
Chapter – 10 History

Eighteenth-Century: Political Formations

- By 1765, British had captured major chunks of Indian territory in eastern India.
- With Aurangzeb's death in 1707, many new states emerged in India.
- **The Crisis of the Empire and the Later Mughals**
 - (i) After reaching its zenith, Mughal empire started declining under Emperor Aurangzeb. This was because of Aurangzeb's military and religious policy which depleted the financial resources of the Mughals.
 - (ii) Under his successors, the efficiency of the imperial administration broke down. It became difficult to check governors and mansabdars.
 - (iii) In the midst of this crisis, Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739 and invasions of Afghan ruler Ahmed Shah Abdali between 1748-1761, weakened the Mughal empire.
 - (iv) The nobility was divided into two major groups Iranis and Turanis. For a long time, the later Mughal emperors were puppets in the hands of either one or the other of these two powerful groups.
- **Emergence of New States:**
 - (i) With the decline of Mughal authority, the governors consolidated their authority.
 - (ii) Broadly speaking, the states were divided into three overlapping groups; old Mughal provinces like Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad States which enjoyed consideration independence like Watan Jagirs and several Rajput principalities, and the last group included states like Marathas, Sikhs and the Jats.
- **The Old Mughal Provinces:**
 - (i) These included the states of Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad.
 - (ii) Hyderabad state was founded by Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah. The state was constantly engaged in a struggle against the Marathas.
 - (iii) Awadh was founded by Saddat Khan. The rich alluvial plains allowed development of the region.
 - (iv) Bengal was founded by Murshid Quli Khan. He commanded revenue administration of the state. Under Alivardi Khan the state became prosperous.
- **The Watan Jagirs of the Rajputs:**
 - (i) Many Rajput Kings, particularly those belonging to Amber and Jodhpur had served under the Mughals with distinction. They got considerable autonomy and thus were called watan jagir.
 - (ii) Maratha expansion after 1740s put restriction on growth of Rajput expansion.

Seizing Independence;

- **The Sikhs:**
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- (i) The Sikh arose as a power under Guru Gobind Singh who inspired the Khalsa with the belief that their destiny was to rule.
 - (ii) Maharaja Ranjit Singh reunited the Sikhs as a powerful group and established his capital at Lahore in 1799.
 - **The Marathas:**
 - (i) The Maratha kingdom rose under Shivaji. After Shivaji's death Peshwa, led the Maratha empire to its zenith.
 - (ii) Marathas collected huge revenue from taxes of chuth and Sardshmukhi in the entire kingdom.
 - (iii) Maratha chiefs included Peshwa, Sindhia, Gaekwad and Bhonsle. Their territory touched near Delhi in its peak stages.
 - **The Jats:**
 - (i) The Jats under Churaman controlled territories towards the west of Delhi.
 - (ii) They were prosperous agriculturalists.
 - (iii) Under Suraj Mal, the kingdom of Bharatpur emerged as a strong state.
 - (iv) Jats even built a garden palace at Dig.
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