

3. Effects of British Rule

In this chapter, we are going to study the effects of British rule over India.

Establishment of East India Company : We have seen that due to geographical discoveries, the European powers reached the Indian coast. All the European including Portuguese, Dutch, French and British entered the race for capturing the Indian market. When the British came to India for trade purpose, the Portuguese had already settled here and they gave a bitter resistance. Later friendly relations developed between them. But, to establish the domination over India, the British had to face opposition from French, Dutch and local rulers.

The British and The Marathas : Mumbai was the main centre of British in western India. They were trying to acquire the nearby territories but the Marathas had strong hold over it. After the death of Peshwa Madhavrao, his uncle, Raghunathrao approached for help from the British due to his greed for Peshwaship. This led to the entrance of the British in Maratha politics.

During 1774 to 1818, three wars were fought between the Marathas and the British. During the first war the Marathas unitedly faced the British and hence proved superior. In 1782, with the Treaty of Salbai, the first Anglo-Maratha war came to an end.

The Subsidiary Alliance : In 1798, Lord Wellesley arrived in India as Governor General. His objective was to establish the British Dominion all over India. For this he signed the Subsidiary Alliance with many Indian rulers. According to this Alliance the Indian rulers were assured of British military

help. There were some terms laid on them. The Indian rulers have to maintain British army in their court and have to pay cash or part of their territory to the company for its maintenance. The ruler would not have any alliance with any other power or declare war against any power without the intervention of the British. The ruler would accept a British resident in his state. Some Indian rulers accepted the system and lost their freedom.

In 1802, Bajirao II signed the Subsidiary Alliance treaty with the British. This alliance is well known as the Treaty of Vasai. But this treaty was not acceptable to some Maratha sardars. This led to the second Anglo Maratha war. After the victory of the British, there was increased interference of British into the Maratha state. This became intolerable and Bajirao II waged a war against the British. He was defeated in this battle and in 1818 he surrendered to the British. In the mean time, the capital of Mughals was under the control of Daulatrao Shinde. By defeating the troop of Shinde, General Lake captured the Mughal emperor and gained victory over Hindustan.

Chhatrapati Pratapsingh : Although the Peshwaship came to an end, Chhatrapati Pratapsingh of Satara was still ruling. Britishers signed a treaty with Chhatrapati Pratapsingh and appointed Grant Duff as an officer to assist him in the state affairs. But later, the



**Chhatrapati
Pratapsingh**

Chhatrapati was dethroned and exiled to Kashi. He died there in 1847.

Rango Bapuji Gupte, a loyal officer of the Chhatrapati fought the legal battle and went up to England but his efforts were unsuccessful. Later Lord Dalhousie rejected the adoption policy and in 1848 annexed the state of Satara.



Do you know?

Chhatrapati Pratapsingh made provision of water to the city by building a water tank on the back side of Yevteshwar temple and Mahadara in Satara. Roads were built in the city. Trees were planted on both sides of the road. Schools were built for boys and girls for teaching Sanskrit, Marathi and English. Printing press was set up and many useful books were published. In 1827, 'Sabhaniti', a book on polity, was printed. He built road from Satara to Mahabaleshwar to Pratapgad. The same road further extended to Mahad. Chhatrapati Pratapsingh used to write personal daily diary.

Effect of British rule on India

Dual Government : Robert Clive, in 1765, introduced the dual government system in Bengal. The company undertook the work of revenue collection whereas the Nawab of Bengal had to maintain law and order. This was known as Dual Government system.

The ill effects of dual government system could be seen after certain time period. Money in the form of taxes went into the pockets of the company officers. The Monopoly of Trade in India was given to East India Company and hence many trading companies in England

envied them. The working system of the company in India received criticism in England and British Parliament introduced some important laws to keep control over the company.

Acts passed by Parliament :

According to Regulating Act of 1773, the Bengal Governor came to be known as the Governor General. According to this act, Lord Warren Hastings became the Governor General of India. He got the right to control the policies of Mumbai and Madras provinces. A committee of four members was set up to assist him.

In 1784, Pitt's India Act was passed. The Act provided for appointment of a permanent Board of Control for better regulation and management of affairs of the East India Company in India. In 1813, 1833 and 1853 new laws were passed by the Parliament to make certain changes in the working of the company. In this way there evolved an indirect control of the British Government on the administration of East India Company.

With the emergence of British rule, a new administrative system got developed in India. Civil Services, military, police force and judicial system became the main pillars of British administration in India.

The Civil Service : To strengthen the British rule in India there was a need of bureaucrats. Lord Cornwallis introduced bureaucracy. Civil services became an important part of British government. He restricted the private trade carried out by the company officers and for this purpose he increased their salary.

For the convenience of administration he divided the British occupied territories into districts. The District Collector was the chief of district administration. He was responsible for collection of revenue,

giving justice, maintaining law and order. The officers were appointed through competitive examinations known as Indian Civil Services (ICS).

The Military and Police force : The duty of military was to safeguard the British occupied regions in India, acquire new territories and break down any revolt against the British in India. To maintain law and order in the country was the duty of the police force.

Judicial system : The British established a new judicial system in India on the basis of judicial system in England. Every district had a Civil and Criminal Court to solve the local cases. For reconsideration of their judgements a High Court was established.

Equality before law : In early times, law in India differed from place to place. There was difference in judgement on the basis of casteism. Under the leadership of Lord Macaulay, a committee was setup to create the code of law. The Indian Penal Code was enforced all over British India with British principle of equality before law.

But there were some defects in it. There were separate courts and different laws for the Europeans. New laws were difficult to be understood by common people. Legal cases became an expensive affair for the community and the cases remained pending for years together.

