

History

Chapter - 1

THE ADVENT OF EUROPEANS TO INDIA

We learn about the following in this chapter:

- *Trade relations that India had with the Europeans*
- *Europeans' arrival to India for trading*
- *First, Second and the Third Carnatic wars*
- *Battle of Plassey, dual governance*
- *The British Attack*

Since ancient times the commercial interests subsumed the relationship between India and Europe. There was a great demand from the Europeans, chiefly for Indian spices like pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger and such other things. These products were being exported to Greek and Roman empires of Europe. In the middle ages, trade between Asian countries and Europe used to take place via the Persian Gulf, Red sea and through the north western regions of India. The commercial activity of Asia was being controlled by the Arabs. Mediterranean and European trade were under the monopoly of Italy. By 1400, this trade proved to be immensely profitable. It was through its rich cities of Venice, Geneva, Milan and Florence that Italy acted as a distribution centre for the spices obtained from India. It was to overcome this Italian monopoly that the western European nations tried to look for alternative trade routes through the Atlantic Ocean. Beginning with Spain and Portugal, the countries of Europe encouraged the sailors in their venture of discovering new regions.

The new scientific instruments like the compass, gun powder, naval equipments, maps etc., helped the sailors in their sea voyage. Besides the stories that were being told about the wealth of the Eastern nations, the eagerness of missionaries for proselytisation was a source of inspiration which promoted to find out alternative routes to India.

The Europeans had begun their sea voyages towards the east even before the establishment of the Moghul empire in India. They were attracted by the information of Indians wealth. In 1498, for the first time, the Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, came to Calicut on the western coast of India for the purpose of trade. With this, he became the first European to re-establish trade relations with India.

Do you know this?

For a very long time, the Europeans and the Arabs had trade relations with India through Asian land routes. It was from Constantinople through the territories of Asia that they came over to India. During those days, this was the only available route to India. But with the Capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453 the Europeans trade with India was adversely effected. This was the chief motivating factor for the Europeans to search for an alternative route to India.

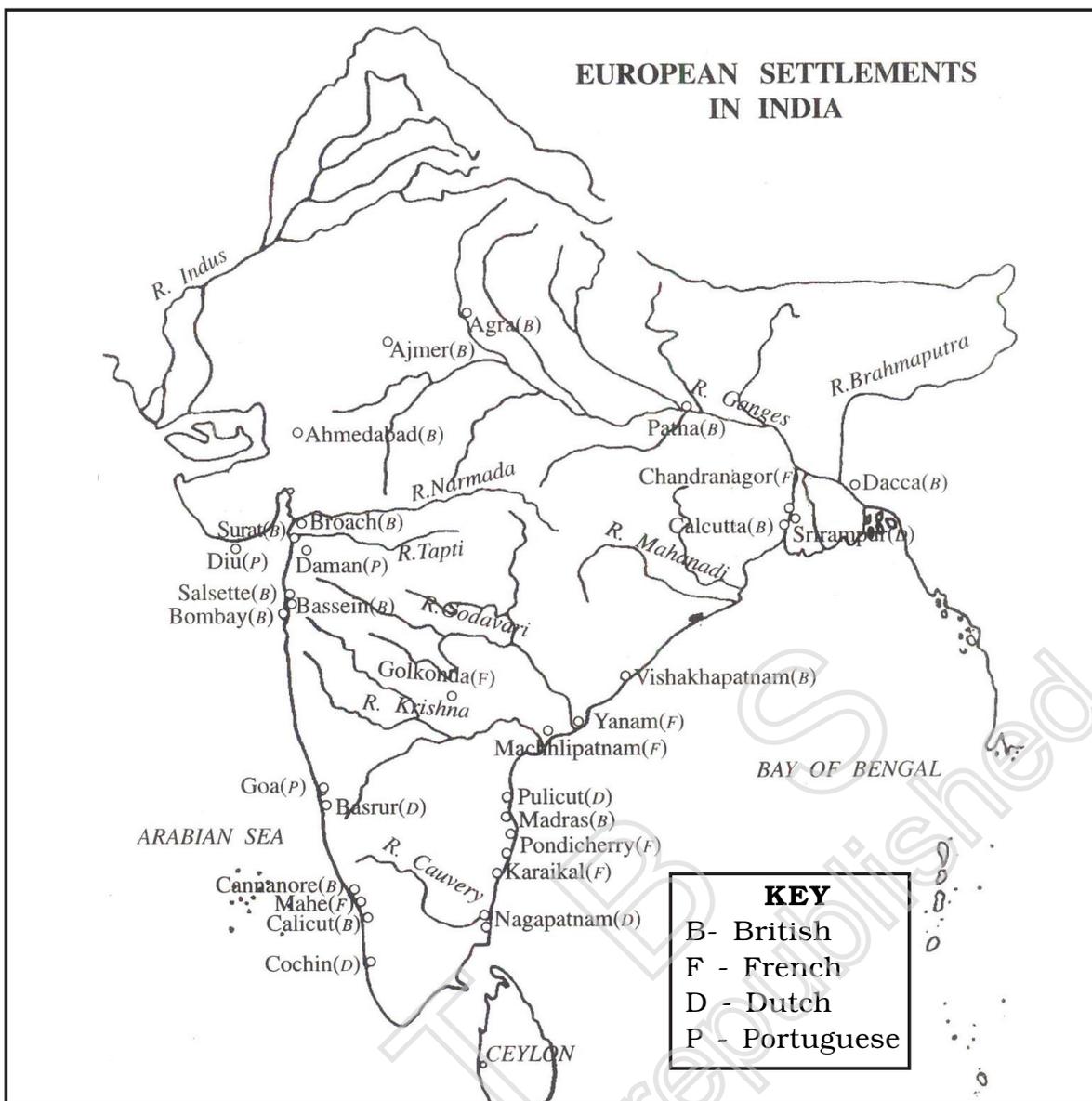
The Portuguese enjoyed trade monopoly over the Arabian Sea till the 17th century. With the arrival of the Dutch and the English, in to India, the Portuguese monopoly started declining.

