

CBSE Test Paper-03
Chapter 06 Indian Economy on the Eve of Independence

1. What was Infant Mortality Rate of India at the time of independence? **(1)**
 - a. 216 per thousand
 - b. 218 per thousand
 - c. 260 per thousand
 - d. 214 per thousand
2. Opening of Suez Canal in ____ significantly reduced the cost of transportation of goods between Britain and India **(1)**
 - a. 1865
 - b. 1869
 - c. 1885
 - d. 1889
3. Death rate and birth rate at the time of independence was **(1)**
 - a. Low birth rate and high death rate
 - b. Low birth rate and low death rate
 - c. High birth rate and Low death rate
 - d. High birth rate and high death rate
4. What was the condition of foreign trade under British rule **(1)**
 - a. Net exporter of raw materials
 - b. All of these
 - c. Surplus on account of foreign trade was spent on war expenses
 - d. Net importer of finished goods reproduced by British India
5. What was the infant mortality rate during the British period? **(1)**
6. Prior to the colonial rule in India, Indian economy was a vibrant economy. Discuss the fact in not more than two lines. **(1)**

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7. What do you mean by commercialisation of agriculture? **(1)**
 8. State the life expectancy in India during British rule? **(1)**
 9. Explain the 'Ryotwari' and 'Mahalwari' System of collecting land revenue prevalent under the British rule. **(3)**
 10. How would you explain the drain of wealth during the British rule. **(3)**
 11. What was the two-fold motive behind the systematic de-industrialisation affected by the British in pre-independent India? **(4)**
 12. The traditional handicrafts industries were ruined under the British rule. Do you agree with this view? Give reasons in support of your answer. **(4)**
 13. Explain the status of industries in India on the eve of Independence. **(4)**
 14. Were there any positive contributions made British in India? Discuss. **(6)**
 15. What were the main causes of Indian's agricultural stagnation during the colonial period? **(6)**

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Answers

1. b. 218 per thousand

Explanation: Infant mortality rate was 218 per thousand (at present, it is about 63 per thousand) on the eve of independence. It was mainly because of lack of infrastructure in health sector.

2. b. 1869

Explanation: The Suez Canal is a 101 mile (163 km) long canal, It officially opened in November 1869.

3. d. High birth rate and high death rate

Explanation: High birth rate and high death rate are treated as an index of backwardness of India, at the time of independence (1947)

4. b. All of these

Explanation: Restrictive policies of commodities production, trade and tariff were imposed by the colonial government, it adversely affected the structure, composition and volume of India's foreign trade.

5. The infant mortality rate during the British period was 218 per thousand.

6. Prior to the colonial rule, Indian economy was self-dependent and India was an important trading nation.

7. A shift from cultivation for self consumption to cultivation for the market is termed as Commercialisation of agriculture.

8. The life expectancy in India during the British rule was 32 years.

9. **Ryotwari System:** It was the way of collecting tax revenue (in British controlled areas in India) directly from cultivators of farmland.

- In Ryotwari System the ownership rights were handed over to the peasants. British Government collected taxes directly from the peasants.

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- The revenue rates of Ryotwari System were 50% where the lands were dry and 60% in irrigated land

Mahalwari System: This system consisted of landlords or zamindars representing an entire village or even a group of villages. Along with the tillers, they were jointly as well as individually responsible for the payment of revenues. The land under this system included the land of the villages as well as adjoining forestland and pastures.

- The Mahalwari system had many provisions of both the Zamindari System and Ryotwari System.
- In this system, the land was divided into Mahals. Each Mahal comprises one or more villages.
- Ownership rights were vested with the peasants.

10. During the 19th century, the theory of 'Drain of Wealth' was advocated by Dadabhai Naroji indicating the exploitative nature of British rule. Throughout the colonial rule, the sole motive of British government was to transform India into a mere supplier of cheap raw materials in order to flourish its own industrial base. Moreover, not only raw materials but India's manpower was also used by the British government with the purpose of spreading its colonial base outside India. Also, the administrative expenses that were incurred by the British government to manage the colonial rule in India were borne by Indian Exchequer. All such exploitative policies of British rule resulted in the drain of India's wealth.
11. Before independence, India's industries were very famous throughout the world. Under the colonial rule, the country's world famous handicraft industries declined. The primary motive of the colonial government behind the policy of systematically de-industrialising India was two-fold:
 - i. **Making India a Supplier of Raw Materials:** The main motive of the British Government was to make India a mere supplier of cheap raw materials to feed its own rapidly expanding industrial base.
 - ii. **Making India a Market for Finished Goods:** Another important objective of the British Government in de-industrialising Indian economy was to use India as a large and growing market to sell the finished goods produced by the British

industries so that their industries never face a demand shortage and could keep on flourishing.

