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Notes of Bipan Chandra's India's Struggle for Freedom

Chapter 1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Structure of the notes and how to best use them



This is the notes of the first chapter of Bipan Chandra's India's Struggle of Freedom .
The Structure of the notes and how to best use them is explained below . We will come up with more such notes . To get it in your email , please register your email on our website (www.notesforias.com) .

Each Chapter of Bipan Chandra's Book is divided into sections which are separated by star marks (*). We refer to these sections as "Plates" in these notes .

Read each section from the Bipan Chandra's Book .

Read the section from main notes

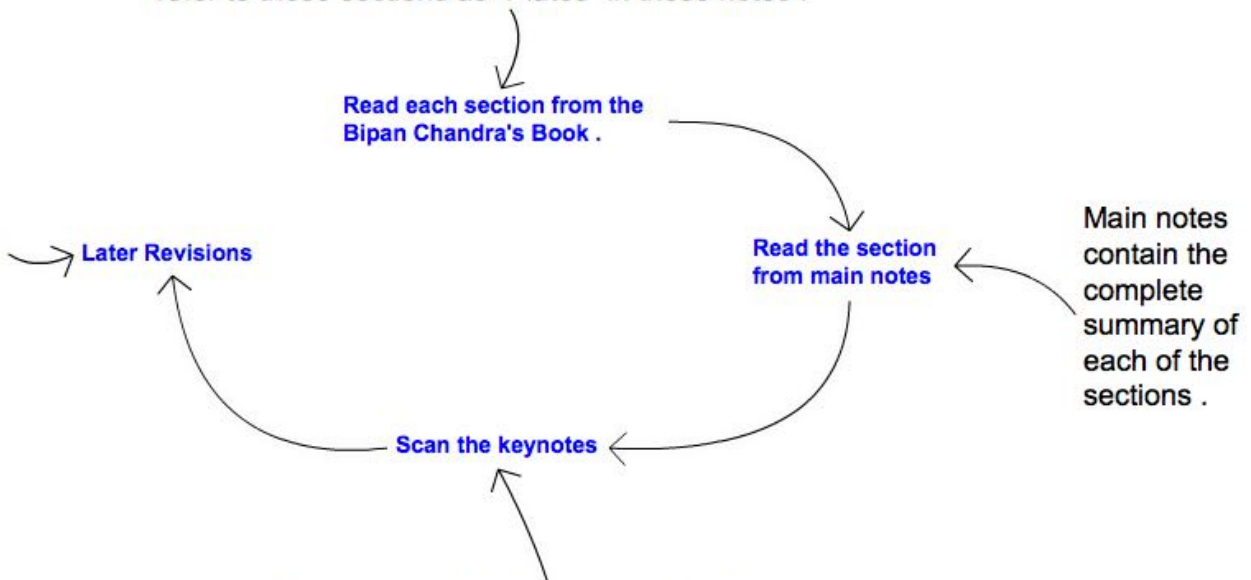
Main notes contain the complete summary of each of the sections .

Scan the keynotes

Keynotes contain the bare outline of the sections and intended to help you remember the most important keywords that can be used to frame your mains answers . Factsheet is just for data that should be memorised for PT .

Later Revisions

When revising later , try to read the keynotes first and try to recall the complete ideas in the notes . Only then refer to main notes .





1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Plates (1 - 3) : Main Notes.

PLATE - 1

11/5/1857

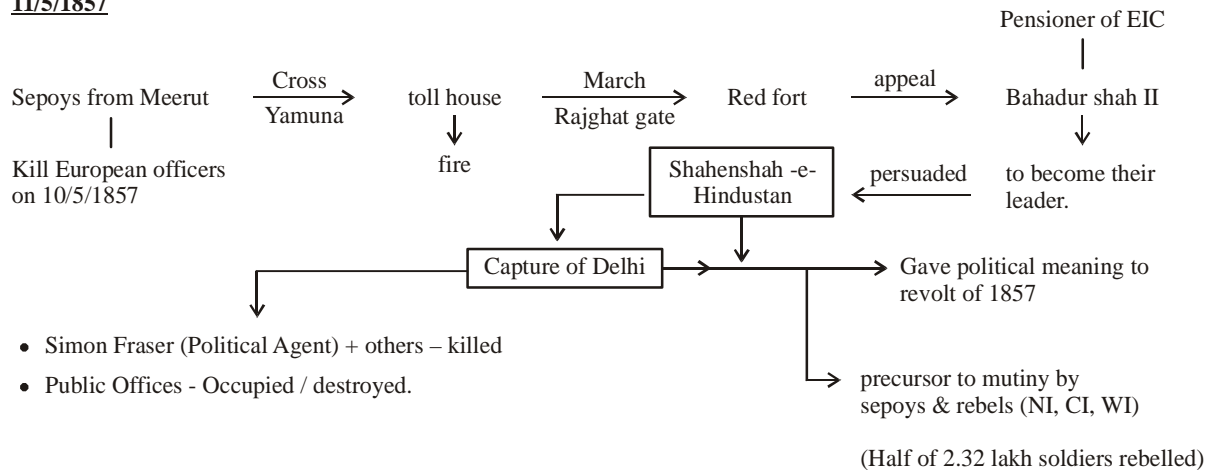
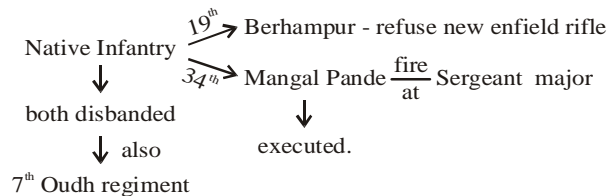


