Paika Rebellion

Prelims - Current events of National & International importance and

History of India & Indian National Movement

Why in News?

Recently, NCERT replied to the Former Odisha Chief Minister's speech, stating that the inclusion of the Paika rebellion in the second volume of the textbook.

- **Paika rebellion -** Armed uprising against ***British colonial oppression*** that erupted in 1817 in the eastern province of Khurda (present-day Odisha).
- **Leadership -** Bakshi Jagabandhu, the former commander-in-chief of the king of Khurda.
- **Paikas -** The Paikas pronounced “paiko”, literally “foot soldiers”.
- They were a class of military retainers recruited from various social groups by the Gajapati rulers of Odisha since the 16th century.
- They would render martial services to the king in return for hereditary rent-free land (nish-kar jagirs), which they would cultivate during peacetime.
- **Causes**
  - **Political –** Dethronement of the native Khurda king, weakening of paika patronage, and abolition of traditional administration.
  - **Economic –** Confiscation of rent-free land, payment of taxes by silver currency, influx of absentee landlords and salt taxation.
  - **Social –** Disruption of tribal and peasant economies, with grievances stemming from over-exploitation.
- **Events**
  - In March 1817, 400 Kondhs equipped with traditional arms marched from Ghumusar towards Khurda.
  - Attacked the police station of Banpur, burnt government quarters, killed policemen, and looted the government treasury
  - Fought bloody battles at several places over the next few months, and killed several British officials.
- **Decline**
  - Later, the Company army gradually crushed the revolt.
  - Bakshi Jagabandhu escaped to the jungles and remained on the run till 1825, finally surrendering to the British under negotiated terms.

Reference

The Indian Express| Paika Rebellion - Honour of Odisha



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