

CLASS-8 (HISTORY)

WHEN PEOPLE REBEL 1857 and After CH-5

IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGIES:

Sepoy: Soldier

Mutiny: When soldiers together begin to disobey their officers in the army.

Firangis: Foreigners, Here, the term has been used for the Englishmen.

Ghazis: Religious warriors

Paramount: Supreme

TIME LINE:

1849 – Governor-General Dalhousie announced that after the death of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the family of the king would be shifted out of the Red Fort and given another place in Delhi to reside in.

1856 – (i) Governor-General Canning decided that Bahadur Shah Zafar would be the last Mughal king and after his death his descendants would be recognised as princes.

(ii) The Company passed a new law which stated that every new person who took up employment in the Company's army had to agree to serve overseas if required.

29 March 1857 – Mangal Pandey, a young soldier, was hanged to death for attacking his officers in Barrackpore.

May 1857 -Sepoys mutinied in several places.

10 May 1857 – Sepoys rushed to Delhi from Meerut.

September 1857 – Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar along with his wife was sent to prison in Rangoon.

October 1858 – A new Act passed by the British Parliament transferred the powers of the East India Company to the British Crown.

1858– Bahadur Shah Zafar died in Rangoon jail.

(A) Fill in the blanks with appropriate words to complete each sentence.

1. In the countryside peasants and zamindars resented the ... **high taxes** and the rigid methods of ... **revenue**...collection.
2. The British passed laws to stop the practice of ... **Sati** ... and to encourage the ... **remarriage**.. of widows.
3. The rebels rushed to Delhi from Meerut and proclaimed ... **Bahadur Shah Zafar** ... as their leader.
4. Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the late Peshwa Baji Rao, gathered armed forces and expelled the ... **British Garrison**... from the city.
5. **Tantia Tope**.. fought a guerrilla war against the British with the support of several tribal and peasant leaders.

(B) State whether each of the following statements is True or False.

1. None of the Indians wanted to change existing social practices.
2. In 1856, Governor-General Canning decided that Bahadur Shah Zafar would be the last Mughal king.
3. The Indian sepoy were unhappy about their pay, allowances and conditions of service.
4. The British could not repress the revolt and called the rebels for negotiations.
5. After the Revolt of 1857, the Governor-General of India was given the title of Admiral-General.

Answer:

1. False
2. True

3. True
4. False
5. False

(C) VERY SHORT QUESTIONS

1. What was the plea of Nana Saheb, the adopted son of Peshwa Baji Rao-II?

Answer:

Nana Saheb pleaded that he be given his father's pension when the latter died.

2. What was the first step taken by the Company towards ending the Mughal dynasty?

Answer:

The name of the Mughal king was removed from the coins minted by the Company.

3. What did the ageing Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar do after he was declared the leader of the rebels?

Answer:

He wrote letters to all the chiefs and rulers of the country to come forward and organise a confederacy of Indian states to fight the British.

4. Name any two smaller rulers who acknowledged the suzerainty of Bahadur Shah Zafar.

Answer:

Nana Saheb and Birjis Qadr .

5. Who was Tantia Tope?

Answer:

He was the General of Nana Saheb.

6. Who was Ahmadullah Shah? What was his prophesy?

Answer:

Ahmadullah Shah was a maulvi from Faizabad. His prophesy was that the rule of the British would soon come to an end.

7. Who was Bakht Khan?

Answer:

Bakht Khan was a soldier from Bareilly. He took charge of a large force of fighters who came to Delhi.

8. When did the British recapture Delhi?

Answer:

The British recaptured Delhi in September 1857.

9. Why were the powers of the East India Company transferred to the British Crown?

Answer:

The powers of the East India Company were transferred to the British Crown in order to ensure a more responsible management of Indian affairs.

10. Under what condition the ruling chiefs could pass on their kingdoms to their heirs?

Answer:

They could do so only when they were ready to acknowledge the British Queen as their Sovereign Paramount.

11. Why did the British treat Muslims with suspicion and hostility?

Answer:

The British believed that Muslims were responsible for the rebellion in a big way.

(D) SHORT QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

1. Under what pretext did the Company take over Awadh?

Answer:

In 1801, a subsidiary alliance was imposed on Awadh, and in 1856, it was taken over. Governor-General Dalhousie declared that the

territory was being misgoverned and British rule was needed to ensure proper administration.

2. How did the Company plan to bring an end to the Mughal dynasty?

Answer:

- (a) First of all the name of the Mughal king was removed from the coins minted by the Company.
- (b) In 1849, Governor-General Dalhousie announced that after the death of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the family of the king would be shifted out of the Red Fort and given another place in Delhi to live in.
- (c) In 1856, Governor-General "Canning decided that Bahadur Shah Zafar would be the last Mughal king and after his death his descendants would be known as princes.

