat who preached that God's benevolent delegate would arrive to free the tribals (1914-1915; Chottanagpur); against interference of outsiders; began as Sanskritisation movement.
15. Rampa Revolts led by Alluri Sitarama Raju of the Koyas (1916, 1922-1924; Rampa region in Andhra Pradesh); against British interference; capture and execution of Raju in 1924.
16. Jharkhand Uprising by tribals of Chottanagpur region (1920 onwards; parts of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal); Adivasi Mahasabha was formed in 1937 which was replaced by Regional Jharkhand Party in 1949.
17. Forest Satyagrahas (a) by Chenchu tribals (1920s; Guntur district in Andhra), (b) by Karwars of Palamau (1930s; Bihar); against increasing British control over forests.
18. Gond Uprising (1940s) to bring together the believers of Gond-dharma.

administration. They resented the policy of annexation. After the annexation of the Maratha territories by the British, the Ramosis, who had been employed by the Maratha administration, lost their means of livelihood. They rose under Chittur Singh in 1822 and plundered the country around Satara. Again, there were eruptions in 1825-26 under Umaji Naik of Poona and his supporter Bapu Trimbakji Sawant, and the disturbances continued till 1829. The disturbance occurred again in 1839 over deposition and banishment of Raja Pratap Singh of Satara, and disturbances erupted in 1840-41 also. Finally, a superior British force restored order in the area. Generally the British followed a pacifist policy towards the Ramosis, and even recruited some of them into the hill police.

■ Tribal Movements of the North-East

Some famous tribal movements of the north-east frontier region have been given below.

Khasi Uprising

After having occupied the hilly region between Garo and Jaintia Hills, the East India Company wanted to build a road

North-East Frontier Tribal Movements: Year, Region, Major Causes

Movements Before 1857

1. Ahoms' Revolt (1828-33; Assam); against the non-fulfilment of the pledges of the Company after the Burmese War; the uprising was suppressed by the Company by dividing the kingdom.
2. Khasis' Revolt (1830s; hilly region between Jaintia and Garo Hills); led by the Nunklow ruler, Tirath Singh; against the occupation of the hilly region.
3. Singphos' Rebellion (1830s; Assam); led to murder of British political agent of Assam by Singphos in 1839; was ultimately suppressed.

Movements After 1857

1. Kukis' Revolt (1917-19; Manipur); against British policies of recruiting labour during the first World War.
2. Revolts in Tripura; against hike in house tax rates and against settlement of outsiders in the region
 - (a) led by Parikshit Jamatia (1863)
 - (b) the Reangs' revolt led by Ratnamani (1942-43)
 - (c) led by Bharti Singh (1920s)
3. Zeliangsong Movement (1920s; Manipur); led by the Zemi, Liangmei and Rongmei tribes; against the failure of British to protect them during the Kuki violence in 1917-19.
4. Naga movement (1905-31; Manipur); led by Jadonang; against British rule and for setting up of a Naga *raj*.
5. Heraka Cult (1930s; Manipur); led by Gaidinliu; the movement was suppressed but Kabui Naga Association was formed in 1946.
6. **Other Smaller Movements** were the revolt of the Syntengs of Jaintia Hills in 1860-62; the Phulaguri peasants' rebellion in 1861, the revolt of the Saflas in 1872-73; the uprising of the Kacha Nagas of Cachhar in 1882; and a women's war in Manipur in 1904.

linking the Brahmaputra Valley with Sylhet. For this, a large number of outsiders including Englishmen, Bengalis and the labourers from the plains were brought to these regions. The Khasis, Garos, Khamptis and the Singphos organised themselves under Tirath Singh to drive away the strangers from the plains. The uprising developed into a popular revolt against British rule in the area. By 1833, the superior English military force had suppressed the revolt.

Singphos Rebellion

The rebellion of the Singphos in Assam in early 1830 was immediately quelled but they continued to organise revolts. An uprising in 1839 saw the death of the British political agent. Chief Nirang Phidu led an uprising in 1843, which involved an attack on the British garrison and the death of many soldiers.

Some of the smaller movements were those of the Mishmis (in 1836); the Khampti rebellion in Assam between 1839 and 1842; the Lushais' revolt in 1842 and 1844, when they attacked villages in Manipur.

Sepoy Mutinies

A number of sporadic military uprisings took place before the Great Revolt of 1857 in different parts of the country.

