

Unit 1

I. Choose the correct answers (Each question carries one mark)

1. Whose estimate of per capita income of India during colonial period was considered very significant.
(a) Dadabai Naoroji, **(b) V.K.R.V Rao**, (c) William Digby (d) R.C.Desai.
2. Railway transport introduced in India in the Year _____
(a) 1835 (b) 1776 **(c) 1850** (d) 1853
3. The present 'Life Expectancy' of India is _____
(a) 32.4 Years (b) 63.6 Years (c) 64.8 Years (d) 66.9 Years
4. During British rule more Than half of India's foreign trade was restricted to _____
(a) Britain (b) Iran (c) China (d) Srilanka
5. In India census is carried out once in _____
(a) 5 years **(b) 10 years** (c) 1 years (d) 2 years

II. Fill in the blank (Each question carries one mark)

1. The share of workforce remained in agriculture during British rule was **85%**
2. Before Independence the India's Jute industries concentrated in **East Pakistan (Bangladesh)** part of the
6. country.
3. Under colonial rule the cotton textile industries dominated by **Indians**
4. **1921** is the year of second stage of demographic transition of India.
5. **Railway** transport is considered as the most important contribution of British rule.

III. Answer the following question in a word/sentence (Each question carries one mark)

1. Name the important 'Revenue Settlement System' during British rule.

Zamindari System

2. TISCO – Expand.

The Tata Iron and Steel Company

3. What is 'Capital Goods Industries'?

Capital goods industry means industries which can produce machine tools which are, in turn, used for producing articles for current consumption.

4. When was the official census carried out in India?

Various details about the population of British India were first collected through a census in 1881.

5. Why did the colonial Government ban canal transport?

It was banned because the inland waterways were uneconomical.

IV. Answer the following question in four sentences each. (Each question carries two marks)

1. What was the objective of the economic policies pursued by the colonial Govt. in India?

The economic policies pursued by the colonial government in India were concerned more with the protection and promotion of the economic interests of their home country than with the development of the Indian economy. Such policies brought about a fundamental change in the structure of the Indian economy — transforming the country into a net supplier of raw materials and consumer of finished industrial products from Britain.

2. List out the important export goods of India before Independence.

India became an exporter of primary products such as raw silk, cotton, wool, sugar, indigo, jute etc. and an importer of finished consumer goods like cotton, silk and woollen clothes and capital goods like light machinery produced in the factories of Britain.

3. What were the Main causes of India's agricultural stagnation during the colonial period?

Agricultural productivity became incrementally low though, in absolute terms, the sector experienced some growth due to the expansion of the aggregate area under cultivation. This stagnation in the agricultural sector was caused mainly because of the various systems of land settlement that were introduced by the colonial government.

4. Name the modern industries which were in operation in our country at the time of Independence.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, modern industry began to take root in India, but its progress remained very slow. Subsequently, the iron and steel industries began coming up in the beginning of the twentieth century. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) was incorporated in 1907. A few other industries in the fields of sugar, cement, paper etc. came up after the Second World War.

5. State the features of India's Pre - Independence occupational structure.

During the colonial period, the occupational structure of India, i.e., distribution of working persons across different industries and sectors, showed little sign of change. The agricultural sector accounted for the largest share of workforce, which usually remained at a high of 70-75 per cent while the manufacturing and the services sectors accounted for only 10 and 15-20 per cent respectively.

6. Mention the economic activities confined to public sector in pre-independence India.

Another significant drawback of the new industrial sector was the very limited area of operation of the public sector. This sector remained confined only to the railways, power generation, communications, ports and some other departmental undertakings.

7. What are the infrastructure facilities developed during colonial rule?

Under the colonial regime, basic infrastructure such as railways, ports, water transport, posts and telegraphs did develop. However, the real motive behind this development was not to provide basic amenities to the people but to support various colonial interests. Roads constructed in India prior to the advent of the British rule were not fit for modern transport.

V. Answer the following question in twelve sentences each. (Each question carries four marks)

1. The traditional handicraft industries were ruined under British rule' Justify this statement.

Even as the country's world-famous handicraft industries declined, no corresponding modern industrial base could come up to take pride of place so long enjoyed by the former. The primary motive of the colonial government behind this policy of systematically deindustrialising India was two-fold.

The intention was, first, to reduce India to the status of a mere exporter of important raw materials for the upcoming modern industries in Britain and, second, to turn India into a sprawling market for the finished products of those industries.

In the unfolding economic scenario, the decline of the indigenous handicraft industries created not only massive unemployment in India but also a new demand in the Indian consumer market, which was now deprived of the supply of locally made goods. This demand was profitably met by the increasing imports of cheap manufactured goods from Britain.

2. Indicate the volume and direction of trade at the time of Independence.

India has been an important trading nation since ancient times. But the restrictive policies of commodity production, trade and tariff pursued by the colonial government adversely affected the structure, composition and volume of India's foreign trade.

India became an exporter of primary products such as raw silk, cotton, wool, sugar, indigo, jute etc. and an importer of finished consumer goods like cotton, silk and woollen clothes and capital goods like light machinery produced in the factories of Britain.

