

22. Survey of British Policies in India

Post 1857, British administration adopted blatantly reactionary policies, even though territorial expansion and cultural intrusions were minimised, on the pretext that Indian were not fit for self-governance and needed British presence in their lives.

| Administrative Policies | Reason(R)/ Action taken (AT) | Result |
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| Divide and Rule | Princes against states' people, region against region, province against province, caste against caste and Hindus against Muslims | Some Middle and upper class educated Muslims opposed tide of nationalism, conflicts over scarce resources in jobs, education and political spoils. Finally- it resulted in |

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| | | Partition and birth of a nation 'Pakistan'. |
| Hostility Towards Educated Indians | Educated Indians started analysing the exploitative and colonial character of British rule. | Various laws to moderate the education system to suit their requirements i.e., provide Indians in blood but British in all other aspects. Indian Universities Act 1904 |
| Attitude Towards the Zamindars | (R): British needed alliances of strong reactionary sections like Zamindars and Princes to counter-weight nationalist minded intelligentsia (AT): Restoration of lands and protection of their interests against peasants | Many Zamindars acted as breakwater in tide of Nationalism and thwarted nationalist movements by supporting British in suppressing it. Example: The Zamindars support to British to suppress Indian sepoy mutiny. |
| Attitude Towards Social Reforms | (AT) British sided with Orthodox sections. | Division of society into reformers and orthodox people. The latter supported British policies. |
| Underdeveloped Social Services | (R) Major allocation of funds went for army and civil Administration and thus could not spend much on Social services | Whatever facilities were established catered to the elite sections and urban areas and poverty skyrocketed in rural areas. |
| Labour Legislations | (R): Rise of Indian textile industry under conditions of cheap and unregulated labour challenging European Industries. (AT): Indian | Increased minimum age for child as labour and decreased number of working hours for women. However, these conditions were not applicable in British-owned |

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| | Factory Act, 1881 and 1891 | tea and coffee plantations where the labour was exploited ruthlessly and treated like slaves. |
| Restrictions on Freedom of the Press | (R): Mostly Vernacular and other local presses responsible for dissemination of Nationalist sentiments (AT): Number of laws to suppress press | Invited wrath from nationalists and fuelled sentiments against British and encouraged leaders to find innovative ways to spread information to evade the laws |

British Social and Cultural Policy in India

| | 1772-1813 | 1813-1857 | 1857 Onwards |
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| Approach | Orientalist: Policy of Neutrality in Socio-Religious Matters | Anglicist/ Occidental Heavy interference in Socio-Religious Matters | Anglicist/ Occidental Sided with Orthodox tendencies and promoted division of society. |
| Reasons | Company was focused on trade and revenue and were afraid that interference in internal matters might produce strong reactions from locals and as they were already engaged in many wars dealing with them would have been | (a) Industrial Revolution (b) Intellectual Revolution (c) Missionary Activities-spread of Christianity | Lesson was learnt from revolt of 1857 that if they interfere in this field people are more likely to hit back |

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| | difficult. | | |
| Objective | British had to legitimise and consolidate its rule first and Links to common past would ameliorate distant affection. | <p>a. India- big market- thus transformation & modernisation of Indian Society was necessary for sale of their products</p> <p>b. New philosophies of Rationalism, Humanism and Liberalism in Europe compelled rulers here to act for betterment of Indian society</p> <p>c. Missionaries considered Indian Culture to be inferior and thus need of reforming it</p> | To facilitate and elongate the rule as divided, under developed and uneducated society can not understand the injustice and so don't fight back. |
| Initiatives taken | Tried to establish connection between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, tried to portray India's past as glorious 1781- Calcutta Madrasa 1784- Asiatic Society of Bengal 1794- Sanskrit College Banaras | <p>a. Charter Act 1813- opened trade for all</p> <p>b. Prohibition of sati, Abolition of slavery, Widow remarriage act, New education policies etc</p> <p>c. Charter act 1813 allowed Christian missionaries for conversion, Lex Loci act 1840.</p> | No actions were taken against orthodox activities rather they were pampered and promoted. After religion-based division of constituencies they further went on to divide us on caste lines in 1930s |

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| Consequences | Despite conquering many states and imposing hardships not much opposition to the foreign rule from local people. | Due sudden changes in socio-cultural sphere Indian subcontinent went through turmoil and culmination was Revolt of 1857. | Social reform movements were thwarted which in turn affected national freedom movement. |
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▪ **British Policy towards Princely States:**

Relations with princely states were to be guided by a two point's policy:

- Using and perpetuating them as bulwark of the empire.
- Subordinating them completely to British authority.

Subordination of Indian princely states ended with the Queen adopting the title of Kaiser-i-Hind (Queen Empress of India) in 1876, to emphasize British sovereignty over entire India. Lord Curzon later made it clear that the princes ruled their states merely as agents of the British Crown.