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# BAHIS301 HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 1526 - 1947 - I



## BA (HISTORY)

### 5<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

**Rajiv Gandhi University**

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## About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

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# SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

## HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 1526-1947

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Syllabi	Mapping in Book
<b>Unit I- Mughal India</b> a. Babur: Foundation. b. Sher Shah Suri: Administration. c. Akbar: Mansabdari System and Din-i-Ilahi. d. Shah Jahan: Art and Architecture.	(Pages 7-47)
<b>Unit II- Crisis of Mughal Empire</b> a. Aurangzeb b. Policies c. Administration.	(Pages 48-65)
<b>Unit III- Rise of Marathas</b> a. Marathas: Shivaji b. Administrations	(Pages 66-83)
<b>Unit IV- Rise of Regional Politics</b> a. Bengal b. Awadh c. Mysore.	(Pages 84-96)
<b>Unit V- Struggle for Supremacy: Expansion and Consolidation Colonial Rule</b> a. Anglo-French Rivalry. b. Advent of British Rule in India. c. Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, Wellesley and Dalhousie.	(Pages 97-128)

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# INTRODUCTION

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## NOTES

Babur (AD1526–30), who founded the Mughal Empire in India, was the descendant of Timur as well as Ghenghiz Khan. Ousted by his cousins, he came to India and defeated Ibrahim Lodi, the last Lodi Sultan, in AD1526 at the First Battle of Panipat. There was a short break (AD1540–1555) in Mughal rule when Babur's son Humayun was dethroned from Delhi by an Afghan ruler, Sher Shah. Babur's grandson, Akbar, consolidated political power and extended his empire over virtually the whole of North India and parts of the south. Akbar was followed by three illustrious Mughal emperors, namely Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.

In western India, Shivaji succeeded in forging the Marathas into an efficient military machine and instilled in them a sense of national identity. They adopted guerrilla tactics to beat the Mughals and engaged them in many conquests that eventually drained their economic resources.

The period between 1707 and 1947 is extremely crucial in the history of India. The advent of the Europeans for the purpose of trading later led to the invasion of the British in India who ruled over India for a long time. During the reign of the British, India was exploited for its economic resources to a great extent. However, their rule also led to various reforms in the social, educational, commercial and judicial spheres in India. The World War I and World War II played an important role in arousing the spirit of nationalism among people. Various freedom fighters fought for the Independence of the country in their own way. Finally, India became independent on 15th August 1947 and became a Republic on 26th January 1950 when the Constitution of India was enforced.

This book, *History of India from 1526-1947*, comprises five units. The book is written strictly in SIM (Self Instructional Material) format for Distance Learning. Each unit starts with an Introduction and Unit Objectives. Then, the detailed content is presented, along with figures and tables, in an understandable and organized manner. Each unit has Check Your Progress questions at regular intervals to test the readers' understanding of the topics covered. A Summary along with a list of Key Terms and a set of Questions and Exercises is provided at the end of each unit for effective recapitulation. Each unit also has a list of books for Further Reading.

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# UNIT 1 MUGHAL INDIA

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## NOTES

### Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- Babur: Foundation
- Early Career and Personality of Babur
- The First Battle of Panipat
- Battle of Khanwah
- Achievements of Babur from AD 1526–1530
- Early Career and Conquests of Sher Shah Suri
- Sher Shah Suri: Administration
- Akbar
- Mansabdari System
- Din-i-Ilahi
- Early Career and Accession of Shah Jahan
- Shah Jahan: Art and Architecture
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- Questions and Exercises
- Further Reading

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## INTRODUCTION

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Till the early 16th century, India had been without a major empire for almost a thousand years. Since the Gupta Dynasty, an all-India empire had not prevailed. In AD 1526, Babur, a descendant of Timur, from Central Asia, swept across the Khyber Pass and established the Mughal Empire, which lasted for over 200 years. The Mughal Dynasty had taken hold of most of the Indian subcontinent by AD 1600. It went into a slow decline after AD 1707 and finally came to an end following defeat in the Rebellion of 1857.

The Mughal period marked a vast social change in the subcontinent, as the Hindu majority was ruled over by the Mughal emperors. Some emperors showed religious tolerance, others liberally patronized Hindu culture, while some others destroyed the historical temples and imposed taxes on the non-Muslims. During the decline of the Mughal Empire—which at its peak occupied an area slightly larger than the ancient Mauryan Empire—several smaller empires rose to fill the power vacuum, and subsequently contributed to the decline of the empire.

The Mughal Dynasty was the last great empire of Indian history. Such was their greatness that the word ‘Mogul’ in English (derived from Mughal) refers to a powerful person. The Mughals were a remarkable dynasty, and at the height of their powers gave the world a set of capable rulers. It was also during their reign that some of the finest monuments of India were built, most notably, the Taj Mahal.

