

- **Emergence of new power centers:** USA and Japan emerged as new power centers with their colonial ambitions.

Ultimately, it led to increased contact between countries which resulted in imperialism whereby the colonial powers tried to establish control over the colonies by use of military power, direct rule and rule by intermediaries.

10. The 'cutting of Chinese melon' was a landmark event in the history of imperialism. Discuss. (150 words) 10

Approach:

- Give a brief background leading up to the cutting of Chinese melon.
- Discuss how this was a landmark event in the history of imperialism.
- Give a brief conclusion.

Answer:

Imperialist domination of China began with what are known as the Opium Wars and the war with Japan. After both these wars, the Chinese government had to concede to enter into unequal treaties and pay huge indemnity. France, Russia, Britain and Germany gave loans to China to help her to meet this payment since China did not have enough resources. However, in turn, these countries divided China into spheres of influence, which meant that each country had certain regions of China reserved exclusively for its purposes. The **division of China into spheres of influence has often been described as the 'cutting of the Chinese melon'.**

It was a landmark event in the history of imperialism as this event had similar effect on China as in countries, which had been colonized even though China was not conquered and occupied by any imperialist country.

- **Various rights were obtained by these countries** in the regions belonging to their sphere of influence. In its sphere of influence, a country might have the right to build railways or work mines.
 - *For example* - Britain had exclusive rights over Yangtze valley, and only Russia had the right to build railroads in Manchuria.
- China had to give many **trade concessions** to Britain and USA etc., which had **adversely affected her economic conditions** and completely shattered the Chinese economy.
- Chinese suffered **loss of control over some of the territories** as well. France gradually took possession of Annam (Vietnam) and Russia also got a part of the province from China.
- The Western powers also began to press demands on the ruling Qing Dynasty and took a **greater role in administration** and policy making.
- This event also opened doors for **American imperialism** in China. Concerned that the European and Japanese carve-up of China threatened American commercial interests in Asia, US diplomats negotiated an '**open door policy**' for American trade in China.

The growth of these 'spheres of influence' created a patchwork of foreign enclaves that functioned almost as virtual colonies within China's borders. The Qing rulers retained their sovereignty and control of the national government, though in reality much of China was under foreign control. Thus, all these countries were indirectly controlling the politics, economy and society without taking on the onus for ruling the country.

Although after the **Boxer Rebellion** (an uprising in China against the foreign powers), the scramble for privileges stopped, foreign powers levied heavy damages on China and continued imperialism with the cooperation of Chinese warlords. Foreign powers bought these military commanders by giving 'loans' and in exchange the warlords granted even more privileges to the foreign powers. Thereby, reducing China to the status of an international colony.