

War of Independence (1857)

Introduction

The war of independence broke out in January and March 1857. Hindus and Muslims rebelled against British occupation. The mutiny was not occasioned owing of any signal event but it was accumulation of several social, religious, economic, military and political exploitation. The anti-British sentiments growing in the heart of Indians from many decades due to different inhuman actions. Therefore, an intensive violent movement started by Indians against British commonly known as war of Independence.

Causes of war of Independence

The major causes that increased hate against British East India Company are discussed in given lines;

1. Doctrine of lapse:-

The Doctrine of Lapse, part of the British policy of expansionism, was also greatly resented. If a feudal ruler did not leave

a male heir through natural process. i.e. his own child, not an adopted one, the land became the property of the British East India Company (EIC) within eight years, Lord Dalhousie, the then Governor-General of India, annexed many Kingdoms including Jhansi and Oudh.

2. Imposition of westernization :-

East Indian Company attempted to westernize the Indian culture. They banned the tradition of Sati and child marriage which was an interference of Hindu religious customs. They wrote books against Islam and tried to present Muslims as cruel, barbaric, wild and uncultured.

3. Religious Causes :-

The East Indian Company basically arrived India for trade purpose but they were simultaneously busy for the spread of Christianity. The company officials invited their subordinates to their houses and forced them to listen to the sermons of the priests. Moreover, they established orphanages and

Converted orphan children into Christianity.
Sir Syed Ahmed Khan believes that interfaith
of religions of Indians was the most domi-
nated factor of mutiny.

4. Political Causes:-

Muslims were the rulers of India before
occupation of East India Company.

The company took every step to wiping
out Muslims from surface. For Instance,
Lord Dalhousie, the governor general of
India at the time had insulted the emperor
by asking him and his successors to leave
the Red Fort, Delhi. Later, Lord Canning, the
next governor general of India, announced in 1858
that Bahadur Shah's successors would not even
be allowed to use the title of the King.

Although Bahadur Shah Zafar was no more
any strong King but still Muslims consider him
symbol of respect.

5. Annexation of States:-

By 1848, however, the company's financial
difficulties had reached a point where extra
revenue required expanding British territories
in South Asia massively. The company began