

# **DAILY CLASS NOTES**

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## **MODERN HISTORY**

Lecture - 06

**Pitt's India Act-1784**



## Pitt's India Act-1784

### Pitt's India Act-1784:

- ❖ Prime Minister of Britain during the passage of this Act was William Pitt the younger.
- ❖ Financial irregularities and corruption charges were rampant in the East India Company.
- ❖ To look into these charges, a **Select Committee** and a **Secret Committee** were formed.
- ❖ These Committees were to observe and regulate the working of the East India Company and prepare a report on the same. The report of the Committees highlighted that there is a mixup in the Commercial and Political roles of the Company.
- ❖ So, to tackle these issues, Pitt's India Act of 1784 came into existence.
- ❖ This Act is also called the **East India Company Act of 1784**.
- ❖ This act continued in effect till 1858.

### Main Provisions of Pitt's India Act:

- ❖ East India Company's Political and Commercial functions were separated.
- ❖ The **Board of Control** was formed to look into the **Political functions** of the company.
- ❖ The Company was represented by the **Court of Directors** and this Court of Directors controlled the **Commercial functions** of the company.
- ❖ The President of the Board of Control was the **Secretary of State**.
- ❖ All **civil and military officers** had to declare their assets as per the provisions of this Act.
- ❖ Governor-General was provided with **Veto** power. [The power to overturn any decision.]
- ❖ It was re-asserted that **Bombay and Madras Presidency would remain subordinated to Bengal**.

### Significance of Pitt's India Act:

- ❖ It created a **Dual Government** in Bengal. [Double government consisted of a Board of Control and Court of Directors.]
- ❖ Occupied territories of the British were henceforth termed '**British Possessions in India**.'
- ❖ The British Government had full control over the Company and its management in India.

### Defects of Pitt's India Act-1784:

- ❖ **The Governor-General** was controlling the Board of Control and Court of Directors. Since the Governor General had veto powers, he could easily cause conflict between the Board of Control and the Court of Directors.
- ❖ Powers were **not** well defined.
- ❖ There were rising cases of **nepotism, favouritism** and neglect of the interests of the local population.

### Lord Cornwallis (1786-93):

- ❖ He is called the **Father of Civil Services in India**.
- ❖ He brought the **Civil Service Code**. In the Civil Service Code, he mentioned Separation of Power.
  - According to this Code, the **District Collector** was to be responsible for general administration and revenue collection.



- The **Superintendent of Police** was responsible for the maintenance of law and order.
- **District Judge** was to look into the matter of judgements in civil court.
- ❖ He brought **reforms in the criminal justice system**.
- ❖ He **abolished District Faujdari Adalat** and established 4 Circuit Courts at Calcutta, Murshidabad, Dacca and Patna.
  - These Circuit Courts were headed by **company officials**.
  - The Judges, here, would be assisted by **Qazi and Mufti**.
- ❖ **Sadar Nizamat Adalat** was shifted from Murshidabad to **Calcutta**.
- ❖ Each District was divided into a Police Circle/ Thana which consisted of an area of 20 sq miles.
- ❖ Daroga was the head of the police station. Under him, were constables.
- ❖ To reduce corruption, he brought reforms in the **Board of Trade** and incentivised honest officials.
- ❖ He introduced **Permanent Settlement** in India.
  - The First provision regarding Permanent Settlement came through Pitt's India Act-1784. The Britishers were of the view that this Settlement would result in the Industrial revolution in India and bring about a transformation in the agriculture sector.

### Land Revenue System in India:

- ❖ Zamindari system/ Permanent Settlement
- ❖ Mahalwari system
- ❖ Ryotwari system



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