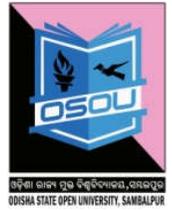


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# UNIT 1: FOREIGN TRADE AND EARLY FORMS OF EXPLOITATIONS IN BENGAL

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## Structure:

- 1.1 Learning objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 India's foreign trade during pre-British period.
- 1.4 Occupation of Bengal by the British and beginning of exploitation
- 1.5 Various forms of exploitation
- 1.6 Commercialization of Agriculture
- 1.7 Destruction of Handicrafts
- 1.8 Drain of wealth
- 1.9 Let us sum up
- 1.10 Key Words
- 1.11 Suggested Readings
- 1.12 Check Your Progress
- 1.13 Answers to check your progress

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## 1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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An overview of this unit will enable you to understand:

- India's trade link with outside world
- British policies of economic exploitation in Bengal
- Consequences of economic exploitations

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## 1.2 INTRODUCTION:

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India's fabulous wealth was proverbial. It attracted both traders and invaders down the ages. Indian manufactures were in great demand across the world. India has maritime trade with Egypt, Rome, Mesopotamia and European countries. Towards the close of 15<sup>th</sup> Century, the discovery of an all-sea route to India by Vasodagama established direct contact with the Western world. The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch, the English and the French. In a stiff competition the British eliminated all trade-rivals. They occupied Bengal in 1757 and introduced trade and economic policies to enrich themselves at the cost of Indian interests. Bengal was fleeced. The various forms of exploitations had far-reaching consequences in the socio-economic life of the people.

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### **1.3 INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE DURING PRE-BRITISH PERIOD.**

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In the pre- British India there existed self-sufficient villages. People following different occupations worked almost exclusively to meet the needs of the village population. Each village was a republic in miniature that functioned independent of the outside world. Most of the stuff produced, both agricultural and non-agricultural, was consumed locally. However, a small part of the produce made its way to the local market. This sort of self–sustained village economy survived for centuries in the face of political turmoil and religious upheavals.

Though agriculture was the main stay of the people, industrial activities formed a part of their economic life. Products of Indian industries enjoyed a world-wide reputation. Indian exports consisted of a wide range of manufactures- cotton and silk fabrics, calicos, artistic wares, opium, indigo etc. Europe was a good customer of Indian goods during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Even when the European merchant-adventurers first came to India for trade, the industrial development of this country was by no means of inferior quality compared to that of the more advanced European countries.

V.F. Calverton remarks ‘..... from ancient days when Indian fabrics, tapestries, gems, carpets, enamels and mosaics adorned the private and public buildings of Rome, down to the beginning of the industrial revolution, the world looked to India for its most arresting and exciting wares’. We are told that Egyptian mummies dating back to 2000 B.C. were wrapped in Indian muslin and the muslin of Dacca was known to the Greeks under the name Gangetica.

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### **1.4 OCCUPATION OF BENGAL BY THE BRITISH AND BEGINNING OF EXPLOITATION**

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Prior to the British, India had been conquered by many foreign invaders like Sakas, Kushanas, Hunas, Turks, Mughals etc. but the early invaders were Indianized and settled in India. They accepted India as their motherland. On the contrary, the British remained perpetually foreigners. Their only aim was to exploit India economically. Assumption of political power was driven by the same purpose. All their policies were carefully designed to serve the British interest.

The British came to India as traders. Upto 1757 trade was carried on by the East India Company which brought gold and silver and exchanged them with Indian goods. The profits of the company came chiefly from the sale of Indian goods abroad. Since Indian goods were in great demand in Europe, more number of markets for Indian goods were opened in England and other countries, so much so that England had to pass laws to prescribe the sale of Indian articles especially

cotton textiles. Many European countries followed suit. Violation of these rules invoked hefty fines from the delinquent persons. In spite of these prohibiting measures, Indian silk and cotton textiles made their way into European markets until middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

The battle of Plassey (1757) marks a turning point in the annals of Indian history. The British occupied Bengal, the richest province (*Suba*) of Mughal Empire. Using Bengal as the spring board, the rest of India was occupied by them in a piecemeal manner. Occupation of Bengal drastically changed the East Indian company's trade equation with India. Now the Company used political power to further its trade interest. Mir Jaffar was under obligation to pay huge sum to Company's officials as bribe and to the Company to meet its ever-increasing expenditure. During this period the Company's servants took recourse to wanton misuse of ***Dastak*** (free pass for transport of Company's goods) for their personal trade.

Acquisition of ***Diwani rights*** in 1765 (right to collect revenue from Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha) accentuated Company's interest. Now the Company purchased Indian goods out of the revenue of Bengal. This was called **investment**. The Company could obtain a huge sum and other privileges by Treaty of Allahabad (1765) after its victory in the battle of Buxar in 1764. Now open plunder of Bengal continued unabated and thereby began a new form of exploitation. The weavers of Bengal were compelled to sell their articles to the Company at the cheaper and dictated price. Many of them were forced to work for the Company for a paltry amount and were not allowed to work for Indian merchants. All trade rivals of the Company were gradually eliminated.

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## 1.5. VARIOUS FORMS OF EXPLOITATION:

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### a) Exploitation through trade

About the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Industrial Revolution took place in England. Factory system came into being. Large scale production became possible. This had a serious bearing on the socio-economic set up of Britain. A new capitalist-class emerged in England. This class forced the East India Company, through legislation (1769), to export British manufactures to India even if it meant loss for the Company on account of the transaction. The British industrialists did not stop there. They launched a powerful campaign against the Company and its commercial privileges. The East India Company established monopoly trade in India. Through persistent effort they eventually succeeded in abolishing the Company's monopoly of Indian trade. The govt. of India now followed a policy of free trade or unrestricted entry of British goods into India, and it became more prominent since the passing of the Charter Act, 1813.

The free trade imposed on India was, however, one-sided. While the British goods could enter into India freely, Indian products were subjected to heavy import duties on entry into Britain. Instead of exporting manufactures India was now forced to export raw materials to meet the needs of British Industries. The avowed aim of the East India Company was to encourage the production of raw cotton, raw jute, sugarcane, ground nuts, raw silk and other raw materials and to discourage the production of manufactures in India. The Indian economist R.C. Dutt, citing in his book *the Economic History of India*, the famous historian H. H. Wilson mentions. “British goods were forced upon India without paying any duty and the foreign manufacturers employed the arm of political power to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom they could not have contended on equal terms”.