Economic policies of the British : Since ancient times there were invasions in India. Many invaders settled in India and were absorbed in the Indian culture. Even though they ruled here, they never made any changes in the basic Indian economic system. The Britishers were an exception.

England was a modern nation. Due to industrial revolution, capitalist economy

prevailed. Hence they inculcated an economic system in India which was conducive to economic system in England. Due to this Britishers gained economic benefit, but India started facing economic exploitation.

Land revenue policy : Before the British rule, the village economic system was self sufficient. Through agriculture and related services the needs of the village were fulfilled in the village itself. Land revenue was the main source of income of the state. During the Pre British period, revenue was based on the type of cultivated crop. The farmer was exempted from taxation in case of loss of crops. Revenue was mainly collected in the form of grains. Even in case of late payment of tax, the farmer's land was not confiscated.

To increase income, the British made important changes in the revenue system. Land was measured and as per the area of the land, the tax was fixed. Payment of tax was made compulsory in the form of cash. If the farmer failed to pay tax in time, then his land would be confiscated. The British system of land revenue collection differed from place to place which led to exploitation of all farmers.

Consequences of new Land revenue system : There were undesirable effects of the new land revenue system on the rural life. For payment of taxes, Indian farmers started selling the crops at whatever price it received. The merchants and brokers started purchasing their goods at minimum rate. At certain times the farmer had to mortgage his land to the money lender for arrangement of money to pay the tax. Farmer became bankrupt. In case of non repayment of loan, the farmer had to sell his land. The farmer was exploited by the government, zamindar, money lenders and merchants.

Commercialisation of agriculture :

Initially food grains were cultivated by the farmers. It used to fulfill their domestic needs as well as the needs of the village. The British Government started giving more encouragement to cash crops like cotton, indigo, tobacco, tea etc. The process of giving stress on cultivation of profit giving cash crops instead of food grains is known as the commercialisation of agriculture.

Famine : From 1860 to 1900, India faced great famine but the British rulers did not take much efforts to overcome it. Similarly not much expenditure was made on provision of water supply.

Development in transport and communication system : For increase in trade and convenience of administration, the British developed modern facilities like transport and communication in India. In 1853, first Railway ran on the route of Mumbai to Thane. In the same year British started Telegraph system in India. Due to it all cities and military stations got connected to one another. Similarly the British also started the Postal System.



Mumbai-Thane Railway (1853)

Due to all these developments, there was a long term impact on the social life of the Indians. Due to this there was increasing sense of unity among them.

Decline of traditional industries in India : The British government obtained huge taxes on goods exported from India to England. On the other hand very less tax was imposed on goods imported from England to India. Also the goods manufactured in England were machine made and hence there was maximum production at minimum cost. To compete with such cheap products was difficult for the Indian artisans. Eventually it led to closing down of traditional industries and many artisans became unemployed.

Development of new industries in India : Due to the lack of British support, experience of management and capital, the Indian businessmen could not come forward in large numbers. Yet some of them built up their business by overcoming these problems.

In 1853, Kawasjee Nanabhoy Davar, started the first textile mill in Mumbai. In 1855 the first Jute mill was started at Rishra in Bengal. In 1907 Jamshedji Tata established the Tata Iron and Steel company at Jamshedpur.



Jamshedji Tata

In India coal, metals, sugar, cement and chemical Industries came to be started.

Social and cultural effects : In the 19th Century Europe, a new era took shape on basis of values like humanitarianism, democracy, nationalism, liberalism etc. This change in west led to obvious repercussions on India. For carrying out administration the British had to understand the Indian society. For this purpose they started studying the

tradition, history, literature, as well as music, flora-fauna of India. In 1784, Sir William Jones, an English officer established the 'Asiatic Society of Bengal' at Kolkata. Max Mueller, a German thinker was a devout scholar of Indian religion, language and history. Due to these examples, there aroused feelings among newly educated Indians to study Indian religion, history and tradition.

The British introduced many laws in India. In 1829, Lord William Bentinck passed the Sati Prohibition Act. In 1856 Lord Dalhousie passed the widow

remarriage act. These acts were responsible for social reforms.

For carrying out administration in India, the British required English educated Indians. According to recommendation of Lord Macaulay, in 1835, English education started being imparted in India. Through new education Indians were introduced to western thoughts, modern reforms, science and technology. In 1857, universities were established at Kolkata, Mumbai and Madras (Chennai). The Western educated middle class Indians led the social reform movement in India.

Exercise

1. Rewrite the statements by choosing the appropriate options.

- (1) Portuguese,, French, British participated in the competition of capturing Indian market.
(a) Austrian (b) Dutch
(c) German (d) Swedish
- (2) In 1802 Peshwa signed the Subsidiary Alliance with the British.
(a) Bajirao I (b) Sawai Madhavrao
(c) Peshwa Nanasaheb (d) Bajirao II
- (3) Jamshedjee Tata started the manufacturing of steel at Tata Iron and Steel industry established in
(a) Mumbai (b) Kolkata
(c) Jamshedpur (d) Delhi

2. Explain the following concepts.

- (1) Civil Services
- (2) Commercialisation of Agriculture
- (3) Economic policies of British

3. Explain the following statements with reasons.

- (1) Farmers in India became bankrupt.
- (2) There was decline of traditional industries in India.

4. Complete the following table.

Person	Work
Lord Cornwallis	
.....	Passed Sati Prohibition Act
Lord Dalhousie	
.....	Established 'Asiatic Society of Bengal'

Project

Prepare detailed information with pictures about the development by British in administration, education, transport and communication in India.