In this unit, you will be learning about the Mughal Dynasty, including sources of Mughal Indian history; the establishment of the Mughal Empire; and factors that prompted their first great emperor, Babur, to invade India. You will also learn about Babur’s personality, the two battles—Panipat and Khanwah—that defined his reign, and his brilliance as a builder, among other topics. This unit will also discuss about Sher Shah

Suri, who was an Afghan ruler who succeeded in establishing a powerful empire in India simply by his own exertions, merit and the power of sword. This unit takes you further down the lanes of Mughal history, where you will learn about one of the greatest emperors of India, Humayun's son, Akbar. This unit will also discuss about Jahangir's son, Shah Jahan. Shah Jahan was a capable and skilled ruler. He contributed extensively towards fortifying and enlarging the Mughal Empire.

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## UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify the various sources of understanding the history of the Mughals
- Describe the political scenario in India on the eve of Babur's invasion
- Analyse the early career and personality of Babur
- Describe the administrative setup introduced by Sher Shah Suri
- Analyse the features of the religious policy adopted by Akbar
- Explain the features of Din-i-Illahi
- Elaborate on the achievements of Shah Jahan in the field of art and architecture

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## BABUR: FOUNDATION

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Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was the son of Umar Sheikh Mirza, a descendent of the famous invader Timur Lane. His mother Qutulug Nigar Khanam belonged to the family of Genghis Khan, the great Mongol invader. When Babur was born in AD 1483, his father was the ruler of a small principality of Farghana in Turkistan. In AD 1494, Babur inherited the petty Kingdom of Fargana from his father. He was then only eleven years and four months old. At such a tender age, he had to shoulder the responsibility of ruling the state. As the famous historian Dr Ishwari Prasad points out, at a very young age, Babur was surrounded by enemies from all sides. His near relatives and Uzbek chief Shahbani Khan wanted to snatch away the principality of Farghana. Oblivious of the Uzbek danger, the Timurid princes were busy fighting with each another. Babur, too, made a bid to conquer Samarkand from his uncle. He won the city twice, but on both the occasions, lost it in no time. The second time, the Uzbek Chief Shaibani Khan Shaibani defeated Babur and conquered Samarkand. Soon, he overran the rest of the Timurid kingdoms in the area. Babur wrote in his autobiography, *Tuzuk-i-baburi*, 'I had lost Samarkand for recovering Fargana but now I feel that I have lost even the first one without having possessed the second.' Having lost both Farghana and Samarkand, Babur was forced to move towards Kabul, which he conquered in AD 1504. For the next fourteen years, Babur kept biding his time to capture back his homeland (Farghana and Samarkand) from the Uzbeks. When he was completely unsuccessful against the Uzbeks, he diverted his attention from the West (Central Asia) to the East (India).

### **Political Scenario on the Eve of Babur's Invasion**

The first half of the 15th century witnessed political instability with the disintegration of the Tughlaq Dynasty. Both the Saiyyad (1414–1451) and the Lodi (1451–1526) rulers failed to cope with 'the disruptive forces'. The nobles resented and rebelled at the earliest opportunity. The political chaos in the north-west provinces of the country had





weakened the centre. Let us examine what was happening in the other parts of India during that time.

In Central India, there were three kingdoms: Gujarat, Malwa and Mewar. The power of Sultan Mahmud Khalji II of Malwa was, however, on the decline. Gujarat was ruled by Muzaffar Shah II, while Mewar under the leadership of Sisodia ruler Rana Sanga was the most powerful kingdom. The rulers of Malwa were under constant pressure from the Lodis, Mewar and Gujarat. This was because, it was not only the most fertile region and an important source for elephant supply, but it also provided an important trade route to Gujarat sea ports. Hence, it was an important region for the Lodis. Besides, for both Gujarat and Mewar, it could serve as a buffer against the Lodis. The Sultan of Malwa was an incompetent ruler, and his prime minister, Medini Rai, could hardly hold the kingdom intact for long in the wake of internal disputes.

Finally, Rana Sanga succeeded in extending his influence over Malwa and Gujarat. By the end of the 15th century, Rana Sanga's sway over Rajputana became almost complete with the occupation of Ranthambhor and Chanderi. Further south, there were the powerful Vijayanagar and Bahmani kingdoms.