### **b. Exploitation through investment.**

Apart from trade, another major means of exploitation was capital investment in India. It was realized by the govt. that for the effective control and administration of the country it was essential that an improved system of transport and communication should be developed. Further, generation of electricity and water works would facilitate the exploitation of natural resources in India. Again collection of raw materials and disposal of finished goods would be made quickly and easily through modern means of transport and communication. Two major forms of investment were made:

- 1) Direct private foreign investment in India was made in coal mining, jute mills, tea, coffee, rubber plantation and sugar.
- 2) Sterling loans were given to the British Govt. in India and public and semi-government organizations to undertake investment in railways, ports, electricity undertakings and other public utilities.
- 3) It is a fact that the British Multi-nationals were the chief instruments of exploitation, and it were they who drained out Indian wealth in the form of interest, dividend, and profits. As many as eight railway companies were entrusted the construction of railway under the state guarantee system. The government promised to provide free land and guaranteed rate of interest.
- 4) Contrary to the expectation, the railway companies proved to be financially losing-concerns during the first fifty years of their existence. The loss was made good by the Indian government as it had guaranteed a fixed return on the capital invested.
- 5) Indian tax-payer’s money was used to make good this loss. R.C. Dutt criticized the scandalous waste of Indian money on the railways in the following words:
- 6) “For half a century the Indian Railways did not pay but were nevertheless continuously extended. The working expenses, the interest on capital spent and the

profits guaranteed to private companies exceeded the earnings by over 50 million sterling- a clear loss to Indian tax-payer”.

7) **C. Exploitation though payments for the cost of British administration-** British civil and military administration was manned by a large number of British officers. The hefty salary received by them was paid out of Indian revenue.

8) India had to pay Home Charges – payments accruing on account of interest on debts incurred by India, pensions, gratuities, furlough allowances and payments for stores purchased in India.

9) The British fleeced the people to meet the expenses of wars of conquest waged by the East India Company, such as -Anglo-Mysore, Anglo-Maratha and Anglo – Afghan wars. India was forced to defray the expenses of the telegraph line from England to India. The cost of banking, insurance and shipping services was made out of Indian revenue.

The above mentioned exploitation led to far reaching sequels in socio-economic field. It broke the isolation of villages, and their self-sufficiency of centuries and introduced money economy to it, contributed to the growth of new urban centres, establishment of large-scale industries, growth of slums and destruction of handicrafts etc. the major consequences can be discussed as under:

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## 1.6. COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

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When the production of crops is meant to be sold in the market for gaining cash profit it is termed as commercialization of agriculture. This process started in India especially in Bengal in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Now the agriculture was not meant for the production of food for internal consumption. It was made to serve the needs of the British economic policy. It may be noted that the period of British conquest of India synchronized with the coming of the Industrial Revolution in England. Gradually, agricultural India was transformed into an economic colony of industrial England.

### 1.6.1 Factors responsible for commercialization of agriculture.

- Under the new system of land settlement land revenue had to be deposited in cash. The peasants were constrained to sale a part of their produce for the payment of revenue.
- The commercial middlemen also induced the farmers to grow crops of particular kind. Often, they advanced money to the farmers and persuaded them to grow cash- crops. In course of time, they learned that it is more advantageous to grow commercial crops than food grains.
- With the destruction of large scale handicrafts in the urban areas, the millions of artisans were thrown out of their jobs. Mostly these artisans were encouraged to take to the cultivation of commercial crops.

- The development of roads and railways made it possible to transport huge amounts of crops not only to local markets but also to foreign markets.

### **1.6.2 Impact of the policy of commercialization of agriculture:**

- It brought more areas under cultivation of commercial crops and the areas under food crops declined. As a result the common people could not get sufficient food to support their own needs. The condition was aggravated due to increase of population and fragmentation of landholdings in almost all parts of rural India. The isolation of villages was broken. Now villages were linked with world market.
- Another important impact was the growth of money lenders' class. Majority of peasants lived in debt to the money lenders who charged exorbitant interest and exploited the peasants.

### **1.6.3 Rural Indebtedness**

The British policy of land revenue contributed to rural indebtedness. During the initial years of the British rule in Bengal, Clive and Warren Hastings exacted the largest possible land revenue. This prompted Cornwallis to remark that *one-third of Bengal was transformed into a jungle, inhabited only by wild beasts, yet no step was taken for the improvement of agriculture*. The peasant was required to pay land revenue whatever might be the condition of his crops. In bad years, the peasant was therefore forced to borrow money to pay the land revenue. Introduction of private property in land made the land saleable, mortgageable and transferable. This helped the govt. to realize their revenue. The money lender charged high rates of interest and through cunning and deceitful methods like false accounting, forged signatures etc. he got the peasant deeper and deeper into debt till he parted with his land.

Rural Indebtedness took away the incentive for efficient farming. As the farmer was deprived of a great part of his produce, he didn't take any interest to improve agriculture. The moony lender-cum-merchant bled the peasant white and the latter was reduced to a pauper. The peasant could not liberate himself from the clutches of money –lenders and some of the indebted peasants emerged as bonded labourers and their number increased with the course of time.

### **1.6.4 Growth of Agricultural labour**

The introduction of new agrarian structure, monetization of economy, the growth of population, lack of industrial employment, and uneconomic holdings led to the emergence of surplus agricultural labourers, whose wages remained low as their bargaining power for living wages was drastically curtailed.

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## 1.7 DESTRUCTION OF HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRIES:

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During the hey-days of Mughal rule, Indian handicrafts produced excellent quality manufactures and nearly two hundred varieties of cotton and silk fabrics were exported. But this glory of the Indian industry did not last long. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Indian handicrafts met with their complete destruction. The European traders who had earlier given a boost to the Indian trade and industry by providing it with new markets proved to be responsible for its decay as well. This process of decline has been described as **de-industrialization**. The period of decline was contemporaneous with the firm foundation of the Industrial Revolution in England.

As mentioned earlier the Indian traditional handicraft industry decayed beyond repairs. The reasons for the decline of handicrafts and indigenous industries are worth noting.

- The improved means of transport – railways, steamer services and roads in India enabled the English manufacturers to reach the interior parts of India at a cheaper cost. As a result Indian industries faced severe competition.
- Prohibitive duties on Indian goods prevented them from entering the English market. At the same time, the British followed free trade policy in India affecting Indian interest.
- India was treated as a dependency of the East India Company and its successor, the British govt. Every move towards the extension of British political authority over the country was accompanied by a simultaneous step towards the disruption of the native economic system.
- The high-handedness of the East India Company's agents also contributed to the decline, they forced the Indian artisans to work for them on non-remunerative wages and sell their products at extremely low prices to them.
- The abolition of East Indian Company's monopoly of Indian trade in 1813 threw Indian market open for the private British enterprise. This new class did not come to Indian to buy goods produced here but came to secure a market for the goods manufactured in the factories of England. Now English cotton stuffs flooded the Indian market and ruined the Indian weaving industry. The government of William Bentinck noted in 1834: "*The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India*"
- The policies of the British Government in India were agriculture-oriented rather than industry-oriented. Much care was taken to improve the quality of agricultural products and to encourage the exports of Indian raw materials to the mother country, England.

