

British exploitation and Resistance SS1-4

Explain the situation after the British occupied India

- The British conquered the princely states of India through military force and diplomacy.
- It was during the span of one hundred years, between the battle of Plassey in 1757 and the First War of Indian Independence in 1857, that a major part of India came under the British rule
- Around 63% of the regions in the Indian subcontinent had come under the direct control of the British.
- The rest of the regions were ruled by the native kings who had been subjugated to the British.

Impact of the British policies

- Farmers were one of the immediate victims of the British rule.
- It was the land revenue system implemented by the British that destroyed the backbone of the farmers.
- The aim of their tax policy was to maximize the income.
- The land revenue system implemented in various regions under the British rule was different.

The land revenue systems implemented by the British in various parts of India

Permanent land revenue settlement

Ryotwari system

Mahalwari system

Permanent land revenue settlement

- Implemented in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa
- Lord Convalis British Governor General introduced this system.
- In the permanent land revenue settlement the tax was collected by zamindars.
- Zamindar was the owner of the entire land where he had the jurisdiction to collect tax.
- While the zamindars became the owners of the land, the actual farmers became tenants.
- Farmers were to pay up to 60% of the yield as tax.
- Tax was to be paid even at the time of poor yield.
- The tax was to be paid in cash strictly before the cut-off date. (Before introducing this system, tax could be paid in kind).

Ryotwari system

- The Ryotwari system introduced in South India
- The land revenue was collected directly from the farmers (Ryots).
- The ownership of land was vested with the farmers, excessive tax impoverished them
- The tax rates were frequently increased.

Mahalwari system

- Implemented in North West India.
- The village headman was assigned the responsibility to collect tax.
- The tax rate was too excessive.
- The entire village (Mahal) was considered as a single unit for tax collection.

The impact of the tax policy implemented by the British in India

(How did the British land revenue policy make the peasantry fall easy prey to the exploitation of moneylenders? Explain)

- Farmers were unable to pay tax in the form of money before the deadline.
- They had to take loan from moneylenders at a high rate of interest to pay tax.
- The loans were obtained by mortgaging agricultural land.
- The agricultural land of the farmers, who could not pay back the loan and interest, was seized by the money lenders.

Commercialization of agriculture

- Traditionally the peasants in India were engaged in agriculture mainly to produce things only to meet the needs of their family and the village.
- During the British rule they were compelled to cultivate crops according to the market needs.
- As a result, commercial crops were largely cultivated instead of food crops.
- This transformation is termed as commercialization of agriculture.
- To meet to pay high rate of tax in the form of cash before the deadline, farmers cultivated the crops that had higher market price.
- The products that had demand in the European markets were given higher price.
- Thus, the Indian lands became the cultivating field of Europe.

The miseries of the indigo farmers. (Analyse the circumstances that led to the Indigo Revolt).

- Indigo was used to colour the fabric.
- With the industrial revolution of the 18th century, textile manufacturing increased and the demand for indigo increased.
- It was necessary for the British industrialists to get indigo plantation spread to more regions in India.
- They gave the farmers a good amount as advance for the cultivation of indigo.
- However, the farmers who started indigo farming instead of food grains got cheaper prices due to British intervention during the harvest.
- Later when artificial colours were invented, indigo became obsolete.
- This made the plight of the farmers more miserable.
- The exploitation and misery experienced by the indigo farmers prompted them to revolt against the British.
- In 1859 the farmers of Bengal organized themselves and declared that they were giving up indigo cultivation.
- They attacked indigo factories with bows, arrows, swords and spears.
- Several women also participated in the revolt.
- Educated people from Calcutta reached the revolt areas and extended their support.
- The government immediately appointed a commission to study the problems of the indigo farmers.
- The commission found that the indigo farming was uneconomic and proposed to stop it.

Peasant Revolts in Kerala

- It was the exploitation and suppression of the landlords and the British that led to the revolt in Malabar.
- The British treated the Jannis (landlords) as owners of the land.
- The revolt was against the atrocities of the landlords including eviction of tenants.
- Such atrocities were carried out with the support of the British.
- Most of the farmers in South Malabar are Mappilas.
- So these struggles that happened in the nineteenth century are known as the Mappila Rebellions.
- Around twenty two peasant revolts took place in Malabar.
- To suppress these revolts the British raised a special armed police battalion named Malabar Special Police (MSP).
- To enquire about the frequent revolts, the British government appointed William Logan Commission.
- The Commission pointed out that the cause of the struggle was the unfair land revenue system of the British.

Situations led the tribes to fight against the British. (How did the British rule make the Tribal life miserable)

- The major means of livelihood of tribes were gathering forest products, cattle rearing, shifting cultivation, and hunting.
- The Forest Acts imposed by the British made their life miserable.
- They were prohibited to enter forest when the British declared forests as protected.

