HISTORY OF INDIA 1707 – 1857

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August - 2024

History of India 1707 – 1857

European Penetration into India: Early European Settlements -The Portuguese - The Dutch - The English and the French - Golden Firman – Dastaks

Objectives

- Understand the Timeline of European Arrivals in India.
- Examine the Strategies Adopted by Each Power.
- Evaluate the Inter-European Conflicts.
- Analyze the Long-term Impacts on India.

Introduction

The desire of the Europeans to come to India for finding immense wealth becomes apparent from the accounts of the contemporary scholars, travellers and also from the study of literary works. Whereas the renowned writer Shakespeare termed India as a land of great opportunities, the famous poet John Milton while discussing the specific attributes of different countries referred to Indian riches. Similarly, while the German Philosopher Hegel called India as the 'land of desires', the Swiss Writer Landstrok wrote, "The routes and means were many, but the goal was always the same, to reach the fabled land of India, a country overflowing with fabulous riches of gold, silver, precious gems, exotic spices and fabrics". India's cultural heritage and spiritual richness had impressed many scholars and travelers from Europe and Asia. The intention of the majority of the European travellers and traders was to find wealth, expand trade and spread Christianity which in course of time was transformed into objectives of establishing political supremacy, colonialism and imperialism.

The Portuguese

The discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco Da Gama, one of the most successful explorers in the Age of Discovery and the commander of the first ships to sail directly from Europe to India, ushered the era of the Portuguese trade in

India. He returned to Portugal from India in 1499, with cargo worth sixty times his expenses. Zamorin treated the Portuguese mariner in a friendly manner, which encouraged them to open up commercial relations with Calicut within two years. In 1502, he established a factory at Cochin. The king of Cochin let Vasco Da Gama build the first fort. He was followed by Alfonso de Albuquerque, who arrived in India in 1503. In 1505, the Portuguese appointed a governor named Francisco de Almeidato who used to look after their affairs in India. He built forts at Anjadiva, Cannanore and Cochin. Alfonso de Albuquerque was the real founder of the Portuguese Empire in the East. In 1510, Albuquerque occupied the port of Goa from the Bijapur Sultan by a sudden attack and arranged for its defence by strengthening its forts. He was a capable ruler and played an important role in the abolition of the 'sati' system. Albuquerque encouraged the Portuguese men to marry Indian women so that he could establish the authority of the Portuguese in India. He, however, ill-treated the Muslims. When Albuquerque died in 1515, the Portuguese had established themselves as the strongest naval power in India. Nino da Cunha (1529–1538) transferred his capital from Cochin to Goa (1530) and acquired Diu and Bassein (1534) from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. The famous Jesuit Saint Francisco Xavier arrived in India with Martin Alfonso de Souza during this time (1542–1545). Under Albuquerque's successors, the Portuguese occupied Diu, Daman, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul and Bombay, San Thome (near Madras) and Hugli (in Bengal). Portuguese occupation of Diu compelled the Arabs to withdraw from the Indian trade. The Arab merchants of Calicut were apprehensive of the Portuguese designs from the very beginning. The Zamorins, the hereditary royal title used by the Hindu rulers of the medieval Kingdom of Calicut, supported them against the Europeans. On the other hand, Calicut's rivalry with Cannanore and Cochin forced them to cultivate friendship with the Portuguese. Besides, they

forced Cochin to sell all its products through Calicut. To retaliate, this was an apt opportunity for Cochin. Its ruler allowed the Europeans to establish a factory in Cochin. The Portuguese exploited the situation to their advantage. They realized that Calicut was a major hindrance in controlling the Malabar trade. Hence, throughout the 16th century, the Portuguese carried on armed clashes against Calicut. With a view to driving out the Portuguese, the Zamorins allied with Bijapur, Gujarat, Ahmednagar and Egypt. However, they did not succeed. At any rate, the Zamorins continued to harass the Portuguese on land. Even on the seas the Portuguese found it difficult to destroy Calicut's naval power, which was organized under the celebrated Marakkar family of admirals. From 1528 to 1598, the Portuguese–Zamorin clashes were mainly confined to the seas. It was only in 1599 that the Portuguese succeeded in making a breakthrough against the Marakkars. The Portuguese control was effective at only those places where they had built their fortresses. But their highhandedness and cruelty compelled even these allies to part with them in spite of their traditional rivalries with Calicut. For example, the Cannanore rulers, who supported the Portuguese against Calicut in the early years, later supported the Zamorin in 1558 against the Portuguese. Similarly the King of Tanur, who had become a Christian and supported the Portuguese against Calicut, turned his back to the Europeans. In fact, it was only Cochin and Quilon with whom Portuguese succeeded in maintaining a lasting friendship. Portuguese settlements on the west coast consisted of the following places:

- Calicut (1500)
- Cochin (1501)
- Cannanore (1503)
- Quilon (1503)
- Cheliyam (1531)
- Rahole (1535)
- Krengannore (1536)

- Mangalore (1568)
- Hanawer (1568)
- Diu (1509)
- Goa (1510)
- Surat (1599)
- Daman (1599)

Portuguese settlements on the east coast consisted of the following places:

- Meliyapur
- Chittagong
- Hugli
- Bandel

The Portuguese power continued to be strong till the middle of the 16th century but with the death of Governor D.J. Castro, the Portuguese power in India began to decline.

Factories, Fortresses and Commercial Arrangements

The Italian merchants had established warehouses (factories) in Cairo and Alexandria to carry on trade and commerce. Following this example the Portuguese, too, founded factories on the coastal regions of India and certain other places in Asia. A factory could be defined as a commercial organization having an autonomous existence set up within the country with which another country had commercial relations. Each factory had an officer who was assisted by a number of persons appointed by the Portuguese king. He was the agent of the crown to promote economic, financial and administrative activities of all sorts. In all situations Portuguese national interests were of paramount consideration. Factories also required protection from hostile elements. Therefore, to consolidate and strengthen their power the Portuguese also attempted to fortify their factories. A chain of factories and fortresses came into existence for the support of the maritime trade conducted by the Portuguese. These fortified centres were expected to serve the Portuguese to check the movements of vessels owned by others and to function as areas for the reserve of military and naval forces. The system of

factories had a great role to play in the commercial arrangements in the period beginning with the 16th century till the mid-18th century.

Western India

In the Malabar region, the Portuguese established their first factory in 1500 at Calicut. However, it could not run for a long time because the Zomorins were against the establishment of such factories. In 1525, finally, the Portuguese closed down their factory at Calicut. This did not stop the Portuguese to establish factories in other places, thus, they establsihed factories in other places such as Cochin (1501), Cannanore (1503), Quilon (1503), Chaliyam (1531), Rachol (1535) Crangannore (1536), and Mangalore and Honaver (1568). Later, in the second decade of the 16th century, NizamulMulk of Ahmednagar granted the permission to the Portuguese to construct a factory at Chaul.

In the north-west, Cambay (Khambayat) was the main port of call on the route from Malacca connecting Calicut, the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf with the ports of the Mediterranean. Apart from this, factories were established by the Portuguese at Diu (1509, 1535), Bassin (1534), Surat, Daman (1599) and Bhavnagar. Thus, almost the entire coastal belt of Malabar, Konkan and north-west India came under the influence of the Portuguese

Eastern India

The Portuguese navigators came across several merchants from the eastern coast of India who had trade relations with other South-East Asian centers. The Portuguese collected textiles and other commodities from various port-towns of the Coromandel Coast.

Some of these port-towns were Masulipatnam, Pulict, San Thome, Pondicherry, Cuddalore, Porto Novo and Nagapatnam. Meilapore known as San Thome to the north of Nagapatnam was also a Portuguese settlement, which was

surrounded by walls. The Portuguese also established a fortress at Manar in 1518 on the western coast of Ceylon. This fortress, though not on the main land of India, could contain the movement of vessels to the east from the western side of the subcontinent.

The Portuguese also tried to establish commercial contacts with Bengal from AD 1517. The first effort in this direction was made at Chittagong–the chief port of Bengal during this period. After much manoeuvering, they at last obtained permission from Mahmud Shah, the king of Bengal, to establish factories at Chittagong and Satgaon in 1536. The second settlement at Hugli was granted to the Portuguese by Akbar in 1579–1580. The third one was established at Bandel with the permission of Shah Jahan in 1633. Yet, during the 16th century there were no fortresses on the eastern coast. Still the settlements, with a few artilleries, were able to oversee the movement of vessels carrying commodities.

South-East Asia

With a view to having an exclusive domination over the trade in the Indian Ocean regions, the Portuguese found it necessary to bring under their control the important trade centres in South-East Asia. They established a few fortresses at Colombo and Batticaloa–all in Ceylon.

Subsequently, contacts with Java, Siam, Moluccas, Martaban and Pegu were established. From 1518, the Portuguese started a settlement in China on the island of Sancheu. It was here that St. Francis Xavier, a Christian missionary, died in 1552. The beginning of factories in various parts of the subcontinent of India and neighbouring Asiatic kingdoms provided an environment suitable for long distance trade to the Portuguese.

Commodities of Export and Import

The chief aim of the Portuguese in discovering the sea route connecting the East with Portugal was to collect spices directly from the places of production rather than from the hands of the intermediaries like the Italian or the Muslim traders. Pepper became a necessary ingredient in European food. The demand for pepper went on increasing, especially for the sake of preserving meat.

Besides, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, mace, nutmeg and several exotic herbs from the East had a market in Europe. A special variety of textiles like muslin and chintz and few animals like elephants, too, found their way to Portugal. The commodities which the Portuguese had were not acceptable to eastern nobility, thus, they did not have sufficient commodities to give in exchange to acquire commodities available in the East. They bought silver from the West so that they could buy commodities of the East. Pepper was the most popular commodity which was traded from Malabar and the Konkan coasts. Ginger, white sandalwood, red sandalwood, sealing wax, indigo, spikenard, tamarind, areca nut, textiles, ivory and turmeric were also traded from the Malabar Konkan coasts to Portugal. In 1498, the Zamorin of Calicut asked Vasco da Gama to send gold, silver, coral and scarlet from Portugal.

This shows that these commodities were imported to the Malabar and Konkan coasts. In 1513, Alfonso de Albuquerque gave a list of commodities to the king of Portugal which he felt could be sold in India. This included items like coral, copper, quicksilver, vermilion, velvet, carpets, saffron, rose-water and clothes of various kinds. All these items were not from Portugal, but the Portuguese started procuring them from various places, like Flanders, Germany, England and other European countries.

Indigo, textiles, silk, handicrafts made of tortoise shells, taffeta, satin, chintz, malmal, and tripped cotton clothes were some of the things that were

exported to Portugal. Among these items, silks were produced in places like Burhanpur and Balaghat, chintz in Cambay, sandalwood in Coromandel, spikenard in Bengal, calico in the vicinity of Daman, Cambay and Balaghat. The volume of export of textile products increased in the 17th century. Copper, broadcloths and cash in various denominations were sent to north-western coast. In addition to this, a few products such as pepper and other spices from the South were also taken to north-western India for the purchase of textiles.

The most expensive item of export from this region was pearl, chiefly collected from the pearl fishery coast. Cotton and silk textiles and embroideries from Bengal were exported to the Portuguese. Ginger in conserve, myrobalans, butter, oil, wax and rice were the other commodities that were collected from Bengal.

The Portuguese brought brocades, damasks, satins, taffetas, cloves, nutmegs, mace, camphor, cinnamon, pepper, chests, writing desks, valuable pearls and jewels to Bengal. Most of these were from Malacca, China, Borneo, Ceylon and Malabar Coast. Sea-shells or cowries from Maldives, white and red sandalwood from Solor and Timor were also taken to Bengal by the Portuguese. Various types of spices were collected from Ceylon and other South East. Asian regions.

For example, Malacca and Java produced pepper for export. Moluccas produced good variety of cloves. The best sort of cinnamon was produced by Ceylon for export to Lisbon. Timor and Tennaserim produced good variety of sandalwood, which was carried by the Portuguese to Lisbon. Sumatra provided sealing wax for Portuguese consumption. Borneo, Sumatra and China produced good variety of camphor for export to Lisbon. Benzoin from Pegu was also taken by the Portuguese to Portugal. Rhubarb was carried by the Portuguese from China.

In return, the Portuguese took gold, silver, cash and textiles to SouthEast Asian regions. Most of these textile goods were manufactured in India.

Finances of the Portuguese trade

Taking into account the details of the Portuguese enterprise on the Malabar coast in the period between 1500 and 1506, an Italian estimated in 1506 that the total investment needed for conducting trade with the East was 170,000 ducats every year. The king of Portugal provided only one-fourth of this amount and the rest was raised by the merchants and financiers who collaborated with the Portuguese king. In 1500, he issued an order permitting natives as well as foreign merchants to send their own vessels to the East. Revenues collected in the form of booty, tributes and taxes levied on ships of the private merchants also provided funds for the conduct of trade with India.

European merchant–financiers

Italians, especially the Florentines, occupied an important position among the financiers in the 16th century. Most of the Italian financiers concluded contracts with the Portuguese king. They supplied cash or materials to the king at Lisbon. The king used them to purchase pepper and other commodities from India. These commodities were given to these financiers at Lisbon in view of the contracts signed. However, some of the financiers also sent their own factors to India. Cash or commodities were always sent under the supervision of the Portuguese authorities to the East.

Indian commodities also attracted the German financiers and merchants. The Portuguese king welcomed them with open arms for he was finding it difficult to finance the Oriental enterprise on his own. Since copper was given in part-payment for Indian commodities, especially pepper and other spices, large quantity of copper was needed for transactions. Some of the German merchant financiers

like the Fuggers had a monopoly over the production of copper in Europe. This turned out to be of great use for trade with India. The German financiers could fit out their vessels, entrust cash and commodities to the India House in Lisbon to be taken to India under the Portuguese flag and buy the commodities from Lisbon according to the terms and conditions of the contracts signed. During the second half of the 16th century both the Welsers and the Fuggers joined the expedition along with Giraldo Paris and Juan Battista Rovalesco for the purchase of 30,000 quintals of pepper directly from India and agreed to send an amount of 1,70,000 crusados to India annually.

Thus, the firms of the Welsers and the Fugger's continued to be closely associated with the trade of India. There were a few Portuguese merchants who in their private capacity participated in the trade with India during the 16th century. State officials posted in India were also allowed to participate in the Indian trade. According to their position in the hierarchy, they had some rights to take certain quantity of commodities to Portugal, in lieu of remuneration in cash. The details of their entitlements were spelt out in their appointment orders and this formed part of their emoluments.

Indian merchants and rulers

Several Indian merchants supplied commodities to the Portuguese on credit when the latter did not have cash or commodities to furnish in exchange. The merchants of Cochin, especially the Marakkars, were of great help to the Portuguese in this respect and their services were gratefully remembered by the Portuguese officials. Sometimes, the Portuguese king was persuaded to grant some privileges to such merchants. Khwaja Shamsuddin Gilani, who had settled down in Cannanore after service at the kingdom of Bijapur, was often helpful to the Portuguese in finding funds on loan. Some of the local rulers stood surety for the

Portuguese when they did not have sufficient money to pay the merchants for the commodities bought by them.

For example, the king of Cochin came forward to help the Portuguese several times making the required volume of commodities available to them on credit. The Portuguese had banned all other vessels from plying on the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. They used to confiscate the ships which carried commodities without a pass (cartaz) from the Portuguese officials. All the ships were required to procure pass from the Portuguese officials in case something had to be shipped to India or other Asian countries. Even rulers of India like Akbar and his successors, Nilam Shah of Ahmednagar, Adil Shah of Bijapur, kings of Cochin, the Zamorins of Calicut and the rulers of Cannanore used to procure cartaz when they had to send ships to some places. The fees charged for the issuance of passes also became a source of income for them. Though only a small amount was charged as fees but ships who wished to take passes had to visit ports where the custom houses of the Portuguese asked them to pay tax. Also, the rulers who were defeated by the Portuguese were forced to pay them some money or something in kind. The Portuguese used this method a lot of times to procure money for investment. Thus, the Portuguese used a number of ways to earn money for running their trade in India.

Nature of the Portuguese trade with India

Right from the time Portuguese arrived at Calicut they had demanded that other merchants, Indian as well as foreign, should be ousted and a complete monopoly over trade be granted to them. Portuguese ships equipped with arms and ammunitions threatened other merchants and confiscated their merchandise and vessels. By 1501, the Portuguese king assumed a grandiloquent title showing his proprietary right over the Indian Ocean regions. The title proclaimed him Lord of

Navigation, Conquest and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India. In 1502, the Portuguese demanded an exclusive right over trade at Calicut to which the Zamorin, the king of Calicut, did not yield. Vasco da Gama declared war on ships plying on the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. He introduced an expedient under which those ships which carried a cartaz duly signed by the Portuguese authorities, namely the royal factor, were not to be attacked. This certificate was first issued in 1502. Everyone who was involved in maritime activities had to procure cartaz from the Portuguese. There was a condition that they cannot load certain items on their ship such as pepper, ginger, ship pitch, horses, sulphur, lead, coir and cinnamon. The Portuguese had monopoly over these items.

Monopoly Trade

Till the end of the 15th century, merchants from various quarters of the world were found on the coastal regions of India engaged in trade and commerce. Vasco Da Gama reported in 1498 that there were merchants from Mecca, Ceylon, Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Ethiopia and various parts of India at the port of Calicut. It is well-known that Chinese merchants as well as merchants from the Red Sea areas used to come to the Indian ports. There is no record of any group of merchants demanding exclusive right of trade in general, nor of any attempts made to declare a few or all commodities set apart for anybody. But, with the arrival of the Portuguese, this state of affairs underwent considerable change. Kings were pressurized to forbid other merchants from trading with their ports. Similarly, certain commodities were declared forbidden to be traded by others.

In other words, the Portuguese demanded monopoly of trade. The treaties concluded with the Indian rulers specifically mentioned this. The setting up of Portuguese fortresses at strategic places, surveillance by their patrolling vessels,

and the insistence on passes for other ships were the attempts made to establish monopoly of trade in Asian waters.

Trade of the Indian rulers and merchants

The Portuguese attempts at establishing total monopoly did not bring about a situation in which trade conducted by the Indian rulers and merchants was totally uprooted. The king of Cannanore, for instance, used to collect passes from the Portuguese to send his vessels laden with commodities to Cambay and Hormuz. He imported horses from the above mentioned places though this was identified by the Portuguese a monopoly item. Sometimes such vessels were at the risk of being confiscated by the Portuguese. The same was the case with the kings of Tanur and Calicut on the Malabar Coast. The nobles of Gujarat continued their trade despite the Portuguese monopoly. Malik Gopi, Malik Ayaz, Khwaja Sofar and others interested in trade plied their ships with or without passes from the Portuguese. Besides, the local and foreign merchants settled in India carried on their trade with or without cartaz. The area between Calicut and Cape produced approximately 60,000 quintals of pepper but only 15,000 quintals were sent to the Portuguese factories. The rest of the pepper was taken to other ports and this was termed illegal by the Portuguese. The Portuguese were not willing to increase the price of pepper agreed upon in 1503 even after several decades. Hence, the producers of pepper did not have any alternative other than supplying it to the merchants who might buy it and send it to other centres of trade without the knowledge of the Portuguese. Moreover, several Portuguese officials conducted their own private trade in various commodities without the knowledge of their government. In fact, Portuguese monopoly was never effective in the Red Sea zone.

Trade and Production

Overseas trade conducted in the 16th century in Asia in general and India in particular was, by and large, long-distance in nature involving the Asiatic ports on one side and the Atlantic ports on the other. The commodities exported from India reached various parts of Europe. There were a number of elements in the pattern of this trade, as explained earlier, which distinguished it from just 'peddling' trade. In view of the greater demand for pepper, the cultivators strove to increase the production. In the period between 1515 and 1607, the production of pepper in the Malabar area went up by 200 to 275 per cent. Since we are not aware of the amount of production of pepper before the coming of the Portuguese, it is difficult to determine the increase in production as well. At any rate, it is reasonable to conclude that the production of pepper in India increased after the Portuguese advent. But it must be borne in mind that the internal demand for pepper from the Mughal Empire and the external one from the Safavi Empire also might have contributed to the increase in pepper production in India.

Causes of Decline of the Portuguese

The Portuguese power witnessed a decline as quickly as it had risen; the reasons of their decline were as follows:

- Nobody could carry on the work of Albuquerque.
- The Portuguese rulers were not tolerant towards religions of the country.
- The administrative system of the Portuguese had gradually become corrupt.
- The rise of other European trading powers–the Dutch, French and the British.
- In 1631, they lost Hugli when Qasim Khan, a Mughal noble, drove them out.

- In 1661, the king of Portugal gave Bombay to Charles II of England as dowry when he married the former's sister.
- The Marathas captured Salsette and Bassein in 1739.
- In the end, the Portuguese were left only with Goa, Diu and Daman.

The short-sighted policy of the Portuguese governors, resorting to every kind of corrupt practice in the name of business including selling people as slaves and carrying on piracy led to their gradual decline in India as well in as the East.

The Dutch

After the Portuguese, the Dutch also felt encouraged to trade in India. They wanted to have direct access to the spice market of India. To fulfil their ambition, they undertook many voyages to India from 1596 to 1602. In 1602, they established an organization named the United East India Company. The Dutch had conflicts with the Portuguese and the English merchants. In 1602, the Dutch Parliament passed a Charter. This Charter led to the formation of the Dutch East India Company. As per this Charter, the company had the authority to make wars in order to acquire territories. It also had the power to make treaties and build fortresses.

Establishment of factories

Many factories were set up by the Dutch. Some of the factories were set up at Masulipatam (1605), Pulicat (1610), Surat (1616), Bimilipatam (1641), Karikal (1645), Chinsura (1653) and Cochin (1663). In 1668, the company set up factories in Kasimbazar, Patna, Balasore and Negapatam as well. After the establishment of these factories, they became the most dominant power in the European trade with the East. Till 1690, Pulicat was the main centre of their trading activities. After 1690, Negapatam became the main centre of the Dutch merchants.

The Dutch lost the Battle of Bedera to the English in 1759 and conceded to the English after this battle. Although there were occasional amicable settlements between the English and the Dutch, hostilities were renewed when in 1623 the Dutch massacred ten Englishmen and nine Japanese at Amboyna, which marked the climax of the hatred of the Dutch towards the English as well as the other trading nations. The Dutch in their bid for expansion of trade, came into conflicts with Mir Jumla and during 1672–74, they repeatedly obstructed the communication between Surat and other English settlements in Bombay and even captured three English vessels on the Bay of Bengal. Between 1580 and 1640, Portugal was under Spain.

There were hostilities going on between England and Spain, which naturally meant hostilities between the English and the Portuguese. With the Treaty of Madrid in 1630, commercial hostilities between the English and the Portuguese diminished although they did not cease altogether. When in 1640 Portugal became independent of Spain, the relations between the English and Portuguese further improved and the English right to trade in the East was conceded by the Portuguese. This facilitated the conclusion of treaty with the English in 1661 by which the English agreed to support the Portuguese against the Dutch.

Finally, the rivalry of the trading companies ousted the Dutch and the Portuguese from the Indian trading market.

The English and the French

The French

Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India. Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted charter to this company in 1664. After this, the planning of this French company was done by

Colbert, the then finance minister of France. Under this company, the first factory was established in 1668 at Surat. The founder of the first factory was Coron, a Dutchman in the French Service. The next factory was set up in 1669 at Masulipattinam. In 1674, Pondicherry became their capital. From 1690 to 1692, the French set up one more factory at Chandra Nagar, Bengal, on the bank of river Hugli.

Mahe (now Malabar) and Karikal (now Coromandel) were acquired by the French in 1725 and 1739 respectively. The company was given a loan of 3,000,000 livres by the king. For this loan, the king did not charge any interest. The company had the monopoly for 25 years to conduct trading activities from the Cape of Good Hope to India and the South Seas. Aurangzeb gave a firmanin the favour of the company according to which the company had the permission to conduct trading activities in the Gujarat coast as well.

The British

The East India Company, initially named The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1600. The company was given rights for carrying out trading activities in the East. Later, the company became popular as the English East India Company. For many years, the company traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas. At this time, they dealt only in the trading of spices. In 1608, Captain William Hawkins met Jehangir. He showed him the letter which he brought from James I, king of England. In this letter, James I requested Jehangir to allow the English merchants to establish their shops in the country. The merchants of the Portuguese and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchants in India. Thus, Jehangir had to decline the request of James I.

In 1609, however, Jehangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda. However, for this the sultan made a condition that the company will have to pay fixed custom duty of 500 pagodas per year. In 1651, NawabShuja-ud-Din permitted the company to continue their trading activities for which the company would be obliged to pay `3,000 annually. In 1656, the English was given the security of trade as well. According to this directive, the English received permission to carry on their import and export activities on land as well water without the need to pay customs or tolls. In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a firman in favour of the English. According to this firman, the English were given permission to carry out duty-free trade but they were asked to pay `3,000 annually.

After 1691, the company prospered by leaps and bounds in Bengal. In 1696, the company gave an excuse that it is at risk from Sobha Singh, a zamindar of Burdwan as he might rebel against the company. With the help of this excuse, the company got the rights for the fortification of their factory. The zamindari of three villages—Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata or Kalikata-was given to the English in 1698. In return, they were to pay `1,200 to SabarnaChaudhari who was the zamindar of these three villages before the zamindari was granted to the English. In 1700, a separate President and Council took charge of the factories of Bengal. Also, the English constructed a fort. This fort was named after King William II of England. Later, this fort became the seat of the Council which took charge of the factories. The first President and Governor of this Council was Sir Charles Eyre.

In 1714, the English sent John Surman to the Delhi court to arrange all trading facilities for the East India Company. When he met Emperor Farukhsiyar,

the emperor issued a furmenty which the company was granted permission to carry on custom free trade in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In addition to this, the company was also allowed to mint its own coins.

The French vs. the English

In 1749, the French company seemed to be a serious rival of the English Company, but it could not survive for a long time due to the following reasons:

- The French Company was controlled by the Government but the Government was not too interested in the company's affairs. On the other hand, the English company was a private concern.
- The English company had more money as compared to the French company. The area of the English trade was also vast.
- The English were strong on the waters as well. They had big ships and their merchants made regular voyage for trading activities.

War between the English and the French

From 1746 to 1763, English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as Carnatic wars. They fought with each other in order to get monopoly over trade in India. The Indian rulers, the Mughals, the subedar of Deccan did not participate in these wars.

Self Assessment Questions

Discuss the role of the Portuguese in shaping India's early maritime trade routes.

Evaluate the impact of the Golden Firman on British trade in Bengal.

Examine the role of European rivalry in the shaping of Indian political alliances during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Unit – II

The Struggle for Supremacy: Anglo – French Rivalry

The Struggle for Supremacy: Anglo – French Rivalry- Carnatic Wars– Robert Clive –Dupleix -Battle of Plassey – Battle of Buxar - Treaty of Allahabad - Later Mughals.

Objectives

- Understand the Causes of Anglo-French Rivalry
- Analyze the Outcomes of the Carnatic Wars.
- Evaluate the Impact of the Battle of Plassey and Battle of Buxar:.

Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India. Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted authority for this company in 1664. After this, the planning of this French company was done by Colbert, the then finance minister of France.

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The company was given a loan of 3,000,000 livres by the king. For this loan, the king did not charge any interest. The Company had the monopoly for 25 years to conduct trading activities from the Cape of Good Hope to India and the South Seas. Aurangzeb gave a *farmaan* in the favour of the company according to which the company had the permission to conduct trading activities in the Gujarat coast as well.

The English

The Company named 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies' were granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth. The company was given rights for carrying out trading activities in the East. Later, the company became popular as the English East India Company. For many years, the company traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas. At this time, they dealt only in the trading of spices. In 1608, Captain William Hawkins met Jahangir. He showed him the letter which he

Brought from James I, King of England. In this letter, James I had requested Jahangir to allow the English merchant to establish trade in the country. The merchants of Portugal and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India. Thus, Jahangir had to decline the request of James I.

In 1609, Jahangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda. However, for this the sultan made a condition that the company will have to pay fixed custom duty of 500 pagodas per year. In 1651, Nawab Shuja-ud-din permitted the company to continue their trading activities for which the company would be obliged to pay `3,000 annually.

In 1656, the English was given the security of trade as well. According to this directive, the English received permission to carry on their import and export activities on land as well water without the need to pay customs or tolls.

In 1691, Ibrahim Khan who was the successor of Shaista Khan issued a *farmaan* in the favour of the English. According to this *farmaan*, the English were given permission to carry out duty free trade, but they were asked to pay `3,000 annually. After 1691, the company prospered by leaps and bounds in Bengal. In the year 1696, the company gave an excuse that it is at risk from Sobha Singh, a

zamindar of Burdwan as he might rebel against the company. With the help of this excuse, the company got the rights for the fortification of their factory.

The zamindari of three villages: Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata or Kalikata, was given to the English in 1698. In return, they were to pay `1,200 to Sabarna Chaudhari who was the zamindar of these three villages before the zamindari was granted to the English. In 1700, a separate President and Council took charge of the factories of Bengal. Also, the English constructed a fort. This fort was named after King William II of England. Later, this fort became the seat of the Council which took charge of the factories. The first President and Governor of this Council was Sir Charles Eyre.

In 1714, the English sent John Surman to the Delhi court to arrange all trading facilities for the East India Company. When he met Emperor Farukhsiyar, the emperor issued a *farmaan* by which the company was granted permission to carry on custom free trade in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In addition to this, the company was also allowed to mint his own coins.

The French vs The English

In 1749, the French company seemed to a serious rival of the English Company, but it could not survive for a long time due to the following reasons:

- The French Company was controlled by the government, but the government was not too interested in the company's affairs. On the other hand, the English company was a private concern company.
- The English company had more money as compared to the French company. The area of the English trade was also vast.
- The English were strong on the waters as well. They had big ships and their merchants made regular voyage for trading activities.

War between the English and the French

From 1746 to 1763, the English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as the Carnatic wars. They fought with each other in order to get monopoly over trade in India. The Indian rulers, the Mughals, the subedar of Deccan did not participate in these wars.

The First Carnatic War (1746–1748)

The First Carnatic War was directly linked to the events in Europe. The English and French were fighting on the issue of Austria's succession (1740–48). Once the war broke in March 1740, the two companies in India started preparing for it. Dupleix, the French Governor-General in India since 1742, was the first to realize the necessity of obtaining political influence and territorial control. But he had to face many difficulties. The French East India Company was the Government's company which was in trouble. Although the trade of the company had increased in recent past, its expenditure was more than its income. Naturally, it fell into heavy indebtedness. If this was not enough, the rivalry between two senior leaders-Dupleix and La Bourdonnais, worsened the situation for French. La Bourdonnais arrived near Pondicherry in July 1746 with 10 vessels, 406 canons, 2,350 white soldiers and 700 black soldiers. He wanted to act with complete independence, while Governor- General Dupleix considered himself superior.

On September 21, 1746 the French troops, led by La Bourbononais, captured Madras, an important English trading centre since mid–17th century. Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic, sent a large Indian army to drive the French out of Madras. He was 'guided' by the English. In the Battle of St. Thonie (November 4, 1746) situated on the bank of Adyar river, Mahfuz Khan, son of Anwaruddin, was defeated by French captain Paradis. He had less than a thousand

soldiers and had to fight 10,000 men. But the disciplined and organized army of the French, led by capable officers, won the battle.

The English on the other hand besieged Pondicherry from 6th September to 15th October 1748. But Dupleix made a strong defence and forced the English to retreat. This triumph of Dupleix made him a known and popular figure in the Indian courts. The war came to an end by the treaty of Aix-la- Chapelle (1748), under which Madras was given back to the English. The French got Quebec (Canada) in exchange of Madras. The English promised

The first Carnatic war taught the lesson to the French that a small army of Europeans, aided by Indian troops and trained after the European fashion could easily defeat much larger Indian armies.

To secure political advantages, Dupleix started interfering in the internal matters of Hyderabad and Carnatic. Chin Qilich Khan Nizam-ul-Mulk, the founder of independent Hyderabad kingdom, died in 1748. Dupleix supported Muzaffar Jang, the grandson of Nizam instead of Nasir Jung, the son. The Nawab of Carnatic, Anwaruddin also died in 1749. Dupleix supported Chanda Sahib to the throne of the Carnatic as against Mohammad Ali, the illegitimate son of late Nawab. The English had no other option except to support Nasir Jung for Hyderabad and Mohammad Ali for Carnatic. Thus the war of succession in these two kingdoms led to second Anglo-French War (1749–1754).

The Second Carnatic War (1749–1754)

The war started at the time when the English and French had peace in Europe. This proved that the two were fighting in India for commercial supremacy and not merely because of their traditional rivalry.

On 3 August, 1749, French soldiers with sepoys (from ‘Sipahi’ of Persian) attacked Arcot in Ambur, the capital of Carnatic. Anwaruddin was killed and his

elder son, Mahfuz Khan was captured but his younger son Mohammad Ali Khan Wallajah fled. He took shelter at Trichinopoly, proclaimed himself the Nawab of Arcot and received support from the English. Chanda Sahib and the French officer, Jacques Law seized Trichinopoly. At this critical juncture, a young English officer, Robert Clive seized Arcot, the capital of Chanda Sahib on September 11, 1751 with only 200 European soldiers and 300 sepoys. The purpose was to free Trichinopoly from Chanda Sahib's seize. The plan worked and Chanda Sahib had to withdraw his large army from Trichinopoly to lay siege to Arcot to recapture it. Clive and his small army stood the siege for 50 days. Chanda Sahib had to withdraw; later the English defeated him and his Indian allies at several places; he surrendered and was finally executed, the French gave up their entire claim over Carnatic.

However, the French supremacy over Hyderabad continued. Muzaffar Jung was installed as the Nizam and Subedar of the Deccan. In return, the French got command of a vast area from Krishna to Cape Camorin which was the jagir of Valdavur. Though Muzaffar Jung was killed in 1751, his successor Salabat Jung continued his 'friendship' with the French. Bussy, the French officer at Hyderabad, even succeeded in obtaining '*farmaan*' from the Mughal emperor Ahmad Shah, confirming Salabat as the ruler of the Deccan.

The failure of the French in Carnatic was a great setback. The French Government, which was always in trouble, could not bear this defeat. So it recalled Dupleix to France in 1754. The Second Carnatic War had ended with English acquiring dominance in Carnatic and French, a place in the Court of Nizam.

The Third Carnatic War (1758–63)

The Third Carnatic War (1758–63) began with the Seven Years' War (1756– 63) of Europe. This war was no longer confined to Carnatic. Robert Clive,

the English governor of Fort St. David and Lieutenant Colonel seized Chandan Nagar, the French settlement in Bengal in 1757. He was also responsible for the victory against Siraj-ud-daula, the Nawab of Bengal, in the Battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757). Thus, financially, English East India Company was more secured.

However, the most decisive battles of the war were fought in the Carnatic. The French appointed Count de Lally as the new governor of Pondichery. He besieged Fort St. David and captured on 2 June, 1758; also captured Nagur and entered Tanjore. He then attacked Madras where he called Bussy to assist him. This was a blunder because Hyderabad was well under French control. Bussy himself was reluctant to come. The British forced Salabat Jung to cede 80 miles long and 20 miles wide territory to them. After their victory over Plassey, the English troops led by Col. Forde, captured Northern Sarkar (December 1758) and Masulipattinam (April 1759). But the most decisive battle was fought at Wandiwash (January 22, 1760) where Lally was defeated by English troops, led by Eyer Coote. Lally retreated to Pondicherry, which was besieged by the English and Lally was forced to surrender in 1761.

The Seven Years' War ended in 1763 and a treaty was signed at Paris (February 10, 1763). Among other things, it was decided that Pondicherry would go to France along with five trading ports and various factories but merely as a trading centre without any fortification and armies.

Lally, was accused of treason and executed when he returned to France. He was made a scapegoat. It is wrong to blame only Lally for French failure. Though, some of his moves like calling Bussy from Hyderabad (1758)-were blunders but the real reason for French failure lies in the structure of its company and the policies and attitude of the French Government.

The French East India Company was a state undertaking company whose directors were appointed by the crown. The lethargy and bureaucratic control of this company could be compared to the bureaucratic control of many public sector companies of post Independent India. The English East India Company, on the other hand, was a private undertaking based on free enterprise and individual initiative. It earned profits from the Asian trade and did not depend on the state.

The French could never focus towards India as their priority remained Europe whereas England gave their full attention to the oceans and distant lands, especially India. The French failed to understand the complex political situation of India unlike the British. The French also failed to compete with the English in naval supremacy.

Thus, the third Carnatic war ended the French challenge in India and paved the way for the establishment of the British Empire in India.

Causes for the success of the British against the French

1. The English company was a private enterprise-this created a sense of self-confidence among the people, the French Company was state-owned.
2. Superior geographical position of England in Europe. France had to pay more attention to its border while at war as compared to relative secure position of England.
3. The English navy was superior to the French navy. It helped to cut off the link between the French possessions in India and France.
4. French government never took interest in Indian affairs.
5. The English held three important places i.e. Calcutta, Bombay and Madras whereas the French had only Pondicherry.
6. The French subordinated their commercial interest to territorial ambition, which made the French Company short of funds.

Causes for Failure of France and Success of British

Following are some of the main causes which were responsible for the failure of the French and the success of the British in India:

Commercial Superiority and Better Financial Position

The trade carried on by the English Company was far greater than the French Company. Between 1736 to 1756, the trade of British Company was four times than that of French company. The financial position of French further deteriorated with the third Carnatic war and by the close of this war, it was not able to pay even its troops.

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The East India Company was a joint-stock company which was established by a group of English traders for pursuing trade with the East Indies. It was observed that their trade was mainly focused towards the Indian subcontinent. Through the grant of a Royal Charter in 1599, the Company became one of the oldest companies among the similarly formed East India Companies of Europe. Wealthy English merchants and aristocrats owned the shares of the East India Company. The British government had no shares in the company and had only minimal control over their matters. Though the Company was ruling India from a long time exercising administrative and economic functions of India, it was only after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the Battle of Buxar in 1764 that their rule became effective in India. It was only after the Government of India Act, 1858 that India came under the direct rule of the British Crown.

The British were aware that because they were not natives of the land they could not win the confidence of the people. Therefore, they banked on superior force rather than on public support for exercising their control over India. On his return from India, the Duke of Wellington, who had served in India under his brother, Lord Wellesley, remarked: 'The system of Government in India, the foundation of authority, and the modes of supporting it and of carrying on the operations of government is entirely different from the systems and modes adopted in Europe for the same purpose. The foundation and the instrument of all power there is the sword.' In the hundred years that transpired between the Battle of Plassey (1757) and Great Revolt of 1857, India was witness to large scale political, economic, social and cultural upheavals under the East India Company. In this timeframe, the Company morphed from a mere trade and commerce business

entity into a paramount power in India. The Company's territorial possessions spread from Bengal in the east to all parts of India and came to be known as the British Indian Empire. In the beginning, the administrator was the Governor of Bengal and later as the territories expanded, the administrator became the Governor General of India. The paramount concern, however, remained trade and the profits that the company was accruing. It treaded cautiously whilst formulating policies making sure that these were in tandem with the aim of protecting and promoting the commercial interests of the Company. This unit will discuss the different governor-generals of India from 1757 to 1857.

Robert Clive

As you have learnt, Robert Clive was a key figure of the East India Company campaigns in the Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar. It was because of his machinations and intrigue that the British were able to depose the powerful Nawabs of Bengal and establish a firm grip in India. He first became the Governor General of Bengal in 1758. His stint as the Governor for the first time lasted two years, during which he waged campaigns to strengthen British rule in the country. He left India in 1760 due to ill-health.

Clive returned to Calcutta in May 1765 as the Governor of Bengal for the second term. The problem of the Company's relations with the Mughals awaited a solution. Clive made the final settlement through the Treaty of Allahabad with Shuja-ud-Daula (16 August 1765) Shuja's old dominions were restored to him with the exception of Allahabad and Kora which were given to Shah Alam.

The Treaty of Allahabad (1765) constituted a landmark in the history of Bengal because it led to that administrative transition which prepared the ground for the introduction of British system of administration in India.

It marked the end of the Nawab's authority and ushered in a system under which power was ingeniously divorced from responsibility.

The English by the Treaty of Allahabad (with Shah Alam II) has secured the Diwani rights in return for an annual payment of ` 26 lakh to the emperor and a provision of ` 53 lakh for the nizamat functions. Prior to this treaty, the English had concluded another treaty in February 1765 with Nawab Najm-ud- Daula who surrendered virtually all the nizamat powers, including military, defence and foreign affairs, to the Company. Thus, the Company secured the diwani powers of the province from the emperor and the nizamat from the Nawab. The Company exercised the diwani and the nizamat functions through its agents who were Indians, but the actual power was in the hands of the Company. This system of administration, the rule of the Company and the Nawab, was known as the Dual or Double Government of Bengal.

This system caused administrative breakdown. Law and order deteriorated, trade and commerce was disrupted, merchants were reduced to beggary, the rich and prosperous industries, particularly those of silk and textiles were ruined, peasants were reduced to acute poverty and agriculture was rendered unremunerative. During the great famine of 1770, the ills of the Company's indirect rule were fully realized. In the course of this famine about 10 million people, comprising one-third of the total population of Bengal and Bihar, were swept away.

On the other hand, general distress was turned by many of the Company's officials and their gomastas into a source of illicit private profit. They monopolized all available grain and compelled the poor ryots to sell even the seed required for the next harvest. At a time when 'the living were feeding on the dead' the worst profiteering was allowed to continue without inquiry or punishment. Despite the

large mortality and the consequent decrease of cultivation, not even five per cent of the land revenue was remitted and 10 per cent was added to it the next year. The surviving inhabitants of a village had to make up for the loss of revenue due to desertion or death of their neighbours. Cartier was the governor of Bengal then (1769–72).

The decrease in population caused by the famine seriously affected agricultural production and caused considerable delocation in the economic life of the province. It affected the zamindars: their collections fell as the number and paying capacity of the peasantry were seriously affected. It affected the Company's commercial profits too, because it swept away many cultivators and artisans.

East India Company as Sovereign Ruler of Bengal

The dual system of government introduced by Clive proved to be a failure. When Warren Hastings was appointed governor of Bengal in 1772, he 'tore the mask of Mughal sovereignty' and decided to rule Bengal by the right of conquest. The dual system of administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. The Nawab was deprived of even nominal share in administration. The allowance of the Nawab was reduced from ` 32 lakh to ` 16 lakh. The Company also stopped the payment of ` 26 lakh annually to Emperor Shah Alam II. Allahabad and Kora were taken away from the Mughal Emperor and sold out to the Nawab of Awadh.

Thus, in less than two decades, the actual power in Bengal was transferred from the Nawabs of Bengal to the East India Company and this richest and industrially most advanced province of India was reduced to acute poverty and misery, which was further aggravated by famines and epidemics. The capture of Bengal opened the floodgates of British colonialism and imperialism in India, reducing the rich economy of the country to a colonial economy. Clive himself left India in 1768 and died in 1774.

The Siege of Arcot

In August 1751, Clive was finally made a Captain, and he led a force of 200 British soldiers and 500 sepoys (Indian soldiers) on a 65-mile (105 km) march from Madras to the desert town of Arcot, then the capital of the Carnatic region. An attack on Arcot, it was hoped, might relieve pressure on the British besieged at Trichinopoly. In this period, the British and French Companies were often fighting a proxy war through their support of local rulers and their armies. Arcot was to be just such an engagement. As it happened, by the time Clive had proceeded through a storm and arrived at Ascot, the defensive force of some 1,000 men had already fled. Now, though, Clive would have to defend Arcot against a siege.

Clive received significant reinforcements from Madras, including artillery, but he was severely outnumbered by the combined besieging army of French troops and those of Chandra Sahib, the nizam of Hyderabad. Clive now commanded only around 300 men compared to an enemy of some 7,000 and so was obliged to hold only the fort of Arcot. The desert heat was unbearable, and the fortifications were crumbling, but Clive did have plenty of food, water, and ammunition, and so he withstood the siege until a relief force could arrive. Relief did come but not in the form Clive had expected. In the turmoil of regional politics, the Marathas, who had backed a rival nizam to the French-backed candidate, sent an army of 6,000 men to Arcot. The besiegers realised they must act now or never, and they launched a final attack on the fort. Clive's men withstood the onslaught, which included shooting the enemy's war elephants and causing them to stampede on their own men. With a small British relief force now arriving and news that the Marathas were camped nearby, Chandra Sahib withdrew. Clive had withstood the 52-day siege and achieved his first major military success; it also heralded a turn of the tide against the French.

Clive followed up Arcot with another victory, this time at Arni in December 1751. The geopolitical situation was still very fluid, but the desertion of sepoys from the French to British armies was an important consequence of Clive's victories. At last, the EIC saw the benefit of investing in its military arm, and a rejuvenated army won another victory, this time at Kaveripak in February 1752. Local rulers and the Marathas now began to see that the British were the most likely of the two European powers to establish regional dominance and so gave military support to an ever-growing EIC army. A major **battle** and then siege was won at Trichinopoly in June 1752 where the British were led once again by Stringer Lawrence. Clive had been in charge of the artillery in the field battle, but he disobeyed orders and went in search of a French supply **column**, failed to find it, and was routed on his return when his camp was overrun. Clive was very nearly killed that day but escaped with a facial scar as a permanent reminder of the necessity for officers not to defy their commanders.

Return to England

In 1753, Clive hung up his sabre and returned to Company commerce in Madras. In February, he married Margaret Maskelyne and then returned to England where his first son was born, Edward, on 7 March 1754. The couple would have four more children who survived the perils of infancy.

Clive was elected MP for Mitchell in Cornwall in 1754, a hotly-disputed seat and a 'rotten borough' (one that can be bought). In 1755, Clive decided he was not yet ready for a settled life in England, and so he and Margaret returned to India. Now a lieutenant colonel in the EIC army, Clive was lined up to become the next Governor of Madras. In the meantime, Clive's brief was to use Bombay as a base from which to attack French possessions in India and their proxy, the nizam of Hyderabad. Clive took the Gheria fortress in February 1756 and returned to

Madras. But it was up in Bengal where a crisis was about to explode. A new ruler of Bengal, Nawab Siraj ud-Daulah (b. 1733), took exception to the EIC presence and marched on Calcutta in June 1756. A short siege followed, and the **city** fell.

Black Hole of Calcutta

Clive received news of the loss of Calcutta in August. It was obvious the EIC had to respond, but calls for a punitory expedition were further fuelled by an infamous incident which lived long in the British **psyche** (and even longer in the English language): the terrors of the Black Hole of Calcutta. According to one survivor, John Zephaniah, he and other soldiers who had defended Calcutta were imprisoned in a single cell with two small windows. Suffering extreme heat and dehydration, only 23 men of the original 146 survived the Black Hole. Debate continues today as to the real number of prisoners involved, which may have been much lower, but the effect of the incident was to make men like Clive determined to gain revenge. The incident also became one of those dubious justifications for what the British considered their 'civilizing' presence in India, especially during the Victorian era.

Clive was duly dispatched with an army to re-establish the EIC's trading presence in Calcutta. Sailing in five ships and with an army of some 1,500 men, Clive succeeded in recapturing Calcutta in January 1757, but Siraj ud-Daulah still had a massive army, and the French were in control of Chandernagore just up the coast. Clive was determined on military action. He captured the fort of Hughli later in January, which was then destroyed by cannon fire from the EIC fleet. An attack on the nawab's army outside Calcutta was less successful and obliged Clive to retreat. Both sides became wary of the other and the heavy casualties any future confrontation would bring, but the control of Bengal was at stake. A peace treaty was agreed, but both sides knew this was but a temporary pause. In the interim,

Clive could now deal with the French presence in the region. In March 1757, Clive attacked and captured Chandernagore, bringing an end to any remaining ambitions the French had in Bengal. When the **Hindu** Seths of Murshidabad, a dynasty of financiers worried at the demise in European trade any wider conflict would bring, withdrew their support of the now isolated nawab, Clive seized the moment.

Plassey & Riches

On 23 June 1757, Clive led his EIC forces to victory at the **Battle of Plassey** on the banks of the Bhagirathi river in Bengal. Clive's army consisted of 1,400 sepoys and 700 Europeans. Clive's opponent was the army of Siraj ud-Daulah. The nawab's force was well-trained and greater in size than Clive's – perhaps around 50,00 men – but they were not loyal troops or commanders. Clive had only 10 sizeable cannons at his disposal compared to the nawab's 51 (or 53 according to Clive himself) but a major benefit was the defection of one of the nawab's generals, Mir Jafar (1691-1765).

The fighting began with the usual artillery barrage from both sides. Then a heavy downpour tipped the scales. The nawab's cannons had not been protected, but Clive's gunners had wisely used tarpaulins to keep their powder dry. When the storm ended, the nawab, probably thinking Clive's cannons were also out of action, sent in his cavalry. The British artillery then opened up again and cut down the enemy horse. At the sight of this carnage, most of the nawab's infantry began to leave the field but were pursued by Clive's reserves in a chaotic and bloody melee that involved men, camels, and panicking elephants. The battle was won with the British suffering 50 fatalities and the nawab's army over 500 dead and wounded. The nawab was captured, executed, and replaced by Mir Jafar. The vast treasury of the ex-nawab was distributed amongst the victors, as was the norm, and Clive made himself vastly richer, acquiring what today would be over $50 million

dollars. A grateful Mir Jafar also gave Clive the lucrative rights to the annual rent revenues (*jagir*) around Calcutta.

Victory at Plassey allowed the EIC to siphon off the resources of Bengal without paying the costs of administration, which were left to the nawab since the EIC had no intention of becoming a colonial power. As the beginning of the expansion of EIC territorial rule, Plassey and 1757 are often cited as the beginning of British rule in India. The battle also resulted in Clive becoming forever associated with the subcontinent and earned him the moniker 'Clive of India'. He was made the Governor of Bengal in February 1758, a post he held for two years.

Clive returned to England in July 1760. He bought properties, including Walcott Hall in Shropshire (his favourite residence), and received a seat in Parliament again, this time as the MP for Shrewsbury in 1761. In March 1762, he was given an Irish peerage and henceforth was known as Lord Clive or Baron Clive of Plassey. The Company was loath not to use Clive's talents, though, and to meet a new crisis with a new nawab, in 1764, he was appointed Governor of Bengal for a second time. Clive may well have preferred to stay in England and build his career there, but the Company was split over whether he should keep his annual Calcutta revenues, and this may have been the carrot that made him once more embark for the subcontinent. This time Margaret Clive remained in England with the children.

Clive's Reforms & the *Dewani*

Back in Calcutta by May 1765, one of the tasks the Company set Clive was to reduce corruption, particularly in Calcutta, and this he aimed to do by increasing regulation and reducing private trade by employees (something he himself had always benefitted from). Clive abolished two costly and dubious traditions where EIC employees received gifts as part of trade deals and drew two salaries, one for

administration and another for military service (*batta*). Clive's attempt to reduce corruption was not successful in the longer term, and he caused great upset amongst EIC employees. Clive's reforms also applied to military personnel who were so disheartened by cuts in the *batta* that he had to put down the brief 'White Mutiny' of British officers. Still, Clive's reforms managed to ensure the EIC civil arm kept its control over the military arm. One of the governor's last acts in India was to establish EIC pensions for its soldiers and merchants, and funds for those invalided home or their widows.

Meanwhile, the EIC's military arm continued to bring rewards. On 22 October 1764, the **Battle of Buxar** at Patna saw EIC forces under the command of Hector Munro defeat those of the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II commanded by Nawab Mir Kasim. Clive travelled to meet Shah Alam II, who, in return for an annual tribute from the EIC, awarded the company the right to collect land revenue (*dewani*) in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The deal was struck on 12 August 1765, and it ensured the Company now had vast resources to expand and protect its interests. The people of Bengal, in particular, would soon feel the full bite of the ruthlessly exploitative EIC.