Do you know this?

Monopoly : The right solely possessed by an individual or organization to buy or sell in a place is called monopoly.

The British sought and obtained permission for trade from the native chiefs and the Mughal Emperor. Initially, the trade was for the mutual benefit of Indians and Europeans. During these early days, the British fought with other Europeans to gain monopoly over trade. In the early part of the 17th century the British were able to over come the Portuguese in these conflicts. They became victorious even against the Dutch towards the end of the 18th century.

During the beginning of the 17th Century, The Mughal Emperor Furuk siyyar granted to the British some villages near Calcutta. Gradually, the British extended their sway even in Madras and Bombay. These fishing villages of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay



subsequently became British administrative centres or Presidencies. Through the British East India Company they expanded their trade, commerce and political control. Initially, these places were the trade centres of the East India Company. The British built forts around these areas and strengthened them. They became their warehouses for the commodities they traded in. These areas had their own civil and criminal laws.

The first half of the 18th century was a period of great decline for the Moghul Empire. It was the rise of marchants states and Playagars that the Moghul Empire declined. Among them of significance were the native states of Bengal, Oudh, Hyderabad and the Maratha. Only for the name sake had the native states acknowledged the suzerainty of the Moghal Emperor.

During this period, the British company built its own army to protect its trade. These small native rulers of India who dared to free themselves from the hold of Delhi came forward to seek the assistance of the foreign army. In the subsequent days, the British and the French interfered in the politics of these native rulers to establish their supremacy in India.

The British traders became the masters of the Empire not nearly by the might of their army. But rather, used their political acumen and cunningness. Even during the days of the decline of the native states, the opposition to the establishment of British Empire was in no way small. Beginning with Siraj-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal, there were many including Hyder Ali and Tippu of Mysore who fought against the British.

In the conflict between the British and the French, Nawab Anwaruddin of Carnatic was used as a pawn by the British. The French captured Madras. On account of the agreement that was made subsequently, the French handed over Madras back to the English. This has been called the First Carnatic War.

In the Deccan region, there ensued a struggle for the position of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Carnatic. In this struggle for succession, the English and the French supported their candidates. The British, under the leadership of Robert Clive, supported Anwaruddin. In the same manner, the French under the leadership of Dupleix, supported Chanda Sahib. In the war that ensued, Robert Clive attacked Arcot and surrounded Tiruchinapalli. Chanda Sahib who supported the French, died in the battle. Due to this Carnatic region fell indirectly into the hands of the British. The French defeated Nasir Jung of Hyderabad who was a supporter of the British. As a result, Hyderabad came into the control of the French. This has been called the Second Carnatic war. However, the influence of the French over the Deccan area slowly dissipated.

Do you know this?

Robert Clive

Robert Clive was the first official responsible for the creation of a British India. He had joined the East India Company as a clerk. He played a significant role in the Carnatic War, Parliamentary in the sages of Arcot and became responsible for the victory of the British. After having become successful in the establishment of the British existence in the south, he was also responsible for their victory over Bengal. On account of the Battle of Plassey of 1757, he gained control over the Nawab of Bengal. As a result, Clive earned lot of wealth both for himself and the East India Company. When Clive returned to England as a very prosperous man, he managed to get appointed as a Member of Parliament too. After Clive's departure to England, The East India Company began to experience huge losses. Although there were many accusations against him, in order to regain its lost status, the British government was forced to send him back to India as a General. Clive brought victory to the British again in the Battle of Buxar and obtained the Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Thus having acquired wealth for himself and the East India Company, he returned to England in 1767.

