

# Geography Sample Answer

## 2021 Long Question 8B

Colonialism is the dominance of areas by powerful countries, primarily for economic gain. India was a British colony up until 1947 when it gained independence.

Under the British Empire, unprocessed raw materials from India were used to fuel the economy of the colonial power. Cash crops e.g. tea, coffee, jute, rubber and spices took over from the traditional food crops. This caused major changes to native agricultural practice. Large plantations were removed from peasant ownership to be used to grow crops that would be of use to Britain. This had a negative impact on food production as it was usually the most fertile land that was removed by the peasants. This caused huge problems for India as she had to find alternatives to feed the rapidly growing population. The effects of the food crisis were felt throughout India for years after colonial power ended. It led to the government having to spend a huge amount of money. The Green Revolution was put in place to deal with the challenges that colonialism had left under British rule. In 1700, industrial output in India was 25%, this was reduced to 2% in 1900.

Prior to colonialism, India had a well-developed textiles industry. This was sadly forced into decline to allow British products to access the markets. Jewellery and leather making were huge parts of society in rural India. Rural India was completely ignored during colonial rule. Britain took India's resources and processed them for their own economic gain. Taxes were placed on the Indian population and they were paid to the British Empire. Infrastructural developments of ports and railways. This was only so that they could be used to facilitate the transport of goods to Britain.

Colonialism had a few advantages to India such as the introduction of exchange rates and uniform currency. The building of railways in Calcutta was also an advantage. However, there were many disadvantages. India was left with an economy that was one of the poorest in the world. The agricultural sector had stalled and life expectancy was low. India was left with a closed market system with tariff rates of 75%. This would cause her issues in years to come.