- The disappearance of the courts of native rulers who patronized Indian artisan class constituted a powerful cause for the destruction of the handicraft industries.
- It is ridiculous to note that the newly educated professional class turned their back on the indigenous goods. To follow European fashions was considered the hall- mark of enlightenment.
- The British rule weakened the organization of *guilds* which used to supervise the quality of products and workmanship.

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## 1.8 DRAIN OF WEALTH:

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The term ‘drain of wealth’ is generally used for the transfer of resources from India to England without getting anything in return or getting only a disproportionately small part of such transfer of resources. This must be regarded as unrequited exports. The chief advocates of this drain theory were Indian nationalist leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, R.C. Dutta and Mahadev Govind Ranade. In his book “*Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*” Dadabhai has tried to quantify the magnitude of the drain. He has also demonstrated that poverty of India was due to the policies of Britishers. He also termed the exclusion of Indians from higher jobs in their own country as **moral drain**.

In the foregoing pages, the various forms of exploitations have been elucidated. It is said that a sum of nearly 6,000,000 pound was sent to England between 1758 and 1765 and this amount was more than four times the total land revenue collection of the Nawab of Bengal in 1765. Between 1765 and 1770, the Company is said to have sent nearly four million pounds, in the form of goods to England. This sum represented about 33 percent of the net revenue of Bengal. The drain was so obvious that even British officials accepted the fact of the drain. John Sullivan, President of the Board of Revenue, Madras said: “Our system acts very much like a sponge, drawing up all the good things from the banks of the Ganges and squeezing them down on the banks of the Thames”.

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## 1.9 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit we have discussed threadbare India’s trade link with outside world during pre-British period. Indian goods made their way to European countries during 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. When European merchants came to India for trade, Indian industries were in a flourishing stage. The conquest of Bengal by the British affected a sea change in the socio-economic life of the people. The British utilized the political power to further their trade interests. People were forced to pay through the nose the various taxes and exorbitant land revenue. The British took invidious

steps to fleece all categories of people. Agriculture, industry, trade and other sectors were so hit hard as to leave the people gasping for life. Self-sufficient village economy which existed for centuries gave place to market economy. Indian handicraft industries crumbled one after another. The artisans lost their hereditary occupation as it was no longer profitable. No effort was made to develop modern industries in India. Finding no other means of livelihood, the artisans were constrained to fall back upon agriculture which was already over-crowded. This led to enhancement of further pressure on land. Indian peasants were forced to grow cash-crops and to supply raw materials to the British industries. Thus, from a country of supplier of manufactures India became a country of supplier of raw materials. Various forms of exploitations with their concomitant baneful impacts have been dilated upon. The economic wound inflicted upon the people of Bengal continues to fester even to this day.

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### 1.10 KEY WORDS

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**Dastak:** The right of the East India Company, granted to it by the Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar's *firman* (royal order) of 1717, to carry on trade free of custom duties.

**Investment:** After 1765 the East India Company purchased Indian goods out of the revenue of Bengal. This purchase is known as Investment.

**Diwani:** The right of the Company, granted to it by the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II in 1765, to collect revenue from Bengal, Bihar and Odisha.

**Home Charges:** Payment made by India for pensions, gratuities, furlough Allowances, store purchases and interest on debts.

**De-industrialisation:** The process of decline and decay of traditional industries and absence of the growth of modern industries is known as de-industrialization.

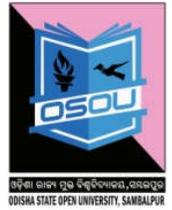
**Guilds:** An association of merchants or craftsmen who used to control the quality and prices of crafts.

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### 1.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. How were the earlier conquerors of India different from the British?
2. Give a brief note on exploitation through trade by the British in Bengal.
3. What does the commercialization of agriculture mean?
4. Mention the factors responsible for the decline of handicraft and indigenous industries.
5. Define the Drain of Wealth.



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## 1.12 SUGGESTED READINGS:

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1. A.R. Desai: *Social background of Indian Nationalism*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1998.
2. P.E. Roberts: *History of British India*, London: Oxford University Press, (1921) 1983.
3. Bipan Chandra : *History of Modern India*, Delhi:Orient Black Swan,2013.
4. B.L. Grover : *A New Look on Modern Indian History* ,New Delhi: S. Chand & Company (Pvt.) Ltd.,1988.
5. Ruddar Datt: *Indian Economy* , New Delhi: S. Chand & Company Ltd.,
6. K.P.M. Sundharam, 1985.
7. Publication Division: *Dadabhai Naoraji -Builder of modern India*
8. R.C. Dutt: *The Economic History of India in the Victorian age*, London: Trubner and Co., 1956.
9. R.C.Majumdar, H.C.Raychaudhuri, Kali kinkar Dutta: *An Advanced History of India*, New Delhi: Mackmilan.

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## 1.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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- 1) See sec1.4
- 2) See Sec1.5
- 3) See Sec1.6
- 4) See Sec1.7
- 5) See Sec1.8

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## **UNIT-2: DYNAMICS OF COLONIAL EXPANSION : EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF COLONIAL RULE IN BENGAL, MYSORE AND ODISHA**

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### **Structure**

- 2.0 Learning Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Expansion in Bengal
- 2.3 Expansion in Mysore
- 2.4 Expansion in Odisha
- 2.5 Check your progress
- 2.6 Let us sum up
- 2.7 Key Words
- 2.8 Answers to check your progress
- 2.9 Suggested Readings

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### **2.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to have an idea about the Anglo –French rivalry of South, conspiracy for occupation of Bengal, which was a part of Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire was in a declining stage and the Nawab of Bengal took advantage of it. He declared the Bengal province as independent. The British defeated Bengal Nawab in 1757 and 1764 and established their company. Right from the days of the grant of dewani of Bengal, Mysore and Odisha to the East India Company, the British wanted to establish dominance in Odisha. The British defeated the Bengal Nawab in 1757 and 1764 and established their rule and authority over Benagal, Bihar and Odisha .The inefficient administration of Marathas gave opportunity to British for establishing their authority over Odisha. Finally it was occupied by them in 1803.

