

When People Rebel – 1857 and After

Questions (to be done in CW)

I) Fill in the blanks:

1. The Governor General of India was given the title of _____.
2. _____ escaped to the jungles of Central India and continued to fight a guerrilla war against the British. He was supported by many tribal and peasant leaders.
3. 'From Sepoy to Subedar' is a memoir written by _____.

II) Answer in brief:

4. What steps did the British take to end the Mughal Empire?
5. Why were the land and property of Muslims confiscated on a large scale after the revolt of 1857?
6. Mention the steps taken by the British to reform the Indian society.
7. What were the main provisions of the Act of 1858?
8. State any five leaders of the Revolt of 1857 and mention their role in the rebellion.
9. What impact did Bahadur Shah Zafar's support to the rebellion have on the people and the ruling families?

III) Answer in detail:

10. Mention the political causes of the rebellion.
11. Explain the steps taken by the British to suppress the revolt in India.
12. What were the causes of discontent among the sepoys of the British army. Why did the Sepoys refuse to use the new cartridges?

IV) MAP – to be done on India river map or India Outline map:

Centres of Revolt - Delhi, Meerut, Bareilly, Lucknow, Kanpur, Faizabad, Jhansi

ANSWERS:

6. Mention the steps taken by the British to reform the Indian society.

ANS: 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.

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. This law allowed an Indian who had converted to Christianity to inherit the property of his ancestors.

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

ANS: Bahadur Shah Zafar 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. This single step taken by Bahadur Shah had great implications.

The Mughal dynasty had ruled over a very 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 Mughal authority.

The British had not expected this to happen. They thought the disturbance caused by the issue of the cartridges would die down. But Bahadur Shah Zafar's decision to bless the rebellion changed the entire situation dramatically.

11. Explain the steps taken by the British to suppress the revolt in India.

ANS: Unnerved by the scale of the upheaval, the Company decided to repress the revolt with all its might.

It brought reinforcements from England, passed new laws so that the rebels could be convicted with ease, and then moved into the storm centres of the revolt.

Delhi was recaptured from the rebel forces in September 1857. Lucknow was taken in March 1858. Rani Lakshmibai was defeated and killed in June 1858. Tantia Tope captured, tried and killed in April 1859.

The British also tried their best to win back the loyalty of the people. They announced rewards for loyal landholders would be allowed to continue to enjoy traditional rights over their lands. 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.