In the east, Nusrat Shah ruled Bengal. Towards the end of Ibrahim Lodi's reign, Afghan chieftains Nasir Khan Lohani and Ma'ruf Farmuli succeeded in carving out a separate kingdom of Jaunpur under Sultan Muhammad Shah. Besides these major powers, there were numerous Afghan chieftaincies around Agra—the most powerful ones being those of Hasan Khan in Mewar, Nizam Khan in Bayana, Muhammad Zaitun in Dholpur, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani in Gwalior, Husain Khan Lohani in Rapri, Qutub Khan in Etawa, Alam Khan in Kalpi, and Qasim Sambhali in Sambhal, among others. While analysing the political setup on the eve of Babur's invasion, it is generally said that there was a confederacy of Rajput principalities which was ready to seize control of Hindustan. It is held that had Babur not intervened, the Rajputs led by their illustrious leader Rana Sanga would have captured power in northern India. It is argued that the political division of the regional states was religious in nature and that the Rajput confederacy under Rana Sanga fueled by religious zeal wanted to establish a Hindu empire. This assumption is based on the famous passage in *Baburnama* where Babur says that Hindustan was governed by 'five Musalman rulers': the Lodis (at the centre), Gujarat, Malwa, Bahmani, and Bengal, and two 'pagans' (Rana Sanga of Mewar and Vijaynagar). Besides, the *fathnama* (prayer for victory) issued after the battle of Khanwa suggests that the Rajput confederacy under Rana was inspired by religious zeal and organized with the intention to overthrow the 'Islamic power'.

However, such observations have been questioned by historians. Babur has nowhere suggested that these powers were antagonistic on religious grounds. Instead, Babur himself admits that many Rais and Ranas were obedient to Islam. Moreover, if one looks at the composition of the confederacy, there were many Muslim chieftains like Hasan Khan Mewati and Mahmud Khan Lodi, who sided with Rana Sanga against Babur. Though the power of Rana was unquestionable, Babur was in reality more worried about the Afghan menace.

### **Political conditions on the basis of historical sources**

On the basis of *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* and other historical sources, the political conditions of India on the eve of Babur's invasion can be summarized as follows:

- There were innumerable small and independent kingdoms which often fought with each other.

## NOTES

- There was no powerful central authority to unite all the small states against a foreign invasion. In the words of Dr Ishwari Prasad, ‘In the beginning of the 16th century, India was a confederacy of small independent states which could easily fall prey to any strong and determined invader.’
- Babur writes in his memoirs that when he invaded India there were seven important states—five Muslims and two Hindus. Besides these states mentioned by Babur, there were several other states which were also playing a considerable role in the politics of India. In northern India, the main states were Delhi, Punjab, Bengal, Jaunpur, Gujarat, Mewar, Malwa, Orissa, Sindh, Kashmir and Khandesh.
- The political conditions of southern India were also deteriorating. The Bahmani kingdom had broken up into five small principalities. These were Bijapur, Golkunda, Beedar, Barar and Ahmednagar. Although all these states were ruled by the Shia rulers, still they used to fight against each other. The southern Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar was under Krishnadev Rai. Even though he was very powerful, Krishnadev Rai did not have good relations with the Bahamani kingdom and was only interested in the politics of the Deccan.
- The people of India lacked the feeling of modern nationalism. They were more loyal to their local rulers than the symbolic central power of Delhi. In order to form an idea of the political condition of northern India on the eve of Babur’s invasion, a brief survey of these states would be very helpful.

*Table 1.1 A Brief Survey of Indian States on the Eve of Babar’s Invasion*

State	Political Condition
Delhi	In northern India, the small remnant of the Delhi Sultanate was ruled by an incapable ruler Ibrahim Lodi against whom rebellions were a frequent occurrence.
Bengal	During the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, Bengal became an independent kingdom. Nusrat Shah ruled over the territory during the invasion of Babur, and extended the borders of the kingdom up to Hajipur and Mongher and annexed Tirhut.
Punjab	Daulat Khan Lodi had revolted against the authority of Ibrahim Lodi and had become an independent ruler of Punjab. He joined hands with Alam Khan, an uncle of Ibrahim, and invited Babur to invade India. Besides that, the rulers of Sind and Multan were also hostile to the Sultan of Delhi.
The Eastern Districts	The eastern districts about Oudh, Jaunpur and Bihar rose in arms and chose Darya Khan Lohani as their chief.
Jaunpur	It was absolutely independent of the central control.
Bihar	It was an open rebellion.
Gujarat	The kingdom of Gujarat was ruled by the Muslim Sultans independent of Delhi.
Malwa	The ruler of Malwa was Mahmud II of the Khilji dynasty. The ruler of Chanderi, Medini Rai wanted to establish his control over Malwa with the help of Rana Sanga of Mewar. Malwa was beset with internal quarrels and rebellions.
Mewar	Mewar was the most powerful Rajput Kingdom under the able and wise leadership of Rana Sanga who had united all the Rajputs under a single flag in a federation.
Khandesh	Khandesh, once the province of the Delhi Kingdom had become independent at the close of the 14th century. On the eve of Babur’s invasion, Miran Mohammad was the ruler.

Vijayanagar	Vijayanagar was founded in AD 1336 by Harishar and his brother Bukka. Krishna Dev was a very powerful ruler of this dynasty. The rulers of Vijayanagar were in constant war with the neighbouring kingdom of Bahmani.
Bahmani State	It was founded in AD 1347 by Hassan, an Afghan noble. It produced a number of warriors and ambitious kings. Unfortunately, it was always on warring terms with its neighbour, Vijayanagar. Afterwards, this state was split up into five small states—Barar, Ahmednagar, Badar, Bijapur and Golkunda.

