

India in 18th Century

Advent of Europeans

Before the beginning of the formal rule of the British in India, number of European powers like Dutch and Portuguese had set-up their establishments in India.

Portuguese

- A sea route from Europe to India *via* Cape of Good Hope was discovered by Vasco da Gama. He reached the port of Calicut in 1498 where he was received by a Hindu ruler Zamorine.
- They established their trading stations at Calicut, Cannanore and Cochin.
- The first Governor of Portuguese in India was Francisco de Almeida. He was followed by Albuquerque who captured Goa in 1510 from the ruler of Bijapur. Goa thus became the capital of Portuguese in India.
- However, the Portuguese power declined in India by the end of 16th century. They lost Bombay to the British as it was given to Charles II (King of England) as a dowry for marrying a Portuguese Prince.

Dutch

- Dutch East India Company was formed in 1602.
- They set-up their first factory at Masulipatnam in 1605.

- Their other factories were at Pulicat, Chinsura, Patna, Balasore, Nagapattanam, Cochin, Surat, Karikala and Kasimbazar.

English

- The English East India Company was formed by a group of merchants known as Merchant Adventurers in 1599.
- It was granted a royal charter in 1600 by Queen Elizabeth I, to trade in the East. Captain William Hawkins arrived at Jahangir's court in 1609, seeking permission to open factory at Surat. Thus, the English opened their first factory at Surat in 1613.
- In 1615, Sir Thomas Roe came to India as ambassador of James I (King of England) and obtained permission from Jahangir to set-up English factories in different parts of India.
- In South, the company established their first factory at Masulipatnam in 1611. The company got the lease of Madras from a local Raja in 1639 and built a fortified fort there, known as Fort St. George. In 1633, the company established its first factory in East India at Hariharpur (Orissa).
- In 1690, Job Charnock (English official) established a factory at Sutanati and the zamindari of three villages of Sutanati, Kalikata and Govindapur was acquired by the British.

- These villages later grew into the city of Calcutta. In 1700, the company fortified the Calcutta factory into Fort William.
- In 1717, John Surman obtained a **farman** from Farrukhsiyar which gave large concessions to the company. This farman is called the Magna Carta of the company.

Danish

- The Danish East India Company was formed in 1616. They established settlements at Serampur (Bengal) and Tranquebar (Tamil Nadu).
- They finally sold their settlements to the English in 1845.

French

- The French East India Company was set in 1664, at the instance of a minister, Colbert, in the reign of Louis XIV.
- The French company was created, financed and controlled by the State and it differed from the English company which was a private commercial venture. They established their first factory at Surat in 1668 and at Masulipatnam in 1669.
- The foundation of Pondicherry was laid in 1673 which, afterwards, became its capital. They also developed a factory in Chandernagar.

(18th Century)

Battles	Parties Involved	Result
Battle of Swally (AD 1612)	British East India Company and Portuguese	It was fought near the city of Surat (Gujarat) and resulted in the victory of English over Portuguese.
Battle of Madras (AD 1746)	French East India Company and English	The war ended with the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle signed in 1748 and the defeat of English.
Battle of Plassey (AD 1757)	Robert Clive (British) and Nawab Siraj-ud-duallah (Nawab of Bengal)	The Nawab of Bengal was defeated and Bengal moved under the hands of the British.
Battle of Wandiwash (AD 1761)	French (under Comte de Lally) and British (under Sir Eyre Coote)	It resulted in the defeat of French army by the British forces.
Battle of Buxar (AD 1764)	Hector Munro (British) and the combined armies of Nawab Mir Qasim (Bengal), Nawab Shuja-ud-daulah (Awadh), Shah Alam (Mughal Emperor)	The Battle marked the victory of English East India Company. It ended with the Treaty of Allahabad in 1765. Robert Clive was selected the first Governor of Bengal.

Practice Exercise

- Who discovered the sea route from Europe to India *via* Cape of Good Hope?
(a) Francisco Almeida (b) Albuquerque
(c) Vasco da Gama (d) Fransisco Xavier
- Who was the first Governor of Portuguese in India?
(a) Albuquerque
(b) Francisco Almeida
(c) Zamorin
(d) Fransisco Xavier
- When did Portuguese captured Goa?
(a) 1515 (b) 1525 (c) 1510 (d) 1500
- Which was the 1st Colonial Power to Rule India?
(a) British (b) Portuguese
(c) Dutch (d) Danish
- The first factory of Dutch East India Company was in
(a) Pulicat (b) Chinsura
(c) Surat (d) Masulipatnam

