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INSTITUTE FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS

SOUTH INDIA'S PREMIER INSTITUTION FOR
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HISTORY

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IMPORTANT ACTS IN BRITISH INDIA

Regulating Act, 1773

Pitts India Act, 1784

Charter Act of 1793

Charter Act of 1813

Charter Act of 1833

Charter Act of 1853

Government of India Act, 1858

Indian Council Act, 1861

Indian Council Act, 1892

Indian Council Act, 1909 (Morley-Minto Act)

Government of India Act, 1919

Government of India Act, 1935

Indian Independence Act, 1947

IMPORTANT ACTS IN BRITISH INDIA**Regulating Act, 1773**

- * First attempt by the British Parliament to regulate the affairs of the Company
- * End of Dual Government.
- * Provided for Centralization of Administration of Company's territories in India.
- * Governor of Bengal became Governor- General for all British territories in India.
- * Governor General and Council of 4 members appointed for Bengal.
- * Bombay and Madras presidency subordinated to Bengal presidency.
- * Supreme Court to be set up at Calcutta.

Pitts India Act, 1784

- * This Act gave the British government the supreme control over Company's affairs and its Administration in India
- * Established Dual system of governance. Court of Directors(COD)consisting of 24 members to look after Commercial functions.
- * Board of Control (BOC) consisting of 6 parliamentary commissioners appointed to central civil, military and Revenue affairs of India.
- * Subordinated the Bombay and Madras presidency to Bengal in all questions of War, Diplomacy and Revenues.
- * First effective substitution of Parliamentary Control over East India Company.

Charter Act of 1793

- * Company was given monopoly of trade for 20 more years.
- * Expenses and salaries of the Board of control to be charged on Indian Revenue.
- * Governor- General could override his council.

Charter Act of 1813

- * Company deprived of its trade Monopoly in India except in Tea and trade with China.



- * All Englishmen could trade with India subject to few restriction
- * Rules and procedures made for use of Indian revenue.
- * A sum of Rs 1laksh earmarked annually for Education.

Charter Act of 1833

- * End of company's trade monopoly even in tea and with China. Company was asked to close its business at the earliest.
- * Governor-General of Bengal to be Governor-General of India. (1st Governor-General of India- Lord William Bentick)
- * Government of Madras and Bombay deprived of Legislative powers.
- * A fourth member, law member, added to council of Governor-General.
- * Government services were thrown open to the people of India.
- * All laws made by Governor General- in- council henceforth to be known s Acts and not Regulations.

Charter Act of 1853

- * Extended life of the company for an unspecified period.
- * First time separate Legislative Machinery consisting of 12 member Legislative Council was created.
- * Law member was made a full member of the Exclusive Council of the Governor-General.
- * Recruitment to Civil Services was based on open annual competitive examination.(excluding Indians)

Government of India Act, 1858

- * Rule of company in India ended and that of the Crown began.
- * System of double Government ended. Court of Directors and Board of control abolished.
- * Secretary of State (a member of the British cabinet) for India was created .He was assisted by 15-member council (India council). He was to exercise the powers of the Crown.
- * Secretary of state governed India through the Governor-General
- * Governor- General was to be called the Viceroy and was the direct representative of the Crown in India.

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- * A unitary and highly Centralized administration structure was created.

Indian Council Act, 1861

- * Policy of association of Indians in legislation started.
- * A fifth member, who was to be a jurist, was added to the Viceroy's executive council.
- * For legislation, executive council of viceroys. Was enlarged by 6 to 12 members composed of half non-official members, Thus foundations of Indian legislature were laid down.
- * Legislative powers of the presidency Government deprived in 1833 were restored.
- * Viceroy could issue Ordinances in case of emergency.

Indian Council Act, 1892

- * Though the majority of official members were retained, the non-official member of the Indian Legislative council was Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Provincial Legislative council. While the non-official members of the Provincial council were to be nominated by certain local bodies such as universities, district boards municipalities.
- * Beginning of representative system in India
- * Council to have the power to discuss budget and of addressing questions to the Executive

Indian Council Act, 1909 (Morley-Minto Act)

- * Morley was the secreted of state, While Minto was the Indian Viceroy.
- * Additional members in central Legislative Assembly were increased to 60
- * Introducing for the first time indirect elections to the Legislative Councils.
- * Separate electorates was introduced for the Muslims.
- * 27 non-official seats were be to filled in by elections. They were distributed as follows
- * By non- official members of the provincial Legislative Council
- * By landholders of 6 provinces
- * By Muslims of 5 provinces
- * Alternately by Muslim landholders of UP/ Bengal Chambers of commerce of Calcutta and Bombay



- * Muslims were to be elected by Separate Electorates
- * Resolutions could be moved before the budget was taken in its final form. Supplementary question could be asked.

Government of India Act, 1919

- * Popularly known as Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.
- * The idea of "Responsible Government" was emphasized upon.
- * Devolution Rules: Subject of administration was divided into two categories - "Central" and "Provincial". Subject of all India importance (like railway & finance) were brought under the category of Central. While matters relating to the administration of the provinces were classified as provincial.
- * Dyarchy system introducing in the Provinces. The Provincial subjects of administration were to be divided into two categories "Transferred" and "Reserved" subjects. The transferred subjects were to be administered by the Governor with the aid Ministers responsible to the Legislative Council. The Governor and his executive council were to administer the reserved subjects (Rail, Post, Telegraph, Finance, Law & order, etc.) without any responsibility to the legislature.
- * An office of the High commissioner of India was created in London.
- * Indian Legislature became "bicameral" for the first time.
- * Communal representation extended to Sikhs
- * Secretary of state for India now to be paid from British revenue.

Government of India Act, 1935

- * The act was based on 2 basic principles: Federation and Parliamentary system
- * Provided for the establishment of an All India federation consisting of the British Provinces and the princely States, The joining of princely states was voluntary and as a result the federation did not come into existence.
- * Dyarchy was introduced at the Centre (Ex Department of foreign Affairs and Defense were reserved for the Governor General) Provincial autonomy replaced Dyarchy in provinces. They were granted separate legal identity.



Notes

- * It made a 3 –fold division of powers-federal, provincial and concurrent lists. Residuary powers were to be with the Governor General
- * The Indian Council of Secretary of state of India was abolished
- * Principle of separate electorate was extended to include Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and Europeans.
- * A Federal court was to be constituted with a chief justice and 10 other judges. This was set up in 1937.
- * Sind and Orissa were created
- * Franchise was based on property qualification

Indian Independence Act, 1947

- * This Act did not lay down any provision for the administration of India
- * Partition of India and the establishment of two dominions of India and Pakistan
- * Constituent Assembly of each Dominion would have unlimited powers to frame and adopt any constitution
- * The Suzerainty of the crown over Indian states was terminated
- * The office of the Secretary of state for India was to be abolished and his work was to be taken over by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs.

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