



# Pal-Dadhvav Massacre

## Why in News

Recently, the Gujarat government marked **100 years of the Pal-Dadhvav killings**, calling it a massacre “bigger than the [Jallianwala Bagh](#)”.

- A Gujarat government release on the centenary of the massacre described the incident as “more brutal than the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919.
- Earlier, Bihar Chief Minister announced that 15<sup>th</sup> February would be commemorated as “[Shahid Diwas](#)” in memory of the **34 freedom fighters** who were killed by police in Tarapur town (now subdivision) of Bihar’s Munger district 90 years ago.

## What was the Pal-Dadhvav Massacre?

- The Pal-Dadhvav massacre **took place on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1922**, in the **Pal-Chitariya and Dadhvaav villages of Sabarkantha district**, then part of Idar state (Now Gujrat).
- The day was **Amalki Ekadashi, which falls just before Holi**, a major festival for tribals.
- Villagers from Pal, Dadhvav, and Chitariya had gathered on the banks of river Heir as part of the ‘**Eki movement**’, led by one Motilal Tejawat.
  - Tejawat, who belonged to Koliyari village in the Mewad region of Rajasthan, had also mobilised [Bhils](#) from Kotda Chhavni, [Sirohi](#), and Danta to participate.
  - The **impact of the protest** was felt in Vijaynagar, Dadhvaav, Poshina and Khedbrahma, which are now talukas of Sabarkantha; the Aravalli districts, Banaskantha and Danta of Banaskantha district; and Kotda Chhavni, Dungarpur, Chittor, Sirohi, Banswada and Udaipur of Rajasthan, all of which were then princely states.
- The movement was **to protest against the land revenue tax (lagaan) imposed on the peasants** by the British and feudal lords.
- The British Paramilitary force was on hunt for Tehawat. It heard of this gathering and reached the spot.
- Nearly **200 bhils under the leadership of Tehawat lifted their bows and arrows**. But, the Britishers opened fire on them. Nearly 1,000 tribals (Bhils) fell to bullets.
  - While the British claimed some 22 people were killed, the Bhils believe **1,200-1,500 of them died**.
- Tejawat, however, escaped and later “returned to the spot to christen it ‘Veer Bhumi’”.

## Who was Motilal Tejawat?

- Born into a **merchant (Baniya) family in the adivasi-dominated Koliyari village**, Tejawat was **employed by a landlord, where he worked for eight years**.
  - During this period he saw closely how the landlords exploited tribals and would threaten to beat them with shoes if they did not pay the tax.
- Outraged by the atrocities and exploitation of the tribal people, **Tejawat quit the job in 1920 and devoted himself to social work** and reform. To this day, local tribals recount the Pal-Dadhvav massacre in songs sung at weddings and fairs. One such song is ‘**Hansu dukhi, duniya**

**dukhi'.**

PYQ

In the context of Colonial India, Shah Nawaz Khan, Prem Kumar Sehgal and Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon are remembered as (2021)

- (a) leaders of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement
- (b) members of the Interim Government in 1946
- (c) members of the Drafting Committee in the Constituent Assembly
- (d) officers of the Indian National Army

Ans: (d)

**Source: IE**

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