Final Return to England

Clive returned to England in 1767; never a light traveller, he brought home a host of souvenirs, curiosities, and, of course, more wealth from his Calcutta annual revenues. Clive's Indian souvenirs are today housed in the Clive Museum in Powis Castle in Wales.

In 1768, he became MP for Shrewsbury again. In 1772, he was appointed to the House of Commons Select Committee on Indian Affairs, but something was amiss. Clive, although having developed the blueprint for empire-building in India and built the foundation for the British Raj, was seen by many of his compatriots

as too powerful. Clive and his like were accused of enriching themselves rather than serving wider British interests. He had old enemies, too, those who had missed out on the spoils of Plassey, EIC officials who had opposed his reforms, and the press, which gleefully reminded their readers of Clive's humble origins. The affairs of the EIC came under ever-greater public scrutiny. Parliament set up an inquiry into Clive's affairs and the great riches he had plundered. Clive defended himself in the House of Commons in May 1773 with characteristic bravado: "By **God**, at this moment, do I stand astonished at my own moderation!" (Faught, xi). In the end, Clive was honourably acquitted with the note that he had done his country "great and meritorious services" (Watney, 215). It was the EIC itself, everyone now realised, that was to blame for the mismanagement of British interests abroad and why, just as Clive had recommended to the government, it would eventually be taken over by the state.

In his later years, Clive suffered from a lengthy series of painful illnesses that included malaria, gallstones, gout, rheumatism, and intestinal problems, none of which were helped by lengthy visits to the supposedly restorative waters of Bath or the warm climes of southern **Europe**. Opium was the only source of temporary relief, and even that became less and less effective. Clive committed suicide at his home in 45 Berkeley Square on 22 November 1774. The story goes he cut his own throat with a penknife, but some have speculated he died of an accidental overdose. Public statues of 'Clive of India' would be erected, but his rumoured suicide meant that he was secretly buried beneath the flooring of the church of St. Margaret of **Antioch** in the village of Moreton Say, Shropshire.

The Successes of Dupleix

The news of peace arrived just as another series of events came to a head. The Carnatic was in theory dependent on the Deccan; and the Nawabs of the

Carnatic were supposed to be appointed by the Viceroy of the Deccan. But the latter, the famous Nizam-ul-Mulk, had long been too busy establishing and maintaining his own independence of the Emperor to pay much attention to the Carnatic. There also a similar process went forward. Three successive Nawabs had belonged to the same family; and the Nawabship seemed likely to become hereditary, when suddenly the third, Safdar Ali Khan, was murdered by a relative and rival, Murtaza Ali Khan, who, however, failed to establish himself. This led to confusion, to Nizam-ul-Mulk's personal intervention, and the appointment of a new Nawab, Anwar-ud-din, who was entirely unconnected with the late ruling family. This took place in 1743. But from the day of Anwar-ud-din's appointment, his position had never been as secure as that of his predecessors. It had been shortly followed by the murder of the young son of the last Nawab. Anwar-ud-din and Murtaza Ali Khan were suspected of having had a hand in this; and every bazaar had been filled with a thousand uncertain rumours and prognostications. It was whispered that Anwar-ud-din would shortly be removed, and that Nizam-ul-Mulk would extend to the Carnatic that baneful practice of leasing the revenues to the highest bidder, which he had already established in the Deccan. Even to European eyes the disjointed, enervated condition of the Empire was becoming obvious ; while Ananda Ranga Pillai predicted that the Nizam's death would mvolve in anarchy the whole of Southern India.

The truth of his prophecy was soon to be proved. Even as he wrote the words, Nizam-ul-Mulk was lying dead near Burhanpur, and his second son, Nasir Jang, had already seized the government. The news quickened into sudden activity all the shouldering plot and intrigue which for the last four years had surrounded the new Nawab. At once he ordered additional horse to be raised, and entered into negotiations with his nearest and most dangerous enemy, Murtaza Ali Khan, who

had escaped all punishment for the murder of two Nawabs, and who was believed to be awaiting a propitious moment to renew his attempts upon the government of Arcot. Farther south, the surviving Hindu princes were planning the restoration of Hindu rule at Trichinopoly. At the same moment news came that Chanda Sahib had reached the river Kistna with an army of Mahrattas.

This was a man who had played a great part in the previous history of the Carnatic. Allied to the late ruling house by blood and marriage, he had served the previous Nawabs both as Diwan and General. He was brave, warlike, and ambitious. He had aimed at founding a Government for himself by conquering, ostensibly for the Nawab, the ancient Sindu kingdoms of Trichinopoly, Tanjore, and Madura; but his conquests had provoked the great Hindu power of the Marathas, and his ambition had made an enemy of the Nawab's son and successor. Accordingly, in 1740-41, the Marathas invaded the Carnatic, slew the Nawab in battle, and then, having made terms with his son Safdar AU, they proceeded to besiege Chanda Sahib in Trichinopoly. He was at last forced to surrender, and was carried off prisoner to Satara, where he remained for some eight years, constantly intriguing for his release and establishment as Nawab of Arcot.

The method and time of his release have been variously stated. At a later period Dupleix claimed the whole credit, and this story has been endlessly repeated by writers who did not choose to go deeper for their sources. M. Cultru, on the contrary, holds that he was released in 1745, without French intervention of any sort. Both views, I believe, are inaccurate.

As Grant Duff observes Chanda Sahib's captivity was not very rigorous. It probably amounted to no more than confinement within the limits of the fort with an attendant guard. Certainly it was not long before he began to scheme for his return to the south. As early as October 1744, we hear of invitations addressed to

the Marathas by the family which Anwar-ud-din had supplanted. Many of them held jagirs and forts in the Carnatic, and feared they would be dispossessed if he succeeded in establishing his power. In the next year, Chanda Sahib himself wrote to Dupleix.' He related that as Raghoji and other lords of the Marathas had promised " to put him in possession of his rights, he had resolved to give them what they asked," but, he himself having no funds, Balaji Rao's nephew had paid several lakhs to Raghoji for him, and promised to provide what would be needed either for presents to the Nizam or for other expenses. Raghoji Rao, he adds, having given him leave of departure, he intends to visit Balaji Rao, and to send his son to the Nizam, “who seeing me so strongly supported, will not fail to restore me to my rights."

However, in spite of this plain statement of his release by the Marathas, something appears to have gone wrong with the negotiation, for he remained in captivity. In 1747 the Pondichery Council wrote of him that he was still a prisoner though allowed a good deal of liberty. In November 1746, Ranga Pillai recorded negotiations for his release. Early next year a messenger came from Poona, "where Chanda Sahib is detained." In July he wrote to Pondichery from Satara. His family only heard of his release in 1748, at the same moment that his brother reported it to the Enghsh. In the face of all this, it must be admitted that Chanda Sahib was not free to go where he pleased in 1745. Perhaps he was so sanguine as to write of promises as accomplished facts; and probably the whole affair depended on Nizam-ul-Mulk's attitude. It is not likely that Balaji Rao's nephew advanced several lakhs for nothing; and in effect Chanda Sahib would seem only to have exchanged Raghoji Bhonsla for Balaji Rao as jailer.

In any case, we know that Maratha generosity was not so great as to reeve Chanda Sahib from the necessity of finding other financial help. On May 4, 1745,

the Pondichery Council agreed to lend him a lakh of rupees as soon as funds were received from France. This was, however, a mere Platonic resolution. The presence of the British squadron prevented the arrival of any funds at Pondichery; French credit vanished; and Dupleix was more in need of help than capable of affording any. But the events of 1746 - the coining of La Bourdonnais, the capture of Madras, and Paradis' victory at the Adiyar - changed the situation. The alliance of the French became more valuable. At the close of the year, Dupleix and Chanda Sahib's relatives at Pondichery were concerting measures for his Hibernation. Dupleix refused to guarantee the payment of his ransom, but offered to act as the Marathas' agent in its collection ; and a few days later advised Raza Sahib to assemble all the forces of his family and fall upon Anwar-ud-din, who was then lying sick at Arcot. He promised to pay the lakh offered in the previous year as soon as Chanda Sahib reached the Carnatic.

Meanwhile a new plan emerged. The Nizam had expressed such disgust at the defeat of the Nawab's forces by the French that Chanda Sahi resolved to send his elder son to treat with him for the Camatic; and he informed Dupleix that Balaji Rao had promised, in the event of the Nizam's refusal, the assistance of 30,000 men. This message seems to have accompanied the letters of congratulation on the capture of Madras addressed to Dupleix by Chanda Sahib and Raghoji. The latter announced that he was coming to re-establish Hindu rile in the territories seized in recent years by the Moghuls. It looks, therefore, as though the restoration of Trichinopoly to Hindu rule were one of the conditions of Chanda Sahib's release at this time. If so, it would completely explain Nizam-ul-Mulk's opposition. About this time a noble of his court informed Dupleix that Nasir Jang had been ordered to £orsue and punish any Marathas moving towards the CafnatTc.

Dupleix having conferred with the vakils from Poona, raised his offer to 3 lakhs of rupees - one when Chanda Sahib set out from Satara ; another when he reached Cuddapah ; and the third when he reakhed Arcot. It is not explicitly stated whether this offer was accompanied by a promise of armed assistance ; but as such an offer had previously been made,' it is not unlikely. However, Chanda Sahib was expected to be accompanied with an overwhelming force; and financial appeared more urgent than military help. When the offer reached Chanda Sahib, he seems to have assembled troops, and was only hindered from marching by the fact that Nizam-ul-Mulk and Nasir Jang were encamped in a position commanding his route. In June 1747 he was only awaiting their withdrawal to begin his march.

But this scheme was destined to fall through, equally with that of 1745. It is possible that this was brought about by Dupleix' failure to furnish the necessary sums, which was certainly beyond his power at any moment between June 1747 and June 1748. But a mere matter of 3 lakhs would not have withheld the Marathas, had their minds been set on the affair. It is likely that they were diverted from it either by the threats of Nizam-ul-Mulk or by that internal disunion to which they were constantly subject. In any case, Chanda Sahib did not escape from their guardianship for another year.

This succession of futile plans wearied Dupleix, who began to regard Chanda Sahib's coming as improbable. So far did this feeling lead him that he did not hesitate to coerce and threaten a family hitherto treated with great deference and generosity. In May 1748, when he was at his wits' end for money, a proposal was made to borrow a lakh of rupees from the Killedar of Wand wash, one of Chanda Sahib's relatives. The Killedar's son seems to have promised to supply the money, and on failing to do so. He was imprisoned in Fort Louis; as for Chanda

Sahib's wife and son, long resident at Pondichdry, they could go and welcome as soon as they had paid what they owed.

Just when Dupleix was behaving as though he had ceased to care what Chanda Sahib did or thought, the latter was actually released by the Marathas. News reached his family on July 2, 1748 (and was then about six weeks old), that the ransom had been fixed at 210,000 rupees payable in forty days, that the question of Trichinopoly had been settled, and that Chanda Sahib had already set out on his march. There is much here that is obscure. Whence came the funds for the payment of the ransom? Apparently not from the French, who were actually quarrelling with the Navaits over a loan for their own use. Ranga Pillai mentions diamonds being sent to Chanda Sahib from Pondichery, presumably by his wife, but they are spoken of as though not completing the full sum. Again, how was the Trichinopoly question settled? As we have seen, Chanda Sahib had already agreed to its retrocession, thus incurring the Nizam's hostility. We do not know why the matter had been reopened or how it was determined. A letter from Chanda Sahib, received nearly two months later but which seems to refer to this period, says that his affairs have been settled thanks to Dupleix' message by Jayaram Pandit, Raghoji's vakil ; but whether this refers to the three-lakh agreement made with Jayaram Pandit in 1747, or whether the latter had made a later unrecorded journey to Pondichery, does not appear. News received at the same time as this letter reported Chanda Sahib south of the Kistna with 12,000 horse. Dupleix perhaps hoped that he would move south and drive Boscawen from before Pondichery, and he even asked Raza Sahib to write to his father about it; but the matter made so little impression on him that within twenty-four hours he cancelled the leave of departure he had given to Chanda Sahib's son, and offered to his wife the public insult of stopping her and her retinue on the public highway. " Men say to-day's

action obliterates all the kindness shown them since 1740," observes the Tamil diarist. However, this was only a temporary aberration. Soon Dupleix was writing to Chanda Sahib to explain away the detention of his son,' and announcing to one of his subordinates that he would place the French on a footing such as they had never yet enjoyed in India.' But Chanda Sahib was not to enter the Camatic for yet another year. His movements during that period are uncertain. Orme relates that on reaching the Kistna he engaged in a local dispute, was made prisoner and released, engaged again in a war with the king of Bednur, and succeeded in obtaining a following of 6000 horse, with which he then joined Muzaffar Jang, Nawab of Adoni and grandson of Nizam-ul-Mulk. Wilks narrates a very different story, according to which he immediately joined in the war against Bednur, was taken prisoner on the very day of Nizam-ul-Mulk's death, and was then released by the body of Muhammadan horse who had captured him and who enlisted under his banner.

Neither of these romantic stories can be entirely accepted. Neither Dupleix nor Chanda Sahib's family appear to have heard of any participation in local disputes down to October 1748 ; and the first contemporary mention of the Bednur affair appears to be in a letter received at Fort St. David in March 1749. Moreover, it should be remembered that Muzaffar Jang, with whom Chanda Sahib was presently to enter the Carnatic, had been, and I believe still was, Nawab not only of Adoni but also of the whole country of Bijapur, on the government of which the Raja of Bednur was nominally a dependent. I conjecture,

Default of precise information, that Chanda Sahib joined uzaffar Jang very shortly after his release, and that the next few months were spent in persuading him to embark on the great adventure of seizing first the Carnatic and then the Deccan. We know that early in 1749 the final negotiations were carried through in

which French help was finally pledged against Anwarud-din. At the same time, it may be conjectured, Chanda Sahib was employed in raising money for Muzaffar Jang in the Subah of Bijapur, out of which arose the Bednur affair/ probably a very insignificant business such as was incidental to raising revenue in the Moghul country in the eighteenth century.

Chanda Sahib had engaged to reimburse to the French Com- pany the pay of their sepoys - 1800 or 2000 men - from March 1749 ; but he did not claim their assistance until the following July. On the 15th Raza Sahib marched with them to join his father, accompanied further by a body of Europeans and Coffrees, 500 strong, under the command of d'Auteuil. On July 28 they joined Chanda's army. On August 3, they completely defeated Anwar-ud-din at Ambur, after a stubborn contest in which the French troops bore the brunt of the fighting. Anwar-ud-din was slain; his brother and elder son were made prisoners ; his second son escaped and fled to Trichinopoly.

So resolute a resistance was a surprise to the confederates. The French detachment had marched, not in order to fight battles, but to protect Chanda Sahib from his ally, Muzaffar Jang. Indeed, at the moment the latter was regarded with great mistrust. Dupleix advised Chanda Sahib to keep the French detachment with him until he had got rid of "this leech that will prove difficult to satisfy." But the important business that demanded immediate settlement consisted of presents, rewards, finance. On receiving the news of victory, Dupleix' first thought was to claim a proper share of the booty for the French troops and himself. He urged the attack of forts supposed to shelter great treasures. D'Auteuil was not to give up his prisoners till assured of a share of their ransom. But the victors' military chest was ill-furnished. All that could be got was a donation of 50,000 rupees for the French troops and a promise of 140,000 rupees for the officers. Dupleix, his wife, and her

relatives were rewarded for the moment with a village apiece, as Dumas had been after the great Maratha raid.

The victors entered Arcot on August 7 and remained there five weeks, enjoying their newly assumed dignities and seeking the means of supporting them. The French contingent accompanied them, but found Arcot so unhealthy - I suppose owing to excessive indulgence in the liquor and women of the country - that they were recalled to the Pondichery limits. On September 14, Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jang left the capital and pro- ceeded by easy stages to the French settlement, which the former entered on the 27th the latter on the 29th with all the pomp of Oriental processions, elephants, flags, and dancing-girls, and in their train came the European troops without whom the position of Ambur would never have been carried.

This visit was marked by a serious political blunder. One of the conditions of French help had been the grant of the neighboring districts of Villiyanallur and Valudavur ; but Muzaffar Jang was anxious to show his gratitude ; with all the facility usually shown in parcelhng out an enemy's territory, he added the seaport of Masulipatam and the district of Bahur. But this last included the villages immediately surrounding the Fort St. David Umits. To Dupleix this may have seemed no more than a convenient rounding off of French territory; but to the English it bore the menacing aspect of a scheme to cut off all trade and communication with the interior of the country. Their fear was confirmed by certain sinister occurrences in the neighborhood of Madras ; and thus the English Council were compelled to embark on a policy of opposition, which was to renew and carry to a victorious conclusion the contest they themselves had provoked in 1744.

The English Governor, at the time when this momentous resolution was taken, was Charles Floyer, who had unexpectedly succeeded to the Chair. He was not a man of parts or appUcation. He had not even troubled to make adequate preparations for the siege of Pondichery; he had squandered a considerable sum of money on a useless embassy to Nasir Jang; he was fond of pleasure and preferred the card-table to the Council room. The only man of note in his Council was Stringer Lawrence. But he had only arrived on the Coast in 1748 and had little experience of India. An excellent soldier, he was too short-tempered, had too little imagination, and possessed too fallible a judgment, to make a political leader or open out new political paths. Always ready to have a knock at Jack Frenchman, he doubtless supported any proposal to resist French plans; but his conduct in 1750, when chance placed him for a short time in control of the English policy, shows plainly that his political judgment was timid and irresolute. If under such leaders the English decided upon resistance, the necessity of so doing must have seemed beyond dispute.

Flyer, however, had already given signs of leaning towards a policy of adventure. Towards the end of 1748, Shahji, who had been driven from the throne of Tanjore in 1739, applied to the English for help to recover the kingdom, asserting that he would find plenty of support once he entered Tanjore with an English force. He had already made one or two attempts to engage the French in his favour, 1 but at that time Dupleix had both the English war and Chanda Sahib's intrigue on his hands; he therefore refused. The English, however, were, free from engagements. They had just received news that peace was being made in Europe. They decided therefore to help Shahji with a body of men on condition of a grant of Devakottai, a small fort at the mouth of the Coleroon, and the reimbursement of their expenses. In principle the agreement cannot be distinguished from that made

by Dupleix with Chanda Sahib. Each was designed to establish a pretender and expel a prince who was in quiet possession of his territory, with the help of foreign mercenaries; and each looked to favours which might be expected from the newly established prince by his benefactors. Dupleix aimed at the poetical control of the Carnatic no more than the English at that of Tanjore. The real difference consisted in the possibility of the pretender's being useful when established; and the English should have foreseen that a new Raja of Tanjore could never render them any service of an essential nature. Moreover, as far as could be seen in 1749, Devikottai was useless. It was not a place of trade; and although later on it opened a secure route of communication with Trichinopoly, the need for that was still hidden in the future. Floyer's bargain was identical with that of Dupleix in all but the advantages which could be derived there from.

However, the affair was decided on by Floyer and one other Councilor, 3 in consultation with Boscawen. It was only announced in Council when the troops had actually marched ; and was only confirmed by Council to avoid the ignominy of recalling them.

Of the expedition it little need be said. It was nearly overwhelmed by a cyclone before it reached the Coleroon ; not a soul in Tanjore was prepared to support Shahji; after an inglorious appearance before Devikottai and a still more inglorious retreat, a second expedition was dispatched by sea. This was commanded by Lawrence. He took Devikottai easily enough ; and when Pratab Singh, the actual Raja of Tanjore, offered terms, they were accepted, and Shahji was pensioned off into an obscurity from which he should never have emerged.

This business was finished by the month of June, so that the English had full leisure to observe the revolution brought about by Dupleix. They watched its progress with apprehension, decided to keep up the troop of European horse that

had been formed during the late war, and maintained their sepoys at fuU strength. 2 But their European force was still inconsiderable. The 1200 Independents brought out by Boscawen had been thinned by war and sickness. Even when 500 of these had entered the Company's service, the Council had not 800 Europeans under its orders.

However, Boscawen was still on the Coast with his squadron, and with his help the English could certainly have assembled a body of men quite large enough to counteract all French designs. Orme even says that Boscawen offered to remain, and blames the jCouncil for not acceding to his offer.

In his dispatch, however, describing the situation on the Coast and the peril of French aggression, Boscawen does not drop a word about remaining in the Indies; while if the Coimcil, having, as we shall see, already decided on opposing the French, were unwilling to incur the slight additional responsibility of inviting Boscawen to remain, they far exceeded even the measure of ordinary human stupidity. It seems more Ukely that Orme was misinformed.

At first, while standing on their guard, the English resolved to offer no cause of rupture to the new Nawab. Chanda Sahib wrote informing Flyer of his success; Flyer immediately responded with a letter of congratulation, and followed this a few days after with a similar letter to Muzaffar Jang. A Httle later Raza Sahib wrote, offering to procure for the English Governor a mansab and a jagir, and promising to bestow greater favours on the English than on the French. ^ These letters merit consideration. Possibly they were intended only to keep the English quiet until Chanda Sahib had firmly established his power; but probably they meant more. Probably Chanda Sahib hoped to be able to hold the balance between the English and the French. He certainly made two proposals for an

interview with Flyer. Perhaps fear of friendship between the English and his Nawab forced Dupleix into actions which could not but provoke English hostility.

We have already seen that in September 1749 Dupleix received from Muzaffar Jang a grant of the villages skirting the bounds of Fort St. David, thus cutting them off from the inland weaving settlements on which the trade of the place depended. Just before this, another scheme had taken air, intended to nullify the rendition of Madras. On the outskirts of that city stood, and still stands, a little Portuguese church, a of the Portuguese settlement at St. Thome, and dedicated to Nossa Senhora da Luz. This church was served by a Portuguese Cordelier, by name Antonio Noronha, a relative of Madame Dupleix.* He had already made himself useful by sending information about Madras to Pondichery; and as soon as Dupleix knew that he would be obliged to restore that place to the English, he got from the Viceroy of Goa a commission appointing this man Procurator of the Portuguese at St. Thome. As soon as Anwar-ud-din had been disposed of, he strengthened Noronha's position by getting Chanda Sahib to appoint him Amildar of the district. He thus established a creature of his in a post of authority within three miles of Fort St. George.

The existence of French designs on St. Thome were reported by Boscawen to the Council on September 13; three weeks later he advised that the English should secure themselves by taking possession of the town, as Noronha had already signalised his attitude by stopping provisions going into Madras. Accordingly, the English applied to Muhammad Ali for a grant. On October 22, Boscawen occupied it, hoisted the English flag, and arrested Noronha, whose papers are said to have proved him" a secret enemy and a stimulator of the animosities between the French and us." Chanda Sahib at once demanded Noronha's redoes; but though Flyer abstained from returning a direct refusal,^ the

occupation of St. Thome was in fact and should have been regarded as a formal defiance of the French and a proclamation of the English resolve to support Muhammad Ali.

That resolution was definitely taken on October 13, 1749. Even when congratulating Chanda Sahib, Floyer had written to condole with Muhammad Ali on his father's death. In August fourguns and a few artillerymen were sent to him at Trichinopoly. In September, when he was urgently demanding more considerable assistance, Floyer answered that Nasir Jang's intervention would probably prevent any attack upon Trichinopoly, but that, were any made, he would send all possible help.' On October 13 this conespondence was laid before the Council. It resolved, under the pretext of dismissal, to send some of the best sepoys in service to Trichinopoly, together with a small body of Europeans, partly out of gratitude for Muhammad All's help in 1746, partly out of the conviction that Nasir Jang's arrival would speedily suppress Chanda Sahib's rebellion. In November, for fear lest the French should carry all before them while Nasir Jang was still at a distance, they sent in addition a company of Europeans under Captain Cope. This party never came into conflict with the French, but it heartened up the English protege, and induced him to grant the Enghsh country round Fort St. David which had already been granted to the French by Muzaffar Jang. Thus the ring Dupleix had formed around the English in the south was broken through, just as the similar design at Madras had been frustrated by the seizure of St. Thomd.

While the English were thus considering and defining their position, Chanda Sahib and Dupleix were maturing their plans for future operations and waiting for the end of the autumnal rains. The main business before them was the reduction of Muhammad Ali at Trichinopoly. The French contingent was increased to 800 Europeans, with 300 Coffrees and Topasses, and a train of field artillery.

But, the difficulty was finance the payment of that useless swarm of cavalry without which no Indian prince could move. Dupleix managed to borrow from private persons 2 lakhs of rupees, and himself provided another, secured on the revenues of certain districts.^ Such security was good enough in time of peace when backed by undisputed authority. But in times of war districts might be plundered; and when two men laid claim to the same province, the mortgages and grants of the successful competitor alone were honoured. This defect lay at the bottom of all the financial difficulties which the French were to undergo.

Even with the assistance which Dupleix was able to procure for his protégés, they did not proceed upon their main enterprise, but turned aside to collect revenue, according to the time-honoured custom of Moghul India, with the armed hand. As soon as the monsoon rains were over, they marched from Pondichery, but Chanda Sahib lingered on the way to surround the jungles of a considerable Pohgar and extort from him 3 lakhs of rupees. This affair occupied the best part of a month. Meanwhile Muzaffar Jang had moved on with a slowness proportioned to his dignity. Their united forces did not pass the Coleroon until December 13, and then it was only to repeat the operation of collecting revenue in Tanjore. The army encamped before the capital of that kingdom. Two vigorous actions, in which the French took the lead, produced in the Raja a speedy desire for an accommodation; and he agreed to pay 70 lakhs of rupees. But he never intended to pay all this if he could possibly help it; he still hoped that some fortunate event would relieve him from the necessity of making good his promise. In this view he was encouraged by Muzaffar Jang, who was jealous of the independence Chanda Sahib had displayed in making the treaty. The terms had been settled on December 31; but a month later only a small part had actually been paid. The attack was therefore resumed. But by this time the French army had grown thoroughly weary

of so dilatory and ineffective a manner of making war. The men complained they had not received a fanam since taking the field; five sergeants had to be punished for mutinous behaviour; the officers' sense of honour had to be quickened by donations, which absorbed most of the money that Chanda Sahib received from the Raja.

It might have been supposed that the French officer in command would have had a decisive voice in determining what was to be done. The French troops formed the effective part of Chanda Sahib's army. They had borne the brunt of the fighting at Ambur ; they had stormed the redoubts outside Tanjore; by a sudden assault they had seized one of the gates of the city ; and all this while the native troops had done little to justify their bearing arms. But in spite of this, neither Duquesne, nor Goupil, nor Bussy seems to have been consulted by Chanda Sahib. In December Duquesne believed that terms had already been made with Muhammad Ali ; his advice was never asked about Tanjore; on February 19 Chanda Sahib forbade an attack on the city in spite of Goupil's desire to make it.^ In other words, the French were as yet neither masters, nor even partners, but auxiliary troops serving for hire. Chanda Sahib was at liberty to frame his plans without reference to Dupleix; Dupleix could offer advice, but he had not yet attained the position from which advice is equivalent to a command.

Towards the close of February 1750, while the French and their wayward allies were still lying aimlessly before Tanjore, long-current rumours of Nasir Jang's coming were confirmed by the approach of a numerous body of Maratha horse. Dupleix advised the seizure of Tanjore, where he thought they might have maintained themselves until famine compelled the hosts of Nasir Jang to withdraw. With singular timidity his advice was rejected. Then he urged them to move northward and seize Gingee as their headquarters; but this also seemed too daring

I to be ventured on the siege of Tanjore was raised. The army moved hurriedly towards Pondichdry, harassed by the Marathas and only saved from dispersion by the steadiness of the French troops and the rapid fire of their artillery. The terrified crowd and its panic-stricken leaders were only prevented from seeking shelter under the walls of Pondichery by a threat that the French would open fire on them if they dared to enter the bounds. Reluctantly they encamped at Villiyanallur. Their condition was miserable. All the money that Dupleix had provided and all that they had managed to raise had been expended in donations to the French officers and in part-payment of the arrears due to the troops who were still dissatisfied and clamouring for more. Dupleix succeeded in raising another 3 lakhs. The operations of the last four months had thus cost the French 6 lakhs, but had been utterly fruitless save for the grant of a few villages bordering on Karikal.

When the news of the battle of Ambur reached Nasir Jang, he was on his way to Delhi to co-operate in repelling Afghan invaders who were threatening the north. ^ He at once halted, ordered all the forces of the south to join him; negotiated with Raghoji Bhonsla for the services of a Maratha contingent,^ and made arrangements for marching south instead of north. These were completed in the fullness of time, and at last he entered the Camatic in March 1750. He had appointed Gingee as his rendezvous, and thence moved to Tiruviti, about 25 miles west of St. David's, whence he summoned the English to his assistance. The number sent probably disappointed his expectations, for they do not seem to have exceeded 300 men.

Meanwhile Chanda Sahib and the French contingent under d'Auteuil had advanced towards the new enemy. On April 3 the French commandant addressed to cope a letter which well illustrates the political complexity of the situation and

the manner in which Dupleix tried to scare the English out of the conflict by political fictions. D'Auteuil claimed that the French had abstained from intervention in the Devikottai affair solely on account of the peace between the two crowns, and required the English not to interfere in this war of the French against the family of Anwar-ud-din. Cope merely replied that he had forwarded the letter to Fort St. David.

Lawrence at this juncture advised Nasir Jang to move on Pondichery, so as to compel the enemy to attack. Instead of this, he moved directly against them and spent April 4 in a distant cannonade. ^ That night the French retired hastily with Chanda Sahib; next day Nasir Jang set out in pursuit of them and received the submission of his nephew Muzaffar Jang.

To Nasir Jang this was a victory due to the greatness of his name ; in fact it was brought about by a piece of insubordination which can only be paralleled by the mutiny of the Bengal officers in 1766. On the return from Tanjore, several officers had asked to be relieved on the plea of ill-health; and d been replaced by others from the garrison of Pondichery.

One knows not which party to blame the more - those who wrung donations from Chanda Sahib before Tanjore, or those who refused to serve against Nasir Jang and the English without reward. When the English joined Nasir Jang, the complaints became louder and more exigent. Bury, the senior officer at Pondicherry, was sent out to bring the officers to a sense of their duty, but without success. He was told that aimless their demands were conceded within twenty-four hours they would abandon the camp. The next day was occupied by Nasir Jang's cannonade. That evening thirteen subaltern officers withdrew to Pondicherry. D'Auteuil, unable to control his men without officers, retreated in the night.

With such ill-defined aims the ambassadors could accomplish little beyond getting a general idea of the parties into which the Court was divided. They also seem to have sought relations with the Pathan Nawabs of Cuddapah, Kurnool, and Savanur, who were already discontented at their prolonged detention in the south. After a few days they returned to Pondichery.

Meanwhile, Dupleix had succeeded in restoring order among his troops, and had sent them out of the bounds to encamp near Valudaviu", where their presence probably contributed to Nasir Jang's willingness to receive the ambassadors. After these had returned, d'Auteuil sent out a detachment under La Touche to beat up the Moghul camp by night, probably with a view to restoring the self-confidence of his men. The enterprise succeeded, as such enterprises usually did, and Nasir Jang's army was thrown into great confusion. This alarm, coupled with a growing shortage of food and fodder, led to Nasir Jang's withdrawing to pass the hot months at Arcot, leaving all the questions in dispute imsettled, and Chanda Sahib still strong in French support.

The English had hoped that the advent of the Subahdar would quickly bring about such a settlement as they desired to see. Their disappointment in this respect was deepened by the failure of their own political views. On Nasir Jang's approach, they had appointed Major Lawrence and a Company's servant, Foss Westcott, ambassadors to Nasir Jang with instructions to procure confirmation of Muhammad All's grant at St. David's and Madras, and a grant of the Poonamallee country lying round Madras, to meet the cost of maintaining troops enough to counterbalance the French, and, as Dupleix had the title of Saf ar Jang Bahadur, the grant of the same or a higher one to Floyer, together with villages yielding revenue enough to support the dignity. To assist in procuring these concessions, they were entrusted with the delivery of a handsome present. 2 This was done on

April 7, and the ambassadors were delighted with their reception, reporting that Nasir Jang had written a letter to the King of England with one of the fountain pens which formed part of the present. On April 10, they complacently relate that he would not open a letter from the French except in their presence. But three days later they write to Floyer: "Patience we find is very requisite in transacting business with the Moors ; our affairs go on but very slowly, and we have great reason to suspect the French are tampering with some of the people about Court." Indeed, their services had not been such as to merit any considerable reward. They had proffered unwelcome military advice ; they had refused to pursue the French in their flight; they had informed Nasir Jang that they could not enter the French bounds. Moreover, they were accompanied by a native agent, who, though long employed by the English, made no scruple about betraying their plans and letters to the French.' On April 20 they refused to co-operate in an attack on Wandiwash unless their demands were granted. Again, they refused to join Nasir Jang in an expedition to raise tribute in Tanjore. On May i, although Nasir Jang had agreed to their requests, "this day his whole army has marched six miles from us towards Arcot." So the ambassadors and their troops marched back to Fort St. David.i"

The hot weather which followed these events was marked by great French successes. Nasir Jang had given orders for the seizure of the two French factories to the northward - at Masulipatam and Yanam. This was accordingly done, and the two French factors at the former place were made prisoners; Yanam was abandoned before it was attacked. With the help of thirty men sent up from Pondichery, the Yanam factoiy was presently recovered by force, only to be abandoned again when a larger Moghul force was assembled against it. Sometime after this, as all seemed quiet in the Carnatic, Dupleix ventured to send La Tour

with 200 Europeans and as many sepoys by ship to Masulipatam, which town they seized without striking a blow.

Still more marked successes were gained in the south. As soon as Nasir Jang had withdrawn to Arcot, Dupleix hastened to reoccupy Valudavur and Bahur. A little later he sent his troops farther afield and occupied Chidambaram and Tiruviti. In June Muhammad Ali moved south with a body of horse to oppose them, and by promising to pay all the English expenses procured the assistance of 600 men with a train of artillery under Cope. The French troops consisted of 500 Europeans under La Touche, their best officer. Some trivial operations followed. On August I, under orders from Lawrence, Cope tried to bring the French to action. He found them well entrenched in a grove of trees, and after a prolonged cannonade, withdrew. ^ At the end of the month he was recalled to St. David's, "as the French would not, and we could not attack." Immediately Dupleix sent out reinforcements under d'Auteuil with orders to attack Muhammad Ali. On September i he was completely routed with the loss of all his guns. His troops attempted to reassemble under the walls of Gingee. Bussy was at once sent forward with a detachment; and d'Auteuil followed. They arrived before Gingee on September. Bussy repulsed an attack made on his troops by Muhammad Ah's fugitives, and, on d'Auteuil's coming up, the fortress was carried by escalade. It was reputed the strongest in Southern India.

Meanwhile an active intrigue had been going on between Nasir Jang's court and Pondichery. On the surface the negotiations with Nasir Jang still proceeded on their leisurely way; but closer relations were being secretly knit up between the French and his discontented officers. The capture of Gingee induced Nasir Jang to move south again. But the autumn rains that year were unusually early and severe; they caught Nasir Jang on the march, and prevented him from advancing or

retiring. Just before this, the plot against him had been completed. The leaders of it were the three Pathan Nawabs, to whose messenger Dupleix gave a white flag so that their troops should not be fired upon by the French. ^ Meanwhile the discomforts of Nasir Jang's position, under canvas amidst swollen rivers and beneath pouring skies, induced him to renew his negotiations with Dupleix. It had been arranged with the conspirators that they should give d'Auteuil the signal for attack. Apparently this was delayed by the heaviness of the weather. The signal was at last given at the very moment when Dupleix had assented to Nasir Jang's proposals. A letter was written to inform d'Auteuil that an agreement had been reached and that he was not to attack the Moghuls. But already La Touche had marched against Nasir Jang's camp. In the early dawn of December i6 the French broke into it ; the troops of the confederates held aloof; one of the rebel leaders shot Nasir as he was about to take up his position to command the army ; and at once his nephew, Muzaffar Jang, was acknowledged as Subahdar of the Deccan.

The news reached Pondich6ry the same day. In defiance of all etiquette, Chanda Sahib ran through the streets to find Dupleix and almost stifled him with his embraces. On December 26 Muzaffar Jang made his triumphal entry into the French settlement. On the 31st he held his first durbar and received the homage of Dupleix and the Moghul nobles. Nor was this an empty, unremunerative triumph. Nizam-ul-Miilk in his long rule had accumulated a great treasure, after the approved fashion of Moghul officials/ This had been seized by Nasir Jang on his father's death; and in his expedition to the south he had carried with him a large amount. Eighteen chests of jewels and a crore of rupees in specie, besides bullion, are said to have been carried into Pondichery. The whole town overflowed with money. Soldiers and officers, councilors and junior servants, all had their share. The amount Dupleix received is unknown, but there is no reason to suppose that he

was any more backward than Clive was in similar circumstances. A few days later, Muzaffar Jang set out to take possession of the Deccan, having appointed Dupleix his deputy south of the Kistna, and granted the French territories which with fond optimism they expected to produce an annual net revenue of 3 lakhs of rupees.

The Failure of Dupleix

The English had looked on at these affairs without intervening. In the middle of the year a dispatch had been received from England dismissing the President, Charles Floyer, ostensibly for gaming, really for the extravagance of his administration and the little care which he bestowed on the investment. He was succeeded by Thomas Saunders, who arrived at St. David's on September 30.1 He was a man of far more than common capacity, yet singularly lacking in the gift of self-expression. No portrait of him is known to exist; none of his private letters have survived; even the mansion which he built for himself after his return to England has long been demolished; his very family has died out. At Madras no vestige remains of him except the official papers which he composed or approved; at Vizagapatam, where he once was chief, his successors have ignorantly commemorated him by inscribing his family motto - Mors janua vitae over the gateway of their cemetery.

The eulogies which Orme and Wilks alike passed on him need not be here repeated. Far more illuminating is a chance phrase of the former in one of his letters. "Had I anything on earth to expect," he says, "or anything to fear, he is the man on earth I should dread as an enemy." Cold, silent, and unresponsive in bearing, he was gifted with quick insight, with superlative common sense, with a tenacity not to be shaken off by all the ingenuity of plot or ferity of intrigue of Dupleix himself. His name can never be omitted from the list of those who have contributed greatly to the foundation of British India.

Shortly after this change in the government. Stringer Lawrence, the only experienced military officer in the English service, returned to England. His departure was not due, as Orme states, to the obstinately pacific policy of the Council,^ for a negotiation was going forward at the very time of his sailing with a view to join Nasir Jang with a body of men.^ It was due to a lamentably petty cause which Orme did not choose to mention. Lawrence, on his arrival in 1748, said he had agreed with the Company for a larger salary than they indicated in their dispatches. The Council accorded him more liberal tenns; and the Company at first acquiesced. However, when Floyer was removed, Lawrence's pay was cut down to what the Company declared it had originally stipulated ; on which Lawrence at once threw up his commission.

On the death of Nasir Jang, Muhammad Ali had fled once more to Trichinopoly; and opened negotiations with the French. But as he applied at the same time to the English for assistance, this was but in accordance with the wise saying, "Why should we begin a fray to-day which may be done as well to-morrow? " Besides it was the harvest season, the chief time of collecting the revenue; and the longer he could persuade the French to remain at Pondichery, the better it would be for his finances. He accordingly amused Dupleix and Chanda Sahib for four months with discussions which he regularly communicated to the English. They too took their part with decision. Although he informed them that he no longer had resources with which to carry on the war, they determined not to acquiesce in French supremacy, but to support Muhammad Ali by every means in their power. They accordingly dispatched a force to Trichinopoly under the command of Captain Cope.

In March 1751, Chanda Sahib and the French moved from Pondichery, reduced one or two forts in the Carnatic; and, proceeding to Arcot, there received

the homage and tribute of the Killedars and others in authority in that province. This occupied the best part of three months, and Chanda Sahib was not ready to move southward until the end of May or later. Meanwhile an English force under Captain de Gingens had taken the field in order to bar the way to Trichinopoly; and the two forces came in contact, near a fort called Valikondapuram, in July. Each side endeavoured to win the Killedar over. He, however, very much preferred to admit neither side into his fort. After a fortnight's negotiations, Gingens lost patience, and, posting himself between Chanda Sahib and the town, opened fire on the latter, and carried it by assault, but could not affect an entrance into the citadel. Next day the French advanced. The English officers could not decide whether to attack or retreat; their poor spirit infected the men ; and after having won an initial advantage, Gingens retired towards Trichinopoly, with the loss of much baggage." He fell back on a strong defensive position, but abandoned this also, after a couple of skirmishes, and withdrew first to the north bank of the Coleroon, then across the river into the island of Srirangam, and finally across the Cauvery under the walls of Trichinopoly. This singularly inglorious campaign marks with the greatest plainness the signal incapacity of the English commander, who was also hindered by quarrels and cabals among his subordinate officers.' The only excuse that can be found is that offered by Captain Dalton: "To say the truth, we were all young soldiers, at that time little experienced in the country method of making war." If the Enghsh had shown no greater vigour and intelligence than they had hitherto displayed against the French, in spite of all the advantages of the command of the sea, they could never have won India.

But the moment had come for them to show their better qualities. For some time Muhammad Ali had been proposing a diversion in the direction of Arcot." At first Saunders and the Council thought this might be affected by Gingens leaving a

sufficient garrison in Trichinopoly and himself marching with the remainder into the Arcot country. But Gingens was too sluggish, and denied the possibility of such a course. At that moment Captain Clive returned from conducting a convoy to Trichinopoly.' Probably Muhammad Ali had urged the Arcot plan on him, and he was one of those men "who see things and their consequences in an instant." On his return he persuaded Saunders to send him into the Arcot country with any troops that could be spared. A party of 130 was made up at St. David's and sent by sea to Madras under his command. There he was joined by 80 more. With these and a few sepoys he marched on Arcot and, beyond expectation, occupied it, a body of 3000 native troops retiring before him.

His object was, if possible, to raise contributions for Muhammad AU, and at all events to interfere with the collection of revenue for Chanda Sahib. In his first object he failed altogether. He marched against two or three Killedars near Arcot, but could nowhere halt long enough to produce any effect.

Meanwhile he had to look to his own security; and although Chanda Sahib's people whom he had driven from Arcot did not dare to attack him, their flying parties of horse hindered getting in provisions. 2 In spite of this, however, adequate supplies seem to have been collected, and CUve resolved to hold the fort in spite of its large circuit and ruinous defenses.

The news of this violation of his capital caused great annoyance to Chanda Sahib. He wrote an indignant letter of protest to the English, which they ignored; and dispatched troops to expel the intruders. He had, indeed, no alternative. To leave Clive undisturbed at Arcot would have involved a loss of revenue which he could ill afford. As was usually the case in Indian warfare, strategy was at the mercy of finance. But to avoid weakening the forces at Trichinopoly more than need be, the main part of the attacking troops were drawn from Pondicherry.

Battle of Plassey

The famous battle, in which the 39th Foot (later the Dorset Regiment) played such a prominent part, was fought on the 23rd June 1757 and effectively marked the beginning of 200 years‘ British rule in India. Universally known as Plassey, after the village near which the action took place, the battlefield is located north of Calcutta in the region known as Bengal and is now near the north eastern border of India with Bangladesh. As has been the case in many other instances, the military action was a comparatively straightforward matter compared to the politics, rivalry, greed, treachery, bribery, _spin‘ and general skulduggery which led up to it. Historically, the British began trading with India in the early 17th Century through the British East India Company and became more and more influential, effectively ruling many districts. Although the Company used mostly locally-enlisted troops (sepoys) they had small detachments of the British Army under command.‘ Any form of British rule was obviously unpopular with some local rulers, including the Nawab of Bengal, Surajah Dowlah, who in 1756 captured a British fort in Calcutta and imprisoned 146 members of the garrison in a tiny building. Many of the captives died of heat exhaustion in what became known as the Black Hole of Calcutta.

In February 1757 the Nawab agreed to sign a peace treaty with the British, but at about the same time news filtered through to India of the war which had broken out between Britain and France the previous year. Lieutenant Colonel Robert (later Lord) Clive, who was commanding the British forces in Bengal, foresaw that the French and the Nawab might unite forces against them, so he decided to take the initiative and test the Nawab‘s intentions. He therefore asked him for permission to attack Chandernagore where there was a French settlement.

Despite the Treaty, the Nawab refused permission, but Clive still marched on the town and captured it on the 23rd March.

Clive and his masters in the East India Company decided that they could not trust the Nawab, whose army was assembled at Plassey and was therefore a threat to Calcutta. Anxious that there should be no repetition of The Black Hole incident, they decided to depose the Nawab and replace him with Mir Jafar, Commander-in-Chief of the Nawab's army. William Watts, who spoke the local dialect, was sent secretly to negotiate with Mir Jafar3 who, along with other nobles, offered his support to the British. It was at this moment that a messenger arrived from Calcutta with a letter purporting to come from the chieftain of Berar, containing an offer to bring 120,000 men into Bengal to co-operate with the British against the Nawab.

Clive initially thought this might be a trick by the Nawab to find out the true feelings of the British towards him. So he sent the letter to the Nawab as an outward mark of his confidence in him, and at the same time asked him to remove his army from Plassey. This Surajah did, bringing it back to Murshidabad, the capital, twenty-two miles further north, away from Calcutta. Thinking the British were now on his side he began threatening his nobles where before he had been afraid of them. His first intended victim was Mir Jafar, who shut himself up in his palace and defied his master, at the same time sending word to the British begging them to begin operations at once. The agreement between the British and Mir Jafar, by which the latter was to

This spelling is an anglicized version of the local name Palashi, from the palash tree, which used to abound in the vicinity. The palash tree is known as the Flame of the Forest because of its bright red flowers. Past rulers of Bengal played changan (a version of hockey) at night using burning balls made from the wood of

this tree because it was light and burned for a long time. The Black Hole of Calcutta incident undoubtedly took place, but it seems likely that there was a degree of exaggeration in subsequent colonial literature in order to make the Indians appear less civilized than Europeans. The original story was that 146 prisoners were kept overnight in a room measuring 18 by 15 feet and that only 23 survived. The exact details have been disputed by historians ever since.

The story goes that Watts, dressed as a local veiled lady, met Mir Jafar in Jaffarganj, a village near Murshidabad. The gate though which Watts is supposed to have entered the village is still called Nemak Haramer Deori (Traitor‘s Gate). Watts was later rewarded with a gift of £114,000 for his efforts.be placed on the throne of the Nawab in return for co-operation in the field, had by now been signed, and there was no point in delaying.

Preliminary Moves

On the 13th June 1757 Clive left Chandernagore for Murshidabad, and the following day he sent a letter to the Nawab which amounted to a declaration of war. Surajah, thoroughly scared, now tried to placate Mir Jafar and the other nobles. They all swore allegiance to him, and again he became full of confidence, little realising that they were still in league with the British. His army was once more ordered forward to an entrenched camp at Plassey. By the 21st of June, the force was in position.

Clive, advancing from Chandernagore, had reached Palti, a town on the western bank of the River Bhagirathi, on the 16th. The following day he sent a force composed of 200 Europeans and 500 sepoys with one field gun and one small howitzer, all under the command of Major Eyre Coote of the 39th Foot, against Katwa, a town and fort about twelve miles away. Katwa surrendered after a very short resistance and the same evening Clive arrived with the rest of the force.

An immense supply of grain was captured as well as a considerable quantity of stores. The next day the rainy season broke with great violence, but luckily the troops were under cover in the huts and houses of the town.

Only a few miles and the River Bhagirathi now lay between Clive and the Nawab‘s forces, but the situation was uncertain because a letter dated the 16th was received from Mir Jafar announcing his reconciliation with the Nawab but also, strangely, his intention of carrying out his agreement with the British. This was followed, on the 20th, by another letter from the same source, merely Soldier 39th of Foot – 1757 saying that he was on the point of setting out, that he was to be posted on one flank of the army, and would send further information later. There was no specific suggestion of co-operation between him and the British. Clive was undecided as to what he should do in view of the uncertainty of Mir Jafar's attitude. Dare he, with an army consisting of 3,000 men of whom only about one-third were Europeans, cross the river and attack a force of 50,000, relying on the uncertain promises of the commander of less than one-third of that force that he would join him during the action? There seemed to be three alternatives: he could fortify himself at Katwa and wait for the rains to end; he could return to Calcutta; or he could attack. Clive called a Council of War on the 21st to help him decide.

Clive’s Council of War

Twenty officers, all those above the rank of subaltern, attended the Council. Among them were two majors: Grant and Eyre Coote, both of the 39th Foot. Clive explained the options and initially recommended that they should fortify Katwa until the rainy season was over. He then called for votes in order of seniority. Major Eyre Coote was the fourth to record his opinion, and was the first to declare for immediate action, explaining that so far the British had met with nothing but success, which had naturally raised the spirits of the force, and he

feared any delay might be bad for morale. Furthermore he suggested that communication with Calcutta would be cut off owing to the great distance, and therefore there could be no question of getting resupplies and this would mean privation and distress for the force throughout the rainy season. Opinion was against him to the extent of thirteen votes against seven, but Clive was impressed. Dismissing the Council, he strolled to a clump of trees, and sitting down again, considered all the arguments. A bold man himself, he saw the logic of Eyre Coote's reasoning and at the end of an hour he returned to his quarters determined to give battle, and dictated his Orders for the advance.

The Opposing Forces

Deducting the sick and wounded and a small guard to be left at Katwa, the force with which he was about to march against the Nawab consisted of 750 European infantry; 200 men of mixed Portuguese and native blood, armed and equipped as Europeans; 100 European artillery; 50 British sailors and 2,100 native troops. The artillery consisted of eight 6-pounders and 2 small howitzers. The Nawab's army amounted to about 18,000 cavalry, 35,000 infantry and about 53 guns, some worked by a party of 40-50 French, who had escaped from Chandernagore. These guns were mostly of heavy calibre - 32, 24 and 18 pounders. The infantry was generally not well trained or armed, but the cavalry were well mounted and armed with swords or long spears. The odds against Clive were thus enormous.

The Battle

At sunrise on the 22nd June, the British crossed the Bhagirathi. There was no opposition, and by 4 pm the force was safely on the eastern bank. At sunset Clive and his army marched the 15 miles to Plassey, following the winding bank of the river. It was an exhausting march, as owing to recent floods the water was

often above waist height, while the rain was falling in torrents. It was not until one o‘clock in the morning on the 23rd that they reached their destination. Passing through the village, the exhausted troops bivouacked north of it, in the large mango grove which was about 800 yards in length and 300 yards in breadth, surrounded by an earth bank and ditch. This was an early indication of Major Eyre Coote‘s talent which was to stand him in good stead throughout his military career – he retired as a Lieutenant General.

The nearby encampment occupied by the Nawab had in its southern face a redoubt (marked A on the Plan) in which cannon were mounted. Three hundred yards east of it, and in front of the entrenchments, was a hillock covered with jungle (B) and about eight hundred yards to the south was a reservoir of water. A hundred yards still further to the south was a larger tank (C). Both these tanks were surrounded by large banks of earth. Just north of the mango grove and on the Bhagirathi was a hunting box (D) belonging to the Nawab, surrounded by a masonry wall. Clive had taken the precaution on reaching the grove of sending out a force of 200 Europeans and 300 Sepoys with two guns to hold this enclosure. Outposts were also placed all round the force.

Soon after daybreak on the 23rd June, the Nawab's army was seen to be advancing in two lines towards the mango grove as if to surround it. In front was the party of French with four guns, and they proceeded to take up a position at the larger of the two tanks, about half a mile from the British line. Between this party and the river were two heavy guns under a native officer. Immediately to the rear of the French and supporting them was a picked body of 5,000 cavalry and 7,000 infantry, commanded by the Nawab's faithful general Mir Mudin Khan. From the left rear of this force the rest of the army formed a curve towards Plassey, reaching

to within about eight hundred yards of the south-east corner of the mango grove. Mir Jafar‘s forces were on the far left flank.

