

## REVOLT OF 1857 AND MOVEMENT AGAINST BRITISH PRE 1857



## **People's Resistance**

According to Bipan Chandra, people's resistance during the colonial era manifested in three broad forms: civil rebellions, tribal uprisings, and peasant movements.

## **Causes of People's Uprisings**

- Colonial land revenue settlements and new taxes imposed heavy burdens.
- Peasants were evicted from their lands, and tribal lands were encroached upon.
- Exploitation in rural society grew, with an increase in intermediary revenue collectors, tenants, and moneylenders.
- The loss of tribal control over agricultural and forest lands.
- The promotion of British manufactured goods and heavy duties on Indian industries devastated Indian handloom and handicraft industries.

## Movements against the Britishers pre 1857

### Religious Movements

Sanyasi (1770-1820)

Fakir (1776-1777)

Pagalpanthi (1825-1840)

Wahabi (1786-1860)

Faraizi (1838-1857)

Moplah (1835-1921)

### Tribal Movements

Santhal (1854-1855)

Khond (1837-1856)

Munda (1899)

Paika (1817-1818)

Khasi (1829-1833)

Singphos (1830-1849)

### Political Movements

Velu Thampi (1808-1809)

Polygar (1799-1805)

Ramosi (1822-1826)

Gadkari Swanat wadi (1844)



## **The Great Revolt of 1857**

An attempt by dispossessed rulers, zamindars, and rebel soldiers to overthrow British rule in India.

### **Political Causes:**

- **Wars and Conquests:** East India Company created discontent among dispossessed ruling families.
- **Doctrine of Lapse:** Lord Dalhousie's policy prevented rulers from adopting sons for religious purposes, causing discontent.
- **Foreign Governance:** India was governed from Britain, causing irritation among Indians.

### **Administrative Causes**

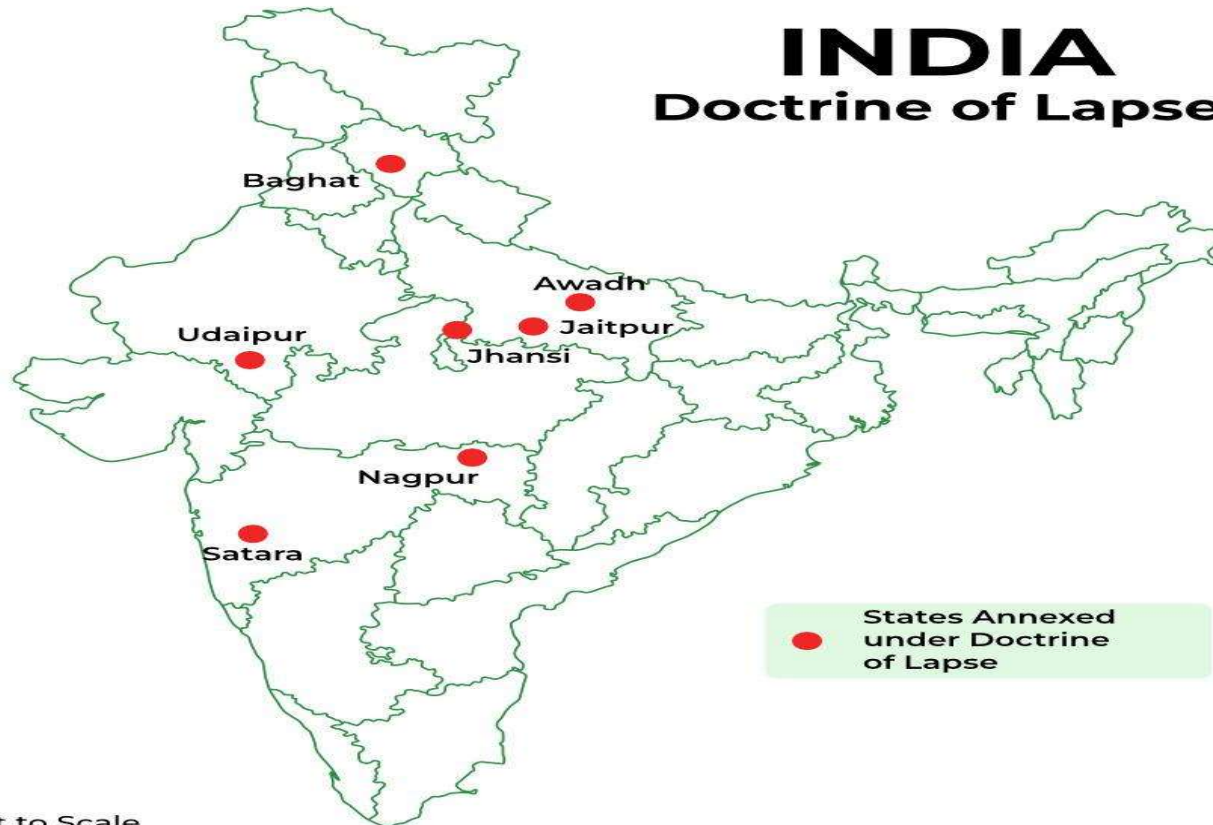
- **New Administrative System:** Faceless, soulless, and arrogant British administration.
- **Loss of Benefits and Privileges:** Confiscation of rent-free lands and loss of aristocratic privileges.
- **Exclusion from Higher Posts:** Indians excluded from higher administrative and military positions.

