

## **SUBJECT: SOCIAL STUDIES (HISTORY)**

### **CH-5: WHEN PEOPLE REBEL ; 1857 AND AFTER**

#### **Short answer question:**

#### **1. What was the immediate cause of the Sepoy mutiny and why?**

**Answer:** Use of greased cartridges in the army was the immediate cause. They were coated with the fat of pig and cow and offended the religious sensibilities of the sepoys.

#### **2. Why were the powers of the East India Company transferred to the British crown?**

**Answer:** The British Parliament passed a new Act in 1858 and transferred the powers of the East India Company to the British Crown in order to ensure a more responsible management of Indian affairs.

#### **3. What were the religious causes of the revolt?**

**Answer:** The Company allowed Christian missionaries to function freely in its domain and even own land and property. In 1850, a new law was passed to make conversion to Christianity easier. Many Indians felt that the British were destroying their religion; thus, revolted against the British rule.

#### **4. What were the social causes of the revolt?**

**Answer:** The British believed that Indian society had to be reformed. Laws were passed to stop the practice of sati and to encourage the remarriage of widows. English-language education was actively promoted. Many Indians believed that the British were meddling in their social customs and their traditional way of life; thus, revolted against the British rule.

## **5. What happened to the Nawabs when the British established political power in India?**

**Answer:** When British established political power in India:

- The Nawabs and Rajas lost their authority and honour.
- British Residents were stationed in all the courts, the freedom of the rulers reduced, their armed forces disbanded and territories taken away by stages.

### **Long answer question:**

#### **1. Why were the Indian sepoy unhappy with the British rule?**

**Or**

#### **Why did the Indian soldiers get angry at the British?**

**Answer:** They were unhappy about their pay, allowances and conditions of service. Some of the new rules violated their religious sensibilities and beliefs. Those were the days many people in the country believed that if they crossed the sea they would lose their religion and caste. So when in 1824 the sepoy were told to go to Burma by the sea route to fight for the Company, they refused to follow the order, though they agreed to go by the land route. They were severely punished, and since the issue did not die down, 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.

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

**Answer:** The reasons for the confidence of the British rulers about their position in India before May 1857 were:

- Nawabs and rajas had lost their authority and honour. Residents had been stationed in many courts, the freedom of the rulers reduced, their armed forces disbanded, and their revenues and territories taken away by stages.
- Awadh was one of the last territories to be annexed. In 1801, a subsidiary alliance was imposed on Awadh, and in 1856 it was taken over.
- In 1856, Governor-General Canning decided that Bahadur Shah Zafar would be the last Mughal king and after his death none of his descendants would be recognized as kings – they would just be called princes.

### **3. What reforms did the British introduced in the Indian society? How did people of India respond to them?**

**Answer:** British introduced the following reforms in the Indian society.

- Laws were passed to stop the practice of sati and to encourage the remarriage of widows.
- English-language education was actively promoted.
- After 1830, the Company allowed Christian missionaries to function freely in its domain and even own land and property.
- In 1850, a new law was passed to make 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.

### **4. 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.

- The people of the towns and villages also rose up in rebellion and rallied around local leaders, zamindars and chiefs who were prepared to establish their authority and fight the British.
- Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the late Peshwa Bajji Rao, gathered armed forces and expelled the British garrison from the city.

- 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 Lakshmibai joined the rebel sepoys and fought the British along with Tantia Tope, the general of Nana Saheb.

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

**Answer:** Following are the important changes that were introduced by the British.

- The British Parliament passed a new Act in 1858 and transferred the powers of the East India Company to the British Crown in order to ensure a more responsible management of Indian affairs.
- All ruling chiefs of the country were assured that their territory would never be annexed in future. They were allowed to pass on their kingdoms to their heirs, including adopted sons. However, they were made to acknowledge the British Queen as their Sovereign Paramount.
- It was decided that the proportion of Indian soldiers in the army would be reduced and the number of European soldiers would be increased. It was also decided that instead of recruiting soldiers from Awadh, Bihar, central India and south India, more soldiers would be recruited from among the Gurkhas, Sikhs and Pathans.
- The land and property of Muslims was confiscated on a large scale and they were treated with suspicion and hostility. The British believed that they were responsible for the rebellion in a big way.
- The British decided to respect the customary religious and social practices of the people in India.
- Policies were made to protect landlords and zamindars and give them security of rights over their lands.