Clive drew up his troops in one line just north of the grove with his left resting on the hunting box. In the centre he placed his Europeans, consisting of detachments of the 39th Foot and Bombay, Madras and Bengal European regiments, flanked on either side by three 6-pounders. On the right and left flanks he posted his native troops. At the same time he sent a small party with two 6-pounders and two howitzers to occupy some brick kilns about two hundred yards in front of his left flank. A glance at the map will show how dangerous his position was, threatened both in front and on the right flank.

The battle opened at 6 am or shortly afterwards with a shot from one of the French guns which killed one and wounded another man of the 39th. This seemed to be the signal for a heavy bombardment by all of the Nawab's guns. The British guns replied but because they were of smaller calibre they made little impression. Luckily most of the enemy's shots went high, but even so, after thirty minutes Clive had suffered about thirty casualties and he decided to withdraw all the force except the two detachments at the brick kilns and the hunting box behind the bank which bordered the mango grove. What appeared to be a withdrawal encouraged the enemy, who brought their guns much nearer and kept up an even more vigorous rate of fire. The British, however, now had the advantage of good cover, and sheltered by the bank they suffered few casualties. Clive ordered some of the men to cut holes in the bank for his guns to fire through, and they were then able to successfully engage the opposing gunners.

This stalemate continued until late morning, by which time there had been no indication that Mir Jafar had any intention of changing sides. Being completely outnumbered, Clive had no real offensive option, so he decided to maintain his

present position until midnight and then to attack the Nawab's camp, hoping for Mir Jafar's help. It was at this point, at about noon, that nature intervened. A violent rain storm sprang up and lasted for about an hour. The British had tarpaulins ready to cover their ammunition and suffered little or no inconvenience. The enemy was not as well prepared and consequently their rate of fire initially slackened and then dwindled away almost completely, as their powder was soaked. Mir Mudin, however, thinking that the British would be in a similar plight, advanced towards the grove with a body of cavalry to take advantage of the situation. His party was received with a storm of grape shot which drove it back, mortally wounding the leader.

This proved to be the decisive moment of the battle, but Clive could not have anticipated that such a seemingly minor skirmish would lead to the Nawab's retreat. He re-entered the hunting box which he had made his headquarters and laid down to rest, giving orders that he was to be roused if there was any sign of enemy activity.

We must now turn for a moment to events in the Nawab's army. The death of Mir Mudin deprived the Nawab of his most faithful general. He sent for Mir Jafar and begged him to remain loyal and to defend him. Taking off his turban, he threw it on the ground in front of his uncle exclaiming in humble tones: 'Jafar, that turban thou must defend.' Mir Jafar played his deceitful part admirably and promised to use every effort, meaning all the time to betray the Nawab as soon as possible. Immediately the interview was finished he galloped back to his troops and sent a letter to Clive telling him what had happened and urging him to push on at once or in any case not to delay the attack. Clive did not get this letter in time to profit by it.

The Nawab also appealed to his Prime Minister, Rajah Dulab Ram, who strongly advised him to withdraw the army behind the entrenchment and then to quit the battle-field, entrusting everything to his generals. The Nawab, by now thoroughly bewildered and incapable of thinking coherently, did so; mounting a camel, he rode with about 2,000 horsemen to Murshidabad. It was now about 2 pm and the enemy generals had matters in their own hands. They began falling back as the Nawab had ordered them. But the French gunners were made of sterner stuff and refused to leave their position, recognising that if the British were to move forward and occupy the water tank they would be in a perfect position to fire onto the flank of the Nawab's withdrawing troops.

Among the British officers at the battle was Major Kilpatrick, who had already distinguished himself in southern India and who was commanding the troops of the East India Company. Seeing the French gunners‘ determined stand and recognising the importance of the position they held, he decided to attack them. He sent word to Clive and advanced with two companies and two guns. The messenger is said to have found Clive asleep, but he was quickly aroused and, furious that an important manoeuvre was being made without his agreement, ran out and reprimanded Kilpatrick. A quick glance at the situation, however, convinced him of the soundness of the latter's plan which he himself would have ordered had he been on the spot. He therefore sent Kilpatrick back for the rest of the force and continued to lead the advance himself. The French, seeing that their position was hopeless, withdrew to the corner of the entrenchment, and prepared to bring their guns into action again.

While the British force was following the retreating enemy it was seen that the troops commanded by Mir Jafar were moving more slowly than the rest of the enemy and were beginning to drop behind. When the rearmost files were about

level with the northern end of the grove the whole group wheeled to the left and marched in that direction. Not knowing that they were the troops of Mir Jafar, and thinking this might be a raid on his baggage, Clive despatched a party of Europeans with a gun to check them. The fire soon stopped them but they made no efforts to rejoin the Nawab's army.

Meanwhile, Clive had reached the tank just evacuated by the French and opened heavy cannon fire against the enemy behind the entrenchment. The majority of the Nawab's officers and the troops knew nothing about the treachery that was going on and were still faithful to Surajah Dowlah and therefore, seeing that they were superior to the attacking force left the entrenchment and opened a heavy fire on the British troops. The position was one which might become dangerous. Clive moved up closer to the entrenchment, and posted half his infantry and artillery on the bank surrounding the smaller of the two tanks. Most of the remainder were placed on rising ground to the left whereupon he opened heavy and sustained artillery and musket fire on the enemy, causing considerable casualties. Even so, with the French artillery still effective, vastly superior numbers, and plenty of cavalry, the enemy retained the upper hand.

While these events were taking place, Clive noticed that the enemy on his right, which he thought were trying to attack his baggage, had made no move and were taking no part in the battle. It dawned on him that this force must be under the command of Mir Jafar and he was relieved that there was no longer a danger to his rear. Despite his much smaller force, Clive decided to force an end to the battle by making a major effort to carry the redoubt held by the French and the hillock to the east of it. He therefore formed two strong detachments and sent them simultaneously against the two objectives, supporting them with the main body in the rear. The hill was taken first, without a shot being fired, and the French

realized that their position was outflanked and no longer tenable so they withdrew. Effectively this marked the end of the battle and by 5 pm Clive was in control of the whole area. The victory of Plassey was complete. Judged purely from a military standpoint the action was little more than a skirmish, but the effect of Clive's victory was to gain control over the provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa for the British.

Casualties

The precise numbers of the 39th Foot present at the battle are not recorded, but were probably about 350 men with the following officers: Majors Archibald Grant and Eyre Coote, Lieutenant (temporary Captain) John Corneille, and Ensigns Joseph Adnett and Martin Yorke. The casualties on the British side were absurdly small. Accounts vary as to the actual figures, but all put them as between 22 and 24 killed; and between 43 and 50 wounded. The losses to the Nawab's army could only be estimated, but they were considered to be about 1,000 killed and wounded. In addition, more than 40 guns fell into the hands of the British.

Primus in India's

In the words of The Historical Record of the 39th of Foot: 'The motto Primus in India and the word Plassey, borne by Royal authority on the regimental colour of the Thirty-ninth are proud memorials of its having been the first King's regiment which served in India and of the gallantry displayed in this battle.'

Battle of Buxar

The Battle of Buxar, a significant battle in the history of India, was fought between British East India Company and the combined forces of Nawabs and the Mughal Emperor. While the East India Company's force was led by Hector Munro, the Indian force was led by the Mughal rulers of three princely states - Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal, Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Awadh and Shah Alam II,

the Mughal Emperor. Both the Nawabs were governors under the Mughal Emperor. This historic battle was fought on 23rd October, 1764. The battle was fought at a place called Buxar, which was in Bengal during that time and later on it became a part of Bihar, as it was just 130 km west of Patna.

The reasons that led to the Battle

The seeds of the Battle of Buxar were sown after the Battle of Plassey, when Mir Qasim became the Nawab of Bengal. The primary cause was the conflict between the English and Mir Qasim. Mir Qasim was an independent ruler and was the strongest and ablest of all Nawabs. He undertook some reformation, under which there was a reduction in expenditure on administration and palaces; fire locks and guns were manufactured, there was regular payment of salaries, new taxes were imposed and the capital was shifted from Monghyar to Murshidabad, which annoyed the British nobles and officers. The English wanted Mir to remain as a puppet in their hands. But, he always wanted to keep himself away from the British influence. This led to a number of conflicts between him and the English. He was defeated in three successive battles (between June to September 1763) before the Battle of Buxar, which eventually compelled him to flee to Allahabad where he met Shuja-ud-Daulah. In the meantime, after the acquisition of power as the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II also wanted to combine several states as one physically stronger empire, which included Bengal (Bengal+Bihar+Orissa). But, he also could not overpower the British and was under the shelter of Shuja-ud-Daulah who always wanted to destroy the English supremacy in Bengal. Thus, one of the main causes of hostility between the English and the three rulers was the share of Bengal. Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam II joined hands to fight against the English to establish their sovereignty over the whole of Bengal and reduce the power of the British. They declared war against the English on 23rd

October, 1764 at the battleground Katkauli, 6 kilometres from Buxar. This was a war which was fought for just few hours but marked as one of the most significant wars in Indian History.

The Strength of Warring Forces

In the Mughal force, there were 40,000 men in the battle of Buxar, while the English East India Company's Hector Monroe's forces included 10,000 men, out of which 7000 were from British Army (857 European soldiers and 6213 sepoys). The Britishers had formed a stone memorial at Katkauli after the war. In the Battle of Buxar, 847 were killed and wounded from the English forces while on the Indian side, more than 2,000 officers and soldiers were killed.

Combined armies of Nawab Mir Qasim, Nawab Shuja-udDaulah & Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II

The historic battle fought between the British and the Indian forces resulted in victory for the British. The three combined army forces of Mir Qasim (Bengal), Shuja-ud-Daulah (Awadh), and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II met with a crushing defeat under the hands of Major Munro. After the war, Mir Kasim fled to the North-West and died. Shah Alam II left Shuja-ud-Daulah and sought shelter in the British camp. Shuja-ud-Daulah tried to defeat the British till 1765 but was not successful. He later fled to Rohilkhand. According to historical reports and studies, the main cause of defeat of the Mughals was the lack of co-ordination among the various Mughal forces.

The Larger Implications of the Battle

The significant outcomes of this battle were as follows:

It led to the signing of the Allahabad Treaty in 1765 by Lord Robert Clive with Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.

With the defeat of Mir Kasim, the rule of Nawabs came to an end.

Diwani rights or fiscal rights were secured which meant that the British would administer and manage revenues of large areas which included the present-day West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh, as well as of Bangladesh. The British became the masters of the people of these places.

In return of this right, the British would give Rs 26 lakh to the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II.

After the Buxar victory, the English armies moved towards Awadh and established their control over Banaras and Allahabad.

Shuja-ud-Daulah would pay Rs 50 lakh immediately to the company as expenses of war. He also needed to pay later Rs 25 lakh in installments.

The treaty legalised the East India Company's control over the whole of Bengal. Thus, the British established their control in the eastern part of the country.

Ghazipur and its adjacent area were handed over to the East India company.

The Allahabad fort became the home of the emperor and he would be protected by few men of the company's army.

A vakil of the English would remain in the court of Shah Alam II. But he was not allowed to interfere in the administration of the country.

The Battle of Buxar paved the way for a more concrete British Empire in India. Though the initial foundation of the British rule in India was laid after the Battle of Plassey by Clive, it became more strengthened after the Battle of Buxar. The East India Company, after the battle of Buxar, gained dominance over entire Bengal. The revenues collected by Shah Alam II from the princely states of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, went into the hands of the company. The Mughal emperor came fully under the control of British. All duties and revenues from the

most prosperous Indian province went to the company. It also gained administrative power by controlling the army, finances, and revenues. The responsibility of collecting revenues went to the Nawabs but they had no power while the British East India Company had all the authority to control and also gain benefits from the Nawabs. With the wealth of Bengal, the British could conquer other regions of India. The supremacy of the British was established in the Eastern parts of India. British historian Ramsay Muir had rightly said that Buxar finally riveted the shackles of company's rule upon Bengal.

The battle of Buxar was, indeed, a decisive battle in the Indian history which led to the beginning of the British colonial rule that lasted for almost two centuries, leading to unending exploitation of India. The battle led to the establishment of British sovereignty. It was also served as an eye opener to the political weaknesses and military shortcomings of the Mughal Empire.

Robert Clive as the Governer of Bengal

The revolution of 1757 had established military supremacy of the English in Bengal. Their French rivals had been ousted and they had become the real power behind the throne.The last attempt made by Mir Qasim to retrieve the position of the Nawab of Bengal had ultimately failed with his defeat at the battle of Buxar, 1764. Mir Jafar whom the English had placed on the Bengal Masnad for a second time died early in 1765 which gave the Company yet another opportunity to establish their supremacy in Bengal on a more definite basis.

Mir Jafar‘s son Najm-ud-daulah was allowed to succeed to the Nawabship of Bengal in terms of a treaty (Feb. 20, 1765) which laid down that the entire management of the affajrs of the state should be left in the hands of a minister called Deputy Subahdar, who would be nominated by the English and could not be removed from office except with the consent of the English. Thus, for all practical

purposes the control of the Nawab‘s administration passed into the hands of the English and the Nawab was reduced to a powerless show piece.

Such was the situation in Bengal when Robert Clive, now raised to the peerage, came as the Governor of Bengal for a second time (May, 1765). He had been the governor of Bengal from 1757-60 and left for home in 1760. When the news of the English success at Buxar (1764) reached England the question of consolidation of the newly acquired territories in India naturally arose.

The authorities of the Company in England thought that no body other than dive, now Lord Clive, was more suited for the task and appointed him Governor of Bengal for a second time and also combined the post of the Commander-in-Chief with that of Governor. During the Years 1760-64 the political and administrative situation in India had undergone a great change for the worse. The problem of Political Settlement with the Nawab of Oudh, Emperor as well as the Nawab of Bengal needed immediate handling. The lust for money had debased the general character of the Company‘s servants which brought the Company‘s affairs into utter disorder.

The Company‘s servants had become thoroughly demoralised and bribery and corruption reigned supreme, their participation in private trade had reduced the Company‘s profit. Thus, when Clive arrived in Bengal he was faced with several intricate problem that needed his immediate attention.

Between the first and the second governorship of Clive Vansittart was the Governor of Bengal. It was during his time that Major Hector Munro had defeated confederate forces of Mir Qasim, Suja-uddaulah and Shah Alam II at the battle of Buxar (October 22, 1764). The prevailing idea among the English servants of the Company in Bengal was restoration of the power of the Emperor Shah Alam who was a fugitive in Oudh, with the English help so that the Company might take the

fullest advantage of the Emperor‘s name and authority to enhance their status and increase their interests. It was with this end in view Vansittart had already promised Oudh to Shah Alam

The nature of the regime which had achieved so marked a success was one so discreditable to the English that Sir Alfred Lyall described ―these years as the only period which throws grave unpardonable discredit on the English government‖. According to Clive ―such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery, corruption and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal, nor such and so many fortunes acquired in so unjust and rapacious manner.‖

As V. A. Smith points out: ―It was, however, Clive himself who had started the moral collapse of the Bengal‘ civilians.‖ Before 1757 despite the blows inflicted on the Mughal government by the Persians, Marathas and the Afghans, the power of the local governor ―the Nawab kept the activities of the merchants both native and European within bounds. But the events of 1757 transformed the plodding English merchants into the arbiters of Bengal politics thereby removing the restraints exercised on them by the Nawab.

The English merchants all on a sudden found avenues of undreamt of wealth open before them and as they lacked inner restraint there was no sense of moderation of justice in them. ―The First step was taken by Clive‖. (Smith). He received a reward (a bribe?) of £ 234,000 and a jagir worth £ 30,000 per year. By irony of fate it was Clive himself on whom fell the task of retrieving the English servants of the Company in Bengal from the slough of Corruption, bribery and insubordination, and his remarks about the prevailing condition on his arrival as the governor for a second time make a curious reading.

Clive came with immense power to deal with the affairs of the Company in India. He was empowered to nominate a Select Committee of his own should he

think that he could not function‘ with the existing Council. Within two days of his arrival he nominated his Select Committee of four members Verelst, Carnac, Sykes and summer. The former two were already in Bengal and latter two came with him.

He found on his arrival that the immediate crisis which led to his appointment, namely, the danger of the Emperor‘s enmity was already over. Vansittart had promised Oudh to the Emperor Shah Alam, who offered to come under the English protection, the relation.

with Suja-ud-daulah had remained unsettled. In February 1765 died Mir Jafar. His son Najm-ud-daulah was placed on the masnad and Reza Khan was appointed his Deputy by the Englis.

Clive’s mission had a double purpose

(1) To establish such relations with the native powers as would put an end to ceaseless wars; arid

(2) To suppress the insubordination, corruption, bribery finds all that pervaded all branches of the Company‘s government.

The problems were not easy of solution for on one side there was nothing to stop if he would march upto Delhi, put the fugitive Emperor on the Delhi throne and made the English Company the imperial Wazir, on the other side to take statesmanlike decision of consolidation of what was within the _grip rather than of expansion. Clive decided for the former course and the wisdom of his policy is now generally recognised.

He abandoned the policy of Vansittart and decided to limit the Company‘s influence to Bengal and Bihar, leaving Oudh as a buffer State friendly to the English, between the Company and the Marathas. Therefore Emperor‘s claim on Oudh was discountenanced. But the spirit of Vansittart‘s earlier offer was retained.

The Emperor Shah Alam was given Korah and Allahabad. Oudh was restored to Shuja-ud-daulah on payment of a compensation of 50 lakhs, and a defensive alliance concluded with him by the terms of which the security and defence of his territories were guaranteed by the Company, and the Nawab Shuja-ud-daulah was to pay the expenses of necessary troops. ―Shuja-ud-daulah‖, rightly remarks Smith ―did not realise that his new friends would eventually prove more deadly than his supposed enemies. This treaty provided for a model for the system which Wellesley later developed by which the Indian princes saved themselves from their enemies at the price of enmeshing themselves in the threads of the Company‘s spider‘s web.‖

Emperor Shah Alam who was a supplicant at the door of the English and in return for his rehabilitation in Korah and Allahabad, he by a farman formally granted Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company on condition of payment of a tribute 26 lakhs per year. The Diwani, i.e. revenue collection and civil justice, was granted on August, 12, 1765.

The grant of Diwani conferred on the Company the momentous power of collecting revenues, to mete out civil justice, to defray the charges of the government and to pay the Emperor the annual tribute of 26 lakhs. But Clive fixed the sum of the expenses of the Nawab‘s household and Government to 53 lakhs per year. The amount was reduced to 41 lakhs in 1766 and 32 lakhs in 1769.

Clive then turned to set his house in order. He firmly checked abuses of the private trade and acceptance of presents by the Company‘s servants. He arrived with _Covenants‘ which the Company‘s servants were to sign agreeing not to engage in inland trade or accept presents.

The Company‘s servants at first thought, remembered as they did the past record of Give himself, that he could not be malignantly determined to prevent

others from amassing fortune that he himself had done. But Clive showed no sign of relenting. Some resigned, others were forced to resign and vacancies filled in from Madras. Eventually recalcitrant officers had to submit. With equal vigour and determination Clive dealt with the military batta, i.e. allowance. Batta was an extra allowance that was paid to the soldier for field service away from the garrison.

This practice began during the French war at Madras, when the Nawab subsidised the British troops by such payment. The practice spread to Bengal; the British troops were paid double batta. Even when there was no field service rendered, the military drew double batta. Clive allowed officers in cantonment to draw half batta, those in field service within Bengal full batta and those who would be required to serve outside Bengal borders double batta.

This rationalisation of the allowance was not liked by the military. Encouraged by Brigadier Commander Sir Robert Fletcher a mutinous movement was set on foot. Clive met this opposition with a strong hand and the opposition gradually died down.Clive left India for good in 1767 (February). Dyarchy, system of double government introduced by the Government of India Act (1919) for the provinces of British India. It marked the first introduction of the democratic principle into the executive branch of the British administration of India. Though much-criticized, it signified a breakthrough in British Indian government and was the forerunner of India‘s full provincial autonomy (1935) and independence (1947). Dyarchy was introduced as a constitutional reform by Edwin Samuel Montagu (secretary of state for India, 1917–22) and Lord Chelmsford (viceroy of India, 1916–21).

The principle of dyarchy was a division of the executive branch of each provincial government into authoritarian and popularly responsible sections. The first was composed of executive councilors, appointed, as before, by the crown.

The second was composed of ministers who were chosen by the governor from the elected members of the provincial legislature. These latter ministers were Indians.

The various fields, or subjects of administration were divided between the councilors and the ministers, being named reserved and transferred subjects, respectively. The reserved subjects came under the heading of law and order and included justice, the police, land revenue, and irrigation. The transferred subjects (i.e., those under the control of Indian ministers) included local self-government, education, public health, public works, and agriculture, forests, and fisheries. The system ended with the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1935.

Treaty of Allahabad

After the Battle of Buxar in 1764, a significant agreement called the Treaty of Allahabad was signed on August 16, 1765. Here are the main points of the treaty:

- The treaty gave the East India Company the right to collect taxes (revenue rights) in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa.
- Previously, the responsibility of collecting taxes in these regions belonged to the Mughal Empire and the local rulers, but now the Company could do it directly from the people.
- The Company gained control of managing taxes after paying an annual amount of Rs 26 lakh as per Shah Alam II's decree.
- In return for certain administrative functions like defense, police, and justice, Shah Alam II paid Rs 53 lakhs to the Company.
- The treaty also acknowledged the Nawab of Awadh as an independent ruler, though he had to pay a significant amount to the East India Company for their support in the Battle of Buxar.

- This treaty marked the start of British dominance in India and contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire, which was already weakened due to various conflicts.
- By obtaining tax control (Diwani rights), the East India Company took charge of Bengal's economy, a region known for its wealth. This control helped the Company amass financial strength and expand its influence across other parts of India.

Battle of Buxar Important Facts

- After the Battle of Buxar, the British didn't take control of Awadh even though they defeated Shuja-Ud-Daulah. This decision was because if they annexed Awadh, it would mean they had to protect a large border from invasions by the Afghan and Maratha forces.
- Instead, Shuja-Ud-Daulah, after his defeat, became a close friend of the British. He arranged Awadh to act as a protective barrier between the British and potential invasions from foreign powers.
- Additionally, the Treaty of Allahabad was signed between the British and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam-II. This treaty made the emperor essentially a figurehead for the British Company's decisions. The emperor's official decree, the Farman, gave legal approval to the British Company's political control in Bengal.

Later Mughals

After the death of Aurangzeb, no new emperor arrived at the scene who could compare with the legacy of the great Mughal emperors of the past. Muhammad Shah, Ahmad Shah Bahadur, Alamgir II, Shah Alam-II, and so on, were all weak leaders who were not able to sort the rot in the empire. Over time, the power of the Mughal emperor began to weaken. With the centre weakening,

regional players began to take centre stage in India. Let us discuss these various regional kingdoms that began to emerge.

Bengal

In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *firman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal. However, this concession did not ensure that they could trade in Bengal without paying any taxes. The Company servants like other Indian traders had to pay taxes. This misinterpretation of the *firman* became a constant cause of dispute between the Nawabs of Bengal and the Company. All the Nawabs of Bengal, beginning from Murshid Quli Khan to Alivardi Khan, refused to sympathize with the Company's misconstrued explanation of the *firman*and even forced them to pay a huge amount as indemnity if they used the *dastak*s wrongly.

In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad. In 1756, with Alivardi's demise and in the absence of any rightful successor, several factions vied with each other to make their chosen candidate the Nawab of Bengal. Though Alivardi wanted his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daula, son of his youngest daughter, to acquire the nawabship, the latter's succession to the throne was not accepted by other contenders, such as Shaukat Jang (*faujdar* of Purnea) and Ghasiti Begam, eldest daughter of Alivardi. In the wake of increasing court intrigues, the English East India Company took the opportunity to win factions in their favour and work against the Nawab and thereby lead to a headlong confrontation with the Nawab.

As Bengal, in the eighteenth century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically

extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal. They wanted to base their operations in Calcutta. There were other European contenders too in Bengal, namely, the Dutch, having their factory at Chinsura and the French with their factory at Chandernagor. Siraj-ud-Daula became the Nawab of Bengal in 1756. Apart from having several foes in the family who were not happy with the succession, he was immature and lacked adequate skills to tackle the situation. In the South, the English East India Company and the French were vying against each other. Without seeking Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's consent, the English began to build fortifications in Calcutta. They even chose to disregard the Nawab's order to curtail augmentation of their military resources and abuse the use of *dastak*s granted to them by the *firman* of 1717. Also, Company servants began misusing the concessions granted by the *firman* of 1717 by extending the privileges over their private trade too. Causing further economic loss to Bengal, the officials began to profit by selling off the *dastak*s to the Indian merchants. Another cause of discontentment towards the English for Siraj was their conscious move to give protection to Siraj's foe Krishna Das, son of Raja Rajballava. The intrigue between the Nawabs of Bengal and the British was to play a vital role in the emergence of the British as the paramount power later on in the century.

Awadh

After the waning of the Mughal Empire, the second half of the 18th century witnessed gradual expansion of the British East India Company's role in North India and this had a strong bearing on the economy and politics of Awadh. Until 1801, Awadh was treated as a buffer state protecting Bengal against the powers of the Marathas and the question of encroachment and

The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar. In this battle, the English defeated the combined forces of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, Mughal emperor Shah Alam and Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim. After the battle, the Treaty of Allahabad was signed between the Nawab of Awadh and the British. According to this treaty, Shuja-ud-Daula was allowed to retain Awadh. However, Kora and Allahabad were ceded to the Mughal emperor. A war indemnity of ` 50,00,000 to be paid in instalments was imposed on Shuja who entered into a reciprocal arrangement with the company for defence of each other's territory. The Nawabs were annexation did not arise. It was only around the turn of the 19th century that Awadh became a block to further British expansion. This eventually led to the takeover of the province in 1856.

Aware of the company's burgeoning strength and aspirations and, like the Bengal Nawabs, they were not prepared to let go without at least a semblance of a struggle. This assumed, in the initial stages, the form of a concerted drive against British commercial penetration of Awadh. Alongside, a major reorganization and reform of the Awadh army was initiated.

The military reforms initiated by Shuja-ud-Daula after the humiliation at Buxar were not intended to either intimidate the English or promote a war against them. Rather, it would seem that the overall military effort reflected the Nawab's anxiety to defend his political authority at a time when it was being steadily undermined by the alien company. For the Company, Awadh was too important and lucrative a province to be left alone. Its vast amount of revenue could be used to subsidize the company's armies. In carefully planned stages, the company stepped up its fiscal demands. In 1773, the first definitive treaty was concluded between Awadh and the English East India Company. By this treaty, the Nawab agreed to pay ` 2,10,000 monthly for each brigade of company troops that would

remain present in Awadh or Allahabad. This provision established the beginning of Awadh's chronic indebtedness to the Company and represented the initial British thrust into the region's political system.

It was in and after 1775 that the vulnerability of the nawabi came into sharp focus. It was also in these years, ironically enough, that the emergence of a provincial cultural identity centered on the new court and capital at Lucknow (the capital had been shifted from Fyzabad) was more clearly identifiable than before. Asaf-ud-Daula's succession to the throne in 1775 went without a hitch notwithstanding the hostility of some of Shuja' s courtiers and of the opposition faction of his brother Saadat Ali, the Governor of Rohilkhand. Soon, however, under the stewardship of Murtaza Khan (Asaf's favourite who received the exalted title of Mukhtar-ud-Daula), the stability of the existing political set up was strengthened as older nobles and generals were displaced. Furthermore, Mukhtar allowed the Company to negotiate a treaty with the Nawab ceding to English control the territories surrounding Benaras, north to Jaunpur and west to Allahabad, then held by Chait Singh. The treaty also fixed a larger subsidy than before for the Company brigade and excluded the Mughal emperor from all future Anglo-Nawabi transactions. Finally all diplomatic transactions and foreign intelligence were to be controlled by the English through the resident at the Nawab's court. The disintegration of the political system, the blatant intervention of the English in Awadh's affairs and Asaf-ud-Daula's excessively indulgent disposition and disregard of political affairs alarmed a sizeable section of the Awadh nobility. The situation worsened as troops were in arrears and at places mutinied. These acts of disturbance and lawlessness smoothened the way for British intervention. In the 1770s, the English East India Company persistently eroded the basis of Awadh's sovereignty. The rapid inroads of the English made

by virtue of their military presence seriously undermined the Nawabi regime which in 1780 came up with the first declaration of protest. The supreme government in Calcutta was forced to realize that unremitting pressure on Awadh's resources could not be sustained indefinitely and that the excessive intervention of the English Resident would have to be curtailed if Awadh's usefulness as a subsidiary was to be guaranteed.

Thus, in 1784, Warren Hastings entered into a new series of arrangements with Asaf-ud-Daula which reduced the debt by ` 50 lakh and thereby, the pressure on the Awadh regime. In the following decade and a half, the Awadh regime continued to function as a semi-autonomous regional power whose relations with the company were cordial. This state of affairs lasted until 1797, the year of Asaf's demise, when the British once more intervened in the succession issue. Wazir Ali, Asaf's chosen successor, was deposed in favour of Saadat Ali. With Saadat Ali a formal treaty was signed on 21 February 1798 which increased the subsidy to ` 76 lakh yearly.

A more forward policy was initiated by Lord Wellesley who arrived in 1798 only to reject the Awadh system. The Nawab's declaration of inability to pay the increased financial demand of the company gave Wellesley a suitable pretext to contemplate annexation. In September 1801, Henry Wellesley arrived in Lucknow to force Saadat's surrender of his whole territory. After protracted negotiations, the company accepted the perpetual sovereignty of Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur and the Doab which yielded a gross amount of ` 1 crore 35 lakh. The annexations inaugurated anew era in Anglo-Awadh relations. The shrunken subah could no longer pose a threat to the stability of the Company dominions nor did the rulers of Awadh entertain any notion of resistance to the relentless forward march of the

English. Deprived of their army and half of their territory, they concentrated their energies in cultural pursuits.

In this, they were following the footsteps of Asaf-ud-Daula, who had built up around the Lucknow court a vibrant and living cultural arena. The patronage extended to luminaries and poets like Mirza Rafi Sauda (1713-86) and Mir Ghulam Hasan (1734–86). Lucknow had been a second home for these sensitive men of letters who had left Delhi and lamented for the world they had loved and lost. The assumption of imperial status by Ghazi-ud-din-Hyder (1819) and the formal revocation of Mughal sovereignty was an integral part of the blooming court culture of Awadh. But this coincided with the decline in the ruler's control over the administration and province. The heavy price that had to be continually paid to the Company for 'protection', the devolution of administrative responsibility to ministers, and the dominant position of the British Resident, were facts which no regal pomp and ceremony could conceal.

The Nawab of Awadh had many heirs and could not, therefore, be covered by the Doctrine of Lapse. Some other pretext had to be found for depriving him of his dominions. Finally, Lord Dalhousie hit upon the idea of alleviating the plight of the people of Awadh. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was accused of having misgoverned his state and of refusing to introduce reforms. His state was, therefore, annexed in 1856. Undoubtedly, the degeneration of the administration of Awadh was a painful reality for its people.

Hyderabad

Six Deccan subahs of the Mughal Empire made up the area of Hyderabad. Since the Mughals were constantly involved in a struggle with the warring Marathas, they had neglected to consolidate the newly-conquered Deccan region. After Aurangzeb had died, an ambitious Zulfiqar Khan, who had hitherto been the

strongest and most influential general of Aurangzeb, vowed to seize control of the Deccan subahs. To do so, he decided to befriend the Mughal enemies—the Marathas—and entered into a secret pact with them. Since Khan was a Shia Muslim, his ambition was to establish a Shia kingdom where Bijapur and Golconda had been. But he was not the only one with his eye on the coveted prize of these two states. Chin Qilich Kahan (later known as Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah) was a powerful mansabdar who also wanted to set up an independent state in the Deccan.

Zulfiqar Khan and Chin Qilich Khan had been enemies for a long time, since they belonged to two warring camps in the Mughal court—Irani and Turani. However, after Aurangzeb died, Zulfiqar Khan had a slight edge because his father Asad Khan, had been the wazir in Aurangzeb's time and managed to maintain his influence for much longer after the Emperor died. Zulfiqar came even closer to realizing his ambition when in 1708, he was granted the vice-royalty of the Deccan by Bahadur Shah I. He held that post until his death in 1713 at the hands of his killer, Farrukh-Siyar.

Immediately after Aurangzeb died, as was the norm, his sons started fighting among themselves to take over the throne. However, Chin Qilich Khan remained neutral at his post in Bijapur. He was made the Governor of Awadh and *Faujdar* of Gorakhpur by Bahadur Shah on 9 December 1707. He was thus removed from Bijapur where his ambitions had lain. When Bahadur Shah eventually came close to the end of his reign, Chin Qilich Khan rejoined public service because he saw another opportunity for gaining power. However, the reigns of the Deccan were handed over to Nizam-ul- Mulk in 1713 by Farrukh-Siyar, who gave Nizam-ul-Mulk prestigious titles like Khan Khana and Bahadur Fatehjang in return for his services. The new Governor, Nizam-ul-Mulk, was an

ambitious man and aspired to rule the Deccan region independently of the Mughal interference.

Nizam-ul-Mulk was a shrewd and tactful administrator. He wanted to suppress the Marathas and to do so, he put a stop to the payment of 'chauth' and incited the already proud and selfish Maratha chiefs against the Sahu. In the meantime, at the Delhi court a number of political intrigues were brewing and as a result, Nizam-ul-Mulk was summoned from the Deccan close to the end of 1715 and replaced by Husain Ali. Nizam-ul-Mulk was sent to control Muradabad and later to Bihar. While he was still preparing to assume charge of his new duties Farrukh-Siyar fell and Nizam-ul-Mulk was transferred again, this time to Malwa. This time, he received the pledge that he would not be transferred again.

It was finally in Malwa that Nizam-ul-Mulk came into his own as a great leader. He became so popular that the Sayyid brother became jealous of him and he was summoned back to the court. However, Nizam-ul-Mulk was not happy with this decision and rebelled against it—he led the army to take control of Asirgarh in May 1720 and three days later, Burhanpur. The Sayyid brothers sent Sayyid Dilawar Ali Khan and Alam Ali Khan to overcome Nizam-ul-Mulk. However, Dilawar Ali Khan tasted defeat in June 1720 and Alam Ali Khan was killed in the battle. Husain Ali was also murdered when he was on his way to the Deccan, on 8 October 1720. Sayyid Abdullah was also killed soon after.

Once the Sayyid brothers were out of his way, Nizam-ul-Mulk appointed himself the ruler of the six subahs of the Deccan and shifted his attention to overpowering the Marathas. In February 1722, his feats were recognized by the Mughal ruler and he was granted the office of the Wazir of the Mughal Empire, which he remained until 1724. He was a strict disciplinarian and tried to rule the court with an iron hand. However, the hangers-on at the court did not like this.

They spread stories about him to the king. As a wazir, his tenure was highly dissatisfying for him, even though he managed to add Malwa and Gujarat to the Deccan area.

Once he found out that he was not appreciated at the court, he left for the Deccan without taking leave of the emperor. Obviously, the emperor felt insulted and appointed Mubariz Khan as the Viceroy of the Deccan and ordered the new Viceroy to bring the Nizam to the court, dead or alive. But the Nizam was not so easily defeated and he killed Mubariz Khan and sent his head to the emperor instead. Nizam-ul-Mulk also defeated Mubariz Khan's son and overtook the reigns of Hyderabad in early 1725.

The historian, Irvine, writes, 'From this period may be dated Nizam-ul-Mulk's virtual independence and the foundation of the present Hyderabad state.' The Nizam started his rule in earnest and appointed officers for various posts, besides promoting his favourites and conferring titles upon the deserving officers. He also issued assignments on land revenue according to his own idea of administration. While in all other ways, he was like a king, he refrained from overt royal manifestations like the use of scarlet or imperial umbrella, the recitation of the Friday prayer in his own name and the issue of coins stamped with his own superscription.

Nizam-ul-Malik was an intelligent ruler and gauged the intentions of the Marathas, specifically Peshwa Baji Rao I, to oppose his independent rule in the Deccan. He decided thus to take preventive measures. At the same time, there were many Maratha chieftains who were dissatisfied with the Peshwa and the Nizam got them to his side. The battle between the Nizam and supporters and Peshwa Baji Rao I continued for five years—from 1727 to 1732. In 1728, the Nizam was

defeated at Palkhed. His main supporter, Senapati Trimbak Rao Dabhade, was killed later in 1731.

Nizam-ul-Mulk realized that he needed to negotiate a mutually beneficial treaty with the Peshwa, who also wanted peace after such a long period of strife and wanted Nizam's support for his expeditions to the north. The two leaders managed to reach a compromise in December 1732 which gave the Nizam freedom to expand his empire in the south and the Peshwa to expand his empire in the north.

When Peshwa Baji Rao I suddenly died soon after, the Nizam was summoned by the emperor and he reached Delhi in July 1737. Here, the Nizam was given the title of Asaf Jah. The Nizam then proceeded to Malwa but was overpowered by Peshwa Baji Rao near Bhopal and forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty in January 1738. The Nizam had to sign away the subedari of Malwa to Baji Rao as well as the area between rivers Narmada and Chambal.

After the attack of Nadir Shah on the Mughal India, the Nizam was summoned to Delhi by the emperor who wanted the Nizam to finalize a peace treaty with Nadir Shah. The Nizam succeeded in this task but it didn't amount to much due to the intervention of Saadat Ali Khan.

Nizam-ul-Mulk controlled the Deccan region until he died in 1748. He maintained his loyalty to the Mughal ruler and rejected Nadir Shah's offer of gaining control of the throne in Delhi. Not only was Nizam-ul-Mulk an able general and a thoughtful, progressive administrator but he was a shrewd statesman and diplomat as well. He helped to uplift the regions under his reigns financially by successfully suppressing the refractory chiefs, over-ambitious officers and robbers. He promoted trade through his measured revenue assessment and taxation

policies. Religion-wise also, he was tolerant and progressive. His right hand man was Puran Chand, designated as Diwan.

After Nizam-ul-Mulk died, a war of succession followed which ultimately became interlinked with the Anglo-French dispute in the Deccan. It was finally in 1762 that India reached a level of political stability when Nizam Ali came to the throne and ruled for over 40 years. After the English East India company started to establish itself and Lord Wellesley was the administrator, the Nizam entered into a subsidiary alliance with them and became their ally.

Punjab

Ranjit Singh made himself the master of Punjab. The first regular contact between Ranjit Singh and the British seems to have been made in 1800, when India was threatened by an invasion of Zaman Shah, the Afghan ruler who had been invited by Tipu Sultan, a bitter enemy of the British. As a precautionary measure, the British sent Munshi Yusuf Ali to the court of Ranjit Singh with rich presents to win the Maharaja over to the British side. Soon, however, he learnt that the danger of Zaman Shah's invasion receded and Yusaf Ali was recalled.

The second contact was made in 1805, when the Maratha chief Holkar entered Punjab with help from Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh had gone to conquer Multan and Jhang but came to Amritsar on learning about Holkar's arrival. He called a meeting of a Sarbat Khalsa to decide about the policy to be followed towards Holkar. Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Bhag Singh of Jind advised Ranjit Singh not to come in conflict with the British by helping Holkar. Ranjit Singh told Holkar politely that he would not help him against the British. General Lake and Maharaja Ranjit Singh concluded an agreement in January, 1806.

As the danger of French invasion on India became remote, the English adopted a stern policy towards Ranjit Singh. He was given a note by the Governor

General Metcalfe which contained some soft-worded warnings against his aggressive policy. Ranjit Singh was asked to restore all the places he had taken possession of since 1806 to the former possessors which will confine his army right to the bank of the Sutlej. Ranjit Singh was not prepared to accept the demand. However, he withdrew his troops from Ambala and Saniwal but continued to retain Faridkot. Ranjit Singh fortified the fort of Govindgarh. But in the last stage, Ranjit Singh changed his mind and agreed to sign the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809.

One of the effects of the treaty of Amritsar was that the British government was able to take the Sutlej states under its protection. Ranjit Singh's advance in the east was checked but he was given a carte blanche so far as the region to the west of the Sutlej was concerned.

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in June 1839 was followed by political instability and rapid changes of government in the Punjab. Selfish and corrupt leaders came to the front. Ultimately, power fell into the hands of the brave and patriotic but utterly indisciplined army. This led the British to look greedily across the Sutlej upon the land of the five rivers even though they had signed a treaty in 1809. Figure 1.1 shows a map displaying the kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Self Assessment Questions

- Discuss the economic and political motives behind the Anglo-French rivalry in India.

- Evaluate the contributions of Robert Clive and Dupleix in the Anglo-French conflict.

- Analyze the decline of the Later Mughals and their inability to resist British expansion in India.

Unit – III

British Expansion in India: Ring Fence policy – Policy of Subordinate Alliance – Policy of Lapse and Annexations by conquests – Anglo - Mysore wars - Anglo Maratha wars – First Anglo Afghan war – Anglo - Burmese wars – Anglo - Sikh conflicts

Objectives

- Examine the Policy of Subordinate Alliance
- Explore the Anglo-Mysore Wars.
- Analyze the Anglo-Maratha Wars
- Evaluate the Anglo-Burmese Wars:

Policy of Ring of Fence

Warren Hastings established the Policy of Ring of Fence (1765–1813) to establish buffer zones and safeguard the Company's frontiers. In order to safeguard their own territories, it was often their policy to defend the boundaries of their neighbors. The ring-fence states were obligated to retain subsidiary armies that were to be organized, outfitted, and led by Company commanders who were to be compensated by these rulers.

Since the British only considered expediency, their relationship with the Indian states evolved with time. The British never lost sight of their desire to rule an empire. They were therefore constrained in how they interacted with native governments by their own interests, which evolved through time. The discussion of the Ring of Fence Policy (1765–1813) in this article would be beneficial for students studying Modern Indian History for the UPSC Civil Service Exam.

Policy of Ring Fence in India History

During this time, the British treated local states like independent nations. At the time, they had not yet attained the status of India's absolute power. As a result, they could not claim complete sovereignty over the native kings who became their supporters or that they were unable to interfere everywhere.

The first and second Maratha Wars, the treaties with Avadh and Hyderabad, the wars against Mysore and the peace with the Hindu monarch ending the fourth Mysore War, as well as the treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh, were all fought during this time. Naturally, the Wellesley Wars and related agreements with numerous monarchs made the British the dominant force in India, while their allies became subordinate rulers.

Policy of Ring Fence Establishment

In order to preserve their own holdings, Warren Hastings devised the Ring-Fence policy, which involved guarding the borders of their neighbours. This was echoed in the conflict between the East India Company and the Kingdom of Mysore and the Marathas. The Company undertook to organize Awadh's defence in order to assure Bengal's security because the Marathas and Afghan invaders posed the biggest threat.

The rulers of such a kingdom paid for the maintenance of the troops that the East India Company dispatched to strengthen the fortifications of its allies. In this sense, the East India Company would be necessary for the local ruler's defence. During the "Policy of Ring Fence" era, the British did not recognize native rulers as having any sort of suzerainty over them; instead, they treated them as independent nations with the freedom to conduct their own internal affairs, with the exception of the Hindu ruler of Mysore, with whom they entered into treaties on an equal footing.

The ring fence policy, which aimed to lessen states' dependency on the British administration in India, was extended by Wellesley's subsidiary alliance program. The Maratha, Awadh, and other powerful nations such as Hyderabad accepted subsidiary partnerships. British dominance was thus entrenched.

Policy of Subordinate Alliance

Introduction

Br'itish expansion in North India, particularly in the kingdom of Awadn, was a prbcess of building an alternative hegemony by the British in opposition to the Mughal and the Awadh rulers' authority. The use of force in the battle field on the part of the East India Company, remained minimal after the Battle of Buxar in 1764, and no major confrontation took place until Awadh was fully annexed and made a part of Company's domination in 1856.

The Company's fortunes improved dramatically when Clive in collaboration with the idluential Indian merchants and nobels, defeated the nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daula in 1757 at Plassey and installed a puppet nawab, Mir Jabar, in his place. bngal, one of the weakhiest provinces of India, proved an extraordinary advantage to the British. The massive Rs. 30 million land revenues, secured by good natural irrigation, were deployed not only to support the poorer presidencies of Bombay and Madras but also to recruit more army and enrich its servants. The results were obvious when the Company's armies defeated a combined force of Mir Kasim, Shuja-ud-Daula (the nawab of Ayadh), and the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam El. From that time the company became most dominant power in the subsontinent. By securing from the Emperor the grant of Diwani or the right to collect ~evenue of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and by forcing a subsidiary alliance on the Awadh Nawab, the Company at once legitimised its position in india and created a buffer between its tertitoties and the more turbulent regions of Western India.

The army which fought the British in Buxar in October 1764 was basically an Awadh army composed of the Mughal, Durrani and local AwadM troops. Lacking in a centralized command and prone to mercenary activities like the

looting of both the Company's and NawabS baggage trains right id the midst of the battle, this army symbolised the awadhi society as a whole. The Awadh elites consisted of three basic strata, each different from the other in tradition and culture.

- The Awadh dynasty and many of its highest officials were Shia Muslims who were an insignificant part of the population and considered themselves as part of the Mughal imperial service elite;
- The castes of scribes Kayasthas and ~ha'ttris. who predomhated in the Awadh administration.
- The Raiput and Brahmin landholders who were dominants as 4041 zamindars though. They had very limited place in the provincial administration.

It is not only the tengons between the central and local power, but also the assertion of independence, particularly by the zamindars, which tended to weaken the regime. About eighty percent of all the zamindars, both Hindus and Muslims, asserted that they. had been established in their estates prior to the arrival of Saadat Khan, the founder of the Awadh dynaaty. Thus, the vast majority of the landholders saw themselves as prior to, and largely independent of, the provincial rulers of Awadh.

The British government took a policy of expansion to consolidate the administration. They focused on capturing as many as powerful as possible under their control. In 1798, Lord Wellesley was appointed as the governor. He wanted to focus on his political goals using Subsidiary alliances. Under this system, the rulers were compelled to accept the permanent dominance of the British force.

The policy of the Subsidiary Alliance is written below:

The Subsidiary Alliance in India was a "Non-Intervention Policy" planned by Lord Wellesley, but French Governor Dupleix introduced this term. The main aim was to subjugate Indian powers without the cost and operation of war. Under this system, the Indian rulers had to install the company's troops. Also, they had to pay all the expenses to operate the troops. The rulers need to maintain British residents at their courts.

The impact of the alliance was huge in understanding Indian provincial rules. It weakened the political system of India and affected their economy as well. The British government forced the Indian rulers to sign the treaty and began interfering in the political system.

- The Indian states were compelled to come to terms with British domination. They had to pay all the expenses of the troops.
- The rulers under the Subsidiary Alliance could not employ any British service. In that case, the governor would sign an agreement before allowing them the conditions.
- Any Indian rules under this term cannot negotiate with other rulers. If they want any additional support from the rulers, they have to seek permission from the governor-general.
- If any ruler fails to meet the army's expenses, the company will also seize the administrative power.
- The payment of the expenses was arbitrary. Hence, the company can increase the subsidy whenever they want.
- Awadh was the first kingdom to accept this policy. Later on, other rulers started to join the alliance. Indian rulers who signed the alliance:
    - Awadh

- Hyderabad (1798)
- Mysore (17990
- Tanjore (1799)
- Awadh (1801)
- Peshwa (1802)
- Scindia (1803)
- Gaekwad (1803)
- The Rajput states (1818).
- The Holkars 1818.

Results of Subsidiary alliance:

The Indian ruler signed the treaty of domination. The East India Company trickly installed their forces and started to keep a watch on the military force. The Indian rulers started to lose their independence became dependent on the company's rule. The results of this alliance were detrimental to the Indian political system. It was the first step to interfere in the administrative system. The rulers faced various challenges to meet the high expenses of the British army.

The Indian rulers lost their sovereignty, and the British government became involved in political matters. It led to a great political loss for the Indian rulers.

The cost of maintaining the British forces was very expensive. It was nearly impossible for the rulers to meet their expenses. In addition, this system also drains the economic backbone of the provincial government.

Before the advent of the Subsidiary Alliance, Indian forces had a steady income. Lakhs of soldiers were deprived of their livelihood. It led to greater political tension for the soldiers.

On the other hand, the rulers of the protected states started to lose their interest in good administration. As they lost the scope of incentives, they became oppressive towards the common people.

Key points of the Subsidiary Alliance

1. Firstly, supporting states of the Indian state's rulers were forced to accept the rules of the British Army within their territories. Also, they had to pay subsidies for its maintenance.
2. The Indian rulers required prior approval of the British to employ any European.
3. The Indian rulers also needed to consult the Governor-General before negotiating with any other Indian ruler.

Policy of Lapse and Annexations by Conquests

The youngest Governor General of British India was Lord Dalhousie. He is best known for annexing regional Indian states into the British Raj in India on the basis of superfluous reasons. His methods of annexing Indian States were as follows:

Annexations by conquest

1. Punjab: The Sikhs were defeated by the British in the First Sikh War but had not made Punjab part of the Empire. Even after the defeat the Sikhs were strong and powerful. They were keen on taking revenge. Lord Dalhousie was part of the second war. After the war, Punjab became part of British Empire. Maharaja Dalip Singh sent to England on a pension. Under Sir John Lawrence as Chief Commissioner of the province, Sikhs became loyal to the British. After this, he made the settlement of the province.

2. Sikkim: When the King of Sikkim arrested two British officers, Dalhousie attacked Sikkim and made it a part of the Empire.

3. Lower Burma. After the defeat of Burma after the Burmese War in 1824, trade relations were established with Burma and it also became part of the Empire.

(b) Doctrine of Lapse

The rulers of Indian princely states had the right to adopt a child and make that child the successor. The British government agreed to this and made this right official by declaring, 'Every ruler, under Hindu laws, is free to nominate his successor, real or adopted son. The Company's government is bound to accept this right'. In 1831, the Company declared, 'The Government may accept or reject, according to the situation, the application of Indian rulers to nominate his adopted son as his heir.

The policy of the British administration was not clear. At times it rejected such an application at times it accepted. There was no real logic given behind such decisions. For example, it permitted Baijabai, the widow of Daulat Rao Sindhia, to nominate Jankoji, her adopted son, as the successor king in 1827. However, the Company rejected the claim of Ram Chandra Rao's adopted son at Jhansi in 1835.

Lord Dalhousie made three distinct categories for Indian States:

a. British Charter created states: If there was no biological heir then the British Empire would annex the state.
b. Subordinate States: Permission of the East India Company was needed to validate the heir in case of adoption.
c. Independent States: These had the freedom to appoint any heir as they chose.

The first policy was called the Doctrine of Lapse. Satara was the first State to which this policy was applied in 1848. Appa Sahib, the king of this state, did not have any child and before his death he had adopted a son. Other states to which

this policy was applied were Jaipur, Sambhalpur, Baghat, Udaipur, Jhansi and Nagpur.

The queen of Jhansi, Rani Laxmi Bai stood up for her right and fought the British. But when her struggle was not successful she rebelled against the Empire in the revolt of 1857.

Adopted son as heir. But this decision was overruled by the court. The rules of annexure between the second and third category were not clear. Even though many of the states so annexed were under the control of the Mughals, they had no power to decide the legality of the heir, as the East India Company by then had become very powerful. And on the pretext of some excuse or the other, the states were annexed.

This arbitrary rule of annexure became one of the reasons for the Revolt of 1857 and all united to stand up against the British. Lord Canning another Governor General, later legalized adoption.

Anglo-Mysore Wars

The Four **Anglo-Mysore Wars** (1767-1799) were fought between the British **East India Company** (EIC) and the state of Mysore. Haidar **Ali** and his son Tipu Sultan, the "Tiger of Mysore", were relentless foes to British expansion in southern **India** but were eventually subdued by the triple alliance of the EIC, the Maratha Confederacy, and the Nizam of Hyderabad.

