BENGAL FAMINE 1770

"I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion. The famine was their own fault for breeding like rabbits." -Winston Churchill. Under the British Raj, India suffered countless famines. But the worst hit was Bengal.

Causes of Famine : After Plassey and Buxar, the British East India Company took control of Bengal, sidelining the Nawab. It abruptly raised land revenue tax from 1/10th to 50. In 1768, there was a minor crop shortage, but things got worse in 1769 with a failed monsoon and severe drought. Starvation deaths began, but the company officials ignored it. By 1770, nearly 10 million people died due to this manmade disaster. The company continued taxing farmers. The famine was largely a result of the company's tax policies, and the officials' indifference to the growing starvation.

Attacking Area : West Bengal and Bihar Orissa, Jharkhand and Bangladesh, Birbum and Murshidabad in Bengal.

Results of the Famine : The 1770 famine in Bengal, claiming 1/3rd of the population, depopulated vast areas, turning agricultural lands into jungles. This led to the rise of large bands of thugs. Despite the devastation, the East India Company's global profit doubled from 1765 to 1777. Financial struggles led the company to influence the Tea Act of 1773, allowing tax-free tea shipment to the American colonies. This sparked protests, including the Boston Tea Party.