

# APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

## MODERN INDIA

### Advent of European Invasion

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| 8 <sup>th</sup> std  | Unit -1   | Advent of the European  |
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#### 1. Advent of the Europeans

##### Introduction

Many of the foreign travellers, traders, missionaries and civil servants who came to India in the 18th and 19th centuries have left accounts of their experiences and their impressions of various parts of the country. To know the events of modern period, we have abundant sources at the international, national, and regional level.

##### Sources of Modern India

The sources for the history of modern India help us to know the political, socio-economic and cultural developments in the country. From the very beginning, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, the Danes, and the English recorded their official transactions in India on state papers. Well preserved records are very valuable to know about their relations in India. The archives at Lisbon, Goa, Pondicherry and Madras were literally store houses of precious historical information's. All these sources must, however, is critically evaluated before they are used for historical writing.

## **Kinds of Sources**

We can write history with the help of sources like written sources and material sources.

## **Written Sources**

After the advent of the printing press, numerous books were published in different languages. Hence, people began to acquire knowledge easily in the fields like art, literature, history and science. The Europeans came to know about the immense Wealth of India from the accounts of Marco Polo and similar sources. The wealth of India attracted Europeans to this country. AnandaRangam is a name to conjure with in the annals of Tamil history. He was a Dubash (Translator) in Pondicherry to assist French trade in India. He recorded the events that took place in French India. His diaries contain the daily events from 1736 to 1760, which are the only written secular record available during that period. His diaries reveal his profound capacity for political judgment, and is a most valuable source of history. Written sources include Literatures, Travel Accounts, Diaries, Auto Biographies, Pamphlets, Government Documents and Manuscripts.

## **Archives**

This is the place where historical documents are preserved. The National Archives of India (NAI) is located in New Delhi. It is the chief storehouse of the records of the government of India. It has main source of information for understanding past administrative machinery as well as a guide to the present and future generations related to all matters. It contains authentic evidence for knowing the political, social, economic, cultural and scientific life and activities of the people of India. It is one of the largest Archives in Asia.

## **Tamil Nadu Archives**

The Madras Record Office, presently known as Tamil Nadu Archives (TNA) is located in Chennai. It is one of the oldest and largest document repositories in Southern India. The most of the records in the Tamil Nadu archives are in English. The collections include series of administrative records in Dutch, Danish, Persian and Marathi. Few documents are in French, Portuguese, Tamil and Urdu.

Tamil Nadu Archives has 1642 volumes of Dutch records which relate to Cochin and Coromandal coast. These records cover the period from 1657 - 1845. The Danian records cover the period from 1777 - 1845. Dodwell prepared with great effort and the first issue of the calendar of Madras records was published in 1917. He was highly interested in encouraging historical researches. He opened a new chapter in the History of Tamil Nadu Archives.

### **Material Sources**

Many paintings and statues are the main sources of modern Indian history. They give us a lot of information and the achievement of national leaders and historical personalities. Historical buildings like St. Francis Church at Cochin, St. Louis Fort at Pondicherry, St. George Fort in Madras, St. David fort in Cuddalore, India Gate, Parliament House, President House in New Delhi, etc are different styles and techniques of Indian architecture. Other objects and materials of religious, cultural and historical value are collected and preserved in Museums. These museums help to preserve and promote our cultural heritage. The national museum in Delhi is the largest museum in India which was established in 1949.

Coins are a good source to know about administrative history. The first coinage in modern India under the crown was issued in 1862. Edward VII ascended after Queen Victoria and the coins issued by him bore his model. The Reserve Bank of India was formally set up in 1935 and was empowered to issue Government of India notes. The first paper currency issued by RBI in January 1938 was 5 rupee notes bearing the portrait of King George VI.

### **Advent of the Europeans**

After the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in A.D (CE) 1453, the land route between India and Europe was closed. The Turks penetrated into North Africa and the Balkan Peninsula. It became imperative on the part of the European nations to discover new sea routes to the East.

### **Portugal**

Amongst the entire European nations Portugal was the foremost to make a dynamic attempt to discover a sea route to India. Prince Henry of Portugal, who is commonly known as the "Navigator", encouraged

his countrymen to take up the adventurous life of exploring the unknown regions of the world. Bartholomew Diaz, a Portuguese sailor reached the southern-most point of Africa in 1487. He was patronized by the King John II.

### **Vasco da Gama**

Vasco da Gama, another Portuguese sailor reached the southern-most point of Africa and he continued his journey to Mozambique from where he sailed to India with the help of an Indian pilot. In A.D (CE) 1498, he reached Calicut, where he was cordially received by King Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut. A second Portuguese navigator, Pedro Alvares Cabral, sailed towards India, following the route discovered by Vasco da Gama with 13 ships and a few hundred soldiers in 1500. On his arrival at Calicut, there arose conflicts between the Portuguese and king Zamorin.

Vasco da Gama came to India for the second time in 1501 with 20 ships and founded a trading centre at Cannanore. One after another, they established factories at Calicut and Cochin. King Zamorin attacked the Portuguese in Cochin, but was defeated. Cochin was the first capital of the Portuguese East India Company. The third voyage of Vasco da Gama was in 1524. He soon fell ill, and in December 1524 he died in Cochin.

### **Francisco de Almeida (1505-1509)**

In 1505, Francisco de Almeida was sent as the first Governor for the Portuguese possessions in India. Almeida had the aim of developing the naval power of the Portuguese in India. His policy was known as the "Blue Water Policy". As Portuguese tried to break the Arab's monopoly on Indian Ocean trade, it negatively impacted on the trade interests of Egypt and Turkey. Sultans of Bijapur and Gujarat were also apprehensive of the expansion of Portuguese control of ports which led to an alliance between Egypt, Turkey and Gujarat against Portuguese invaders. In a naval battle fought near Chaul, the combined Muslim fleet won a victory over the Portuguese fleet under Almeida's son who was killed in the battle. Almeida defeated the combined Muslim fleet in a naval battle near Diu, and by the year 1509, Portuguese claimed the naval supremacy in Asia.

### **Alfonso de Albuquerque (1509-1515)**

The real founder of the Portuguese power in India was Alfonso de Albuquerque. He captured Goa from the Sultan of Bijapur in November 1510. In 1515, he established the Portuguese authority over Ormuz in Persian Gulf. He encouraged the marriages of the Portuguese with Indian women. He maintained friendly relations with Vijayanagar Empire.

### **Nino de Cunha (1529-1538)**

Governor Nino de Cunha moved capital from Cochin to Goa in 1530. In 1534, he acquired Bassein from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. In 1537, the Portuguese occupied Diu. Later, they wrested Daman from the local chiefs of Gujarat. In 1548, they occupied Salsette.

Thus during the 16th century, Portuguese succeeded in capturing Goa, Daman, Diu, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul and Bombay on the western coast, Hooghly on the Bengal coast and San Thome on the Madras coast and enjoyed good trade benefits. The Portuguese brought the cultivation of tobacco to India. Due to the influence of Portuguese Catholic religion spread in certain regions on India's western and eastern coasts. The printing press was set up by the Portuguese at Goa in 1556. A scientific work on the Indian medicinal plants by a European writer was printed at Goa in 1563. In 17th century, the Portuguese power began to decline to the Dutch and by 1739 the Portuguese pockets became confined to Goa, Diu and Daman.

