

# **HISTORY**

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **WHEN PEOPLE REBEL**

#### **1857 AND AFTER**



# **POLICY AND THE PEOPLE**

- **Nawabs lose their power- Since the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century nawabs and rajas had seen their power erode**
- **They had gradually lost their authority and honour**
- **Residents had been stationed in many courts**
- **The freedom of the rulers reduced**
- **Their armed forces disbanded and their revenues and territories taken away by stages**
- **Many ruling family tried to negotiate with the company to protect their interest**
- **Eg- Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi wanted the company to recognise her adopted son as heir to the kingdom after the death of her husband**

# **CAUSES OF THE REVOLT OF 1857**

# **POLITICAL CAUSE**

- **The Company wanted to bring the Mughal Dynasty to an end**
- **The name of the Mughal King was removed from the coins minted by the Company**
- **In 1849, Governor-General Dalhousie announced that after the death of Bahadur Shah Zafar the family of the king would be shifted out of the Red Fort**
- **In 1856 Governor-General Canning decided that Bahadur Shah Zafar would be the last Mughal King and after his death none of his descendants would be recognised as Kings- they would just be called princes.**

# POLITICAL CAUSES



Lord Dalhousie's policy  
of annexation and the  
Doctrine of Lapse  
had made the

Indian rulers angry and insecure.

The Rani of Jhansi, Laxmibai ,  
was not allowed to adopt a son.



# **ECONOMIC CAUSES**

- **In the countryside peasants and the zamindars were in great trouble**
- **They resented the high taxes**
- **And the rigid methods of revenue collection**
- **Many failed to pay their loans to the moneylenders**
- **And gradually lost the lands they had tilled for generations**

# **MILITARY CAUSES**

- **The Indian sepoy in the employ of the company also had reasons for discontent**
- **They were unhappy about their pay, allowances and conditions of service**
- **Some of the new rules, violated their religious sensibilities and beliefs**
- **Many people believed if they will cross the sea they would lose their religion and caste**
- **So in 1824 when sepoy were told to go to Burma by the sea route to fight for the company, they refused to follow the order**
- **In 1856 the company passed a new law which stated that every new person who took up employment in the company's army had to agree to serve overseas if required.**

# MILITARY CAUSES

- Immense discrimination between the British and the Indians.



# **SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CAUSES**

- **The British believed that Indian society had to be reformed**
- **Laws were passed to stop the practice of sati**
- **Encourage the remarriage of widows**
- **English language education was actively promoted**
- **After 1830 the company allowed Christian missionaries to function freely in its domain and even own land and property**
- **In 1850, a new law was passed to make conversion to Christianity easier**
- **Company allowed an Indian who had converted to inherit the property of his ancestors**
- **Many Indians began to feel that the British were destroying their religion, social customs and their traditional way of life.**

**MUTINY BECAME  
POPULAR  
REBILLION**

# FROM MEERUT TO DELHI

- On 29<sup>th</sup> March 1857, Mangal Pandey was hanged to death for attacking his officers in Barrackpore
- Sepoys refused to do the army drill using the new cartridges coated with the fat of cows and pigs
- 85 sepoy were dismissed from service and sentenced to 10 years of jail
- In response other soldiers in Meerut marched to the jail attacked and killed British officers
- The soldiers were determined to bring an end of British rule in India
- Rebellion spread and soldiers marched to the Red Fort wanting Bahadur Shah Zafar as their leader

# **THE REBELLION SPREAD**

- **Regiments started mutinied and took off to join other troops at nodal points like Delhi, Kanpur and lucknow**
- **Nana Saheb gathered armed forces and expelled the British garrison in Kanpur**
- **In Lucknow, Brijis Qadr proclaimed new Nawab and his mother Begum Hazrat Mahal took an active part in organising the uprising against Britishers**
- **In Jhansi, Rani Lakshmibai joined the rebel sepoy and fought bravely along with Tantia Tope**

