

SOCIAL STUDIES

CLASS VIII

THE REVOLT OF 1857.

Q1.What were the political causes of the revolt of 1857?

A1.The revolt of 1857 had deep rooted political causes-

- *The faulty land revenue settlements that exploited the peasants and also took away the privileges of the landlords.

- *The Subsidiary alliance introduced by Lord Wellesley, subjugated the Indian rulers.

- *Doctrine of Lapse, introduced by Lord Dalhousie in 1848, did not allow adopted heirs to inherit the kingdom and the british took over many such kingdoms such as Jhansi and Satara, on this basis.

- *They could depose rulers on the grounds of misrule like they deposed Wajid Ali Shah, the nawab of Awadh, even though he had signed the Subsidiary alliance.

- *Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zaffar was declared the last emperor of the mughal dynasty and his sons were not to be allowed even to live in Red Fort.

Q2.Why was Awadh annexed and why was this looked upon as an act of betrayal?

A2.The british had made the Nawab of Awadh ,Wajid Ali Shah sign the Subsidiary alliance and yet he was removed on grounds of misrule and sent into exile in Calcutta.

This was considered as an act of betrayal by the Indian rulers because -

- *The Indian rulers felt cheated and were unsure if they would be able to keep their kingdoms even after signing the subsidiary alliance.

- *The artists, singers , and musicians lost patronage of Wajid Ali Shah and became unemployed.

- *As the Awadh army was disbanded , the soldiers became unemployed.

- *There was anger amongst the farmers because they got low remissions from the british.

Q3.What were the social religious causes of the revolt?

A3.The orthodox section of the Indian society felt threatened by the presence of Christian missionaries who often converted people.

- *Though the Sati Abolition Act 1829 and the Widow Remarriage Act 1856 were great steps towards reform but they made the orthodox Indian feel that hindu customs were being threatened by the british.

- *Caste rules were violated when people of diverse castes travelled together in the army or in the railways.

*Religious symbols like tilaks for hindus and beard for muslims were not permitted in the british Indian army.

*Persian was replaced by English as the official language in 1844.

*Lands of temples and mosques had to pay tax but there was no tax on the land of churches.

Q4.Why were the sepoys unhappy with the british?

A4.The sepoys were unhappy with the british because-

*Inspite of their hard work, they were not promoted beyond the rank of Subedar.

*According to the General Service Enlistment Act 1856, they were forced for the overseas duties which was against the Hindu religion.

*Their salaries were lower than those of their british counter parts.

*The allowance that they used to get during war was also discontinued.

*They were not allowed to follow their caste or religious rituals

Q5.What were the immediate causes of the revolt of 1857?

A5. *The british introduced Enfield rifles in 1856.

*The cartridges of these rifles were coated with grease and sealed in tiny paper packets that had to be bitten off before being loaded.

*It was rumoured that the grease contained the fat of cows and pigs.

*Cows are holy to hindus and muslims are forbidden from eating pig meat.

*Thus, both hindu and muslim sepoys refused to use the Enfield rifles and revolted.

Q6.Why did the revolt of 1857 fail?

Q6.The revolt of 1857 failed to dislodge the British government because of the following reasons-

*The concept of India as a nation was lacking and every rebel leader fought only for his/her own kingdom.

*The Indian rulers had outdated weapons as compared to the British.

*The british had brilliant generals.

*The administrative centres of the British namely , Bombay,Madras and Calcutta were not impacted by the revolt and remained well connected.

*The educated middle class of India did not support the revolt as they considered british rule necessary for modernisation.

*Several royals as the Nizam Of Hyderabad , the Scindia of Gwalior supported the British.

*The revolt remained localised in the Indo-Gangetic plains and parts of Central provinces.

Q7.Discuss why the revolt can be called as the war of independence.

A7 . 1857 has been called the first war of Indian independence because-

*Though it was started by the sepoys ,it soon spread amongst kings and queens , peasants and workers .

*Though most of the rulers fought for their territories ,yet they proclaimed Bahadur Shah Zaffar as "Shahenshah-e-Hindustan".

*Nearly all the classes of Indians began to see the british as their enemies.

*Though this revolt was unsuccessful in dislodging the british yet it inspired many other rebellions in the coming years.

* It initiated the concept of "India" as a nation.

Q8 What did the British do in order to win the loyalty of the Indian orthodox?

A8.In order to please the orthodox Indians after the revolt of 1857, the britishers-

* Promised not to interfere in the religious affairs.

*They also said that they would no longer take interest in the socio- religious reforms.

Q9.What were the economic causes of the revolt of 1857?

A9.The various economic causes were-

*The exploitative land revenue system of the britishers that made the land revenue rates very high and that to be paid in cash.

*There were no remissions even in the time of famines.

*The British imposed heavy duty on goods of Indian merchants but did not pay any duty on their own trade. Thus they drained away the wealth of india.

*When rulers were deposed , the artisans of the state lost patronage.

*When states were taken over, armies were disbanded and soldiers became unemployed

*The british ruined the textile industry of India and even cut the thumbs of weavers.

*Thus, India was suffering from mass poverty under the British.

Q10.How was the policy of divide and rule implemented in Indian army after the revolt of 1857?

A10. After the revolt of 1857 ,the British Indian army was reorganised to favour the british.

*The number of European soldiers was increased.

*Strategic military possessions, important equipment like guns and cannons were always under the British control.

*Fewer soldiers were absorbed from areas that had been active during the revolt. eg. Awadh and Bihar.

*More Sikhs , Gurkhas, Rajputs and Jats were incorporated in the army ,for they had supported the British during the revolt.

Q11 Why did the british adopt the policy of discrimination against the muslims after the revolt of 1857?

A11. During the revolt of 1857 ,hindus and muslims had fought shoulder to shoulder against the British and the british rule had been severely threatened.

*To prevent this from recurring the British followed a policy of Divide and Rule in which they discriminated against the muslims first to create a chasm between hindus and muslims.

DO IT YOURSELF-

1. Name 4 important rulers of the revolt of 1857 and stick their pictures.Also write the centres of their revolt.

2. Name three leaders who played a great role in crushing the revolt of 1857.

3. What change was made in the post of Governor General, after the revolt?

3. In a political map of India, mark-

*The city where the revolt started.

* Centres of revolt of two Indian rulers with their names.