

## Chapter 5 When People Rebel - 1857 and After

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

**Answer.**

Rani Lakshmibai was the queen of Jhansi. She had adopted a son. Hence, she wanted her son to be the ruler of Jhansi. However, according to Lord Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse policy, an adopted heir will not be allowed to acquire the kingdom once the father dies and the same will be annexed by the British. Hence, Rani Lakshmibai's demand for recognizing her adopted son as the male heir of the kingdom was refused by the British.

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

**Answer.**

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 the conversion to Christianity easier. This law allowed an Indian who had converted to Christianity to inherit the property of his ancestors. Many Indians began to feel that the British were destroying their religion, their social customs and their traditional way of life.

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

**Answer.**

The new cartridges were unaccepted by the Indian sepoys as they had the belief that these have been coated by the fat of the cow and pigs. The sepoys have to bite the cartridges but the religion of Indian sepoys did not allow them to touch these cartridges. Hence they denied using the new cartridges.

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

**Answer.**

The last Mughal emperor was Bahadur Shah Zafar. His title of the Mughal emperor was the symbolic one as, after the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal rulers lost their power and led only symbolic stature. Zafar was also the symbolic head of the 1857 revolt. However, once the revolt was crushed, Bahadur Shah Zafar was tried in court. He was blinded by the British and imprisoned. Later in 1858, he along with his wife was sent to Rangoon where he died in 1862.

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

**Answer.**

The British became confident about their position in India because of the following reasons:

- a. The Mughal rulers after the death of Aurangzeb were not strong and powerful hence it was easier for them to annex states
- b. The disunity among nawabs and the Mughal ruler helped the British have a firm stronghold in the Indian society, starting from Bengal.
- c. The policies, like Subsidiary Alliance, helped British annexe territories one after another without the use of any military power.
- d. The revolt of 1857 though was unique however was crushed by the British leading to their supremacy over the Indian society.

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

**Answer.**

However, after the death of Aurangzeb, considered as the last strong and powerful Mughal ruler of India, the Mughal ruler still had a symbolic presence. Hence, even after Aurangzeb, Mughal rulers had their presence. The revolt of 1857 started only when Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last ruler of Mughals, gave his permission. His support for the revolt made leaders from various places confident. Zafar asked all the leaders to form a confederacy to fight the British. Many small, large kingdoms, rulers and chieftains supported the revolt after Bahadur Shah Zafar's support to the revolt. Hence, his support for the rebellion had a widespread effect on the people and the ruling families.

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

**Answer.**

British followed a two-pronged approach to suppress the rebel landowners of Awadh:

- a. The first approach was to hang the rebel landowners who had killed British personnel to threaten the people of Awadh for consequences of their revolts in future.
- b. The second approach was to reward the loyal landowners of Awadh stating that if they have not killed British personnel and they submit before British, they will be safe and they can have their share of lands.

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

**Answer.**

After the revolt of 1857, the British Crown took over the Indian administration. The powers of the East India Company were transferred to the Crown. The following changes were made:

- a. Doctrine of Lapse policy was abolished
- b. The number of Indian sepoys was reduced in the army so that in future they can't rebel against the British
- c. Zamindars and landowners' right were further enhanced
- d. Crown promised that it will not interfere with the religion of the people.
- e. Viceroy and Secretary of the state were appointed for the administration of Indian society.