The four Anglo-Mysore wars were spread over four decades of battles, sieges, and ruthless psychological **warfare**:

- First Anglo-Mysore **War** (1767-69)
- Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84)
- Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92)
- Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799)

East India Company Expansion

The East India Company was founded in 1600, and by the mid-18th century, it was benefiting from its **trade** monopoly in India to make its shareholders immensely rich. The Company was effectively the colonial arm of the British government in India, but it protected its interests using its own private army and hired troops from the regular British army. By the 1750s, the Company was keen to expand its trade network and begin a more active territorial control in the subcontinent.

Robert Clive (1725-1774) won a famous victory for the EIC against the ruler of Bengal, Nawab Siraj ud-Daulah (b. 1733) at the **Battle of Plassey** in June 1757. The Nawab was replaced by a puppet ruler, the state's massive treasury was confiscated, and the systematic exploitation of Bengal's resources and people began. 'Clive of India' was made the Governor of Bengal in February 1758 and, for a second spell, in 1764. The EIC won another key contest in October 1764. After victory at the **Battle of Buxar** (aka Bhaksar), the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II (r. 1760-1806) awarded the EIC the right to collect land revenue (dewani) in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. This was a major development and ensured the Company now had vast resources to expand and protect its traders, bases, armies, and ships. Unfortunately for the EIC, its growth meant that it came into conflict with new powers, chief amongst them the southern state of Mysore.

First Anglo-Mysore War

The ruler of Mysore was Haidar Ali (1721-1782), in power since 1761 when he usurped the throne and took over the royal **palace** in Seringapatam (Srirangapatna), the capital of the kingdom located on the Kaveri river. Ali, an experienced general, was keen to expand his kingdom which covered the southern portion of India, and he had the means to do it thanks to a series of revenue and tax

reforms that permitted him to fund a large army. Another advantage for Mysore was innovations in weapons, particularly the use of handheld rockets, typically fired by cavalry riders.

The problem for Ali was that this part of the subcontinent was a particularly busy area of competing states. To the south was Travancore, in the northwest was the Maratha Confederacy (aka the Mahrattas, 1674-1818) – a loose confederation of **Hindu** princes, and to the northeast and east was the Nizam of Hyderabad. This part of India was also the main presence of the French East India Company, but they had been seriously squeezed by the increased militarism of the British East India Company, particularly along the eastern coast, often called the Carnatic coast. From the mid-1750s, the British had gained several important victories which gave them control of trade centres like Pondicherry and Arcot. Haidar Ali courted the French as allies, and while the EIC was seemingly busy expanding in Bengal in northeast India in the 1760s, Ali saw the opportunity to expand into the less powerful EIC presidency (administrative region) of Madras. In August 1767, he declared war on the East India Company. He had 50,000 well-trained and well-equipped troops, including camel cavalry that fired rockets, more and bigger cannons than the EIC, and superior logistics based on large permanent pens of bullocks for use as transportation (it took dozens of bullocks to move heavy cannons, for example).

When the EIC realised Madras was under serious threat and the directors saw with horror the consequent crash in the EIC's share price back in London, the company took decisive action. The EIC joined forces with the Nizam of Hyderabad to attack Mysore in 1767. Ali shrewdly pursued a scorched earth policy while buying off the Marathas with a huge quantity of **silver**. The withdrawal of the Marathas resulted in the Nizam of Hyderabad switching sides. Both were then

defeated at the **Battle** of Trinamalai (September 1767) by an EIC army led by Colonel Joseph Smith. Hyderabad then switched sides again, but still, Haidar Ali fought on. Then another EIC force mobilised from Bombay (Mumbai) on the western coast.

Caught between three armies, Haidar Ali decided to sue for peace, one which the EIC was glad to accept given the already high costs of the war. Consequently, the First Anglo-Mysore War ended in an alliance between the EIC and Mysore with a mutual protection clause against any future threat from the Marathas. The Maratha Confederacy had challenged and conquered territories of the Mughal **Empire** in the southern and western areas of India through the 18th century and was perhaps the greatest threat to everyone else, but the Marathas were a group ravaged by internal disputes, which limited their effectiveness in wars. The Marathas would be on-off allies and outright enemies of the EIC through the three **Anglo-Maratha Wars** until the dominance of the British was finally established in 1819. As these various powers jostled for supremacy in southern India, the consequent disturbance to peasant life manifested itself in a terrible famine in 1770.

Second Anglo-Mysore War

The second round of warfare between Mysore and the EIC saw Haidar Ali invade the Carnatic coast to the east with a massive army of 70,000-100,000 men. Through 1780, many isolated British forts were captured and Madras came under serious threat again. Ali had at his disposal far more and bigger cannons than the British, and he was always careful to ensure local terrain protected his artillery in battles so that they could be whisked away if the infantry side of things went against him.

The British, largely due to poor planning and even poorer logistics, suffered a resounding defeat at the Battle of Pollilur in September 1780. The overall commander was Sir Hector Munro, victor at the famous Battle of Buxar in 1764, but Munro was long past his best, and, fatally, he had not managed to link up with a second EIC army led by Colonel William Baillie. It was Baillie's force which was destroyed at Pollilur despite brave resistance.

This defeat at Pollilur, which Munro described as "the severest blow that the English ever suffered in India" (Dalrymple, 255), was very damaging to the Company's reputation in the subcontinent. In addition, thousands of British soldiers were taken prisoner, "although many were later released, some converted to **Islam**, were given wives, and were incorporated into his [Ali's] army" (Barrow, 87). There were also tales of forced circumcisions, the smashing of limbs with hammers, and long spells in flooded cells for those British unfortunate enough to be captured.

At least the British domination of the High Seas meant that Mysore's traditional ally France was limited in how much logistical help it could give to the Indian kingdom. Eventually, the superior resources of the EIC and its ability to renew its armies and weaponry began to tell. The EIC won the Battle of Porto Novo (Parangipettai) in July 1781 thanks to its gifted commander Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783). Coote had exploited the fact that Haidar Ali had unwisely left his left flank unprotected, thinking the sand hills in that position would suffice. Nevertheless, Mysore continued the war, concentrating now on sporadic attacks on the EIC supply network. Haidar Ali died of illness, possibly blood poisoning or cancer, in December 1782. Ali's son and successor, Tipu Sultan (aka Tipoo Sahib, r. 1782-1799), continued his father's aggressive expansionist policies, particularly against his southern neighbours of Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore. Tipu styled

himself as the "Tiger of Mysore" in reference to his military prowess and the profusion of tigers then roaming southern India. Tipu went even further in the association and kept a menagerie of tigers in his palace and used the animal as a logo on everything from banners to his personal firearms; the sultan even had a mechanical tiger made for him (the contraption survived better than its owner and is today on public display in London's Victoria and Albert Museum).

The EIC won the Second Anglo-Mysore War after Tipu Sultan was obliged to sue for peace following the withdrawal of French naval support headed by Admiral de Suffren. The 1784 Treaty of Mangalore essentially restored the borders to the situation prior to the war.

Third Anglo-Mysore War

The EIC Governor-general from 1786 was Lord **Charles Cornwallis** (1738-1805), and he continued the company's policy of boxing in Mysore through alliances, ensuring the continued hostility of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maratha Confederacy against the southern kingdom. The lack of interest Tipu Sultan showed in cultivating allies would, in the end, be the main reason for his demise. The ongoing war also brought the British a new ally eager to defend its own boundaries with Mysore. This was the Kingdom of Travancore. The EIC was determined that Travancore would not be gobbled up by Mysore. In addition, the EIC was equally determined that they would smash the Mysore-France alliance that military intelligence revealed involved shipments of French arms to southern India via Mauritius. Even more useful to Tipu Sultan was the few hundred French mercenaries who not only fought for him but helped train his army and improve his weapons manufacturing, albeit on a small scale.

When Tipu Sultan attacked Travancore on 29 December 1789, the various alliance treaties kicked into gear and the Third Anglo-Mysore War began. In

December 1790, Mysore attacked the Carnatic coast again where towns, villages, and temples were razed to the ground.

An EIC army of 19,000 sepoys led in person by Cornwallis first took Mysore's second **city** of Bangalore and then linked up with his Hyderabad allies, who came in the form of 18,000 cavalry. Cornwallis struggled to find supplies in the face of Tipu Sultan's familiar scorched earth tactics, but he was further reinforced by a Maratha army of 12,000 men. This combined force eventually moved to besiege Seringapatam. Tipu's Sultan's fortress capital was a formidable nut to crack as it had been designed by French engineers using the very latest ideas on how to resist artillery and mining. Sustained barrages and attacks did eventually persuade Tipu Sultan to surrender in January 1792. The terms of the Treaty of Seringapatam were harsh: Tipu Sultan was obliged to give up a large slice of his kingdom, pay the EIC regular 'protection' money, release all prisoners, and leave two of his sons with the Company as hostages. At least the Mysore ruler lived to fight another day, or rather, another war.

Fourth Anglo-Mysore War

The fourth and final installment of this round of on-off wars to control southern India saw Tipu Sultan once more form an alliance with the French. Tipu Sultan had even written to **Napoleon Bonaparte** (1769-1821) to send him an army, but the future emperor had already set his sights on **Egypt** as the stage to best attack British interests abroad. Back in India, the EIC was determined to break such a potentially threatening alliance, and Lord Richard Colley Wellesley (1760-1842), the new EIC Governor-General (appointed 1798), was the most aggressive governor yet. Wellesley amassed a massive army to quash Mysore once and for all. Wellesley also had the continued backing of the Maratha Confederacy and the Nizam of Hyderabad whose army was led by Arthur Wellesley (future Duke of

Wellington and victor at Waterloo). There was, too, an elite battalion of 1,400 British Army grenadiers and a battalion of Scottish Highlanders. As the EIC assembled its most powerful pieces for this final round in the four-decade game of empires, the situation for Mysore looked bleak indeed. By February 1799, 50,000 fighting men were on the march to once again attack Seringapatam.

On 7 April 1799, the EIC army led by Major-General David Baird (a one-time prisoner of Tipu Sultan) along with his Indian allies, began a one-month siege of fortress Seringapatam. By 2 May, the 40 massive 18-pound cannons of the attackers – brought to the capital for this specific purpose – had at last blasted enough holes in the formidable fortification walls to permit the infantry to storm the city and win the war. A staggering 927 cannons were captured at Seringapatam fortress, ten times more than the British had. Tipu Sultan was killed in action or its immediate aftermath, and his remaining family members were exiled. 10,000 men on the Mysore side had been killed compared to just 350 or so of the attackers. The city was systematically looted, and for 24 **hours**, its 100,000 civilians suffered the unspeakable terrors of those left to face an out-of-control victorious army.

Mysore signed a treaty with the EIC in 1799, and the state, now much reduced in territory, came under British rule through their reinstallation of a puppet ruler, **Krishna** Raja Wadiyar III of the traditional Wadiyar ruling family (which had reigned before Haidar Ali's takeover). The British took over Mysore directly in 1831. Victory over Mysore had, for the EIC, "removed a bogey which had overshadowed all their activities in South India for thirty years" (Spear, 102). The storming of Seringapatam marked the first occasion the EIC issued medals to all ranks in its armies, ranging from solid **gold** medals for a general to tin versions for privates, British and Indian.

Aftermath

While the EIC showed the subcontinent the eventual fate of any kingdom that dared to cross it, the spectre of Tipu Sultan cast a long shadow over the British **psyche**. Rarely had the EIC come across such a determined foe, and Tipu was demonized in **Britain**, so much so, Indians in Britain frequently had to bear children in the street shouting at them "Tipoo, Tipoo!". The four Anglo-Mysore Wars became the stuff of legend and were a favourite subject for London playwrights in the 19th century, while Tipu Sultan's demise captured the imagination of countless painters and engravers. More recently, Tipu Sultan's reign and character have been more carefully re-examined by historians, and the study of, for example, **temple** records shows that he was a generous benefactor to Hindu shrines. We also now know that he possessed a library of 2,000 books and was a keen collector of the latest scientific instruments. The Mysore ruler was certainly guilty of devising gruesome deaths for his captives, but he is nowadays presented less as a Muslim fanatic intent on murdering Hindus and Europeans alike and more as an industrious administrator, enlightened ruler, and gifted general who was, in the end, the victim of the relentless colonial expansion of his more powerful neighbors.

Anglo-Maratha Wars
Anglo-Maratha Struggle for Supremacy
Rise of the Marathas

- The rise of the Marathas in India occurred as the Mughal Empire declined. The Marathas gradually gained control over a significant portion of the country and even collected tributes from regions outside their direct influence. By the mid-18th century, they had aspirations of becoming rulers of the north Indian empire and played a significant role in the Mughal court as kingmakers. Despite suffering a defeat at the Third Battle of Panipat in

1761 against Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Marathas regrouped, regained their strength, and within a decade achieved a position of power in India.

- Under the leadership of Bajirao I, considered one of the greatest Peshwas (prime ministers) of the Maratha Empire, a confederacy of prominent Maratha chiefs was formed to manage and expand Maratha power. This confederacy aimed to appease the Kshatriya section of the Marathas, led by the Senapati Dabodi, by assigning each prominent family a sphere of influence that they were expected to conquer and rule on behalf of the Maratha king, Shahu.
- Several prominent Maratha families emerged within this confederacy, including the Gaekwad of Baroda, the Bhonsle of Nagpur, the Holkars of Indore, the Sindhias of Gwalior, and the Peshwa of Poona. The confederacy operated cordially under the leadership of Bajirao I to Madhavrao I. However, the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 and the subsequent death of the young Peshwa, Madhavrao I, in 1772 weakened the Peshwas' control over the confederacy. As a result, the chiefs of the confederacy often quarreled among themselves, although they occasionally united against the British during the period from 1775 to 1782.

Entry of the English into Maratha Politics

- During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Marathas and the English engaged in three major conflicts for political supremacy, ultimately resulting in the English emerging victorious. These conflicts arose due to the English's ambitious goals and the internal divisions within the Maratha Empire, which encouraged the English to pursue their ambitions.
- The English in Bombay had a desire to establish a government similar to the one established by Robert Clive in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The

Marathas provided an opportunity for the English when succession disputes within the Maratha leadership led to divisions and conflicts among them.

- The English saw this as a chance to intervene in Maratha politics and further their own interests. They aimed to exploit the divisions within the Maratha Empire and establish their control over territories and resources. The English hoped to establish a puppet government or manipulate the Maratha leadership to serve their own political and economic interests.
- These conflicts between the Marathas and the English were characterized by a series of battles, alliances, and diplomatic maneuvering. The English took advantage of the internal conflicts within the Maratha Empire, forming alliances with certain factions and exploiting divisions to weaken the Marathas' position.
- Ultimately, through a combination of military victories, diplomatic maneuvering, and exploiting internal divisions, the English emerged as the dominant power in the region. The conflicts marked a significant turning point in the political landscape of India, with the English consolidating their control and influence over vast territories.

First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-82)

Background

- During the First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-1782), the conflict between the Marathas and the English was primarily sparked by the power struggle within the Maratha Empire following the death of Peshwa Madhavrao in 1772.
- After Madhavrao's death, his brother Narayanrao became the fifth Peshwa. However, Narayanrao's uncle, Raghunathrao, orchestrated his nephew's assassination and declared himself the Peshwa, despite not being the rightful heir. Narayanrao's widow, Gangabai, gave birth to a son named

Sawai Madhavrao, who was the legitimate heir to the Peshwa title. A group of twelve Maratha chiefs, led by Nana Phadnavis, supported the infant Madhavrao and sought to rule on his behalf as regents.

- Amidst this power struggle, Raghunathrao sought assistance from the English at Bombay and signed the Treaty of Surat in 1775. Under this treaty, Raghunathrao ceded the territories of Salsette and Bassein to the English and received military support in return. However, the Calcutta Council, the governing body of the English in Calcutta, disapproved of the Treaty of Surat and sent Colonel Upton to Pune to annul it and negotiate a new treaty, known as the Treaty of Purandar (1776). The Treaty of Purandar promised Raghunathrao a pension and revoked his claim to the Peshwa title. However, the Bombay government rejected this and continued to support Raghunathrao, offering him refuge.
- In 1777, Nana Phadnavis, who had sided with Raghunathrao and the English, violated the treaty by granting the French a port on the west coast. In response, the English sent a military force towards Pune to confront the Marathas.
- The First Anglo-Maratha War was characterized by shifting alliances and military engagements. The conflict saw both sides vying for control over key territories and attempting to assert their influence within the Maratha Empire. However, the war eventually concluded with the Treaty of Salbai in 1782, which restored the status quo ante Bellum and resulted in territorial exchanges and mutual recognition of pre-war possessions.
- Overall, the First Anglo-Maratha War was driven by the internal power struggle within the Maratha Empire, with the English seizing the opportunity to intervene and secure their own interests in the region.

Course of War

- The Battle of Wadgaon, which took place in January 1779, was a significant event during the First Anglo-Maratha War. The Marathas, led by Mahadji Sindhia, employed strategic tactics to trap and defeat the English forces near the village of Wadgaon, Maharashtra.
- During the battle, the Maratha army, despite being outnumbered, utilized their knowledge of the local terrain to their advantage. They lured the English forces into the mountainous ghats near Talegaon and launched a surprise attack, isolating them and cutting off their supply lines. The Marathas also implemented a scorched earth policy, causing further difficulties for the English by destroying farmland and poisoning wells.
- The English, under the command of Colonel Egerton, attempted to retreat to Talegaon but were pursued and attacked by the Marathas. Eventually, they were forced to seek refuge in the village of Wadgaon, where they found themselves surrounded on all sides and deprived of essential supplies.
- Faced with a dire situation, the English surrendered by mid-January 1779 and signed the Treaty of Wadgaon. As a result of this treaty, the British Bombay government was compelled to relinquish all territories that they had acquired since the Treaty of Surat in 1775.
- The Battle of Wadgaon was a significant setback for the English in their quest for dominance over the Marathas. The Marathas demonstrated their military prowess and effectively defended their territories, forcing the English to retreat and accept unfavorable terms in the subsequent treaty.

Treaty of Salbai (1782)

- The Treaty of Salbai, signed in May 1782, marked the end of the first phase of the struggle between the English and the Marathas during the First Anglo-Maratha War. The treaty was the result of negotiations between the Peshwa and the English, with Warren Hastings, the Governor-General of Bengal, playing a significant role.

The main provisions of the Treaty of Salbai were as follows:

- Salsette, a territory acquired by the English, would remain under their possession.
- All territories conquered by the English since the Treaty of Purandar (1776), including Bassein, would be restored to the Marathas.
- Fateh Singh Gaekwad would retain his territory in Gujarat and continue to serve the Peshwa as before.
- The English would cease their support for Raghunathrao, and the Peshwa would provide him with a maintenance allowance.
- Haidar Ali, the ruler of Mysore, was required to return all territory taken from the English and the Nawab of Arcot.
- The English would maintain their trading privileges as before.
- The Peshwa would not provide support to any other European nation.
- Both the Peshwa and the English would ensure that their respective allies remained at peace with each other.
- Mahadji Sindhia, a prominent Maratha leader, would act as a mutual guarantor to ensure the proper observance of the treaty's terms.
- The Treaty of Salbai aimed to establish a period of peace between the English and the Marathas for twenty years. It addressed territorial disputes, alliances, trade privileges, and the position of various key individuals

within the Maratha power structure. However, tensions and conflicts between the English and the Marathas would continue in subsequent phases of the Anglo-Maratha Wars.

Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1805)

Background

- The Second Anglo-Maratha War took place from 1803 to 1805. Similar to the first war, the conflict arose due to the internal divisions among the Marathas and the British desire to intervene in Maratha affairs. Here is a breakdown of the key events during the war:
- Succession and Political Instability: After the suicide of Peshwa Madhavrao Narayan in 1795, Bajirao II, the son of Raghunathrao, became the new Peshwa. However, his rule was marred by ineffectiveness and he was heavily influenced by his ministers. Nana Phadnavis, a rival of Bajirao II, held significant power as the chief minister.
- Opportunity for British Intervention: The internal conflicts and power struggles within the Maratha Empire provided an opportunity for the British to interfere in Maratha affairs. The death of Nana Phadnavis in 1800 further weakened the Marathas and strengthened the British position.
- British Military Campaign: The British, under the leadership of Lord Wellesley, launched a military campaign to expand their influence in India. They attacked and captured several Maratha territories, including Bassein, Broach, and Ahmadnagar. The British also defeated Marathas armies in battles such as Assaye and Argaon.
- Treaty of Bassein: In December 1802, Peshwa Bajirao II signed the Treaty of Bassein with the British. The treaty made the Peshwa a subsidiary ally of the British East India Company, meaning he had to accept their protection and abide by their advice in matters of external affairs. This treaty further

escalated tensions between the Marathas and other regional powers who opposed British influence.

- Maratha Resistance: The Treaty of Bassein sparked widespread opposition to the British among the Maratha chiefs, including Holkars and Bhonsles. They rallied together under the leadership of Yashwantrao Holkar and Daulat Rao Sindhia to challenge British dominance.
- Battle of Poona: The Maratha chiefs launched a joint attack on the British residency in Pune, seeking to overthrow the Peshwa and remove British influence. However, the British successfully defended their position and inflicted heavy losses on the Marathas.
- Conclusion and Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon: The war came to an end with the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon in December 1805. The treaty restored some territories to the Marathas but also recognized British control over significant parts of India. The Marathas were weakened, and the British expanded their influence and dominance in the region.
- The Second Anglo-Maratha War further diminished the power and influence of the Maratha Empire, while strengthening the British position in India. It marked another phase of British expansion and control in the Indian subcontinent.

Course of War

- The course of the war unfolded as follows: On April 1, 1801, the Peshwa (ruler) brutally killed Vithuji, the brother of Jaswantrao Holkar. Outraged by this act, Jaswantrao assembled his forces to confront the combined armies of Sindhia and Bajirao II. The unrest continued, and on October 25, 1802, Jaswantrao decisively defeated the armies of the Peshwa and Sindhia near Poona, specifically at Hadapsar, and placed Vinayakrao, the son of

Amritrao, on the Peshwa's throne. In fear, Bajirao II fled to Bassein and signed a treaty with the English on December 31, 1802.

- Known as the Treaty of Bassein, the agreement stipulated several terms. First, the Peshwa agreed to receive a native infantry of at least 6,000 troops from the English, along with field artillery and European artillerymen stationed permanently in his territories. Second, he agreed to cede territories yielding an income of Rs 26 lakh to the English, surrender the city of Surat, renounce all claims for Chauth on Nizam's dominions, accept the English's arbitration in disputes with the Nizam or the Gaekwad, refrain from employing Europeans from nations at war with the English, and subject his relations with other states to English control.
- After accepting the subsidiary alliance, the Peshwa's allies, Sindhia and Bhonsle, attempted to preserve Maratha's independence. However, the well-prepared English army under Arthur Wellesley defeated their combined forces, compelling them to sign separate subsidiary treaties with the English. In 1804, Jashwantrao Holkar tried to form a coalition of Indian rulers against the English, but his efforts proved unsuccessful. The Marathas were defeated, forced into vassalage under the British, and became isolated from one another through the defeats of Bhonsle, Sindhia, and Holkar.
- The Treaty of Bassein, although signed by a Peshwa with limited political authority, brought immense gains for the English. The provision of permanently stationing English troops in Maratha territory was strategically advantageous. With troops already stationed in Mysore, Hyderabad, and Lucknow, adding Poona to the list allowed for a more evenly spread English force that could be promptly deployed when necessary. While the

Treaty of Bassein did not hand over India to the English easily, it marked a significant step in that direction, positioning the English to expand their sphere of influence. Therefore, the statement that the treaty "gave the English the key to India" may be seen as somewhat exaggerated but understandable given the circumstances.

Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-19)

Background

- The Third Anglo-Maratha War took place from 1817 to 1819 with Lord Hastings, who aimed to establish British paramountcy, leading the British forces. This war occurred in the backdrop of the East India Company's need for new markets after the end of its monopoly on trade in China (except for tea) according to the Charter Act of 1813. The Pindaris, a group comprising various castes and classes, served as mercenaries in Maratha armies. When the Marathas weakened, the Pindaris were left without regular employment, leading them to engage in plundering neighbouring territories, including those under the Company's control. The English accused the Marathas of harbouring the Pindaris.
- Pindari leaders such as Amir Khan and Karim Khan surrendered, while Chitu Khan fled into the jungles. The Treaty of Bassein, which was seen by other Maratha leaders as a surrender of independence, created resentment and discontent. Lord Hastings' actions against the Pindaris were viewed as a violation of Maratha sovereignty and served to reunite the Maratha Confederacy. In 1817, Bajirao II, repentant and seeking to challenge the English, rallied the Maratha chiefs together in a final attempt during the Third Anglo-Maratha War.

Course of War

- During the course of the war, the Peshwa initiated an attack on the British Residency in Poona, while Appa Sahib of Nagpur targeted the residency in Nagpur. Meanwhile, Holkar prepared for war. However, the Marathas had already lost the crucial elements necessary for building and sustaining power. The political and administrative conditions in the Maratha states were chaotic and ineffective. After the death of Jaswant Rao Holkar, Tulsi Bai, Holkar's favored mistress, took control in Poona. Despite her intelligence, she struggled to govern the state properly due to the influence of untrustworthy individuals like Balram Seth and Amir Khan. The Bhonsle of Nagpur and the Sindhia of Gwalior had also weakened. The British retaliated vigorously, preventing the Peshwa from reestablishing his authority over the Maratha confederacy.
- As a result, the Peshwa was defeated at Khirki, the Bhonsle at Sitabuldi, and the Holkar at Mahidpur. Several significant treaties were signed: the Treaty of Poona with the Peshwa in June 1817, the Treaty of Gwalior with Sindhia in November 1817, and the Treaty of Mandsaur with Holkar in January 1818. In June 1818, the Peshwa finally surrendered, leading to the dissolution of the Maratha confederacy and the abolition of the peshwaship. Peshwa Bajirao became a British retainer at Bithur near Kanpur. Pratap Singh, a direct descendant of Shivaji, was appointed as the ruler of a small principality called Satara, which was created from the Peshwa's former dominions.

Why the Marathas Lost

- The defeat of the Marathas by the English in the Third Anglo-Maratha War can be attributed to several reasons:

- Inept Leadership: The later Maratha leaders, including Bajirao II, Daulatrao Sindhia, and Jaswantrao Holkar, were ineffective and self-serving. They lacked the leadership qualities required to match the capabilities of English officials such as Elphinstone, John Malcolm, and Arthur Wellesley.
- Defective Nature of Maratha State: The cohesion of the Maratha state was artificial and precarious. There was no concerted effort to improve communal conditions, promote education, or unify the people. The Maratha rise was based on religious-nationalistic movements, which proved inadequate when facing a well-organized European power like the British.
- Loose Political Set-up: The Maratha empire functioned as a loose confederation with the Chhatrapati and later the Peshwa at the helm. Powerful chiefs like the Gaikwad, Holkar, Sindhia, and Bhonsle enjoyed semi-independent status and only paid lip service to the authority of the Peshwa. Internal divisions and hostilities among the Maratha chiefs weakened the overall state.
- Inferior Military System: While the Marathas displayed personal prowess and valour, they were inferior to the English in terms of military organization, weaponry, disciplined action, and effective leadership. Divided command and treachery within the ranks contributed to the Maratha's failures. The Marathas also neglected the importance of artillery and failed to adopt modern warfare techniques adequately.
- Unstable Economic Policy: The Maratha leadership failed to develop a stable economic policy that could adapt to changing times. The absence of industries and limited foreign trade opportunities hindered the economic development of the Maratha state, ultimately affecting its political stability.

- Superior English Diplomacy and Espionage: The English demonstrated superior diplomatic skills in winning allies and isolating the Marathas. The disunity among the Maratha chiefs made it easier for the English to take an offensive stance. The English maintained a well-organized spy system, gathering valuable information about their enemies while the Marathas lacked sufficient knowledge about their opponents.
- Progressive English Outlook: The English, influenced by the forces of the Renaissance, had a progressive outlook, while the Marathas remained steeped in medievalism and traditional social hierarchy. The Maratha leaders paid little attention to the practical aspects of governance, making it difficult to unite the empire.
- Overall, the combination of these factors, including weak leadership, a defective political system, military shortcomings, economic instability, and diplomatic disadvantages, led to the defeat of the Marathas by the English.
- Regarding the conquest of Sindh, the English gradually developed an interest in the region due to trade facilities authorized by a Mughal Farman (royal order) in 1630. The rise of the Talpuras Amirs, a Baloch tribe, in the 18th century resulted in their acquiring power and influence in Sindh. The English initially established a factory in Thatta under the Kallora chiefs but faced obstacles later on. Various treaties were then negotiated, including the Treaty of 'Eternal Friendship' in 1807 and the Treaty of 1832, which confirmed English privileges in Sindh and established a defensive arrangement. Lord Auckland's interest in Sindh was driven by the need to counter a potential Russian invasion and gain influence in Afghanistan. The English gradually turned Sindh into a British protectorate through treaties and interventions.

The Causes of the First Anglo-Afghan War

Afghanistan is a beautiful, but savage and hostile country. There are no resources, no huge market for selling goods and the inhabitants are poor. So the obvious question is: Why did this country become a target of aggression of the biggest powers in the world? I would like to answer this question at least in the first case, when Great Britain invaded Afghanistan in 1839. This year is important; it started the line of conflicts, which affected Afghanistan in the 19th and 20th century and as we can see now, American soldiers are still in Afghanistan, the conflicts have not yet ended.

The history of Afghanistan as an independent country starts in the middle of the 18th century. The first and for a long time the last man, who united the biggest centres of power in Afghanistan (Kandahar, Herat and Kabul) was the commander of Afghan cavalrymen in the Persian Army, Ahmad Shah Durrani. He took advantage of the struggle of succession after the death of Nāder Shāh Afshār, and until 1750, he ruled over all of Afghanistan.1 His power depended on the money he could give to not so loyal chieftains of many Afghan tribes, which he gained through aggression toward India and Persia. After his death, the power of the house of Durrani started to decrease. His heirs were not able to keep the power without raids into other countries. In addition the ruler usually had wives from all of the important tribes, so after the death of the Shah, there were always bloody fights of succession. There is actually one important descendant of Ahmad Khan: Shah Shuja Durrani. He was the first Afghan Shah, who accepted the British mission into his country. The British envoy, Montstuart Elphinstone, came to Peshawar in 1809.2 The good results of their negotiations were destroyed due to the removal of Shah Shuja from the Afghan throne by his brother, Mahmud Shah Durrani. However there was one important result. Shah Shuja was rather

untypically taken under the wings of the East India Company and given a residential house in Ludhiana. He played a huge role in future events.

The reason why Great Britain started to be concerned about affairs in Central Asia was the Napoleonic wars.3 Britain saw the Treaties of Tilsit as a threat to the security of India and started to negotiate treaties with all their neighbours. Instead of the already mentioned discussion with the Afghan Shah, British also came to Sindh, Persia and Sikh Empire. Negotiation with Sindh took place in 1808; the first negotiation broke down, but second expedition returned with a clause of eternal friendship and a promise of emirs: that no French will be let into their country. Negotiations were also in motion in Persia. The first envoy, Sir John Malcolm, did not succeed, but the second one, Sir Hartford Jones, negotiated the British-Persian Treaty on 12th March. The Treaty contained several articles, but the most important for our subject were those about Afghanistan and foreign policy. Persia undertook to not let any foreign army go into their territory and to help India in case of any threat. Britain promised material and financial help in case of a defensive war, and in the 9th article to not interfere with the conflict between Afghanistan and Persia. This promise was especially important, because for almost the whole first half of the 19th century, Britain tried to omit it from the treaty. The last treaty was signed in Lahore, the capital city of the Sikh Empire. The British envoy, Charles Metcalfe, met here with the Sikh Maharajah, Ranjit Singh, and they signed an allied treaty, which set the border between India and the Sikh Empire on the Sutlej River and was the base of long term friendship between those powers.

In 1813, British representatives mediated the Peace of Gulistan. The peace agreement ended nine years of war between Russia and Persia. Britain was in a tricky situation. Because of the Napoleonic wars, Britain financially supported

Russia and because of the treaty of 1809, it had to support Persia too, so it was in their interest to end this war. Britain also wanted to prevent conflicts between Russia and Persia in the future. The instrument for this goal was the treaty of 25th December 1814.4 Britain had to keep some articles from the treaty of 1809 including the unwanted 9th article. London also promised £150,000 for equipment and training soldiers in case of proven aggression against Persia. The Persian Shah claimed to try to convince the other Central Asian countries to join their commitment of not letting foreign armies into their country.

The situation inside Afghanistan did not indicate any danger for India. After the dethroning of Shah, Shuja Durrani took over the initiative of a tribe called Barakzais. Mahmud Shah was forced to retreat to Herat. The main power was moved into the hands of Barakzai vizier Futeh Khan. Futeh was in charge of Kabul until 1818, when he was as- sassinated by Sadozais in revenge for a raid of his son, Dost Mohammad Khan, on Herat. This event started a civil war in Afghanistan. Ranjit Singh took advantage of it and from 1818 to 1819 he occupied the Multan province, containing Kashmir, Jammu, and most importantly, Peshawar. This town had huge economical and historical value for Afghan monarchs. The majority of inhabitants were Pakhtuns (ethnical "Afghans"). The civil war ended in the 1826, when the inner fight between the Barakzai chieftains was decidedly won by Dost Mohammad Chan. Victorian historians usually valued his moral character highly. But contemporary historians are not so positive about his character. He gained the power "partly through his own powers of leadership, partly because he was even more successful at intrigue and treachery than his surviving brothers, partly because he had been Fateh Khan's favourite, and partly because he was supported by the Qizilbash palace guard, his mother having belonged to one of the noble Qizilbash families which lived around Kabul.

In the first half of the 19th century, Central Asia was a target of two main powers: Russia and Great Britain.6 The war between Persia and Russia from 1826 to 1828 had a big impact on their relations. Russia took advantage of a doubtful article in the Treaty of Gulistan and annexed Gokcha. Persia took it as cassus belli and wanted to attack Russia. Persia wanted to use the Decembrist Revolt as an advantage. The British saw this conflict as Persian aggression and did not help, in accordance with the agreement of 1814. Persia lost the war, which resulted in a very catastrophic peace of Turkmenchay. The policy of foreign secretary Lord Canning in this case was a target of major criticism by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Ellenborough.7 Ellenborough warned the government that this treaty would cause an increase of Russian influence on Persia. Charles Metcalfe had similar thoughts: "were we ever to expect any essential aid from Persia, in the time of our own need, we should most assuredly find ourselves miserably deceived and disappointed. If ever Russia be in the condition to set forth army against India, Persia most probably will be under her banners

Problems were also caused by the uncertain leadership in foreign policy of British India. There were two major institutions: The "East India Company" and the Foreign Office, and neither of them were clearly in the front. Both offices were sending their own envoys and in many cases enforced different policies. Russian expansion also did not threaten only Persia, but the Osman Empire was in danger, too. The Duke of Wellington even said: "All parties in Europe must view this Treaty of Peace in the same light as we do. They may not have such reasons as we may have to look with jealousy and anxiety at its consequences; but they must all consider it in the same light as the death blow to the independence of the Ottoman Porte, and the forerunner of the dissolution and extinction of its power."9 Lord Ellenborough saw the problem similarly. The book by Colonel Lacy Evans On the

Practicability of an Invasion of British India, which was describing the possibilities of Russian progress through Central Asia to India, had a big influence, too. He quotes many important men in his book, for example Sir John Malcolm: "The frontier of the Indus is the most vulnerable part of our Eastern Empire."10 This danger was rather illusory and even British politicians were aware of it; but they were worried about the possible approach of foreign forces near Indian borders. According to Sir John Malcolm, this presence could lead to "danger and incitement to riot"11 in British India. This reality would have had unwanted consequences, such as the necessity to increase the amount of soldiers allocated in British India for its potential defence. This would lead to the reduction of the profit that the East India Company received from India.

Wellington's government tried to push Russia as far from India as possible. The main instrument for achieving this goal was the commercial influence. All diplomatic journeys in Central Asia were declared as trade opening. The primary aim of the policy of Lord Ellenborough during his two years in office at Board of Control was the expansion of British trade throughout Indus. After the fall of Wellington's government, the new president of the Board of Control (Charles Grant) continued in this policy. It was even more peaceful; the new Governor-general of India Lord Bentinck was not to go into any military actions including cases, where negotiations broke down.

In 1830, a young British officer, Alexander Burnes, took off on an expedition. Burnes was not a very experienced diplomat, so the expedition was without much success, but it laid the bases for the next, more experienced, envoy of Henry Pottinger. Both diplomats were very im- portant in our story. Henry Pottinger succeeded, thanks to his decisive attitude and to stressing dangers like ambitions of Sikh Empire or Afghan ruler, Dost Mohammad Khan. Nevertheless,

the first visit of Henry Pottinger did not bring any concrete result; however his second visit in January 1832 ended up in a commercial treaty. Emirs agreed not to interrupt British trade on Indus, with the exception of military material. Britain wanted to settle British resident into the biggest and capital-type city of Sindh, Hyderabad, but they did not succeed in this demand, due Emir's fear of losing independence.

In January 1832, Alexander Burnes started his second journey. His final destination was Bokhara, but his first stop was Kabul. He arrived at the biggest city of Afghanistan on 1st May 1832.12 The behaviour of Dost Mohammad Khan was excellent and Alexander Burnes quickly started to feel sympathetic toward him. Burnes wrote later about their first diner: "The conversation of the evening was varied, and embraced such a number of topics, that I found it difficult to detail them; such was the knowledge, intelligence, and curiosity that the chief displayed."13 The opinion of Alexander Burnes is probably the main reason why Dost Mohammad Khan has such a big moral credit in the historical literature of the 19th century. It has to be said that the motivation for this behaviour was not without self-interest. Dost Mohammad Khan wanted to convince Britain to help him against the Sikh empire with his ambition to get Peshawar back. Burnes had visited the British candidate for the Afghan throne, Shuja Durrani, some months earlier and thought that Dost would be a much better ruler for British interests. His plan was simple. He proposed to wait for the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and then make an alliance with Dost Mohammad Khan, who he hoped would cooperate with the British in an expansion of trade along Indus and the pacification of frontier areas of British India. Burnes continued to Bokhara after his departure from Kabul. He arrived to Bokhara in June 1832. His main instruction was to discover the extent of Russian trade in Bokhara. Burnes tried to contact Emir of

Bokhara, but the guards did not let him into the palace, because did not have a diplomatic status. His message for the Indian government about Russian trade involved describing certain spheres where Britain could succeed. The Russian position in metals was ironclad; Burnes saw the possibilities to get on in trade with manufactured goods and cotton. As a last part of his journey, Burnes visited Persia, where he met the crown-prince and Shah. On 18th January 1833, he headed back to India

Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja Durrani started to draw outlines of their future alliance in March 1833. Negotiations were not difficult; their interests were very similar. They signed the treaty on 12th March 1833. Ranjit promised to help Shuja with restoration, and on the other hand Shuja promised to officially admit Sikh sovereignty over the already occupied lands of Punjab (Peshawar, Kashmir etc.). Shuja wanted to gain British support, but because of instructions from London, GovernorGeneral Lord Bentinck could not intervene.

Another power invaded Afghanistan before Shuja, along with Ranjit, could even start. Persian Shah, Mohammad Mirza, tried to fulfil his ambition to take control of Herat. Britain was not very pleased, but could not do anything because of the 9th article of the treaty of 1814. Britain wanted to come to an understanding with Russia. Foreign secretary Lord Palmerston made an arrangement with Russian Foreign Minister, Count Nesselrode, in which they agreed to try to end the conflict with diplomatic negotiations. In the end, it was not necessary. Mohammad Mirza had to return to Teheran because of the death of his father, Abbas Mirza, and because of a fight of succession that was beginning.

In the beginning of the year 1834, the plans of Ranjit and Shuja finally came to be. The army of the ex-emir started its march into the depths of Afghan country in January; a force of approximately 22,000 men. After a slight

complication with the wild tribes of Sindh, the army fought a battle near Rohri on 9th January 1834. Shuja won and could march towards Kandahar. Fights continued for several months; the decisive battle took place on 2nd July 1834, near Kandahar. Shuja stood against the Barakzai brothers, who ruled Kandahar (the most important of them was Kohaldir Khan). Dost Mohammad Khan was also present; it was quite surprising because the Barakzai brothers had not had very harmonic relations so far. For the moment their alliance celebrated victory, but conflicts inside the family were imminent after the battle, when Kohaldir denied Dost access to the city. Nevertheless, Dost gained even more influence in Kabul. Local religious leaders awarded his efforts with new titles: "Commander of the Faithful" or "Commander of the Champions of the Islam". Not everything was good for the Afghan ruler at the moment. Ranjit didn't want to give up his promised gains and sent his best general, Hari Singh, to conquer Peshawar. He had had a huge influence on city's inner politics since 1819, but the formal ruler was still member of the Barakzai family, Sultan Mohammad Khan. Hari Singh drove him out of the city.

Dost Mohammad Khan wanted to use this as cassus belli and allied with Sultan Mohammad Khan with the goal of re-conquering Peshawar. This alliance was even more surprising than the one with Kohaldir Mohammad Khan, because the relationship between Dost Mohammad Khan and Sultan Mohammad Khan was very unfriendly. However this time they had common interests. In the beginning of the year 1835 they tried to march towards Peshawar. Unfortunately for Dost Mohammad Khan, the Sikhs managed to convince Sultan Mohammad Khan to give up his plans and betray the ruler of Kabul. They promised him his possessions in Punjab and a safe place to live. The plans of Dost Mohammad Khan failed, so

he had to find another way to fulfil the ultimate goal of his foreign policy: Peshawar.

On the 29th of April the government changed again in Great Britain. Whigs won the election and their leader, Lord Melbourne, became Prime Minister. Lord Palmerston maintained the Foreign Office despite a slight resistance from the Prime Minister. Lord Hobhouse took charge of the Board of Control. He had to decide who would be the next GovernorGeneral. Before the final election Charles Metcalfe took over the office as temporary governor. The exiting Governor Lord Bentinck wrote a very long memorandum about the situation in India. He was aware of a possible attack of Russian-Persian alliance; he was not concerned about direct a Russian attack, but saw the danger in Persian ambitions towards Herat. He also predicted possible problems with the Sikhs in case of the death of Ranjit Singh.

The Primary goal of the new government was a reduction of Russian influence in Persia. The newly appointed British envoy in Teheran, Henry Ellis, was told by Palmerston to warn the Shah about any attempts to take control of Herat. Palmerston was sure that a Persian attack would have negative consequences for Britain: “Whether Persia is successful or not, her resources will be wasted in these wars, and her future means of defence against the attacks of Russia must be diminished.” Losing the war could result in Persia’s political dependence on Russia.

In July 1835, the office of Governor-General of India was offered to former First Lord of Admiralty, Lord Auckland. He had many experiences with politics; he was the President of the Board of Trade or “Master of the Mint”. However colonial administration was new to him. His appointment probably had its roots in the fact that “Melbourne, Palmerston, Auckland and Hobhouse formed a very tight

little group within the Whig party." Auckland accepted the offer and set out to India in Sep- tember. His farewell speech was quite promising. He said that he "looked with exultation to the new prospects opening before him, affording him an opportunity of doing good to his fellow-creatures–of promoting education and knowledge – of improving the administration of justice in India – of extending the blessing of good government and happiness to millions in India.

After his arrival to India, Auckland was a little confused so he needed the help from the exiting Governor Charles Metcalfe very much. Metcalfe's influence on Auckland's decisions was big. The negotiations run by Henry Ellis and John McNeill continued in Teheran. Both tried to convince the Shah not to attack Teheran, but their effort was constantly thwarted by the activity of Count Simonich, the unofficial Russian envoy in Teheran.

At the end of May 1836, Palmerston received alarming messages from Teheran. Within the messages, Henry Ellis announced the arrival of Afghan envoys from Dost Mohammad Khan.20 This diplomatic expedition had a simple goal: to get Persian support against the Sikh Empire in exchange for support of Kabul against Herat. Fortunately for Britain Ellis was able to convince the envoys to go back to Kabul without any contracts; but within the following month the next diplomatic expedition arrived from Kandahar. The result was the same. If Henry Ellis were to be ignored, the Afghan envoys were afraid of British aggression in response. Henry Ellis ended his service in Teheran in the summer of 1836 and was replaced by John McNeill. McNeill had special competences; unlike Ellis, he was not under the authority of the Indian GovernorGeneral, but reported directly to Foreign Office in London. His main goal was to erase Article 9 in the British-Persian Treaty of 1809 or 1814.

Negotiations were going on in India, as well. Auckland was trying to endure the long-term concept “Balance of Power”. He warned the Sikh Empire not to adopt an aggressive foreign policy, particularly against Sindh. In correspondence with Dost Mohammad Khan, Auckland adopted tactics of no promises and remained strict on the policy of only business treaties. Three missions to neighbouring countries would resolve this complicated situation.

The first mission was directed at the lands behind Indus and was led by Alexander Burnes. The second one had its goal in Sindh, where experienced diplomat Henry Pottinger would achieve some good results. Last one was led by Claude Wade and would ensure the continued alliance with Ranjit Singh.

The mission to Sindh had one primary goal: enforce the foundation of British residence in Hyderabad. Henry Pottinger was instructed to use the intervention in favour of Sindh which Auckland made in Lahore. The secondary goal was the expansion of British trade along the Indus. A big opponent of this policy was Charles Metcalfe: “I lament the course which you have determined to pursue, for what is now done is but a beginning. We are, I fear, about to plunge into a labyrinth of intervenes from which I fear we shall never be able to extricate ourselves. I cannot perceive any object worth the risk of the possible consequences of this change in our policy, and this departure from that pacific system which was essential for the establishment of our political strength and financial prosperity.”21 Metcalfe was convinced that Auckland should have left the Sindh to Sikh empire and with this decision he had shown his gratitude for a smooth alliance with Ranjit. Auckland answer was very complex: “You almost frighten me with your black prognosis. I am far from enthusiast upon the subject of the Indus, nor do I dream golden dreams of it, or think it the factorum of India as some in England do. But it may grow into Commercial importance. Its navigation is an avowed British

project. I have been moved to secure it and money and pains are spending and have been spent for it. It is true that this one may lead us further than we either wish or foresee, but the most passive policy is not always the most pacific; and another course might have led to evils even more formidable. In all this you will differ from me and I deeply lament it, and whenever you do so I must doubt whether I am in the right. But whether I am in the right or wrong it is little good in politics to be long looking back on footsteps that are passed. Our thoughts must be given to where we may step in advance with most firmness and prudence, and a very few days will enable me to see our way more clearly."22 The letter shows without any doubts that Auckland hived off Metcalfe in this time.

On 17th November 1836, Ranjit Singh finally yielded and definitively gave up the idea of military progress to Sindh. The main cause of this action was, without a doubt, British pressure. It should be said that this pressure was in a friendly atmosphere and did not harm the relationship between the countries. The problem was that Ranjit's withdrawal bound Britain to orientate her politics to the Sikh Empire and against Afghanistan.

Negotiations on Persia were not so successful. Persians did not want to give up expansion to Herat and for British diplomacy it was still harder and harder to discourage Shah from his expansion. McNeill did everything he could and was instructed to leave Teheran in case of Persian attack on Herat.

Meanwhile, Alexander Burnes started his journey to Kabul. By his own words: "On the 26th of November we sailed from Bombay, and sighting the fine palace at Mándivee, on the 6th of December, we finally landed in Sindh on 13th of the month.

The activities of Count Simonich became even more dangerous for British interests in the beginning of 1837. In January, Palmerston wrote the letter to the

British envoy in St. Petersburg Earl Dunham: “I have to instruct your Excellency to ask Count Nesselrode whether Count Simonich is acting according to his instructions in thus urging the shah to pursue a line of conduct so diametrically opposed to His Persian Majesty’s real interests.” Nesselrode replied that the British did not have the right information because Count Simonich certainly did not undertake these steps. By the end of February 1837, Durham was assured that Simonich would be called away. From our perspective it is quite sure that this move was a cloaking manoeuvre. Nesselrode printed a transcription of his discussions with the Shah, where Simonich spoke against plans to conquer Herat; however after three months Count Simonich was one of the Russian officers who accompanied the Shah’s army to Herat.

Meanwhile, McNeill sent a memorandum which arrived in Calcutta at the end of March and to London at the end of April. He wrote that the main problem was the decision between two main tribes (Sadozais and Barakzais) of Afghanistan, but he saw the main goal as the unification of Afghanistan. McNeill’s opinions were very important for his officials both in India and London, but in London his influence was more visible. Auckland hoped that after possibly helping Afghanistan against Persia, there would be an option to fix relations between Afghanistan and the Sikh Empire. Auckland also had a long-term plan to build a dike of prosperous states along Indus which would, in times of danger, protect the Indian border as British allies.

Letters written in November 1836 by Auckland arrived in February 1837 which, in case negotiations failed with Persia, ordered McNeill to fall back from Teheran. McNeill wrote immediately to Palmerston arrived to McNeill: “I doubt whether these measures proposed by Indian Government would have desired effect. I am not quite satisfied with reference to the temper and feelings of the

Shah of this Court, whether it would be advisable to produce the alienation which must result from the measures proposed by the Indian Government, unless we are prepared to go further and to insure success in the object for which we resort to threats, by convincing the Persian Government that we are prepared to act as well as threaten.

In this perspective it is important to mention that British foreign policy was divided. McNeill reported directly to the Foreign Office, but he had to follow orders from the Indian government, too. So, he always could say that orders did not coincide and do the policy he wanted. London and Calcutta were also both dependent on his messages as sources of information. Palmerston sent McNeill to Teheran because of their shared opinions on policy. They were both slightly more aggressive in foreign policy than Auckland. McNeill's plan was quite simple: help Dost Mohammad Khan unify all of Afghanistan and use his state as a wall against Russian and Persian expansion into India. This was not acceptable for Auckland because he did not want to lose the alliance with the Sikh Empire, which was very important in the strategic plans of British India.

The situation was messed up even more when Dost Mohammad Khan tried to attack Peshawar, a long-term target of Dost's foreign policy. The attack failed. The commander of the army and Dost's son Akbar Mohammad Khan won the battle of Jamrud and almost took control over Peshawar. However lack of proper logistics prevented this achievement and the armies had to withdraw. This episode was very important. From then on, every contact with Kabul was quite risky in perspective of the relation between the British Empire and the Sikhs. And relations with Sikhs were crucial for the defence of India. Auckland had the same opinion as that which was articulated by the Commander in Chief of Indian Army, Henry Fane, almost a year before these events: "A case could hardly occur which would

render it wise for us to overturn the Sikh power, or to over-run the Punjab, or to extend ourselves to the Westward... Every advance you might make beyond Sutlej to the Westward, in my opinion adds to your military weakness. If you want your empire to expand, expand it over Oude or over Gwalior, and the remains of Maratha Empire. Make yourselves complete sovereigns of all within your bounds but let alone Far West."

Meanwhile, Alexander Burnes got closer to Kabul and received complete instructions, from William Macnaghten. The mission was offi- cially declared to be strictly commercial.27 However, Burnes was told not to give any direct answers to questions from the Emir. He also was instructed to try to conciliate relations between the Sikhs and Kabul and "observe the general feelings towards the British and Russian Governments."28 Before he had received these instructions, he had heard about the battle of Jamrud. It gave him the idea to suggest offering Peshawar to Dost in exchange for an increase of British influence in this area and military assistance against Persia. These ideas were very close to the thoughts of John McNeill but not to the thoughts of Burnes's main superior, Lord Auckland. Auckland valued more highly the alliance with the Sikhs than a possible improvement of relations with Kabul.

In June 1837, Herat's government sent an offer of very favourable peace to the Persian Shah, but he refused it. McNeill wrote immediately to Palmerston that diplomacy was failing and that it was inevitable that something more aggressive would need to be done. McNeill asked Auckland to submit a warning as the highest political authority in the area, but it was too late. On 23rd June 1837, the march of the Persian army in the direction of Herat started. The Russians officially dissociated from this move; Nesselrode sent Palmerston a dispatch from Simonich, where the Count apologized that he was not able to discourage the Shah from his

expansion into Herat. It was a lie, but this correspondence between both ministers improved their relations concerning Afghanistan slightly.