- The British widely felled trees from forests to lay railway lines and build ships, and for plantation.
- The British levied tax at higher rates on the forest produce collected by the tribes.
- These situations led the tribes to fight against the British.
- The rhythm of their life was disturbed with the establishment of the British rule.
- Zamindars and moneylenders captured their land.
- The British officers made them work as slaves in laying railway lines.
- When their life became unbearable, they decided to take up arms against the British under the leadership of Sido and Kanhu.

The Santhal Rebellion

- Held in Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar in 1855.
- The Santhals were a tribal people who lived in the valley of the Raj Mahal Hills in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Bihar.
- They lived closely with nature and earned a living by farming and collecting forest products.
- They were sturdy and hard working, and had their own unique culture.
- The rhythm of their life was disturbed with the establishment of the British rule.
- Zamindars and moneylenders captured their land.
- The British officers made them work as slaves in laying railway lines.
- When their life became unbearable, they decided to take up arms against the British under the leadership of Sido and Kanhu.

Kurichya Revolt

- Kurichya Revolt was organized by the Kurichya and the Kurumba tribes of Wayanad in 1812.
- Imposition of excessive tax by the British.
- Compulsion for paying tax in cash.
- Seizing of agricultural land for non payment of tax.
- The revolt was led by the Kurichya leader Rama Nambi.
- The British government suppressed the struggle and killed Rama Nambi.

Important other tribal revolts in India against British.

- Pahariya Rebellion – Himachal Pradesh
- Kol Rebellion - Chottanagpur
- Khasi Rebellion - Meghalaya
- Bhil Rebellion – North west India
- Munda Rebellion - Jharkhand

" The anti-British struggles of illiterate tribal communities were more aggressive, intense and continuous than any other sects including peasants."

The words of K.Suresh Singh, a historian, about the tribal struggles in India.

Decline of traditional industries during British rule

Reasons for the decline of the Indian textile industry

- Large scale import of machine-made British textiles was the major reason for the ruin of Indian textile industry.
- The expansion of railway was also responsible for the decline of the Indian textile industry
- It helped the British to carry the imported fabrics from port towns to interior villages.
- And the cotton collected from villages to the ports for exporting to Britain.
- Thus Indian weavers lost their business in village market too.
- Due to the higher tax levied, the price of Indian textiles exported to Britain increased.
- So it lost the British market too.

- The British officers forced the weavers to work at meagre wages and to exchange the products to them at cheaper rate.
- Weavers gave up their work massively due to the exploitation and torture of the British officers.
- So they searched for other jobs.

What were the consequences of the decline of the textile industry in India under British rule?

- The immediate reflection of the decline of the textile industry was found in urban areas
- Weavers sought other jobs.
- The textile centers like Murshidabad and Dhaka that were thickly populated once, became least inhabited.
- The people, who had been working in textile industry, migrated to villages and engaged in agriculture related works.
- The number of people, who engaged in agriculture to earn a living, increased.
- It fragmented the agricultural fields and the production fell to be stagnant.

Handicrafts in villages that decline under British rule

- Pottery- Import of aluminum vessels
- Carpentry -Use of machines made of metals
- Tanning - Export of raw leather to Europe

What is the result of the decline of agriculture and the handicraft industry?

- The ruins of agriculture sector and handicraft industry led India to famine and deaths due to starvation.
- Lakhs of people died of famine.

Modern industries started by the British in India

- Plantation industry,
- Textile,
- Jute,
- Steel,
- Paper.

Problems faced by workers in the modern industrial sector in British India

- Prolonged working hours
- Meagre wages
- Unhealthy accommodation.
- So the condition of workers in modern industrial sector was extremely pathetic.

Indian workers' agitations against British exploitation

- Great Bombay Textile Strike.
- Calcutta Jute Mill strike.

First War of Indian Independence, 1857

- The first organized revolt against the British.
- This rebellion of kings, peasants, soldiers and artisans who were dissatisfied with British rule, without being confined locally, is known as India's First War of Independence.

Causes of the Revolt of 1857

- Miseries of farmers.
- Poverty of the craftsmen.
- Dissatisfaction of kings
- Miseries of the sepoy.

Miseries of the sepoy

- Poor salary.
- Abuse by the British officers.
- The rumour that the cartridge in the newly supplied Enfield rifles were greased with the fat of cows and pigs.
- It wounded the religious sentiments of the Hindu and Muslim soldiers.
- The soldiers who were unwilling to use the new cartridges were punished by the officers.
- In Barrackpore in Bengal, Mangal Pandey, an Indian soldier, shot at a British officer, who forced him to use the new cartridge.
- He was arrested and hanged to death.