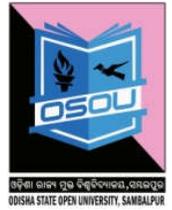
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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

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The English arrived in India in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as traders and established their trade centres in Surat, Hoogly etc. The commercial relations developed rapidly and consequently the British amassed a huge fortune. Their prosperity facilitated for political supremacy in India. Gradually, the British merchants not only occupied Bengal but also established supremacy in whole of

Indian subcontinent. The East India Company built an empire. Great Britain extended influence all over the globe and at one time the Sun did not set in the British Empire.



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## 2.2 EXPANSION IN BENGAL

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When Alivardi Khan, taking the advantages of the weakness of the Mughal Empire established his control over Bengal, he had to face various problems but he handled the affairs very tactfully. During his regime the people of Bengal remained quite happy and prosperous.

Alivardi, after having concluded a treaty with the Marathas in A.D. 1752 turned his attention towards the designs of the East India Company. The British were strengthening their position after setting up trade centres. They were consolidating their army. The Nawab kept a close watch on their activities but he did not enter into any struggle with them. However, he called the French representatives in his court and warned them. He said, "when you are in my custody you cannot be afraid of the enemies".

During the last days of Alivardi his court became the centre of conspiracy for succession. He breathed his last on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1756. He had no son, so he nominated Sirajuddaulah's grand son as his successor and asked him to keep a close watch on the activities of the Europeans.

### **Mirza Muhammad Sirajuddaula , the Nawab (1756-1757)**

The new Nawab was only twenty years of age when he ascended to the throne of Bengal after the demise of Alivardi Khan. During this time the Mughal empire had collapsed and the East India Company established its roots very firmly, so Sirajuddaula had a tough task ahead of him.

He faced various difficulties. His relations opposed his succession for the throne but he faced all the conspiracies very boldly. Sirajuddaula directed his attention towards the British in order to suppress his rivals. He had already been warned by his predecessor Ali Vardi Khan to be alert on the activities of the British, so he kept a close eye on their activities from the beginning. The confrontation of the Nawab and the British had many underlying causes. Sirajuddaula was becoming unpopular among his subjects because of his oppressive nature and cruelty. He was also unable to gauge the real nature of the British. Both were not in friendly terms. Moreover, the British were bent upon expansion of trade through political dominance. The prosperous Bengal province with its fertile land was a prize that the Company could not turn a blind eye. Some of the other reasons for the conflict were between both the parties were following:

1.The British were abusing the trade concession granted to them by the Mughal emperor FarukhSiyar .They were trading in India without paying their tax and they inspired the native rulers to continue their trade under their name .It harmed the Nawab financially .

2. The English did not give any presentor gift to the Nawab at the time of his accession .This meant they didnt recognize Sirajuddaula as Nawab.

3.Drake the British the governor of Calcutta was involved in some illegal work which annoyed the Nawab.

4. The English gave shelters to the enemies of the Nawab, which angered the latter.

5. British and the French started strengthening their forts without the permission of the Nawabon the wake of Seven Years ‘War between them. The Nawab felt offended and ordered their demolition .The French obeyed the command of the Nawab but the English annoyed the Nawab who attacked the English colony at Kasim Bazar on 24<sup>th</sup>June 1756 and established his control .He also conquered Calcutta afterwards and defeated the English badly .The story of Black Hole followed the event of Calcutta invasion but the historian hold different opinion about its reality .In the evening the prisoners 146 in number were put in a tiny room out of which 123 died due to suffocation. John Zephaniah Holwell (1711-1798), a surgeon of the East India Company and a survivor from the Black Hole tragedy published his account entitled, *A Genuine Narrative of the Deplorable Deaths of the English Gentlemen and others who were suffocated in the Black Hole* (London, 1758). It was widely circulated in Britain and the veracity of facts was not questioned for a pretty long time.

Holwell's figure of 146 prisoners with 23 survivors was exaggerated. The modern historians had put the number of prisoners as 64 out of which 21 survived. Recent evidences and all facts considered prove that Holwell overplayed the incident and he became a hero in the eyes of the British public. He was made temporary Governor of Bengal in 1760. The Nawab was not directly responsible for the Black Hole incident. The survivors were set free by the Nawab and only Holwell along with three others were imprisoned. The British had erected a monument to commemorate the event, but it was removed in 1940 to the graveyard of St John’s Church.

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## OCCUPATION OF CALCUTTA

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The British were defeated by the Sirajuddaula in the beginning, but they were very strong. On the other hand the condition of Sirajuddaula weakened with the passage of time. He did not make proper arrangement for the defence of Calcutta. Moreover the ruler of Calcutta was the opponent of Sirajuddaula. Some of the commanders and courtiers were also the supporters of the English. Hence all these circumstances encouraged the company to invade Calcutta. They established their control over Calcutta on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1757. Sirajuddaula felt very much shocked with the loss of Calcutta and its adjacent territory. He attacked the English in order to recover Calcutta but did not succeed. The fear of Ahmad Shah Abdali was there. So he readily accepted the treaty of Ali Nagar on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1757. This treaty provided advantage to the English. They got all the old trade concessions and also received a huge amount of money as war indemnity.

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## MIR JAFAR

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Clive, Robert (1725-1774), the British officer made a secret plan against Sirajuddaula in connivance with Mir Jafar and few others. Sir Robert Clive, who laid the foundation of British Raj in India, was born in Shropshire, Britain. In 1743, he was sent to Madras to work as a bookkeeper of the East India Company (EIC). He joined the military service in 1746. Clive proved his mettle soon. He seized Arcot in 1751 with less number of troops. He had been recognized as an outstanding military strategist and general. He stayed in Britain for three years (1753-1756) and afterwards became involved in Bengal affairs. The Nawab, Sirajuddaula (1729-1757) ordered the British to dismantle fortification of Calcutta. Sirajuddaula occupied it on June 20, 1756, but Clive recaptured it on January 2, 1757. Clive hatched a conspiracy against the Nawab through shady deals and promised Sirajuddaula's Commander Mir Jafar (1691 – 1765) that he would be the next Nawab. The Battle of Plassey took place on June 23, 1757. Afterwards, Clive demolished the French settlement in Chandernagore. He wanted to give the position of the nawab of Bengal to some puppet ruler in place of Sirajuddaula. He convinced Mir Jafar for treachery promised him for throne. Though he knew the plan of the secret treaty earlier still he was unable to stop it. He wanted to have support from Mir Jafar but it was his biggest mistake, due to which he had to pay heavy price.

