The Unsung Martyrs of Mangarh

Why in news?

Recently, Prime Minister attended a programme 'Mangarh Dham ki Gaurav Gatha' and paid homage to the sacrifice of Govind Guru.

Who is Govind Guru?

- Govind Guru was born in a nomadic community in the Dungarpur-Banswara region of Rajasthan.
- He was influenced by the teachings of **Swami Dayanand Saraswati** to work for the socio-religious upliftment of people from the Bhil community.
- He founded the **Samp Sabha** in 1883 to promote harmony amongst the tribal communities.
- The Bhil community was always in debt that lingered for generations and thus Bhils worked as bonded labourers at farms.
- Govind Guru quickly saw the social setup and liquor as the primary causes of woes and decided to fight the malaise.
- He started **Bhagat Sampradaya (sect)** in 1908.
- **Mangarh massacre** - Govind Guru demanded the colonial state to reduce the revenue rate during famines and to stop the encroachment of the religious freedom of tribal communities.
- A massive gathering occurred at Mangarh in 1913 in support of the demand for a separate state for Bhils.
- Terming the meeting as rebellion, rulers' forces fired indiscriminately leading to the death of more than 1,500 tribal freedom fighters.

What are the major contributions of Govind Guru?

- **Unity of Bhils** - He was the pivotal force in uniting Bhils to demand a separate entity in the British period.
- **Reforms within the community** - Guru's work that prompted Bhils to reform their outlook.
- The guru's followers started to work right from the elimination of archaic traditions of marriage to the establishment of schools.
- **Impact on Indian National Movement** - Govind Guru's calls for protesting against the injustice of the colonial rulers laid the foundation of the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- The sacrifices of these heroes increased the moral quotient of the national movement.
- The spirit of taking ownership of the country's welfare has passed down to people after the country gained Independence.

NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES
• 1780s - Santhal Sangram was fought under the leadership of **Tilka Manjhi**.
• 1830-32 - The country witnessed Larka Andolan under the leadership of **Budhu Bhagat**.
• 1855 - **Sidhu-Kanhu Kranti** energised the nation.
• **Bhagwan Birsa Munda** inspired everyone with his energy and patriotism.
• In Andhra Pradesh, **Alluri Sitarama Raju**'s contribution is notable.
• In Rajasthan, the **Adivasi Samaj** stood with Maharana Pratap.

What efforts have been taken regarding the tribal communities?

15th November, the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda is celebratd as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas

- **Mangarh Dham** is to be developed as a joint project of the governments of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- It will be a national memorial showcasing tribal legacy and their rich cultural heritage.
- The government is already setting up tribal museums in 10 states to raise awareness about the sacrifices made by tribals during the freedom struggle.
- **Droupadi Murmu**, a person from Odisha's tribal-dominated Mayurbhanj district, taking over as the President of India is a landmark in the country's history.
- The pro-poor welfare policies, Eklavya Model residential schools, scholarship schemes for students, etc. stands testimony to the idea of social justice.

References

1. The Indian Express | The unsung martyrs of Mangarh
2. Times of India | Bhil reformer who preceded Bapu
3. PIB | PM attends 'Mangarh Dham ki Gaurav Gatha'

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