

Chapter 7 Rise of Popular Movements

1. Which of these statements are incorrect: The Chipko Movement

- (a) was an environmental movement to prevent cutting down of trees.
- (b) raised questions of ecological and economic exploitation.
- (c) was a movement against alcoholism started by the women.
- (d) demanded that local communities should have control over their natural resources.

Answer: (c) was a movement against alcoholism started by the women.

2. Some of the statements below are incorrect. Identify the incorrect statements and rewrite those with necessary correction.

- (a) Social movements are hampering the functioning of India's democracy.
- (b) The main strength of social movements lies in their mass base across social sections.
- (c) Social movements in India emerged because there were many issues that political parties did not address.

Answer:(a) Rewritten-Social movements involve a gradual process of coming together of people with similar problems.

(c) Rewritten-Social movements in India emerged to reduce the possibility of deep social conflict and disaffection of groups from democracy.

3. Identify the reasons which led to the Chipko Movement in U.P. in early 1970s. What was the impact of this movement?

Answer: 1. The Chipko movement began in two or three villages of Uttarakhand on refusal of permission to villages to fell ash trees for making agricultural tools and allotted the same land to sports manufacturers for commercial uses.

2. The villagers protested against the practices of logging to be permitted by government.

3. Villagers used a novel tactic to hug the trees to protect them from being cut down.

Impact of movement:

1. It soon spread across many parts of Uttarakhand and larger issues of ecological and economic exploitation were also raised.

2. Government issued a ban on felling of trees in Himalayan region for fifteen years until green cover was fully restored.

3. Active participation of women was also a very novel aspect of the movement.

4. This movement was started with a single issue but became symbol of many such popular movements emerging in different parts of country during 1970s.

4. The Bharatiya Kisan Union is a leading organisation highlighting the plight of farmers. What were the issues addressed by it in the nineties and to what extent were they successful?

Answer: Bharatiya Kisan Union was one of the leading farmers' movement to protest against the policies of process of liberalisation of Indian economy:

Issues addressed by BKU:

1. Higher government floor prices for sugarcane and wheat,

2. Guaranteed supply of electricity at reasonable rates.

3. To wave off repayments due on loan to farmers.

4. To provide government pension to farmers.

5. Abolition of restrictions on the inter-state movement of farm produce. Highlighted the plight of farmers:

1. BKU conducted rallies, demonstrations, and Jail Bhari agitations.

2. These protests involved thousands to over lakhs farmers from western UPs adjoining regions.

3. BKU operated as a pressure group in politics with its strength of sheer members.

Extent of Success:

1. BKU became the most successful social movements.
2. It sustained for a longtime due to clannetworks among its members.
3. These networks mobilised funds, resources and activities of BKU.
4. An outcome of political bargaining powers by its members.
5. BKU farmers dominated regional electoral politics also.

5. The anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh drew the attention of the country to some serious issues. What were these issues?

Answer: 1. Anti-arrack movement was the movement of rural women in Andhra Pradesh to protest against alcoholism, mafias and government.

2. This movement had its roots in “adult literacy drive” where women complained of increased consumption of locally brewed alcohol arrack by men in their families to effect on rural economy also.
3. Women in Nellore came together in spontaneous local initiatives to protest against arrack and forced the closure of wine shop.

And this movement spread slowly all over the state

Issues relating to movements:

1. The Anti-arrack movement aimed at prohibition on the sale of arrack.
2. Its demand touched upon larger section of social, economic and political issues which had established a close nexus between crime and politics.
3. Women openly discussed the issues of domestic violence like dowry, sexual violence etc.
4. Anti-arrack movement provided a platform to discuss private issues of domestic violence.

6. Would you consider the anti-arrack movement as a women’s movement? Why?

Answer: Yes, we would consider the Anti-arrack movement as a part of women’s movement to provide a platform for women to discuss private issues of domestic violence:

1. This movement focused on issues of sexual violence against women either within family or outside.
2. Women joined the campaign against dowry and demanded personal and property laws based on gender equality.
3. These campaigns contributed a great deal in increasing social awareness as well as shifted from legal reforms to open social confrontations.
4. Consequently, movement demanded equal representation to women in politics during the nineties. Hence 73rd and 74th amendments granted reservations to women in local level political offices.
5. Thus, it can be concluded to be a part of women’s movement.

7. Why did the Narmada Bachao Aandolan oppose the dam projects in the Narmada Valley?

Answer: Narmada Bachao Aandolan was a collective local organisation’s movement to save river Narmada which opposed the construction of multi-purpose dam „ “The Narmada Sagar Project” and questioned the ongoing developmental projects in country:

1. Narmada Bachao Aandolan linked its opposition to Sardar Sarovar Project with larger issues concerning the nature of ongoing developmental projects, efficiency of model of development that the country followed and about what constituted public interest in a democracy.
2. It demanded that there should be a cost benefit analysis of the major developmental projects due to construction of dam submerged around 245 villages to require two and a half lakh population to be relocated.
3. The movement demanded proper rehabilitation of all those to be effected from the construction of these projects.
4. This movement also questioned the nature of decision making process to be in framing of mega scale development projects.
5. Movement also insisted that local communities must have a say in such decision making alongwith an

effective control over natural resources.

