



Daily Current Affairs

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Paika Rebellion

Why in news?

The Prime Minister releases commemorative stamp and coin on Paika Rebellion.

About Paika Rebellion:

- The Paik Rebellion, also called the Paika Bidroha, was an armed rebellion against the British East India Company's rule in Odisha in 1817.
- The Paikas rose in rebellion under their leader Bakshi Jagabandhu and, projecting Jagannath as the symbol of Odia unity, the rebellion quickly spread across most of Odisha before being ruthlessly put down by the company's forces.
- The Paikas were the traditional militia of Odisha. They served as warriors and were charged with policing functions during peacetime.
- The Paikas were organised into three ranks distinguished by their occupation and the weapons they wielded.
- These were the Paharis, the bearers of shields and the khanda sword, the Banuas who led distant expeditions and used matchlocks and the Dhenkiyas - archers who also performed different duties in Odisha armies.

Causes of the rebellion:

- The Paika rebellion had several social, economic and political reasons. The Paiks were alienated by the British regime, who took over the hereditary rent-free lands granted to them after the conquest of Khurda.

- They were also subjected to extortion and oppression at the hands of the company government and its servants. Had conciliatory measures been adopted towards the Paiks from the beginning, it is possible that they would have become a source of strength to the company rule in Odisha.
- The extortionist land revenue policy of the company affected the peasants and the zamindars alike. A source of much consternation for the common people was the rise in prices of salt due to taxes imposed on it by the new government.
- The company also abolished the system of cowrie currency that had existed in Odisha prior to its conquest and required that taxes be paid in silver. This caused much popular hardship and discontent.
- In 1804 the Raja of Khurda planned a rebellion against the British in alliance with the Paiks, but the plot was soon discovered and the Raja's territory confiscated.

Course of the rebellion:

- Discontent over the policies of the company was simmering in Odisha when, in March 1817, a 400-strong party of Kandhas crossed over into Khurda from the State of Ghumsur, openly declaring their rebellion against the company's rule.
- The Paiks under Jagbandhu joined them, looting and setting to fire the police station and post office at Banpur. The rebels then marched to Khurda itself, which the company abandoned, sacking the civil buildings and the treasury there.
- Another body of rebels captured Paragana Lembai, where they killed native officials of the company.

The Effects:

- In May 1817, the British posted judges to Khurda to sentence the captured rebels. The rebels were awarded sentences of death, transportation and long-term imprisonment.
- Between 1818 and 1826, the company's forces undertook combing operations in the jungles of Khurda to capture and put to death rebels who had managed to escape.
- In these operations numerous Paiks were killed. Their leader, Jagabandhu, surrendered to the British in 1825 and lived as their prisoner in Cuttack until 1829, when he died.

- On capturing Puri, Jagabandhu had offered to reinstate Raja Mukunda Deva - whom the British had dethroned in 1804 and exiled to Puri - as the Raja of Khurda.
 - Although he turned down the offer and asked for British assistance, he was arrested when the British retook the town and was imprisoned at Cuttack. The Raja died a British prisoner in November, 1817.
 - The East India Company also appointed a commission to inquire into the causes of the rebellion. The British set about reorienting their administration under the newly appointed Commissioner of Cuttack Robert Ker to ensure such a rebellion would not repeat itself.
 - These attempts remained half hearted at best, the British viewing Odisha largely as a convenient land link between their presidencies of Madras and Bengal. Odisha continued her freedom struggle by Tapanga in 1827 and the Banapur Rebellion of 1835.
 - The revenue policies of the company in Odisha, which was a major cause of hardship to the people, remained unchanged.
 - In October 2017, government of India recognise paika revolt as first war of independence earlier it was Revolt of 1857.
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Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

Why in news?

Recently The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has given information about achievements of AMRUT.

About AMRUT:

- The scheme was launched by Prime Minister in June 2015 with the focus to establish infrastructure that could ensure adequate robust sewage networks and water supply for urban transformation by implementing urban revival projects.
- Rajasthan was the first state in the country to submit State Annual Action Plan under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- The scheme is dependent with public private partnership (PPP) model.

If required, various other schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission, Housing for All 2022, along with the local state schemes like that related to water supply and sewerage and other infrastructure related schemes can be linked to AMRUT.

The purpose of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is to

(i) ensure that every household has access to a tap with assured supply of water and a sewerage connection;

(ii) increase the amenity value of cities by developing greenery and well maintained open spaces (e.g. parks); and

(iii) reduce pollution by switching to public transport or constructing facilities for non-motorized transport (e.g. walking and cycling). All these outcomes are valued by citizens, particularly women, and indicators and standards have been prescribed by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) in the form of Service Level Benchmarks (SLBs).

The Consumer Protection Bill, 2018

Why in news?

Recently in Lok Sabha The Consumer Protection Bill, 2018 was passed.

Highlights of the Bill:

- The Bill replaces the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. The Bill enforces consumer rights, and provides a mechanism for redressal of complaints regarding defect in goods and deficiency in services.
- Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions will be set up at the District, State and National levels for adjudicating consumer complaints. Appeals from the District and State Commissions will be heard at the next level and from the National Commission by the Supreme Court.
- The Bill sets up a Central Consumer Protection Authority to promote,

protect and enforce consumer rights as a class. It can issue safety notices for goods and services, order refunds, recall goods and rule against misleading advertisements.

- If a consumer suffers an injury from a defect in a good or a deficiency in service, he may file a claim of product liability against the manufacturer, the seller, or the service provider.
- The Bill defines contracts as 'unfair' if they significantly affect the rights of consumers. It also defines unfair and restrictive trade practices.
- The Bill establishes Consumer Protection Councils at the district, state and national levels to render advice on consumer protection.

Key Issues and Analysis:

- The Bill sets up the Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions as quasi-judicial bodies to adjudicate disputes. The Bill empowers the central government to appoint members to these Commissions. The Bill does not specify that the Commissions will comprise a judicial member. If the Commissions were to have members only from the executive, the principle of separation of powers may be violated.
 - The Bill empowers the central government to appoint, remove and prescribe conditions of service for members of the District, State and National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions. The Bill leaves the composition of the Commissions to the central government. This could affect the independence of these quasi-judicial bodies.
 - Consumer Protection Councils will be set up at the district, state, and national level, as advisory bodies. The State and National Councils are headed by Ministers in-charge of Consumer Affairs. The Bill does not specify whom the Councils will advise. If the Councils advise the government, it is unclear in what capacity such advice will be given.
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