

HISTORY NOTES,

CLASS:--12TH, NCERT BASED

REBEL & THE RAJ

Rumours and prophecies:

- There was the rumour that the British government had hatched a gigantic conspiracy to destroy the caste and religion of the Hindus and Muslim.
- The Remour said that the British had mixed the bone dust of cows and pigs into the flour that was sold in the market.
- These sepoy and the common people refused to touch the Atta.
- There was a fear and suspicious that the British wanted to convert Indians to Christianity.
- The sepoy had the fear about bullets coated with the fats of cows and pigs, biting those bullets would corrupt their caste and religion.

Why did the people believe in the rumours:

- The British adopted policies aimed at reforming Indian society by introducing Western education, western ideas and western institutions.

- With the cooperation of sections of Indian society, they set up English medium schools, colleges and universities which taught Western sciences and the liberal arts.
- The British established laws to abolish customs like sati (1629) and to permit the remarriage of Hindu widows.
- The British introduced their own system of administration, their own laws and their own methods of land settlements and land revenue collection.

Awadh in Revolt:

“A cherry that will drop into our mouth one day “

- In 1851 Governor General Lord Dalhousie described the kingdom of Awadh as “a cherry that will drop into our mouth one day “and five years later it was annexed to the British Empire.
- The Subsidiary Alliance had been imposed on Awadh.
- The terms of this alliance the nawab had to disband his military force of the British to position their troops within the kingdom and act in accordance with the advice of the British.
- Deprived of his armed forces the nawab became increasingly dependent on the British to maintain law and order within the kingdom.

- He could no longer assert control over the rebellious chief and taluqdars.

WHAT THE REBELS WANTED

The vision of unity

- The rebellion was seen as a war in which both Hindus and Muslims had equally to lose or gain.
- The ishtahars harked back to the pre- British Hindu- Muslim past and glorified the
- coexistence of different communities under Mughal Empire.
- In 1857 the British spent Rs.50000 /- to incite the Hindu population against the Muslims but the attempt failed.

Against the symbols of oppression:

- The land revenue settlements had dispossessed landholders, both big and small and foreign commerce had driven artisans and weavers to ruin.
- Every aspect of the British rule was attacked and the firangi accused of destroying a way of life that was familiar and cherished.
- The proclamations expressed the widespread fear that the British were bent on destroying the caste and religions of Hindus and Muslims and converting them to Christianity.
- People urged to come together and fight to save their livelihood, their faith, their honour, their identity.