More than half of India's foreign trade was restricted to Britain while the rest was allowed with a few other countries like China, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Persia (Iran). The opening of the Suez Canal further intensified British control over India's foreign trade.

The most important characteristic of India's foreign trade throughout the colonial period was the generation of a large export surplus. But this surplus came at a huge cost to the country's economy.

3. Explain the demographic profile of India during the colonial period.

Various details about the population of British India were first collected through a census in 1881. Before 1921, India was in the first stage of demographic transition. The second stage of transition began after 1921. However, neither the total population of India nor the rate of population growth at this stage was very high.

The various social development indicators were also not quite encouraging. The overall literacy level was less than 16 per cent. Out of this, the female literacy level was at a negligible low of about seven per cent. Public health facilities were either

unavailable to large chunks of population or, when available, were highly inadequate.

The overall mortality rate was very high and in that, particularly, the infant mortality rate was quite alarming—about 218 per thousand in contrast to the present infant mortality rate of 63 per thousand. Life expectancy was also very low—32 years in contrast to the present 63 years.

4. What do you understand by the 'drain of Indian wealth' during colonial period?

The most important characteristic of India's foreign trade throughout the colonial period was the generation of a large export surplus. But this surplus came at a huge cost to the country's economy. Several essential commodities—food grains, clothes, kerosene etc. — became conspicuous by their acute scarcity in the domestic market.

Furthermore, this export surplus did not result in any flow of gold or silver into India. Rather, this was used to make payments for the expenses incurred by an office set up by the colonial government in Britain, expenses on war, again fought by the British government, and the import of invisible items, all of which led to the drain of Indian wealth.

VI. Answer the following question in twenty sentences each. (Each question carries six marks)

1. Explain the Status of India's agriculture during British rule.

India's economy under the British colonial rule remained fundamentally agrarian — about 85 per cent of the country's population lived mostly in villages and derived livelihood directly or indirectly from agriculture.

Agricultural productivity became incrementally low though, in absolute terms, the sector experienced some growth due to the expansion of the aggregate area under cultivation. This stagnation in the agricultural sector was caused mainly because of the various systems of land settlement that were introduced by the colonial government.

Particularly, under the zamindari system which was implemented in the then Bengal Presidency comprising parts of India's present-day eastern states, the profit accruing out of the agriculture sector went to the zamindars instead of the cultivators.

To a very great extent, the terms of the revenue settlement were also responsible for the zamindars adopting such an attitude; dates for depositing specified sums of revenue were fixed, failing which the zamindars were to lose their rights. Besides this, low levels of technology, lack of irrigation facilities and negligible use of fertilisers, all added up to aggravate the plight of the farmers and contributed to the dismal level of agricultural productivity

2. 'India could not develop a sound Industrial sector under colonial rule'
Justify the Statement.

Even as the country's world-famous handicraft industries declined, no corresponding modern industrial base could come up to take pride of place so long enjoyed by the former. The primary motive of the colonial government behind this policy of systematically deindustrialising India was two-fold.

The intention was, first, to reduce India to the status of a mere exporter of important raw materials for the upcoming modern industries in Britain and, second, to turn India into a sprawling market for the finished products of those industries.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, modern industry began to take root in India, but its progress remained very slow. Subsequently, the iron and steel industries began coming up in the beginning of the twentieth century. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) was incorporated in 1907. A few other industries in the fields of sugar, cement, paper etc. came up after the Second World War.

However, there was hardly any capital goods industry to help promote further industrialisation in India. Capital goods industry means industries which can produce machine tools which are, in turn, used for producing articles for current consumption.

3. Write a note on development of infrastructure in India during the colonial period.

Under the colonial regime, basic infrastructure such as railways, ports, water transport, posts and telegraphs did develop. However, the real motive behind this development was not to provide basic amenities to the people but to support various colonial interests. Roads constructed in India prior to the advent of the British rule were not fit for modern transport. The colonial administration also could not accomplish much on this front due to a shortage of funds.

There always remained an acute shortage of all-weather roads to reach out to the rural areas during the rainy season. Naturally, therefore, people mostly living in these areas suffered grievously during natural calamities and famines.

The British introduced the railways in India in 1850 and it is considered as one of their most important contributions. The railways affected the structure of the Indian economy in two important ways. On the one hand it enabled people to undertake long distance travel and thereby break geographical and cultural barriers while, on the other hand, it fostered commercialisation of Indian agriculture which adversely affected the comparative self-sufficiency of the village economies in India.

Along with the development of roads and railways, the colonial dispensation also took measures for developing the inland trade and sea lanes. However, these measures were far from satisfactory. The inland waterways, at times, also proved uneconomical as in the case of the Coast Canal on the Orissa coast.

4. Were there any positive contributions made by the British in India? Discuss.

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The volume of India's export trade undoubtedly expanded but its benefits rarely accrued to the Indian people. The social benefits, which the Indian people gained owing to the introduction of the railways, were thus outweighed by the country's huge economic loss.

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