12. The traditional handicrafts industries in India enjoyed a worldwide reputation, but the British misrule in India led to the decline of Indian handicraft industry. The Britishers adopted the following policies to systematically destroy the handicraft industry:
- i. **Discriminatory Tariff Policy of the State:** The Britishers followed a discriminatory tariff policy by allowing tariff free exports of raw material from India (to provide for the requirements of their industries in Britain) and tariff free import of British industrial products (to promote British goods in India), but placed a heavy duty on the export of handicraft products. So, Indian handicraft products started losing the foreign as well as domestic markets.
 - ii. **Disappearance of Princely Courts:** Prior to the British rule, Rajas, Nawabs and Shehenshahs ruled the different parts of our country and they were great patrons of the handicrafts. But, as the British Raj spread its tentacles, these princely courts declined and so did their patronage. This ultimately led to the decline of the handicrafts.
 - iii. **Introduction of Railways in India:** The Britishers introduced railways in India to expand the market of its low priced industrial products. Consequently, the demand for high-priced handicraft products started to fall, thus leading to the downfall of the handicraft industry.
 - iv. **New Patterns of Demand:** As British rule progressed in India, a new class emerged, which was keen to follow the British lifestyle. This changed the pattern of demand in favour of British goods.
 - v. **Competition with Machine-made Products:** Machine-made products from Britain were cheap and better in quality than the handicraft products. This competition forced many handicraftsmen to shut down their business.
13. The industrial policy pursued by the Britishers under the colonial administration aimed at promoting the modern industries in Britain. The status of industries in India on the eve of Independence is as follows:
- i. **Decay of Handicraft Industry:** The traditional and important handicraft industry of India, in the absence of any patronage and incentive, started to decline. The decline of handicraft industry not only created massive unemployment but also

resulted in a spur of demand in the Indian consumer market which was now deprived of supply of locally made goods. This demand was met through goods produced in British industries.

- ii. **Absence of Capital Goods Industries:** The consumer goods industries were not supported by the capital goods industry. There was also a dearth of basic and heavy industries.
 - iii. **Limited Growth of Public Sector Enterprises:** Only those public sector enterprises which subserved the interests of the Britishers were developed such as railways, postage and telegraph, etc.
 - iv. **Stagnant Growth of Modern Industry:** Because no initiative was taken by the British Government to industrialise the Indian economy, therefore modern industries registered a negligible growth rate. A few enterprising entrepreneurs opened the iron and steel industry, sugar, cement and paper mills.
14. Yes, there were various positive contributions that were made by the British in India through these contributions were not made with the objective of welfare for Indians but for the British interests.

Some of the positive contributions made by the British are:

- i. **Introduction of Railways:** The introduction of railways by the British was a breakthrough in the development process of Indian Economy. It opened up the cultural and geographical barriers and facilitated commercialization of Indian agriculture.
- ii. **Introduction of Commercialization of Agriculture:** The introduction of commercial agriculture is an important breakthrough in the history of Indian agriculture. Prior to the advent of the British, Indian agriculture was of subsistence nature. But with the commercialization of agriculture the agricultural production was named out as per the market requirements leading to higher agricultural incomes.
- iii. **Introduction of Free Trade:** British forced India to follow free trade pattern during the colonial rule. This is the key concept of globalisation today. The free trade provided a domestic industry with a platform to compete with the British industries. The introduction of free trade led to an increase in the volume of India's exports.
- iv. **Development of Infrastructure:** The infrastructure developed in India by the

British proved to be useful for Indian people. The telegram and postal services served the Indian public and the roads built by British provided connectivity to interior regions.

15. Indian agriculture was primitive and stagnant. The main causes of stagnation of agriculture sector were as follows:
- i. Land Tenure System:- There were three forms of Land tenure systems introduced by the British rulers in India. These were:
 1. Zamindari system
 2. Mahalwari system
 3. Ryotwari system

In the Zamindari system, Zamindars or landlords were the owners of land. The actual collections by Zamindars were much higher than what they had to pay to the Government. Zamindari system led to multiplication of middlemen between cultivators and Government, absentee landlordism, exploitation of peasants by unsympathetic agents and enmity between landlords and tenants. Under the system, intermediaries benefited at the cost of both actual cultivators and the state.
 - ii. Commercialisation of Agriculture:- Commercialisation of agriculture means production of crops for sale in the market rather than for self consumption. Farmers were forced to cultivate commercial crops like Indigo. Indigo was required by the textile industry in Britain for dyeing of the textile. As a result, there was a fall in the production of food crops. The farmers had to suffer from frequent occurrence of famine. Indian agriculture was transformed into a raw material exporting sector for England.
 - iii. Partition of the Country:- Partition of the country in 1947 also adversely affected India's agricultural production. The rich food producing areas of West Punjab and Sindh went to Pakistan. It created a food crisis in the country. Also, the whole of fertile land under jute production went to East Pakistan. The jute industry was most severely affected due to partition.
- Thus, Indian agriculture became backward, stagnant and non-vibrant under the British rule.