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Mains Practice Questions

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Q. Discuss the elements of colonial legacy in post-independent India.

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Approach

- Start the answer by briefly mentioning what colonial legacy is.
- Discuss the positives and negatives of Colonial Legacy.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

India was under direct British administrative control for almost a century and gained independence from Britain in August 1947. However, British imperialism had a number of significant impacts on the region.

These legacies of British rule continue to impact the country's economic and social positions.

Body

Elements of Colonial Legacy

- **Use of the English Language:** During the British regime English served as the official language for the entire country.
 - Even today English continues to be the official language. It serves as the lingua franca and as a medium of higher education.
 - However, the use of English has created an economic and social divide between Urban and Rural India.
- **Three pillars of the British Rule:** Provision of law and order was an important contribution of the British rule. In this, the bureaucracy, police and the army were the backbone of the British Raj in India.
 - The successor of the Indian Civil Service known as the Indian Administrative Service still continues to be the “steel frame” upon which the independent nation's stability and development chiefly depends.
 - However, the attitude of police with respect to common people still remains colonial in nature.
- **Partition:** Partition between India & Pakistan remains the biggest colonial legacy. Due to which, the relations between the countries continue to be enmity.
 - As a result, the South Asian region remains to be one of the most disintegrated regions in the world.
 - Further, the Kashmir problem also has its origin in British policies.
- **Establishment of a Unified Administrative System:** The British for the first time brought the whole subcontinent under one imperial rule.
 - Under the British rule, a unified administrative system became possible and it reached out even to the remotest areas of the country.
 - However, even after nearly 75 years of independence, we are following numerous laws that were enacted during the British rule.

Conclusion

While some of the impact of colonial legacies were positive for India, many resulted from British imperial interests being prioritized over domestic interests, which led to an uneven pattern of development and weak central government.

Thus, it can be concluded that a century of foreign control may have done more harm than good for the country's development.