### **The Dutch**

The Dutch followed the Portuguese into India. In 1602, the United East India company of Netherlands was formed and it received the sanction of their government to trade in East India. After their arrival in India, the Dutch founded their first factory in Masulipatnam, (Andhra Pradesh) in 1605. This company captured Amboyna from the Portuguese in 1605 and established its supremacy in the Spice Islands. They captured Nagapatnam near Madras from the Portuguese and made this place as their strong hold in South India. At first, Pulicat was their headquarters. Later, they shifted it to Nagapatnam in 1690. The most important Indian commodities traded by the Dutch were silk, cotton, indigo, rice and opium. They monopolized the trade in black pepper and other spices. The important factories in India were Pulicat,

Surat, Chinsura, Kasim bazaar, Patna, Nagapatnam, Balasore and Cochin.

The English East India Company remained engaged in rivalry with the Portuguese and the Dutch throughout the 17th century. In 1623, the Dutch cruelly killed ten English traders and nine Javanese in Amboyna. This incident accelerated the rivalry between the two Europeans companies. Their final collapse came with their defeat by the English in the Battle of Bedera in 1759. The Dutch lost their settlements one by one to the English and was completely wiped out by the year 1795.

### **Dutch in Tamil Nadu**

The Portuguese who established a control over Pulicat since 1502 were over thrown by the Dutch. In Pulicat, the Dutch built the fort Geldria in 1613. This fort was once the seat of Dutch power. The Dutch established their settlement at Pulicat in 1610. Diamonds were exported from Pulicat to the western countries. The other Dutch colonial forts and possessions were Nagapattinam, Punnakayal, Porto Novo, Cuddalore and Devanampatinam;

### **The British**

On 31st December 1600, Elizabeth, the Queen of England granted a charter to the governor and company of Merchants of London to trade with East Indies. The Company was headed by a Governor and a court of 24 directors. Captain Hawkins visited Jahangir's court in 1608 to get certain concessions for the company. He secured permission to raise a settlement at Surat. However, the Emperor cancelled the permission under pressure from the Portuguese.

In 1612, the English Captain Thomas Best, inflicted a severe defeat over the Portuguese in a naval battle near Surat. The Mughal Emperor Jahangir permitted the English to establish their factory in 1613 at Surat, which initially became the headquarters of the English in western India. Captain Nicholas Downton won another decisive victory over the Portuguese in 1614. These events enhanced the British prestige at the Mughal court. In 1615, Sir Thomas Roe was sent to Jahangir's court by King James I of England. He remained at Agra for three years and succeeded in concluding a commercial treaty with the emperor. Before

the departure of Sir Thomas Roe, the English had established their trading centres at Surat, Agra, Ahmadabad and Broach.

On the coastline of the Bay of Bengal, the English established their first factory in 1611 at Masulipatam, an important port in the territory of the kingdom of Golconda. In 1639, the English merchant, Francis Day, obtained Madras as a lease from ChennappaNayaka, the ruler of Chandragiri. The East India Company built its famous factory known as Fort St. George in Madras, which became their headquarters for the whole of the eastern belt and first fort built by British. King Charles II of England received the island of Bombay as a part of his dowry from the Portuguese King, on the occasion of his marriage with Catherine. In 1668, the East India Company acquired the island at an annual rent of £ (pounds) 10 from Charles II.

In 1690 a factory was established at Sutanuti by Job Charnock. The Zamindari of the three villages of Sutanuti, Kalikata and Govindpur was acquired by the British in 1698. These villages later grew into the city of Calcutta. The factory at Sutanuti was fortified in 1696 and this new fortified settlement was named as 'Fort William' in 1700. After the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the Battle of Buxar in 1764, the Company became a political power. India was under the East India Company's rule till 1858 after it came under the direct administration of the British Crown.

### Danish

On March 17, 1616 the King of Denmark, Christian IV, issued a charter and created a Danish East India company. They established settlement at Tranqueber (Tamilnadu) in 1620 and Serampore (Bengal) in 1676. Serampore was their headquarters in India. They failed to strengthen themselves in India and they sold all their settlement in India to the British in 1845.

### The French

The French East India Company was formed in 1664 by Colbert, a Minister of King Louis XIV. In 1667, a French expedition came to India under Francois Caron. France was the last European country to come India as traders. Caron founded the first French factory in India at Surat. In 1669, Marcara founded second French factory at Masulipatam by securing a patent from the Sultan of Golkonda. In 1673, the settlement of Pondicherry was founded by Martin under a grant from Sher Khan

Lodi, the ruler of Bijapur. Pondicherry became the most important and prosperous French settlement in India. A fort known as St. Louis was built by Francois Martin in Pondicherry. In 1673, the French obtained permission from Shaista Khan, the Mughal Subedar (governor) of Bengal to establish a township at Chandranagore, near Calcutta.

The French East India Company established factories in different parts of India, particularly in the coastal regions such Mahe, Karaikal, Balasore and Qasim Bazar. These were a few important trading Centers of the French East India Company. The vision of the French power in India was further reinforced by the appointment of Joseph Francois Dupleix as the Governor of the French East India Company in 1742. He succeeded Dumas as the French governor of Pondicherry.

### **Conclusion**

Since the Portuguese were eliminated by the Dutch and the later extinguished by the English, the French were left to face the English for control over trade and territory. The French neglected trade and entangled themselves in wars with Indian and other European powers. The three “Carnatic wars” ruined the French and rejuvenated the English to embark on a systematic territorial expansion. The comparative success of the British over the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danish, and the French was largely due to their commercial competitiveness, spirit of supreme sacrifice, government support, naval superiority, national character and their ascendancy in Europe.

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## 16. The coming of Europeans

### Introduction

The beginning of British rule in India is conventionally ascribed to 1757, after the Battle of Plassey was won by the English East India Company against the Nawab of Bengal. But the Europeans had arrived in India by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their original intention was to procure pepper, cinnamon, cloves and other spices for the European markets and participate in the trade of the Indian Ocean.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish themselves in India. Vasco da Gama discovered the direct sea route to India from Europe around the Cape of Good Hope at the end of the fifteenth century. Subsequently, the Portuguese conquered Goa on the west coast in 1510. Goa then became the political headquarters for the Portuguese in India and further east in Malacca and Java. The Portuguese perfected a pattern of controlling the Indian Ocean trade through a combination of political aggressiveness and naval superiority. Their forts at Daman and Diu enabled them to control the shipping in the Arabian Sea, using their well-armed ships.

The other European nations who came to India nearly a century later, especially the Dutch and the English, modelled their activities on the Portuguese blueprint. Thus we need to understand the advent of the European trading companies as an on-going process of engagement with Indian political authorities, local merchants and society, which culminated in the conquest of Bengal by the British in 1757.

