



SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Question 1. Give an account of different European trading companies besides the British East India Company that entered the Eastern markets.

Answer: Different European trading companies were:

- (a) The Portuguese: By the time the first English ships sailed down the West coast of Africa, round the Cape of Good Hope, and crossed the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese had already established their presence in the western coast of India and had their base in Goa.
- (b) The Dutch: By the early 17th century, the Dutch too were exploring the possibilities of trade in the Indian Ocean.
- (c) The French: The French traders soon arrived on the scene for the same purpose.

Question 2. What were the grievances of the Company regarding the Nawabs of Bengal?

Answer: The Company declared that the unjust demands of the local officials were ruining the trade of the Company. Trade could flourish only if the duties were removed. It was also convinced that to expand trade it had to enlarge its settlements, buy up villages and rebuild its forts.

Question 3. Write a note on Tipu Sultan—The ‘Tiger of Mysore’.

Answer: Tipu Sultan was the famous ruler of Mysore. He ruled Mysore from 1782 to 1799. Under his leadership Mysore became very powerful. It controlled the profitable trade of the Malabar coast where the Company purchased pepper and cardamom. In 1785 Tipu Sultan stopped the export of these items through the ports of his kingdom, and disallowed local merchants from trading with the Company. He also developed relationship with the French in India to modernise his army with their help. The British got furious. They waged four battles against Tipu Sultan. The last battle proved unfortunate for him. He was killed defending his capital Seringapatam. The way he resisted the British is undoubtedly praiseworthy.

Question 4. Give a brief description of all the three Anglo-Maratha wars. Also write the main consequences.

Answer: The Company waged a series of wars against the Marathas in order to crush Maratha power:

- (a) In the first war there was no clear victor, hence it ended in 1782 with the Treaty of Salbai.
- (b) The second Anglo-Maratha War began in 1803 and ended in 1805. This war was fought on different fronts resulting in the British gaining Orissa and the territories north of the Yamuna river including Agra and Delhi.
- (c) The third Anglo-Maratha War of 1817-1819 crushed Maratha power. The Peshwa was removed. The Company now had complete control over the territories south of the Vindhya.

Question 5. What administrative reforms were brought in the sphere of justice?

Answer: Before the reforms were brought, there were Maulvis and Hindu pandits who interpreted Indian laws for the European

district collectors who presided over civil courts. The criminal courts were still under a qazi and a mufti. The Brahman pandits usually gave different interpretations of local laws. But there was no uniformity in them. To bring out about uniformity, in 1775 eleven pandits were asked to compile a digest of Hindu laws. N.B. Halhed translated this digest into English. By 1778 a code of Muslim laws was also compiled for the benefit of European judges, under the Regulating Act of 1773, a new Supreme Court was established, while a court of appeal—the Sadar Nizamat Adalat—was also set up at Calcutta.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Question 1. Give an account of the Battle of Plassey.

Answer: The Company was very keen to have a puppet ruler in place of Sirajuddaulah, so that it might enjoy trade concessions and other privileges. It began to help one of Sirajuddaulah's rivals become the nawab. This infuriated Sirajuddaulah. He sternly asked the Company to stop meddling in the political affairs of his dominion. After negotiations failed, the Nawab marched with his soldiers to the English factory at Kasimbazar, captured the Company officials, disarmed all Englishmen and blocked English ships. Then he marched to Calcutta to establish control over the Company's fort there. As soon as the Company officials in Madras heard the news of the fall of Calcutta, they sent forces under the command of Robert Clive, reinforced by naval fleets. Prolonged negotiations with the Nawab followed. But no concrete solution came out. Finally, in 1759, Robert Clive led the Company's army against Sirajuddaulah at Plassey.

In this battle, Sirajuddaulah got defeated. The main reason was that one of his commanders, Mir Jafar, did not fight the battle. He, in fact, supported the Company by not fighting because the Company had promised to make him Nawab after defeating Sirajuddaulah. The victory of the Company in the Battle of Plassey gave it immense confidence. It was the first major victory of the Company in India.

Question 2. Who introduced the policy of 'paramounty'? What did it mean? What sort of resistance did the Company face?

Answer: Lord Hastings, who was the Governor-General of India from 1813 to 1823, introduced a new policy of 'paramounty'. Now the Company claimed that its authority was paramount or supreme, hence its power was greater than that of Indian states. In order to protect its interests it was justified in annexing or threatening to annex any Indian kingdom.

However, this process did not go unchallenged. For example, when the British tried to annex, the small state of Kitoor (in Karnataka today), Rani Channamma took to arms and led an anti-British resistance movement. She was arrested in 1823 and died in prison in 1829. But this resistance movement did not stop. It was carried on by Rajana, a poor chowkidar of Sangoli in Kitoor. With popular support he destroyed many British camps and records. He was also caught and hanged by the British in 1830.

Question 3. How did the East India Company begin trade in Bengal?

Answer: The East India Company set up first English factory on the banks of the river Hugh in the year 1651. This became the base from which the Company's traders, known at that time as 'factors', operated. The factory had a warehouse where goods for export were stored and it had offices where Company officials set. As trade expanded, the Company persuaded merchants and traders to come and settle near the factory.

By 1696 the Company began to build a fort around the settlement. Two years later it bribed Mughal officials into giving the Company zamindari rights over three villages. One of these was Kalikata which later developed into a city, known as Calcutta. The Company

also persuaded the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb to issue a farman granting the Company the right to trade duty-free. The Company tried continuously to press for more concessions and manipulate existing privileges. For instance, Aurangzeb's farman had granted only the Company the right to trade duty-free. But Company officials who were carrying on private trade on the side, were expected to pay duty. But they refused to pay. This caused huge loss of revenue for Bengal.

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