Burnes's mission was now, because of the Shah's action in Herat, even more political. In another instruction there was more emphasis put on the improvement of Sikh-Afghan relations. He also proposed that the Peshawar could be given back to Sultan Mohammad Khan if the Emir gave up his negotiations with Persia. The Herat events could serve as a good catalyst for rapprochement. Unfortunately, the first meeting was undertaken before these instructions arrived in Kabul, so Burnes had to scrape by with the old ones.

Alexander Burnes arrived in Kabul on the 20th of September 1837. His first impression of Emir was very positive and the rest of the expedition saw him similarly. As he wrote later: "we were received with great pomp and splendour by a fine body of Afghan Cavalry, led by Ameer's son, Akbar Khan."29 It is obvious now that Emir wanted to provide this impression, so he prepared very well, but the expedition did not see this reality. The negotiations were very difficult; Dost Mohammad Khan rejected the offer of Barakzai rule in Peshawar. He wanted another Barakzai than Sultan Mohammad Khan to rule in this city. Burnes sent this information to Calcutta.

New instructions finally arrived in October. Dost was very sorry for his contacts with Persia and criticized his brothers from Kandahar who had Persian envoys at their court. The neuralgic point of the negotiation had always been Peshawar. Dost Mohammad Khan did not want his cousin, Sultan Mohammad Khan, to rule there, so the proposition from Britain was nearly unacceptable. Because of the nature of his foreign policy and situation in Afghanistan, he could not give up the effort to take this city. His one and only strategy was to convince Britain that he was a much better ally than Ranjit Singh and then capture the city

with their help. So, he cooperated with Alexander Burnes extensively, but the situation became even more complicated when Russia sent their own envoy.

Burnes's good relationship with Dost Mohammad Khan can be easily illustrated by quoting his letter to Macnaghten concerning this envoy: "Dost Mohammad Khan said that he had come for my counsel on the occasion; that he wished to have nothing to do with any other power than the British; that he did not wish to receive any agent of any power whatever so long as he had a hope of sympathy from us." Lieutenant Vitkevich arrived in Kabul on the 19th December 1837. Burnes described him as "intelligent and well informed on the subject of Northern Russia."31 The main difference between Russian and British diplomacy was simple: the Russians promised everything. The first proposal was really tempting. Vitkevich offered Russian help against the Sikhs with annual subsidies and the only thing he asked as the reward for all this was an improvement in relations.

Meanwhile, the Barakzai brothers in Kandahar continued with their contacts with Persia. They sent the son of one of the most prominent Barakzais in the city to negotiate in Teheran. Burnes panicked and sent an offer of money and personal assistance in case of an attack on Kandahar. In addition, he sent Lieutenant Leech to try to negotiate with local the Sirdars in ending their contacts with Persia. He probably knew that he was contravening his competences. His defence was easy, he argued that there was no time: "In the critical position in which I was situated I saw no course left but that which I have followed. My belief is that Herat may withstand the attack of the Persian, but if not, and the Shah marches to Kandahar, our own position in the East becomes endangered, and the tranquillity of all the countries that border on the Indus." Burnes also openly protested against the direction of Auckland's foreign policy and tried to convince

the Governor-General to adopt policy against the Sikhs and in support of the Afghans. “Though the messenger has arrived and delivered his letters, I trust that the friendly devotion of Dost Mohammad Khan is asking in my Advice and next handing to me all the letters brought by the emissary will remain in your Lordship’s mind, as proofs of sincerity and conciliation, highly to be appreciated, and the more so as the British have as yet made no avowal of support to his power, while he has received declarations from others, the sincerity of which can no longer be questioned.” He further spoke against an alliance with the Sikhs: “It is undoubtedly true that we have an old and faithful ally in Maharajah Runjeet Singh, but such an alliance will not keep these powers at a distance, or secure to us what is the end of all alliances, peace and prosperity, on our country and on our frontiers. I am yet ignorant of the light in which you’re Lordship or Maharajah Runjeet Singh have viewed the overtures of Dost Mohammad Khan regarding Peshawar.” The influence of Dost Mohammad Khan is very evident in these letters.

These letters had to go through the Sikh Empire. The British envoy in Lahore, Claude Wade, wrote down his own opinion in his accessory letter, where he argued the course of policy which Burnes had recommended. He inclined more toward Auckland’s policy to restore Shah Shuja. Negotiations with Dost Mohammad Khan also broke down due to his exaggerated demands. His ordinary demands were well known: protection against the Sikhs and the gain of Peshawar. But he also wanted British help to gain control of Kandahar and Herat. This condition went absolutely against British interests, as Auckland saw them.

At almost the same time, Macnaghten and Colvin sent letters to Burnes, in which they criticized his unauthorized promises to Dost Mohammad Khan in the matter of Kandahar. Burnes tried to work it out, but did not succeed. He tried to

play his hand the best he could. Burnes told Dost every condition he had: Emir should stop contacts with Persia and Russia; he should also send away Vitkevich and give up all his claims of Peshawar. In addition, he should respect the independence of Kandahar and Herat and try to establish better relations with his brothers. Dost Mohammad Khan surprisingly accepted his conditions but also demanded withdraw all of the Sikh army from Peshawar. The first signal that something was wrong was the unexecuted departure of Lieutenant Vit- kevich. Burnes described this treaty as a huge success, but he was cheering too soon. The very influential group at Kabul's court, which argued in favour of an alliance with Russia and Persia, put huge pressure on Emir. It was obvious for him too that he could not fulfil his ambition for an alliance with Britain, but he was not sure if an alliance with Russia would do the trick. Despite his doubts Emir decided to try, and he answered the letters which Vitkevich had brought a few months earlier. This action exceedingly angered Burnes. He immediately wrote to India that he would like to depart from Kabul because of the obvious failure of negotiations. Dost Mohammad did not want to lose this option, so he tried to play for time, but he did not succeed, and after a few letters between Auckland and Emir, Alexander Burnes departed on 26th April 1838.

Henry Pottinger was more successful in Sindh. He was able to sign a treaty of British residence in Hyderabad with Nuseer Mohammad and Nur Mohammad, two of the most influential emirs of Sindh.

The siege of Herat had been the thorn in the eye of British policy in central Asia for the last several months. McNeill bombarded Auckland and Palmerston with demands in a condemnatory letter against Persian action. McNeill wrote Palmerston in February 1838 to: "This on act of interference would doubtless cause some immediate irritation, but it would cause less than would be produced

by our interfering to Kandahar after Herat shall have fallen, and if we must ultimately (incur the odium of) arrest(ing) the progress of Persia in Afghanistan, it appears to me that it can be most advantageously incurred for the preservation of the whole country, including so valuable a position as Herat." At this time McNeill did not have any specific orders concerning his behaviour towards the Persian Shah. McNeill saw it as freedom to act so he began the journey to Herat. In April, Palmerston received a message about a Russian expedition to Orenburg and Bukhara, so he immediately wrote to McNeill to gather some information about it.

McNeill arrived at the Persian encampment on 6th April 1838. The first thing what he had to do was to write to his superiors. He repeated his opinion that the only option to rescue the alliance with Persia was to prevent their armies from capturing Herat. He also declared that he could mediate a possible negotiation between the Persian Shah and the ruler of Herat, Shah Kamran. McNeill was convinced that the Russians did not see the Herat adventure as so important to risk open hostility against Great Britain.

The May 1838 was a very important month. Palmerston approved McNeill's mission and told him to send an envoy to Bokhara to find out what ate Russians were planning for this strategically very important city. Palmerston also received very disturbing messages from the British envoy in Odessa, which contained information about Russian plans to march through Bokhara to reach Afghanistan.

In May, Auckland also established the shape of his policy. From a very careful policy of a balance of power he turned to a policy of alliance with the Sikhs and turned away from Barakzais in Afghanistan. In a memorandum from 12th May he accurately described the causes of this change. Apart from the generally praised Persian move towards the Indian border, Auckland articulated the idea that

interference was inevitable, because letting Afghanistan to his faith would be an admission of total defeat. He also thought that the aid from Sikhs would be impossible when Dost Mohammad Khan was still on the throne in Kabul. Auckland definitively decided to send William Macnaghten to Lahore to negotiate a treaty with Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja. On 22nd May Auckland officially announced to the East India Company that Burnes's mission had failed and that the Indian government had started to negotiate the treaty with Ranjit and Shuja. In this letter he also mentioned the last information from Burnes about Russian progress through central Asia and noted that they contained "unequivocal demonstrations therein noted of the extent to which Russia is carrying her system of interference on the very threshold of the British India possessions. I need not repeat my anxiety, even though the rapid march of events may oblige me to act without your instructions, to be favoured with communication of your views upon present crisis at the earliest possible opportunity.

Meanwhile, McNeill was trying to impact the Persian Shah in his camp near Herat, but Count Simonich was jeopardising all his efforts. He was able to persuade the Shah with promises of land and power, which he could gain from a successful siege. This problem was solved very early. Palmerston decided to deal with it without any hesitation. On 19th June 1838 a small navy army occupied Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf. The Persian Shah reacted with a hasty offensive against the still-resisting Afghan fortress of Herat. The presence of the Russian deserters led by General Isidor Borowski is very important. He attacked on 24th June 1838, but the attack did not succeed. The Shah's army got through the walls of the fortress, but was not able to gain control of the city.

In June, the negotiations with the Sikhs were under way, as well. Britain needed their help and not only militarily, but also because they required free

passage through Punjab in case of a military expedition to Afghanistan. In retrospect, another fact is quite surprising: almost all British officials felt sure, that installation of the Shah Shuja on the Afghan throne would be very easy. However, Auckland still hesitated and doubted. The negotiations with Ranjit Singh were led by William Macnaghten and the envoy from Kabul, Alexander Burnes. British envoy to Lahore, Claude Wade, and Shah Shuja were present too. The negotiation was not easy, but on 26th June 1838 the so called "Tripartite Treaty" was signed. This alliance was very important because it was the basis of future conflict. We should therefore quote some of the most important articles of the treaty.

"1st Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk disclaims all title on the part of himself, his heirs, successors, and all the Suddozyes, to whatever territories lying on either bank of the river of Indus that may be possessed by Maharajah.

4th Regarding Shikarpore and the Territory of Sindh the Shah will agree to abide by whatever may be settled as right and proper, in conformity with happy relations of friendship subsisting between the British Government and Maharajah.

15th Shah Shoojah ool-Moolk agrees to relinquish for himself, his heirs and successors, all claims of supremacy and arrears of tribute over the country now held by Ameers of Sindh.

17th Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk shall not attack or molest his nephew, the ruler of Herat.

18th Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk binds himself, his heirs, and successors, to refrain from entering into negotiations with any foreign state without the knowledge and consent of the British and Sikh Governments."

Auckland sent another message to the Secret Committee of the East India Company on 13th August 1838, where he explained the reasons for closing the tripartite treaty: "In almost every direction we seemed to be surrounded by

undisguised foes or doubtful friends. It occurred to me that a more intimate alliance between Runjeet Singh and the British Government would damp the spirit of disaffection all over India, and I deem it fortunate that a combination to the westward afforded me the means of engaging that powerful chief in a design which, while it will frustrate the views of our enemies on the other side of the Indus, must dishearten those who might have entertained secret views of hostility towards us in other quarters.“ Auckland described unification with Ranjit as the only one possibility. The analysis of Sir Henry Fane, Commander in Chief of Indian Army, which revealed that war with the Sikhs would be very difficult, had an influence on this policy, too. In the future it was shown that he was right.

When it started to became really clear that the Persians would not be able to conquer Herat, a discussion started about the necessity of a British invasion into Afghanistan in the case of an unsuccessful siege. Auckland, however, thought that he had no other option; he saw it as a choice between passivity and action and he saw no point in passivity. In the meantime, John McNeill left Herat and sent his representative, Colonel Charles Stoddart. When John McNeill was still at the Shah's court he got the information about Russian progress through central Asia. McNeill wrote later: "A Russian army of from 10,000 to 15,000 men, which had been collected at Orenburg under the command of General Perowski, in anticipation of the Shah's success at Herat actually invaded Khiva." He saw great danger in this situation: "By the concerned action of Russia and Persia the sovereignty of the Shah would have been established in Kandahar and Cabool as well as at Herat under the guarantee of Russia; Khiva would have become a Russian province, extending along the course of the Oxus probably to the northern slopes of the Hindoo Koosh – the British and Russian empires would then been in contact." It's important to note, that John McNeill was the only source of

information for the majority of government in London. During August several month old messages from India arrived in London. President of the Board of Control, Hobhouse, approved the occupation of Kharg; by this action he confirmed Palmerston's action in the name of East India Company and British-Indian Government. At the end of August, the Foreign Office received the messages about McNeill's departure from Herat, about Russian intrigues during the Siege, and about Auckland's negotiations with Ranjit. After these messages, Palmerston saw the situation as follows: "The true Measure to take would be to make a great operation in Afghanistan; to push on Runjeet Singh, send an English Corps to act with his army; to drive the Persians out of Afghanistan and to reorganise that country under one Chief; and to pay Runjeet by giving him Peshawar and Cashmeer. A good Afghan state connection with British India would make a better Barrier than Persia had been, because it would be more under our control. We should have the same kind of geographical pull upon such a state that Russia has upon Persia." It is clear that Palmerston agreed with Auckland's policy, and so did the government; Lord Melbourne thought that passivity was more dangerous than action.

In October some good news finally arrived. McNeill wrote about the successful negotiations of Charles Stoddart in Herat. The Shah withdrew from Herat, but the main reason was the failed attack in June. McNeill, however, appealed the the British Government to still enforce the active policy and install a new Shah on the throne in Kabul.

Palmerston was also negotiating with the Russian envoy in London, Pozzo di Borgo. Nesselrode transmitted a letter through this envoy, in which it "was distinctly denied that any project for disturbing the British possessions in India had ever presented itself to the mind of the emperor."42 This time, however,

Nesselrode actually dismissed Count Simonich from the Persian court. The withdrawal of the Russians started a bigger discussion about Afghanistan in London, but the most important people in government did not stop supporting Auckland. The most articulated problem of financial demands was keeping the Shah on the throne in Kabul. Auckland did not consider this as crucial, and he was not alone; almost all of his colleagues had the same opinion. They all believed that Shuja would be popular and there would be no problem in installing him.

The most important and most quoted document of the British campaign in Afghanistan is "Simla Manifesto". It's the document that explains the causes of the British invasion to Afghanistan. It was written by William Macnaghten, but the text is from the mind of Lord Auckland. It explains the reasons why Lord Auckland decided to go to Afghanistan. The primary reason was the impossibility of an agreement between Dost Mohammad Khan and Ranjit Singh: "It was evident that no further interference could be exercised by the British Government to bring about a good understanding between Sikh Ruler and Dost Mohammad Khan, and the hostile policy of latter chief showed plainly that, so long as Kabul remained under his Government, we could never hope that the tranquillity of our neighbourhood would be secured." The second important reason was the Persian siege of Herat: "The attack upon this city was a most unjustifiable and cruel aggression, perpetrated and continued notwithstanding the solemn repeated remonstrances of the British Envoy at the court of Persia, and after every just and becoming offer of accommoda- tion had been mad and rejected." His last reason was the defence of the Indian border and the desire that India would be surrounded by friendly states with no offensive thoughts. This manifest was written exactly how the London government wanted. So, the real main reason: the progress of Russia through central Asia, was withhold and the Persian threat was exaggerated.

It is possible to say that the Palmerston agreement with the manifesto started the war.

The war itself went well for Britain in the beginning. Britain conquered all of Afghanistan in half a year, but then problems began. Installing a new Shah proved to be very difficult. He picked the wrong people for the government and his country never forgave him for letting the infidels into their country. The British managed to control Afghanistan for almost two years, but in November 1841 an uprising started, which led to catastrophe. The mistakes of military and political officers led to the bloody march from Kabul to Jalalabad, where 16 000 people died and only around 20 survived from the entire Kabul garrison. Not even children or women were spared. The British Army sought revenge for this massacre by burning the old Kabul Bazaar, but Dost Mohammad Khan returned to the throne a year later (1843) and pursued, not surprisingly, anti-British policy in central Asia for the next 10 years. The British did not achieve any of the goals they had established before the war and for which they even started the war.

The First Afghan war is also very interesting from a current perspective. Maybe the most powerful nations ended their campaign similarly here. The British had to lose for two more times to realize that Afghanistan is a country that can be conquered but cannot be controlled. The Soviet Union has made the same mistake and the USA is making it now.

First Burma War

Border

During the early 19th century, Burmese military expansion into Assam and Manipur created a long border between the Burmese Empire and neighbouring British India, which was under the control of the East India Company at the time.

The British claimed some of these frontier areas as protectorates, such as Jaintia and Cachar, and allowed anti-Burmese rebels from Assam and Manipur to raid across the border.

Outbreak

In September 1823, the Burmese occupied Shalpuri Island near Chittagong, a territory claimed by the British. After attacking a small British troop detachment, Burmese soldiers entered Cachar.

The British sent troops to eject the Burmese and a small skirmish ensued. The outbreak of further clashes in Arakan (now Rakhine) prompted the British to declare war on 5 March 1824.

The British weren't just looking to secure the north-eastern frontiers of India, they were keen to open up new markets for trade. By establishing themselves in Burma, they also sought to counter French influence, which had been growing there since the mid-18th century.

Burmese forces

Most Burmese soldiers at this time fought with either a musket, spear, bow or dha (sword). They generally preferred to fight on the defensive in bamboo stockades or to engage in jungle skirmishes.

The Burmese also had a variety of artillery pieces at their disposal. But many of their guns were outdated, and their gunnery skills and tactics were relatively poor.

Whenever the Burmese deployed in the open, superior British training and armaments usually prevailed. But when fighting in thick jungle, or in the confines of a stockade, they proved formidable opponents.

Chittagong and Arakan

On 17 May 1824, around 10,000 Burmese troops overran a small Bengal Army force at Ramu near Cox's Bazar, which they occupied soon after. This Burmese success caused panic in Chittagong and Calcutta, where the British residents formed themselves into emergency militias.

Not wanting to overstretch themselves, the Burmese stopped their advance on Chittagong. Had they taken this lightly defended town, an advance on Calcutta would have been possible. Instead, the British were able to send reinforcements and bolster their position.

In early 1825, 10,000 troops from the Bengal Army, under Brigadier-General Joseph Morrison, were sent by sea into Arakan, supported by gunboats. After establishing a base of operations, Morrison advanced against the outnumbered Burmese, taking the city of Myohaung (now Mrauk-U) in March.
The Burmese position in Arakan had been weakened by the withdrawal of troops to meet a larger British invasion of Rangoon (now Yangon). Their remaining forces evacuated the Arakan soon after.

Rangoon expedition

On 10 May 1824, a seaborne expedition, consisting mainly of Madras Army troops under General Sir Archibald Campbell, landed at the lightly defended city of Rangoon. The British hoped that this would lead to a settlement, but the Burmese fought on. In the weeks that followed, the British systematically captured Rangoon's stockades and fortifications.

After recalling their best troops and their leading general, Maha Bandula, from the Arakan, the Burmese surrounded Campbell's position in Rangoon with a reinforced army of 60,000 men. Fierce attacks were made against the British

defences, but a counterattack by several infantry battalions on 15 December defeated Bandula and scattered his troops.

River advance

Campbell now decided to advance on Prome (now Pyay), which was located hundreds of miles up the River Irrawaddy towards the Burmese capital at Ava (now Inwa).

First, his men attacked the Burmese stockade at Danubyu and, despite an initial repulse, secured it in early April 1825. During the fighting, General Maha Bandula was killed by a British rocket as he walked around the defences to boost his men's morale.

On 25 April, the British occupied Prome. Campbell remained there for the monsoon season, but faced a counterattack in late November from a large Burmese force. After beating this off, he pursued the Burmese further up the Irrawaddy, winning several more victories, including at Malun on 19 January 1826 and Pagan (now Bagan) on 9 February.

With Campbell's men now approaching the imperial seat of power at Ava, the Burmese sued for peace.

Peace

The war ended in February 1826 with the Treaty of Yandabo. This led to the British annexation of Arakan, Assam, Manipur and Tenasserim (now Tanintharyi). The Burmese also had to renounce their claims to several disputed frontier areas, including Cachar and Jaintia.

On top of this, the Burmese had to pay a large indemnity, sign a commercial treaty and accept a British Resident at the imperial court at Ava.

The East India Company awarded the Burma Medal to Indian soldiers who served in the war. The Europeans - including Company officers and members of the

British Army - were not eligible for this. But surviving European soldiers later qualified for the Army of India Medal with the clasp 'Ava', established in 1851.

On campaign

For many soldiers in Burma, the most dangerous enemy was the rough terrain, thick jungle and punishing climate. The monsoon made rivers impassable and it became difficult to move supplies and artillery.

At least 15,000 British and Indian soldiers died, together with an unknown number of Indian and Burmese labourers and camp followers. Three-quarters of the British-Indian losses were due to diseases like malaria, dysentery and dengue fever, as well as the effects of heat stroke.

It was not just the rank and file who succumbed to the conditions. Brigadier-General Morrison died on his way home to Britain, the victim of a ‘malignant jungle fever’ contracted in Arakan.

Aftermath

The conflict’s huge financial cost contributed to an economic crisis in India. In turn, this brought about the decline of the East India Company and led to greater British government intervention in Company affairs during the 1830s.

The war also weakened the once-powerful Burmese Empire. As well as losing important territories, the high cost of the indemnity (over £1 million) hobbled the Burmese economy.

The country would come under British occupation again during the Second Burma War (1852-53). This conflict was largely provoked by the Company, which coveted more territory and Burmese resources like teak and rubber.

Second Burma War (1852-53)

Origins

At the end of the First Burma War (1824-26), the East India Company annexed the regions of Arakan (now Rakhine), Assam, Manipur and Tenasserim (now Tanintharyi).

The terms of the Treaty of Yandabo (1826) also opened up Burma to British commerce and saw a British Resident installed at Ava to oversee the royal court. This was a bitter humiliation for the once-powerful Burmese Empire.

In 1837, King Baggidaw, who had signed the treaty, was overthrown by his more belligerent brother, Tharawaddi. This hostile attitude continued under Tharawaddi's son, Pagan, who succeeded to the throne in 1846.

King Pagan’s animosity towards British traders, as well as his subjects' interference with shipping, led Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, to despatch a small naval force to Burma in 1852 to resolve these issues.

Naval clash

In an effort to appease the British, the Burmese made immediate concessions, including the dismissal of a provincial governor accused by the Company of charging excessive customs duties and infringing the rights of its mariners and trade representatives.

However, Commodore George Lambert, the British commander, angered the Burmese by demanding hefty financial compensation for these alleged slights. He then provoked a naval confrontation by blockading the port of Rangoon (Yangon) and seizing King Pagan's royal ship.

Burmese forces

At this time, the Burmese army was estimated to be around 50,000-strong, much smaller than it had been during the First Burma War in the 1820s.

Its regular soldiers wore red jackets, with striped trousers or loincloths, and a distinctive spiked helmet made of lacquered bamboo. Although they now had more firearms, their general standard of training was not as high as during the first war.

Irregular Burmese troops wore their own native dress and were equipped with bows, swords, spears and a variety of outdated firearms. They proved most adept when fighting as guerrillas in their own jungle terrain.

Expedition

Increasingly concerned about French and American commercial influence in the delta region of the Irrawaddy River, Lord Dalhousie now sent a larger expedition under the command of General Henry Godwin. Known as the 'Army of Ava', this force primarily consisted of troops from the Madras Army and Bengal Army, reinforced by a small British Army contingent of three infantry battalions.

On 5 April 1852, the expeditionary force took Martaban (now Mottama) after a short naval bombardment. On 12 April, Godwin led a force ashore at Rangoon that included the 51st (2nd Yorkshire West Riding) Light Infantry and the 18th (Royal Irish) Regiment. After two days of fighting, the capture of Rangoon was completed with the storming of the Great Dagon (or Shwedagon) Pagoda.

The British then pursued the retiring Burmese army northwards. They took Bassein (now Pathein) on 19 May and Pegu (now Bago) on 3 June, after heavy fighting around the Shwemawdaw Pagoda.

Annexation

The fighting quickly drew to a halt when the monsoon broke. During this lull, the British decided to annex the lower Irrawaddy valley. Once conditions had improved, Godwin captured Prome (Pyay) on 9 October 1852, meeting only light Burmese resistance.

In December, Lord Dalhousie informed King Pagan that the province of Pegu was now British, and that any further resistance would end in the destruction of his kingdom. The proclamation of annexation was formally announced on 20 January 1853.

End of campaign

This setback for the Burmese led to major changes at the royal court at Ava. Pagan was overthrown by his half-brother Mindon, who immediately sued for peace. The two Italian priests he sent to negotiate terms encountered the British at Myede (now Aunglan), around 50 miles (80km) further north from Prome, having occupied the surrounding Ningyan teak forests.

Although the major campaigning was now over, sporadic fighting and civil unrest continued for several months. The 'Army of Ava' was finally demobilised in July 1853.

The climate and physical exertion of waging war in Burma took a heavy toll on the British and Indian troops. General Godwin himself died shortly after returning to India, just before news arrived from London that he had been knighted for his services.

Aftermath

Despite King Mindon’s diplomatic overtures to the British, no treaty was ever signed to bring a formal end to the war. Trade soon resumed between the British and Burmese, but relations remained tense.

A third round of hostilities began in 1885, which led to the British occupation of Upper Burma.

Third Burma War

Origins

The First Burma War (1824-26) and the Second Burma War (1852-53) both resulted in large tracts of Burmese territory being annexed to British India.

For the remaining part of independent Burma - primarily composed of Upper Burma - relations with British India were fairly stable until a royal succession crisis in 1878. The new Burmese king, Thibaw Min, ordered the withdrawal of the British Resident from the royal capital of Mandalay, effectively ending diplomatic links between the countries.

During the 1880s, the British grew increasingly concerned about Burmese military and trading links with the French. By then, the latter had expanded their colonial rule in Southeast Asia right up to the borders of Burma.

At the same time, the Burmese continued to find fault with the British, taking great exception to new territorial borders marked out by a British Indian commission in 1881.

Trade Dispute

In 1885, the Burmese imposed severe fines on the Bombay and Burma Trading Corporation (BBTC) for under-reporting its teak logging and not paying its Burmese employees fully.

The British government claimed the fines were unjust and insisted that the Burmese accept a British-appointed arbitrator to settle the dispute. When they refused, the British issued an ultimatum on 22 October 1885.

The British demanded that any legal action or fines against the BBTC be suspended and that Burma accept a new British Resident in Mandalay. They also expected the Burmese to agree to British supervision of their foreign relations and to facilitate the development of British trade between northern Burma and China.

War Declared

When King Thibaw rejected the ultimatum, the British decided to invade. Three brigades, under the overall command of Major-General Sir Harry Prendergast, were mobilised to occupy Upper Burma.

With the addition of supporting logistic, engineering and medical units, the Upper Burma Field Force amounted to nearly 10,000 British and Indian soldiers.

River Campaign

Upper Burma was covered in dense jungle, so the easiest way to advance north from British-controlled Rangoon (Yangon) was to sail up the River Irrawaddy towards Mandalay. Using around 50 low-draft steamers, many of which towed barges, they advanced at such a speed that the Burmese had little chance to organise effective resistance.

On 17 November 1885, the river fleet neutralised shore batteries at Minhla. A brigade of Indian soldiers was then landed and stormed several redoubts, defeating the Burmese.

The advance continued. Over the next few days, troops and sailors of the Naval Brigade captured a succession of Burmese river defences and gun emplacements at Nyaung-U, Pakokku and Myingyan.

A divided foe

Burmese military resistance was somewhat half-hearted. King Thibaw's subjects had divided loyalties, especially after the execution of royal rivals that had accompanied his accession to the throne.

Some were taken in by British propaganda and opted not to fight. They mistakenly believed the British had no plans to occupy the country, but intended only to replace Thibaw with Prince Nyaungyan, his exiled half-brother.

Surrender

Meanwhile, the river fleet pushed on. After it threatened to bombard Ava (Inwa), the former royal capital, Thibaw ordered his troops to surrender on 26 November. Two days later, Mandalay was secured by British soldiers.

From there, Prendergast continued northwards to reach Bhamo during December. This strategic move was designed to forestall the Chinese, who had their own claims and border disputes with the Burmese.

Annexation

Thibaw and his family were exiled to Ratnagiri, near Bombay (Mumbai) in India. The king described those who had deposed him as the ‘bull-faced, earth-swallowing English’.

On 1 January 1886, Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, announced that Upper Burma was to be annexed by the British.

Guerrilla war

When it became clear that the British had no intention of installing a new king, but instead were going to annex Upper Burma, a rebellion began. Various Burmese groups, including irregular tribesmen and soldiers of the former Burmese army, launched an insurrection that rumbled on until the mid-1890s.

The British called the rebels 'dacoits', a local term for bandits. Although some criminals took advantage of the unrest to loot and pillage villages, the great majority of the insurgents were motivated by anti-colonial sentiment. Upper Burma was finally secured under the direction of General Sir Frederick Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief in India. He encouraged the construction of a network of small military and police posts across the country. These were supported by lightly equipped mobile columns that were despatched to trouble spots.

During these campaigns, several foot regiments formed mounted infantry platoons for scouting and skirmishing. The troops travelled great distances by horse, but fought on foot with rifles.

Most British and Indian casualties during these operations were caused by disease rather than enemy fire. Despite this, medical care had improved when compared to the earlier Burma wars, with quinine now used to combat malaria.

Recognition

The clasps for ‘Burma 1885-87’ and ‘Burma 1887-89’ were added to the Indian General Service Medal. These were awarded to troops who took part in the initial invasion, as well as the subsequent anti-guerrilla campaigns that followed the annexation of Upper Burma.

Later, additional clasps were issued for several small punitive expeditions against rebellious Burmese tribes, including 'Chin Hills 1892-93' and 'Kachin Hills 1892-93'.

Anglo Sikh Wars
Anglo-Sikh War Venue:
In Punjab in the Northwest of India Year: 1848-49

There were two Anglo-Sikh Wars or campaigns between the British and the Sikhs. The first conflict took place in 1845-1846 and the second in 1848-1849. The first Sikh war led to a partial control of the Sikh kingdom by the British. However, it was the second AngloSikh War which was considered to be a major one in the history of India as it was this Sikh war, which for the first time annexed the whole of Punjab to British India and the fall of the Sikh empire. This Sikh war was a major war fought between the British East India Company and the Sikh empire.

The reasons that led to the battle

The Punjab Sikh kingdom was expanded by Maharaja Ranjit Singh during the nineteenth century, especially in the earlier part. During the same period, the territories of British East India Company had also been expanded till the areas adjacent to the Punjab. Ranjit Singh tried maintaining an uneasy relation with the East India Company, and at the same time the military strength of the Sikh army or

the Khalsa army was enhanced. This army tried to obstruct British aggression against his state. Ranjit Singh also expanded Sikh territory to the north and northwest, including areas from Afghanistan and Kashmir. After the death of Ranjit Singh, the Sikh kingdom began to fall. Many short-lived rulers came to power at the central court or the Durban after his death. This led to an increased tension between the Khalsa and the Durbar. Meanwhile, the British East India Company began to strengthen its military strength on the Punjab borders. The first Anglo Sikh war took place which ended in defeat for the Khalsa. At the end of the war, the Sikh empire surrendered some territories of Punjab to the British. Also the Sikhs were compelled to hand over Kashmir as a fine to the British. This was later sold to Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu for 10 Lakh Pounds.

In January 1848, Lord Dalhousie took office of the British East India Company as the Governor General and was faced with a fresh crisis just within three months of joining his office in Punjab. Diwan Mulraj of Multan revolted against the British. This was in the month of April in 1848. He was in financial trouble as a result of which he was forced to resign in March 1848 and Sardar Khan Singh was appointed as the new Diwan by the new British Resident Fredrick Currie. Sardar Singh was sent to Lahore to take charge and he was accompanied by two British officers, Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson, who were murdered on 20 April 1848. The people of Multan rose in protest. The Second Sikh war, thus began with the revolt of Mulraj, Governor of Multan.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Reign: 1801 – 1839)

Born in 1780 to the leader of the Sukerchakia misl of the Sikh confederacies in Pakistani Punjab.United 12 Sikh misls and subjugated other local kingdoms to become the _Maharaja of Punjab‘ in 1801.Successfully resisted many Afghan invasions and also captured areas under them like Lahore, Peshawar and

Multan.Earned the title _Sher-i-Punjab‘ (Lion of Punjab).After occupying Lahore in 1799, it became his capital.

His Sikh Empire included lands to the north of the Sutlej River and South of the north-western Himalayas. His Empire included major towns like Lahore, Multan, Srinagar (Kashmir), Attock, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Jammu, Sialkot, Amritsar and Kangra. He maintained friendly relations with the British.He had men from different races and religions in his army.His maintained an army very efficient in warfare, logistics and infrastructure.

After his death in 1839, there was a struggle for succession among his many relatives. This marked the process of disintegration of the Empire.He was succeeded by his eldest legitimate son Kharak Singh.

First Anglo-Sikh War (1845 – 1846)

Major Broad was placed in Amritsar as the East India Company‘s agent in 1843.The British were closely watching the developments in the Punjab political front and had territorial ambitions there as in other parts of the subcontinent. The Sikh forces crossed the Sutlej in December 1845 and took offensive positions against the English forces.Subsequently, battles were fought in different places and the English victory at Sobraon led to the signing of the Lahore Treaty in 1846 which ended the war.

Treaty of Lahore, 1846

Maharaja Duleep Singh, who was the ruler of Punjab was to remain its ruler with his mother Jindan Kaur as regent.The Sikhs had to cede the Jalandhar Doab to the British. The Sikhs were also asked to pay a very huge war indemnity to the English. But since they could not pay all of it, part of it was paid and to make up for the remaining, Kashmir, Hazarah and all territories between the Beas and the Indus Rivers were given to the English.The Sikhs were to limit their army

to a certain number.Also, a British Resident, Sir Henry Lawrence was appointed to the Sikh court.The second Anglo-Sikh war was fought between 1848 and 1849. This war led to the complete control of Punjab by the British. This area was later to become the North-Western Frontier Province.

Causes of the Second Anglo Sikh War

The humiliation caused by the first Anglo-Sikh war wherein the Sikh Empire had lost some territories to the British East India Company.The Sikh regent, Maharani Jindan Kaur was not treated properly by the British.She was removed from Lahore on conspiracy charges against the British resident in Lahore.Multan was a part of the Sikh Empire when Maharaja Ranjit Singh had captured it in 1818. Multan was governed by Dewan Mulraj. He resented the Lahore Court‘s (capital of the Sikh Empire but controlled by the Britishresident since the first Anglo-Sikh war) demand for increased tax assessment and revenues.The British Resident at that time was Sir Frederick Currie. He undermined Mulraj and imposed another governor Sardar Kahan Singh along with a British agent Patrick Vans Agnew. In 1848, Vans Agnew and another officer who arrived in Multan to take charge were murdered by Mulraj‘s troops.This news led to unrest in Punjab and many Sikh soldiers joined the rebel forces against the British.

Course of the Second Anglo-Sikh War

Battles were fought in Ramnagar and Chilianwala.The battle at Ramnagar was indecisive whereas the Sikhs won at Chilianwala.The final battle was fought at Gujrat near Chenab (not the present Indian state Gujarat) in 1849. This was won by the British forces.The Afghan forces under Dost Mohammad Khan had joined the Sikhs‘ side.

Results of the Second Anglo-Sikh War

Punjab was annexed by the British in March 1849 (under Lord Dalhousie) as per the Treaty of Lahore.The eleven-year-old Maharaja, Duleep Singh was pensioned off to England.Jind Kaur was separated from her son the Maharaja and taken to Firozpur. Her allowance was reduced to a meagre amount and her jewels and money confiscated. Sir John Lawrence was appointed as the first Chief Commissioner of Punjab to take care of the administration.Dalhousie was recognised for his role in the annexation of Punjab to the British and was made a Marquis. The famous Koh-i-Noor diamond went into British hands. It was in possession of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who had willed it to the Puri Jagannath Temple of Odisha but his will was not executed by the British. They say it was acquired as part of the Treaty of Lahore after the second Anglo-Sikh war.

Self Assessment Questions

- Discuss the impact of the Ring Fence Policy on British relations with Indian rulers.

- Analyze the Policy of Subordinate Alliance.
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- Examine the cultural contributions of the Madurai Sultanate.

Unit – IV

British Colonial Administration: Early Administrative Structure – Regulating Act - Pitt's India Act – Charter Acts - Economic Impact of British Colonial Rule – Land Revenue Administration –Permanent Land Revenue Settlement- Ryotwari System - Mahalwari System - Commercialisation of Agriculture - Railways – Roadways - Telegraph and Postal services – Famine Commissions.

Objectives

- Understand the commercialization of agriculture
- Assess the development of infrastructure.
- Discuss the social and economic effects of British policies on Indian agriculture,

British Colonial Administration

From the beginning of the creation of the Central Provinces in 1861 it was the goal of the British administration to construct a governmental system providing for the improvement and development of the area. The Government of India Resolution establishing the Central Provinces noted that the previous forms of administration -- of the Saugor and Narbadda Territories under the control of the North-Western Provinces, and a separate Province of Nagpur did "not present that unity, completeness and efficiency which are requisite in order that justice may be done to the condition and prospects of Territories so largely capable of improvement." Therefore the Government intended to create a new provincial administration encompassing those two areas which would provide the new province "with the greatest advantage t the management of the resources and to the development of the capabilities of the whole area." Part II examines the activities of the British provincial government to develop the Central Provinces during the six decades from 1861 to 1921. Though the Government resolution creating the Central Provinces en- visioned the use of government institutions to promote development, wry few departments dealt with the improvement of the province.

Rather they concentrated primarily on law, order, and taxation; only secondarily on providing rudimentary social services; and least of all on economic development. With the imposition of a provincial government most of the procedures of British rule which were designed to consolidate their position in India were brought to the Central Provinces. The wholesale importation of these procedures meant that there was little imaginative attempt to revise the form of provincial administration into what was needed to fit the particular character of middle India, or to meet the specific needs of its economic development.

Raghaven Iyer suggests that there were four dominant imperialistic themes or theories of Government that inspired the British administration and justified their ideas and policies- trusteeship, guardianship, utilitarianism, and evangelism. All were animated by a mixture of paternalism and laissez-faire. On the one hand, British administrators sought to teach and lead Indians in ways to improve their condition in British terms; on the other hand they sought to provide institutions which would free Indians to develop in their own chosen ways. Administrators formed policy based on this mixture of enlightened Western despotism and non-interference. Prevailing attitudes of Victorian idealism and optimism often clouded over inherent contradictions of British policy.

One task of the new government was to form policies based on cu rent governmental theories. The effective implementation of these policies a was quite a separate and more difficult activity. The hierarchical structure of provincial government imported and superimposed on the Central Provinces tended to divide the policy-making from the implementation functions of administration at the district level. British administrators above the district level debated, decided and finalized provincial policy. British administrators at the district level and below attempted to implement these policies through Indian officials. The division of

governmental functions at the district level involving higher and lower levels of administrators tended to create two separate worlds. Those British administrators at the higher levels usually based their policies on English theories with only occasional and superficial reference to empirical information about Indian society and with only rare consideration of Indian opinion. Under the supervision of lower-level British administrators, the Indian officials sought to implement that policy in the context of local Indian society.

The tendencies of the British to segregate policy from implementation and to disassociate British administrators from Indian officials, isolated the higher levels of administration and local society. British provincial administration lacked the ability to penetrate into the lives of a majority of the population in the Central Province and therefore had a minimal affect on them. The Indians whom the British administrators influenced most were those connected with the provincial administration either as part of administration or involved in its institutions. They mainly consisted of lower officials, educators and student, the urban population, and taxpayers, in particular those designated as landlords to pay the land revenue.

Interaction with Indian society during six decades from 1861 to 1921. The analytical framework makes three distinctions. The first is between policy and implementation that is between goals, ideas, and the intentions of British administrators, and the achievements and results of British rule. The second is between two levels, an upper provincial level and a lower district level of administration and the majority of Indians only partially affected by British administration but mainly affected by other events and changes. The third is between the two types of departments. Social service departments include education, health, and local government such as municipal committees and district councils. Consolidative departments consist of judicial, police, and taxation. Thus

Part II examines two types of administration activity and its interaction with changes occurring within Indian society. The changes in Indian society consists first of educational changes, p.litical. Evolution, and population growth; and second, land policy and taxation, and agrarian relations. Judicial and police activities are not examined separately.

As the first Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces from 1861 to 1866, Richard Temple formulated the structure of the provincial administration. His first annual report on the administration of the province contains a wealth of information and impressions. He expressed both a concern for the everyday establishment and management of the administration and a vision for the future development of the area. The judicial, police, and taxation systems needed to be organized; substantial begin-nings had to made in education, health services, local government; and plans had to made for other improvements. Temple estimated that the total provincial revenue from all sources was just over Rs. 8 million. Of this, about Rs. 3.25 million, or a little less than 40 percent consisted of expenses for the civilian government. Rs. 1.1 million, or 13 percent was paid as pensions and subsidies to recently deposed Indian rulers of the Central Provinces. Rs. 2.9 million or over 33 percent want for the military. The remainder, somewhat more than Rs. I million or about 12 percent was for "material improvements," mainly public works. The accompanying table lists the expenditures of the civilian administration under Temple.

In addition to detailing his reorganization of the administration, Temple stressed the importance of other measures for the improvement of the province. He suggested that the payment of land tax (about 64 percent of all taxes) by landlords of the cultivated parts of the province should be made permanent and unalterable. He was confident that if the central Indian government would except this principal

of land taxation, it would stimulate the "industry, enterprise, and self-reliance of the agriculturalist, the application of capital, and the accumulation of wealth." He also investigated the possibility of attracting European colonists to settle unoccupied lands of the province, confident that with "European capital and enterprise, it may be possible for the "a and plough to invade the ancient domain of the Forest and Prairie." Such European colonization in the Central Provinces, he regarded, as the "hope of the future." Temple also made a preliminary assessment of the forest and mineral wealth of the province, and placed emphasis on the improvement of communications and transportation. He wanted to put the postal and electric telegraphic communications on a sound footing (frail and rotting posts constantly interrupted service in the rainy season) and he had plans to improve the roads. He gave encouragement to private companies to build an extensive railway system across the province. His administrative reorganization was to be implemented within a couple of years while his plans for the development of the province would take several years.

During the five year period (1868-1872) after Temple's administration, the annual income of the provincial administration averaged over Rs. 8.5 million, while expenditure within the province rose to over Rs. 4.5 million.

The table showing provincial expenditures for various departments and activities indicates that the primary role of government was to promote law and order. The judicial and police activities including expenditure for salaries and office supplies always exceeded 50 percent of provincial funds . Social services expenditures for education and health never averaged as much as 17 percent. Expenditures for public works averaged 17 percent during the first three decades but were increased during the famine-troubled 1890's and 1900's to around 33 percent.

In a reply required by the Government of India to these and other charges of "oppression used in the Central Provinces to fill Zillah schools," the Chief Commissioner did not directly deny any of the charges, nor wk. a "useless inquiry of the British officers" to ask if they had "been guilty of putting improper pressure on the people and of misusing their authority." Rather he relied on his own personal knowledge and stated that in 1869 the Chief Commissioner had explained to district officers "that though they should use all their endeavours and all their official influence to get parents to send their children to school, no harsh measures would be tolerated." The Chief Commissioner suggested that touring District Commissioners probably did admonish parents of truant children and expressed his opinion that "if Government shows no interest in education and does not push the people, they cannot be expected of themselves to appreciate a boon" (education), and he felt that in India " among similar people in Europe, education was "held but in light estimation by the lower classes" when they were "not being subjected to compulsory instruction."

Although the Chief Commissioner did not openly denounce these compulsive methods, criticism leveled against it did seem to influence policy. In 1875 the Chief Commissioner ordered that local British officers should encourage education less through their executive assistants (tahsildars) and more through the education department's Indian inspectors. This carried some negative results for by transferring the matter from executive to departmental officers, it left it to officers who had less status and authority. It was at this time that the rapid development during the 1860's slowed down and this decline continued until it reached stagnation in the late 18701s. Stagnation in education continued during this middle period until about 1905. It was during this period that there were a number of

short-term Chief Commissioners, many of whom had had no previous knowledge of the province.

The slow progress of education during the last part of the nineteenth century led to disillusionment among British officials. In Fuller's review of the first three decades of provincial administration, he admitted that "Public education in its true sense has indeed hardly begun." Five years earlier the head of the Central Provinces Education Department, in a review of the discipline and moral training in the schools and colleges of the Central Provinces, commented that as only twelve out of 100 school-going age boys were in the school system, "so far as morality is concerned, our schools affect but little the mass of the population." He also felt that though schools and colleges of the Central Provinces had been modeled after the English system, the results could not be compared. "British colleges are a growth, not a creation. Indian colleges and high schools am not a growth but an alien graft." Sons of gentlemen in England went to college "from fashion, or from the desire of learning." In India they hoped "merely to obtain employment under government." The 110 college students in the Central Provinces were not the equivalent of "gentlemen" in the colleges of England. Only five of the parents had an annual income of over Ea. 5000, while at least a third had annual incomes of less than Rs. 200. The Chief Commissioner in 1890 (MacKenzie) did not seem to encourage education in his annual review. He complained that the Nagpur Municipal Committee lavished funds on higher education, "while the town wants drainage."

The stagnation in education and disillusionment about it continued during the last of the 1800's when famines partially disrupted education efforts. Then by 1905 there were evidences of change. A "great and spontaneous increase had set in" so that the number of students increased from 1902 to 1912 "from 153

thousand to 300 thousand." This progress was attributed partly to the "new spirit" of social and political movements, partly as people gained "a greater appreciation of the benefits of education," partly from an attempt to revise educational methods, and partly from increased funds. One book which both reflected and encouraged a revision in the educational system was by Henry Sharp, Rural Schools in the Central Provinces.

Sharp wished to make education accessible to rural children. He suggested half-day attendance, and instruction in useful agricultural knowledge such as the forms and methods of village tax accountants (patwaris) and money-landers. He also stressed the need to provide traditional Indian gymnastic exercises (Deshi Kasrat). A large increase in funds was reported, as seen in the accompanying chart for Hoshangabad. There in the 1890's the total annual funds averaged Rs. 40,553 and rose to Rs. 98,734 between 1901-1910. Primary education increased even more sharply in the same period, from Rs. 23,000 to Rs. 64,500. But while funds more than doubled, average annual student attendance increased by only 38 percent and schools by 20 percent.

During the six decades after the establishment of an education department in the Central Provinces, British methods and institutions Of education became firmly established. Within this period education grew by fits and starts as British administrators varied widely in their formation of policy and in their support of its implementation. The first fifteen years had been ones of extraordinary growth because British executive officers had used their influence and power to push forward education. Also, during the last fifteen years of the period, 1905-1920, more Indians sought education and educational funds showed increases -ally. The near stagnation of the middle years, from the mid 1870's to 1905, my be attributed to British disillusionment, to rapid changes in administrators who had little

knowledge of the province, and to adverse economic conditions, particularly the wide-spread famines. By 1921 only 10 percent of the population over ten years old and 5 percent of those over five years of age were literate. Such an advance from almost zero percent in 1860 appears extraordinary, but in fact it was discouraging, for more than 90 percent of the population still could not read or write. Only two out of the eight provinces in British India had lower literacy rates than the Central Provinces and Berar. Education of the masses or mass education, which in the 1890's had "hardly begun," had by the 1920's just barely begun.

The vacillating expansion of British-style education in the Central Provinces over six decades provided a small Indian elite with education, though British administrators had intended, in the early 1860's, for education to produce far greater direct and Indirect changes among the population. As noted earlier, education was intended to achieve three objectives: first, to instruct an "agricultural middle class;" second, these in turn would serve as a "lever" to raise the lower classes; and third, to train some Indians (especially those classified as Maratha Brahmins) for subordinate administrative posts. The uneven effect of the slowly rising literacy can be shown by examining each of these three "classes." The most immediate need was to train some Indians for subordinate administrative posts.

The intention to educate Maratha Brahmins as lower officials solved one difficulty but created others. In order to substitute Maratha Brahmins for the predominance of "north Indian" Kayasths, mainly in the Marathi speaking Nagpur Division, some Maratha Brahmins had to be imported from outside that area and they were referred to as "foreigners." The Judicial Commissioner objected to this replacement of north India "foreigners" with imported Marathi Brahmins as an unsatisfactory solution. But on a request from the Government of India, the

provincial administration examined the situation in the Nagpur Division closely, and defended its position by saying that it was politically expedient to have a predominantly Maratha lower bureaucracy to rule over a Maratha population, and to have Marathi as the court language. They also pointed out that only 13 percent of the Marathi officials in the Nagpur Division were imported "Deccani Brahmins," while 59 percent were "natives of Nagpur" and the remaining 24 percent were from "Hindustan." Only in the Education Department did "Deccani Brahmins" predominate (61 percent) and that was because there were not enough qualified local teachers so sow had to be imported. The continued presence of so many "Hindustani Kayasths" for sow time made it difficult to promote the Marathi language as the official language of the area. The change-over from Hindi or Urdu to Marathi took time and during this period of transition a strange mixed language emerged which consisted of Urdu grammar and vocabulary, with some Marathi words, but written in Marathi (Modi) script. By the early 1870's Maratha officials, both local and "foreigners" predominated, largely to the exclusion of Hindustani Kayasths, in the Nagpur Division and a purer Marathi had become the official language.

The education of local Maratha subordinate Indian officials cox. tinned to be a concern at least into the 1870's. Three times in that decade the Chief Commissioner issued circulars complaining that local officials were still hiring foreigners "of the Deccan and North-West Provinces," instead of educated Central Provinces Indians. The Chief Commissioner acknowledged that it had no doubt been necessary in the formative years of the administration to hire foreigners, since "few natives . . . were found fitted for government service." But as education had spread and the number of locally qualified Indians had increased, the Chief Commissioner pointed out it was of "great importance" to employ "as much as

possible the natives of the country in its administration." (Central Provinces Proceedings, Home, January 1873, General, #3, p. 6. The circulars are dated January 10, 1873; March 4, 1874, #7; and March 26, 1877, 7). The Chief Commissioner observed that the imported "foreign" officials were "naturally anxious to surround themselves with men of their own race whom they . . . believe more capable," and could trust, but he hoped his instructions "would be observed in the future." He directly criticized the Education Department, since it was from that department that most of the "foreigners" had been transferred to other departments.

Following the employment of "foreigners" as officials did not remain a major concern of the Provincial administration, and it appears that the instructions of the Chief Commissioner were finally implemented local Marathis were educated for various posts so that it was no longer necessary to import "foreigners" for subordinate posts in the government

British policy originally intended to concentrate on educating the agricultural middle-class. Policy differed toward them as British administrators did not attempt to train most of them for government service but rather "to enlighten and civilize them." In 1877 the Chief Commissioner (like the Inspector of Education already quoted in the late 1880,G) did not wish most of the Indian students to view "an appointment in the public service" to be "looked upon as a reward for study." Yet many students in the Central Provinces continued to regard education as the road into government jobs,

Administrators discovered the agricultural middle class, whom the British wanted most to educate, were not generally interested in this educational opportunity. In the context of the 1860's policy statement "agricultural middle class" consisted of the large and small landlords. The majority of the these and

their children remained indifferent to the Western-style education offered them. Another type of "agricultural middle class," however, who took advantage of these educational opportunities included rural government officials; such as the patwaris (village tax accountants), landlord agents and their assistants, and banias or the money lenders, together with their assistants, the munims. The character of the Agricultural School in Nagpur gives evidence of this trend. The School was established in the early 1900's with three sections, one for the training of land Revenue subordinates, another for the instruction of Primary Schoolmasters, and a third for providing the "sons of agriculturalists with a practical training in farming." The weakest part of the school (which became a three-year college in 19051906) was the section intended to provide practical training for sons of landlords. By 1907-1908 the Administration Report admitted that the results of this section were not as good as originally hoped; students were especially reluctant to participate in the manual work that was a part of its practical training. The next year the Administration Report declared that the results of the mulguzari class were "most disappointing" as "it had been from the beginning." Further Administration Reports for 1911-1912 and 1912-1913 observed that the Agricultural School was still not attracting many students from the agricultural castes. On the other hand, the section to train revenue subordinates appears to have functioned well, though few, if any, of the recruits for that section came from the malguzars.

