

ADVENT OF THE EUROPEANS IN INDIA

Introduction

- The commercial contacts between India and Europe were very old via the land route either through the Oxus Valley or Syria or Egypt .
- But , the new sea route via the Cape of Good Hope was discovered by Vasco da Gama in 1498 .
- Thereafter , many trading companies came to India and established their trading centres .
- They entered India as traders at the outset but by the passage of time indulged in the politics of India and finally established their colonies .
- The commercial rivalry among the European powers led to political rivalry .
- Ultimately , the British succeeded in establishing their rule in India

The Portuguese

- The Portuguese traveller Vasco da Gama reached the port of Calicut on 17th May 1498 and he was warmly received by Zamorin , the ruler of Calicut . He returned to Portugal in the next year .
- Pedro Alvarez Cabral arrived in 1500 and Vasco da Gama also made a second trip in 1502. they established trading stations at Calicut , Cannanore and Cochin .
- The first Governor of the Portuguese in India was Francis de Almeida .later in 1509 Albuquerque was made the governor of the Portuguese territories in India .
- In 1510 , he captured Goa from the ruler of Bijapur . Thereafter , Goa became the capital of the Portuguese settlements in India .
- Albuquerque captured Malacca and Ceylon .He also built a fort at Calicut .
- Albuquerque died in 1515 .
- The successors of Albuquerque established Portuguese settlements at Daman , Salsette and Bombay on the west coast and at Santhome near Madras and Hugli in Bengal on the east coast .
- However , the Portuguese power declined in India by the end of the 16th Century .
- They lost all their possessions in India except Goa , Diu and Daman in the next century .
- The Dutch
- The Dutch East India Company was established in 1602 .The merchants of this company came to India and established their settlements at Masulipattinam , Pulicat , Surat, Karaikal , Nagappattinam , and Kasimbazar .
- In the 17th Century they won over the Portuguese and emerged the most dominant power in European trade in the East .
- In the middle of the 17th Century the English began to emerge as a big colonial power .
- The Anglo – Dutch rivalry lasted for about seven decades during that period the Dutch lost their settlements to the British one by one .

The English

- The English East India Company was established in 1600 and the Charter was issued by Queen Elizabeth of England

- Captain Hawkins arrived at the royal court of Jahangir in 1609 to seek permission to establish English trading centre at Surat .
- But it was refused by the Mughal Emperor due to Portuguese Pressure .
- Later in 1612 , Jahangir issued a farman (permission letter) to the English and they established a trading factory at Surat in 1613 .
- Sir Thomas Roe came to India as ambassador of James I , the King of England to the Mughal court in 1615 .
- He obtained permission from Jahangir to establish English trading factories in different parts of India .
- The English established their factories at Agra , Ahmadabad and Baroda by 1619 .
- The East India Company acquired Bombay from Charles II , the then king of England .
- In 1639 , Francis Day founded the city of Madras where the Fort St. George was built .
- in 1690 , an English factory was established at Calcutta where Fort William was built .later Calcutta became the capital of British India .
- Thus Bombay , Madras , Calcutta became the presidencies of the English settlements in India .

The French

- The French East India Company was formed in 1664 by Colbert , a Minister under Louis XIV.
- The first French factory in India was established at Surat by Francis Caron.
- Later , Maracara set up a factory at Masulipattinam .
- Francois Martin founded Pondicherry in 1673 .
- Other French factories in India were Chandranagore , Mahe and Karaikal .
- Francois Martin was the first governor of Pondicherry , the headquarters of the French possessions in India .

The Danes

- Denmark also established trade settlements in India .
- Their settlement at Tranquebar was founded in 1620 .
- Another important Danish settlement in India was Serampore in Bengal .
- Serampore was their headquarters in India .
- They failed to strengthen themselves in India and they sold all their settlements in India to the British in 1845 .

Anglo – French Rivalry

- In the beginning of the 18th century , the English and the French were competing with each other to establish their supremacy in India .
- The Anglo – French rivalry in India was manifest in the Carnatic region and in Bengal .
- The Carnatic Wars .

- The downfall of the Mughal Empire led to the independence of Deccan under Nizam – ul – Mulk .
- The Carnatic region also formed part of the Nizam’s domination.
- In 1740 , the Austrian War of Succession broke out in Europe .
- In that war England and France were in the opposite camps.
- They came into conflict in India also .
- The French governor of Pondicherry , Dupleix opened attack on the English in 1746 and **thus began the First Carnatic War (1746 – 1748)** .
- The English sought help from the Nawab of Carnatic , Anwar ud din .
- But French concluded a treaty with his rival Chanda Sahib .
- The English army crushed a defeat on the French in the Battle of Adyar , near Madras .
- In the meantime , the Treaty of Aix- la- Chappelle was concluded in 1748 to end the Austrian Succession War . Thus the First Carnatic War came to an end .
- But the English and French continued to take opposite sides in the internal politics of India .
- Robert Clive defeated French at Kaverippakkam . Chanda Sahib was captured and beheaded in Tanjore .
- Meanwhile Dupleix was replaced by Godeheu as the French governor .
- The war came to an end by the Treaty of Pondicherry in 1754 .