### **Economic Causes**

- **Economic Exploitation:** Maximum revenue collection with minimum effort.
- **Ruin of Mercantile Class:** High tariff duties on Indian goods and promotion of British imports.
- **Destruction of Manufacturers:** Import of British cotton goods ruined Indian textile industry.
- **Economic Drain:** Wealth drained from India to England through unfair policies.

# INDIA

## Doctrine of Lapse



\* Not to Scale

### **Socio-religious Causes**

- **Social Exclusiveness:** British racial superiority and arrogant behavior.
- **Missionary Activities:** Interference in religion by Christian missionaries.

**Social Legislation:** British efforts to eradicate practices like sati and child marriage.

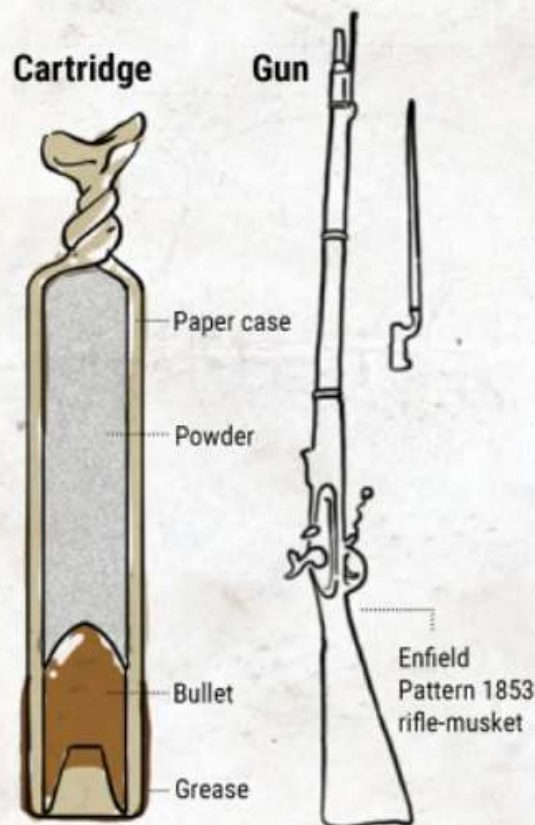
### **Military Causes of the Revolt of 1857**

- **General Service Enlistment Act (1856):** Forced Indian soldiers to serve in Burma and Afghanistan, violating religious beliefs.
- **Disparity:** Inequality between Indian and British soldiers stationed in India.
- **Salary Dissimilarity:** Lower salaries for Indian soldiers compared to British soldiers.
- **Mysterious Chapatis:** Unrest signaled by the circulation of chapatis from village to village since 1850.
- **Lotus Flowers:** Circulation among regiments, creating an atmosphere of mystery.
- **Centenary of the Battle of Plassey:** Anticipation of the end of 100 years of British rule on 23rd June, 1857.