These observations are further substantiated at the Primary education level. The Administration Report of 1902-1903 commented that Instruction has been pushed on in new subjects of a practical nature which are intended chiefly for the benefit of the cultivating class, such as village records, the use of village maps, the

nature of the soils in the village area, the tenancy rights, manuscript reading, and Bania accounts.

Schoolmasters called in local patwaris and banias to assist in these subjects, and it appears that it was mostly children of patwaris, banias, agents of the landlords, and others closely related, who benefitted from this instruction, rather than the sons of landlords, tenants, and agricultural laborers. This first goal had not been achieved in the way it was intended.

Having failed to reach their goals with regard to education for the malguzars, their second goal, that of using them to serve as a "lever" to raise the educational standard of the lower Classes was in jeopardy. There is no indication that those agriculturalists who did take advantage of the educational opportunities that were offered, the rural officials and agents, became that "lever" to uplift the masses. Rather, the lower classes remained the most uneducated section of the population. As in other instances, British intentions and ideas to educate the lower classes were not matched by successful implementation. The low caste Chamars of Chattisgarh. Division provide one example. They comprised more than one-sixth of the population of that Division, living mostly in the central agricultural area of the Chattisgarh plain where they were predominately tenants and agricultural laborers. More than half of the Chamars associated themselves with the Satnami (True Religion) reform sect, thus rejecting their usual "untouchable" status.

In 1868 the Chattisgarh Chamars were first brought to the attention of the provincial administration when the Divisional Commissioner requested special permission to obtain some land for the establishment of a Christian mission among them. He said an American missionary, Mr. Lohr, would supervise the effort among the Satnamis who were "desirous of religious instruction." The Chief Commissioner, however, objected to approve any special concession for a

missionary effort; he felt his sanction would be "unpopular" among the bulk of the Hindu population who looked with "much disfavor" on the Chamars. He speculated that his approval might provide an opportunity for Hindus to accuse "the administration of leaning unduly to the religion of the ruling race," or Christianity. Soon afterward the same Divisional Commissioner requested support for a teacher-training school among the Chamars with Mr. Lohr as the headmaster. He felt such a school would be beneficial as the large Chamar population was backward and desired education, and it was known they received bad treatment in the schools managed by Brahmins, Kayasths, Muslims and others. Again his request was denied for the same reasons.

The Chattisgarh area remained one of the most backward areas of the Central Province particularly in education. In 1875 the Inspector General of Education complained that the Chattisgarhi malguzars were particularly problematic as they could not be trusted to pay the school masters regularly. The Inspector-General. viewed the Chattisgathi people as "backward," living "cheaply," and caring "little for knowledge of any kind not connected with their daily work." The problem was worst in Simga tahsil, where almost one-fifth of the population was Chamar. In 1884 the problem of collecting the education subscription became so acute that the administration decided to close one-third of the 1-10 primary schools. Almost all the schools closed were in predominately Chamar villages, where the administration felt the people were of a bad character and hostile to education. Chattisgarh made a proposal for promoting education among the Chamars but the Chief Commissioner replied that provision was already being made for them in the general scheme of primary education expansion.

Other attempts by local British administrators to promote lower caste education generally met with failure. In Chanda District, the local high school was

closed when some low caste Dher boys, who had passed the entrance examination, tried to enter the school. Though the District Commissioner supported the attempt, all the other high caste boys resigned from the school. Eventually the school was revived as a Zillah school with full attendance. As late as 1917, however, the Central Province administration refused to remove specific restrictions on the admission of low caste girls into schools. While it favored admitting them, in principal, it left their admission and thereby the implementations of their policy to local officials to deal with as the applications were received.

These cases under review reflect some of the more general and persistent attitudes of the provincial government toward lower class, and especially low caste education. Though in principle it seemed often to hold to the ideal of educational opportunities for most of the population, it did not strongly commit itself to promote education among the lower classes. At the divisional and district levels, British administrators sometimes attempted to implement educational opportunities for specific lower castes in their areas. These effort. often met with opposition or indifference from British administrators at the provincial level and strong opposition and rejection by local higher castes.

Another large category of the Central Province population received almost the same treatment from British rulers as was given the low castes. They were the tribal groups who totaled almost one-fourth of the population in the province. They lived in the mom inaccessible areas and were comparatively backward in education. Though a few British officials and foreign missionaries from time to time labored to promote education among them, such efforts were minute in comparison to the general educational efforts in the province. Some British attitudes toward tribal groups also may have limited British concern for education among them, The Central Provinces Gazetteer (1908) in its summary of the

educational position of various segments of the population admitted that only three percent of the tribal boys of school age were in school. The Gazetteer send their children to school. The student wrote that parents would "at last send their children to school regularly when they suffered all such hardships, viz, that of being detained without purpose for several days together at the house or in the Court of the District Commissioner, and of paying the fees of the peons, the value of the stamp paper, and the fees of the writer." The student suggested that some district officers, with a view to gain name, spare no means to collect a' many boys as they can, without the least consideration of the he- arising therefrom. They rather seem to think that, unless the ignorant people were punished to a certain extent, they would always object to attend to education.

In a reply required by the Government of India to these and other charges of "oppression used in the Central Provinces to fill Zillah schools," the Chief Commissioner did not directly deny any of the charges, nor wk. a "useless inquiry of the British officers" to ask if they had "been guilty of putting improper pressure on the people . . . and of misusing their authority." Rather he relied on his own personal knowledge and stated that in 1869 the Chief Commissioner had explained to district officers "that though they should use all their endeavours and all their official influence to get parents to send their children to school, no harsh measures would be tolerated." The Chief Commissioner suggested that touring District Commissioners probably did admonish parents of truant children and expressed his opinion that "if Government shows no interest in education and does not push the people, they cannot be expected of themselves to appreciate a boon" (education), and he felt that in India " among similar people in Europe, education was "held but in light estimation by the lower classes" when they were "not being subjected to compulsory instruction."

Lastly, this review of education in the Central Provinces between 1861 and 1921 reaffirms the analytical framework of the beginning of this chapter. The promotion of education under British rule was limited by several factors: by a minimal financial commitment, by the divergence between ideals and results, between policy and implementation, and between provincial and district level British officials. Education directly affected only a small number of Indians, though it indirectly affected a much larger number. In such an agricultural society, British officials often expressed a hope that education would stimulate agricultural production. But, as the practical schemes for agricultural education in the primary schools and the Agricultural College reveal, education did not increase agricultural production, rather it strengthened the position of Indians at the intermediate level in the government and economy, which in turn reinforced the colonial structure rather than change it. Education thus helped consolidate British rule rather than promote development.

Regulating Act 1773

Introduction

The English East India Company was marked with a huge transformation from 1707 to 1765. The Company had acquired sovereignty over the rich province of Bengal, besides assuming a political status. There were some fundamental factors which led to the passing of the 1773 Regulating Act which was otherwise known as East India Company Act of 1773. The British Parliament passed the Regulating Act in 1773 to bring the Company under the supremacy of the British parliament.

The historians have described the Regulating Act, 1773 as the first great landmark in the constitutional development of India. This Act empowered the British Parliament for the first time to interfere into the affairs of India The object of the Regulating Act was to remove the evils of the constitution of the company

and its rule in India. The Regulating Act was the first, of a long series of British Parliamentary statutes which altered the form of Indian government and administration

Circumstances which Led to the Passing of the Regulating Act

The main causes which led to the enactment of the Regulating Act, 1773 were the Company's assumption of territorial sovereignty, constitutional anomaly, dual system of Government, administrative confusion, unpopularity of the servants of the Company, acquisition of Diwani, earning of fat dividends by the Company, the greed of the British Parliament, the great disasters of 1769 and 1770 and the financial difficulties of the Company.

Company's Territorial Sovereignty and Constitutional Anomaly

The Company became a territorial power as a result of the battle of Plassy (1757) and the battle of Buxar (1764). Moreover the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam's grant of Diwani in 1765 had established the Company as a defacto ruler in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. These circumstances raised the question as to the relation of the Company to the British Crown and the Parliament. A feeling was gradually emerging that the Parliament must be responsible for the British rule in India and not a trading Company. Thus, the Parliamentary intervention had become necessary. Keith, states that "it was clear by the year 1772 that the company was no longer merely a trading body but in reality a delegation of the whole power and sovereignty of this kingdom sent to the East".

Dual System of Government and Administrative Confusion

The people were left helpless against the oppression, both of the Nawab and the servants of Company, on account of the defective Dual Government introduced by Robert Clive. The magistrates, the Police, the revenue officials being diverse bodies, were working upon different systems with conflicting

interests. There was no positive law and there was very little justice in the country. The system suffered from all conceivable defects on account of 'the unfortunate divorce of power. It was quite evident that the Company was mercilessly exploiting the natives of India. The Company administration was also corrupt to the core. The Company which was a Commercial Corporation began to perform the functions of a political party. Further, the Presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were waging war against the local ruler at their own responsibility. These acts created a dangerous situation for the East India Company. The British Parliament could not remain a passive spectator of all these activities of the Company. Thus, the interference of the British Parliament became inevitable in India.

Unpopularity of the Servants of the Company

The retired servants of the Companyy, on return to England with immense wealth lived rich, after the battle of Plassey. They were called as the English Nawabs and claimed equality with the English Nobles. While the politicians, looked for a share of this wealth to come to the Exchequer, the proprietors of the Company wanted their share of profits to contest in the Parliament elections. The retired servants of the Company were able to corrupt the politics of England due to their wealth brought from India.

Thus, everybody in England became jealous of these retired servants of the Company. This hastened the Parliamentary intervention in the affairs of the Company in India.

The Two Great Disaster of 1769 and 1770

The defeats and disasters, that the Birtish faced in India had their effect on the pride of their nation. Hyder Ali of Mysore defeated the Company in the year 1769 was a shock to certain members of the British Parliament. This defeat of the

Company undermined the British prestige and discredited the Madras government. Besides this, a severe famine broke out in Bengal in 1769 - 1770. These two incidents called the attention of the British government to regulate the Company affairs by a law.

British Prestiage

The British prestige in India had been undermined by the commercial activities of the East India Company. In England a great agitation was imminent since 1765 for Parliamentary intervention in the affairs of the Company.

The British Parliament

The greed of the British Parliament, was also said to be responsible for the passing of the Act. British Government wanted to enjoy a share of the huge profits made by the Company. This was also a factor which made the Parliamentary intervention inevitable in the affairs of the Company.

The Financial Difficulties of the Company

Shah Alam, the Mughal Emperor's grant of Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa brought the Company proprietors good prospects of huge profits. The dividends of the Company increased from 6% in 1766 to 12.5% in 1767. The British Government demanded and got an annual payment of £ 400,000 from the East India Company since 1767 for the privilege of retaining its territorial acquisitions. The Company had become bankrupt by the year 1772. The Bank of England after lending several times to the Company refused to send any more. But the Company did not pay that amount to the British exchequer in 1773. Further in August 1772, the Company approached the English government for a loan. A "Secret Committee" was appointed in November 1772 to look into the affairs of the East India Company and submit its report. The report of the Secret Committee made Lord North to get the Bill passed in October 1773.

The Main Provisions of the Regulating Act Of 1773

a) The qualifications for a vote in the court of proprietors were raised from £ 500 to £ 1000. The Act gave the right to vote for the election of Directors of the Company to shareholders, holding stock worth £1000 for 12 months preceding the date of election. It was also provided that the Directors were to hold office for four years, instead of being annually elected, and a quarter of the members were being annually re-elected.

b) The Governor of Bengal was to be the Governor-General of the Company's possessions in India. The Governors of Madras and Bombay were made subordinate to him, in the matters of war and peace. The Governors of Madras and Bombay were also directed to obey the orders of the Governor-General in matters of administration, revenue and the interests of the Company. They were also required to seek his advice before framing any rules or regulation. However the Governors of Madras and Bombay were permitted to seek directions directly from the Directors at London at the time of emergency.

c) The Governor-General was to be assisted by four councilors. Warren Hastings was the first Governor-General of Bengal. Clavering, Mansan, Philip, Francis and Barewell were appointed the members of his council. These members of the Council were to hold office for five years and could be removed only by the crown on the representation of the Directors. The GovernorGeneral had to carry on the work, based on the majority opinion of this Council. He had no powers to veto the majority view of this Council. However the Governor General was given a casting vote in the case of a tie.

d) Governor – General in Council was empowered to make rules, ordinance and regulations for the good order and civil government of the Company's settlement of Fort William and factories and places subordinate to it. All there

regulations were to be registered in the Supreme Court and not to be against the laws of England.

e) A Supreme Court of Judicature, consisting of a Chief Justice and three Judges was established at Calcutta. It had civil, criminal, admiralty and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all the British subjects, in the Company's dominions except the GovernorGeneral and the members of his Council.

f) The Act also fixed the salaries of the Governor-General, Governors, Chief Justice and other Judges. The salaries of the Governor-General, Member of the Council, Chief Justice, Judges were fixed annually at £25,000, £10,000, £8,000, £6,000 respectively.

g) The Act provided that, if the Governor-General, Governor, Member of the Council or a Judge of the Supreme Court committed any offence, he would be liable to be tried and punished only by the King of England.

h) The Directors of the Company were directed to send the copies of the letters and the advices received from the GovernorGeneral and Governors, to the Secretary of State for India. The Governor-General and the Governors were asked to obey and respect the directions of the Directors and to inform them all the matter that affected the interests of the Company.

i) All the servants of the Company were forbidden to receive any presents or bribes or to indulge in private trade. The offenders were liable to be transported to England.

Importance of the Regulating Act

The Regulating Act is reckoned as the beginning of the constitutional development of British India. The British continued to establish their administrative system on the basis of this Act upto 1857. It contributed to the strengthening of the British rule in India. The Regulating Act is regarded as the

beginning of the Constitutional History of India. The Act by giving a new Constitution to the Company, reformed the government of the Company at home and in India. The Regulating Act drafted a written constitution for the British possessions in India instead of an arbitrary rule of the Company.

The Regulating Act was the first legislative interference of the English Parliament in Indian affairs of the East India Company. It remodeled the constitution of the Company in India. The Act incompletely brought the Company to the supervision of the minister. This Act also marked the control of the Central or Supreme government of Calcutta over the subordinate Presidencies. To check the Governor General from becoming autocratic the collegiate system was introduced. It checked the private trade of the servants of the East India Company. However, this act had many shortcomings.

Main Defects of the Regulating Act

No Veto Power to the Governor General

One of the serious short comings of the Act was that, it did not clearly define the relations of the Supreme Court and the Governor-General in Council. This led to the conflict between the two in the course of time. The Governor-General in Council was of the view that the Supreme Court had no jurisdiction over them. On the other hand the Supreme Court was of the view that it had jurisdiction over the Governor-General in Council. Besides this, the Governor-General was given no veto power. He had to act according to the advice of the majority opinion in the Council. Governor-General was thus, powerless before his colleagues. The three councilors had come without any knowledge of Indian problems. Warren Hastings had therefore to face difficult situations. Warren Hastings was often out-voted and over-ruled by the majority of the councilors who were against him until 1776.

Defective and Obscure Provisions of the Supreme Court

The provisions relating to the Jurisdiction of the Court were said to be 'obscure and defective'. It was also not made clear, as to whether the Court was to administer the native law or the English law. The Supreme Court was of the view that all the subjects of the British India was subject to its jurisdiction. But the Governor-General in Council disagreed with the view. As a result of this difference in views of the both, there often arose conflicts between the two.

Inadequate Control of Governor-General over the Presidencies

The Presidencies of Madras and Bombay were made subordinate to the Governor-General of Bengal in matters of war and peace. But, his authority was not effective because of certain exceptions mentioned in the Act. On the plea of emergency, the Presidencies often acted on their own discretion and started wars and made ordinances without seeking the advice of the Governor-General.

Changes in the Home Government Were Not Free From Defects

Despite the changes made by the Home Government, it did not improve matters much. The raising of the qualifications of the voters among the proprietors turned the court of Directors into more or less a permanent oligarchy. The Regulating Act did not define the powers of the Supreme Court. As well, it did not explain the relation of the Supreme Court with the native courts and the courts of the East India Company. The absence of defined relationship brew conflicts between the Supreme Court and other courts of the Company. It did not define as to what law had to be administered with regard to Hindu, Muslim or British by the Supreme Court. The fact that the Judges of the Supreme Court were acquainted with the British Law only created many difficulties. Since the judges followed the English Law, there was no consideration shown to the customs of the people of India. The Regulating Act imposed restrictions on the private trade of the servants

of the Company. But, no efforts were taken to increase their salary by other means. The servants of the Company started corrupt practices to increase their income.

Pitt's India Act 1784

The Regulating Act was in operation for eleven years since 1773. The Act was superseded by Pitt's India Act, 1784. After the rejection of the bills of Dundas and Fox, Pitt the younger, the British Prime Minister introduced his bill on India in January 1784. The British Parliament passed it in August 1784. The following were the main provisions of the Pitt's India Act of 1784.

a) A Board of Control (Board of Six Commissioners) consisting of a Secretary of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and four other Privy Councilors was created. The king appointed the Commissioners and held office during the pleasure of the crown.

b) The Board of Control was empowered to have supervision and control over Indian administration. All the dispatches from India received by the Court of Directors were to be placed before the Board of control. The Board of control was empowered to make modifications, in all the dispatches and orders prepared by the Board of Directors.

c) The Board of Control was given the power to ask for quick disposal of business on any subject. In case such a direction was not complied by the Director within fourteen days, the Board of Control could itself prepare and dispatch in to the Directors for transmission to India.

d) The Act provided for the appointment of a Secret Committee consisting of three Directors. Instructions regarding declaration of war, making of peace and the concluding of treaties were to be sent by the Board of Control to this Committee these instructions were not to be disclosed to other directors.

e) The Court of Directors was to retain the power of the making appointments to most of the offices in India. However, the Crown was to have the power to recall any of such officials.

f) The Court of Proprietors was not to have right of overriding the decisions of the Court of Directors.

g) The Secretary of State was to be the Chairman of the Board of Control. In his absence the Chancellor of Exchequer was to act as Chairman. In case both the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of Exchequer were absent, the senior most Commissioner was to preside its meetings.

h) The Act provided that, the expenses of the Board were to be met out of Indian revenues which should not exceed£16,000.

i) The Board of Directors retained the control over commercial activities. However, the policy of intervention as followed by the servants of the Company in India was disfavored.

j) The number of the members of the Governor-General's Council was reduced from 4 to 3. Among three one was to be the Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the Company in India.

k) Governor-General was to be appointed by the Directors with the approval of the Crown. But, such an approval was not necessary for the appointment to the Members of the Governor-General's Council and Governors of the Presidencies. The members were to be appointed from amongst the committed servants of the Company. However, the Crown could recall the GovernorGeneral or Governors anytime.

l) The powers of the Governor-General's Council were increased. It was given the power of the superintending, controlling and directing of the Presidencies.

Importance of the Act

Pitt's India Act represented a compromise between the Bills of Dundas and Fox. The Act established the system of dual control from England. They were the Board of Control and that of the Directors of the Company. Making the Governor-General supreme over the Governors of Madras and Bombay Presidencies, this Act unified the Administration of the East India Company in India. The British Parliament claimed supremacy over the possessions of the Company in India. The Committee of Secrecy was given independent powers apart from the Court of Directors. The power of the Court of Proprietors was considerably reduced.

Charter Acts

The Charter was to be renewed in 1793. Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, was in favour of renewing the Charter and allowing the Company to retain its political privileges and responsibilities. Cornwallis also supported this stand. The Charter of the Company was renewed for 20 years and it was declared that it would be allowed to continue with the possession of all territories for the next 20 years.

The Governor General's and Governors' powers to overrule their council were emphasiked and explained. This power had been given specially to Cornwallis in 1786. Governor General's control over the Presidencies was strengthened. He was allowed /to issue orders and directions to any Government and Preside'ncy of lndia during his absence from Bengal without previous consultation with his council. He could exercise all executive power vested in the Central Government.

A regular code of all regulations that could be enacted for the internal Government of the BFitish territory in Bengal was framed. The Regulation applied

to the rights. persons and property of the Indian people and it bound the Courts to regulate their decisioni by the rules and regulations contained therein. It also required that, "all laws relqting to the rights of the person and property should be printed with translation in Indian languages and prefixed with statements of grounds on which they were enacted, "so that the people should become familiar with their rights. privileges and immunities.

The Act of 1793 thus laid the foundation of government by written laws and regulations in British lndia in place of the personal rule of the past rulers. The interpretation of regulations and written laws was to be done by the Courts. The concepts of a civil law. enacted by a secular human agency and applied universally, was an important change. Indians were not given positions where they could share the influence or authority. Indians were excluded "to satisfy the demand of English men for lucrative jobs."

Charter Act of 1813

Enquiries into the Company's affairs were ordered before another renewal of the Charter due in 1813. In 1808, the House of Commons appointed a Committee of investigations. Its report on judicial and police arrangements was submitted in 1812. The government decided to allow British subjects access to lndia with their ships.

The Home Government had specifically directed the Government of lndia not to follow the policy of conquests. But aggressive policies in lndia resulted in acquisition of territory. Lord Wellesley and Marquis of Hastings followed an imperialistic policy. The Company's power had spread to the whole of lndia except Punjab, Nepal and Sind. Company requested for financial help from the Parliament due to overspending in wars and setback in trade. There was also a lot of agitation against continuance of commercial monopoly by the East lndia Company.

Independent merchants demanded ending of the same. They wanted a share in the trade with India. The teachings of Adam Smith and his school were by then dominating the politics of Britain. Benthamite Reformists, the Evangelicals and the Traditionalists tried to influence British politics and policies towards British India. Their foremost interest was to safeguard the stability of the Empire.

The Act of 1813 renewed the Company's Charter for 20 years, but it asserted the sovereignty of the British Crown over the lndian territories held by the Company, Company was allowed to have territorial possessions for another 20 years. The Company was deprived of its monopoly of trade with India. It was allowed to continue with its monopoly of trade with China for 20 years. The lndian trade was thrown open to all British merchants.

Charter Act of 1833

The Industrial Revolution had made Britain a manufacturer of cotton textiles and other factory goods. A vast country like lndia could consume a large number of manufactured goods and provide raw materials as well. Industrialists were keen to conquer the vast lndian markets. The East India Company served the ends of British imperialism. Their restrictive policies had led to the ruin of indigenous industries. Laissez Faire had become the basic philosophy of the new industrial policy in Britain. There was a popular desire to free trade from restrictions and monopolies.

When it wastime for the renewal of the Charter in 1833 there was widespread agitation for abolition of the Company and take over of administration by the Crown. A Parliamentary enquiry was held.

The political atmosphere in Britain was full of enthusiasm for reforms. The well known Reform Act was passed in 1832. The country was enjoying the prosperity achieved with the Industrial Revolution. It could afford to adhere to the

policy of free trade. Slavery was abolished in the whole of the British empire. The Act of 1833 was a great landmark in the constitutional history on India.

The monopoly of tea trade with China was abolished. The Company was to have only political functions. lndia was to pay the Company's debts. Its shareholders were guaranteed a dividend of 10.5 per cent per annum. The union of the trader and the sovereign was finally dissolved. the lndian possessions of the Company were to be held in trust for the British Crown. The President of the Board of-Control became the minister for lndian affairs. The Directors were to act as expert advisors of the President of the Board of Control. The Board of Control was invested with authority to superintend, direct and control the affairs of the Company relating to the Government or revenues of the lndian territory which vested in the Company in trust for the English Crown.

Governor General of Bengal became the Governor General of India. The Governor General in Council was to control, superintend and direct the civil and military affairs of the Company. Bombay, Bengal, Madras and other regions were subjected to complete control of the Governor General in Council. Central Government was to have complete control over raising of revenues and expenditure. Expenses of Provincial Governments, creation of new offices, and obedience of all members of the Government of Bombay, Madras were under strict control of the Central Government.

By the Act of 1833, the Governor General in Council were given the power to legislate for the whole of the British territories in India. These laws were applicable to all persons, British or lndian foreigners or others and to the servants of the Company. They were enforceable by all cou'rts in India.

The Act added one more member to the Executive council of the Governor General. the Law Member, whose work was fully legislative. He had no vote in the

Council and he was to attend meetings, on invitation. But he practically became a regular member of the council. Lord Macaulay, the Law member, influenced't he educational policy of the government for a number of years.

The number of members of the Presidency Councils was reduced to two. Bombay and Madras were to keep their separate armies under the Commanders-in-Chief. They were to be under the control of the Central Government.

The Act provided for the codification of laws in India. There were several type of laws before 1833. There were the English Acts, Presidency Regulations, Hindu Law, Muslim Law, Customary Law etc. By this Act the Governor General was empowered to appoint the Law Commission to study, collect and codify various rules and regulations prevalent in India. The lndian Penal Code and Codes of Civil and Criminal Law were enacted by the efforts of lndian Law Commission.

Section 87 of the Act declared, "that no native or natural born subject of the crown resident in lndia should be by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disqualified for any place in the company's service." It was a momentous declaration. Lord Morley later described it as the most important lndia Act passed by the British Parliament till 1909. This was not of much practical importhnce, since nothing was done and Indians remained excluded from higher posts in civil and military service.

The Charter Act of 1833 made no provision to secure the nomination of Indians to the covenanted services of the company. Yet the clause proclaiming on discrimination was of great importance for it became the sheet-anchor of political agitation in lndia towards the end of the century.

Charter Act of 1853

Politically conscious Indians made efforts to bring to an'end the reactionary government of the East lndia Company. Raja Rammohan Roy went to Britain and

represented India's case before the Parliamentary Select Committee. The Bombay Association and the Madras Native Association sent petitions on similar lines. But there was strong opposition to it from leaders of different parties, ministers, president of the Board of Control and Company's Directors. They favoured the renewal of the Charter.

By the Act of 1853, separation of the executive and the legislative functions was carried a step further by the provision of additional members of council for the purpose of legislation.

The Law Member was made a full member of the Executive Council of the Governor General. The consent of the Governor General was made necessary for all legislative proposals. In this framework the central,legislature was completed. Central Legislative Council was to consist of one representative each from the Provinces. Measures concerning a province were to be considered in the presence of representatives from that province. The Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Calcutta was to be the ex-officio member of the Council. Two more civilians might be nominated by the Governor General, but this authority was never exercised.

The Council in its legislative capacity was to consist of 12 members. These included the Governor General, Commander-in-Chief, four members of his council and six - legislative members.

All vacancies in lndia were to be filled in by competitive examinations. Lord Macaulay was appointed the President of the Committee.

The number of Directors was reduced from 24 to 18. Six of them were to be nominated by the Crown. The Company was allowed to retain possessions of the Indian territories "i~ trust for Her Majesty, her heirs and successors until Parliament shall otherwise provide."

The "Legislative Councillors" were neatly distinguished from the "Executive Councillors" and by doing so, legislation was for the first time treated as a special function of the government requiring special machinery and special procedure. The business of the Council was conducted in public. The procedure it adopted for transaction of business was much the same as in the British Parliament. Questions were put, papers were demanded and information was asked for and Government was criticised for its lapses and excesses.

Certain misgivings were raised in the minds of Home authorities lest a representative system might not pave its way into the fortress of their autocratic machinery. The authorities in Britain felt when the Council which consisted of British officials only, showed boldness and inquisitiveness and pried into the field of the Executive. Its petitions for redress of grievances were presented as defiance of the parental authority of the Home Government and public rejection of certain bills offended the authorities in Britain. No Indian element was associated with the Legislative Councils.

In practice the Legislative Council threatened to alter the whole structure of the Indian Government. It had developed into "an Anglo-Indian House of Commons."

Government of India Act 1858

As the Charter Act of 1853 did not give the East lndia Company the right to govern lndia for another 20 years, it gave an opportunity to the Home Government to step in and take the place of the East lndia Company in India. This process was hastened by the happenings of 1857, or the so called 'Mutiny'.

Whigs and Tories had joined hands to complete without delay the process of extendihg crown government over India. Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Ministdr, declared his Government's decision to assume directly the Government

of lndia by the British Crown. John Stuart Mill prepared-a dignified and weighty petition which was presented by the Company against the Government decision to both the Houses of Parliament. But no petition could any longer stem the tide of mounting criticism against the Company's administration. Lord Stanley. President of the Board of Control introduced a bill for the 'Better Government' of lndia which became an Act of Parliament in August 1858.

The Government of lndia passed from the hands of the English East lndia Company to the crown. The armed forces of the company were transferred to the crown. The Board of control and court of Directors were abolished. Their place was taken by the Secretary of State of lndia and his lndia Council. They were to govern lndia in the name of her majesty. The Secretary of State was to sit in Parl~ament. He was a cabinet minister of England and as such was responsible to Parliament. Ultimate power over lndia remained with Parliament.

The Act created an lndia council of fifteen members. It was to advise the Secretary of State who could overrule its decisions. Approval of the Council was essential in financial matters. Most of the members of the lndia Council were those who had retired from Indian services.

The Secretary of State was given the power of sending and receiving secret messages and despatches from the Governor General without the necessity of communicating them to the lndia Council. The Secretary of State was to present to the House of Comqons periodically report on the moral and material progress of India.

The Government of India in its dealings with England was guided by the directions laid down by the Secretary of State in Council. All matters concerning legislation. land revenue. public works, railways, jobs, new expenditure and policies were rigidly scrutinised and controlled by the Secretary of State. The

Rules and Regulations made in lndia by the secretary of state were to be laid on the table of the House of Commons.

The Governor General became known from now as the Viceroy or Crown's representative. In matters of policy and its execution the viceroy was increasingly reduced to a subordinate position in relation to the British Government. The Govetnrnent of lndia was finally directly controlled from London.

Economic Impact of British Colonial Rule

"The government of an exclusive company of merchants is perhaps the worst of all governments for any country whatever." That was the opinion of Adam Smith in the Wealth of Nations in 1776. As you know already (Unit 14) Adam Smith's criticism of the monopolist character of the East India Company was part of an attack on its statutory privileges which led to the abolition of these privileges in 1813 and 1833. You have also studied the impact of the Industrial Revolution in Europe and how it led to the rise of a new form of colonialism (Units 6 and 7). Some aspects of the consequent transformation of the colonialism in India have been discussed in connection with the process of commercialization of agriculture (Unit 16) and India's deindustrialization (Unit 17). It remains to be seen how some other dcvelopments, not discussed till now, reflect the process of colonialisation of the Indian econorny.

Subordination of 'Native' Capital

The European system of merchant capitalist trade provided initially for an important role for the Indian 'native' traders: they were needed for the procurement of goods for export. But, as the English East India Company began to acquire political hegemony and a dominant position as the chief buyer of export goods, the local traders' position was reduced to that of dependent agents and, in some branches of trade, to the status of servants of the English.

In the middle of 18th century there were flourishing native business communities in many parts of India. These included the Hindu, Jain and Bohra merchants of the Gujarat coast, the Khatris and Lohnas of Punjab and Sind, the Marwari banias of Rajasthan, the Moplas and Syrian Christians and Cochin Jews of present day K6ala. the Chettis and Komtis of Tamil and Andhra region, the Vaniks of Bengal, etc. Some of them, e.g. those in Gujarat or Kerala region, were prominent in overseas trade, and in various degrees all of them played in the internal economy some important roles (iil addition to their usual trade functions), in the precolonial period.

a) They facilitated tax collection in cash by converting crops into money and sometimes also by paying, on behalf of the landlords or tax farmers, cash to the state in advance: often they were also guarantors of the tax collectors.

b) The traders and bankers also facilitated remittance of revenue. For example by means of a bill of exchange or hundi the banking house of Jagat Seth paid the annual revenue payable by the Bengal Nawab to the Mughal emperor.

c) Money-changing was an important function performed by bankers, particularly the Sarrafs. This was an important service not only to trade but also the state at a time when numerous regional states each minted currency of its own and coins also came in from foreign countries through trade channels.

d) The State depended heavily on the traditional trading communities for provisioning the army during the wars. From late 17th century, as you know, warfare became quite frequent. For supply of food to the army on the march, for loan of money to pay the soldiers' wages, for sale of plundered goods, etc. the state depended on traders and banjaras (migrating dealers in foodgrains, livestock etc.).

e) Finally the traders and bankers were vitally important to the State and the nobility as source of loans during crises like warfare or the failure of crops, as Gel1 as other credit requirements in normal times.

Thus in the pre-colonial period there was close interdependence between the State and the traders and bankers. As the regional States begrln to wilt before the onslaught of the British and the East lndia Company's tentacles began to spread in India, some of these lines of business began to close for Indian business communities. For example, the banking house of Jagat Seth ceased to be the state banker and repository of revenue in 1765 when the .Company became Dewan of Bengal: the minting. rights of Jagat Seth were gradually taken away by the English: that banking house and other native ones also lost their European clients to English banks and agency houses of Calcutta.

There was much change in the position of the local traders during the late 18th century in the trade in commodities for export. We can look at the example of Bengal trade in cloth, the leading export item. Up to 1753 the English East lndia Company, like other European companies and private traders, depended on the Indian merchants to procure cloth: these merchants were called dadni merchants since they were the agency through which dadan or advance was given by the Company to the artisans or weavers. From 1753 the English Company began to replace the independent dadni merchants with gomastas who were agents of the English a* depend;nt on commission paid by the English as a percentage on value of cloth collected by these agents. After the battle of Plassey the increasing political power in the hands of the English enabled them to ;with over to this new gomasta system which reduced the Indian merchants to commisioned brokers. In 1775 a variant of this system, known as the 'contract system', consolidatql the position of the English in relation to the lndian brokers. Finally, in 1789 the system

of 'direct agency' was introduced, dispensing with lndian middlemen altogether. Thus step by step lndian businessmen were reduced to a subordinate position (e.g. in salt, saltpetre business) or virtually excluded (e.g. in raw silk, cotton cloth) by the end of thp 18th century.

The dscline of export industries in the early half of the 19th century, restricted opportunities for lndian businessmen further. In the new lines opening up (e.g. jute and opium), a role subordinate to the English business houses was assigned to lndian businessmen. Petty money lending, rnternal trade in agricultural and artisanal products, the sale of imported manufacrures- these were the areas of activity of lndian businessmen in Bengal in the first half of the 19th century.

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It is true, however, that within the over all pattern of foreign capital's domination over lndian businessman, there remained spaces for the latter to do well in business and to accumulate capital. For example, the business in raw cotton and opium in western lndia (commodities produced in large quantities in ihe princely states outside of Bombay Presidency), allowed considerable accumulation of capital in the hands of lndian businessmea; some of the Parsi businessmen in the first half of the 19th century became major exporters of these cgmmodities. It is the capital accumulation which led to industriai investments in Bombay and the growth of a textile industry which challenged manctiester's hold over the lndian market in the early 20th century

Domination - Market and the Producers

1-cr LI\ nw turn I'rom :he realni of traders to that of producers, the farmers and Cry little is known of the trentis in production that could tell us about national income or about thc enrnings of artisans and farmers. However, we do kno~ about the way producrion and markcring was organised in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. HOW wab that affected by the activities of the Er.glish East Ind~a Company, 11s servants engaged ill private trade and English 'free traders' and agency hou\es'!.

The essence of merchant capitalist operation is to 'buy cheap and sell dear'. It is good to have a monopoly to enable one to do that. It is even better to be able ro use coercion and state power to do that really well. This was the Seautry of the position of the East lndia Company as a government (since 1765 in Bengal and in some other parts of lndia where the Company extended territorial control: (Block-3)

As you know, by the 1770's and 1780's there had developed a collective monopoly of the English Company and its servants engaged in private trade in respect of ccrtain commodities, particularly cotton cloth in Bengal (Unit 14). That meant that arrisan, had no option bui to sell their products to the i'ompany and its servants. How wa\ \uch a situation brought about? To a great ewtent this was the result of LI\C of coercion. A classic instance is provided by the restructuration of the relationship between the weavers on the one hand, and the Company and the \erbrant, of the Company on the other, between the 1750's and the 1780's in Iknpal.

'Up to the middle of the 18th century, the weavers appear to havc enjoyed - Independence and freedom to sell their products to the Engl~sh. the French or the Dutch or to lndian merchants. From the 1750's. the gomastas began to compel

'weavers to $ell their products to the English. The elimination of the French and the Dutch from conipet~tion by military means helped the process. Extortion by fraudulent undervaluation of cloth and chicanery in the English Factories became common. The weavers were bullied and harassed by the Factors, through the agency of Gomastas, to accept advance and to produce cioth. In the 1780's this practice became systematised as the Khatbandi system: the artisans were indentured to sell exclusively to the Company under Regulations passed by the Bengal government.

Thus the artisans were reduced step by step to the position of bonded labourers by the denial of free access to the market, by the use oi coercion, and by laws and regulations made by the Company's government. Another instance that you already know of is the production of indigo (Unit 16): in the ryoti system the peasant was forced to cultivate and to supply indigo at a low price by the English indigo planters. To a lesser degree, opium was also produced under the threat of coercion.

Now, what is the result of this system of semi-monopoly and coercion? It creates a buyers' market, i.e. a situation where the buyer can dictate the price, the buyer being the English Company, its servants, and later. English traders, planters and agency houses.

It was, of course, to be expect4 that an English Factor in the later 18th century would pay the weaver as little as possible, or th~i the English Indigo planter in early 19th century would pay the indigo-grower ryot as little as possible, if the Englishman had the advantage of a monopoly position or coercive power. Lower prices paid to the weaver or the indigo farmer would inflate the profit margin of the English trader. Thus, sections of the artisans and peasants were

producing unda coercion goods which did not fetch a price that would allow more than subsistence to the producer.

Consider this situation where trading capita! gets a nice profit margin without having to make any capital investment in the production of cotton cloth or indigo or opiclrm. Why should the trader invest his money ir. the production process if he is making good money merely by buying the product at a low price? And consider the producer who obtains such a 'low price that he cannot add to his capital stock, for he has scarcely any surp!us after feeding himself and his family. How can the artisan or the weaver add to his capital stock, i.e. his tools'and implements. if he is forced to sell his-product at a price so low as to make accumulation of funds in his hands impossible? Then who will invest and add to the capital stock and generate higher production with new tools and implements and machines? In other words who will invest in technological development and increase in productivity? The answer is, no one. Thus the scheme of things outlined above contains one of the explanations of the longstanding stagnation in technology and productivity characterising 19th century India. In fairness one must add that Indian trading and money lending capital played the same role as that of foreign trading interests in this regard; the only difference was that the latter received more firm backing from . state bower in the initial stages of the establishment of this pattern.

In short, capital remained outside of production process, leaving technology and organization of production by and large where it had been in the 18th century. It is o! dourse true that there are variations from region to region, from industry to industry. In some cases the involvement of the capitalist was greater; e.g. in the raw silk industry in Bengat where wage employment was not uncommon, or in the nijabsidi system (see Unit 16) where indigo planters

employed people in farms owned by the planters. These are exceptional cases and affected only a small section of producers.

City and Countryside

In the absence of other measurements of the prqsperity and welfare of the people many historians have used the frequency and intensity of famines as a means of gaugihg economic condition of the people, particularly the condition of agriculture. As regards intensity of famines, the number of people who died in famines could have been a measure, but such figures are not available in most cases; further, there is no way one can separate in these figures starvation deaths from deaths due to epidemics which usually accompanied famines. We have, therefore, to depend on general accounts of famines, without the aid of statistics.

From the middle of the 18th century a number of major famines occurred in India. North India was affected by famines in 1759 (Sind). 1'183 (present day Uttar Pradesh, Kashmir, Rajasthan), 1800-04 (U.P.), and 1837-38 (U.P., Punjab and Rajasthan). In Western India, present day Maharashtra and Gujarat, famine years were 1787,1790-92, 1799-1804, 1812-13, 1819-20, 1824-25, 1833-34. Famines visited South Indian regions in 1781-82, 1790-92. 1806-07.1824-25. 1833-34 and 1853-55. In Eastern India famines occurred relatively infrequently, but the famine of 1770 in Bengal was possibly the most disastrous of all in this period, causing about one crore deaths i.e. one-third of the population of Bengal.

These famines occurred due to a variety of causes not all of which can be traced to British rule; in fact, several of the famines mentioned above struck regions outside of British terr~iories. In the 18th and early 19th centuries an important factor was the devastation caused by frequent warfare between the British and various regional powers. In the part of the country ruled by the British there was a tendency in the early days of British administratior, to push up land

revenue demand to a high lever. Moreover, the British collecied the revenue with greater rigour than was customary in pre-British days. They also refused to reduce revenue as a concession to farmers in a bad season. This inflexibility of revenue policy was certainly a major cause af the Bengal Famine of 1770, apart from failure of seasonal rains. English traders' and their agents' activities might have contributed to the intensity of famines in some cases, e.g. speculation in grain trade by the Company's servants in 1770 in Bengal. In the early 19th century the forced cultivation of commercial crops for export in place of foodgrains may have been a factor. The neglect of the British to maintcin or expand the pre-British irrigation works, in the territories that came under their rule, exposed agriculturists to their old enemy, drought. From the middle of the 19th century the newly established Public Works Department began to pay some attention to irrigation requirements ip British India. The revenue policy also became more flexible and from 1880 famine relief measures were systematiscd. On balance it may be concluded that if ability to withstand occasional crop failure without heavy famine mortality is a measure of the prosperity and economic well-being of the agriculturist, the dchievement of British rule in that regard was no better than that of previous 'pnenlightened' administrations.

Turning from the country side to the towns and cities. we notice two trends. the decline and depopulation of old urban centres and, on the other hand, the rapid growth of new cities and towns. The latter development was due to the needs of British commerce and administration. The premier examples were the future colonial metropolises, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Simultaneously, many hitherto small towns grew in size as administrative centres or central places for the marketing of imported manufactures and exportable agricultural goods. The noteworthy feature was that the new urban growth was not oriented towards

industrial production, quite unlike the European pattern. Towns and cities which ef perienced growth in the first half of the 19th century were not places where productive activities were located - their population was engaged predominantly in tthe service sector i.e. marketing, transport, administration etc.

There is no doubt about the evidence of decline on stagnation of older cities, e.g. the Mughal capital cities of Agra and Delhi, or regional seats of power like Deccan, Murshidabad, Patna, Scringapatam, H yderabad etc. This trend Was partly due to the shift in the political centre of gravity away from them to new colonial metropolises. It was also due to the decline in the trade marts located in them and rd-channeling of trade to new routes and networks. De-urbanization seems to have been particularly marked in the heartland of Northern India, the region around klhi. and in parts of Western India. Whether. in an all-India perspective, the decline of population in older cities was counterbalanced by population growth in new ones is a difficult question to answer. Perhaps the answer does nor matter in one sense: functionally the cities remained what they were in the pre-colonial era, vast pumping stations for the concentration of wealth from,fhe countryside. The colonial m~etropolises were d~fferent only In that these were meant to pump out a sqsbstantial part of that wealth. That leads us to another important feature of the colonial economy, the transfer of funds to England.

Land Revenue Administration

Land Revenue Administration during Colonial Period

Land revenue was the most important aspect for the British government in India. They needed resources to run their administration. Therefore, they devoted great attention to the task of administration and re-organisation of land revenue system. In 1793, Cornwalis introduced the Permanent Settlement, which created landed aristocracy for the first time in India. Secondly, this system put the tenants into a very insecure position. Though the'Government had fixed its share in

perpetuity, they were given full freedom in exacting from the tenants as much as they liked. It not only impoverished the peasantry but also deprived them of their land. It proved so defective that the British did not extend this system outside the Bengal region. In the southern and some parts of Northern India, the Ryotwari system was adopted. It established a direct relation between the landholder and the government. Here also they conformed a proprietary rights upon the landholders. It was a new system. Earlier, the land belonged to village communities and the joint families. The individual had no share of his own. This land settlement brought about a radical change in the rural areas.

Land System

Before the British rule, the land belonged to the peasantry and the government received a proportion of the produce. According to Radha Kumud Mukerjee, "The soil in India belonged to the tribe or its sub-division - the village community, the clan or the brotherhood settled in the village - and never was considered as property of the king." The king had the right to share the produce as was fixed from time to time. So far the British were collecting this revenue and they had introduced modification in the procedure and share of collection. The squeezing nature had created both political and economic hazards, as Buchanan reported about the district of Dinajpore in Bengal. In this context, Radha Kumud Mukerjee has commented that "The natives allege that, although they were often squeezed by the Mogul officers, and on all occasions were treated with the utmost contempt, they preferred suffering these evils to the British mode that has been adopted of selling their land when they fall in arrears, which is a practice they cannot endure. ~esides, bribery went a great way on mod occasions and they allege that, bribes included, they did not actually pay onehalf of what they do now."

In those conditions, "neither native nor European agriculturist", reported Bishop Heber, "can thrive at the present rate of taxation. Half the gross produce of the soil is demanded by Government."

Lord Cornwallis was least concerned with the problems of the peasantry. He introduced reforms in land revenue to achieve twin aims of the Company policy, increasing demand of British manufactures in India and export of raw materials such as raw silk, wool, cotton, indigo etc. to British. Their policy had made commerce the pivot of all the activities of the executive and of Indian economy. It is clear from the fact that the "commercial department" had become more important than the general department". It was the reducing importance of the general department which brought a steep fall in the collection of land revenue and inoreased the chances of the agricultural economy.

Permanent Land Revenue Settlement

Lord Cornwallis sought to bring about stability in the agricultural economy. He tried, first, to bring continuity by making decennial (i.e. ten years) settlement in place of annual settlement. In March, 1793, he introduced the concept of 'Permanent Settlement'. According to Romesh Dutt, 'if the prosperity and happiness of a nation be the criterion of wisdom and success; Lord Cornwallis' permanent settlement of 1793 is the wisest and most successful measure which the British nation has ever adopted in India." However, according to some other historians, it was not so Refoms - and benevolent. It is generally felt that though the permanent settlement helped to make Prospects the province the wealthier and more flourishing in India, it was temporary in nature and at the cost of millions of peasantry and Indian economy.

A Settlement with Zamindars

So we see that the land revenue was fixed permanently. But from whom was it to be collected? The Nawabs of Bengal had collected taxes from the zamindars. These zamindars were usually in control of large areas: sometimes entire districts. They had their own armed forces, and were termed Rajas. But there were also zamindars who held smaller areas, and either paid directly to the State, or paid through some big zamindar. The actual cultivation was carried on by peasants who paid the zamindars at customary rates fixed in every sub-division (or pargana). Oppressive zamindars often added extra charges called 'abwabs' on top of the regular land revenue rates,

By 1730 British rule had greatly confused this picture. Some Zamindars were retained - others were replaced by contractors or officials. The old customary rates were ignored, and every abuse permitted, if it led to an increase in the revenues. By the time Cornwallis arrived on the scene, the situation was one of the complete confusion. The new Governor-General belonged to the landed aristocracy of Britain and was in favour of a settlement that gave the right of ownership to the zamindars, who, he hoped, would improve the land as English landlords did. But apart from this perference on his part, it was difficult for the government to make the settlement with any other class.

To understand this you must bear in mind that there must have been about four or five million cultivating families in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa at that time. CoUecting from them would have involved the preparation of detailed records of all their holdings, and the calculation of a tax on this basis. This would take several years and a large staff to execute. In addition it would give great opportunities for corruption. It was obviously much simpler to collect the revenue from a small number of big zamindars- and this was the arrangement made under the '

Permanent Settlement that was introduced in Bengal and Bihar in 1793. Every bit of agricultural land in these provinces therefore became part of some zamindari. The zamindar had to pay the tax fixed upon it: if he did so then he was the pwprietor, the owner of his zamindari. He could sell, mortgage or transfer it. The land would be inherited by heirs in due course. If however, the tamindar failed to pay the tax due, then the Government would take. the zamindari and sell it by auction. and all the rights would vest in the new owner.

The Position of the Cultivators

The actual cultivatiqn of the Land was of course, carried on by the lakhs of peasants who weie dqw reduced to the status of tenants of the zamindars; Cornwallis had also decreed that the zamindars should issue written agreements (cajled pattas) to each cultivator, and these should specify what the tenant was to pay. He zpparently believed that this would prevent -oppression by the zamindars. 111 practice, however, no such pattas were issued, and the peasants were wholly at the mercy of the zamindars.

This was not accidental. As we have noted earlier, the permanent assessment was the largest sum that could be got from the land. It was a heavy and oppressive assessment. According to the estimate of a knoyiedgeable official. John Shore, if a piece of land produced crops worth Rs. 100. then Rs. 45 went to the government. as. 15 to the zamindar and Only Rs. 40 was left to the cultivator. Such oppressive taxes could only be collected by oppressive methods. If the zamindars were not allowed to oppress the peasants then they would not be ~ble to meet the demands of the State. By regulations made in 1793. 1799 and 1812, the zamindar could' seize, that is, carry away the tenants' property if the rent had not been paid. He did not need the permission of any court of law to do this. This was a legal method of harassment. In addition to this the zamindars often resorted to iliegal .

methods, such as locking up or beating tenants who did not pay whatever was demanded. The immediate effect of the Settlement was, therefore, to greatly I worsen the position of the actual cultivators of the soil, in order to benefit the / zamindars and the British Government.

Effects of the Permanent Settlement

It may seem that the settlement was greatly in favour of the zamindars but we should not forget that they were also now obliged to pay a fiied amount by fixed dates eveiy year, and any failure on their part meant the sale of the zarnindari. I Furthermore, many of the zamindaris were rated for large sums that left no I margin for shortfalls due to flood, drought or other calamity. As a result, many t zamindars had their zamindaris taken away and sold in the decades immediately after the permanent Settlement. In Bengal alone it is estimated that 68 per cent, of the zamindari land was sold between 1794 and 1819. Merchants, government officials, and other zamindars bought these lands. The new buyers would then set about trying to increase the rents paid by the tenants in order to make a profit from their purchases. Raja Rammohan Roy remarked that: under the premanent settlement since 1793, the landholders have adoptsci every measure to raise the rents, by means of the power put into their hands.

However, many zamindars still found it difficult to pay the amount demanded b) the British. One such zamindar, the Raja of Burdwan then divided most of his estate into 'lots' or fractions called parni taluqs. Each such unit was permanently rented to a holder called a patnidar, who promised to pay a fixed rent. If he did not pay, his patni could be taken away and sold. Other zamindars also ~esorted to this: thus .a process of subinfeudation commenced.

Gradually the population of Bengal increased, waste and jungle land came under cultivation. Rents also increased. On the other hand, the tax payable to

government was fixed, so the position of the zamindars improved, and they were able to lead lives of indolence and luxury at the expense of their tenants. Only in 1859 did the State take some step to protect the rights of tenant: a law passed that year bestowed a limited protection on old tenants, who were now termed occupancy tenants.

Disillusionment with Permanent Settlement

When Cornwallis introduced the Permanent Settlement in Bengal he expected that the same system would be established in the other British territories as well. And the Government of Madras in fact began to introduce it in the lands under its control. However, British officiab soon began to doubt the virtues of this system, while its defects became more prominent.

A very important defect, as far as they were concerned, was that it left no scope for increases in taxation, while the expenditure of the Company, fuelled by repeated wars, continued to expand. Lord Wellesley, Governor-General from 1798 to 1806 actually diverted funds sent from England for the purchase of trade goods and used them for his military expenditures. So officials began to think of ways and means of increasing the government's income. Some of the officials thought that in 1793 the zamindars had got off too easily, and this mistake should not be repeated in future. As early as 181 1 the London authorities warned against the introduction of permanent settlements without 'a minute and detailed survey' of the land.