## NOTES

Thus, it is clear from Table 1.1 that both north India and south India were divided into small principalities that were under the rule of various Hindu and Muslim kings. Under these circumstances, it was not a difficult task for Babur, or for that matter any competent invader, to conquer India.

### Advent of Mughals into India

The Mughals called themselves so after their Mongol ancestry. Unlike the Delhi Sultanate, which was ruled by many dynasties, the Mughal period witnessed the rule by a single dynasty for nearly two-and-a-half centuries. Sher Shah Suri's rule was the only interruption. The Mughals established an empire which roughly coincides with the present Indian territory.

The Mughal period is also described as Early Modern period. This is because the era witnessed major changes in trade, agriculture and technology. For instance, with the creation of more sea routes and expansion in trade, currency came to be used increasingly. These changes were supported by a stable and centralized empire.

### Political conditions

The political conditions in the north-west of the country around this time made Babur's conquest easier. Ibrahim Lodi, the Sultan of Delhi and Punjab, was trying to establish a large empire which alarmed the Afghan chiefs. The rulers of Bihar and Punjab had revolted against him. The Rajput rulers were also plotting against him. Daulat Khan, the governor of Punjab, along with an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, invited Babur to attack this region.

### Factors that Prompted Babur to Conquer India

The various factor that prompted Babur to conquer India are discussed as follows:

#### 1. Babur's ambition

Like other contemporary rulers, Babur was very ambitious. He stated 'I had never ceased to think of the conquest of Hindustan. But I had never found a suitable opportunity for undertaking it. Hindered as I was sometimes by the apprehensions of my Beks, sometimes by the disagreement between my brothers and myself.' He was involved incessantly in the struggle for the conquest of Samarkand (which Babur loved dearly). When he was finally unsuccessful there, he tried to fulfil his ambition by conquering India.

#### 2. Miserable political conditions of India

The political situation in north-west India was suitable for Babur's entry into India. Sikandar Lodi had died in AD 1517, and Ibrahim Lodi had succeeded him. His efforts to create a large centralized empire had alarmed the Afghan chiefs as well as the Rajputs.

## NOTES

Amongst the most powerful of the Afghan chiefs was Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of Punjab, who was almost an independent ruler. Daulat Khan attempted to conciliate Ibrahim Lodi by sending his son to his court in order to pay homage. At the same time, he was trying to capture neighbouring states. He wanted to strengthen his position by annexing the frontier tracts of Bihar etc., which Babur had captured in AD 1518–1519, but all hopes of Daulat Khan Lodi were shattered. Babur put a demand through his ambassador that Daulat Khan Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi surrender all those places to Babur which were at one time under the Turks. Daulat Khan Lodi very cleverly influenced Babur's ambassador to stay at Lahore, thus preventing him from meeting Ibrahim Lodi. When Babur returned from Bhira, Daulat Khan Lodi took away Bhira from Babur's representative. The following year, Babur again attacked Bhira and captured it along with Sialkot. This victory opened a gateway of India for Babur. One thing was made clear by these preliminary invasions of Babur—India lacked the feeling of political unity. Babur knew that India was divided into several petty principalities and that the rulers of these states could never unite together. Babur also knew that they often fought amongst themselves. Thus, he considered this anarchical situation as the appropriate opportunity to invade India.

### **3. Immense richness of India and legal right to occupy some area**

Like countless earlier invaders from Central Asia, Babur was drawn to India by the lure of its fabulous wealth. India was famous as the land of gold and riches. Babur's ancestor Timur had not only carried away a vast treasure and many skilful artisans who helped him to consolidate his Asian empire and beautify his capital, but had also annexed some areas in the Punjab. These areas remained in the possession of Timur's successors for many years. When Babur conquered Kabul, he felt that he had a legitimate right to these areas. Moreover, India was very near to Kabul where Babur was ruling.

### **4. Meagre income from Kabul**

Another reason for Babur's invasion of India was the meagre income of Kabul. The historian Abul Fazal remarks, 'He (Babur) ruled over Badakhshan, Kandhar and Kabul which did not yield sufficient income for the requirement of the army, in fact, in some of the border territories the expense on controlling the armies and administration was greater than the income.' Thus, the meagre income of Kabul also prompted Babur to invade India. Babur knew very well that after capturing the fertile province of Punjab, he would have no financial problems and he could strengthen his position very easily.

### **5. Fear of the Uzbeks**

Babur was apprehensive of an Uzbek attack on Kabul and considered India to be a good place of refuge, and a suitable base for operations against the Uzbeks.

