THEME - 11
REBELS AND THE RAJ
1857 Revolt and its Representations

Key concepts in nutshell

- Rebels and the Raj- The revolt of 1857 and its representation Pattern of Rebellion- People from different walks of life plunged into the revolt- due to their hatred against the oppressive policies of the British Centres of the Revolt- Lucknow, Kanpur, Barrelly, Meerut, Arrah in Bihar.

- Leaders- Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, Nana Saheb, Kunwar Singh, Bakt khan, Begum Hazrat Mehals, Tatya tope.

- Awadh revolt- direct annexation policy of Dalhousie- 1856. Hatred provoked- dispossessed taluqdars of Awadh, injustice done to Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Awadh embittered the people.

- Revolt of the sepoys :   1) Policy of social superiority of British

     2) Interference in religious matters- greased cartridges issues.

- The vision of unity :   1) Hindu Muslim unity

     2) Search for alternative powers

     3) Rebels established parallel administration, in

     Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur after capturing centres of

     British power. Later they failed. British policy of repression.

- Repression- 1857- North India was brought under strict law to prolonged attacked of British- one from Calcutta to North India, another from Punjab to recover Delhi, 27000 Muslims hanged.

- Image of the Revolt- Pictorial images produced by British and Indians- posters and cartoons.

- The performance of terror :   1) Execution of rebels

- Nationalist imageries: 1) Inspiration to nationalists

     Celebration as first war of Independence-

     leaders depicted as heroic figures

V. S. A. (2 Marks)

Q.1 Who introduced subsidiary alliance? Name four powers which accepted it?

Ans. Lord Wellesley introduced subsidiary alliance. Hyderabad, Awadh, Mysore, Surat, Tanjor were early subsidiary states.

Q.2 Give two military causes for revolt of 1857?

Ans. (1) British officers showed sense of superiority. (2) Greased cartridges.

Q.3 Why was the revolt in Awadh so extensive?

Ans. (1) The British dethroned Nawab Wazid Ali Shah. (2) Zamindars, Talukadars and peasants

did not like British.

Q.4 Mention two economic causes for revolt of 1857?

Ans.(1) Peasants were exploited by British and moneylenders. (2) Handicrafts men were jobless.

Q.5 What was doctrine of lapse?

Ans.The native states without natural successor were forcefully made part of British Empire.

Q.6 Which four centres of the revolt were more aggressive against British?

Ans.Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Gwalior.

S. A. (4 Marks)

Q.7 Why did the mutinous sepoys in many places turn to erstwhile rulers to provide leadership to the revolt?

Ans.(1) Native rulers were natural leader of the people. (2) They believed that Hindu Muslim unity is compulsory. (3) They wanted to restore the pre-British world. (4) Delhi was capital city in Mughal India and last Mughal emperor was there so rebels requested him for main leadership. (5) Mostly, kings had experience of leadership and organization.

Q.8 What were the measures taken to ensure unity among the rebels?

Ans.(1) Both Hindus and Muslims requested Bahadur Shah for leadership. (2) The proclamation issued during the revolt, appealed to all sections equally. (3) The Sentiments of both communities were respected and cared. (4) The posters glorified the pre-British unity. (5) Hindus and Muslims were equally member of the military commanding committee.

Q.9 What steps did the British took to quell the uprising?

Ans.(1) Marshall Law was clamped throughout the north India. (2) All Englishmen were empowered to punish Indians. (3) The common process of law and trial was brought to an end. (4) British army assisted from many sides. (5) Many native states assisted against rebels. (6) Rebel cruelly punished.

Q.10 Discuss the extent to which religious beliefs shaped the revolt of 1857.

Ans.(1) Common Indian people did not like new education system without any discrimination. (2) Study of Bible was compulsory in missionary schools. (3) Christianity was common in Jails. (4) A law was passed which enabled converted Christian to inherit his ancestral property. (5) Under general service Enlistment act every new service undertook to serve anywhere in India. (6) The government decided to replace the old guns by the new rifles.

Q.11 Discuss the evidences that indicated planning and coordination on the part of rebels.

Ans.(1) Mostly cantonments soldiers were revolting. (2) The rebels after revolting in Meeru set out for Delhi immediately. They wanted support of the Mughal emperor. (3) The messengers were working in transmitting news from one place to another. (4) Native officers' panchayats were convened at night and collective decisions were taken. (5) To send chapattis from one place to another place was common. (6) New administration was established.

Q.12 What were strengths and weaknesses of the revolt of 1857?

Ans.Strengths-(1) Complete cooperation between Hindus and Muslims, (2) Common people were also revolting, (3) All rebels wanted freedom.

Weakness-(1) The revolt failed to spread in all areas, (2) All communities did not support, (3) Many rulers were supporter of British, (4) The rebel leaders were suspicious and Jealous of each other, (5) The rebel soldiers were not well equipped.

L. A. (8 Marks)

Q.13 Why was the revolt particularly widespread in Awadh? What prompted the peasants, Taluqdars and Zamindars to join the revolt?

Ans.(1) All people of the Awadh did not like exploitation system of British. (2) Wajid Ali Shah was a popular ruler and he had many sons but British dethroned him. (3) All people of the Awadh wanted to restore rule of the Nawab. (4) Begum Hazrat Mahal was leader of the rebels. (5) Many great rebel leaders were also working in Awadh all people were dissatisfied. (6) Taluqdars troops were disbanded and forts were destroyed. The Taluqdars of Awadh badly suffered by summary settlement of land revenue. (7) Mostly Zamindars Zamindaris were snatched by British. The Zamindars did not like activities of the British. (8) Peasants did not like 50% land revenue, to deposit land revenue was compulsory so farmers were selling their properties.

Q.14 What did the rebels want? To what extent did the vision of different social groups differ?

Ans.(1) The rebels wanted to root out the British authority from India and restore pre-British world. (2) Interest of all classes of Indian society was hurt. It led to general resentment against the British among them. (3) The rulers and Jagirdars wanted to reoccupy their respective kingdoms and Jagirs. (4) Indian merchants wanted concessions in trade. They did not like interference in their accounts and transactions. (5) The peasants wanted liberal land revenue with liberal means of realization. They also wanted to abolish exploitation by Zamindars and Sahukars. (6) The government servants wanted good respect, salary, power and dignity. (7) Indian artisans and craftsmen wanted good vocational conditions. (8) Pandits, Fakirs and other learned persons wanted to protect Indian culture and religion.

Q.15 What do visual representation tell us about the revolt of 1857? How do historians analyze these representations?

Ans.(1) The British artist presents the Britishers as heroes. (2) As saviours the relief of Lucknow painted by Thomas Jones Barker is remarkable in this regard. (3) Collin Campbell and Jones Outram captured Lucknow defeating the rebels. Recapturing of Lucknow has been described by the British as a symbol of survival, heroic resistance and ultimate trump of British power. (4) In memoriam was famous painting of Joseph Noel. He expressed helplessness of English ladies and children. (5) Miss Wheeler has been depicting example of defending heroine. (6) The heroic image of Laxmibai inspired Indian for struggle. (7) Cruel images of British were the symbol of revenge. (8) Brutal images of Indian soldiers were the symbols of strangeness against British. (9) Indian artist persuaded nationalism and patriotism in Indians.