This lesson has two parts. The political history of India and the changing scenario that emerged after 1600 are discussed in the first part. The second part deals with the arrival of European trading companies in India and the impact each one made on Indian society.

### I

#### Political Affairs

#### 1600-1650: The Mughal Empire

This was the period when the Mughal Empire was at the peak of its power. The Europeans were quite aware of the wealth and power of the Mughals, and English poets even wrote about the fabulous “wealth of India”. Travellers from all parts of Europe visited India regularly

during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The journals of their travels present a detailed contemporary account of the empire and society in India.

By 1600 Akbar had achieved his imperial dream and extended the frontiers of the Mughal Empire through his conquests in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Gujarat was conquered in 1573, and this gave the Mughal empire valuable access to the port of Surat, which was the gateway to west Asia and Europe. Besides trade, the ships carrying pilgrims to Mecca left from Surat. The importance of Surat to the Mughals can be appreciated from the fact that Surat had two governors, one the governor of the city, and the other, the governor of the castle which had been built on the river Tapti to protect the city. The governor of the city was in charge of civilian affairs and collecting the revenues from customs duties.

Akbar had also tried to extend his empire in the east beyond Bihar by conquering Bengal. But Bengal was not really integrated into the empire until nearly three decades later, when it became one of the provinces (subah) under Jahangir. Under Akbar, the revenue system of the empire had been revamped by Todar Mal so that a unified system of governance and revenue collection could function throughout the empire. At his death, therefore, Akbar left a powerful, economically prosperous and well-administered empire.

The Dutch, followed by the English, arrived in Surat in the early years of the 1600s to begin their trading activities. The Mughal governor permitted them to trade, and to set up their “factories” (as the business premises of the European traders which also functioned as warehouses were termed), but they were not allowed to have any territorial authority over any part of the city. This frustrated their ambitions to follow the Portuguese model.

The English acquired the islands of Bombay in 1668, and set up their headquarters in Bombay in 1687. Their primary objective was to develop Bombay as an alternate base for their operations.

But Surat under the protection of the Mughal state still remained the preferred centre of commercial activity for the merchants.

## **1600-1650: South India after Vijayanagar**

South India, especially the Tamil region, presented a sharp contrast to the centralized stability of the Mughal Empire in these decades. Politically the region was fragmented and unsettled. Under Vijayanagar rule, three Nayak kingdoms had been set up in the Tamil region: in Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji. The objective was to provide financial and manpower resources to the empire. After the defeat of Vijayanagar in 1565 in the Battle of Talikota by the combined forces of the rulers of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda, the central authority of the once dominant kingdom became very weak. The Nayak kingdoms became virtually autonomous, though they made a ritualistic acknowledgment of the authority of the Vijayanagar emperor. In addition to the larger Nayak kingdoms, several local chiefs also controlled some parts of the region. The most notable of them was probably the Setupati of Ramanathapuram, who was also keen to assert his independence. Between 1590 and 1649 the region witnessed several military conflicts arising out of these unsettled political conditions. Madurai and Thanjavur fought several times to establish their superiority. There were also rebellions against the Vijayanagar emperor. Besides these on-going conflicts, Golkonda invaded the Coromandel in 1646 and annexed the area between Pulicat and San Thome, which also changed the political scenario in the region.

The Dutch and the English were able to acquire territorial rights on the east coast during these years. They realized that they needed a base on the Coromandel Coast to access the piece goods needed for trading with the spice-producing islands of Indonesia. The Dutch had successfully negotiated to acquire Pulicat (Palaverkadu) from the Nayak of Senji and constructed a fort there. The English got a piece of land further south from the local chief, Damarla Venkatadri Nayak on which they built Fort St. George in 1639. Thus an English settlement came up which eventually grew into Chennai (Madras), the capital of the Madras Presidency.

## **1650-1700: The Mughal Empire**

Emperor Aurangzeb began an ambitious programme of extending his empire south to the Deccan, and the kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda were conquered in the 1680s. This extended the

Mughal control of the Deccan as far south as Chennai. But the overextended Mughal Empire soon began to reveal its inherent weakness. This became most apparent when the Marathas, under Shivaji, began to grow in power and military strength. They attacked Surat with impunity in 1664, though it was soon abandoned. But their second raid in 1670 devastated Surat and its trade took several years to recover. This seriously challenged the claim of Mughal invincibility and it sounded the beginning of the gradual disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

In the 1660s, after the attack on Surat, Shivaji turned his attention to south India, and defeated the Nayaks of Senji and Thanjavur. Though Senji was conquered by the Mughals a few years later, Thanjavur survived as a Maratha-ruled state. The Maratha kings, with their inclusive policy of assimilating Tamil intellectual and cultural traditions, made Thanjavur the cultural capital of the Tamil region.

### **1700-1750: The Mughal Empire and the Successor States**

Aurangzeb, the last of the “great Mughals”, died in 1707. One of the major developments following his death was the establishment of what have been called ‘successor states’. Mughal viceroys in various parts of the country Oudh, Bengal, Hyderabad and the Carnatic set themselves up as independent rulers. The English and the Dutch had understood this vulnerability of the Mughal state.

In Bengal and the Carnatic, the Nawabs had borrowed heavily from the English, and assigned vast tracts of land to them so that the English could collect the land revenue as repayment for the loans. This marks the beginning of British rule as revenue collectors.

By this time the Dutch had given up Pulicat and moved their headquarters further south to Nagapattinam. They

The name Carnatic originally referred to the region occupied by the Kannada-speaking people. In the eighteenth century it included the region lying between the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats, in the modern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and southern Andhra Pradesh. The Nawab of Arcot controlled this region.

Had decided to shift their focus to the spice-producing islands of Indonesia and established their capital at Jakarta (Batavia). Chennai, in the meantime, had grown into a prosperous town. The English, after many years of struggle, became a power to reckon with in the region. Surat continued to suffer due to the uncertain political conditions, and by 1750, the local merchants had begun to declare themselves to be “under the protection” of the Dutch or the English in order to feel more secure. Bombay therefore became a viable alternative as a trade centre, attracting merchants from Surat and other parts of Gujarat.

## **The Economy**

### **Agriculture**

India was primarily an agricultural economy. Most of the population lived in the rural areas and they depended on agriculture for their livelihood. In addition to food grains, they grew several commercial crops. These included sugarcane, oil seeds, cotton and indigo. There was a brisk trade in food grains, ghee, jaggery and other food products from the surplus areas to the deficit areas within India. Food grains, particularly, were transported on coastal boats and the Tamil region, for instance, imported food grains from the Andhra region and Bengal.

On the west coast, food grains from Gujarat were exported to the Malabar region in return for pepper, cinnamon and ginger. Food grains were also shipped to the Dutch establishments in Sri Lanka and Batavia.

