

**P.R. GOVERNMENT COLLEGE (A), KAKINADA**  
**NAAC Accredited “A” Grade Institution (CGPA –**  
**3.17)**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**Study Material for students**



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**TOPIC: BRITISH ACT's 1773-1853**

## **Regulating act of 1773**

This act was of great constitutional importance as

(A) It was the first step taken by the British government to control and regulate the affairs of East India Company in India.

(B) It recognised for the first time the political and administrative functions of the company.

(C) It laid the foundations of Central administration in India.

The features of this act:

1. It made governor of Bengal as the governor general of Bengal and created an executive council of four members to assist him. The first governor general was Lord Warren Hastings.
2. It made the governors of Bombay and Madras presidencies subordinate to the governor general of Bengal.
3. Establishment of a supreme court at Calcutta 1774, comprising one chief justice and three other judges.
4. It prohibited the servants of company engaging any private trade or accepting presents or bribes from the natives.
5. It strengthened their control of the British government over the company by required in the quota director (governing body of the company) to report on its revenue civil and military affairs in India.

## **Pitt's India act of 1784**

The features:

1. It distinguished between the commercial and political functions of the company.

2. It allowed the quote of directors to manage the commercial affairs but created new body called board of control to manage the political affairs. Thus it established a system of double government.

3. It empowered the board of control to supervise and direct all operations of the civil and military government or revenues of the British possessions in India.

This act was significant for two reasons.

1. The company's territories in India were for the first time called the British possessions in India.

2. The British government was given the supreme control over company's affairs and its administration India.

## **Charter Acts**

### **Charter act of 1793**

The features:

1. It extended the overriding power given to Lord Cornwallis over his council, to all future governor generals and governors of presidencies.

2. It gives the governor general more powers and control over the governments of the subordinate presidencies is of Bombay Madras.

3. It extended they trade Monopoly of the company in India for another period of 20 years.

4. It provided that the commander chief was not to be a member of the governor general council, unless he was so appointed.

5. It laid down that the members of the board of control and their staff work henceforth to be paid out of the Indian revenues.

### **Charter act of 1813**

The features:

1. It abolished the trade Monopoly of the company in India, the Indian trade was thrown open to all British merchants. However it continued the Monopoly of the company over trade in trade China.
2. It declared them sovereignty of the British crown over the company's territories in India.
3. It allowed the Christian missionaries to come to India for the purpose of enlightening the people.
4. It provided for the spread of Western education among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.
5. It authorised local government in India to impose tax on persons. They could also punish the persons for not paying taxes.

### **Charter act of 1833**

This act was the final step towards centralisation British India.

The features:

1. It made the governor general of Bengal as the governor general of India and vested in him all civil and military powers. Lord William Bentinck was the first governor general of India.
2. It deprived the governor general Bombay and Madras of their legislative powers. The governor general of India was given exclusive legislative powers for the entire British India.
3. It ended the activities of the East India Company as a commercial body which became purely administrative body.

4. The charter act of 1833 attempted to introduce a system of open competition for selection of civil servants and stated that Indians should not be debarred from holding any place, office and employment under company.

### **Charter act of 1853**

This was the last series of charter act passed by British parliament.

The features:

1. It separated, for the first time legislative and executive functions of the governor general's council. It provided for additional 6 new members called legislative councillors to the council. In other words, it established a separate governor general's legislative council which came to be known as the Indian legislative council.
2. It introduced an open competition system of selection and recruitment of civil servants. The covenanted civil service was, thus, thrown open to the Indians also.
3. It extended the companies rule and allowed it to retain the possessions of Indian territories on trust for the British crown. This was a clear indication that the company's rule could be terminated at any time the parliament liked.
4. It introduced for the first time local representation in the Indian legislative council. Of the 6 new legislative members of the governor general council 4 members for appointed by the local (provincial) governments of Madras Bombay, Bengal and Agra.

This is all about the information of charter acts from 1793 to 1853 made by British parliament.