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Administration Under the British

Lesson Plan

Contents

- ▶ An overview of the East India Company transforming from traders to conquerors
- ▶ Understanding how and why the British gained control over the kingdoms and people of India

Objectives

- ▶ To understand the way the East India Company evolved from being a body of merchants to conquerors and rulers
- ▶ To learn the steps taken by the British to conquer India and gain political and economic control over region
- ▶ To know about the various administrative and legislative measures that established British rule
- ▶ To appreciate the manner in which the East India Company became the rulers of India

Teacher's Aids

- ▶ Globe
- ▶ Pictures, charts, atlas and wall maps
- ▶ Blackboard
- ▶ Internet

Tips for Teacher

- ▶ Explain the purpose of the British arrival in India—to strengthen the industries of Britain—not the welfare of India.
- ▶ Drain on the economic resources of India to build the British industries and acquire individual wealth—weaknesses of Indian rulers and people in failing to see the bigger picture.
- ▶ Explain the changes caused by the entry of new education, culture, religion, etc., and their impact.
- ▶ Students should be encouraged to know people, ideas, changes, advantages and disadvantages, places, locations and their placement on the maps.

■ Background and Reading

- ▶ Read the lesson aloud and explain, sharing the aids, etc., pausing to examine and explain the data in the boxes.
- ▶ Particularly focus on the economic drain and the cultural impact, both good and bad.

Administrative Policies of the British

- ▶ East India Company came as traders–stayed as conquerors–they needed to control administration so formulated policies for the territories they occupied–only to serve British interests–not the common people of India.
- ▶ After Battle of Buxar–started Dual Government system in Bengal–Nawab of Bengal to run the administration, but revenue collection was under British control–so the nawab had to run administration without any revenue.
- ▶ The aim of the British–earn more profit from trade; strengthen control over territories.
- ▶ Resulted in rampant misuse–personal gain taken by British individuals building fortunes; extra revenue extracted from farmers; agricultural sector badly affected; craftsmen forced to sell products at very low prices–corrupt practices led to Company’s financial crisis–East India Company asked the British government for a loan but government took control of the affairs of the Company and regulated its functions by the Regulating Act of 1773.

The Regulating Act, 1773

- ▶ East India Company had got the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha–the Regulating Act reduced its powers.
- ▶ Significant changes: Governor General of Bengal made the Governor General of all territories in India–helped by a four-member Council formed to assist him–proposed setting up a Supreme Court at Calcutta in order to check corrupt practices of officials–all officials to give details of personal property earned; asked to place all documents of civil, military and revenue affairs of the Company before the government.
- ▶ Act failed because powers of Governor General and Council not clearly defined–led to disputes–Supreme Court didn’t know whether to follow British or Indian laws–Governors of Bombay and Madras did not accept control of Calcutta Governor General.

The Pitt’s India Act, 1784

- ▶ Introduced by William Pitt, Prime Minister of Britain in 1784–to overcome shortcomings of the Regulating Act of 1773.
- ▶ A Board of Control set up in Britain to control Company’s military, civil and revenue affairs–six members appointed by the king–Governor General powers to overrule Council and control over Bombay and Madras Presidencies–he was also the Supreme Commander of British forces in India–Company had monopoly over Indian trade and right to appoint and dismiss officials.

The Charter Acts

- ▶ Charter Act 1813 – ended Company's trade monopoly in India – however monopoly on trade in tea remained.
- ▶ Charter Act 1833 – made Company discontinue its commercial activities in India – Company became an administrative body under the supervision of the Board of Control.
- ▶ In India the Company's administration carried out by four agencies: Civil service for administration; army to protect territories; police to maintain peace; judiciary to deal with justice and civil service.

Civil Service

- ▶ Lord Cornwallis established the Indian Civil Service [ICS] called the steel frame of administration – introduced strict laws to monitor officials – raised salaries and promotions for senior officials.
- ▶ Fort William College started in 1801 for training young men who joined civil service – initially civil servants nominated by the directors – from 1813 all civil servants selected through a competitive examination – his regulations were called Cornwallis Code – First Indian to qualify the ICS examination was Satyendranath Tagore, brother of Rabindranath Tagore, in 1864.
- ▶ Posts with higher remuneration reserved for the British – Indians selected for subordinate posts.
- ▶ Territories occupied by British in India divided into districts – each district had three main officials:
 - ▶ Collector: One who supervised revenue collection and looked after administration
 - ▶ Magistrate: Maintained law and order
 - ▶ Judge: Administered justice

Army

- ▶ Important for defending and consolidating British rule in India – needed to conquer more territories and protect territories from enemies and rivals.
- ▶ Consisted of Indian soldiers called sepoys – recruited from areas now known as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand – well-organised and disciplined – loyal to the British.

Police

- ▶ Lord Cornwallis created a permanent police force in India – districts divided into thanas under control of Darogas – villages and cities placed with Chowkidars and Kotwals – post of District Superintendent of Police created to oversee law and order in the district.
- ▶ Police force successful in reducing crimes like dacoity, thuggee – policemen not paid properly – were unpopular with people.

Judiciary

- ▶ Prior to the British Code of Law, India had no uniform code of law – it followed local customs and traditions – the British introduced the Rule of Law – the same for all people irrespective of their positions.

- ▶ Europeans, however, had a special court—tried only by an English judge.
- ▶ In 1883 a Law Commission was set up to codify Indian laws—compiled the Indian Penal Code and established the Rule of Law—the Supreme Court was established in 1774 in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras—later high courts at these places—Indian judges appointed in subordinate courts.

Assessment Corner

Oral Assignment

- A. Ask for answers at random from the students. Confirm the right answers. Let them write down the correct answers if they like in their books.

Written Assignment

- B–E. The teacher has two options—(i) Either do these exercises orally first and then ask the students to write them down. OR (ii) Ask the students to write the answers on their own. Then the teacher can announce the correct answers to the students and they can ask their partners to cross-check them.

In either case, the answers can be written as homework and the teacher can check them in the class.

Think Tank

- F. **HOTS questions:** Discuss the questions in the class and let the students write the answers to F and G as homework. Teacher should assess individual work.