# **THE COMPANY FIGHTS BACK**

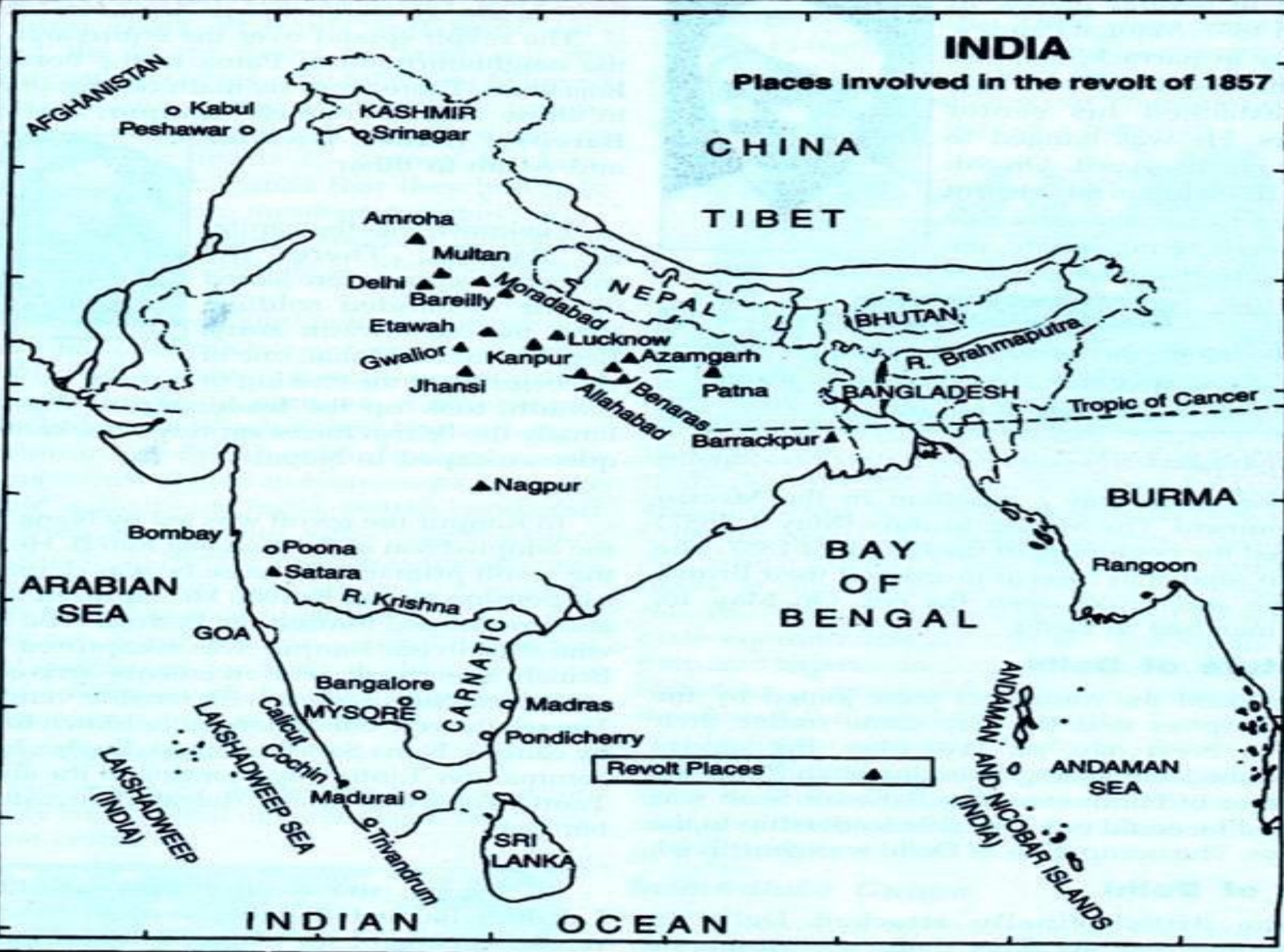
- **The company decided to repress the revolt with all its might, they brought reinforcements from England, passed new laws**
- **Delhi was recaptured from the rebel forces in September 1857, Bahadur Shah Zafar was tried in court and sentenced to life imprisonment with his wife in Rangoon**
- **Lucknow was taken in March 1858, Rani Lakshmibai was killed in June 1858, Tantia Tope was captured and killed in 1859**
- **A similar fate awaited Rani Avantibai, who embraced death when surrounded by the British on all sides**
- **Hundreds of sepoys, rebels, nawabs and rajas were tried and hanged**

# AFTERMATH

- **The British Parliament Passed a new Act in 1858 and transferred the powers of the East India Company to the British Crown to ensure a more responsible management of Indian affairs**
- **All ruling chiefs of the country were assured that their territory would never be annexed in future, they were allowed to pass on their kingdoms to their heirs**
- **It was decided that the proportion of Indian soldiers in the army would be reduced and the number of European soldiers would be increased**
- **The land and property of Muslims was confiscated on a large scale and they were treated with suspicion and hostility**
- **The British decided to respect the customary religious and social practices of the people in India**
- **Policies were made to protect landlords and zamindars and give them security of rights over their lands**

# INDIA

Places involved in the revolt of 1857



Centres of the Revolt of 1857