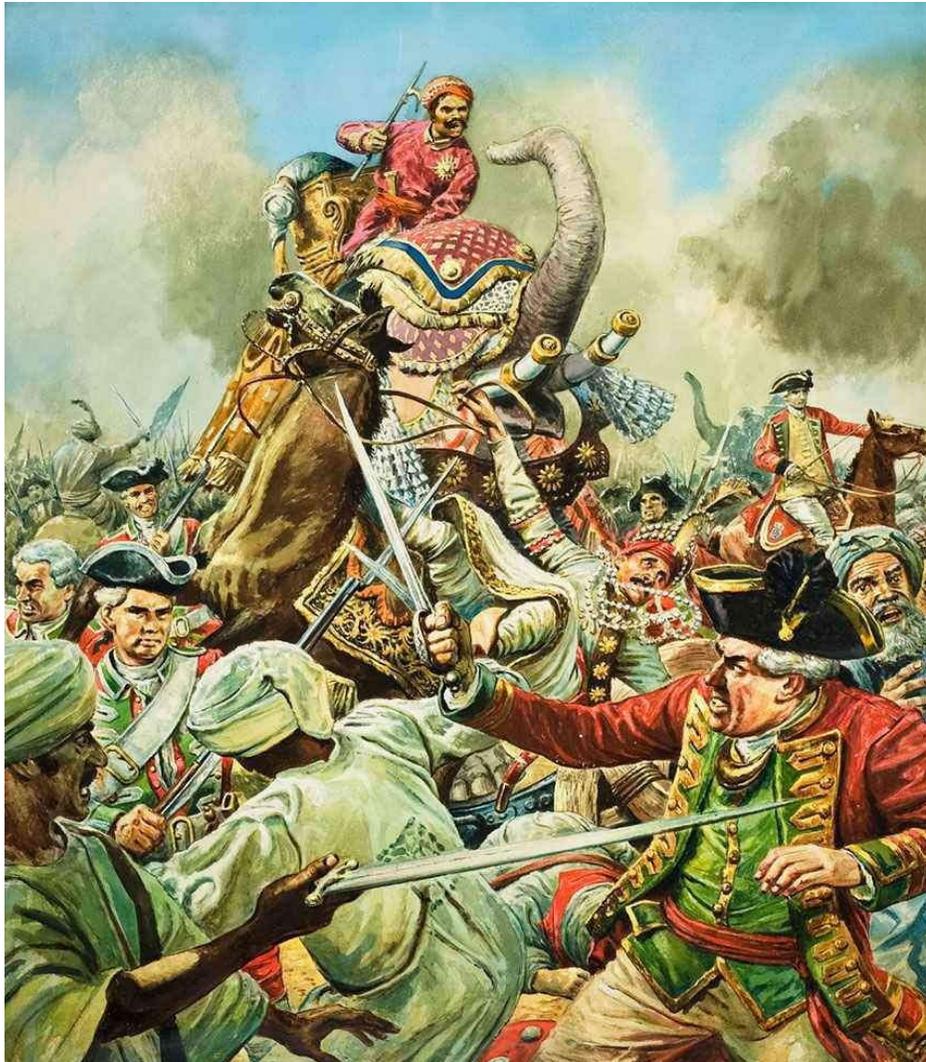


Figure 1 Battle of Plassey Sources <https://images.app.goo.gl/qtHuzjU45jdVfkJc9>

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## BATTLE OF PLASSEY 1757

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The small village of Plassey on the Bhagirathi River catapulted into fame on June 23, 1757, when a decisive battle of modern Indian history was fought. It was a time of Anglo-French struggle and the foundation of the British Empire was laid in this battle. The profitable free trade carried out by the British became the cause of the conflict with the Nawab Sirajuddaula. He gave orders for dismantling of fortification of Calcutta. There were fugitives from the court of Nawab in British camp also. The Nawab occupied Calcutta on June 20, 1756, but the British troops under Robert Clive recaptured it on January 2, 1757. He did some maneuvering and promised the Commander of Nawab, Mir Jafar (1691 – 1765) that he would be replacing Sirajuddaula. The battle began around 7 AM between Clive's army consisting of 800 Europeans, 2,200 Indians with 9 canons and Nawab's

comprising 50, 000 troops and 53 canons. The troops under Mir Jafar were silent spectators. The outcome of the battle had been decided previously and the battle had been won by treason. The death toll for the British and Nawab were 22 and 50 respectively. Clive was richer by £ 234,000 and received the annual rent of £ 30,000 that the Company was paying for whole life. He remained as governor of Bengal for two years. Sirajuddaula had been murdered and Mir Jafar was installed as the new Nawab. The subsequent plunder of Bengal made the East India Company and its officials rich.

The following reasons contributed to the outbreak of this significant war :

1.Both the Nawab and English were not ready to follow the term of the treaty of Alinagar .Nawab didnt pay the total amount to the English which he had promised at the time of treaty .The English didnt want to give time to the Nawab for preparation ,Hence they thought it is better to announce war as soon as possible . Actuality Nawab was not ready to follow the term of the treatyand he was retreatingfrom the terms of the treaty as the English were too retreating from the treaty .The English very well knew that without defeating Nawab they could not secure their position .Hence battle of Plassey had become inevitable .

2.The English wanted to establish their political ,administrative and economic supremacy over Bengal for which it was essential to fight with Nawab .So they promised to give the throne to their puppet Mir Jafar and dethrone Sirajuddaula who had to fight the battle of Plassey .

3.Siraj inherited many troubles from his grand father .He had a rival in his cousin,theNawab of Purnea,Shaukat Jung ,a hostile aunt Ghasiti Begum ,a childless widow , a rebellious commander of army Mir Jafar ,husband of Alivardi Khans sister and an alarmed hindu subject population .

4.The English never respected Nawab .

5.The English knew inspite of all the power, army of Sirajuddaula it proved to be worthless because of the traitors.The English concluded a treaty with Mir Jafar on 4<sup>th</sup> june 1757 .It enhanced the power of the English .The army of Sirajuddaula was so vast to defeat English but the treachery of Mir Jafar ruined him .

6.The English forced the Nawab to remove the French and not to allow trade in India.Because some French were working under Nawab army so he cannot drive the French completely, so the war become inevitable .

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7. Durlabh Rai, the treasurer of Sirajuddaula, also cheated him. He floated rumours that the British were gaining victory and the soldiers of the Nawab were fleeing. These news disturbed Nawab very much. Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh withdrew their forces from the battle field. They made no effort for the safety of Nawab.

