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UPSC Mains 2023 (DAY-05)

- 1) Discuss the policies and impact of Lord Wellesley in consolidating British power in India during the early 19th century.

UPSC Mains Syllabus topic	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.
Why was this question asked?	<p>(Theme – British Consolidation)</p> <p>Evaluate the policies of Lord Curzon and their long-term implications on the national movements.</p> <p>In many ways, Lord Dalhousie was the founder of modern India. Elaborate.</p>
Introduction	Lord Wellesley's initiatives and diplomatic maneuvers had a profound impact on British dominance in the subcontinent.
Body	<p>I. Policy of Subsidiary Alliances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Subsidiary Alliance System, wherein local rulers were forced to accept British military protection in exchange for control over their foreign affairs and the stationing of British troops. The objective was to ensure British supremacy, weaken rival Indian powers, and expand British influence throughout India. <p>II. Wars and Expansion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anglo-Maratha Wars: Lord Wellesley engaged in a series of conflicts with the Maratha Empire, defeating their forces and securing British control over significant territories. Mysore Campaign: Wellesley's forces defeated Tipu Sultan of Mysore, resulting in the Treaty of Srirangapatnam and further extending British dominion.

	<p>III. Administrative Reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralized Administration: Wellesley established a system of centralized administration to strengthen British control, including the establishment of British resident officers in princely states. Judicial and Revenue Reforms: He introduced judicial and revenue reforms to streamline governance and enhance British influence over economic and legal matters. <p>IV. Impact on British Power:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of British Territories: Lord Wellesley's policies led to the acquisition of fixed territories, extending British control and influence in India. Consolidation of British Power: The Subsidiary Alliance System and military victories strengthened British hegemony, diminishing the power of indigenous rulers and princely states. Legacy of Imperialism: Wellesley's policies laid the foundation for subsequent British imperial rule in India, shaping the course of Indian history for the next century.
Conclusion	<p>Therefore, Lord Wellesley's policies and actions during his tenure as Governor-General played a pivotal role in consolidating British power in India during the early 19th century.</p>

2) Do you agree with the view that the Revolt of 1857 was elitist in nature? Justify your answer.

UPSC Mains Syllabus topic	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.
Why was this question asked?	<p>(Theme – 1857 Revolt)</p> <p>The 1857 uprising was the culmination of the recurrent, big and small local rebellions that had occurred in the preceding hundred years of British rule. Elucidate.</p>
Introduction	<p>The Revolt of 1857, also known as the Indian Rebellion or the First War of Independence, was a watershed moment in India's struggle against British colonial rule. The nature of this</p>

	<p>uprising has been a subject of historical debate, with some arguing that it was elitist in nature.</p>
Body	<p>Key arguments favouring the elitist nature of 1857 Revolt:</p> <p>Leadership by Elites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revolt was led by the upper echelons of Indian society, including disgruntled princely rulers, aristocrats, and sepoys, suggesting an elitist character. • Prominent leaders like Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and Bahadur Shah II belonged to the royal elite. <p>Grievances of the Sepoys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immediate trigger for the revolt was the sepoys' discontent over British reforms, such as the introduction of the new Enfield rifle and the use of animal fat in its cartridges. • The grievances of the sepoys, who were part of the Indian elite military class, played a significant role in the uprising. <p>Limited Participation of the Masses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revolt witnessed limited participation from the rural peasantry and urban working classes, suggesting that it may have been primarily driven by the grievances of the elite. <p>Urban Centers as Focal Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revolt centered around major urban areas like Delhi, Lucknow, and Kanpur, where the elite and princely rulers were concentrated, reinforcing the notion of an elitist revolt. <p>However, it was not an entirely elite in character due to the following reasons:</p> <p>Widespread Popular Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rebellion witnessed significant support from various sections of society, including peasants, artisans, and religious leaders, suggesting a broader-based movement beyond the elite class. <p>Socio-Religious Factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revolt saw the mobilization of diverse religious communities, such as the Hindu and Muslim sepoys and leaders, indicating a larger social and religious dimension.

	Economic Grievances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic factors, such as the impact of British policies on agrarian communities and the disruption of traditional economic structures, motivated a wider section of society to join the revolt.
Conclusion	<p>While there were elements of elite participation and leadership, the rebellion also witnessed substantial support from diverse sections of society. The Revolt of 1857, therefore, represents a complex tapestry of societal aspirations and resistance against British colonial rule.</p>

3) Critically examine the reasons for non-existence of Permanent settlement in other parts of India that were annexed by East India Company in 19th century.

UPSC Mains Syllabus topic	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.
Why was this question asked?	<p>(Theme – British Economic Policies)</p> <p>Why was there a sudden spurt in famines in colonial India since the mid-eighteenth century? Give reasons.</p>
Introduction	<p>The Permanent Settlement introduced by the East India Company in Bengal in 1793 was a significant land revenue policy. However, its application in other parts of India that were annexed by the Company in the 19th century was limited or non-existent largely due to following setbacks witnessed in the implementation of Permanent Settlement.</p>
Body	<p>I. Struggle between Local Governments and Zamindars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the implementation of the Permanent Settlement, a struggle ensued between the local governments and the zamindars, leading to administrative complications. Zamindars often hindered the government's efforts and even supported criminal activities, resulting in law-and-order problems.

	<p>II. Weakening of Government Authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system led to a weakening of the bond between the government and the people, as the focus shifted solely to rent collection by the zamindars. • Lack of direct contact with the masses and limited knowledge of the interior adversely affected the government's control and authority. <p>III. Exclusion of Peasants' Interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Permanent Settlement favored a handful of landowners, ignoring the interests of the vast mass of peasants who faced resentment and dissatisfaction. • The system failed to provide the state with a share in the increasing rents, leading to the concentration of wealth in the hands of zamindars. <p>IV. Absence of Zamindari Class and Financial Implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of a sizable zamindari class in the Madras Presidency prevented the introduction of the Permanent Settlement in that region. • The British Empire sought a unified concept of sovereignty, and the ryotwari system was favored by administrators like Thomas Munroe for eliminating overmighty poligars. <p>V. Financial Burden on the East India Company:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Permanent Settlement imposed a fixed revenue payment on the Company, leading to financial losses in the long run as expenses escalated due to continuous wars. <p>In addition to the above factors the following issues constrained British from implementing Permanent Settlement system in rest of the Indian parts</p> <p>VI. Diversity of Land Tenure Systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different land tenure systems existed in different parts of India, making the implementation of a uniform Permanent Settlement challenging. • Regions like the Deccan, Punjab, and Madras Presidency had their distinct land tenure arrangements deeply rooted in local customs and traditions.
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	VII. Political and Administrative Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexed regions often experienced political instability, making the implementation of a long-term settlement like the Permanent Settlement impractical. • Administrative constraints, such as inadequate knowledge of local land systems and resistance from local elites, hindered the extension of the Permanent Settlement.
Conclusion	<p>The East India Company therefore recognized the need for region-specific revenue systems to navigate the complexities of land ownership and ensure sustainable revenue collection and thus implemented ryotwari and mahalwari systems in other geographical regions of the country.</p>