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Q1(e)

Rights over resources and tribal unrest.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Anthropology GS 2 · 10 marks · The concept of ethnicity

7.3 The concept of ethnicity; Ethnic conflicts and political developments; Unrest among tribal communities; Regionalism and demand for autonomy; Pseudo-tribalism. Social change among the tribes during colonial and post-Independent India.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on rights over resources and tribal unrest
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

Tribal unrest is mainly a resource-rights conflict.

Forest law, dams, and mining shrink Adivasi control of land and jungle.

FRA and PESA try to restore rights; implementation lags.

Elwin and Vidyarthi tied forest to culture, not only wages.

Fifth Schedule and Samata are the constitutional brake on alienation.

Introduction

Tribal unrest in India is repeatedly a fight over land, forest, and mineral. When rights over those resources shrink, movements follow.

Body**The resource wound**

- Colonial forest law and post-Independence dams treated Adivasi territory as state property. **Fifth Schedule** and **Samata** doctrine were meant to brake land transfer.
- **FRA 2006** promised individual and community forest rights. Delay and rejection keep the wound open.
- Mining in Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh, and projects in the Narmada valley, convert unrest into roadblocks, petitions, and sometimes armed Maoist shelter.

How anthropology reads it

- **Verrier Elwin** warned that forest loss is cultural death, not only income loss.
- **L. P. Vidyarthi** mapped the nature-man-spirit complex; when the forest goes, the complex cracks.
- Unrest is therefore a rights claim, not a residual tribal temperament.

Flow diagram

Land forest mineral -> Tribal unrest
FRA PESA Fifth Schedule -> Land forest mineral
Mining dams -> Tribal unrest

Conclusion

Tribal unrest tracks the theft or delay of resource rights. FRA, PESA, and the **Fifth Schedule** are the legal answers still poorly delivered.

Facts & figures

FRA 2006

Recognises forest dwellers' individual and community rights; slow titles feed unrest.

Fifth Schedule

Special administration and land-transfer limits in Scheduled Areas.

Samata judgment

Supreme Court brake on mining leases to non-tribals in Scheduled Areas of Andhra.

Vidyarthi

Nature-man-spirit complex shows why forest loss is a total social shock.

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