■ Causes

There was rising discontent of the sepoys against the British rule due to the following reasons:

- (i) discrimination in payment and promotions;
- (ii) mistreatment of the sepoys by the British officials;
- (iii) refusal of the government to pay foreign service allowance while fighting in remote regions;
- (iv) religious objections of the high caste Hindu sepoys to Lord Canning's General Service Enlistment Act (1856) ordering all recruits to be ready for service both within and outside India.

Further, the sepoys shared all the discontent and grievances—social, religious and economic—that afflicted the civilian population.

Over the years, the upper caste sepoys had found their religious beliefs in conflict with their service conditions. For example, in 1806, the replacement of the turban by a leather cockade caused a mutiny at Vellore. Similarly in 1844, there was a mutinous outbreak of the Bengal army sepoys for being sent to far away Sind and in 1824 the sepoys at Barrackpore rose in revolt when they were asked to go to Burma because crossing the sea would mean loss of caste.

■ Important Mutinies

The most important mutinies which broke out during the pre-1857 period are the following:

- (i) The mutiny of the sepoys in Bengal in 1764.
- (ii) The Vellore mutiny of 1806 when the sepoys protested against interference in their social and religious practices and raised a banner of revolt unfurling the flag of the ruler of Mysore.
- (iii) The mutiny of the sepoys of the 47th Native Infantry Unit in 1824.
- (iv) The revolt of the Grenadier Company in Assam in 1825.
- (v) The mutiny of an Indian regiment at Sholapur in 1838.
- (vi) The mutinies of the 34th Native Infantry (N.I.), the 22nd N.I., the 66th N.I. and the 37th N.I. in 1844, 1849, 1850 and 1852 respectively.

However, all these mutinies did not spread beyond their locality and were ruthlessly crushed by the British Indian government, often inflicting terrible violence, executing leaders and disbanding the regiments. But the legacy of these revolts proved to be of immense significance later.

Weaknesses of People's Uprisings

- 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, backward-looking, 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.
- Those who were not so uncooperative or obstinate were pacified through concessions by the authorities.
- The methods and arms used by the fighters in these uprisings were practically obsolete compared to the weapons and strategy—as well as deception and chicanery—employed by their opponents.

Summary

- **Factors Responsible for People's Resistance**
 - Colonial land revenue settlements; heavy burden of new taxes and eviction of peasants from their land.
 - Growth of intermediary revenue collectors, tenants and money-lenders.
 - Expansion of revenue administration over tribal lands.
 - Destruction of indigenous industry and promotion of British manufactured goods.
 - End of patronage to priestly and scholarly classes.
 - Foreign character of British rule.

- **Forms of People's Uprisings**

Civil Uprisings
Peasant Movements
Tribal Revolts
Military Revolts

- **Civil Uprisings Before 1857**

Sanyasi Revolt (1763-1800)—Bihar and Bengal; Manju Shah, Musa Shah, Bhawani Pathak and Debi Chaudhurani were some important leaders.

Rebellion in Midnapore and Dhalbhum (1766-67)—Bengal; Damodar Singh, Jagannath Dhal, etc.

Revolt of Moamarias (1769-99)—Assam and parts of present Bangladesh; Krishnanarayan was important leader.

Civil Uprisings in Gorakhpur, Basti and Bahraich (1781)—Uttar Pradesh.

Revolt of Raja of Vizianagaram—Northeren Circars; Vizieram Rauze (Chinna Vijayaramaraju) was supported by his subjects.

Revolt in Bednur (1797-1800)—Karnataka; Dhundia Wagh.

Revolt of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja (1797-1805)—Kerala; Kerala Varma.

Civil Rebellion of Awadh (1799)—Eastern Uttar Pradesh; Wazir Ali Khan (Vizier Ali).

Uprising in Ganjam and Gumsur (1800, 1935-37)—Eastern Orissa; Strikara Bhanj, Dhananjaya Bhanj and Doora Bisayi.

Uprisings in Palamau (1800-02)—Chhotanagpur of Jharkhand; Bhukhan Singh was the leader of the revolt.

Poligars's Revolt (1795-1805)—Tinnevely, Ramnathapuram, Sivagiri, Madurai and North Arcot of Tamil Nadu; Kattabomman Nayakan was an important leader.

Revolt of Diwan Velu Thampi (1808-09)—Travancore; led by Diwan of State, Velu Thampi.

Disturbances in Bundelkhand (1808-12)—Regions of Bundelkhand in present Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh; Lakshaman Dawa, the Killadar of Ajaygarh Fort, Darya Singh, the Killadar of Kalanjar, and Gopal Singh, a military adventurer were the important insurgents.