### **Cotton Manufactures**

India also had a strong manufacturing base and was particularly famous for the variety of cotton fabrics produced at various centres across the country. Weaving was the second most important economic activity in the country, supported by subsidiary activities like spinning and dyeing. Manufacturing – that is, handicraft production – was carried on both in urban and rural areas. Luxury crafts, like metalwork were urban based. Weaving was mostly done in rural areas. India had a great advantage in that cotton was grown in the country. Indian craft communities also possessed specialized knowledge about dyeing cotton using chemicals like alum to produce a permanent colour. The Coromandel region was famous for its painted (kalamkari) fabrics which

had designs drawn on the cloth and then dyed. By the sixteenth century these had become staple products for consumers in south-east Asia, especially the Indonesian islands. Cotton fabrics were the most important exports from all parts of India to the rest of the world. This continued well into the eighteenth century.

## **Marketing**

Production for an external market was widespread, so that there was a high degree of commercialization of production beyond subsistence levels. This required the organization of marketing by agencies which were distinct from the producers, that is, a class of merchants. Merchants thus linked producers who were dispersed in the rural areas with urban markets within the country, and with external markets outside the country. The extensive trade network in the country operated in several circuits, from the village markets, to regional markets and large urban commercial centres, culminating in the ports which were the gateways to the markets outside the country.

## **Merchant Groups**

Just as the various kinds of markets functioned at different scales, merchants were also not a homogeneous group. There were traders and retailers who serviced markets in smaller centres. If mercantile activity can be deemed to be a pyramid, this class of merchants would be at the base of the pyramid. At its top were the great merchants, who were the prime movers in overseas trade with great reserves of capital, who controlled the producers in the hinterland of the ports. They generally employed the services of a network of brokers and sub-brokers to acquire goods from the interior regions or hinterland of the port towns. These agents could be said to form the middle tier of the merchant pyramid.

## **Banking and Rise of Merchant Capitalists**

Commercial institutions were also well-developed to promote such extensive trade. Because a variety of coins were in circulation, there were money-changers or shroffs to test coins for their purity and decide their value in current terms. They also served as local bankers. Instead of transferring money as cash from one place to another, merchants issued

bills of exchange, known as hundis which would be cashed by shroffs at different destinations at a specified rate of discount.

This well-developed infrastructure and organization of trade enabled the rich merchants to amass large fortunes. Such merchant princes or capitalists were found in all parts of India – the banias and Parsi merchants of Surat, the nagarseths of Ahmedabad, the Jagat Seths of Bengal, and the merchant communities of the Coromandel. Contemporary European observers noted that these merchants appropriated all the profits from trade to themselves, while the earnings and condition of the weavers and peasants were pitifully poor. This rendered them especially vulnerable to natural calamities like famines. In the Madras region, for instance, famine occurred at least ten times between 1678 and 1750. Sometimes there was widespread famine which lasted for several years on end. This drove the rural poor to sell themselves into slavery. Dutch records from the Coromandel regularly mention male and female slaves among the cargo sent to Batavia.

### **Overseas Trade**

The overseas trade from both the east and west coast was incorporated into Indian Ocean trade which had stabilized into a well-set pattern by the sixteenth century. Shipping in the Indian Ocean was segmented and carried on over several demarcated stages. Ships coming from China and the Far East sailed up to Malacca, where their cargoes were unloaded, and in return, goods from the west were taken back. From Malacca, ships sailed to the west coast of India, to Calicut or Cambay or Surat in Gujarat. Such intermediate ports were known as “entrepots”. Goods from Europe and West Asia were exchanged in these ports for goods from the east, as well as locally produced pepper, spices, dyes, clothes and food grains. In the sixteenth century, Calicut gradually lost out to the Gujaratports which were served by a much larger hinterland producing a wider range of products. The ports of the Coromandel coast, like Masulipatnam, Pulicat and other ports further south served as intermediate ports for the ships from Burma and the Malay peninsula.

### **Advent of Europeans**

The arrival of the Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese, was the first major external shock to this well established and regulated system of trade. The primary interest of the Europeans was in securing spices for Europe directly. In the olden days, the spices were carried to the Persian Gulf ports and then overland to the Mediterranean. They soon learned that a simple bilateral exchange was not workable in the Asian markets. This was mainly because there was no demand in the local economies for the products of Europe, other than gold or silver. On the other hand, because of the universal demand in south-east Asian markets for Indian textiles, clothes from India served as a substitute medium of exchange. The demand for the painted fabrics of the Coromandel Coast in the Indonesian islands, in particular, made the Dutch and the English set up their establishments on the east coast to procure the cloth that could be profitably exchanged for spices.

### **Collaboration with Indian Merchants**

From the beginning of their trading venture in India, the Europeans realized that they could succeed only with the help and collaboration of the leading Indian merchants. The merchants, on their part, saw in the Europeans a great new business opportunity for expansion, and worked with them. In Surat, the merchants were functioning with the security of the Mughal government to support them in case of any problems. But in Pulicat, and later in Chennai under the English and Pondicherry under the French, the merchants also saw in these early colonial enclaves a place of security from where they could carry on business safely, free from the continuing political turmoil in the Tamil region.

The Indian merchants were not at a disadvantage in their dealings with the Europeans till about 1700. In Surat, the situation changed because of the threat posed by the Maratha incursions and the inability of the Mughal state to provide security. In Chennai the English had stabilized and they could put pressure on merchants to accept unviable terms in order to increase their exports of cloth to Europe. Gradually, the power relations between the English and the local merchants began to change. The great merchant princes who were the dominant players on the trading scene in the previous century virtually disappeared.



The expansion of demand from Europe for Indian textiles also had an impact on the indigenous economy. Initially, this increased demand was beneficial to the local economy. The productive resources (labour, raw materials and capital) could respond positively. However, as the demand from Europe continued to grow, the pressure to increase production exponentially began to strain the productive resources. The frequent famines in the south and the shortage of food grains and raw materials, for instance, were additional burdens which the weaver had to bear. Thus, though the increased trade opportunities were beneficial in the short run, the long term effects were not necessarily positive.

Over these one hundred and fifty years, the English in India were gradually undergoing a metamorphosis from being traders to builders of a trading empire, eventually emerging as the virtual rulers of large parts of the country.

## II

### **Arrival of Europeans and the Aftermath Portuguese in India**

During his first voyage Vasco da Gama came with 170 men in three vessels. The cordiality of Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut, made him comfortable. He journeyed back on 29 August 1498 with only fifty five surviving men and of the three ships; two were laden with Indian goods. Gama's success made Portugal to send 1200 men with 13 vessels under Pedro Alvarez Cabral. On 29 October 1502 Gama visited Calicut for the second time with a fleet of 20 vessels. Gama moved from Calicut to Cochin as its harbour was better. He soon realized that the monopolistic trade of the Arabs needed to be broken if European trade was to thrive. He used the enmity between the two Hindu rulers of Cochin and Calicut for this purpose. Before he returned to Portugal he established a factory [warehouse] in Cochin and a prison at Kannur.