8. So English wanted to dethrone Mir Jafar with new Nawab Mir Kasim and got huge booty from him.

The manoeuvring of his own trusted persons, the disturbed Nawab Siraj ran away from the battle field. Captured at Rajmahal, he was brought to Murshidabad and on the order of Miran, son of Mir Jafar, he was put to death. The battle ended on the same day when it began, 23 June 1757.

Significance of the battle of Plassey :

The battle of Plassey was not a big one significant event but its results were very significant and this battle counted among the decisive wars in Indian history.

1. Mir Jafar became the new Nawab of Bengal. It gave the British a huge amount of money and the zamindari of 24 praganas to the English.

2. It not only extended the influence of English in India, but also founded the British empire in India.

3. It turned the English merchants to be the rulers. They became makers of Nawabs in Bengal. Their main rival French were ousted.

4. It exposed the weakness of the Indians, their military strategy and strength before that of the Europeans, especially the English. The English understood that success could be achieved in India only through conspiracies and intrigues which gave a boost to their imperialist design.

5. Bengal was very important for British from military point of view. It was very difficult to establish their reign in south due to power of Nizam and the Marathas. Far away from the above-said two powers, British could easily extend their empire through Bengal. They also came very near to sea and use water route for the expansion of his trade and military power. The control of the English in Bengal helped them to establish their control over northern India.

6. Battle of Plassey proved to be fatal for the Mughal empire. Not only the suba of Bengal slipped from the hands of the Mughals, it disclosed their military weakness

.It also confirmed that instead of being servants of Mughal emperors,the English were the makers of nawab in Bengal .

7.Victory in the battle had great economic significance .Bengal was accounted among the richest provinces of India .The resources of the company considerably enhanced after their power established in Bengal .

The battle of Plassey had political significance as it laid the foundation of the British empire in India .It is rightly regarded as the starting point of the British rule in India.

### **Battle of Buxar (1764):**

MirJafar became the new nawab of Bengal ,Bihar and Odisha .The sovereignty of English over Calcutta was recognised .The English posted a president to the court of the nawab .Mir Zafar was irritate by the interference of Clive .He entered into a conspiracy with Dutch at Chinsura .But British defeated the Dutch at Bedara in November 1759 .The treachery of Mir Zafar and his failure to make the payment due to the company annoyed the English .

The company signed a treaty with Mir Kasim ,the son in law of Mir Jafar ,in 1760 .important provisions of the treaty were :

- a) Mir Kasim agreed to cede to the company the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong .
- b) The company would get half of the share in case of trade of sylhet .
- c) MirKasim would pay the company half of the outstanding dues .
- d) Mir Kasim promised to pay a sum of rupess five lakhs towards financing company, war efforts in south India .
- e) Both would treat the other parties ,friends and enemies to be the same for them .

Now under pressure Mir Jafar resigned in favour of Mir Kasim, who was enthroned in 1760.

Mir Kasim fulfilled all the promises he made to the English but he did not become the puppet as expected by the British .He gave huge amount of wealth to the officers of the company .He took active part in the administration of Bengal .He tried to improve the financial position of the state .He crushed rebel jagirdarsand forced the officers of the company to deposit all the money in the royal treasury which they had embezzled.Hisadministration,manufacturing of fire-locks and

guns,imposition of new taxes ,reduction of administrative expenditures as well as that of courts and palace,shifting capital from Murshidabad to Munger annoyed nobels and officials .

1.The company and its officers were not prepared to let him do things on his own accord .It led to conflict between the company and the nawab that resulted in the battle of Buxar .

Causes of the war :

1.The English wanted a puppet nawab but Mir Kasim only gave them trade concessions and kept all political power in his hands,which make them English angry .They thought of changing him .

2.After the assassination of Alamgir II in 1760,his son Prince Shahzada ,who was in Bihar .declared himself emperor and took the name ShahAlamII .English pressurised Mir Kasim to accept him as emperor ,as they wanted to get some concession after his enthronement . Mir Kasim didnt accept the pressure of the English ,which displaced the latter .

3.Ram Narain ,the deputy governor of Bihar became defiant,didnt submit the accounts of the revenue of Bihar .Mir Kasim didnt tolerate open defiance of his authority .Ram Narain,when dismissed went to the side of English and the fugitive was not surrendered .Though he was handed over later ,it enhanced the tension between both the parties .

4.The trading rights of the company and their misuse was the most significant reason of dispute between the company and the nawab .The English merchants did not pay any tax for their trade in the territory of nawab .The English also began to help the Indian menrchants by giving them passes to evade the taxes .The angry nawab abolished the trade tax for all traders including Indians ,to put both of them on equal footing ,though it affected the royal treasury .The company pressurise the nawab to reimpose the tax on the Indian merchant ,which was rejected by the nawab which led to the conflict between the company and nawab .War between broke out in 1763.English gained victories at Murshidabad ,Munger,Gooty,Giria and Katwah .Nawab fled to oudh and formed a confederacy with nawabshujauddaulah of oudh and Mughal emperor Shahalam II .The combined force of the three were defeated by English commander ,Major Hector Munro on october 23,1764 at Buxar in a closely contested battle .The English campaign against Mir Kasim was short but decisive.NawabShujauddaula fled to Rohilakhand .The English captured oudh.nawab tried to outst the English with the

help of the marathas and rohillas but he couldnot succeed and surrendered before the English in 1765 .

The importance of the battle lay in the fact that not only the nawab of Bengal but also the Mughal emperor was defeated by the English .Rober Clive concluded two treaties at Allahbad in Aug 1765 –one was the nawab of oudh and other with Mughal emperor ShahalamII.

The political gain of the company in Bengal :

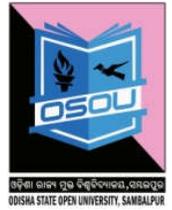
Nawab Shuja-ud-daulla agreed to:

- i)Surrender Allahbad and kora to emperor ShahAlamII .
- ii)Pay rupees 50 Lakhs to the company as war indemnity .
- iii)GiveBalwantSingh,zamindar of Benaras full possession of his estate .

Shah Alam II agreed to :

- i)To reside at Allahbad under company protection .
  - ii)Issue a ferman granting the company the diwani of Bengal,Bihar and Odisha in lieu of an annual payment of rupees 26lakhs .
  - iii)A provision of 50 lakh to the company in return for nizamat function military defence ,police and administration of justice of the said province .
- Mir Kasim the dethroned nawab of Bengal spent the rest part of his life as a homeless wanderer and died in june1777 .

It is correctly said that the battle of Buxar completed the work of Plassey .The supremacy of English over Bengal ,Bihar and Odisha was established after the war .It made the Mughal emperor a useful rubber stamp of the company .Besides,the emperor farman legalised.