Ryotwari System

You can see that the officer fixing the tax, or settling the revenue, has a difficult mask. He has to fix the tax on thousands of fields in a sub-division or district, and GO fix it in such a way that the burden on each such field is approximately equal. If the burden is not equally distributed, then the cultivators

will not occupy the heavily assessed fields, and cultivate only those with a light assessment. Mow, in fixing the assessment of a field, the revenue officer had to consider two things: one was the quality of the soil - whether it was r.ocky or rich, irrigated or dry etc.; the other was area of the field. It followed, therefore, that this system depended on a survey, that is, a classification of it. Thus one acre of first class rice land should pay the same amount regardless of whether it was located in this village or that one. But how was this amount to be fixed?

Munro usually fixed it by estimating what the usual product of the land was- for example - 2600 Ibs. of paddy per acre. He would then claim that the State share of this amounted to one third of this, or two-fifths of [his, and thus calculate the amount that the cultivator had to pay the State. This, of course is the theory of ryotwari -in practice, the estimates were largely guesswork, and the amounts demanded so high that they could be collected with great difficuhy , and sometimes could not be collected at all.

The Adoption of Ryotwari in Madras

After some experiments with other ways of managing the land revenue, the Madras authorities were by 1820 converted to the ryoti:ari system, and its triumph was indicated by the appointment of Munro as Governor of Madras. Munro advanced many arguments in favour of this system. He argued that it was the original - Indian land tenure, and the one best suited to Indian conditions. Its adoption was due, however, to one main reason - it resulted in a larger revenue than any other system could have produced. This was because there were no zamindars or other intermediaries who received any part of the agricultural surplus - whatever could be squeezed from the cultivator went directly to the State. The Madras government was chronically short of funds, and such a system would

naturally appeal to it. So. taking advantage of the rejection of the Permanent Settlement, it introduced the temporary ryotwari settlement.

Ryotwari Theory and Practice

We have-outlined the ryotwari system as it was developed by Munro in the districts under his charge. After 1820 however, ryotwari was extended to most of the Madras Presidency in forms quite different from those visualised by Munro. His ryotwari, you will remember, was a field assessment, leaving the cultivator free to cultivate or give up any particular field. And, as we saw, the working of such a system depended upon the government carrying out a detailed measurement and assessment of each field. But after 1820 the system was extended to many districts where no surveys had ever been carried out. No one knew how much land a peasant cultivated, or what its product might be. His tax came to be fixed on an arbitrary basis, usually by looking at what he had paid in earlier years. This was known as a 'putcut' assessment.

Again, in theory the ryotwarl allowed the ryot to give up any field that he chose. But it soon became clear that if this was freely permitted the tax reverme of the State would fall. So government officers began to compel the cultivators to hold on to (and of course, pay for) land that they did not really want to cultivate. Since cultivation was not voluntary, it, was always difficult to collect the revenue, and so the use of beating and torture to enforce payment was also widespread. These methods were exposed by the Madras Torture Commission in 1854. After this certain reforms were intrdduced. A scientific survey of the land was undertaken, the real burden of tax declined, and there was no need to use violent and coercive methods to collect the revenue. However, these improvements occ arred after 1860 - beyond the period that we are studying at present.

Effects of the Ryotwari System in Madras

There is hardly any doubt that the effects of this system upon the rural economy were distinctly harmful. The peasants werp impoverished and lacked the resources to cultivate new lands. The Government of Madras itself noted in 1855 that only 14% million acres of ryotwari land were cultivated, while 18 million acres were waste. It confessed: 'There is no room for doubt that an increase of cultivation would follow reductions of the Government tax.' Apart from this depressing effect upon the rural economy, the heavy burden of taxation distorted the land market. Land in most districts of Madras had no value in the first half of the 19th century. No .one would buy it, because buying it meant that the new owner would have to pay the extortionate land revenue. After paying it, be would have no income from the land, and obviously, in such circumstances, no one would purchase land.

The ~$otw&i Settlement in Bombay

Ryatwari in the Bombay Presidency had its beginnings in Gujarat. The British began by collecting the land revenue through the hereditary officials called desais and the village headmen (Patel). However, this did not produce as much revenue as the British wanted, ar, they began collecting directly from the peasants in 1815-14. When they conquered the Peshwa's territory in 1818 the ryotwari system on the Madras pattern was also introduced there, under the supervision of Munro's disciple Elphinstone. The abuses that characterised the Madras ryotwari soon -red in the Bombay Presidency also, especially as the Collectors began trying to increase the revenue as rapidly as they could.

A regular measurement and classification of the land was commenced under the supervision of an officer named Pringle. This survey was supposed to be founded upon the theory of rent developed by the English economist Ricardo. This

theory was hardly applicable to Indian conditions, and, in any case, Pringle's calculations were full of errors, and the resulting assessmerit was far too high. When the government tried to collect the amounts futed by Pringle in Pune district, many of the cultivators gave up their lands and fled into the territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad. This assessment thus had to be abandoned after some years.

It was replaced by a reformed system divised by two officers named Wingate and Goldsmid. Their system did not try to apply any theoretical rules: instead it aimed at moderating the demand to a level where it could be regularly paid. The actual assessment of each field depended upon its soil and location. This new assessment began to be made in 1836 and covered most of the Deccan by 1865. Its effects upon agricultfire were beneficial, and the dultivated area expanded as the new assessment was introduced.

Effects of tk Ryotwui System in ad& and Bombay

We have seen how the Permanent Settlement established a few big zamindars in a position of dominance over the mass of the peasants. The socid effects of the ryotwari settlements were less dramatic. In many areas the actual cultivating peasants were recorded as the occupants or 'ryots', and thus secured the title to their holdings. However, as we saw, the tax was so heavy that many peasants would have gladly abandoned at least some of their land, and had to be prevented from doing so. It was also possible for non-cultivating landlords to have their names entered as the occupants (or owners) of particular holdings, while the actual cultivation was carried on by their tenants, servants or even bonded labourers. This was partic&rly the case in irrigated districts like Thanjavur (in Tamil Nadu) where many of the 'ryots' held thousands of acres of land. There was no limit to the amount of land that a ryot could hold, so there could be great difference in wealth and status between one ryot and another. However, money-

lenders and other non-cultivators were not much interested in acquiring lands because of the heavy taxes that came with them. Hence the small peasants, oppressed though they might be by the tax-collector did not have to fear expropriation by the money-lender or landlord.

Under the reformed ryotwari system that gradually developed in Bombay after 1836 and Madras after 1858 the burden of the land revenue was somewhat reduced, and land acquired a saleable value. The purchaser could now expect to make a profit from owning land :the State would not take it all as tax. One result of this was that money-lenders began to seize the lands of their peasant debtors and either evict them.or reduce them to tenants. This process led to considerable social tension, and caused a major rural uprising in the Bombay Deccan in 1875.

Mahalwari System

The aggressive policies of Lord Wellesley led to large territorial gains for the British in North India between 1801 and 1806. These areas came to be called the North-Western Provinces. Initially the British planned a settlement on the Bengal pattern, Wellesley ordered the local officials ro make the settlement with the zamindars wherever they could, provided they agreed to pay a suitably high land revenue. Only if the zamindars refused to pay, or nor zamindars could be found were the settlements to be made village by village 'giving the preference to the mokuddums, perdhauns, or any respectable,Ryotts of the village'. Ultimately, the settlement was to be made permanent, as in Bengal.

In the meantime, however, every effort was made to enlarge the revenue collection. The demand in 1803-4 was Rs. 188 lakhs - by 1817-18 it was Rs. 297 lakhs.

Such enormous increases provoked resistance from many of the big zamindars and rajas, who had been almost independent in the earlier period. Many

of them were therefore driven off their lands by the new administration. In other cases the old zamindars could not pay the amount demanded, and their estates were sold by the Government. Increasingly, therefore, it became necessary to collect from the village directly through its pradhan or muqaddam (headman). In the reSrenue records the word used for a fiscal unit was a 'mahal', and the villagewise assessment therefore came to be called a mahalwari settlement. It was however quite possible for one person to hold a number of villages, so that many big zamindars continued to exist. Furthermore, as in Bengal, the confusion and coercion that accompanied the collection of the very heavy land tax created fine opportunities for the lyal officials, and large areas of land were illegally acquired by them in the eakly years. Meanwhile, the Government found that its expenditures were alwasy exceeding its revenues, and the idea of a permanent settlement was dropped.

Mahalwari Theory and Prsctice

In 1819 an English official, Holt Mackenzie, developed the theory that taluqdars and zamindars were originally appointed by the State, and the real owners of villages were the zamindars who lived in them, or constituted the village community. He argued that their rights and payinents should be clearly established by a survey. His ideas were embodied in a law, Regulation VII of 1822. This required that Government officials should record all the rights of cultivators, zamindars and others, and also fix the amounts payable from every piece of land. The Governor-General orders:

It seems necessary to enter on the tas'k of fixing in detail the rates of rent and modes of payment current in each village, and applicable to each field: and anything short of this must be regarded as a very imperfect Settlement

In practice, this proved impossible to implement. The calculations made were often quite inaccurate, and the Collectors in any case slanted them so as to increase the revenue due to the Government. Far from favouring the village communities, the new mahalwari ofren ruined them by imposing impossible tax assessments. In 1833 it was decided that the detailed effort to regulate all rights and payments should be given up, and that a rough and ready estimate of what the village could pay to rhe State was adequate. In later years, these estimates came to be guided by the rents paid by the tenants of village lands to the owners. From these rents the Settlement officer would calculate the theoretical amount that all the lands of the village or mahal would yield. Then some part - ultimately 50 per cent of this would have to be paid to the Government. All these calculations involved a large amount of guesswork: and, not suprisingly, the guesses tended to be on the high side, increasing the amounts to be paid to the State.

Effects of the Mahalwari Settlement

One of the earb effects was that the area under the controi of the big taluqdars was reduced. The British officers made direct settlements with the vilIage zarnindars as far as possible, and even supported them in the law cows when the taluqdars brought suits against them. But the so-called village zamindars were supported only because it was planned to extract the highest possible revenue from them. They were freed from taluqdar's claims only to subject them to a full measure of government taxation.

The result was often the ruin of the village zamindars. One officer reported that in many villages of Aligarh: the Juma (land revenue) was in the first place considerably too heavy; and in which the Malgoozars revenue payers seem to have lost all hope of 'improving their condition or of bearing up against the burden

imposed on them. They are now deeply in debt, and utteriy incapable of making any arrangements for defraying their arrears.

The result of this situation was hat large areas of land began ts pass into the hands of money-lenders and merchants who ousted the old cultivating proprison or reduced them to tenants-at will. This occurred most frequently in tk mxe commercialised districts, where the land revenue demand had been p&ed to the highest level, and where the landholders suffered most acutely from the business collapse and export depression after 1833. .By the 1840s it was not uncommon to Sind that no buyers could be found to take land that was being sold for arrears of land revenue. As in the Madras Presidency, the tax in these cases was so high that the buyer could not expect to make any profit from the purchase. Overall, therefore. the mahalwari settlement brought impoverishment and widespread dispossession to the cultivating communities of North India in the 1830s ad 1840s. and their resentment expressed itself in popular uprisings in 1857. In that year villagers and taluqdars all over North India drove off government official, destroyed court and official records and papers, and ejected the new auction purchasers from the villages.

Commercialisation of Agriculture

What is Commercialization of Agriculture?

Commercialisation of agriculture is a phenomenon where agriculture is governed by commercial consideration i.e. certain specialised crops began to be grown not for consumption in village but for sale in national and even in international market. Commercialization of agriculture in India began during the British rule. Revolutionary changes had occurred in the agrarian property relations towards the end of the 18th century. The commercialization of Indian agriculture started post 1813 when the industrial revolution in England gained pace.

Commercialization of agriculture became prominent around 1860 A.D (during American Civil War which boosted demand of Cotton from India to Britain as Aerica was not able to export Cotton). The commercialization of Indian Agriculture took place not to feed the industries of India because India was far behind in industrial development as compared to Britain, France, Belgium and many other European countries of eighteenth century. The commercialization of Indian Agriculture was done primarily to feed the British industries that it was taken up and achieved only in cases-of those agricultural products which were either needed by the British industries or could fetch cash commercial gain to the British in the European or American market.

For example, several efforts were made to increase the production of cotton in India to provide raw and good quality cotton to the cotton-textile industries of Britain which were growing fast after the Industrial Revolution in Britain. Therefore, cotton growing area increase in India and its production increased manifold with gradual lapse of time. Indigo and more than that, tea and coffee plantation were encouraged in India because these could get commercial market abroad.

Most of the plantations for commercial crops were controlled by the English. Jute was another product that received attention of the English company because the jute made products got a ready market in America and Europe. Cash transactions become the basis of exchange and largely replaced the barter system.

How Commercialization of Agriculture Happened?

The commercialization of India agriculture was initiated in India by the British through their direct and indirect policies and activities. The new land tenure system introduced in form of permanent settlement and Ryotwari Settlement had made agricultural land a freely exchangeable commodity. The Permanent

settlement by giving ownership right to the zamindars created a class of wealthy landlords; they could make use of this ownership right by sale or purchase of land. Further, the agriculture which had been way of life rather than a business enterprise now began to be practiced for sale in national and international market. Moreover, crops like cotton, jute, sugarcane, ground nuts, tobacco etc. which had a high demand in the market were increasingly cultivated. The beginning of the plantation crops like Tea, coffee, rubber, indigo etc heralded a new era in agricultural practices in India. These were essentially meant for markets and thus commercialization of agriculture took to new heights with the expansion of the British rule. The commercialization of agriculture was a forced and artificial process for the majority of Indian peasants. It was introduced under coercion of the British and not out of the incentive of peasantry at large. The peasantry went for cultivation of commercial crops under duress. He had to pay the land revenue due to the British government in time. Moreover, he had to grow commercial crop on a specified tract of his land under the oppression of planters.

What Caused Commercialization of Agriculture in India during British Period?

A large number of factors encouraged and facilitated commercialization of Indian agriculture. The political unity established by the British and the resultant rise of the unified national market was an important factor. Further, the spread of money economy replaced the barter and agricultural goods became market items. The chief factor was the colonial subjugation of India under the British rule. India was reduced to the supplier of raw materials and food grains to Britain and importer of British manufactured goods. Many commercial crops like, cotton, jute, tea, tobacco were introduced to meet the demand in Britain.

The replacement of custom and tradition by competition and contract also led to the commercialization of Indian agriculture Better means of communication

(equipped with rapid development of railways and shipping) made trade in agricultural products feasible, especially over long distances. The emergence of grain merchants was a natural adjunct to this and greatly facilitated agricultural trade.

Monetization of land revenue payments was another important casual factor for agricultural commercialization. Another boosting factor for commercialization of agriculture in India was the gaining of speed of Industrial Revolution in England. This led to factor in commercialization as more and more agricultural goods were produced to satisfy the demand for raw materials by the British industries.

The enlargement and expansion of international trade and the entry of British finance capital also belted commercialization of agriculture. Increasing demand for some of the commercial crops in other foreign countries gave impetus to commercialization of agriculture. The American Civil War also indirectly encouraged commercialization of agriculture in India: the British cotton demand was diverted to India. The demand of cotton was maintained even after the civil war ceased because of the rise of cotton textile industries in India.

British policy of one way free trade also acted as sufficient encouraging factor for commercialization as the manufactured items in textile, jute etc could find free entry in Indian markets, where as the manufactured goods did not have similar free access to European markets. The peasants went in for growing commercial crops to pay back the interests due to money lenders in time.

What was Impact of Commercialization of Agriculture?

a. Increase in Equality-Normally speaking, it should have acted as a catalyst in increasing agricultural productivity. But, in reality this did not happen due to poor agricultural organization, obsolete technology, and lack of

resources among most peasants. It was only the rich farmers; who benefited and this in turn, accentuated inequalities of income in the rural society.

b. Major benefits to planters, traders and manufacturers- The commercialization of agriculture beneficial to the British planters, traders and manufacturers, who were provided with opportunity to make huge profits by getting the commercialized agricultural products at, throw away prices. The commercialization of Indian agriculture also partly benefited Indian traders and money lenders who made huge fortunes by working as middlemen for the British.

c. Increased dependency on moneylenders-The poor peasant was forced to sell his produce just after harvest at whatever prices he could get as he had to meet in time the demands of the government, the landlord, the money lender and his family members' requirements. This placed him at the money of the grain merchant, who was in a position to dictate terms and who purchased his produced at much less than the market price. Thus, a large share of the benefit of the growing trade in agricultural products was reaped by the merchant, who was very often also the village money lender. Commercialization of agriculture did not encourage growth of land market because major profit of commercialisation went to company traders and mediators. Indian money lenders advanced Cash advances to the farmers to cultivate the commercial crops and if the peasants failed to pay him back in time, the land of peasants came under ownership of moneylenders.

d. Decline in Food Production & Frequent Famine-Most of the Indian people suffered miserably due to the British policy of commercialization of Indian agriculture. It resulted in reduced area under cultivation of food crops due to the substitution of commercial non-food grains in place of food grains.

Between 1893-94 to 1945-46, the production of commercial crops increased by 85 percent and that of food crops fell by 7 percent. This had a devastating effect on the rural economy and often took the shape of famines.

e. Impoverishment of Indian People- The misery was further enhanced became the population of India was increasing every year, fragmentation of land was taking place because of the increasing pressure on land and modern techniques of agricultural production were not introduced in India. Thus, the commercialization of agriculture in India by the British was also one of the important causes of the impoverishment of the Indian people.

f. Regional Specialization of crop- Regional specialization of crop production based on climatic conditions, soil etc., was an outcome of the commercial revolution in agriculture. Deccan districts of Bombay presidency grew cotton, Bengal grew jute and Indigo, Bihar grew opium, Assam grew tea, Punjab grew wheat, etc.

g. Linking Agriculture sector to World Market- Another important consequence of the commercial revolution in agriculture was linking of the agricultural sector to the world market. Price movements and business fluctuations in the world markets began to affect the fortunes of the Indian farmer to a degree that it had never done before. The farmer in his choice of crops attached greater importance to market demand and price than his home needs. The peasant class got adversely affected owing to imbalances in market condition.

h. Adverse effect on self-Sufficiency-Commercialization of agriculture adversely affected self-sufficiency of village economy and acted as major factor in bringing the declining state in rural economy.

i. Effect on traditional agriculture-industry relation-Commercialisation effected traditional relations between agriculture and industry. In India, traditional relations acted as factors for each other's development which were hampered.

j. No Technological Development-Commercialization of agriculture indicated a commercial revolution. But this was devoid of any support from any technological revolution. Owing to true the healthy benefits which agriculture and associated fields would have enjoyed were lacking. The commercialization of agriculture had mixed effects. While it assisted the industrial revolution in Britain, it broke the economic self-sufficiency of villages in India. The commercialization of agriculture was a new phenomenon in Indian agriculture scene introduced by the British. While the upper class and British industries benefited-from it, the Indian peasants' life was tied to remote international market.

k. Peasant Revolts-The worst effect of commercialization was the oppression of Indian peasants at hands of European. This found expression in the famous Indigo revolt in 1859. Moreover, commercialization of Indian agriculture got manifested in series of famines which took a heavy toll of life.

Positive Impacts of Commercialization of Agriculture:

In spite of having many negative effect commercializations in one sense was progressive event. Commercialisation encouraged social exchange and it made possible the transformation of Indian economy into capitalistic form. Commercialisation linked India with world economy. It led to the growth of high level social and economic system. The important contribution of commercialisation reflected in integration of economy. It also created a base for

growth of national economy commercialisation of agriculture led to growth of national agriculture and agricultural problem acquired national form. It also brought about regional specialization of crops on an efficient basis.

Railways

In 1846, the revenue commissioner of Bombay, Thomas Williamson wrote to the chairman of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company in London stating that, The great trunk-line, running by the Malseje Ghaut in the direction of Nagpur, would be most direct which could possibly be selected to connect Bombay to Calcutta. Commercially, it would be best for the cotton of Berar, while for the first 120 miles from Bombay we would proceed in the immediate direction of the military stations of Ahmednuggur, Jaulna and Aurangabad.1 Nothing could be more obvious than the twin purpose of colonial railways stated so early and so clearly above, i e, commercial and military. These two objectives set the tone for the imperial railway project until the end of the British raj. Four years later, the same company undertook the construction of the very first 20-24 miles railway line from Bombay to Thana completed and opened in April 1853.2 By 1900, over 24,000 miles of tracks had been laid.3 This enormous project was financed entirely by British private investment capital.

Imperial Finance and the Colonial Railway

Private British companies with the strong backing of the government of India not only built railways but also owned them. There were on average 1,405 miles under construction every year until the end of the century.4 Some 150 million pounds-sterling was invested in Indian railways by the end of the 19th century. This became the single largest investment in the British empire. The government of India became the guarantor to the railway shareholders who were mostly British. Private companies would build and operate their respective lines in

different regions of the subcontinent with a guaranteed 5 per cent return on their stockholders' investment assured by the Indian revenues of the empire. And between 1869 and early 1880s, the government of India itself built railroads for private British companies. Fifty million pounds-sterling from Indian revenues were set aside by the colonial state to meet the guarantee irrespective of the company losses.

The accession of Lord Dalhousieinaugurated a new chapter in the history of British India. He functioned as the Governor-General of India from 1848-1856.

He belonged to an aristocratic family of Scotland. Earlier he had served as the President of the Board of Trade. He is regarded as one of the greatest Governor-General of India.

His eight years rules are full of important events in every sphere.

He was great both in war and peace. He introduced a number of reforms which paved the way for the modernisation of India and also earned the title, "Maker of the Modern India". He believed that, "the promotion of civilization meant the promotion of western reforms, that western administration and western institutions were as superior to Indian as Western arms had proved more potent."

Administrative Reforms

Dalhousie's chief aim was the consolidation of British rule in India. So he adopted the principle of centralization. For the newly acquired territories he devised the 'Non-Regulation System" under which commissioners were appointed to deal with the administrative problems.

They were made responsible to the Governor-General in the Council. He handed over all other powers relating to justice, police, and land revenue

to the District Magistrates. Dalhousie also made provision for the appointment of a Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. By the Parliamentary Act of 1853, the Governor-General was relieved of his functions as the governor of Bengal.

Military Reforms

After the conquest of Punjab, Sindh and Avadh, the frontiers of the company were extended and the military interest of India was transferred to the North. Thus Dalhousie shifted the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery from Calcutta to Meerut. The army head-quarter was also transferred to Shimla so that the army could remain is touch with Governor-General who resided is Shimla.

Dalhousie also ordered for the general movement of troops from around Calcutta and from the lower provinces of Bengal towards the west. He could clearly foresee that the future safety of India depended upon the numerical strength of the army and on the maintenance of balance between British and Indian forces.

After some reduction in the strength of the Indian element the army stood at 2, 23,000 men in 1856, as against 45,000 Europeans. As he had no confidence in the Indians, a new Gurkha regiment was created. A new "Irregular Force" was also formed and posted in Punjab. These regiments proved to be of great assistance to the British during the revolt of 1857-58.

Railway Reforms

Dalhousie introduced a new system of internal communication in India. He was the father of Indian Railways. Dalhousies' famous Railway Minute of 1853 convinced the home authorities of the need of the railways and laid down the main lines of their development.

He envisaged a network of railways connecting the main places with the ports and providing both for strategically needs and commercial development. The first railway line connecting Bombay with Thane was laid down in 1853. It covered a distance of twenty-six miles.

The following year a railway line was constructed from Calcutta to Raniganj coal-fields. Gradually all important cities and towns were linked up with railway lines. The railway lines were not built out of the Indian Exchequer but by private English Companies under a system of "Government Guarantee". Besides facilitating trade and commerce, minimizing distances the railways have gone a long way in uniting India.

The Electric Telegraph

In 1852 Dalhousie introduced the Electric Telegraph System in India. The first telegraph line from Calcutta to Agra was opened in 1854, covering a distance of 800 miles. By 1857, it was extended to Lahore and Peshawar. In Burma a line was laid down from Rangoon to Mandalay. People could send message from one place to another place very easily by this telegraph system.

Postal Reforms

The credit of establishing Postal Department also goes to Lord Dalhousie. In 1854 a new Post Office Act was passed. Under this system, a Director-General was appointed to supervise the work of Post Offices in all the Presidencies; a uniform rate of half-anna per letter was introduced and for the first time postage stamps were issued.

A postal Department was established for the whole country. As a result of these reforms the post offices became the sources of revenue of the government. The people were benefited by the modern postal system.

Public Works Department

Before Lord Dalhousie, military boards were in charge of the construction of Public Works. Hence Civilian works were completely neglected by the military board. A separate Public Works Department was established by Lord Dalhousie. The Chief Works of this department was to construct roads, bridges and government buildings. The chief Engineer, other highly trained engineers were brought from England to supervise the work of construction. Irrigational works were undertaken on an extensive scale.

The construction of Ganges Canal was completed and was inaugurated on April 8, 1854. Many bridges and canals were constructed and also the construction of Grand Trunk Road was taken up. Dalhousie's special contribution was the construction of an engineering college at Roorkee and in other presidencies. He thus ranks as the father of technical education as distinct from professional education in India.

Social Reforms

Dalhousie abolished female infanticide which was prevalent among the Rajputs of higher castes. He also abolished the practice of human sacrifice practiced by the khonds of Orissa, Madras and Central Provinces who had blind belief that the fertility of the soil would be increased by sacrificing human beings. By that time it was in practice that if any person became a convert, he was deprived of his ancestral property.

This system checked the speed of conversions in India. But Dalhousie passed the Religious Disability Act in 1850 which enabled the Hindu convert to inherit his ancestral property. Moreover, he also passed the Widow Remarriage Act in 1855 which legalized the marriage of Hindu widows.

However, these reforms annoyed the people of India and became one of the reasons of the revolt of 1857.

Commercial Reforms

Dalhousie followed the policy of free trade. Dr. Ishwari Prasad writes, "Dalhousie's commercial reforms were designed to throw open the produce and market of India to the exploitation of English Capital." All ports of India were declared free. The harbours of Karachi, Bombay and Calcutta were developed and light houses were also constructed. All the sea-trade was captured by the English merchants who had power and resources. The commercial reforms of Dalhousie spoiled the Indian trade and economic conditions of Indians became miserable.

Educational Reforms

Lord Dalhousie had introduced a number of reforms in the field of education. The Government did not take any step for the promotion of vernacular education. In 1854 Sir Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control sent his recommendations known as "Wood's Despatch of 1854" to India reorganizing the whole structure of education.

The wood's dispatch laid the foundations of modern education system. It recommended Anglo Vernacular Schools throughout the districts, Government Colleges in important towns and a University in each of the three Presidencies in India.

In each province a separate department of education was to be established and it was to be placed under a Director General of Public Instruction. The government should encourage private enterprise by providing grants-in-aid to the educational institutions opened by private bodies.

Dalhousie completely reorganized the department of education on the basis of Wood's recommendations.

In 1857 examining universities on the model of London University were established at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. These universities were to hold examinations and award degrees. Vernacular Schools were opened in the villages and education was imparted to the children through vernacular or regional language of the province in the Lower Classes.

Lord Dalhousie had introduced several reforms touching all most every department. Unfortunately after one year of the departure of Dalhousie from India, the revolt of 1857 broke out. Some of the Social reforms of Dalhousie were responsible to some extent for the outbreak of the revolt. But most of the reforms of Dalhousie took India to the path of modernization.

Famine Commissions during British Rule in India

Famine in India during British East India Company

There are records of severe droughts by the British, especially during the East India Company period. During the company's rule, there were many famines in different regions of India. In the Bengal famine of 1769-70, approximately 1/3 of the population died due to famine. The company government has not implemented any remedial plan or did not help. Not only this, during the drought, he bought rice at a low price and sold it at a high price and made a huge profit. In 1781-82 there was a famine in Madras and in 1784 in the whole of North India. The company government did relief work. But that was not enough. In 1833, 2 lakhs people out of 5 lakhs died in Guntur district. Also in 1837, severe drought again occurred in North India, in which the Company government started some public activities. But the aid did not reach the drought victims. Due to this, there was a terrible loss of life and financial loss. From this, during the rule

of the company, there was no sure measure to save the common people from drought and for relief work. Therefore, the drought-affected people got substantial relief work from the company government.

Famine in British India

In 1858, the transfer of the administration of India from the Company to the British Crown and the development of railways and other means of communication, the advancement of foreign trade, changed the nature of the problem of drought. The British government also realized this. It was the responsibility of the British government to expand irrigation works in India, make agricultural laws, try to alleviate droughts, formulate a drought policy. An average of 10 severe droughts occurred during this period. In 1860-61 there was a famine abroad in Delhi and Agra. This was the first time that arrangements were made to accommodate the famine victims. It was decided to investigate the causes of the drought. Colonel Smith was appointed for this purpose. There was no concrete suggestion in his report. Even though the drought in Orissa in 1866 was more serious, no preparations were made to face the drought. So the government was following the theory of supply and demand. As a result, 13 lakhs people died. This point was proved by drought changes. A committee was set up by the government under the chairmanship of George Campbell. During the drought of 1876- 78, there was a severe drought in the states of Madras, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. In this 5 crore 80 lakhs people were caught in the grip of drought. The government made superficial efforts to prevent drought. Thousands of people died in this.

The Bengal famine of 1942-43 was the worst and worst of the many droughts in India, in which thousands died. Looking at the nature of this drought, due to the policy of the British government and the Second World

War of 1939, it is seen that the hand of man was more than that of God in this drought.

Causes of Famine in British Rule

Seeing that, after the arrival of the British in India, there was no problem to overcome the above limits to effectively prevent and eliminate drought, i.e. Eliminatedrought permanently. Trade increased with British expansion in India. Also, the means of transport and communication like roads, railways, post and wire were expanded. Similarly, if irrigation, agriculture and industries were developed and expanded in India on the basis of modern science and technology and capital production methods, the ability of the Indian economy to face naturalcalamities would have increased. Drought would have been largely eradicated from India. But the opposite happened.

Food grains and agricultural products like jute, cotton, tea,indigo etc. were exported to Britain as raw materials from India.While the cloth, leather goods, utensils etc. from the mills of England. Cheap ready-made goods began to be consumed in India. Therefore, weavers, tanners, coppersmiths etc. in India. As the goods of the artisans became scarce, they lost their business as artisans. Also, the British took care that no mills should be set up in India in order to consume the goods of English mills here. As a result of all this, on the one hand agriculture was destroyed and the farmers were greatly impoverished, on the other hand, due to the destruction of craftsmanship and lack of industrial development, the entire population turned to agriculture for livelihood. This increased the population burden on agriculture. In such a situation, how will the Indian economy's ability to face natural calamities like drought increase due to the arrival of the British? The opposite potential also decreased.

Even a small amount of rain led to the collapse of the agricultural system and the growing agricultural population was thrown into the abyss of drought.

During the 50 year period from 1850 to 1900, 2 crore people died due to famine. This drought is a cruel glimpse of the dark British colonialism that plunged India into the trenches of long-term hunger, unemployment and poverty through immense looting and extreme exploitation.

British Famine Relief Plans Drought Commission

a. Smith Committee, 1860-61 in 1860-61 there was a famine in Delhi and Agra region. Seeing the severity of this drought, the British government established the Smith Committee for the first time under the leadership of British officer Smith. This committee worked to get information about the severity of drought in and around Delhi.

b. Campbell Commission, 1866 In 1865-66 there was a devastating drought in Orissa, Bengal, Bihar and Madras. 20 lakhs people died in this drought. 1 million people died in Orissa alone. The severity of this drought was highest in the Orissa region. Hence this drought is also called Orissa drought. Seeing the severity of this drought, the British government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Sir George Campbell. This committee held the government system responsible for this drought. Sir John Lawrence was the Viceroy at this time.

c. Strachey Commission, 1880 The Great Famine of 1876-78 was the worst disaster experienced since the beginning of the 19^{th} century. Madras, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab were affected and about 5 million people died within a year. The government made half-hearted efforts to help the drought-stricken people.

d. In 1880, Viceroy Lytton appointed a commission eaded by Richard Strachey to formulate general rinciples and suggest measures to permanently overcome the famine. This commission is called Strachey Commission or Strachey Commission.

e. Lyall Commission, 1896 the previous drought was followed by the drought of 1896-97. It affected almost every province to varying degrees, and the

total drought was estimated to have affected a population of 34 million.A commission headed by Sir James Lyall, the former Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, followed the views expressed by him in 1896. It suggested some changes to give more flexibility to the then accepted principles. The commission recommended development of irrigation facilities. Lord Elgin was the second Viceroy.

f. McDonnell Commission, 1900 After the famine of 1899-1900, Lord Curzon appointed a Famine Commission headed by MacDonnell. In a report in 1901, he summarized the principles of relief and suggested changes where necessary.

Self Assessment Questions

- Explain the dual system of control introduced by Pitt's India Act of 1784.

- Discuss the impact of the Permanent Settlement on the Indian agrarian economy.

- How did the introduction of railways, roadways, and telegraph systems under British rule influence economic exploitation
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Unit – V

Indian Response to British Rule: Early Peasant movement and Tribal Uprisings – KolUprising - Moplah Uprisings – Bhil Uprisings – Santhal Uprisings - Poligar Uprisings – Puli Thevan – Velu Nachaiyar – Kattabomman – Maruthu Brothers - Vellore Mutiny – The Great Revolt of 1857 – Jhansi Rani.

Objectives

- Discuss the roles of notable figures such as Puli Thevan, Velu Nachiyar, Kattabomman,
- Examine the significance of the Vellore Mutiny.
- Evaluate the causes, events, and consequences of the Great Revolt of 1857.

Indian Response to British Rule: Early Peasant movement and Tribal Uprisings

Earlier in this course we have studied the process of establishment of colonial rule in India and the transformation that came with it in the field of economy, law, administration and other spheres of life. What was the reaction of the common people to this new Raj and the changes that it brought? Was the revolt of 1857 and isolated event or was it preceded by protest movements of like nature? An attempt has been made in this Unit to show how the peasants and tribes reacted to alien rule in the late 18th and 19th centuries,, till 1857. This Unit covers~somehajor peasant and tribal uprisings and the origins and character of such uprisings.

Peasant and Tribal Uprisings: Origins

In pre-colonial India popular protest against the Mughal rulers and their officials was not uncommon. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed many peasant uprisings against the ruling class. Imposition of a high land revenue demand by the state: corrupt practices and harsh attitude of the tax collecting officials, were some of the many reasons which provoked the peasants to rise in revolt. However, the establishment of colonial rule in India and the various

policies of the colonial government had a much more devastating effect on the Indian peasants and tribes. In Block 4 we have discussed in detail how the Indian economy was transformed by the British to suit the East India Company's needs and to enlarge the profits of their own countrymen. Some of the changes in Indian economy brought during this period were:

- Promotion of British manufactured goods in Indian markets leading to destruction of Indian handloom and handicraft industries.
- Huge transfer of wealth from India to England (Drain of Wealth).
- British land revenue settlements, a heavy burden of new taxes, eviction of peasants from their lands, encroachment on tribal lands.
- Growth and strengthening of exploitation in rural society along with the growth of intermediary revenue collectors and tenants and money-lenders.
- Expausion of British revenue administration over tribal territories leading to the loss of tribal people's hold over agricultural and forest land.

The overall impact of these changes on the peasant and tribal society was very destructive. The appropriation of peasants surplus by the company and its agents, the increasing burden of taxes made the peasants completely dependant on the mercy of the revenue intermediaries and officials, the merchants and the money-lenders. Moreover, the destruction of indigenous industry led to migration of large scale workers from industry to agriculture. The pressure on land increased but the land revenue and agricultural policy of the government allowed little scope for the improvament of Indian agriculture.

While the British economic policy led to pauperization and impoverishment of the Indian peasantry, the British administration turned a deaf ear to the peasants grievances. British law and judiciary did not aid the peasantry; it safeguarded the interest of the government and its collaborators-the landlords,

the merchants and the money-lenders. Thus being the prey of colonial exploitation and being deprived of justice from the colonial administration the peasants took up arms to protect themselves. The grievances of the tribal people were not different from those of the peasants. But what made them more aggrieved was the encroachment by outsiders into their independent tribal polity.

Some Important Uprisings

The simmering discontent of the peasants and tribal people broke out into popular uprisings in different parts of India at different points of time in the first hundred years of BritiGh rule. Whatever may be the immediate cause of each uprising by and large these protest movements were monlded by a shared experience of oppression in various forms, including colonial oppression. We would discuss in brief some of the important uprisings of this period.

The Sanyasi Rebellion, 1763-1800

The East India Company's official correspondence in the second half of the eighteenth century referred many times to the incursion of the nomadic Sanyasis and Fakirs, mainly in northern Bengal. Even before the great famine of Bengal(1770) small groups(of Hindu and Muslim holymen travelled from place to place and made sudden attack$ on the store houses of food crops and property of the local richmen and government officids. Though the Sanyasis and Fakirs were religious mendicants, originally they were peasants, including some who were evicted from land. However, the growing hardship of the peasantry, increasing revenue demand and the Bengal famine of 1770 brought a large member of dispossessed small Zamindars, disbanded soldiers and rural poor into the bands of Sanyasis and Fakirs. They moved around different parts of Bengal and Bihar in bands of 5 to 7 thousand and adopted the guerilla technique of attack. Their target of attack was the grain stocks of the rich and at later stage, government officials.

They looted local government treasuries. Sometimes the wealth looted was distributed among the poor. They established an independent government in Bogra and Mymensingh. The contemporary government records describe these insurrections in their own way, thus:

A set of lawless banditti known under the name of Sanyasis and Fakirs, have long infested these countries and under the pretence of religious pilgrimage, have been accustomed to traverse the chief parts of Bengal, begging, stealing and plundering wherever they go and as it best suits their convenience to practice. In the years subsequent to the famine, their ranks were swollen by a crowd of starving peasants, who had neither seed nor implements to recommence cultivation with, and the cold weather of 1772 brought them down upon the harvest fields of lower Bengal, burning, plundering, revaging in bodies of fifty to thousand men.

One noticeable feature of these insurrections was the equ'al participation of Hindus and Muslims in it. Some of the important leaders of these movements were Manju Shah, Musa Shah, Bhawani Pathak and Debi Chaudhurani. Encounter between the Sanyasis-Fakirs and the British forces became a regular feature all over Bengal and Bihar till 1800. The British used its full force to suppress the rebels.

The Kol Uprising,

1831-32 The Kols of Singhbhum hr long centuries enjoyed independent power under their chiefs. They successfully resisted all attempts made by the Raja of Chota Nagpur and Mayurbhanj to subdue them. British penetration into this area and the attempt to establish British law and order over the jurisdiction of the Kol Chiefs generated tensions among the tribal people.

As a result or British occupation of Singhbhum and the neighbouring territories, a large number of people from outside began to settle in this area which

resulted in transfer of tribal lands to the outsiders. This transfer of tribal lands and coming of merchants, money-lenders and the British law in the tribal area posed a great threat to the hereditary independent powe; of the tribal chiefs. This created great resentment among the tribal people and led to popular uprisings against the outsiders in the tribal area. Tht rebellion spread over Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau and Manbhum. The target of attack was the settlers from other regions whose houses were burnt, and propert9 looted. The insurrection was ruthlessly suppressed by the British militia.

The Mappila Uprisings, 1836-54

A,mong the various peasant uprisings that posed serious challenge to the colonial rule the Mappila uprisings of Malabar occupy an important place. Mappilas are the descendants of the Arab settlers and converted Hindus. Majority of them were cultivating tenants, landless labourers, petty traders and fishermen. TheBritish occupation of Malabar in ihe last decade of the eighteenth century and the consequent changes that the British introduced in the land revenue administration of the area brought unbearable hardship in the life of the Mappilas. Most important change was theltrarlsfer of 'Janmi' from that of traditional, partnership with the Mappila to that of an independent owner of land and the right of eviction of Mappila tenants which did not exiit earlier. Over-assessment, illegal taxes,\eviction from land, hostile attitude of government officials were some of the many reasons that made the Mappilas rebel Peasant and against the British and the landlords.

The religious leaders played an important role in strengthening the solidarity of the Mappilas through socio-religions reforms and-also helpeain the evolution of anti-British consciousness among the Mappilas. The growing discontent of the Mappilas broke out in open insurrections against the state and

landlords. Between 1836 and 1854 there were about twenty-twduprisings in Malabar. In these uprisings the rebels came mostly from the poorer section of the Mappila population. The t -get! of the rebels were generally the British officials. Janmis and their dependents. The British armed forces swung into action to suppress the rebels but failed to subdue them for many years.

The Uprising of the Bhils, 1818-31

The Bhils were mostly concentrated in the hill ranges of Khandesh. The British occupation of Khandesh in 1818 enraged the Bhils because they were suspicious of outsiders' incursion into their territory. Moreover, it was believed that Trimbakji, rebel minister of Bari Rao 11, instigated the Bhils against the British occupation of Khandesh. There was a general insurrection in 1819 and the Bhils in several small groups ravaged the plains. There were similar types of insurrection quite often by the Bhil chiefs against the British. The British government used its military force to A suppress the rebels and at the same time tried to win them over through various conciliatory measures. But the British measures failed to bring the Bhils to their side.

The Santhal Rebellion, 1855-56

The Santhals were inhabitants of the districts of Birbhum, Bankura, Murshidabad, ' ~akur, Dumka, Bhagalpur and Purnea. The area of maximum concentration of . Santhals was called Daman-i-koh or Santhal Pargana. When the Santhals cleared the forest and started cultivation in this area the neighbouring Rajas of Maheshpur and Pakur leased out the Santhal villages to Zarnindars and money-lenders. Gradual penetration by outsiders (called dikus byYthe Santhals) in the territory of the Santhals brought misery and oppression for the simple.living Santhals. In Calcutta Review of 1856 a contemporary writer depicted the condition of the Santhals in the following words :

"Zamindars, the police, the revenue and court alas have exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse. and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid, and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent; false measures at the haut (weekly market) and the market; wilful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, tattoos (small ponies), ponies and men elephants, on the growing crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been,prevalent."

The oppression by money-lenders, merchants, Zamindars and government officials forced the Santhals to take up arms in order to protect themselves. Initial protests of the Santhals were in the form of robbery and looting of Zamindars and money-lenders houses. But violent suppression of these activities and harassment of Santhals at the hands of police and local officials made them more violent. The rebel Santhals found their leaders in two brothkrs, Sidhu and Kanu, who were believed to have received blessingp from the gods to put an end to the ongoing oppression of the Santhals and to restore "the good old days". Several thousand Santhals armed with their traditional weapons of bows, arrows, axes assembled and took the decision to give an ultimatum to the Zamindars and the government officials to stop oppression immediately. They decided to get back control of their lands and to set up their own government. The authorities however paid no serious attention to this ultimatum: Ultimately the grievances of the Santhats flared up in open armed insurrection against the local governaent officials, Zamindars and money-lenders. The insurrection spread rapidly in the whole~anthal Pargana. Large numbers of low caste non-Santhals also came out in suppwt of the Santhals.. The government and Zamindars started counter-attacking the insurgents. The

heroic struggle of the Santhals ultimately failed because of British superiority of arms.

Poligar Uprisings

The Period from 1799 to 1801 was the most important one in the history of Kayathar. It was one of anti-British outbreaks to free the land from the British conquests. The growing unrest in Kayathar culminated in the Poligar Rebellion of 1799, and the East India Company suppressed the rebellion with an iron- hand. Though the Company reorganized the Poligar system in 1800, it could not eliminate the sources of trouble. Therefore there was another rebellion which spread far and wide in 1801. But the Company suppressed it with determination and violence. The triumph of the British arms over the rebels contributed to the consolidation of the Company's power on a strong foundation.

The causes for the anti-British feeling were many. The English reduced the hereditary rulers to the humiliating status of a 'widow', and treated the 'sons of the soil' like "dogs". They showed no honour to the customs of the land and denied due share of the crops to the peasants. The Company not only waged a series of wars against the Poligars, but deposed and at times, executed them. This policy excited much jealousies and created bitter hatred against the English.

The discontented people decided to liberatre the land from the British domination and restore the old royal instruction to their former glory. Therefore they declared that if the people in different regions would rise up and resist, they (the Eruopeans) would sink and perish. As the people of these kingdoms were submissive, they wanted them to do whatever they liked. Thus the leaders of the rebellion took decision to take united action for attaining their objective; especially the Poligars of the south took initiative in forming a confederacy of the rebel-chiefs against the

Company. One among the prominent Poligars was Vira Pandya Kattabomman, the chief of Panchalamkurichi.

By September, 1798 the tribute from Panchalamkurichi fell in arrears and Colin Jackson, the Collector of Ramnad, who was noted for arrogance and rashness, wrote a letter to Vira Pandya Kattabomman, asking him to pay the arrears on receipt of the letter. But he never minded the Collector's demand. Kattamboman questioned thus: "It rains, the land yields, why shoul we pay tax to the English?". Infuriarated by these words Colin Jackson decided to punish Kattabomman by sending and expedition on him which was considered unnecessary or unlawful by the Madras administration. The Company asked the Collector of Ramnad to summon Kattabomman to his office at Ramnad.

Therefore, Kattabomman was asked to meet the Collector in connection with the arrears of tribute that he had to pay to the company. In the meantime, the Collector started on a tour to Tirunelveli after sending a letter to Kattabomman. The latter went to meet the Collector at Tirukuttalam and waited for an interview. But the interview was refused by the Collector there when Kattabomman came with money for the payment of arrears of tribute. He followed the collector to Chookampatti, Sivagiri, Sattur and Srivilliputhur for about twenty-three days. Eventhen, Jackson did not meet Kattabomman and ordered him to meet only at Ramanathapuram.

On 19th September, 1798, an interview was granted. Kattabomman and his Minister Sivasubramania Pillai alone were given permission to meet Jackson. However, they were asked to stand before the Collector as the show of insult and humiliation. At the end of meeting, the Collector decided to arrest the Poligar and his Minister by adopting a trick. Fortunately, Kattabomman escaped from the fort while his minister was taken prisoner. At the gate of fort an English soldier Clarke

was killed and some others got wounded. After this incident Kattabomman sent a petition to the Council at Madras and requested for a lawful judgment.

Governor Edward Clive wrote a letter to Vira Pandiya asking him to surrender the Palayam of Panchalamkurichi to the Company's rule and for that the dismissed the Collector and released Sivasubramania Pillai. As a positive response to this offer Kattabomman decided to submit yet when the attitude of the committee at Ramanathapuram was not favourable to him, he declined the offer.

In the meantime, Marudu Pandiyan of Sivaganga, the most eminent rebel leader of the time, was closely associated with Gopal Nayak of Dindigul and Yadul Nayak of Anamalai, was engaged in the organization of a South Indian Confederacy. Marudu Pandiyan initiated and assumed the leadership of the league of the patriots. He appealed to all sections of the people to unite and fight till the end of alien rule in India. Rebel leaders of Thanjavur, Ramnad and war-like Kallars of Madurai accepted the leadership of Marudu Pandiyan. In the eastern region of Tirunelvli, Vira Pandya Kattabomman took an active part in the rebellious cause. His meeting with Marudu Pandiyan was prohibited by the next Collector of Ramnad Mr. Lushinghton9. However, the two patriots met and took effective proposals against the alien rule.

The Poligars of Nagalapuram, Mannarkottai, Powally, Kolanpatti and Chennulgudi who had already formed themselves into a combination of Poligars joined Kattabomman and Marudu Pandiya of Sivaganga. Kattabomman assumed the leadership of this league and he persuaded the chieftains of Saptore, Yezhayiram-pannai, Kadalgudi and Kulattur to join the league in order to strengthen it. He also won the alliance of Kallars and Maravas. He sent Pandiyan Pillai, brother of Sivasubramania Pillai, to Madras to watch the movement of the

Company and to know the strength of the British army. He also placed spies at different places to watch the Europeans and their supporters.

In August, 1799, the son of the Poligar of Sivagiri visited Panchalamkurichi and insisted Kattabomman that to bring the Poligar of Sivagiri to the league using his influence. Therefore, Kattabomman advanced towards Sivagiri. As the Poligar of Sivagiri was an ally of the Company, the Council of Madras considered this as a challenge to the authority and ordered the British forces to suppress the rebels. Though there was no serious offence on the side of Kattabomman, the Madras Council wanted to wreak vengeance on him.

At the orders of Lord Wellesley, the then Governor General sent a large army from Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli and Madurai along with troops of the Raja of Travancore to the far South under Major Bannerman. He commenced military operations against the rebels in June 1799. The rebel chiefs were routed and many of them were executed along the public streets. Seized with terror, the inhabitants fled to different directions. In two months the country was restored to order, but unrest continued to prevail.

On 1st September, 1799, Bannerman issued an ultimatum directing Kattabomman to meet him on 4th at Palayamkottai. But he refused to meet the Collector without his armed followers and he delayed in the discharge of his *Peshcush*. Therefore, Major Bannerman had judged that action of the Poligar to assemble sufficient body of troops in the Southern Provinces to assert the authority of the Company's Government. He was given the power to use even military execution.

On 5th September, Major Bannerman left Palayamkottai and arrived at Panchalamkurichi, where he was joined by the troops stationed at Koilpatti and Kayathar13. The sudden approach of the troops was not looked for Lieutenant

Dallas, without much delay surrounded the Fort of Panchalamkurichi with his cavalry. Then Major Bannerman ordered the Poligar to surrender at discretion of the Company. But the Poligar did not surrender. Then he ordered captains O'Reilly and Bruce to attack the fort. The troops were then posted for the storm. The flank companies of the 1st Battalion of the 3rd Regiment and the four flank companies of the 13th Regiment of Native Infantry were ordered to carry out the assault and to blow open the south gate. At the same time, an attack on the North face of fort was made by two companies of sepoys regulated by Lieutenant Dallas. During this attack one native officer was wounded and four European officers were killed.

Two days afterwards, the European portion of the force arrived and preparations were made by Major Bannerman for another assault on the fort. However, in the course of night, the fort was completely evacuated. Having obtained the intelligence that Kattabomman escaped from the fort, Major Bannerman lost no time in addressing letters to several Poligars whom he know informing them of the flight of Kattabomman and called upon them to use every exertion in their power to capture Kattabomman.

Instructions were sent to Lieutenant Dallas and captain O' Reilly to follow in support of the cavalry as fast as possible. Their forces met the forces of Kattabomman at the fort of Kolarpatti where some skirmishes ensued in which both parties sustained considerable loss. However, the followers of Kattabomman dispersed, but he affected his escape mounted on a horse. But the British forces captured thirty-four of Kattabomman's principal dependants among whome one was Subramaniya Pillai, his principal manager.

Subramania Pillai was brought as a prisoner to the tent of Bannerman. He gave directions to pay handsomely to the Ettayapuram party and ordered to hang Subramania Pillai in the most conspicuous part of the village of Nagalapuram and

his head afterwards carried and fixed on a pike at Panchalamkurichi. His brother and other prisoners were kept in confinement. Nagalapuram came under the possession of the British.

In the meantime, Kattabomman was caught at the jungles of Kolapura in Pudukottai and handed over to the English by the Tondaiman. On the 16th October Bannerman brought Kattabomman to an assembly of the Poligars at Kayathar and sentenced him to capital punishment. In the presence of other Poligars, who had become dumb found Kattabomman was taken to an important spot and executed. Thus Kayathar had entered into the history of the martyrdom of the earliest rebel. Bannerman after giving a warning to the other rebels dismissed the assembly.

Bannerman's cruetly knew no bounds. He executed the sone of the soil as if he was the master of the land. The inhabitants of Panchalamkurichi took it a great humiliation to them. The ill-treatment of a high spirited people reacted powerfully upon their sentiments.

