

2H.2 Founding of Singapore



Contributions to the Locals under British Rule

- Political
 - Political Stability (Singapore)
 - System of Government
 - Executive Council
 - Only high ranking British Officials
 - Advised Governor to help him run the settlements
 - Legislative Council
 - Consisted of both British Officials and non-officials
 - Non officials consisted of mainly Asian and European traders
 - Helped make laws
 - However, only British officials were allowed to vote for the implementation of these laws
 - Non-British officials were there as they represented their respective ethnic communities; their responsibility was to voice out concerns for the people they represented
 - Non-officials had to fight very hard to persuade the government to act on their suggestions because there were more officials than non-officials
 - The law for the banning of opium, which was suggested by Dr Lim Boon Keng, was not implemented
 - Eunus Abdullah suggested setting aside some land for a settlement called Kampung Melayu for cheap farming for the Malays; this was a success.
 - Headmen of secret societies were elected in *sometimes, such* that when laws were created, even if the gang members were unhappy they were not to complain as their headmen was involved in the debating as to whether that law should be passed
 - Governor
 - Assisted by the Legislative and Executive Council
 - Had veto powers to stop the passing of any law

- Reported directly to Colonial Office in London
- Political Stability (Federated Malay States)
 - Residential System (Indirect Control)
 - Each state was appointed a Resident
 - Purpose was to work with Sultan to help run the country
 - Resident needed to get Sultan's favour, as partnership was only between them and Malay chiefs
 - How the system works is that the Resident advises the Sultan, then he uses traditional methods to administer the law suggested should he decide to implement it
 - The Sultan can choose not to implement the law; the only way to force him is use of military power
 - It was a success in Selangor and Sungei Ujong
 - Residents were personal friends of Sultans
 - It failed initially in Perak.
 - Birch did not understand Malay customs and forced the natives to become more civilised
 - He was assassinated in the end.
 - Hugh Low was appointed as second Resident and succeeded.
 - Lesson learnt: Resident had to understand Malay customs and co-operate with Sultan as the Sultan was the one with the backing of the locals and only he could properly enforce laws.
 - However, it must be noted that sometimes the Residential System led to the Residents being the true rulers and the Sultans becoming mere puppets.
- Taxation
 - To ensure internal administration of the colony was in order, taxes had to be collected from the natives
 - This was also done prior to colonisation but it was disorganised and taxes could be paid in any form
 - i.e. free labour, harvest (crops)
 - European Powers introduced modern methods of tax collection
 - Only in cash
 - This was tough for natives to cough up cash though
 - Was put in a centralised public treasury to prevent corruption

- Social
 - Law and Order
 - Piracy
 - Was a serious issue as ships had to travel through narrow straits and this made them easy targets for pirates
 - There were Malay and Chinese pirates
 - But dangerous ones were the Lanuns from North Borneo
 - Problems
 - Ships lost cargo after being attacked
 - People captured were killed or became slaves
 - A group of Chinese merchants were forced to pay from their own pockets to hire four armed trading ships to protect cargo (1832)
 - British sent out the sloop *Wolf* (1835)
 - Steam-ship *Diana* was sent out against the pirates
 - They were shocked when the ship went against the currents
 - Helped to ease the situation
 - It was never completely solved
 - Secret Societies
 - Were made up of Chinese immigrants who came alone and thus joining secret societies with similar cultural backgrounds gave them a sense of belonging and brotherhood
 - These immigrants brought crime and violence with them
 - Members had to swear an oath of secrecy and helped each other in times of needs as “brothers”
 - Sometimes to find a job (good)
 - Or to murder someone for revenge (bad)
 - Problems
 - Rivalry between the Secret Societies
 - Fights became common
 - Street battle in 1846, which involved more than 6000 people, was only stopped by military intervention
 - Robbed, killed and took part in unlawful activities
 - Ran opium houses, brothels and gambling dens
 - Abuse of new immigrants
 - Many immigrants were to pay to go to and fro Singapore (from China)

- Fell into debt with their coolie agents (who brought them)
- Many immigrants were abused and ill-treated by employers
 - Some were ill-treated on the boat ride to Singapore
- Many girls came to Singapore to work as maids and were supposed to have their contracts ended at 18 to go back to China and get married
 - However many employers forced these girls to stay
- Chinese Protectorate
 - To help solve issues amongst the Chinese Community
 - Helped make Secret Societies less attractive by advising Chinese to resolve their problems at the Protectorate instead of joining Secret Societies
 - Made registration of secret societies compulsory
 - So easier to keep track and work with the headmen to maintain law and order
 - Made registration of coolie agents and lodging houses compulsory
 - Inspected all ships carrying coolies
 - Inspected coolie houses regularly
 - Set up Po Leung Kuk
 - Provided shelter for girls sold as prostitutes and servants
 - Also helped girls who were forced by their employers to stay beyond 18 as maids
 - William Pickering
 - 1st Chinese Protector
 - Could speak fluent Chinese and dialects
- Detective Branch
 - Improved pay of policemen
 - Provided proper training
 - Employed officers who could speak Malay and Chinese dialects
 - Originally police were ineffective
 - Made up of Malays and Indians only
 - Were corrupted
 - Introduced modern investigation methods like fingerprinting
- Education (condensed)
 - To meet demand for more English-speaking people to fill up posts in government offices and trading companies
 - English and Malay Schools set up
 - Grants were provided to these schools