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### 2.3: EXPANSION IN MYSORE

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Struggle for mastery over Mysore:

The English also fixed their eyes on Mysore as their political and commercial interests in south India was threatened because of Mysore proximity with the French and Hyder Ali and Tipus control over the rich trade of the Malabar coast .Mysor's power was seen as a threat to the control of English over Madras

#### **The First Mysore War :**

The English and the Nizam concluded a treaty against HaiderAli in A.D.1765 .The Marathas were also included in this alliance in A.D.1765 .All this alarmed HyderAli ,noting their divergent aims .Haider Ali was confident of breaking their coalition against him .He was a skilled diplomat ,hence he won over to his side the Marathas and Nizam .Thus the English were alone .

Taking advantage of this situation Haider Ali at once launched an expedition against the English in A.D.1767 .But he was twice defeated by the English and compelled to go Malabar for fear of a rebellion .After the departure of HaiderAli ,the Nizam couldnot alone face the English so he sued for a treaty with the English in February A.D.1768 .The Nizam also promised all help to the English against Haider Ali and declared Haider Ali a rebel and a usurper .The English also assured their full support to the Nizam at the time of need but the Nizam would pay the price of the same.

Haider Ali was very much annoyed by the term of the treaty and attack the English .The English forces tried to encircle him from two sides but he fought vigorously and attained victory at both the places .He forced the English into a treaty in A.D.1769 dictating his own terms .Treaty of Madras the victoy added greatly to the power and prestige of Haider Ali .Thus the victorious Haider Ali went back to his capital adding some new feather on his cap .He got the promise of help of the English in case he was attacked by other power .

The southern war brought to the English nothing but impoverishment .The engagement with Nawab and Haider were contradictory .The relation with Marathas were unsettled .This together with the ruinous state of affairs in Bengal completed a picture both gloomy and desolate .Such was the situation in internal and external .Such that Hastings confronted in 1772 .

## Second Mysore War

The relation between the Haider Ali and English could never be friendly .hence a war between the two become unavoidable .The conflicting interest of both the parties resulted in the straining of the relations between them .

Haider Ali had already crossed words with the English at the time of the first Maratha war ,now he wanted to take revenge .He ,therefore joined hands with the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas .All the three decided to launch expedition against the English .Haider invaded Madras and its adjacent territory and in July A.D.1780 ,he advanced towards Karnataka which led to the outbreak of Second Mysore War .In July A.D.1780 Haider swooped down on the plains of the Carnatic carrying death and destruction .Panic seized the English .Sir Hector Munroe the victor of Buxar fled for safety to Madras .throwing his guns and stores into a tank .Another force under colonel Baillie was cut to pieces by Tipu at Conjeevaram .In oct A.D.1780 Haider took possession of Arcot and was the undisputed master of the Carnatic .

Hastings was watching all these activities desperately from Calcutta and wanted to break up his alliance as soon as possible .Hence he at once Sir Eyre Cooteto the south .Anyhow by his skilful diplomacy Hasting succeeded in creating some differences and detached the Raja of Berar and Scindia from the coalition .He also ,made Nizam agree to withdraw his forces from the battle .The English gave Guntur as a gift for his Withdrawal .The Marathas also couldnot support Haider Ali for a long time ,so he was left alone to face the English .

The joined forces of Sir Eyre Coote and colonel Pierce fought a pitched battle against Haider Ali at Pollilur in Aug A.D.1781 andHaider Ali was defeated by them .But Tipu forced Colonel Braithwaite to surrender near Tanjore .But the conflict between the two continued upto 1784 .When his son Tipu was attaining some significant victories ,a fatal attack of cancer ended the life of Haider Ali in December A.D. 1782 ,while war was still in progress .

Tipu received considerable help from the French and defeated Brigadier Mathews who was despatched from Bombay to establish his control over Mangalore and Bednur .at this time with the withdrawal of the French The English again become the master of the Indian seas .By the year A.D.1784 which provide mutual restitution of conquest and release of prisoners .It was no better than a true forced upon both the power by their inability to continue the struggle ,both were convinced without the destruction of one there was no safety for the other .

Both the parties felt tired of wars and the treaty of Mangalore signed between them on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1784 .

### **The Third Anglo Mysore war :**

A dispute rose between Tipu and the state of Travancore on some territorial dispute .Tipu declared war against Travancore on April 1890 and English siding with Travancore attacked Tipu .In 1790 Tipu defeated the English general Meadows while in 1791 Cornwallis defeated Tipu .He had to sign a humiliating treaty ,treaty of Srirangapatnam in 1792 .Nearby half of the Mysore territory was taken over by the victors .Baramahal,Dindigul and Malabar went to the English while the Marathas got the regions surrounding Tungabhadra and its tributaries .Nizam acquired the areas from the Krishna to beyond the Pennar .Besides an indemnity of three crore rupees was taken from Tipu ,half immediately and the rest half on instalment and till the final payment was totally paid ,two sons of Tipu were kept as hostages .

The Third Anglo Mysore war completely crippled Tipu .It was an agonising chapter of history that in the First Mysore war ,the Nizam and the Marathas joined with Mysore to outst the English where as in the third one they joined hands with the English to defeat the forces of Mysore .The two Indian powers ,Nizam and the Marathas couldnot see anything beyond their narrow interest of gaining some territories with the help of the English ,rather to unite all the Indian states to fight the English .It became costly for the Indian states in the long run .

### **Fourth Anglo Mysore war :**

From 1792to1799 ,both sides used the period to recap their losses .In 1796,the hindu ruler of Wodeyar dynasty died .Tipu refused to place wodeyars minor son on the throne and declared himself sultan .He had decide to avenge his humiliating defeat and terms put by the treaty of srirangapatnam .In 1798 Lord Wellesley became the Governor General of India .An imperialist to the court ,he was concerned with Tipu's growing friendship with French ,aimed at any annihilating independent assistance of Tipu .It was alleged that Tipu has sent emissaries to Kabul,Persia and Mauritius for support .The French Governor of Mauritius supported Tipu and a large number of French volunteers trained the army of Tipu .

The shrewed English made nizam to accept the terms of the Subsidiary alliance on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1798 and become an ally of the English .Marathas were promised half of the Tipu's territory .Tipu was badly defeated by the British general Stuart and Harris at Malavali.While defending his capital Srirangapatnam,Tipu led down his life .His treasures were confiscated by the English,The English choose the boy

from earlier royal family of Mysore as the Maharaja and imposed on him Subsidiary alliance system .

