

## GS FOUNDATION 1.0

### GS TEST-3 (SOLUTION)

**Q1. Identify the key factors that led to the decline of the Maratha Empire in the 18th century. (150 Words)**

**Answer:**

The Maratha Empire of the 18th century dominated much of the Indian subcontinent. It was characterized by a decentralized system of governance, a strong military force, the collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, the Jagirdari system, and the growth of regional Maratha kingdoms under different chiefs, leading to a lack of centralization and unity.

**The downfall of the Maratha Empire in the 18th century attributed to following factors:**

1. **Lack of strong leadership:** After the death of Peshwa Baji Rao I, the Maratha Empire lacked a strong and capable leader who could unite the various factions and lead the empire to glory.
2. **Overexpansion:** The Marathas had expanded their territory too rapidly, which stretched their resources thin and made it difficult to manage such a vast empire.
3. **Lack of consolidation:** Marathas over emphasized conquest and less focused on consolidation of empire through its administrative and economic policies.
4. **Neglect of Economic Affairs:** The Maratha Empire neglected economic development, and depended on irregular income from Chauth, Sardeshmukhi, and plunder, leaving their own economy unproductive. This financial insolvency weakened the empire's political stability.
5. **Lack of Political Foresight:** Despite becoming the strongest power in India, the Marathas lacked political wisdom and failed to assume the authority of the Imperial power, instead choosing to control the Mughal emperor, and failing to achieve political unity or utilize the resources of the country.
6. **Organizational Flaws:** The Marathas allowed commanders to keep captured territory. Peshwa Baji Rao fought against this system, but it persisted after his death and weakened Maratha unity and de-centralized its resources.
7. **Weakness in the Social Organization of the Marathas:** The Marathas' power was fueled by a sense of nationalism, but caste divisions and feudalism weakened them. E.g., Peshwas were challenged due to their Brahmin status.
8. **British interference:** The British interference in the internal affairs of the Maratha Empire, supporting one faction over the other created divisions that weakened the empire. Lack of unity among them led to their defeat.
9. **British Military supremacy:** The Marathas' military power relied on guerilla tactics and cavalry, but they lacked advanced technology and expertise in firearms, which weakened their military power against the British.

Overall, the combination of internal conflicts, overexpansion, lack of strong leadership, the decline of the Mughal Empire, and British interference all contributed to the downfall of the Maratha Empire in the 18th century.

**Q2: Highlight the significance of Right to Equality (Articles 14-18) in promoting equality and non-discrimination in society. (150 Words)**

**Answer:**

The Right to Equality, enshrined in Articles 14-18 of the Indian Constitution, forms the bedrock of ensuring equal treatment and non-discrimination for all citizens. These articles guarantee equality before law, prohibit discrimination, and provide for affirmative action to promote social and economic justice.

**Significance of Right to Equality in promoting equality and non-discrimination:**

1. **Right to Equality before the law:** Article 14 ensures a person equality before the law or equal protection of laws, promoting fairness and inclusivity in the legal system, ensuring all individuals are treated equally under the law.
2. **Prohibition of discrimination:** Article 15 Prohibited of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. It provides that no citizen shall be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction, or condition on such grounds. It also allows the State to make special provisions for women and children.
3. **Equality of opportunity:** Article 16 provides equality of opportunity in matters of public employment. It also allows the State to make reservations for certain disadvantaged groups. This provision is significant as it ensures that public employment opportunities are open to all, regardless of their social identities.
4. **Abolition of untouchability:** Article 17 provides for the abolition of untouchability and makes the practice of untouchability a punishable offence and provides for the enforcement of any law that prohibits such practices.
5. **Abolition of titles:** Article 18 provides for the abolition of titles. It prohibits the State from conferring any titles, except military and academic distinctions. This provision is significant as it aims to eliminate social distinctions based on titles and promotes a more egalitarian society.

The Right to Equality principle promotes fairness, justice, and non-discrimination in society. It aims to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals and eliminate any form of discrimination based on religion, caste, gender, or economic status. Upholding this right is crucial in building a democratic and equitable society where every person is treated with dignity and respect.