### **6. Invitations extended by Daulat Khan Lodi, Alam Khan and Rana Sanga**

Some the historians hold the opinion that Babur had been invited to attack the Delhi Sultanate by Daulat Khan Lodi and Rana Sanga. According to them, in AD 1524, Babur had received an embassy from Daulat Khan Lodi, led by his son Dilawar Khan. They invited Babur to invade India and suggested that he should displace Ibrahim Lodi since he was a tyrant and enjoyed no support from his courtiers and nobles. According to some historians, it was probable that a messenger from Rana Sangram Singh (the ruler of Mewar and popularly known as Rana Sanga) arrived at the same time, inviting Babur

to invade India. These embassies convinced Babur that the time was ripe for his conquest of the whole of the Punjab, if not of India itself.

In brief, we can say that many factors inspired Babur to invade India. His ambitions, immense wealth of India, weak political conditions and some invitations extended by the enemies of Ibrahim Lodi, were some of the factors.

## NOTES

### Early Career and Personality of Babur

Babur, who laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India in AD 1526, belonged to the family of Chaghatai Turks. Born on 14 February 1483, his great grandfather was Timur who was widely regarded as the most powerful king of Central Asia. Babur's successful invasion of India in AD 1526 saw the end of the Lodi Dynasty and the beginning of a new power—the Mughal Dynasty. The history of India since the Battle of Panipat till AD 1857 is interspersed with conflicts and rivalries between Mughal rulers and the Rajput princes. The Hindu Rajputs, who had enjoyed dominance in Rajputana (present-day Gujarat, Rajasthan and parts of Haryana), were displaced from power following the invasion of the Mughals.

Babur led two important and decisive battles—the Battle of Panipat and the Battle of Khanwah—that speak volumes about his personality. At the First Battle of Panipat in AD 1526, Babur, with only 12,000 soldiers with him, subdued Ibrahim Lodi's much larger force. The very next year, Babur displaced the Rajputs from power who had enjoyed the stronghold of Rajputana for a long time. Similar to the First Battle of Panipat, Babur with a much smaller army conquered the enemy by applying novel ways of warfare.

These great victories achieved over the main powers of northern India were the base for Babur's kingdom, from which he could consolidate his rule in northern India. Unlike his predecessor, Timur, Babur did not return to Kabul after plundering and looting the wealth of India. Instead, Babur decided to stay back and strengthen his hold over the wealthy cities. The Battle of Ghaghara was the last battle of Babur in India. By then, he had succeeded in establishing the Mughal Empire in India and there was no one to challenge his power in northern India.

Babur's character has been praised by all historians—both modern and contemporary. He was a man of many virtues and excellences. He was kind, generous, courageous, and a cultured man. He was a good judge of human nature and circumstances. He was fond of music and gardening and constructed many buildings in India. Babur was a Sunni Muslim and had faith in God. He was a scholarly king. Babur did not get time to receive proper education as he engaged himself in fighting, from as early as the age of eleven. Yet, the knowledge he acquired and the command he had over Turkish language has assigned him a place in the world of scholars. He possessed good knowledge of Arabic and Persian while he was also a scholar of Turkish. Babur was a gifted poet and his prose memoir—the *Baburnamah*—is much acclaimed.

Babur was a determined soldier and an experienced general. After becoming a successful commander, he never lost courage or determination to rise. He learnt from his defeats. He learned *tulghuma* warfare from the Uzbeks, *ambuscade* from the Mongols and the Afghans, use of fire-arm and artillery from the Persians, and the effective use of mobile cavalry from the Turks. Besides, he made a clever synthesis of all these tactics of warfare. That made him a successful commander and, therefore, he won every battle in India. Also, Babur could inspire his followers, and get their loyalty and command obedience from them. He never feared fighting against larger armies than that he commanded.

## The First Battle of Panipat

### NOTES

In November, AD1525, Babur attacked India with 12,000 soldiers. When he reached Peshawar, he got the news that Dhaulat Khan Lodi had changed sides. He had collected a huge army and ousted the Amirs of Babur from Sialkot and reached up to Lahore. At Babur's approach, however, the army of Dhaulat Khan melted away. Dhaulat Khan laid down his arms and was pardoned. Thus, within three weeks of crossing the Indus, Babur became the ruler of Punjab. On 20 April, 1526, Babur reached the famous historical field of Panipat along with his army to conquer India. Ibrahim Lodi met Babur at Panipat with a force estimated to comprise 100,000 men and 10,000 elephants. Some historians are of the view that since the Indian armies generally contained large hordes of servants, the fighting men on Ibrahim Lodi's side must have been far less than this figure. Babur had crossed the Indus with a force of 12,000, but he had the support of a large number of Hindustani nobles and soldiers who joined him in the Punjab. Even then Babur's army was numerically inferior. On the morning of 21 April 1526, they fought a pitched battle. Babur, with the tactical use of tulugama warfare, encircled Ibrahim Lodi's army, and his artillery rained a hail of fire and shots on it. The Lodi army was completely overwhelmed. Babur himself wrote, 'By the grace and mercy of Almighty (God), the mighty army of Delhi was laid in the dust in the course of half a day.'

