



Moplah Uprising

 [drishtias.com/printpdf/moplah-uprising](https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/moplah-uprising)

Why in News

Recently, the **Indian Council for Historical research (ICHR)** has constituted a three-member committee to review the entries in the book **Dictionary of Martyrs: India's Freedom Struggle 1857-1947**, which was released by the Prime Minister on 7th March 2019.

The book contains an account of the **martyrs** from India's **First War of Independence in 1857**, to India's Independence in **1947**. The project for its compilation was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture to ICHR to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the **uprising of 1857**.

Key Points

- **Background:** A review report submitted to the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) by one of its members in 2016 had recommended the delisting 387 names including victims of **Wagon Tragedy** and **Malabar/Moplah Rebellion** leaders **Ali Musliyar** and **Variamkunnath Ahmad Haji** from the **Dictionary of Martyrs**.
 - The **year 2021** will mark the **100th year anniversary of the Malabar rebellion of 1921**.
 - There has been recent controversy on a film being released on this issue.

- **Issues involved:** The review report of 2016 noted that “almost all the Moplah outrages were **communal**. They were against the Hindu society and done out of sheer intolerance.”
 - The report also said that none of those who died in the Wagon Tragedy were freedom fighters of India as they hoisted the Khilafat flag and established Khilafat and Khilafat courts for a brief period.
 - Issue of forced conversion of Hindus into Islam by the leaders of the rebellion were also raised by many organizations.
 - However, many historians view this as a one of the **first cases of nationalist uprisings in Southern India**.

Malabar Rebellion or Moplah Uprising or Mapillah Revolt (1921)

- **Reasons:**
 - The trigger of the uprising came from the **Non-Cooperation Movement** launched by the Congress in 1920 along with the **Khilafat agitation**.
 - The **anti-British sentiment** fuelled by these agitations affected the **Muslim Mapillahs** (also known as **Moplahs**) of **south Malabar** region of **Kerala**.
 - **New Tenancy Laws:** After the death of Tipu Sultan in 1799 in the **Fourth Anglo-Mysore War**, Malabar had come under British authority as part of the **Madras Presidency**.
 - The British had introduced **new tenancy laws that** tremendously **favoured the landlords** known as *Janmis* and instituted a **far more exploitative system for peasants** than before.
 - The new laws **deprived the peasants of all guaranteed rights to the land**, share in the produce they earlier got and in effect rendered them landless.
- **The Communal Angle:** Most of the **landlords were Namboodiri Brahmins** while most of the tenants were **Mapillah Muslims**.
- **The Revolt:** Fuelled by the fiery speeches by Muslim religious leaders and anti-British sentiments, the Mopillahs launched a **violent rebellion**. Numerous **actions of violence were reported and series of persecutions** were committed both **against the British and the Hindu landlords**.
- **Support:** In the initial stages, the movement had the support of **Mahatma Gandhi** and other Indian nationalist leaders, but as it turned violent they distanced themselves from it.
- **Collapse:** By the end of 1921, the rebellion was crushed by the British who had raised a special battalion, the **Malabar Special Force** for the riot.
- **Wagon Tragedy:** In November 1921, 67 Moplah prisoners were killed when they were being transported in a closed freight wagon from Tirur to the Central Prison in Podanur. They died of suffocation. This event is called the Wagon Tragedy.

Khilafat Movement

- The Khilafat agitation was launched in India in **1919**.
- It was led by **Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali**.
- The demands of the movement were :
 - Control of **Turkish Caliphate** or Khalifa over islamic sacred places in the erstwhile Ottaman Empire.
 - The *Jazirat-ul-Arab* i.e. Arabia, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq remain sunder Muslim Sovereignty
 - Khalifa is left with sufficient territory to defend the Ismaic faith.
- The movement was supported by the **Indian National Congress**.
- Mahatma Gandhi wanted to align it to the Non-Cooperation Movement to unite Hindus and Muslims against the British rule.

Indian Council of Historical Research

- ICHR is an **autonomous organization**, established under Societies Registration Act,1860 in 1972.
- It is under the **Ministry of Education**.
- **Objectives**
 - To bring historians together for exchange of views.
 - To give a national direction to an objective and scientific writing of history.
 - To promote, accelerate and coordinate research in history and ensure its dissemination.
- The council also provides grants, assistance and fellowships for historical research.

Source: TH