Thus the independant identity of Mysore came to an end .The new king of Mysore was totally dependant on the English for his survival .Henceforth Wellesely came to be known as Marquis Wellesely .Dean Hutton remark “as a military ,financial and pacificatory settlement ,the conquest of Mysore was the most brilliant success of the British power since days of Clive “.

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## 2.4 EXPANSION IN ODISHA

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### **British Occupation of Odisha :**

English had settled as merchants in Odisha long before they emerged as its rulers .They established one of their oldest factories in India in the year 1633 at Harishpur(Modern Jagatsinghpur of Cuttack district )with permission of the Mughal governor .The next factory was established at Balasore in 1642 .Balasore appeared to them as a place of ‘far greater commercial advantages’.Because of conflict with the Mughal authorities ,the English merchants abandoned Balasore in 1688 and again in 1690 they resumed their factory at Balasore with the royal farman from emperor Aurangzeb .The English continued their trade at Balasore till the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century without any major problems .By mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Calcutta emerged as a trading centres of great importance and the Balasore port was in a state of decline .

The Maratha rule was established over Odisha in 1751 ,six years before the British defeated Sirajudaula,the nawab of Bengal in 1757 .The victory in Bengal was followed by incessant bids of the English to establish their authority in other part of the country .In course of time they wanted to acquire Odish so as to remove a territorial barrier between their possession in Madras and Bengal presidencies .In 1759 the English East Company acquired from the nizam of Hyderabad northern sircars with included the district of Ganjam.On 12<sup>th</sup> August 1765 the Mughal emperor ShahAlam ratified the transfer of northern circars to the East India Company and further granted the Diwani (revenue, administration and collection )of Bengal ,Bihar and Odisha to the company .But the formal grant of Diwani by the Mughal emperor couldnot confer upon the English the Diwani right over Odisha because it was ruled by Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur .Theirafter British tried to purchase Odisha from the Bhonsla Raja but Clive failed to acquire the same by negotiation .Eveduring the war with Haider Ali ,Warren Hastings had to pay a huge amount of money to Maratha chief Madhoji Bhonsle to allow the troop movement through Odisha .When Cornwallis the next Governor General of India

had to secure permission from the Bhonsla Raja to sent troops through Odisha to fight with Tipu sultan in 1790 .

In 1802 Peshwa, the nominal chief of the Maratha confederacy entered into humiliating Subsidiary Alliance with the English after his defeat in the hands of the Holkar ,but Scindia and Bhonsala resorted to war instead of accepting the Subsidiary Alliance .Lord Wellesly (1798 -1805)the imperious Governor General decided to conquer Odisha .The following factors contributed to the British occupation of Odisha

#### 1. Weakness of the Maratha subedars

The internecine conflict between the Bhonsles of Nagpur after the death of Januji created weakness among the Marathas. Consequently the Maratha rule is became weak and inefficient. Nagpur could not control the provincial governors. Even for suppressing the unruly land lords they had to look for the British help .Moreover, the Marathas were unpopular because of their oppressive and rapacious rule.

#### 2. Establishment of British factories

The British in order to establish strong economic and military base in Odisha ,established factories in different parts of Odisha .With the grant of *dewani* of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha in 1765 ,the Company realised the importance of Odisha. It also obtained permission from the Marathas to have their monopoly over the manufacturing salt in Odisha .The trade routes passing through Odisha helped their commerce to a great extent .

#### 3. Occupation of south Odisha

With the grant of dewani in 1765, Robert Clive obtained from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam the northern circarregion consisting of Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Guntur and others as free gift. Midnapore, a part of Odisha was handed over to the Company. From military view point the tracts in south and north Odisha made the task of British army comparatively easier to occupy coast Odisha in 1803.

The English planned and executed a three prolonged military campaign under Lt. Col Campbell ,it started fom Ganjam in south ,from the north Jaleswar on Bengal border and an invasion from sea on Balasore town .The campaign resulted in English victory followed by the treaty of Deaogaon between the English and The Maratha Raja in 1803 by which the Raja ceded the coastal belt of Odish to the company which the Marathas ruled earlier which was mentioned as the province of Cuttack .

British annexation of Sambalpur :

In 1793 the Bhonsala of Nagpur first established their suzerainty over the kingdom of Sambalpur .In 1804 ,the British troops occupied Sambalpur .By an agreement of August 1806,The British allowed the Marathas to re-establish their authority over Sambalpur .After defeating the Bhonsala Raja in the Third Anglo Maratha war of 1817 ,the British decided to reestablish the paramountcy over Sambalpur .They installed a one ruler after another from the same royal dynasty till the last ruler Narayan Sen,who was facing the rebellion of Surendra Sai,a claimant of the throne ,died on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1849 .The Governor General Lord Dalhousie then annexed Sambalpur by applying the Doctrine of Lapse .This was how Odisha from southern to coastal and then the western part were included in the possession of East India Company .

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## 2.5: CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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- 1) Give an account of the British occupation of Bengal in ten lines
- 2) Give an account of the British occupation of Mysore in ten lines .
- 3) Give an account of the British occupation of Odisha in ten lines .
- 4) How Battle of Plassey and Battle of Buxar were important for the British?

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## 2.6: LET US SUM UP

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The East India Company was successful in controlling large parts of India because of superior military strategy, the lack of unity among Indian rulers, role of traitors and astute diplomacy of the British. The occupation of Bengal after Plassey and the diwani of Bengal ,Bihar and Odisha after Buxar laid the foundation of British military power in India, specially eastern India .The Four Anglo Mysore war wiped out the opposition to the English in south India with adequate pressure on nizam and Marathas .The Subsidiary Alliance of Wellesly brought many Indian chiefs under obligation to the British .Odisha which remained under two British presidencies Bengal and Madras with its long coast line was the most target which was accomplished in 1803 .In a piece-meal manner through various strategies and policies the British ,annexed Indian territories one by one to the dominion .The Three Anglo Maratha war ,The two Anglo Sikh war,conquest of Sindh along with Subsidiary alliance and Doctrine of Lapse were the stepping stone to the East India Company to established its political power ,through the establishment of an empire in India but the same process led to the outbreak of the great upsurge of 1857 which is proudly termed as the ‘First Indian War Of Independence ‘.

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## 2.7: KEYWORD

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**Paramountcy:** The fact or state of being above others in rank or importance.

**Dominion:** The power to rule and control

**Hegemony:** Control by one country, organization over other countries .within a particular group.

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## 2.8: ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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See sec1.2.2

See sec2.2.3

See sec 3.2.4

See sec4.2.2

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## 2.9: SUGGESTED READINGS

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