The first martyrdom in the 1857 revolt

- Mangal Pandey

Dissatisfaction of kings

- The British took over the princely states through the Doctrine of Lapse.
- The princely states were convicted of inefficient rule and were annexed by the British.

Leaders of the Revolt of 1857

- Delhi - Bahadur Shah II
- Jhansi - Rani Lakshmi Bai
- Lucknow - Begum Hazret Mahal
- Kanpur - Nana Saheb, Thantia Thopi
- Faizabad - Maulavi Ahammedullah

Characteristics of the revolt of 1857 (First War of Independence)

- Along with the kings the sepoy, peasants, artisans and common people also took part in the revolt.
- The real strength of the rebellion was the Hindu-Muslim unity.
- They attacked the British and moneylenders and set fire to their account books, deeds and documents of transactions.
- The rioters captured Delhi and declared Bahadur Sha II as the emperor of India.

The impact of the 1857 revolt

- Millions of rioters were killed.
- The rioters could not overcome the superior military power of the British and the rebellion was completely suppressed.
- The British Parliament took over India from the British East India Company.
- The economic exploitation of the British reached its extreme level in the post-1857 phase.
- In the second half of the nineteenth century, around two crores of people died spread over twenty four great famines.

The growth of nationalism in India

- Nationalism is the sense of unity among the people of a country irrespective of caste, creed, religion and region.
- Nationalism began to grow in India as the British economic exploitation.
- It grew into a fierce British antagonism among various sections of India.
- Indian National Congress was an example for such an organised form of nationalism.
- Indian National Congress was formed in December, 1885 in Bombay.
- Seventy two delegates from different parts of India attended its first session.
- This led to an organized form of nationalism.
- The Indian National Congress led the anti-British struggle from 1885 till India attained independence in 1947.

Dadabai Naoroji

- Dadabhai Naoroji is a person who has collected and studied statistics on the collapse of the Indian economy during the British period.
- The drain of wealth to England was the root cause of poverty and starvation in India based on the study he put forward 'Drain Theory' and said that how did the Indian wealth flow to Britain?

According to Dadabai Naoroji how did the Indian wealth flow to Britain?

- Export of Indian raw materials
- Salary and pension to the British officers in India
- Profit gained through the sale of the British products in India
- Tax from India.

The leaders who exposed the public how British exploitation impoverished India.

- Ramesh Chandra Dutt
- Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- Dadabai Naoroji

What is 'Economic Nationalism'?

- The common people realized that the poverty and exploitation they faced had been the creation of the British.
- It reinforced their anti-British attitude.
- The nationalism, grown out of such awareness, is termed by some historians, as 'Economic Nationalism'

Swadeshi Movement -features

- To check economic drain, the early national leaders pleaded with the people to boycott foreign goods and strengthen Indian industry by consuming Indian products.
- The major strategy adopted for the anti-partition movement in Bengal in 1905 was the boycott of foreign goods and consumption of indigenous products.
- As part of the agitation, foreign goods were collected and burnt publicly.
- The extensive use of indigenous products by discarding foreign items rejuvenated Indian industry.
- As a result, a number of textile mills, soap factories, matchbox companies, national banks, and insurance companies were established.
- It was during the Swadeshi Movement, that the Bengal Chemical Store in Bengal, the Tata Iron and Steel Plant in Maharashtra and the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in Tamil Nadu, were established.
- Import of British goods to India steadily went down during this period.
- Participation of women, labourers, and students were another remarkable feature of this movement.
- Washer men avow that they would not wash foreign cloths.
- The priests swore that they would not perform rituals and prayers using foreign items.
- Woman boycotted foreign bangles and utensils.
- Students quit these schools to take part in the movement.
- Indian nationalism attained further strength from Swadeshi Movement.
- As a result, a number of textile mills, soap factories, matchbox companies, national banks, and insurance companies were established.
- Import of British goods to India steadily went down during this period.
- Participation of women, labourers, and students were another remarkable feature of this movement.
- Washer men avow that they would not wash foreign cloths.
- The priests swore that they would not perform rituals and prayers using foreign items.
- Woman boycotted foreign bangles and utensils.
- Students quit these schools to take part in the movement.
- Indian nationalism attained further strength from Swadeshi Movement.

National leaders of the Swadeshi movement?

- Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Ray, Bala Gangadara Tilak.
- These leaders were together known as Lal-Bal-Pal.
- They emphasized the need to end British rule.

Bala Gangadara Tilak.

- "Freedom is my birth right. I shall have it" - This proclamation of Bal Gangadhar Tilak inspired the national movement.
- It strengthened the nationalist movement by consolidating the disturbed Indian minds in British rule.
- British journalist and historian Valentine Shirod described Thilakan as the father of Indian disturbance.

**BIJU KK
GHSS TUVVUR
MALAPPURAM
9778300200**