### **Consolidation of the Portuguese Trade**

The Portuguese stopped yearly expeditions and instead decided to appoint a Viceroy. The first Viceroy was Francisco d' Almeida who followed what is known as 'Blue Water Policy,' and accordingly, he added more ships to strengthen the navy rather than adding more settlements. He destroyed the fleet of Zamorin and a fleet sent by the Sultan of Egypt. He befriended the ruler of Cochin and built fortresses at Cochin, Kannur and other places on the Malabar Coast.

Albuquerque (1509-1515), the successor of Almeida, was the real founder of the Portuguese empire in India. He defeated Yusuf Adil Khan, the ruler of Bijapur in 1510 and captured Goa. He developed Goa into a centre of commerce by making all the ships sail on that route. He encouraged people of all faiths to settle in Goa. He was in favour of Europeans marrying Indian women and settling down in Portuguese controlled territories. His conquest of Malacca (in Malaysia) held by the Muslims, who commanded the trade route between India- China and Mecca and Cairo, extended the empire. He attacked the Arabs and was successful in taking Aden. In 1515 he took control of Ormuz.

### **Do you know?**

Albuquerque attempted to stop the practice of Sati.

Two more viceroys played a significant role in consolidating the Portuguese empire in India. They are Nino da Cunha and Antonio de Noronha. Da Cunha occupied Bassein and Diu in 1534 and 1537 respectively. The port of Daman was wrested from the hands of Imad-ul Mulk in 1559. Meanwhile in the middle of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese control over Ceylon increased with the completion of a fort in Colombo. It was during the period of De Noronha (1571) the Mughal ruler Akbar visited Cambay in Gujarat and the first contacts between the Portuguese and the Mughal emperor established.

In 1580 Philip II, King of Spain, defeated Portugal and annexed it. In India the Dutch defeated the Portuguese in Ceylon and later seized the Portuguese fort on Malabar Coast. Thereafter rather than protecting their settlements in India, Portuguese began to evince greater interest in Brazil.

### **The Impact of Portuguese Presence**

- For the first time in the political history of India the Europeans conquered and seized territories from the Indian rulers.
- Indian rulers remained divided and Europeans took advantage of it.
- The Europeans adopted new methods in the warfare. Gun powder and superior artillery played a significant role.

- The Portuguese could contain the monopolistic trade of the Arabs. But it did not really help them. Instead, it benefited the British who removed pirates on the sea routes and made the sea voyage safe.
- The marriages between Europeans and Indians, encouraged by the Portuguese in the territories occupied by them, created a new Eurasian racial group. They were the ones who were later taken to other Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia.
- The presence of Portuguese is very much evident in Chennai's San Thome. Mylapore was the Portuguese 'Black Town'. (Black Town of the British period was George Town)
- Following the establishment of Portuguese settlements, Jesuit missionaries visited India. Notable among them are: 1. Fr. Roberto de Nobili, whose linguistic ability enabled him to write extensively in Tamil and Sanskrit. He is considered the father of Tamil prose. 2. Fr. Henriques introduced printing in Tamil and is called the father of printing press.

Clashes occurred between the Portuguese and the Muslim groups on the pearl fishery coast in the 1530s over the control of fishing and pearl diving rights and a delegation of Paravas complained to the Portuguese authorities at Cochin about the atrocities inflicted on them by Arab fleets and sought protection. Seizing the opportunity, the Portuguese sent their Roman Catholic priests (Padres) who converted thousands of fisher people to the Catholic religion. Following this St. Francis Xavier, one of the founders of the Society of Jesus, arrived in Goa in 1542 and travelled as far as Thoothukudi and Punnakayal to baptize the converts. Xavier established a network of Jesuit mission centres. His visit is evident from the shrines dedicated to St. Xavier and the towering churches that came up in the fishing villages on the Coromandel Coast.

The Portuguese threatened disruption of trade by violence unless their protection, cartaz, was bought. Under the cartaz system, the Portuguese exacted money from the traders as price for protection against what they termed as piracy. But much of this was caused by Portuguese freebooters themselves and so the whole system was a blatant protection racket.

## The Dutch

The first Dutch expedition to the South East Asia was in 1595 by a trader (Jan Huyghen van Linschoten), a merchant from Netherlands who lived in Lisbon. There were several companies floated by the traders and individuals to trade with the East. The state intervened and amalgamated them all and created a Dutch East India company in 1602 [known as the United East Indies Company (in Dutch: Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie-abbreviated to VOC). The newly created company established its hold over the Spice Islands (Indonesia). In 1641 the Dutch captured Malacca from the Portuguese and in 1658 the Dutch forced Portuguese to part with Ceylon. The Dutch were successful in Spice Islands but they suffered reverses in India at the hands of the British.

The Amboyna Massacre - twenty servants of British East India Company, Portuguese and Japanese were tortured and killed by the agents of Dutch East India Company at Ambon Island in Indonesia in the year 1623.

### **Dutch in Tamil Nadu**

The Portuguese who established a control over Pulicat since 1502 were overthrown by the Dutch. In Pulicat, located 60 kilometers north of Chennai, the Dutch built the Castle Geldria. The remains of this 400 year old fort can be seen even now. This fort was once the seat of Dutch power. The Dutch established control of Masulipatnam in 1605 and they established their settlement at Pulicat in 1610. The other Dutch colonial forts and possessions include Nagapattinam, Punnakayal, Porto Novo, Cuddalore (Tiruppathiripuliyur) and Devanampatinam. Pulicat served as the Coromandel headquarters of the Dutch East India Company. Diamonds were exported from Pulicat to the western countries. Nutmeg, cloves, and mace too were sent from here to Europe. A gun powder factory was also set up by the Dutch to augment their military power.

One less known fact about the Dutch is they were involved in slave trade. People from Bengal and from settlements such as Tengapattinam and Karaikal were brought to Pulicat. The Dutch employed brokers at Madras for catching and shipping slaves. Famines, droughts and war that resulted in food shortage led to the flourishing of the slave trade.

Wil O Dijk, a Ph.D. Scholar at Leiden University in one of her research papers noted that the passenger list of slaves transported in VOC ships within and from the Bay of Bengal from June 1621 to November 1665 showed a total of 26,885 men, women and children – of which 1,379 died. She further wrote that the export of Coromandel slaves surged during a famine caused by the Nayak rulers of Thanjavur, Senji and Madurai, after the fall of Vijayanagara Empire.

A subsequent invasion of the Bijapur army led to the destruction of fertile agricultural lands of Thanjavur pushing more people into slavery. This time (1646) around 2118 slaves, mostly drawn from places situated along the coasts like Adirampattinam, Tondi and Kayalpattinam.

### **The French**

The French attempted to establish a trade link with India as early as 1527. Taking a cue from the Portuguese and the Dutch, the French commenced their commercial operations through the French East India Company, established in 1664. Unlike other European powers which appeared in India through the private trading companies, the French commercial enterprise was a project of King Louis XIV. His minister of finance, Colbert, was instrumental in establishing the French East India Company.

As the French effort was a government initiative, it did not attract the general public of France who viewed it as yet another way to tax people.