The outbreak of the Seven Years War (1756 – 1763) in Europe led to the Third Carnatic War (1758 – 1763) .

- Count de Lally was the commander the French troops .
- The British General Sir Eyre Coote defeated him at Wandiwash in 1760 .
- In the next year , Pondicherry was captured and destroyed by the British troops .
- The Seven Years War came to an end by the treaty of Paris in 1763 .
- The Third Carnatic War also ended .

Result , the Second Carnatic War (1749 – 1754) .

- Dupleix supported the cause of Muzafar Jang, who wanted to become the Nizam of Hyderabad
- Chanda Sahib wanted to become the Nawab of Arcot .
- The troops of these three defeated Anwar ud din , who was with the British in the First Carnatic War , and killed him in the Battle of Ambur in 1749 .
- After this victory , Muzafar Jung became the Nizam and Chanda Sahib became the Nawab of Arcot .
- Muhammad Ali , son of Anwar ud din escaped to Tiruchirappalli .
- The English sent troops in support of him . In the meantime , the British commander Robert Clive captured Arcot .
- The French agreed to confine its activities in Pondicherry , Karaikkal , Mahe and Yenam

- Thus the Anglo – French rivalry came to a close with British success and French failure .

Causes for the French failure .

- Commercial and naval supremacy of the English only in the Deccan but the English .
- Lack of support from the French Government .
- The French had support only in the Deccan but the English had a strong base in Bengal .
- English had three important ports – Calcutta , Bombay and Madras but French had only Pondicherry .
- Difference of opinion between the French Generals .
- England’s victory in the European wars decided the destiny of the French in India

India under the East India Company

- The English East India Company was established on 31st December 1600 as per the Royal Charter issued by the Queen of England , Elizabeth I .
- After the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the Battle of Buxar in 1764 , the Company became a political power .
- India was under the East India Company’s rule till 1858 when it came under the direct administration of the British Crown .
- Robert Clive was the first Governor of Fort William under the Company’s rule .
- He was succeeded by Verelst and Cartier .
- In 1772 , the Company appointed Warren Hastings as the Governor of Fort William .

Warren Hastings

- He assumed the administration of Bengal in 1772 , he found it lot of chaos .
- The financial position of the Company became worse and the difficulties were occurred by famine . Therefore , Warren Hastings realized the immediate need for introducing reforms .
- Abolition of Dual System
- The East India Company decided to act as Diwan and to undertake the collection of revenue by its own agents .

- Hence , the Dual System introduced by Robert Clive was abolished .in order to improve the finances of the Company , Warren Hastings reduced the Nawab's allowance of 32 Lakhs of rupees to half that amount .
- He also stopped the annual payment of 26 Lakhs given to the Mughal Emperor .

Revenue Reforms

- After the abolition of the Dual System , the responsibility of collecting the revenue fell on the shoulders of the Company .
- For that purpose , a Board of Revenue was established at Calcutta to supervise the collection of revenue .
- English collectors were appointed in each district .
- The Treasury was removed from Murshidabad to Calcutta and an Accountant General was appointed .
- Calcutta became the capital of Bengal in 1772 and shortly after of British India .
- The Board of Revenue farmed out the lands by auction for a period of five years .
- The Zamindars were given priority in the auction . However , certain good measures were taken to safeguard the interests of the peasants .
- Arbitrary cesses and unreasonable fines were abolished .
- Besides , restrictions were imposed on the enhancement of rent , Yet , the system was a failure .
- Many Zamindars defaulted and the arrears of revenue accumulated .
- Reorganisation of the Judicial System :
- The Judicial system during his period was a store house of abuses .
- The Nawab who hitherto the chief administrator of Justice , misused his powers .
- Often , his judgements were careless .
- The Zamindars who acted as judges at lower levels within their own areas were highly corrupt and prejudiced .
- On the whole , the judicial institution suffered from extreme corruption .
- He felt that the necessity of reorganising the judicial system .
- Each district was provided with a civil court under the Collector and a Criminal court under an Indian Judge .
- To hear appeals from the district courts to two appellate courts , one for civil cases and another for criminal cases , were established at Calcutta .
- The the highest civil court of appeal was Sadar Diwani Adalat which was to be presided over by the Governor and two Judges recruited from the members of his council.
- The highest appellate criminal court was known as Sadar Nizamat Adalat under an Indian Judge appointed by the Governor in council .
- Experts in Hindu and Muslim laws were provided to assist the Judges .

- The Hindu law was prepared in Sanskrit by learned Pandits and it was translated into Persian .
- An English translation of it – Code of Hindu Laws – was prepared by Halhed .