# What led to the mutiny?

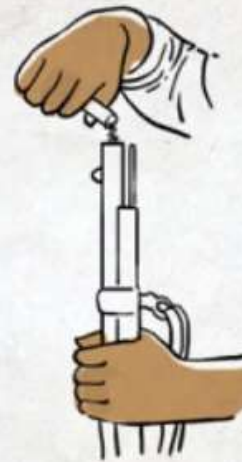
The rebellion of 1857 was not predicated on a single event; rather, it was an accumulation of various factors. **Tallow and lard-greased cartridges** delivered the final blows that triggered the uprising.



1

Soldiers had to tear open the end of the cartridge with their teeth. The grease was rumoured to be derived from beef and pork.

## How it was loaded



2

They then had to pour the gunpowder into the muzzle of the rifle, and thrust the bullet – still wrapped in the cartridge paper – into it.



3

They would then take the ram-rod from its slot beneath the rifle barrel, bring it to the ready, add a percussion cap, set the target and fire.

### **Beginning of the Revolt**

- **Barrackpur (29th March 1857):** Mangal Pandey fired at Lieutenant Baugh; arrested and executed.
- **Behrampur:** Disbanded for disobedience.
- **Meerut (10th May 1857):** Sepoys rebelled after court-martial of 85 sepoy, shot officers, and marched towards Delhi.

### **Major Events During the Revolt**

- **Spread:** Revolt spread to Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra, Jhansi, Central India, and Bihar.
- **Delhi:** Recaptured by the British in September 1857; Emperor Bahadur Shah II exiled to Burma; Mughal dynasty ended.
- **Lucknow:** Sepoys besieged the Residency; Sir Henry Lawrence killed; British recaptured Lucknow in March 1858 with Gurkha help.
- **Kanpur:** Led by Nana Sahib and Tatya Tope; recaptured by General Campbell on 6th December 1857.
- **Lucknow Region:** Led by Begum Hazrat Mahal, wife of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.



### **Major Events During the Revolt**

- Jhansi:** Tatya Tope joined Rani Lakshmi Bai. Sir Hugh Rose occupied Jhansi. They moved to Gwalior; British recaptured Gwalior in June 1858. Rani Lakshmi Bai died fighting; Tatya Tope was captured and executed a year later.
- Bihar:** Kunwar Singh and Amar Singh led the revolt, running a parallel government for almost two years.
- Minor Revolts:** Occurred in Jhansi, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Ropar, Ferozepur, and Agra; suppressed by early 1858 with cooperation from some Indian rulers.

### **Causes of Failure**

- Localized Revolt:** The revolt was widespread but localized and disorganized.
- Premature Start:** Planned for 31st May 1857 but began early, disrupting coordination.
- British Superiority:** Superior weapons, modern guns, rifles, and better communication (electric system) aided British success.
- Lack of Unity:** Rebels lacked organization and a strong central leadership.

### **Consequences of the Revolt**

- Suppression:** Revolt suppressed due to British superiority and rebel drawbacks.
- Transfer of Power:** Power transferred from East India Company to British Crown.
- Queen's Proclamation (1858):** Announced changes in British policy . East Indian company was overthrown.
- Governor General** changed into Viceroy and Secretary of the state together they will make rules and regulations.
- Army Reorganization:** Indian Army reorganized.(Martial races were reconstituted)
- End of Annexation Policy:** British policy of annexation abandoned.(Lord Dalhousie's policy was abolished)
- Divide and Rule:** British adopted a policy of divide and rule.

**112.** Which one of the following statements about the Revolt of 1857 is correct ?

- (a) It was a Revolt carefully organised and planned by the Rajas, Nawabs and Taluqdars
- (b) Rumours and prophecies did not play any role in its outbreak and spread
- (c) The rebel proclamations in 1857 repeatedly appealed to all sections of the population irrespective of their caste and creed.
- (d) The British succeeded in quickly and easily controlling the rebels