



Daily Mains Answer Writing (Day - 34)

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The Act of 1858 culminated in the grounding of colonialism in India from Imperialism, Comment

Structure –

- **Intro** - Briefly Introduce the difference between Imperialism and Colonialism.
- **Body** - First in 1-2 Lines tell about what was before Act of 1858, so as to set up the context of the answer and then talk about the transition of how India evolved as a colonial state.
- **Conclusion** - Give a summary of Act of 1858, what it was all about so as to give a sense of completion to your answer.

Answer –

Though both Imperialism and Colonialism are synonymous with suppression, Colonialism is where one nation assumes control over the other and Imperialism refers to expansion for political or economic control, either formally or informally. Imperialism can be seen as the driving force/idea that leads to the practice of Colonialism.

- Prior to the Act of 1858 termed as the Act of Good Government of India, the EIC was in direct control of territories in India. The GOI Act of 1858, abolished the East India Company, and transferred the powers of government, territories and revenues to the British Crown, thereby bringing in colonialism.
- The British Crown gained sovereignty over India, this act formalised absolute imperial control and “subsequent history upto the making of Indian Constitution is one of gradual relaxation of imperial control and evolution of a responsible government.”
- It ended the system of double government by abolishing the Board of Control and Court of Directors. It created a new office, Secretary of State for India vested with complete authority and control over Indian administration.

Essential features of the Act which symbolised colonialism –

1. Administration of the country was not just unitary but rigidly centralised. The provincial governments had to function under the strict superintendence, direction and control of the Governor General (G-G).
2. All authority- civil, military, legislative and executive were vested in the G-G who was responsible to the Secretary of State (S-S) for India.
3. The control of S-S over Indian administration was absolute with regard to anything related to the government or revenue of India, accountable only to the British government.
4. The entire machinery was bureaucratic, totally unconcerned by the public opinion in India.

'The Act of 1858 was, however, largely confined to the improvement of the administrative machinery by which the Indian Government was to be supervised and controlled in England and did not really alter in any substantial way the system of government that prevailed in India and thus reduced India to merely a colony that had enough potential to fulfil economic interests of Britain.