### Impact of the First Battle of Panipat

- **End of the rule of Lodi Dynasty:** The Battle of Panipat is regarded as one of the decisive battles in Indian history. It broke the back of Lodi power, and brought under Babur's control the entire area up to Delhi and Agra. As Babur's predecessor Timur had brought to an end the rule of the Tughlaqs, similarly Babur's success led to the end of the Lodi rule.
- **Foundation of the Mughal Empire:** Babur's victory at Panipat led to the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India. Soon after the victory, Babur occupied Delhi and Agra, seated himself on the throne of the Lodis and laid the foundation of the Mughal rule in India. Of course, the empire founded by Babur was soon lost by his son, Humayun and it was Akbar who actually recreated the Mughal Empire. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the actual foundation of the empire was laid with the victory in the Battle of Panipat. This empire continued for more than two centuries.
- **End of Babur's bad days:** The treasures that were stored up by Ibrahim Lodi in Agra relieved Babur from his financial difficulties. The rich territory up to Jaunpur also lay open to Babur. Rush Brooke Williams writes, 'After being successful in this battle, the bad days of Babur came to an end. Now, he need not bother about his personal safety or his throne.'
- **Re-established the prestige of Crown:** After the Battle of Panipat, Babur laid the foundation of a new dynasty and called himself the monarch. Unlike the Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate period, he never called himself the deputy of the Caliph, but referred to himself as the Emperor. Thus, he revived the sovereignty of the monarch as it used to be in ancient times in India and thus established the prestige of the Crown.
- **Use of artillery in India:** The Battle of Panipat led to the initiation of artillery in India. Until now, Indians were not familiar with gunpowder. For the first time, it was used in a battle on the Indian plains, and paved the way for its use in many other battles.

*Self-Instructional*

- **Birth of new struggles:** However, Babur had to wage three more hard-fought battles, one against Rana Sanga of Mewar, another against Medini Rao at Chanderi, and the third against the eastern Afghans, before he could consolidate his hold on this area (Delhi, Agra, etc.). Viewed from his angle, the Battle of Panipat was not as decisive in the political field as has been made out. According to R.B. Williams, 'The victory at Panipat was excellent, which was actually a part of the beginning.' Renowned historian Dr Satish Chandra, says about the battle, 'Its real importance lies in the fact that it opened a new face in the struggle for domination in north India.'
- **Tulugama became popular in India:** One of the important causes of Babur's victory in the First Battle of Panipat was the adoption of a scientific war strategy called tulugama (an Ottoman or Rumi device). Gradually, Indian rulers also adopted this very system, which involved the policy of keeping a reserve army. Indian rulers were greatly impressed by the swiftness and immovability of horses and gradually elephants were replaced by horses in battles.
- **A shift in the political interest:** After the Battle of Panipat, the centre of Babur's political activities and ambitions was shifted from Kabul and Central Asia to Agra and India. No doubt the difficulties of Babur after his victory at Panipat were manifold. Many of his Begs (chieftains) were not prepared for a long campaign in India. With the onset of the hot weather, their misgivings had increased. They were far away from their homes in a strange and hostile land. Babur writes in his memoirs that the people of India displayed remarkable hostility by abandoning their villages at the approach of the Mughal armies. Obviously, the memories of Timur's sacking and plundering of the towns and villages were still fresh in their minds. Babur knew that the resources in India alone would enable him to build a strong empire and satisfy his Begs. He, thus, took a firm stand, proclaiming his intention to stay on in India, and granting leave to a number of his Begs, who wanted to go back to Kabul. This immediately cleared the air. However, this also invited the hostility of Rana Sanga who began his preparations for a showdown with Babur.

### Causes of Failure of Ibrahim Lodi

Babur was victorious at the Battle of Panipat because of a number of factors. However, not all can be attributed to his generalship and personality, which he doubtless had in plenty. There were other factors too, the inefficiency of Ibrahim Lodi being one. Let us look at all the factors in detail.

- **Scientific combination of cavalry and artillery:** First, the victory of Babur was due to the scientific combination of cavalry and artillery. The effective use of mobile cavalry and the skill with which Ustad Ali and Mustafa, two great Turkish gunners, fought in the field of Panipat were also important factors which contributed towards Babur's victory. Rush Brooke Williams writes, 'If it could be possible to emphasize any one of the factors as being the most important cause of his (Babur's) victory, one would surely have to assign the first place to his artillery.'
- **Disunity:** The Indian rulers did not visualize any eventuality beyond the borders of their kingdoms and could not stand united to face a threat on India from the outside. Babur defeated them one by one and captured their kingdoms.
- **Babur's personality:** One of the biggest causes of Babur's victory was his impressive personality. He did not lose heart even in the most critical times. He was a born general and was fully acquainted with all the tactics of war.