Added to the injury, the Madras Council condemned the relatives of Kattabomman to perpetual imprisonment and shut them in the fort of Palayamkottai. It included the Palayams of Panchalamkurichi, Kolarpatti, Kadalkudi, Nagalapuram and Kulattur. This was done as a punishment to the rebel leaders as well as to deter others from hostile activities. Parts of Panchalamkurichi were annexed to the Poligars of Ettayapuram, Melamandai and Maniyachi.

In 1799, the Company assumed the administration of the village watch from the Poligars and entered into an alliance with the Nawab to that effect. It was now considered as an opportunity for extending their interference to local affairs by the servants of the Company. The deshakaval fee was increased beyond the customary rates. When the people failed to remit the fees in time the Company

servants plundered the little property they possessed. These harsh proceedings of the Company caused a violent reaction.

The rebellion gained strength when large sections of the population rallied to the support of their leaders. Large groups of Maravas, Nadars and Totients joined the rebel ranks. The coastal Paravas assisted the rebels of supplying wall pieces, guns and powder. These developments gave an impetus to the movement.

In the different parts of Tirunelveli the pillaging parties subdued the military posts of the Company and released the prisoners. Before the end of February the rebels occupied all the territories extending from Panchalamkurichi to Alwarthirunangai and Kayathar. They converted their Palayams into their strong holds and rebuilt the demolished forts. The insurgents then marched to Tuticorin, upon which the garrison voluntarily surrendered. However, they permitted Ormsley, the English Commander of the fort, to take away his properties and to go away in safety. After the fall of Tuticorin, the rebels made an attempt to capture Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai.

On getting intelligence, Colin Macaulay, the Company's Commanding Officer at Tirunelvli, took all precautionary measures against the threatening menance. A proclamation was issued by him warning the people of exemplary punishment if they were found in arms or giving assistance to rebels. He also sent express orders to his loyal Poligars particularly those of Sivagiri and Ettayapuram to supply immediate information about the rebel movements. In the meantime, Colin Macaulay took military moves against the insurgents. In February 1801, he mobilized his forces and marched to Sankarankoil then to Kayathar and reached Kadayanallur, sixty miles short of Panchalamkurichi.

The troops pitched a camp and prepared for a hearty meal when they found their camp suddenly attacked on all sides by rebels. Advancing under cover of a

deep protection, the insurgents launched a simultaneous attack from different directions. The British troops killed forty of the rebels and then formed into a square with guns at angles and baggage in the centre, remaining in their position the whole night, subjected to repeated alarms. The next day, the forces encamped near Panchalamkurichi. To their surprise they found the demolished fort "raised as it were by magic in six days" and every part of it well manned by thousands of armed men. The rebels foiled an attempt to capture the pagoda of Ottapidaram and they appeared boldly on the near and flank of the British army. Macaulay retreated under the guise of preparing for an attack. After a severe march, that lasted all the night the British troops arrived at Palayamkottai. Meanwhile Captain Hazard, reinforced by small detachment of troops from Madurai, attacked Kadalkudi, but was repulsed. Then the rebels directred all their efforts for the reduction of the Company's post at Srivaikundam. The British army led by Major Sheppard was utterly routed by the rebels.

When the rebels were gaining victories, fresh troops of the Company poured into Tirunelveli. Macaulay assembled the forces at Kayathar. From there they marched on to Panchalamkurichi. At Pasuvantanai, a formidable phalanx attacked, the British camp, but after losing ninety-six of its men made its retreat. On reaching Panchalamkurichi, they were ready for any attack of the fort. At 3 p.m their heavy guns broke a part of the wall affecting a practicable breach. Ye the rebels with intrepid firmness engaged the assailants in a fierce encounter. All the British troops who pressed their way into the breach were picked or shot dead. Successive attempts made to surmount the breach were repeatedly defeated. The troops of the Poligars of Ettayapuram attacked the face of the fort, but met the same fate like the Company's troops.

During the siege of the rebels put up a most unnatural yell, and it ceased only after they won complete victory. This was the fifth reverse of British forces at Panchalamkurichi. While the failure of the Company's troops seemed unexplicable, the successful defense of the breach by the rebels appeared equally miraculous. Previous to the assault, a grove of pikes presented themselves to the assailants. The rebels climbing on any part of the wall were at once shot, though were quickly replaced by others. But the pikemen, taking their positions in sheltered enclaves, pierced the threatening enemy to death. In the meantime, the gun-men, as in Poligar warfare kept up a heavy fire from elevated spots. In this way the rebels repulsed the British onslaughts.

After this failure new forces from fort St. George, St. Thomas Mount, Arcot and Malabar reached the spot. The Assistant General, Lieutenant Colonel P.A. Agnew, assumed the command of the operations. He was well qualified for the task by his gallantry, integrity and local knowledge. Agnew assembled a grand army at Kovilpatti, a village very near Kayathar, and marched on to Panchalamkurichi. The rebels did not hesitate to face the army. They stubbornly resisted the advancing enemy with musquetry and pikes. In the battle that ensued, both the combating parties suffered equally heavy losses. The rebels continued their heroic resistances until all of them were shot dead. Thus the British troops emerged triumphant. The rebels evacuated all their strong holds in the Tirunelveli province, the Wallanad Hills, Tuticorin and Kadalkudi. Most of them, fled to the north while the rest scattered themselves in different parts of the Tirunelveli province.

The rebels who fled to Nanguneri in the far south organized a rebellion under Dalawai Pillai, but were hunted down by forces sent by Lushington in October 1801. In May 1801 the rebellion spread from Tirunelveli to the Marava

states. The Poligar rebellion of 1799-1801, marked by ups and downs, spread over an extensive region. It was characterized by bitter ferocity and immense slaughter. The proclamations of the rebels indicate that they believed in a mass movement against the British. The rebellion assumed the proportions of a popular outbreak particularly in 1801. Still its defeat was inevitable because of the superior military strength of the Company.

Puli Thevan

A legendary fighter who was the first Indian to resist British imperialism in India, Puli Thevar lived from 1715 to 1761. He was the Palayakkaran (corrupted to „Poligar‟ in English) or the local chieftain of a place called Nelkattumsevval in Sankarankoil Taluk of the present-day Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu State. „Palayakkaran‟ literally meant „keeper of armed camp‟ or „Palayam‟, and by virtue of his armed might, wielded governing power in his locality. There were 77 or so such Palayams through which the Tamil Country was essentially being governed during the 18th Century, while the English East Company was making its forays into the political arena of South India. This system of governance through the Poligars resulted from the break-up of the once-powerful Vijayanagar Empire of South India in late 16th Century. The Tamil Country, which was part of the empire, thence came to be governed by the provincial governors of the empire called Nayaks. The Nayaks divided their provinces into various Palayams and entrusted the ground-level governance to the Poligars who headed these Palayams. Although the Mughals, after putting down the Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda whose conquest of Vijayanagar had caused the breakup of the empire, had appointed one of their vassals as Nawab of Arcot to exercise their authority over the Tamil Country, neither the Nayaks, nor the Poligars recognized his authority and ruled their domains more or less autonomously.

Nawab of Arcot was the earliest of the scores of India‟s namby-pamby native rulers who chose to toe the line of the English East India Company (EEC), with utter disregard to the welfare of their subjects or states. The Nawab‟s self-indulgent lifestyle found him perpetually short of funds and borrowing from the Company. The Company, with its ulterior motives, was willing to oblige him, and when he failed to repay his debts, which invariably he did, extracted compensation from him in the form of authorization for it to collect taxes from one province of his state after another. A popular joke among the Englishmen arriving in India, most of whom were vagabonding quick-money-seekers of the Robert Clive model, was that if one wanted to get rich overnight in India, the best means was to lend some money to the Nawab; he would never be able repay it and to make good, give away vast tracts of land for the lender to lord over. The Poligars who ruled their respective fiefdoms pretty much as independent sovereigns collected taxes from their subjects themselves, but had not been paying any to the Nawab in defiance of his authority. The weak-kneed Nawab neither had the capability nor the resolve to make the Poligars fall in line. In such a scenario, as far as the Poligars were concerned, the authorization by the Nawab for the alien Company to collect taxes hardly made any difference. This naturally brought the Poligars into confrontation with the EEC, when the latter tried to enforce collection of taxes through force of arms. Such confrontations between the EEC and different Poligars for nearly half a century, which are historically dubbed as „Poligar Rebellion‟, form one of the bloodiest chapters of native resistance against British imperialism anywhere in India. It was no rebellion however, but a prolonged war, marked by sporadic but fierce battles, wherein the Poligar forces, diehard fighters to a man, matched the superior weaponry and manpower of the enemy by their sheer pluck and courage.

The first of a galaxy of brave Poligar leaders who waged war against EEC over that period during the 18th Century was Puli Thevar.

Puli Thevar belonged to a community of warlike inhabitants of southern parts of the Tamil Country, comprising the provinces of Madurai and Tirunelveli and adjacent regions of Ramnad and Sivaganga, known as Maravas. The Maravas – who assumed the name „Thevars" later – were a brave, free-spirited people who paid obeisance to no one. Traditional warriors, their ancestors had conquered and held the greater part of Ceylon for several centuries. They formed the main military muscle of the southern provinces. Mainly armed with pikes twelve to eighteen feet long, they were adept at constructing crude but effective barriers of mud walls and thorn hedges, and repairing breaches with readily available stuff like the trunks of the palm trees that withstood fair amount of battering by artillery. S. C. Hill, a British historian, who is noted for his factual writings of colonial history of the South, refers to an interesting quote from an unpublished manuscript of the times, which summarizes what the Kallars (mentioned as Kallans in the book) – a sub-caste of the Maravas who lived in the hilly and woody parts of the country, and proved an exceptionally tough and cunning lot with their intimate knowledge of secret paths and ambush sites – thought of the payment of taxes in general: "The Heaven supplies the earth with rain, cattle plough for us, and we labour to improve and cultivate the land. Whilst such is the case, we alone ought to enjoy the fruit thereof. What reason is there to be obedient and pay tribute to a person like ourselves?" And much to the consternation of the animal rights activists and moralists, the men of the Marava territory continue to be passionate about holding their robust if highly dangerous game of „Jallikat", in which participants, like gladiators, try to take on a powerfully built bull let loose amongst them and tame it, many of them invariably getting gored in the act. The British

themselves, finding them such formidable foes, came to admire their fighting qualities so much that in later years, after their dominating South India, went on to recruit men from the region in large numbers to the ranks of the Madras Regiment and the Madras Sappers. Their free spirit and martial disposition came to the fore once again years later, towards the end of India‟s colonial history, when the men and women of their stock working in plantations of Malaya and Burma, whose forefathers had long migrated to those countries in search of livelihood, rallied to the call to arms by Nethaji Subhas Chandra Bose and enlisted in the Indian National Army (INA) in large numbers to fight the British for freedom of their „Motherland‟, although none of them had ever set foot on the Indian soil. Also, in recent times, notwithstanding the unfortunate turn of events, the hardcore fighters of the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which the Indian Army was pitted against for two long years and was described by one of its senior commanders as „the most determined and dedicated guerilla force in the world‟, came from their stock.

Puli Thevar‟s was a comparatively smaller domain in the Marava Country, but he was imbued with such exceptional leadership qualities that he commanded tremendous respect, not only among his men but among the various other Poligars of Tirunelveli and adjoining regions, who were collectively called the Western Poligars for their geographical orientation to the southwest of Tamil Country; vis a vis the Eastern Poligars who hailed from the coastal provinces of Ramnad and Sivagangai to the southeast. His run-in with the EEC began in 1755, when the latter sent its first-ever military expedition against the Poligars, under the command of Colonel Alexander Heron, with the elder brother of Nawab Mohammed Ali of Arcot, Mahfuz Khan, for his sidekick. Heron‟s army marched through the Poligar territory more or less successfully to begin with, intimidating

most of the Eastern Poligars to pay „Kisthi‟ (tax) by his superiority of manpower and weaponry, including the most powerful among them, Kattabomma Nayak of Panjalamkuruchi (not the legendary „Veerapandya Kattabomman‟ revered for his heroic fight against the British, but his grandfather), who gave in conditionally, handing over a couple of hostages, pending payment. The force further drew the wrath of the populace by going beyond their objective of collecting taxes and indulging in largescale looting, more so because they carried away the idols of worship from temples. Its winning and plundering streak however came to an abrupt halt when confronted by Puli Thevar‟s stout defence of his fort at Nelkattumsevval. Heron‟s artillery proved not very effective against the thick stone walls of the fort. He was also facing a severe shortage of supplies, his column having been ambushed and plundered over and over again all along their route by locals, who were out en masse to avenge the looting his troops did, and to recover the idols that were sacrosanct to them, which they successfully did. An ineffectual commander not up to overcoming the odds, Heron found his troops demoralized and in total disarray.

Puli Thevar, on the other hand, was a shrewd strategist and had planted spies in the English camp, who gave him constant updates, which helped boost the morale of his garrison, a highly motivated lot as they were. Repeated attempts by Heron‟s troops to storm the fort met with no success against the dogged defence by the garrison. Eventually, his army plagued by indiscipline and desertion, a number of his men, including three high-ranking officers, even switching sides to join the Thevar, Heron had to beat an ignominious retreat, to end his military career in disgrace afterwards, when he was court-martialled and sacked by the EEC. Mahfuz Khan would go on to lead some unsuccessful campaigns against Puli Thevar with his Arcot troops, forging alliances here and there, for a while, but

cowardly by disposition, would in the course of time switch his alliance to the Thevar; but that was later. In the aftermath of Heron‟s retreat, Puli Thevar‟s reputation skyrocketed for his heroic defence of his fort and the entire lot of Western Poligars rallied under his leadership forming a confederacy to wage war against the British and the Nawab. Grabbing the opportunity, Puli Thevar unleashed a campaign capturing one fort after another, ousting the Nawab‟s troops from wherever they had a foothold and took control of the entire countryside and their main power centre of Tirunelveli itself. Dedicated to cleanse his native soil of the foreigners once and for all, he used his exceptional diplomatic skills to forge an allegiance with the Maharaja of the neighbouring kingdom of Travancore, who possessed an army trained on European model, which had the fierce reputation of having driven out the Dutch colonialists from Indian shores during the previous decade.

The next six years would witness a most turbulent period in the history of the southern provinces of the Tamil Homeland, wherein the Poligar Confederacy, joined by the Travancore Army, effectively fought off the forces of the Nawab and EEC in a series of fierce seesaw battles stemming the tide of imposition of colonialism in the region. At one stage, Puli Thevar even came close to retaking Madurai, the kingdom the Maravas traditionally swore allegiance to, but had been seized by the Nawab with EEC‟s help. Unfortunately, a crucial alliance he tried to forge with the Eastern Poligars fell through, with the latter remaining neutral, constrained by the EEC holding their men hostage. By the time they came around following a change of their leadership, and were willing to join the Confederacy, the Travancore Army had withdrawn from the fray, consequent to the shrewd diplomacy of a new „renter‟ (practically the governor) by the name of Yusuf Khan, appointed by the EEC. An intrepid adventurer who hailed from the same

region (born a lower-class Hindu with the name, Maruthanayagam Pillai, he had converted to Islam to escape cast discrimination), he had risen to fame as a legendary soldier serving the EEC, after switching over to them from the French camp, where he had obtained training in modern warfare. Khan would be successful in containing the defiant Poligars; but ironically, within four years of his appointment, he himself would revolt against EEC and lead a historic struggle. That would however be too late for Puli Thevar who had been successfully fighting off the Nawab and his English cronies for four long years by 1759 when Yusuf appeared on the scene. An eminent soldier and a brilliant strategist, Yusuf would go on to successfully exercise his authority in the region, more by efficient administration and strategic foresight than by military muscle.

Faced by such a formidable foe whom he could match only in courage and fighting spirit, but not in his armed might and resources, and betrayed by his own people, who chose to ally with Yusuf for the greater part, Puli Thevar fought a losing war for two years, never giving up his zeal. Meanwhile, Yusuf Khan was expanding his army, recruiting locals to his ranks and consolidating his power in the region. Many of the Poligar fighters thus enlisting in Yusuf‟s army effectively sabotaged a temporary advantage Puli Thevar gained when Kattabomman joined forces with him. Even their combined might did not prove adequate to take on Yusuf. Mahfuz Khan, the rank opportunist who had allied with the Thevar, once again switched sides, seeking a pardon from Yusuf, which the latter gladly obliged him with. Not that he would have been of any great value to a diehard fighter like Puli Thevar fighting with his back to the wall. Mahfuz had the dubious military distinction of having commanded a 10,000-man Mughal Army that was routed by a puny Franco-Indian force of 1000 men at the Battle of Adyar during the previous decade.

Puli Thevar lost his holdings one after another to Yusuf Khan‟s forces, which outnumbered him by a huge margin. Nevertheless, the gritty, unrelenting fighter that he was, the Thevar never gave up, making the enemy pay heavily for every battle won, often using brilliant hit-and-run tactics. By now, Yusuf Khan had successfully won over the Maharaja of Travancore and Puli Thevar found himself pitted against an overwhelmingly strong, combined armies of Yusuf and Travancore. His gallant resistance had to come to an and it happened in his own home turf, Nelkattumsevval. Rich in paddy cultivation, the place derived its name for its tradition of paying taxes in rice; „Nel-Kattum-Sevval‟ literally meaning „Rice-Taxpaying-Locality‟. With Puli Thevar‟s declared defiance not to pay tax, the place had assumed the name „Nel-Kattan-Sevval‟, which meant „Rice-Tax-Not-Paying-Locality‟.

With the fall of his last bastion at Nelkattumsevval after colossal pounding of the place by Yusuf Khan‟s artillery, Puli Thevar vanishes into history. The Thevar and some of his troops are known to have survived the attack on the fort and abandoned it to disperse in the jungles nearby to fight another day. What happened to him later remains a mystery. Some accounts suggest that he was forced into exile in Ramnad where he died later. Other, more popular version, suggests that he was taken prisoner by Yusuf‟s troops, but escaped, was caught again, taken to a nearby hill called Kalugumalai (Vulture‟s Mountain) and hanged. There is also a legend that he expressed a last wish on his way to execution, to be permitted to pray at a Parvathi Shrine en route. Left to pray in solitude in chains in the sanctum sanctorum, his guards waiting outside heard the sound of chains rattling and rushing inside, found the Thevar gone, leaving the chains behind; never to be seen again. It seems plausible that he was indeed taken to the remote hill in the wilderness and secretly executed. Well aware of Puli Thevar‟s

tremendous popularity among the people of the region, Yusuf Khan would have preferred not to antagonize them by a public hanging.

In spite of the failure of his epic struggle, Puli Thevar remains a much-revered hero of the Tamils, especially among the people of Tirunelveli and adjoining regions. The Pulithevan Palace in Tirunelveli, which was his headquarters while he reigned as the leader of the Western Poligars, is a national monument today. A statue of his adorns Nelkattumsevval, where he was born and fought his last battle. The people of Tirunelveli commemorate his birth anniversary every year with absolute devotion. Sadly, the monumental saga of this great Indian who was the earliest to resist the British imperialism in India is little known beyond the Tamil homeland, thanks to a lot of Indian historians for whom colonialism in India began with Plassey and no India existed south of the Vindhyas.

Velu Nachaiyar

Rani Velu Nachiyar was a queen of Sivaganga estate in South India. She is regarded as the first queen who fought against the British colonial power in India. Born as princess of Ramanathapuram she took training in handling different weapons, in martial arts, horse riding and archery, and was also proficient in languages like English, French and Urdu. She was married to King of Sivagangai, Muthuvaduganathaperiya Udaiyathevar. After the British soldiers and son of Nawab of Arcot conquered Sivaganga and killed her husband, she fled with her daughter and lived at Virupachi under the protection of Palayakaarar Kopaala Naayakkar, build her army and joined hands with Gopala Nayaker and Sultan Hyder Ali to wage war against the British and regained her kingdom. She is also credited as the first person to apply human bomb.

Early Life

Velu Nachiyar was born on January 3, 1730, in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu, India, in the family of Raja Chellamuthu Vijayaragunatha Sethupathy of the Ramnad kingdom and his wife, Rani Sakandhimuthal, as their only child. Sans any male heir, the royal couple raised the princess as a boy, who was trained in using war match weapons. She was also well-trained in archery, horse riding, Silambam (fighting with stick) and in martial arts such as Valari. A scholar in her own right, Nachiyar also had command over several languages, including English, French and Urdu.

At the age of 16, she was married to Muthuvadugananthur Udaiyathevar, son of the King of Sivagangai, Sasivarna Periya Udaya. Since 1730, Muthuvadugananthur Udaiyathevar was in charge of the administration of Sivagangai, the first independent state from Ramnad, while his father ruled as the King. Muthuvadugananthur Udaiyathevar became the King of Sivagangai in 1750 and emerged as the only ruler of Sivangangi to rule the state for the longest period of time, for over two decades till his death in 1772. Nachiyar and Muthuvadugananthur Udaiyathevar had a daughter together named Vellachi.

Struggle against the British Rule

Sivagangai was invaded by the troops of the East India Company in association with the son of the Nawab of Arcot in 1772. Muthuvadugananthur Udaiyathevar was killed in a subsequent battle (the Kalaiyar Koil war) with Col.Smith. The war didn‟t even spare women and children, many of whom were killed mercilessly marking one of the most ruthless incidents of those times. Some of the notable people including the trustworthy Marudhu brothers and Thandavaraya Pillai managed to escape the war. Nachiyar was in Kollangudi at that time.

Following the death of her husband in the battle, she fled with her daughter to Virupachi near Dindigul, where she took refuge for eight years under the protection of Palayakaarar Kopaala Naayakkar.

During her stay in Virupachi, she gradually built a powerful army to fight against the British. In her mission she garnered considerable support from Gopala Nayaker and Hyder Ali, the Sultan and the de facto ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in southern India. Seeking his help, she met the latter in Dindugal. As she conversed with him in Urdu, the queen highly impressed Sultan Hyder Ali with her resolute and courageousness. The Sultan gave his word to support the queen in her crusade to retrieve her kingdom. She was also allowed to stay at Virupakshi or Dindugal Fort by the Sultan where she was revered and treated as a Royal Queen. A monthly financial support of 400 pound (Gold) was also sent to her by the Sultan. She sought 5000 infantry and 5000 cavalry from the Sultan to fight the British, and kept on confusing her enemy by frequently changing her base. Sultan Hyder Ali also equipped her with necessary weapons so that she could put up a tough fight against the British.

In 1780, she came face-to-face with the British, and with this became the first queen in India to fight for freedom against the British. She came to know about the ammunition store of the British. With this information, the gallant queen, known by Tamils as Veeramangai, ("brave woman") then plotted and arranged a suicide attack into the ammunition store. An army commander and a loyal follower of the queen, Kuyili, came forward to carry out the mission. Kuyili drenched herself with ghee and then set herself on fire before jumping into armoury and blowing it up, thereby procuring a victory for the queen. Kuyili, who many consider as an adoptive daughter of Nachiyar, is regarded as the first woman suicide bomber.

Nachiyar also had an adopted daughter, Udaiyaal, who gave her life detonating a British arsenal. The queen built up a woman‟s army and named it „udaiyaal‟ after her adopted daughter. After recapturing the Sivaganga estate, Nachiyar ruled the kingdom for the next decade while making her daughter Vellacci the heir to the throne. In 1780, she also bestowed powers to the Marudu brothers to administer the country. Following the restoration of her kingdom, Nachiyar expressed her deep gratitude for the support given by Sultan Hyder Ali by constructing a Mosque and Church at Saragani. The Sultan earlier conveyed his true friendship by building a temple inside his palace. Nachiyar also maintained good relation with Tipu Sultan, the son of Hyder Ali, whom she considered as a brother. She sent Tipu Sultan a golden tiger as a gift. Nachiyar‟s daughter Vellacci succeeded her to the throne in 1790 as the second queen of Sivaganga estate and ruled till 1793.

Nachiyar, the valiant queen breathed her last on December 25, 1796, at the age of 66 years in Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu, and India. According to sources, the queen was suffering from heart ailments in the last few years of her life and also underwent treatment in France. Her last rites were performed by her son-in-law.

In Popular Culture

A commemorative stamp was released in her name on December 31, 2008. A Grand Dance Ballet presented by OVM Dance Academy of Chennai titled „VELU NACHIYAR‟ narrates the epic story of Nachiyar.

Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, late Jayaram Jayalalithaa on July 18, 2014, inaugurated the Veeramangai Velu Nachiyar Memorial in Sivagangai through video conferencing. A six-foot bronze statue of the queen was also unveiled by Jayalalithaa, who also announced that January 3 will be commemorated annually as the birth anniversary of the courageous queen.

Tamil-American hip-hop artist Professor A.L.I. dedicated a song titled „Our Queen‟ to her as part of the artist‟s album called „Tamilmatic‟.

The life of Nachiyar, the first queen of India who fought the British decades before the celebrated Rani of Jhansi, Lakshmibai, was depicted in a grand dance ballet. The director of the ballet Sriram Sharma researched on the epic life of this brave queen for about a decade. It was performed in Naradha Gana Sabha in Chennai on August 21, 2017, and then in Mumbai on September 9 and in Delhi on September 21, 2017.

Kattabomman

Veerapandya Kattabomman became the Palayakkarar of Panchalamkurichi at the age of thirty on the death of his father, Jagavira Pandya Kattabomman. The Company' sadministrators, James London and Colin Jackson, had considered him a man of peaceful disposition. However, soon several events led to conflicts between Veerapandya Kattabomman and the East India Company. The Nawab, under the provisions of a treaty signed in 1781, had assigned the revenue of the Carnatic to the Company to be entirely under their management and control during the war with Mysore Sultan. One-sixth of the revenue was to be allowed to meet the expenses of Nawab and his family. The Company had thus gained the right to collect taxes from Panchalamkurichi. The Company appointed its Collectors to collect taxes from all the palayams. The Collectors humiliated the palayakkarars and adopted force to collect the taxes. This was the bone of contention between the English and Kattabomman.

Confrontation with Jackson

The land revenue arrear from Kattabomman was 3310 pagodas in 1798. Collector Jackson, an arrogant English officer, wanted to send an army to collect the revenue dues but the Madras Government did not give him permission. On 18

August 1798, he ordered Kattabomman to meet him in Ramanathapuram. But Kattbomman's attempts to meet him in between proved futile, as Jackson refused to give him audience both in Courtallam and Srivilliputhur. At last, an interview was granted and Kattabomman met Jackson in Ramanathapurm on 19 September 1798. It is said that Kattabomman had to stand for three hours before the haughty Collector Jackson. Sensing danger, Kattabomman tried to escape, along with his minister Sivasubramanianar. Oomaithurai suddenly entered the fort with his men and helped the escape of Kattabomman. At the gate of the Ramanathapuram fort there was a clash, in which some people including Lieutenant Clarke were killed. Sivasubramanianar was taken prisoner.

Appearance before Madras Council

On his return to Panchalamkurichi, Kattabomman represented to the Madras Council about how he was ill-treated by the collector Jackson. The Council asked Kattabomman to appear before a committee with William Brown, William Oram and John Casamajor as members. Meanwhile, Governor Edward Clive, ordered the release of Sivasubramanianar and the suspension of the Collector Jackson. Kattabomman appeared before the Committee that sat on 15 December 1798 and reported on what transpired in Ramanathapuram. The Committee found Kattabomman was not guilty. Jackson was dismissed from service and a new Collector S.R. Lushington appointed. Kattabomman cleared almost all the revenue arrears leaving only a balance of 1080 pagodas.

Kattabomman and the Confederacy of Palayakkarars

In the meantime, Marudhu Pandiyar of Sivagangai formed the South Indian Confederacy of rebels against the British, with the neighbouring palayakkars like Gopala Nayak of Dindigul and Yadul Nayak of Aanamalai. Marudhu Pandiyar acted as its leader. The Tiruchirappalli Proclamation had been made.

Kattabomman was interested in this confederacy. Collector Lushington prevented Kattabomman from meeting the Marudhu Brothers. But Marudhu Brothers and Kattabomman jointly decided on a confrontation with the English. Kattabomman tried to influence Sivagiri Palayakkarars, who refused to join. Kattabomman advanced towards Sivagiri. But the Palayakkarars of Sivagiri was a tributary to the Company. So the Company considered the expedition of Kattabomman as a challenge to their authority. The Company ordered the army to march on to Tirunelveli.

The Siege of Panchalamkurichi

In May 1799, Lord Wellesley issued orders from Madras for the advance of forces from Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur and Madurai to Tirunelveli. Major Bannerman commanded the troops. The Travancore troops too joined the British. On 1 September 1799, an ultimatum was served on Kattabomman to surrender. Kattabomman's "evasive reply" prompted Bannerman to attack his fort. Bannerman moved his entire army to Panchalamkurichi on 5 September. They cut off all the communications to the fort. Bannerman deputed Ramalinganar to convey a message asking Kattabomman to surrender. Kattabomman refused. Ramalinganar gathered all the secrets of the Fort, and on the basis of his report, Bannerman decided the strategy of the operation. In a clash at Kallarpatti, Sivasubramanianar was taken a prisoner.

Execution of Kattabomman

Kattabomman escaped to Pudukottai. The British put a prize on his head. Betrayed by the rajas of Ettayapuram and Pudukottai Kattabomman was finally captured. Sivasubramanianar was executed at Nagalapuram on the 13 September. Bannerman made a mockery of a trial for Kattabomman in front of the palayakarars on 16 October. During the trial Kattabomman bravely admitted all the

charges levelled against him. Kattabomman was hanged from a tamarind tree in the old fort of Kayathar, close to Tirunelveli, in front of the fellow Palayakkars. Thus ended the life of the celebrated Palayakkarars of Panchalamkurichi. Many folk ballads on Kattabomman helped keep his memory alive among the people.

The Marudhu Brothers

Periya Marudhu or Vella Marudhu (1748–1801) and his younger brother Chinna Marudhu (1753-1801) were able generals of Muthu Vadugar of Sivagangai. After Muthu Vadugar's death in the Kalaiyar Kovil battle Marudhu brothers assisted in restoring the throne to Velunachiyar. In the last years of the eighteenth century Marudhu Brothers organised resistance against the British. After the death of Kattabomman, they worked along with his brother Oomathurai. They plundered the granaries of the Nawab and caused damage and destruction to Company troops.

Rebellion of Marudhu Brothers (1800–1801)

Despite the suppression of Kattabomman's revolt in 1799, rebellion broke out again in 1800. In the British records it is referred to as the Second Palayakarar War. It was directed by a confederacy consisting of Marudhu Pandyan of Sivagangai, Gopala Nayak of Dindugal, Kerala Verma of Malabar and Krishnaappa Nayak and Dhoondaji of Mysore. In April 1800 they meet at Virupachi and decided to organise an uprising against the Company. The uprising, which broke out in Coimbatore in June 1800, soon spread to Ramanathapuram and Madurai. The Company got wind of it and declared war on Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore, Kerala Varma of Malabar and others. The Palayakars of Coimbatore, Sathyamangalam and Tarapuram were caught and hanged. In February 1801 the two brothers of Kattabomman, Oomathurai and Sevathaiah, escaped from the Palayamkottai prison to Kamudhi, from where Chinna Marudhu took them to

Siruvayal his capital. The fort at Panchalamkurichi was reconstructed in record time. The British troops under Colin Macaulay retook the fort in April and the Marudhu brothers sought shelter in Sivagangai. The English demanded that the Marudhu Pandyars hand over the fugitives (Oomathurai and Sevathaiah). But they refused. Colonel Agnew and Colonel Innes marched on Sivagangai. In June 1801 Marudhu Pandyars issued a proclamation of Independence which is called Tiruchirappalli Proclamation.

Proclamation of 1801

The Proclamation of 1801 was an early call to the Indians to unite against the British, cutting across region, caste, creed and religion. The proclamation was pasted on the walls of the Nawab's palace in Tiruchirappalli fort and on the walls of the Srirangam temple. Many palayakkars of Tamil country rallied together to fight against the English. Chinna Marudhu collected nearly 20,000 men to challenge the English army. British reinforcements were rushed from Bengal, Ceylon and Malaya. The rajas of Pudukkottai, Ettayapuram and Thanjavur stood by the British. Divide and rule policy followed by the English spilt the forces of the palayakkarars soon.

Fall of Sivagangai

In May 1801, the English attacked the rebels in Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli. The rebels went to Piranmalai and Kalayarkoil. They were again defeated by the forces of the English. In the end the superior military strength and the able commanders of the English Company prevailed. The rebellion failed and Sivagangai was annexed in 1801. The Marudhu brothers were executed in the Fort of Tirupathur near Ramanathapuram on 24 October 1801. Oomathurai and Sevathaiah were captured and beheaded at Panchalamkurichi on 16 November 1801. Seventy-three rebels were exiled to Penang in Malaya. Though the

palayakkarars fell to the English, their exploits and sacrifices inspired later generations. Thus the rebellion of Marudhu brothers, which is called South Indian Rebellion, is a landmark event in the history of Tamil Nadu.

Carnatic Treaty, 1801

The suppression of the Palayakkarars rebellions of 1799 and 1800–1801 resulted in the liquidation of all the local chieftains of Tamilnadu. Under the terms of the Carnatic Treaty of 31 July 1801, the British assumed direct control over Tamilagam and the Palayakarar system came to an end with the demolition of all forts and disbandment of their army.

Vellore Mutiny (1806)

Before reducing all palayakkarars of south Tamilnadu into submission the East India Company had acquired the revenue districts of Salem, Dindigul at the conclusion of the war with Tipu in 1792. Coimbatore was annexed at the end of the Anglo-Mysore War in 1799. In the same year the Raja of Thanjavur whose status had been reduced to that of a vassal in 1798 gave up his sovereign rights over that region to the English. After the suppression of resistance of Kattabomman (1799) and Marudhu Brothers (1801), the British charged the Nawab of Arcot with disloyalty and forced a treaty on him. According to this Treaty of 1801, the Nawab was to cede the districts of North Arcot, South Arcot, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai and Tirunelveli to the Company and transfer all the administrative powers to it.

Grievances of Indian Soldiers

But the resistance did not die down. The dispossessed little kings and feudal chieftains continued to deliberate on the future course of action against the Company Government. The outcome was the Vellore Revolt of 1806. The objective conditions for a last ditch fight existed on the eve of the revolt. The

sepoys in the British Indian army nursed a strong sense of resentment over low salary and poor prospects of promotion. The English army officers' scant respect for the social and religious sentiments of the Indian sepoys also angered them. The state of peasantry from which class the sepoys had been recruited also bothered them much. With new experiments in land tenures causing unsettled conditions and famine breaking out in 1805 many of the sepoys' families were in dire economic straits. The most opportune situation come with the sons and the family members of Tipu being interned in Vellore Fort. The trigger for the revolt came in the form of a new military regulation notified by the Commander-inChief Sir John Cradock.

According to the new regulations, the Indian soldiers were asked not to wear caste marks or ear rings when in uniform. They were to be cleanly shaven on the chin and maintain uniformity about how their moustache looked. The new turban added fuel to fire. The most objectionable addition was the leather cockade made of animal skin. The sepoys gave enough forewarning by refusing to wear the new turban. Yet the Company administration did not take heed.

Outbreak of the Revolt

On 10 July 1806, in the early hours, guns were booming and the Indian sepoys of the 1st and 23rd regiments raised their standard of revolt. Colonel Fancourt, who commanded the garrison, was the first victim. Colonel MeKerras of the 23rd regiment was killed next. Major Armstrong who was passing the Fort heard the sound of firing. When he stopped to enquire he was showered with bullets. About a dozen other officers were killed within an hour or so. Among them Lt. Elly and Lt. Popham belonged to His Majesty's battalion.

Gillespie's Brutality

Major Cootes, who was outside the Fort, informed Colonel Gillespie, the cavalry commandant in Arcot. Gillespie reached the fort along with a squadron of cavalry under the command of Captain Young at 9.00 am. In the meantime, the rebels proclaimed Fateh Hyder, Tipu's eldest son, as their new ruler and hoisted the tiger flag of Mysore sultans in the Fort. But the uprising was swiftly crushed by Col. Gillespie, who threw to winds all war ethics. In the course of suppression, according to an eyewitness account, eight hundred soldiers were found dead in the fort alone. Six hundred soldiers were kept in confinement in Tiruchirappalli and Vellore awaiting Inquiry.

Consequences of Revolt

Six of the rebels convicted by the Court of Enquiry were blown from the guns; five were shot dead; eight hanged. Tipu's sons were ordered to be sent to Calcutta. The officers and men engaged in the suppression of the revolt were rewarded with prize money and promotion. Col. Gillespie was given 7,000 pagodas. However, the commander–in chief Sir John Cradock, the Adjutant General Agnew and Governor William Bentinck were held responsible for the revolt, removed from their office, and recalled to England. The military regulations were treated as withdrawn

Estimate of Revolt

The Vellore Revolt failed because there was no immediate help from outside. Recent studies show that the organising part of the revolt was done perfectly by Subedars Sheik Adam and Sheik Hamid and Jamedar Sheik Hussain of the 2nd battalion of 23rd regiment and two Subedars and the Jamedar Sheik Kasim of the 1st battalion of the 1st regiment. Vellore Revolt had all the forebodings of the Great Rebellion of 1857. The only difference was that there was

no civil rebellion following the mutiny. The 1806 revolt was not confined to Vellore Fort. It had its echoes in Bellary, Walajabad, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Nandydurg, and Sankaridurg.

The Great Revolt of 1857

Introduction

The mutiny of 1857 was the severest ordeal faced by the growing British empire in India. Diametrically opposite views are held with regard to this outbreak. When analysed these views boil down to two distinct views: The National rising and the mutiny of sepoys. Early national leaders looking for ideals to arouse national consciousness among the people reinterpreted the uprising of 1857 as a people's revolt and its leaders as national heroes gifted with a vision of a free India. V.D.Sarvarkar, Dr. S.N.Sen and many other Indian.

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Causes of the Great Rising of 1857

Modern Indian historians have established that the greased cartridge was not the only cause or even the most important cause for the great rising of 1857. Though it began as a military uprising its causes were deeply rooted in the changing condition of the time. The greased cartridge and the mutiny of soldiers was merely the matchstick which exploded the inflammable material that had gathered in heap on account of a variety of causes-political, social, religious, economic and military.

Political Causes

Both the Indian rulers and the Indian people knew that the English Company had grown rich at their cost by employing all sorts of deceits and lies. Lord Dalhousie added fuel to the fire by his various acts.

a. The Doctrine of lapse and his all-round annexations and abolishing of titles and pensions made various Indian rulers like Nana Sahib, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah and Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh the dead enemies of the English.
b. The treatment given to these rulers also made other Indian rulers suspicious of the English. Indians got a feeling that the British were playing the wolf in the garb of the lamb. This feeling of suspicion and fear turned many Indian rulers against the British because they knew that all their treaties were just time servers and could be revoked at the free will of the British rulers.
c. The Muslim feelings had been grievously hurt because of the annexation of Oudh and Carnatic and the notice served on the Mughal emperor that after his death his successors would be deprived of their ancestral possessions.
d. The annexation of many Hindu states especially those of Jhansi, Satara and Nagpur evoked a feeling of resentment among the Hindus.
e. The policy of Pax-Britannica pursued by the British during the past four decades had led to the disbanding of Pindaris, thugs and irregular soldiers who formed a large part of native armies. These people had lived mostly on plunder, and when deprived of their means of livelihood by the British they formed the nucleus of antisocial elements in different areas. When in 1857 there occurred some disturbances they swelled the ranks of the rebels.

f. The high-handedness of the British officers and the insults which they daily poured on the innocent Indians had also become intolerable. There was also large scale corruption and inefficiency in the administration which made the Indians want a change.

Administrative and Economic Causes

Under the British rule the economic condition of the people deteriorated at a rapid speed.

a. Whenever they conquered any part of the country they began to exploit it as best as they could. All the trade and commerce of the country went into the hands of the English and the different Indian industries began to vanish. While England was growing rich the Indians were starving.
b. The resumptions of rent-free estates in Bengal during the period of Lord William Bentinck caused a great deal of unrest among the landed aristocracy of those provinces.
c. The confiscation of several jagirs in Bombay by Lord Dalhousie dealt a severe blow to the landlords of that area.
d. The Coverly Jackson policy of disbanding native soldiers and of strict inquiry into the titles of the talukdars of Oudh made Oudh the centre of the rebellion as they were the worst hit
e. Due to the all-round annexation of Indian states thousands of people who were serving under the Indian rulers lost their jobs when their masters lost their states. They and their families turned against the British rulers.
f. Under the British rule all high posts civil and military were reserved for the Europeans. Such a policy was naturally resented very much by the Indians especially the educated ones.

Social and Religious Causes

The English rulers of India were rude and arrogant towards the people. They described the Hindus as barbarians and dubbed the Muslims as bigots. So along with the political and economic causes the social and religious causes hastened the crisis.

a. The introduction of Railways, Telegraph and western education created a suspicion in the minds of the people who thought that all these were introduced as indirect instruments for converting the people to Christianity.
b. Their doubt was strengthened when the Christian missionaries began to effect the wholesale conversion of Indians both Muslim and Hindus to Christianity.
c. The abolition of both sati system and child marriage and the Widow Remarriage Act was considered as an open defiance of the Hindu sentiments and social regulations.
d. The spread of western education and culture created a good deal of unrest among the people as they feared that the youth indoctrinated in western culture would discard their religion as a bundle of superstitions.
e. Lord Dalhousie's various acts, especially the Religious Disabilities Act of 1856, the one that said that a convert could inherit his ancestral property made people feel that the English were tying to put an end to Indian culture and civilization. The political and administrative injustice could be tolerated by the Indians but it was beyond their patience to tolerate religious persecution as it touches tender conscience and forms complexes that are not easy to eradicate.

Military Causes

As regards to the military cause, there was a lot of discontentment among the Indian soldiers.

a. The Indian soldiers were paid low salaries, were not given any extra allowances and they had very few chances of promotion. The British officers ill-treated them. Naturally they felt dissatisfied.
b. The Bengal army which was mostly recruited from high caste people of Oudh had a great resentment against the English because of the annexation of their state and levelling of army discipline which treated them on par with the low caste recruits.
c. The disparity in the number of European and Indian soldiers whose ratio became 1 is to 5 gave a sense of self confidence to the Indian soldiers. There were small mutinies or near mutinies at various places and signs of hatred between the white and the coloured people.
d. The first Afghan war where the British forces received serious setbacks broke the spell of the invincibility of the British arms and made Indians feel that even the British troops could be defeated.
e. There was no proper distribution of troops. Strategic places like Delhi, Kanpur and Allahabad were left in the hands of the sepoys. They were thus in a position to take possession of strategic places in the country.
f. The General Service Enlistment Act issued by Lord Canning expected the recruits of the Bengal army to serve anywhere in India or outside India. This created a great bitterness among Indian soldiers as they were reluctant to go overseas.

g. There was a prophesy that Delhi changes its rulers every hundred years. A hundred years had passed since the battle of Plassey of 1757 and people began to feel that the British rule in India would come to an end.

Immediate Cause

The cartridges of the newly introduced Enfield rifle was rumoured to be greased with the fat of cows and pigs. This was offensive to both the Hindus and the Muslims as the cow was sacred to the Hindus and the pig would cause pollution to the Muslims. The Indian sepoys refused to use them. They got infuriated when they realized that the British Government had introduced the greased cartridges only to defile their religion. The greased cartridge did not create a new cause of discontent in the army but supplied the occasion when the underground discontent came out in the open.

Course of the Revolt

The Revolt had its beginning in Barrackpur where the soldiers of the 19th regiment refused to use the greased cartridges. The British disbanded the regiment. More serious trouble broke out on 29th March 1857 when Mangal Pandey, a sepoy not only refused to use the greased cartridge but also fired at the sergeant. He also appealed to his comrades to revolt against the English who were out to defile their caste and religion. Mangal Pandey was captured and executed and his 34th regiment was disbanded. On 24th April 1987 ninety sepoys of the 3rd Native cavalry at Meerut refused to use the greased cartridges. Proceedings were instituted against them and on 9th May, eighty-five of them were dismissed and imprisoned for 10 years.

This greatly infuriated their fellow soldiers and on 10th May they released the imprisoned soldiers and killed their officers. Thereafter they marched towards Delhi. This marked the beginning of the revolt. The rebel soldiers captured Delhi

on 12th May and proclaimed Bahadur Shah as the emperor of India. Their success provided a boost to their revolts elsewhere and soon Lucknow, Bareilly, Kanpur Jhansi, Central India and Bundelkhand were in the grip of the revolution. It is noteworthy that the revolt was not confined to soldiers alone. Peasants, artisans and even common people took part in the rebellion. Even in areas where the people did not join the rebels they showed complete sympathy with the reveals. However the native rulers by and large did not rise against the English. The Sikhs in Punjab and Salar Jang in Hyderabad actively helped them. After some initial reverses the English recouped their lost position and succeeded in suppressing the rebellion by July 1858. During the course of the revolution barbaric atrocities were committed both by the Indians and by the English and large numbers of innocent people were killed.

Causes of the Failure of the Revolt

a. Various causes led to the failure of the Revolt of 1857. There was no unity among the rebels. The ideas of nationalism and unity had not yet developed. The rising was not widespread and it never took the character of an all-India struggle.
b. The lack of resources both in men and money made the rebels give up the struggle on many occasions.
c. The telegraphic systems and postal communication helped the British in speeding up their operation.
d. The Sikh, the Rajput and Gorkha battalions remained faithful to the British government and so it became quite easy for them to suppress the revolutionary forces.

e. Indian leaders lacked organization and planning. The rebel leaders were no match for the British Generals. Bahadur Shah, Lakshmi Bai, Tantia Topi and Nana Sahib were courageous but were not good generals.

f. The revolutionaries had no common ideal. The Muslims among them wanted to revive the Mughal rule while the Hindus were in favour of re-establishing the Peshwa-Raj. So there was a clash of interests.

g. The English mastery over the sea enabled them to get timely help from England. So long as reinforcements could be supplied from across the sea the citadel of the British rule in India was safe from the storms that blew all round.

Results of the Mutiny

Though the great Revolt failed to achieve its aim it certainly had far-reaching results.

a. The Act of 1858 for the 'Better Government of India' put an end to the Company's rule in India. Power was transferred directly to the Crown.

b. Both the Board of Control and the Board of Directors were abolished and the office of the Secretary of State for India was created with an Indian Council of 15 members to assist the Governor-General and Viceroy of India.

c. The Indian army was thoroughly reorganized. The number of European forces was increased and artillery was entrusted to the Europeans.

d. The policy of conquests in India was given up and the Indian princes were given the assurance that their states would not be annexed.

e. The right of adoption was also given to them.

f. Full religious freedom was guaranteed to Indians.

g. Indians were assured of high posts without any discrimination of caste, creed or colour.

The British now began to follow the policy of ‘divide and rule’. They created differences between the Muslims and the Hindus to make their position secure. This problem of Hindu-Muslim unity became impossible to tackle and finally led to the partition of India in 1947.

Jhansi Rani

Rani Lakshmibai was born as Manikarnika Tambe on November 19, 1828, in a Marathi Karhade Brahmin family to Moropant Tambe (Father) and Bhagirathi Sapre (Mother). Lakshmibai's mother died when she was four years old. Her father worked for Peshwa Baji Rao II of Bithoor district. Rani Lakshmibai was educated at home and could read and write. She was also trained for shooting, horsemanship, fencing and mallakhamba. She has three horse Sarangi, Pavan and Badal.

Rani Lakshmibai: Personal Life

In May 1852, Manikarnika was married to Gangadhar Rao Newalkar (Maharaja of Jhansi) and was later names as Lakshmibai as per the traditions. In 1851, Lakshmibai gave birth to her son Damodar Rao who died after 4 months. The couple later adopted Gangadhar Rao's cousin, who was renamed, Damodar Rao. The procedure of adaption was carried out in the presence of a British officer. A letter was handed to the officer from the Maharaja with the instructions that the adopted child should be given due respect and Jhansi should be given to Lakshmibai for her entire lifetime.

However, in November 1853, after the death of Maharaja, British East India Company, applied Doctrine of Lapse, under the Governor-General Lord Dalhousie. Under this policy, Damodar Rao's claim to the throne was rejected as

he was adopted son of Maharaja and Rani. In March 1854, Lakshmibai was given Rs. 60,000 as annual pension and was asked to leave the palace.

Rani Lakshmibai: The 1857 Rebellion

On May 10, 1857, the Indian Rebellion started in Meerut. When this news reached Jhansi, Lakshmibai increased her protection and conducted a Haldi Kumkum ceremony to convince her people that the British were cowards and there's no need to fear them.

In June 1857, the 12th Bengal Native Infantry seized the Star Fort of Jhansi, persuaded British to lay their arms and promised no harm to them, but the Infantry broke their word and massacred the British officers. However, Lakshmibai's involvement in this incident is still a matter of debate.

Sepoys threatened Lakshmibai to blow up the palace, obtained huge money from Jhansi and left the place after 4 days of this incident.

Orchia and Datia kingdoms tried to invade and divide Jhansi amongst them. Lakshmibai appealed the British government for help but received no reply as the British officials believed that she was responsible for the massacre.

On March 23, 1858, Sir Hugh Rose, the commanding officer of the British forces demanded Rani to surrender the city and warned that if she refused, the city will be destroyed. To this, Lakshmibai refused and proclaimed, 'We fight for independence. In the words of Lord Krishna, we will if we are victorious, enjoy the fruits of victory, if defeated and killed on the field of battle, we shall surely earn eternal glory and salvation.'

On March 24, 1858, the British forces bombarded the Jhansi. The defenders of Jhansi sent an appeal to Lakshmibai's childhood friend Tatya Tope. Tatya Tope responded to this request and sent more than 20,000 soldiers to fight against the British Army. However, the soldiers failed to relieve Jhansi. As the

destruction continued, Rani Lakshmibai with her son escaped from the fort on her horse Badal. Badal died but the two of them survived.

During this time, she was escorted by her guards-- Khuda Bakhsh Basharat Ali (commandant), Gulam Gaus Khan, Dost Khan, Lala Bhau Bakshi, Moti Bai, Sunder-Mundar, Kashi Bai, Deewan Raghunath Singh and Deewan Jawahar Singh. She left to Kapli secretly with a handful of guards and joined the additional rebel forces, including Tatya Tope. On May 22, 1858, British forces attacked Kapli and Lakshmibai was defeated.

Rani Lakshmibai, Tatya Tope and Rao Sahib fled from Kapli to Gwalior. The three of them joined the Indian forced defending the city. They wanted to occupy the Gwalior Fort due to its strategic importance. The rebel forces occupied the city without facing any opposition and proclaimed Nana Sahib as Peshwa of Maratha dominion and Rao Sahib as his governor. Lakshmibai was not able to persuade other rebel leaders to defend the force and on June 16, 1858, British forces made a successful attack on Gwalior.

Rani Lakshmibai: Death

On June 17, in Kotah-ki-Serai near the Phool Bagh of Gwalior, the British forces charged the Indian forces commanded by Rani Lakshmibai. The British Army killed 5,000 Indian soldiers. Rani Lakshmibai was unhorsed and was wounded. There are two views on her death: Some people say that she was bleeding on the roadside and upon recognising the soldier fired at him. She was dispatched with his carbine. However, another view is that she was dressed as a cavalry leader and was badly wounded. Rani did not want the British forces to capture her body and told hermit to burn it. Rani Lakshmibai died on June 18, 1858.

Self Assessment Questions

- Describe the role of Velu Nachiyar in resisting British colonization.

- Analyze the impact of the Great Revolt of 1857 on British colonial policies in India.

- Evaluate the significance of the Vellore Mutiny of 1806 in the context of early Indian resistance movements.

Recommended Books

- Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, The Indian Revolt, Medical Hall Press, Benares, 1873.
- Bipan Chandra, History of Modern India, Orient Blackswan, New Delhi 2019
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- Percival Spear, A History of India, Volume 2, Penguin Books, Great Britain, 1976.
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