Pondicherry through Madagascar

### **Pondicherry through Madagascar**

The French traders arrived in Madagascar (in Africa) in 1602. Though the French colonized Madagascar, they had to abandon it in 1674, excepting a small coastal trading post. Berber, a French agent in India obtained a firman [a royal command or authorization] on September 4, 1666 from Aurangzeb and the first French factory was established at Surat in December 1668, much against the opposition of the Dutch. Within a year the French established another factory at Masulipatnam.

Realizing the need for a stronger foothold in India, Colbert sent a fleet to India, led by Haye (Jacob Blanquet de la Haye). The French were able to remove the Dutch from San Thome in Mylapore in 1672. The French sought the support of Sher Khan Lodi, the local Governor, who represented the Sultan of Bijapur, against the Dutch. The Dutch befriended the King of Golkonda who was a traditional foe of Bijapur. It was Sher Khan Lodi who offered Pondicherry (Puducherry) as a suitable site for their settlement.

Pondicherry in 1673 was a small fishing village. Francis Martin who became the Governor of Pondicherry later had spent four years in Madagascar before arriving Surat. He made Pondicherry the strategic centre of French settlements in India.

“The countryside through which we passed (outskirts of Pondichéry) was well-cultivated and very beautiful. Rice was to be found in abundance... where there was water while cotton was grown....” Francis Martin about the landscape of Pondicherry in his diary.

### **Rivalry and Wars with the Dutch**

French attempts to capture Pondicherry were not easy. They had to deal with their main rivals, the Dutch. From 1672 France and Holland were continuously at war. In India the French lacked men, money and arms, as they had diverted them to Chandranagore, another French settlement in Bengal. Therefore the Dutch could capture Pondicherry easily in 1693. It remained with the Dutch for six years. In 1697, according to the treaty of Ryswick, Pondicherry was once again restored to the French. However, it was handed over to the French only in 1699. Francis Martin remained as its governor till his death in 1706.

The French secured Mahe in 1725 and Karaikal in 1739. The French were also successful in establishing and extending their settlements in Qasim Bazaar, Chandranagore and Balasore in the Bengal region. Pierre Benoit Dumas (1668–1745) was another able French governor in Pondicherry. However, the French had to face the threat of the English who proved too strong for them. Eventually they lost out on their hard earned fortunes to the English.

The influence of the French can still be seen in present day Pondicherry, Mahe, Karaikkal, and Chandranagore.

## The Danes

Denmark and Norway (together till 1813) possessed colonial settlements in India and Tamil Nadu. Tarangambadi or Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu, Serampore in West Bengal and Nicobar Islands were their possessions in India. On March 17, 1616 the King of Denmark, Christian IV, issued a charter and created a Danish East India Company. This Company did not get any positive response from the Danish traders. Admiral Ove Gjedde led the first expedition to Ceylon in 1618. The Danes could not get any trade contract in Ceylon. While they were returning in disappointment their main vessel was sunk by the Portuguese at Karaikkal. Thirteen stranded sailors with their trade director Robert Crappe were taken to the Nayak ruler of Thanjavur. Robert Crappe ably negotiated with the Thanjavur King and struck an agreement. According to the agreement signed on 20 November 1620, the Danes received the village of Tarangambadi or Tranquebar and the right to construct a Fort there.

The Danish fort at Tarangambadi was vulnerable to high tidal waves which frequently damaged roads and houses. Despite their involvement in the Thirty Years War and the financial loss they suffered, the Danish managed to set up a factory at Masulipatnam. Small tradingposts were established at Pipli (Hoogly River) and Balasore. Investors in Denmark wanted to dissolve the Danish East India Company, but King Christian IV resisted it. Finally after his death in 1648 his son Frederick abolished it.

A second Danish East India Company was started in 1696. Trade between Denmark and Tarangambadi resumed and many new trade outposts were also established. The Nayak king of Thanjavur gifted three more villages surrounding Tarangambadi. Two Danish Missionaries, the first protestant missionaries, arrived on 9 June 1706. The Danish settled in Andaman and Nicobar in 1755, but due to the threat of malaria they abandoned it in 1848. During the Napoleonic wars the British caused heavy damage to their possessions. Serampore was sold to the British in 1839 and Tranquebar and other settlements in 1845.

## **The Danes in Tamil Nadu**

The Danish Fort built in Tarangambadi is still intact. Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg along with Heinrich Pluetschau arrived in Tranquebar in September 1706, as the first Lutheran missionaries in India. They began preaching, and baptized their first converts within ten months of their stay. Their work was opposed both by Hindus and by the local Danish authorities, and in 1707-08 Ziegenbalg had to spend four months in prison on a charge that by converting the natives he was encouraging rebellion. The Copenhagen Missionary Society wanted to encourage an indigenous Christian Church, and accordingly instructed its missionaries simply to preach the Gospel, and not to bother about other matters. Ziegenbalg, however, contended that a concern for the physical welfare of “others” was implicit in the Gospel.

Ziegenbalg set up a printing press, and published studies of the Tamil language and of Indian religion and culture. His translation of the New Testament into Tamil in 1715 was first in any Indian language. The church building that he and his associates constructed in 1718 is still in use today. He succeeded in establishing a seminary for the training of local clergy. When he died on 23 February 1719, he left behind a full Tamil translation of the complete Bible and of Genesis to Ruth (Bible Story book series), many brief writings in Tamil, two church buildings, the seminary, and 250 baptized Christians.

### **Advent of the British**

#### **The English East India Company**

A group of wealthy merchants of Leadenhall Street in London secured a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth I to have a share in the lucrative spice trade with the East. The Company, headed by a governor, was managed by a court of 24 Directors. In 1611, King James I obtained from Mughal Emperor Jahangir through William Hawkins, permission for regular trade. The English obtained some trading privileges in Surat. In 1615-19 Sir Thomas Roe was sent as an Ambassador of the English King James I. The Viceroy of Gujarat, Prince Khurram granted trading privileges, but the British could not operate freely because the Portuguese exercised a powerful influence in the region.



Madras was ceded to East India Company in 1639 by the Raja of Chandragiri with permission to build a fortified factory which was named Fort St. George. This was the first landholding recorded by the Company on Indian soil.

In 1645, the ruler of Golkonda overran the territories under the Company's control in Madras. Aurangzeb conquered Golkonda in 1687 and brought the Company territories under Mughal rule. But the privileges granted to the English continued. Within a short time Madras replaced Masulipatinam as the headquarters of the English on the Coromandel Coast. The island of Bombay, which Charles II had inherited as dowry, was transferred to the Company in 1668. The Charter of 1683 empowered the Company to raise military forces and the right to declare war or make peace with the powers in America, Africa and Asia. In 1688 Madras had a municipal government with a Mayor. In 1693 the Company obtained another grant of three villages surrounding Madras and in 1702 five more villages were granted.