## NOTES

- **Ill-treatment of Ibrahim Lodi towards his Amirs:** Sultan Ibrahim's treatment towards his Amirs was most discourteous and insulting. The proud Afghan nobles, who used to share the carpet with Ibrahim's father and grandfather, had land taken away from them, and in the King's Durbar had to stand in a humble posture with their arms folded to their chests. He also denied them kingship. Hence, the Amirs went against him.
- **Disciplined army:** Babur's army was more disciplined than the Indian army. His soldiers knew how to stand in the battle array and when to charge. On the other hand, the Indian soldiers moved more or less like a crowd and a little charge from the enemy side was enough to cause confusion among them. Their vast numbers were more a source of weakness than a source of strength. They were ill organized, badly trained and undisciplined.
- **Inefficiency of Ibrahim as a general:** Fortunately for Babur, the rival he had to contend with was an inefficient military general who lacked the qualities of a leader. Neither could he properly organize his forces nor could he plan the battle well. Babur himself remarks that, 'Ibrahim was an inexperienced, young man, careless in his movements who marched without order, halted or retired without plan and engaged in the battle without foresight.' It was not difficult for a brilliant general like Babur to defeat such an inefficient rival.
- **Use of elephants by the Lodis:** Ibrahim Lodi made big use of elephants in his army. As compared to this, the horses of the Mughal cavalry were very swift. Very often, elephants wounded in battle trampled their own army people.
- **Babur's formations or tulugama:** Babur took strategic positions as soon as he reached Panipat. He strengthened his position by resting one wing of his army in the city of Panipat which had a large number of horses, and protected the others by means of a ditch filled with branches of trees. On the front, he lashed together a large number of carts to act as a defending wall. Between those two carts, breastworks were erected on which soldiers could rest their guns and firearms. Historians praise Babur for adopting a unique formation which was both offensive as well as defensive. In brief, we can say that one of the causes of Babur's victory at Panipat was the tulugama strategy of war.

### Battle of Khanwah

The Battle of Khanwah was fought between Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar (popularly known as Rana Sanga) and the founder of Mughal dynasty, Babur, in AD 1527 at Khanwah, about forty kilometers away from Agra.

### Causes for the battle of Khanwah

- **Ambitions of Rana Sanga:** Rana Sanga was an ambitious ruler. He had been fighting with Ibrahim Lodi for dominating eastern Rajasthan and Malwa. After defeating Mahmood Khilji of Malwa, the influence of Rana had gradually extended up to Piliya Khar, a small river in the neighbourhood of Agra. The establishment of an empire in the Indo-Gangetic Valley by Babur was a threat to Rana Sanga. Sanga set preparations to take out Babur at any rate and to confine him to the Punjab.
- **Rana being accused of treachery by Babur:** Babur accused Rana Sanga of breach of agreement. He said that Sanga had invited him to India and had promised to join him against Ibrahim Lodi, but made no move while he (Babur) conquered



Delhi and Agra. The exact terms and conditions of the agreement between Babur and Rana Sanga are vague, but it is certain that after the First Battle of Panipat, Babur had captured only Delhi and Agra. He had not become the emperor of India. He was also brave and ambitious like Rana Sanga. It was not possible for him to become the emperor of India without breaking the power of the Rajputs.

- **Charges of Rana Sanga against Babur:** Rana Sanga, on the other hand, had claim on Kalpi, Dhaulpur and Agra and he blamed Babur for not fulfilling his promise. Sanga probably hoped that like Timur, Babur would withdraw after ransacking Delhi and weakening the Lodis. Babur's decision to stay on in India completely changed the situation. This made a war between Babur and Rana Sanga inevitable.
- **Incitement of Rana Sanga by the Afghans:** Many Afghans including Mahmud Lodi, a younger brother of Ibrahim Lodi, rallied to Rana Sanga in the hope of regaining the throne of Delhi in case Sanga won. Hassan Khan Mewati, the ruler of Mewar, also joined hands with Sanga.

### Events

The armies of Babur and Sanga met at Khanwah on 10 March 1527. Babur arranged his army almost in the same fashion as he had done in Panipat. This time again, he had to face an army which was huge in size compared to his army. According to Lanepoole, 'Whatever the exact number might have been, a more gallant army could not be brought into the field.' A bloody war followed which lasted for about twelve hours. R. P. Tripathi writes, 'The ruthless slaughter, closed the bloody episode.' Sanga's forces were hemmed in and were defeated. Rana Sanga escaped and wanted to renew the conflict with Babur; but he was later poisoned by his own nobles who considered such a course dangerous and suicidal.

