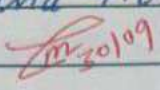
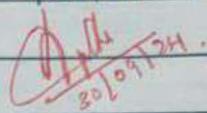




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Invigilator's Sign: 	Examiner's Sign: 		

Note : Start Answering from the space below

"Tribal History : Uncovering Hidden Chapters"

"In the heart of India, where forests whisper secrets, Adivasis weave tales of resilience." - Poetry by Sukant Chaudhary.

India's struggle for independence was a long and arduous one, spanning centuries and involving various sections of society. While the contributions of prominent leaders and nationalist movements are well-documented, the role of tribal communities in this struggle remains relatively unknown. However, tribal communities played a significant and pivotal role in India's fight for freedom, displaying remarkable courage, resilience, and sacrifice.

Tribal communities have been an integral part of Indian society since ancient times. With their unique cultural practices, traditional knowledge, and distinct identities, they have contributed significantly to India's rich diversity. However, British colonial policies exploited tribal resource and land, forcing displacement and cultural erosion.

The Santhal Rebellion, also known as the Santhal Hul, was a major uprising against the British colonial rule in India that took place in 1855-1856. The rebellion was led by the Santhal people, an indigenous tribe living in the Santal Parganas region of Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The Santhals were subjected to exploitation and oppression by the British colonial administrators, moneylenders, and landlords. The British East India Company's policies led to the displacement of the Santhals from their ancestral lands, forcing them to work as labourers. The Santhals were also forced to pay heavy taxes and faced social and economic injustices.

"Adivasis are the original inhabitants of this land, and their rights should be recognized and respected." - Medha Patkar (Social activist).

The rebellion was led by four brothers - Sidhu, Kanku, Chand, and Bhaivav - who were influenced by their spiritual leader, Domni Majhi. The brothers spread the message of rebellion through traditional Santhal folk songs and dances.

"The Santhal rebellion was a heroic struggle against British colonialism, and it will always be remembered as a milestone in India's freedom struggle." - Jawaharlal Nehru (India's first Prime Minister.)

The rebellion began on June 30, 1855, with attacks on government offices, police stations and moneylender's houses. The Santhals used guerrilla warfare tactics, employing bows, arrows, and spears. The British responded with military force, and the rebellion was eventually suppressed in 1856. The Santhal Rebellion of 1855-1856, led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, was one of the earliest and most notable tribal rebellions against British rule. Similarly, the Munda Rebellion, led by Birsa Munda in the late 19th century, sought to establish a tribal kingdom free from British control.

"Birsa Munda's movement was a powerful assertion of Adivasi identity and resistance against colonial exploitation." - Mahatma Gandhi.

During the Non-co-operation Movement of 1920-1922, tribal communities joined Gandhi's call for civil disobedience, boycotting British goods and institutions. The forest satyagraha, led by tribal communities in Central India and Bengal, protested British control over forest resources, highlighting the critical issue of resource exploitation.

The Quit India Movement of 1942 saw widespread tribal participation, with communities like the Gond, Bhil and Korku actively joining the struggle. Tribal leaders like Jayal Singh Munda and Rani Gaidinliu worked closely with Indian National Congress leaders, providing crucial intelligence and logistic support. Despite facing numerous challenges, including exploitation, displacement, and cultural suppression, tribal communities remained committed to the cause of Indian independence. This commitment is complex and multifaceted. While their sacrifices and bravery are now recognized and celebrated, tribal communities continue to face significant challenges. Empowerment and recognition remain elusive, with many tribal communities struggling to protect their land, culture, and rights.

"Education is the key to empowerment for Adivasis. It can help them claim their rights and challenge the status quo." - Dr. Ram Dayal Munda (Adivasi scholar and activist.)

When teachers, government officials or people in general talk about education among Adivasis, you can often hear them complaining, "We have tried a lot for their literacy, development, but they do not cooperate with us." Some also go a step ahead and say, "After all they are Adivasis! No matter what you do for them, they will stay the same..."

"They will stay illiterate!"

The progressive people in the society often agree with them too. While many would believe this to be the truth. On introspection, we will realise that this is not the reality. It's us who fall short of understanding this reality, or probably, we ignore it as well. Therefore, we need to analyse what the ground situation is and take steps accordingly.

The Santhal Rebellion was a significant event in India's struggle for independence, highlighting the exploitation and resistance of indigenous communities. Although the rebellion was unsuccessful, it led to changes in British policies, including the creation of the Santal Parganas district to protect Santhal rights.

Droupadi Murmu, the 64-year-old tribal leader from Odisha scripted history when she was elected India's first Adivasi President, defeating the opposition's Yashwant Sinha with a lion's share of votes. "Adivasis are not 'backward' or 'primitive', but their rights and cultures are constantly erased by mainstream society." - Dr. Nandini Sundar (Academic and activist.)

Uncovering hidden chapters in tribal history reveals a complex tapestry of triumphs, struggles and resistance. By acknowledging we can promote cultural understanding & empathy, support tribal self-determination & autonomy, address historical injustices & finally foster inclusive, equitable societies.