- Queen's Scholarship was established for top secondary school students to go to Britain for further studies
 - Chinese schools were neglected
 - Thus they bred anti-British sentiments
 - Attempts to set up Malay and Tamil schools
 - Difficult to convince parents to send children to school
 - Eventually they were discontinued due to low enrolment
- Health
 - Public Health Department set up
 - Malaria Committee set up to fill swamps and clearing drains
 - Tried to improve housing conditions
 - Built a General Hospital and set up outpatient clinics
 - Set up a health station on one of the Southern Islands of Singapore
 - Immigrants were forced to go through health screenings there before being allowed to enter Singapore
- Economic
 - Singapore
 - Value of goods traded in Singapore rose to 90 million dollars by 1869.
 - Most of products traded were mostly by Europeans
 - However they were in small numbers
 - 74 European traders out of 10 683 traders
 - 466 European traders out of more than 81 000 traders
 - These traders were very rich and powerful and traded in huge amounts.
 - They may also be appointed by European exporters to handle these goods, as "agents".
 - Standardisation of Currency
 - Use of cash enforced (Cash Economy)
 - Natives forced to sell their harvests for cash to pay taxes (mentioned above)
 - Connected Southeast Asia to the world economy
 - But this subjected the worth of currency to be affected by global factors
 - Transport Infrastructure
 - Railways and Roads were constructed
 - Originally was by jungle and river paths
 - But this was inefficient and a better system was required
 - Roads and railways were built by British in Malaya
 - Near tin mines to transport tin to ports for export

- Roads and railways were also built by British in Singapore
 - Originally had only red bricked roads (not tarred)
 - Roads were built especially at ports
 - At ports the roads were muddy roads and could not support the transportation of high volume of goods

| Reasons for Migration of Chinese and Indians to Straits Settlements | |
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| Chinese | Indians |
| <u>Unsatisfactory Conditions in China</u> Manchu government was poorly administrated and corruption ran rampant, with government posts sold to highest bidders with no consideration of experience or competence, and those who got the posts extorted money during their term, making life hard for the people. | <u>Unsatisfactory Conditions in India</u> Overpopulation was a major issue in India, thus there was insufficient food to feed the ever-increasing population and with the happening of natural disasters, standards of living dropped. To reduce socio-economic problems from overpopulation, Indians were allowed emigrate. |
| <u>Job Opportunities in Straits Settlements</u> Emigration to the Strait Settlements promised better lives, as they were told by traders how wealth could easily be acquired there. The tin industry, especially, was flourishing with an increased world demand for it, creating job opportunities for the Chinese immigrants to be tin miners, which was a job the Malays did not prefer over agriculture. | <u>Development of the Rubber Industry</u> World demand of rubber was created by invention of pneumatic tyres and mass production of motor cars, thus plantations needed more workers and tappers. Chinese and Malays were not interested, thus Indian emigrants were used (also, Indians and Europeans had better working relationships due to past experiences in Ceylon). |
| <u>British Policy Encouraging Immigration</u> Chinese were reputed to be hardworking, enterprising and resourceful, so no restrictions were put on their immigration (though less women-folk due to Manchu government laws). | <u>Abolition of Slavery</u> Many overseas European faced labour shortages after the law was passed, so the Indian government passed a law to permit Indians to emigrate to British colonies. |
| | <u>Effective Recruitment of Indian Labour</u> 1. <u>Indenture System</u> (failed) Employers recruited workers from India and paid for travel fees, the workers would work for a number of years before returning to India. Employers exploited the workers as there was no checks from the government. 2. <u>Kangany System</u> (succeeded) A supervisor of workers (known as <i>kangany</i>) was in charge of recruiting |

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| | <p>workers, and the employer of the <i>kangany</i> would pay for the travel fees, and the workers worked for the employer of the <i>kangany</i>. Both parties could stop work at a month's notice.</p> <p>3. Government Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- With rapid increase in demand of rubber, more workers were needed, so the Federal government set up an Indian Immigration Fund for the travel fees of workers and opened large depots for sending immigrants to Malaya.- The Labour Code was introduced in 1912 and provisions were introduced such as education for workers and their families and free passage for those who wished to return to India. These benefits caused more Indians immigrated to Malaya and eventually formed 11% of Malaya's total population. |
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