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REVOLT OF 1857

- Revolt of 1857 is an important landmark in the history of India which occurred during the governor-generalship of Lord Canning.
- As per the historians it was the Sepoy mutiny, however according to the Indian scholar it was the first war of independence.

Causes For the Revolt

The result of 1857 was a result of combination of political, economic, socio-religious and military causes.

Political Causes

- The annexation policy of British was one of the major causes for the revolt.
- Lord Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse had created fear and uneasiness throughout India. According to Doctrine of Lapse an Indian state was annexed by British if the ruler had no natural heir.
- Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur and Sambalpur were annexed owing to Doctrine of lapse.

Economic Causes

- Heavy taxation, forcibly eviction, discriminatory tariff policy against Indian products.
- The Indian weavers and craftsmen were forced to work according to the desires of servants of the company.

Social And Religious Causes

- The racial discrimination by British against Indians, forceful conversion of Christianity and social reforms like abolition of sati in 1829, Legalization of widow remarriage in 1956.
- Religious sentiments were aroused when the British imposed taxes on the lands belonging to temples and mosques.

Military Causes

- British discriminated against the Indian soldiers and adopted the policy of exclusion in the service conditions and promotion by which the high and key posts were reserved only for the Europeans.

Immediate Causes

- The introduction of Enfield greased rifles whose cartridges were said to have a greased cover made of beef and pork sparked off the revolt.
- On 29 March 1857 at Barrakpore near Calcutta, Mangal Panday a young Indian Brahmin sepoy from 34th Bengal Native Infantry refused to use greased cartridge. When he was forced by his sergeant, he shot him down.
- The sepoy broke out into open revolt at Meerut in May 1857 they broke open the prisons and released their imprisoned comrades.

Major Centers and Leaders of Revolt 1857

S.No	Places of Revolt	Indian leader	British Officials who suppressed the revolt
1	Delhi	Bahadur shah II	John Nicholson
2	Kanpur	Nanasahib and Tantiya Tope	Sir Colin Campbell
3	Lucknow	Begam hazarat mahal	Henry Lawrence
4	Jhansi	Rani Lakshmi Bai (Original name of Rani of Jhansi was Manikarnika)	General Hugh Rose
5	Allahabad and Banaras	Liaqat ali	Colonel Oncell

Causes For Failure of the Revolt

- South India remained quit and Punjab and Bengal were only marginally affected.
- The educated Indians did not support the movement in general.
- The revolt was planned throughout the country on May 31, 1857 but it broke out prematurely.
- The Revolutionaries had no common idea. The Muslims wanted to revive Mughal rule and the Hindus wanted to revive the Peshwa Raj.
- The British through their diplomacy of divine rule prevented most of the Indian rulers to join together for a common cause.
- The Indian princes and zamindars either remained loyal or were fearful of British power.
- One of the important reasons for the failure of the rebellion was the absence of a central authority.

Impact of the Revolt 1857

- The major impact of the revolt was the end of East India Company's rule in India. The administration of India was directly taken by the British crown.
- The British Governor-General of India was now also given the title of viceroy of India.
- India was pronounced as one of the many crown colonies to be directly governed by the Parliament. The responsibility was given to a member of the cabinet, designated as the Secretary of State for India.
- Full religious freedom was guaranteed to Indians. Indians were also given assurance that high posts would be given to them without any discrimination.
- The revolt aroused national feelings among the people and paved way for the rise of the national movement.
- India was pronounced as one of the many crown colonies to be directly governed by the Parliament. The responsibility was given to a member of the cabinet, designated as the Secretary of State for India.

Queen Victoria's Proclamation Of 1858

- The proclamation issued by queen victoria is described as the 'Magna Carta' of India.
- A Royal Durbar was held at Allahabad on November 1, 1858. The proclamation issued by Queen Victoria was read at the Durbar by Lord Canning, who was the last Governor General and the first Viceroy of India.

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