## **Bengal**

In Bengal it was a long drawn struggle for the British to obtain trading rights. The Company obtained trading privileges from Shah Shuja, the second son of Shajahan and the Governor of Bengal, but there was no royal confirmation of such privileges. The trading rights for the British in Bengal were obtained only in 1680. Local officials interfered with the trading rights of the British and this resulted in the Company declaring war with the ruler representing the Mughals. Peace was restored in 1690 and the Company established its first settlement at Sultanuti, a site which became the future Calcutta. The factory was fortified in 1696 and in 1698 the Company secured the zamindari rights over three villages, Sutanuti, Kalikata and Gobindpur in return for a payment of 1200 rupees a year. The fortified factory was called Fort St. William which became the headquarters of the Presidency in 1770.

### **Norris Mission**

Sir William Norris, sent by the English King William III in 1698, met Aurangzeb to get full English jurisdiction over the English settlements. This was to confirm the existing privileges and to extend their trading rights further. But this request was conceded only during 1714-17, when a mission under Surman sent to the Mughal Emperor Farukhsiyar

obtained firman (grant of trading rights) addressed to the local rulers of Gujarat, Hyderabad and Bengal.



## The Carnatic Wars

The British had to fight three wars (1746- 1763) with the French to establish their supremacy, which in history are called the Carnatic wars.

The Carnatic is a region in South India lying between the Eastern Ghats and the Coromandel Coast. This region constitutes the present day Tamil Nadu, eastern Karnataka, north-eastern Kerala and southern Andhra Pradesh.

### First Carnatic War 1746-48

The Austrian War of Succession and Seven Years War fought in Europe had their repercussions in India. The Austrian ruler Charles VI died in 1740 and was succeeded by his daughter Maria Theresa. France did not support her succession and joined hands with German-speaking territories of Austria such as Bavaria, Saxony and Spain. Frederick II (known as Frederick the Great of Prussia) taking advantage of the emerging political situation invaded and annexed Silesia, an Austrian province, with the support of France. The wars fought between Britain and France in Europe also led to clashes between these two countries over their colonial possessions in North America and India.

When the war broke out, the new Governor of Pondicherry, Dupleix appealed to Morse, the Governor of Madras, to remain neutral. But a British squadron under Commodore Barnett captured some of the French vessels with Indian goods and precipitated the situation. Dupleix, shocked by this incident, appealed to Anwar- ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic, to help him to avoid war with the English. Calm prevailed for some time.

Meanwhile Dupleix contacted La Bourdonnais, the French Governor of Isle of France, who appeared in the Indian waters with eight warships. Peyton, who led the English squadron with his four ships, intercepted the French squadron and in the battle on 6 July 1746 Peyton suffered reverses and retreated to Hoogly, Calcutta expecting some more ships from Britain.

### Fall of Madras

The French squadron succeeded in capturing the undefended Madras on 15 September 1746. Governor Morse was asked to surrender but the Madras Governor turned to Anwar-ud-din for help. Dupleix was clever in convincing the Nawab that he was securing Madras from the British to be handed over to him. On 21 September 1746 the English were forced to part with Madras. But when the Nawab of Carnatic asked the French to hand over Madras to him as promised, the French dodged. Thereupon the Nawab sent a force of 10,000 men under the command of his son Mahfuz Khan.

### **The Battle of San Thome and Adyar**

Nawab's forces blockaded Fort St. George but the French forces pushed the Nawab's forces to San Thome. The French received reinforcement and Mahfuz Khan attempted to halt the progress of the French on the banks of river Adyar. The French forces were able to wade through the water and inflict a severe attack on the Nawab's forces resulting in heavy losses.

Dupleix then set his eyes on Fort St. David at Cuddalore which was in British possession. The English, with the help of the Nawab of Arcot, was trying to regain the places lost but Dupleix again played a diplomatic game by promising that he would hoist the flag of the Nawab in the Fort St. George for a week and after that he requested the Nawab to hand over the town to the French. The Nawab agreed to withdraw his proposed help to the British. Two attempts of the British under Rear- Admiral Boscawen to take Pondicherry failed. By this time, in 1748, France and the English had signed the Treaty of Aix La Chapelle. Under this treaty the British and the French ceased their hostilities in India. It was agreed that the French would hand over Madras to the British in return for Louisburg in North America.

### **The Second Carnatic War: 1749-54**

In Europe peace prevailed between the British and the French. But the twocolonial powers could not live in peace in India. They played one native ruler against the other. Dupleix wanted to enhance the French influence by involving in the wars of succession in both Hyderabad and Arcot.

Dupleix supported the claims of Muzzafar Jung, the grandson of Asaf Jah, who died in 1748 in Hyderabad, as the Nizam of Hyderabad. In the Carnatic, he supported the claim of Chanda Sahib. A triple alliance was formed amongst the French, Nizam and the Nawab of Carnatic.

The English, after losing Madras, a precious possession, had only Fort St. David under their control. In order to reduce the influence of the French, the English supported the rival candidates Nasir Jung for the throne of Nizam of Hyderabad and that of Muhammad Ali after the death of Anwar-ud-din in the Battle of Ambur in 1749.

### **Anandarangam Diary**

Anandarangam (1709-1761), was born to a leading merchant of the time named Tiruvengadam Pillai. After his father's death at Pondicherry, in view of the support given by the French Governors Dumas and Dupleix became the greatest merchant at Pondicherry. Dupleix appointed him the Chief Dubhashi (one who knows two languages) and Chief Commercial Agent (1746). This enabled him to emerge as a man of substantial political influence at Pondicherry. But his real fame rests on his voluminous Diary in Tamil which is a very valuable source of history for the period from 1736 to 1760, particularly for the Governorship of Dupleix. It is also a good summary of Anandarangam's views and impressions on contemporary events.

### **The Battle of Ambur (1749) the Battle of Ambur:**

Muzaffar Jung, the contender for Nizami of Hyderabad, and Chanda Sahib, a claimant to the Nawabi of Carnatic, with the help of the disciplined French infantry inflicted huge casualties on the Nizam and Anwar-ud-din's forces. Anwar-ud-din was killed. Chanda Sahib entered Arcot as the Nawab. Muhammad Ali, son of Anwar-ud-din, escaped to Tiruchirappalli.

The battle of Ambur was followed by the entry of victorious forces to Deccan. Nazir Jung was killed by the French Army and Muzaffar Jung was made the Nizam of Hyderabad in December 1750. Dupleix's dream of establishing a French empire appeared good for some time. Dupleix received huge money and territories both from the Nizam and the Nawab of Arcot. When Muzaffar Jung required French protection, Dupleix sent Bussy, the French general, with a large French force.

Muzaffar Jung did not live long and the same people who killed Nasir Jung also killed him. Bussy promptly placed Salabat Jung, brother of Nazir Jung, on the throne. In order to reduce the influence of British and also with a view to capturing Mohammad Ali (who fled to Tiruchirappalli after Anwar-ud-din was killed) Chanda Sahib decided to take Tiruchirappalli, with the help of the French and the Nizam.

