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Q8(a)

Compare the nature of tribal movements between North-East and Central India. Briefly mention the current status of existing tribal movements in these areas

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Anthropology GS 2 · 20 marks · Emergence, growth and development of Anthropology in India

4. Emergence, growth and development of Anthropology in India-Contributions of the 18th, 19th and early 20th Century scholar-administrators. Contributions of Indian anthropologists to tribal and caste studies.

Core demand of the question

- Compare the nature of tribal movements between North-East and Central India. Briefly mention the current status of existing tribal movements in these areas
- Keep the answer to a 20-mark length of about 250 words

Revision summary

North-East tribal movements centre on peoplehood, hill, and political status.

Central Indian movements centre on land, forest, and extraction.

Naga and **Sixth Schedule** politics differ from Santhal and Birsa agrarian revolt.

Current NE status is talks, councils, and some armed splinters.

Current central status is FRA, PESA, **Pathalgadi**, and anti-mining sabhas.

Introduction

North-East tribal movements have been largely about sovereignty, hill, and language vis-à-vis the plains state. Central Indian movements have been largely about land, forest, and diku extraction inside the existing republic.

Body**North-East nature**

- The **Naga** movement demanded a political nation, later a federal bargain, not only a tenancy Act.
- Mizo, Bodo, and other hill movements mixed ethnicity, Inner Line, and **Sixth Schedule** or statehood.
- Religion and church networks often organised the public, as in Naga areas, which is rare as a core in central India.

Central India nature

- **Santhal** hul and **Birsa** ulgulan were agrarian and millenarian against landlords and the colonial forest.
- Later Jharkhand, Gond, and Kondh struggles target mines, dams, and alienated plots under the **Fifth Schedule**.

- **Chipko** in the Himalayan belt and **Niyamgiri** in Odisha are livelihood-and-sacred-hill movements, not secession.

Comparison

- **NE: border, Inner Line, armed ceasefire, and autonomous council. Central: tenancy, FRA, PESA, and Gram Sabha.**
- Both use identity. The NE identity is more often a people-nation. The central identity is more often Adivasi versus sarkar-and-company.

Current status

- Naga talks remain a framework-and-faction field. Several NE armed groups are in ceasefire or in territorial councils; some splinters still fire.
- **Central India: Pathalgadi** and related self-rule drives, anti-mining sabhas, and FRA claim struggles continue. Maoist presence overlaps some tribal blocks but is not identical with the tribal movement.
- Jharkhand statehood was a partial political close. Resource conflict did not close with the new capital.

Flow diagram

North-East -> Sovereignty council
Central India -> Land forest mine
North-East -> Naga talks
Central India -> Niyamgiri FRA

Conclusion

North-East movements are political-territorial. Central Indian movements are agrarian-resource. Today the first sits in talks and councils; the second sits in FRA, PESA, and anti-mine sabhas.

Facts & figures

Naga movement

Longest North-East political-territorial struggle, now in a fragmented peace-talk phase.

Birsa Munda

Central Indian millenarian-agrarian leader of the Munda ulgulan.

Niyamgiri

Contemporary central Indian sacred-hill and Gram Sabha resistance to bauxite mining.

Pathalgadi

Stone-plaque self-rule campaign in parts of Jharkhand and adjoining tracts, a current **Fifth Schedule** politics.

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