PLATE - 2

Pre - Meerut:



Post - Capture of Delhi:

revolt spread - anti British feelings ↑↑ - administration toppled. (Allahabad, Banaras, etc).

Leaders - Territorial aristocrats and feudal chiefs:

Kanpur:

Nana Saheb- adopted son of last Peshwa, Bajirao II - was refused family title and banished from Poona.

Lucknow:

Begum Hazrat Mahal - Nawab had been deposed .
Son - Birjis Qadir - made Nawab.
Adm - equally shared by Hindus and Muslims.

Bareilly:

Khan Bahadur (descendant - Rohilkhand ruler)
- Pensioner of British - warned of mutiny to British
- Assumed adm - army of 40 K - offer resistance

PLATE - 3

Jagdishpur:

Kunwar Singh - Zamindar - deprived of his estates - joined Sepoys.

Jhansi:

Rani Laxmibai - Dalhousie applied Doctrine of Lapse - not allow adopted son to succeed her husband - she tried hard - nothing worked - joined the Sepoys.

Spread of revolt:

All cantt. in Bengal - few in Bombay (exc : Madras)

Revolt : Why?

Army job: Prestigious & economically stable. - but proclamation at Delhi - pointed to - rebellion on **religious grounds** (army-mainly upper caste Hindus of NWP and Oudh - initially facilitated to live according to dictates of caste and religion - but gradually taken back with expansion of operations - also, caste distinction not conducive to army cohesion ⇒ discourage employment of Brahmins - but didn't work out.)

First influence: 1824 - 47th regiment of Barrackpur - ordered to cross sea to Burma - crossing sea meant loss of caste (to Hindus) - refused ⇒ regiment disbanded - leaders hanged.

Afghan war: Fleeing Sepoys - ate/drank whatever came their way - so, not welcomed back in "biradari". Religion & caste > employment in Army.

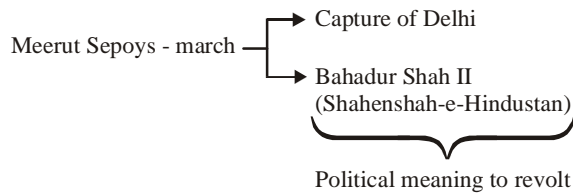


1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

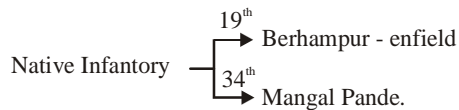
Plates (1 - 3) : Keynotes and fact sheet

KEY NOTES

Plate - 1



Plates - 2 & 3



7th Oudh regiment.

- Post - Delhi** : revolt spread
Leaders : traditional
- Kanpur** : Nana Saheb (Poona - Kanpur)
- Lucknow** : Begum Hazrat Mahal (adm : Hindus + Muslims)
- Bareilly** : Khan Bahadur (Pensioner; Army of 40 K)
- Jagdishpur** : Kunwar Singh (deprived Zamindar)
- Jhansi** : Rani Laxmi Bai (Doctrine of Lapse by Dalhousie).

Revolt : Why ? (First factor : Religion)

- Upper caste Hindus : Not allowed to live according to dictates of their religion
- First instance (1824) : 47th regiment of Barrackpur - ordered to cross to Burma ...
- Afghan War : fleeing sepoy - ate any thing - **NOT** welcomed back.

FACT SHEET

- Political agent killed : Simon Fraser
- Half of 2.32 soldiers - rebelled.
- Adopted son of Baji Rao II : Nana Saheb.
- Son of Begum Hazrat Mahal : Birjis Qadir.
- Khan Bahadur - descendant of ruler Rohilkhand.
- Spread of revolt : all cantt. in Bengal ; few in Bombay ; (exception : Madras).
- Some other areas of major revolt : Allahabad, Banaras.



1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Plates (4 - 6) : Main Notes.