Dupleix

Dupleix was appointed Governor General of the French possessions in India in 1742. In order to realize his dream of establishing French supremacy over India, Dupleix had entered into agreements with the native Rulers. Even Hyder Ali was trained in the same native army that was reared by Dupleix. Dupleix had posed a great challenge to the establishment of British supremacy. It is with regard to the establishment of their supremacy in the Carnatic and the Deccan that we see the conflict between the British and the French. Dupleix having played a Significant role in the battle of Madras of 1746, was successful. The conflict between the French and British continued till 1754. Subsequently, the French Government, desiring peace, recalled Dupleix.

But later the attempt of the French to capture Fort St. George and attack Madras did not succeed. The English army Commander Sir Eyre Coote, defeated the French in the Battle of Wandiwash. Due to this, the French lost most of their power in India. In the subsequent agreement that was made, the British handed over to the French

most of what was won. Despite this the French were not permitted to build forts and to protect them. Those places had to remain only as trade centres. This was the main effect of the Third Carnatic War.

After having defeated all the European powers who wanted to establish their rule over India, the British started conquering India. In this conquest the first to be conquered was Bengal. The battle that was fought by Siraj-ud-Daula against the British to regain control over Bengal has been called the Battle of Plassey. In this war of 1757, the English army under Robert Clive, decisively defeated Nawab Siraj-ud-Daul at the Battle of Plassey. Mir Jafar, who helped the British, was nominated as the Nawab of Bengal. The British in return got the zamindari right over the 24 Paraganas and became all powerful.

When Mir Jafar started consolidating his position, the British removed him and appointed Mir Qasim as the Nawab of Bengal. In return he granted the British the regions of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong. When Mir Qasim tried to free himself from the hold of the British, he was removed. Later, the English installed once again Mir Jafar as a Nawab with certain conditions.

Do you know this?

Black Hole Tragedy

In 1756, Siraj-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal, had attacked Qasim Bazaar, the trade centre of the British, and occupied St. David Fort of Calcutta. He lodged the British soldiers captured at this time in a small room at Calcutta. Among the 146 prisoners imprisoned there, 123 died due to the suffocating heat in the room. This came to be known as the 'Black Hole Tragedy'.

Do you know this?

Diwani Rights means the right to collect land revenue.

In the midst of all this, the confederate army of the Moghul Emperor Shah Alam, Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-Ud-Daula and Mir Qasim, fought against the British army and were defeated. This war has been called the Battle of Buxar of 1764. As a consequence of this war, the English acquired the provinces of Bihar, Orissa and Bengal. The Moghul emperor, Shah Alam conceded the Diwani rights to the British. Subsequently, Robert Clive who was appointed as the company Governor in 1765 introduced the Dual Government in Bengal. That implied due to the Diwani rights English were collecting the land revenue. Administration, importing of Justice and other administrative functions were carry on by the Nawab, this as been called the 'Dual Government'.

In this way, in order to protect their commercial interests, the British by their political shrewdness took control over the native regions. Thus gradually, they appeared on the main stream of India and began to assert their supremacy.

Do you know this?

1600 A.D. : The East India Company was established in England.

1602 A.D. : United East India Company was established in Netherland.

1619 A.D. : The Moghul Emperor, Jehangir, gave permission to the East India Company to carry on trade in Surat on the west coast, and Hoogly on the east coast of India.

1639 A.D. : The British established their ware house at Madras.

1664 A.D. : The French East India Company was established at France.

EXERCISES

I Fill in the blanks with suitable words:

1. The European trade was monopolized by _____ in India in the 17th Century.
2. The first Carnatic war was fought between British and _____.

3. In the battle of Wandiwash British commander_____ was defeated the French.
4. In the Battle of Plassey_____ assumed the leadership of the English army.
5. Dual Government was brought by _____ in Bengal.

II Answer the following questions after discussing them in groups:

1. How was the European trade conducted with India in the beginning?
2. "Scientific developments led to sea voyages". Justify this statement.
3. Explain, how the Carnatic wars helped the British to settle down firmly in India.
4. What are the results of the battle of Plassey?
5. Describe the system of Dual Government.

III Project Work:

1. Discuss how scientific developments have brought in many changes throughout the world, and write a report about it.
2. With the help of your teachers, know about sea-routes from the internet.