3. Why were the Indian sepoys in the employ of the Company discontented? Give sufficient reasons.

Answer:

Reasons for their discontentment:

- (a) The Indian sepoys were given poor salaries and allowances.
- (b) The conditions of service also made them unhappy.
- (c) Some of the new rules even violated their religious sentiments and beliefs.
- (d) Those were the days when many people in the country believed that if they crossed the sea they would lose their religion and caste.
- (e) So when in 1824 the sepoys were told to go to Burma by the sea route to fight for the Company, they refused to follow this order.
- (f) As a result they were given severe punishment. In 1856, the Company passed a new law which stated that every new person who took up employment in the Company's army had to agree to serve overseas if required.

4. What reforms did the British introduce in the Indian society? How did the people of India respond to them?

Answer:

The British introduced several reforms:

- (a) They passed laws to stop the practice of sati and to encourage the remarriage of widows.
- (b) They promoted English language education.
- (c) In 1850, the Company passed a new law that made the conversion to Christianity easier.

Many Indians began to feel that the British were destroying their religion, their social customs and their traditional way of life. But at the same time there were other Indians who readily accepted the reforms introduced by the British. In fact, they wanted to change existing social practices.

5. Why did the chiefs and rulers support the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar in the revolt?

Answer:

The Mughal dynasty had ruled over a large part of the country. Most smaller rulers and chieftains controlled different territories on behalf of the Mughal ruler. Threatened by the expansion of British rule, many of them felt that if the Mughal emperor could rule again, they too would be able to rule their own territories once more, under the Mughal authority.

6. How did the British try to win back the loyalty of the people after they recaptured Delhi?

Answer:

- (a) The British announced rewards for loyal landholders by allowing them to continue to enjoy traditional rights over their lands.
(b) Those who had rebelled were told that if they submitted to the British and if they had not killed any white people, they would remain safe and their rights and claims to land would not be denied.

(E) EXERCISE QUESTIONS / ANSWERS

1. What was the demand of Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi that was refused by the British?

Answer:

To accept her adopted son to succeed the throne of the king, after the death of her husband.

2. What did the British do to protect the interests of those who converted to Christianity?

Answer: Those who converted to Christianity would inherit the property of his ancestors.

3. What objections did the sepoys have to the new cartridges that they were asked to use?

Answer:

Objections the sepoys had to the new cartridges were:

- (a) The cartridges were greased with the fat of cows and pigs.
- (b) The sepoys had to use mouth to remove the covering of the cartridges.
- (c) They termed the cartridges to be a violation of the religious sentiments.
- (d) Hence, they rebelled.

4. How did the last Mughal emperor live the last years of his life?

Answer:

The last Mughal emperor lived a very pathetic life during the last years of his life. He was tried in court and sentenced to life imprisonment. He and his wife were sent to prison in Rangoon. He died there after four years.

5. What could be the reasons for the confidence of the British rulers about their position in India before May 1857?

Answer:

Reasons for the confidence of the British rulers about their position in India before May 1857

- (a) The traditional rulers failed to develop independent leadership.
- (b) They also failed to have independent social, economic, and political aims of their own.
- (c) They fought among themselves and could not present a united front against the foreign rule.
- (d) A section of the people practiced inhuman social practices. They did not rise in revolt against the Britishers.

6. What impact did Bahadur Shah Zafar's support to the rebellion have on the people and the ruling families?

Answer:

Bahadur Shah Zafar's support to the rebellion boosted the morale of the people and the ruling families. They became united to fight the British authority with double spirit.

People of the towns and villages rose up in rebellion and rallied around local leaders, zamindars and chiefs. Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the late Peshwa Baji Rao, who lived near Kanpur, gathered armed forces and expelled the British garrison from the city. He proclaimed himself Peshwa.

He declared that he was a Governor under emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. In Lucknow, Birjis Qadr, the son of the deposed Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, was proclaimed the new Nawab. He too acknowledged the suzerainty of Bahadur Shah Zafar. In Jhansi, Rani Lakshmbai joined the rebel sepoys and fought the British along with Tantia Tope, the general of Nana Saheb.

7. How did the British succeed in securing the submission of the rebel landowners of Awadh?

Answer:

British succeeded in securing the submissions of the rebel landowners of Awadh:

- They provided inheritance rights to the landowners (who would enjoy traditional rights over their land).
- They were exempted from taxes.
- They were rewarded.
- They would be safe and their rights and claims would not be denied to them.

8. In what ways did the British change their policies as a result of the rebellion of 1857?

Answer:

Some important changes brought by the British after the revolt were

- (a) According to the Act of 1858 powers of the East India Company were transferred to the British Crown in India.

- (b) All rulers were made to acknowledge British Queen as Sovereign Paramount and were allowed to pass their kingdoms to their heirs.
- (c) The proportion of Indian soldiers in the army was reduced. More soldiers were taken from Gurkhas, Sikhs and Pathans.
- (d) Muslims were seen held responsible for rebellion and their land was confiscated.
- (e) Social and religious practices were given respect.
- (f) Zamindars and landlords were given protection and rights over their lands

MAP SKILL

1. On an outline political map of India, mark the important centres of Revolt in North India.

Ans.