PLATE - 4

(Some reasons for revolt)

Religion:

- rumour of conversions spread - supported by missionaries preaching openly - also rumour of beef and pig fat in cartridges of enfield rifle ⇒ Sepoys felt their religion in danger.

Emoluments: Infantry : 7 Rs. / month

Cavalry : 27 Rs / month - Pay for maintenance of mount - left with 1-2 Rs. only.

Promotion & Privileges : racial discrimination.

Peasant in uniform : Army - derived from peasantry - when peasants rights suppressed ⇒ consciousness of army affected too.

PLATE - 5

New land revenue system - affect - Oudh - every family - a soldier in army (75 K) - petitioned against it - resentment ↑↑.

Proclamation by Delhi rebels - reflect - Sepoy's anguish ⇒ mutiny was revolt ⇒ was a political act (∴, Sepoys ^{identify} gen. with pop.)

sepo revolt ⇒ popular uprising
i.e.
broad social base (all sections of society) ↑

Sepoy revolt - inspire rural pop. to revolt ⇒ civil rebellion

with accumulated grievances (esp. NWP & Oudh : max employer of Sepoys)

(exception:
Muzaffarnagar & Saharanpur)

↓
Govt. buildings destroyed. - treasury looted - prison opened.

PLATE - 6

Main reason of revolt : Nature of British Rule - ↓↓ affect all sections of people.

LAND | POLICY

Traditional landed aristocracy suffered too.
Eg. 21 K taluqdars of Oudh - estates confiscated - no source of income
↓
so, revolted with Sepoys.

Goal : max. revenue with min. effort ⇒ settlements hurriedly undertaken

↓
excessive taxes

↓
Peasantry : indebted and impoverished.

↓
revenue collection under torture and coercion
[Eg. 2.3 lakh coercive collections in Rohilkhand (1848 - 56)]
Hardly any remissions.

Eg. Grass grown in an estate - collector told its a very good produce - revenue should be collected.

↓
Eg.
Bareilly (1812 : settlement in 10 months (record time))

↓
additional 14.75 lakhs of revenue



1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Plates (4 - 6) : Keynotes and fact sheet

KEY NOTES

Plate - 4 (reasons for revolt).

Religion in danger : rumour of conversions ; missionaries - free to preach; enfield cartridges.

Emolument : Infantry 7 ; Cavalry : 27 ^{to} 1 - 2 ;
Promotions: Racial Discrimination.

Peasant in uniform : peasantry suppressed ⇒ unrest in army

Plate - 5

Oudh - one soldier from every family - affected by new land revenue system.

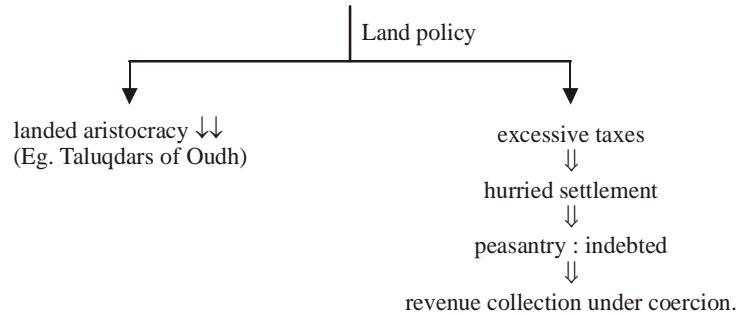
Proclamation at Delhi by rebels - ??

Sepoy revolt $\xrightarrow{\text{let to}}$ Civil rebellions
↓
broad social base.

Plate - 6

Main reasons -

Nature of British rule



FACT SHEET

- Maximum army personnel from: NWP and Oudh (75000).
- Exception to civil rebellion : Muzaffarpur and Saharanpur



1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Plates (7 - 9) : Main Notes.

PLATE - 7

Further effects of British rule

• On artisans & handicraftsman:

- Main source of income - Indian states annexed by British - British goods promoted
⇒ Indian handicrafts ↓↓ ⇒ income ↓↓
P alternative sources of income ⇒ but they didn't exist (∴, No modern industries developed).

• Social reforms:

Indians fear-design to destroy their religion & culture - and aid missionaries - for evangelisation ⇒ orthodox against British - reflected - in proclamations of rebels.

Character of revolt

• Definitely - a popular upsurge

• Doubts - Organised revolt or spontaneous insurrection?

As it seems - hardly any planning or planning at embryonic stage. Besides - Bahadur shah and Laxmibai - initially conveyed the authorities. Nana Saheb and Maulvi Shah (Faizabad) - not yet sure if established contacts with various cantt & instigate revolt. Also not certain - message conveyed by chappatis and lotus flowers.

Only positive factor - post Meerut - revolt was wide spread.