Parlakimedi Outbreak (1813-34)—Orissa; Narayan Deo and Gajapathi Deo.

Kutch Rebellion (1819)—Gujarat; Rao Bharamal.

Rising at Bareilly (1816)—Uttar Pradesh; Mufti Muhammad Aiwan, a religious leader; a resistance against municipal tax turned into a religious *jihad*.

Upsurge in Hathras (1817)—Aligarh and Agra in Uttar Pradesh; Dayaram and Bhagwant Singh were the important insurgents.

Paika Rebellion (1817)—Orissa; Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar, Mukunda Deva and Dinabandhu Santra were important leaders.

Waghera Rising (1818-20)—Baroda region of Gujarat; led by Waghera chiefs of Okha Mandal.

Ahom Revolt (1828)—Assam; led by Gomdhar Konwar and Maharaja Purandhar Singh. Narendra Gadadhar Singh and Kumar Rupchand were other leaders.

Surat Salt Agitations (1844)—Gujarat; attacks on the Europeans by the locals of Surat; over the issue of increase in salt duty.

Gadkari Revolt (1844)—Kolhapur of Maharashtra; Gadakaris, a hereditary military class, revolted in the wake of unemployment and agrarians grievances.

Revolt of Savantavadi (1844-59)—North Konkan Coast; Phond Savant, Subana Nikam, Daji Lakshman and Har Savant Dingnekar were important insurrectionists.

Wahabi Movement (1830-61)—Bihar, Bengal, North West Frontier Province, Punjab, etc., an Islamist revivalist movement started by Syed Ahmed of Rai Bareilly.

Kuka Movement (1840-1872)—Punjab; A religious movement started by Bhagat Jawahar Mal transformed into political one. Ram Singh, a noted leader, deported to Rangoon.

● Peasant Movements

Narkelberia Uprising (1831)—24 Parganas (Bengal); Titu Mir inspired the Muslim tenants in West Bengal against Hindu landlords.

Pagal Panthis (1825-35)—Mymensingh district (Bengal); Karam Shah and his son Tipu rose against *zamindars*.

Faraizi Revolt (1838-57)—Faridpur in Eastern Bengal; Shariat-Allah, son of Dadu Mian, was the founder of the religious sect (Faraizi).

Moplah Uprisings (1836-1854)—Malabar region of Kerala; against hike in revenue demand and reduction in field size.

- **Tribal Revolts**

Pahariyas' Rebellion (1778)—Raj Mahal Hills

Chuar Uprisings (1766 to 1772, 1795-1816)—Midnapore district of Bengal; important leaders—Sham Ganjan, Durjan Singh and Madhab Singh.

Kol Mutiny (1831)—Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum; Buddho Bhagat was an important leader.

Ho and Munda Uprisings (1820-22, 1831-37, 1899-1900)—Chhotanagpur region; Birsa Munda in 1899-1900 led the rebellion.

Santhal Rebellion (1855-56)—Raj Mahal Hill (Bihar); Sidhu and Kanhu were important leaders.

Khond Uprisings (1837-1856)—Hilly tracts extending from Tamil Nadu to Bengal; Chakra Bisoi, an important leader.

Koya Revolts (1803, 1840-1862, 1879-80)—Eastern Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh; Tomma Sora and Raja Anantayyar were important leaders.

Bhil Revolts (1817-19, 1913)—Khandesh, Dhar, Malwa, Western Ghats and southern Rajasthan.

Koli Risings (1829, 1839 and 1844-48)—Western Ghats.

Ramosi Risings (1822-1829, 1839-41)—Western Ghats; Chittur Singh was an important rebel leader.

Khasi Uprising (1829-33)—Hilly region between Garo and Jaintia Hills, Sylhet; Khasis, Garos, Khamptis and Singhphos organised themselves under Tirath Singh.

Singhphos' Rebellion (1830-31, 1843)—Assam-Burma Border; Nirang Phidu led an uprising in 1843.

- **Sepoy Mutinies**

Vellore Mutiny (1806)

Mutiny of 47th Native Infantry Unit (1824)

Revolt of Grenadier Company (1825), Assam

Mutiny in Sholapur (1833)

Mutiny of 34th Native Infantry (1844)

Mutiny of 22nd Native Infantry (1849)

Mutiny of 66th Native Infantry (1850)

Mutiny of 37th Native Infantry (1852)