Robert Clive was born in September 29, 1725. He had no interest in studies and was expelled from three schools for his indiscipline and lack of interest in studies. However, Clive had developed notoriety for fighting. Disgusted by his behaviour his father secured him a writer's post in the East India Company and sent him to Madras. Clive was later promoted as the governor of Fort St David and was involved in the Carnatic Wars and the siege of Trichinopoly. He won the Battle of Plassey in Bengal from where the British Empire came to evolve in India. Clive returned to India to take up his governorship and secured the Diwani rights from the defeated Mughal emperor in 1765. Clive amassed huge wealth and left India a fabulously rich man, with a personal fortune to the then value of 234, 000 pounds. This apart, his jagir in Bengal fetched him an annual rental income of 27,000 pounds. When he returned to England he faced a parliamentary inquiry over allegations of corruption. Though exonerated, Clive committed suicide.

### **Clive in the Second Carnatic War**

Dupleix was also determined to take over Tiruchirappalli with the help of Chanda Sahib. Chanda Sahib's troops were joined by 900 Frenchmen. Muhammad Ali had only 5000 soldiers and not more than 600 Englishmen to help him. Robert Clive's changed the course of history. He suggested the idea of storming Arcot when the French and the Nawab were busy concentrating on Tiruchirappalli.

Clive moved from Fort St. David on 26 August 1752 with only 200 English and 300 Indian soldiers. As expected the English received help from many rulers from small territories. The Raja of Mysore and the ruler of Thanjavur rallied to support Muhammad Ali. Chanda Sahib dispatched a force of 3000 under his son Raja Sahib to take Arcot. Clive seized Arcot on August 31 and then successfully withstood a 53-day siege by Chanda Sahib's son, Raja Sahib, who was helped by the French forces. In the battle of Arni the English and the Maratha ruler Murari

Rao faced an unequal number of French and the forces of Nawab of Arcot. In several battles that followed, including one at Kaveripakkam, Chanda Sahib was captured and executed. Muhammed Ali became the undisputed ruler of Carnatic.

In Europe Britain and France were not involved in any war and so neither of them approved the policy of their Companies fighting in India. The French government recalled Governor Dupleix. The Treaty of Pondicherry was signed in 1755 with the English; both countries agreed not to interfere in the quarrels of the Indian princes. The Treaty also defined their mutual territorial possessions in India, a situation that was maintained for nearly two centuries until Indian independence.

### **The Third Carnatic War: 1756-1763**

The third Carnatic War was an echo of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) which broke out in Europe in 1756. It was a global conflict and was fought between the two arch-rivals Britain and France. The war was fought in North America (resulting in the American War of Independence), and West Africa (which later became the French West Africa). In India it manifested itself in the Third Carnatic war. Before turning our attention to the Third Carnatic War, let us see what happened in Bengal in the meantime.

### **Battle of Plassey (1757)**

The East India Company abused the trade permits (dastaks) granted by the Mughal Emperor by not paying taxes to the Nawab of Bengal, and by involving itself in internal trade. This apart, the Company had given asylum to the son of the Nawab Siraj-ud-daula's hostile aunt. As the Company refused to oblige the Nawab, who demanded the return of his nephew, Fort St. William was captured and Europeans imprisoned. Responding to this situation, the Company at Fort St. George despatched a strong contingent under Robert Clive and Watson. The battle that ensued is called the Battle of Plassey.

It was alleged that 146 European prisoners were kept in a room measuring 18 by 15 feet and it is said that all except 23 prisoners died of suffocation. The veracity of this incident, known as the "Black Hole

Tragedy of Calcutta” in British accounts, has been debated among historians.

The battle of Plassey (1757) changed the position of the British from being a commercial power to that of a territorial power. It confirmed the privileges obtained by the Company and replaced Siraj-ud-daula with the betrayer Mir Jaffar. The Company’s sovereignty over Calcutta was recognized and it was given sufficient land to maintain a military force. Mir Jaffar also agreed for a Company’s resident in the court. Mir Jaffar was replaced by Mir Qasim and the latter tried to assert his independence, which was not to the liking of the Company officials.

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

After fleeing from Bengal Mir Qasim aligned with the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and the Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daulah, who were equally aggrieved by the interference of the Company in their internal affairs. They declared war against the British. The battle was fought at Buxar (1764). By virtue of its superior armed the Company forces won the battle. The victory of the British led to the signing of the Treaty of Allahabad (1765) by Robert Clive with Shah Alam II. By this treaty the Company got the Diwani right to collect land revenue from the princely states of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Besides, the Company obtained three districts, Burdwan, Chittagong and Midnapur, in Bengal and sovereignty over Calcutta. British virtually became the rulers of Bengal.

### **Outbreak of Third Carnatic War**

With the outbreak of the Seven Years War, Clive captured Chandranagore, the French settlement in Bengal. With this the French influence ended in Bengal. But they retained their power in the south. The French government sent Count de Lally as the Supreme Commander of the French forces in India. As the British were active in Bengal, Lally promptly secured Fort St. David after a short siege. Lally’s next move was Thanjavur but the French were after money from the Raja which he could not give. Without a penny the siege of Thanjavur was lifted because there was a threat of British attack on Pondicherry.



Lally wanted Bussy to come from Hyderabad to help him to defend Pondicherry in the case of attack. Bussy left Hyderabad and joined Lally. In Deccan the political situation changed quickly and the French lost both Rajahmundry (1758) and Masulipatam (1759). Salabat Jung, the Nizam of Hyderabad, without fighting a battle signed an agreement with the British. The Nizam transferred Masulipatam and Northern Circars from the French to the English.

The combined forces of Bussy and Lally captured Kanchipuram and proceeded to take Madras. As the British were busy in Bengal, Madras had only about 800 Englishmen and 2500 Indian soldiers. The Siege of Madras began on 12 December 1758. The French could not progress till February 1759, but both sides suffered casualties. The French, however, could not continue with the siege as supplies were dwindling. Meanwhile General Pocock brought a fleet to the relief of Madras. Lally was forced to lift the siege and fall back on Kanchipuram.

### **The Battle of Wandiwash and the fall of Pondicherry**

Lally retired to Pondicherry leaving a French contingent in Arcot. The British moved towards Wandiwash but suddenly fell upon Kanchipuram and captured it. A fresh detachment of British forces arrived under the command of Sir Eyre Coote. The last ditch battle was fought between Eyre Coote and Lally at Wandawashi (Wandiwash) in January 1760. Bussy was defeated and taken prisoner. Lally retreated to Pondicherry but it was not besieged immediately. Meanwhile the British captured Senji and proceeded to Pondicherry and laid siege to it. Lally had reorganized the defences and put up a heroic resistance to the British. The siege of Pondicherry continued for several months and finally on 4 February 1761 Pondicherry fell. In the same year the British took control of Mahe, another French possession in the west coast. All French possessions were now lost. Finally, the hostilities came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1763) at the end of the Seven Years War. Pondicherry and Chandranagore were restored to the French. The French had to henceforth be content with Pondicherry, Karaikal and Yanaon (Yanam) (all in Union Territory of Puducherry), Mahe (Kannur district in Kerala), and Chandranagore (Chandannagar in Bengal). The English emerged as the undisputed colonial power in India, changing from a trading company into that of a territorial power.