PLATE - 8

More on revolt

Attempt at planning & organisation - post capture of Delhi - letter to neighbouring rulers - to participate - BUT - no quick system of communication ⇒ no coordination - no help to each other in times of distress ⇒ each played a lonely hand.

Besides - for all matters of state - court of administrators established at Delhi (6 : Army ; 4 : civilian) - decisions by majority vote - work in "name of emperor".

Bahadur shah - recognised emperor by all rebel leaders

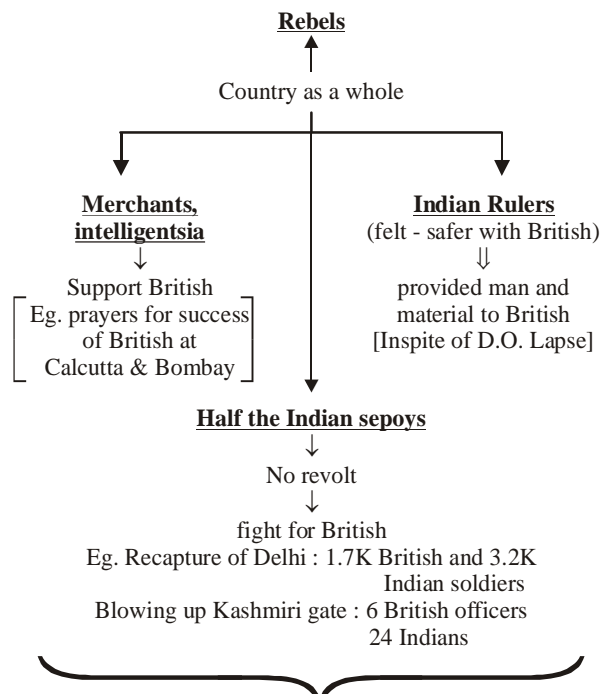
Eg: coins struck & orders issued in his name. - First impulse of rebels anywhere - to proceed to Delhi.

But - organisation - couldn't shape up-in face of British counter offensive.

Other problems: Very less arms & ammunition - at times fight with swords against modern weapons.

PLATE - 9

Progress, end and analysis of the revolt



Better fight by rebels could be expected if these factors were in their favour.

Performance of leaders:

Most failed to realise - significance of revolt. Eg. B. Shah & Zeenat Mahal - no faith in sepoys - negotiated with British. Taluqdars - protect only their interests (Eg. Man Sin frequently switched sides).

Exc: Kunwar Singh, Laxmibai, Maulvi Ahmadullah.

Rebels - No political vision for future - merely fought to regain lost privileges.

Violent end

Rebels - fight and died bravely - but much too short for superior British army.

20/9/1857 : Delhi - first to fall - **B. Shah** - tried - deported to Burma ⇒ back of revolt broke (∴, Delhi - rallying point)

17/6/1858 : Jhansi - Rani killed by Gen. Hugh Rose

1859 : Nana Saheb - escape - Nepal - hope to renew struggle.

9/5/1858 : Kunwar Singh died (kept British on tenterhooks till end).

Apr. 1859 : Tantia Tope (Successful Gurilla warfare) - betrayed by a zamindar put to death.

What if they had succeeded?

Put the clock back to feudal order or something else??

Main achievement : a source of inspiration for national liberation movement.



1. The First Major Challenge : The Revolt of 1857

Plates (7 - 9) : Keynotes and fact sheet

KEY NOTES

Plate - 7

- Effect on artisans and handicraftsmen:
 - income ↓↓ (Indian states annexed; British goods) - No alternatives.
- Social reforms by British - Indians fear destruction of their religion and culture
- Revolt - definitely popular and widespread but doubts about organisation

Plate - 8

- Attempt at planning & organisation : letter to neighbours - no quick communication systems ⇒ no coordination.
- Court of administrators in Delhi - to rule.
 - Bahadur Shah - recognised emperor of rebels.
- Arms & ammunition very less
⇒ ultimately couldn't coordinate much

Plate - 9

- Rebel Sepoys - Not supported by country as whole
 - merchants, intelligentsia, Indian rulers, other Sepoys - all worked against the rebels.
- Very few able leaders (K. Singh, Laxmi Bai, etc.)
- No political vision possessed by rebels for future.

Violent End

- Delhi - first to fall - Bahadur Shah - deported to Burma
- Jhansi - Rani killed
- N. Saheb - escape to Nepal
- K. Singh - Died.
- T. Tope - Betrayed - captured - put to death.

Main Achievement : Source of inspiration for further struggle.

FACT SHEET

- Maulvi Ahmad Shah : Faizabad
- Court of administrators in Delhi : (6 : Army ; 4 : Civilian)
- Recognised emperor of all rebels : Bahadur Shah
- Rani Laxmibai defeated by : General Hugh Rose.