6. Hence, NBA achieved a comprehensive National Rehabilitation Policy formed by government in 2003.

8. Do movements and protests in a country strengthen democracy? Justify your answer with examples.

Answer: Yes, to some extent movements and protests in country strengthen democracy to have mixed reactions both for and against:

Arguments for:

1. Anti-arrack movement, Chipko movement, NBA etc., rectified some problems to be seen as integral part of democratic politics.
2. These movements ensured participation and representation from diverse groups to reduce possibility of deep social conflicts in democracy.
3. These movements broadened the idea of participation in Indian democracy i. e., Anti-arrack movement and Dalit Panthers. Arguments against:

1. Collective actions, rallies, strikes, disrupt the functioning of a democracy and create a delay in decision making.
2. Routine functioning of democracy did not have enough space for the voices of these social groups.
3. It is possible to ignore demand of these movements with the presentation to be represented by one section of society only.
4. Political parties do not seem to be taking up issues of marginal social groups.
5. The relationship between popular movements and political parties has grown weaker over the years creating a vacuum in politics.

Hence, we may conclude that movements are not only about collective assertions or rallies or protest, but they also involve a gradual process of coming together of people with similar problems, demand and expectations.

9. What issues did the Dalit Panthers address?

Answer: Dalit Panthers was a militant organisation of Dalit Youth to be formed in 1972 in Maharashtra:

1. These groups mainly fought against the perpetual caste based inequalities and material injustices that Dalits faced in spite of constitutional guarantees of equality and justice.
2. Dalits faced collective atrocities over minor symbolic issues of caste pride. Hence, they demanded effective implementation of reservations and other such policies of social justice.

1. Assess any two positive aspects of the Chipko Movement.

Answer: (i) The Chipko Movement started in early 1973 in the state that is now Uttarakhand. The movement was unique in the sense that it presented a very unusual form of collective action in which men and women from a village of this state were engaged. These villagers protested against the practices of commercial logging that the government had permitted. They used a novel tactic for their protest— that of hugging the trees to prevent them from being cut down. The struggle soon spread across many parts of the Uttarakhand region.

(ii) Women's active participation in the Chipko agitation was a very novel aspect of the movement. The forest contractors of the region usually doubled up as suppliers of alcohol to men. Women held sustained agitations against the habit of alcoholism and broadened the agenda of the movement to cover other social issues. The movement achieved a victory when the government issued a ban on felling of trees in the Himalayan region for fifteen years, until the green cover was fully restored.

2. Where and when was the organisation 'Dalit Panthers' formed? Describe any three of its activities.

Answer: Dalit Panthers denotes to a militant organisation of Dalit Youth to be formed in 1972 in Maharashtra.

Its activities can be summed up as follows:

1. These groups mainly fought against the perpetual caste based inequalities and material injustices that

Dalits faced in spite of constitutional guarantees of equality and justice.

2. Dalits faced collective atrocities over minor symbolic issues of caste pride.

3. They demanded effective implementation of reservations and other such policies of social justice.

3. What are popular movements? Explain any three issues related to women which brought social awareness amongst them.

Answer: Popular movements are the movements organised by dalits and farmers under the banner of various social organisations to voice their demands.

Women in Nellore came together in spontaneous local initiatives to protest against arrack and forced the closure of wine shops.

And this movement spread slowly all over the state.

Issues relating to movements:

1. The Anti-Arrack movement aimed at prohibition on the sale of arrack.

2. Its demand touched upon larger section of social, economic and political issues which had established a close nexus between crime and politics.

3. Women openly discussed the issue of domestic violence like dowry, sexual violence etc.

4. Anti-Arrack movement provided a platform to discuss private issues of domestic violence.

4. What is the Right to Information Act? When was it passed in India?

Answer: The 'Right to Information Act' is a law to empower the people to find out happenings in government and act as a watchdog of democracy:

1. It was passed in October 2005 by Government of India.

2. This Act ensures its citizens all information about functioning of government machinery.

3. This right has been expanded to cover various services provided by government i.e., if any purchased product is defective it can be -asked for replacement.

4. This right gives political actors incentives to good things to help to control corruption.

5. What was Narmada Bachao Aandolan? What was criticism against it?

Answer: Narmada Bachao Aandolan linked its opposition to Sardar Sarovar Project with larger issues concerning the nature of ongoing development projects with the . dreams of cost benefit analysis due to construction of dams submerged around 245 villages to require two and a half lakh population to be relocated.

Its criticism:

1. The obstruction to the process of development.

2. Denial to the access to water to many people.

3. Hurdle to economic development.

6. "Movement are not only about collective assertions or only about rallies and protests but something else as well". Justify.

Answer: Though movements are the result of collective assertions, still these are associated with a "Gradual process of coming together of people" with common intentions, common problem, demands and common expectations. These movements make people aware also by performing educative role towards expansions of democracy.