

VII. Answer in detail:

1. Discuss the causes and consequences of the Revolt of 1857?

The causes and consequences of the Revolt of 1857

Introduction:

- In 1857, the East India Company rule witnessed a mutiny in the Bengal presidency.
- It began with sepoy mutiny.
- Later it involved large number of civilians, especially peasants.

Causes of the Revolt:

1. Annexation policy of the British:

a) The Doctrine of Paramountcy:

- The British annexed new territories on the ground that the native rulers were corrupt and inept.

b) The Doctrine of Lapse:

- According to the Doctrine, if a native ruler failed to produce a biological male heir to the throne, the territory lapsed to the British.
- Thus Satara, Sambalpur, parts of Punjab, Jhansi and Nagpur were annexed by the British.

2. British interference in Indian cultural sentiments:

- The new dress code introduced by the Britishers in 1806, prohibited the Indians from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and whiskers on their chin.
- The turbans were replaced with a round hat.
- The soldiers feared that the Britishers were taking efforts to convert them to Christianity.
- In 1824, sepoys at Barrackpore refused to go to Burma.
- The reason was crossing the sea meant loss of their caste.
- The sepoys were upset due to discrimination in salary and promotion.
- Indian sepoys were paid much less than the European sepoys.
- The Indian sepoys were humiliated and racially abused by the senior Europeans.

3. Introduction of new Enfield rifle:

- A rumour got spread that the new cartridges of the Enfield rifle had been greased with fats of cow and pig.
- The cartridge had to be bitten off before loading.
- As pork is forbidden to the Muslims and cow is sacred to the Hindus, the sepoys refused to use them.
- On 29th March, Mangal Pandey a sepoy assaulted his European officer.
- Mangal Pandey and fellow soldiers were Court martialled and hanged.
- It fuelled the anger.

- It led to burning and arson in the army cantonments in Ambala, Lucknow and Meerut.

Consequences of the Revolt of 1857:

- Queen Victoria proclamation was issued in 1858.
- India became a crown colony.
- The power was transferred from the East India Company to the British crown.
- Secretary of state was created.
- Queen Victoria proclaimed that the British would not interfere in traditional institutions and religious matters.
- Promise was made that Indians would be absorbed in government services.
- Changes were made in the Indian army.
- The number of Indians in the army was reduced.
- Indians were restrained from holding important ranks and positions.
- British took control of the artillery.
- British turned away from the Rajputs, Brahmins and North Indian Muslims and included non-Hindu groups like Gorkhas, Sikhs and Pathans in the army.

Conclusion:

- The revolt was brutally suppressed.
- The Britishers exploited the caste, religion linguistic and regional difference in the Indian society and thus followed the policy of Divide and Rule.

2. How did the people of Bengal respond to the Partition of Bengal (1905)?

Partition of Bengal (1905)

Introduction:

- Lord Curzon announced the partition of Bengal on the 19th July 1905.
- It was officially partitioned on 16th October 1905.
- The idea of partition was to suppress the political activities against the British rule in Bengal and to divide the Hindus and Muslims.

Bengal People's response to the partition:

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- The partition led to widespread protest all over India.
 - The leaders of the Indian National Congress protested through prayers, press Campaign, Petitions and Public meetings.
 - The day of partition (16th October 1905) was declared as day of mourning.
 - Thousands of people took bath in Ganga.
 - The people marched on the streets of Calcutta singing "Bande Mataram".
 - It led to Bengal Boycott movement and Swadeshi Movement.
 - The leaders started making propaganda for Swaraj or Self-rule across India.
 - The people boycotted foreign goods, government schools and colleges, courts, titles and government services.
 - Swadeshi shops sprang all over the place selling textiles, handlooms, soaps, earthenware, match and leather goods.
 - Lala Lajpat Rai of Punjab, Bala Gangadhar Tilak of Maharashtra and Bipin Chandra Pal of Bengal became the three prominent leaders during the Swadeshi period.
 - In south India V.O Chidambaranar started the Swadeshi steam Navigation Company.

Conclusion:

- The British brutally crushed the Swadeshi Movement.
- Jailed the prominent leaders for long spells of imprisonment.
- Revolutionaries were hanged to death.
- The press was crushed.