### Consequences

- The Battle of Khanwah was more decisive than that of the First Battle of Panipat. After this battle, Babur definitely became the ruler of India. It secured his position in the Delhi – Agra region. Babur strengthened his position further by conquering a chain of forts in Gwalior, and Dholpur in the east of Agra. He also annexed large parts of Alwar from Hasan Khan Mewati. He then led a campaign against Medina Rai of Chanderi in Malwa. Chanderi was captured after the Rajput defenders had died fighting to the last man and their women performed *Jauhar*. In brief, we can say that the Battle of Khanwah consolidated the foundation of the Mughal Empire by bringing the Rajput power to an end. The centre of activity of Babur had shifted from Kabul to Hindustan and, thus, the work of defeating the rest of the unimportant local chiefs and the Afghans became easier.
- With Sanga's death, the dream of a united Rajasthan extending up to Agra received a serious setback. The strength of the Rajputs was broken and the kingdoms of Hindustan passed from the hands of Rajputs to the Mughals. The foundation of the Mughal Empire in India was laid.

### Causes of the Defeat of Rajputs or the Victory of Babur

- **Treachery of Siladi of Rasin:** Siladi of Rasin was the Rajput ally of Rana Sanga and he had promised to fight for the common Rajput cause. In the thick of battle, he deserted Rana Sanga and went over to Babur for the latter is said to have

influenced him. This treacherous behaviour on the part of Siladi of Raisin broke the heart of the Rajputs and adversely affected their lot in the battle.

- **Use of cannons by Babur:** Babur used cannons in the Battle of Khanwah. On the other hand, Rajputs were unaware of this device. Horses of the Rajputs could not face the cannons and so the army of Rana Sanga was shattered.
- **Babur as a commander:** Babur was a very capable commander. His techniques of warfare brought him success once more. In the face of stringent contingencies, he exhibited patience and courage which made him the outstanding leader of his time. He promised after this victory he would allow leave to everyone who wanted to go home.
- **Declaration of the holy war (*Jihad*):** Babur had declared a holy war against Rana and reminded his men that he was fighting for the glorification of his religion. The response was instantaneous and enthusiastic. Everyone swore by the Holy Quran that they would fight to the end and stand by Babur. The spirit of his troops was thus energetic going into battle.
- **Disunity of Rajputs:** The Rajputs were not united. There were great dissensions between them, and due to the victory of Babur in this battle, whatever unity was left in them also ended.
- **Role of Ustad Ali:** Ustad Ali, the captain of Babur's artillery also shares the credit of this victory. His use of cannon balls threw the Rajputs into confusion.
- **Responsibility of Rana Sanga:** Some historians are of the opinion that though Rana was a brave soldier, he was not a statesman of high order. According to Dr Sharma, 'In his relation with Babur, he showed vacillation and a want of decisions and firmness. He failed to proceed and capture Agra, which he ought to have done immediately after Babur had moved south of the Punjab to fight against Ibrahim Lodi. Had he done so, he would not only have acquired the immense treasures and resources that lay stored in the town, but also the support of the entire race of the Indian Afghans. Moreover, luck did not favour Rana Sanga. He was wounded during the course of the battle and failed to provide leadership to his soldiers at a critical moment. It also demoralized his soldiers. However, these can be counted only as the subsidiary causes of the defeat of the Rajputs.'
- **Disciplined army:** Babur's army was small, disciplined and experienced; but the Rajput army was a large crowd of indisciplined and inexperienced mercenaries.

### Achievements of Babur from AD 1526–1530

The great grandson of Timur and Genghis Khan, Babur was the first Mughal emperor in India. He confronted and defeated Lodi in AD 1526 at the First Battle of Panipat, and so came to establish the Mughal Empire in India. Babur ruled until AD 1530, and was succeeded by his son Humayun. During Babur's reign, northern India became united under one rule and had very prosperous cultural and political years.

Babur was not only a brilliant general, but also had qualities of a great leader. Like his contemporaries of the Renaissance period in Europe, Babur too had varied interests. He was well-read and could write in Turkish as well as in Persian. He wrote the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*. It provides information on his character, achievements and life during those times. He loved nature, laid down a number of gardens in Kabul and India, and planted fruit trees. He also loved music and enjoyed polo.



*Fig. 1.1 The Extent of Babur's Empire*

The memoirs of Babur trace his rise to power starting from his accession to the throne of his father. The description of Babur is clear, impressive and quite close to the truth. Babur wrote his autobiography titled *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* (titled *Baburnama* in Persian) in his mother tongue, Turkish. The autobiography is the best source of information on his life, even though there is hardly any information about the periods between AD1508–1519, AD1520–1525 and AD1529–1530.

A fairly good idea about his knowledge, his virtues and vices, his pleasures and sufferings, political circumstances which he faced, the climate, flora and fauna of the countries which he visited, his tastes and desires and the description of those people with whom he came in contact during his rule can be obtained from his writings. Besides, the description of Babur's friends and foes, his emotional reaction to individuals and circumstances, natural beauty of mountains, rivers, forests and towers are very much absorbing which credits his biography as a beautiful piece of literature. Babur gave a description of India as well in his biography. He wrote about the climate, the people, and their economic and social conditions and about the kings and political events in India. About India, he wrote that Hindustan was a country of few charms, where people have no good looks or manners. Describing the political condition of India, he wrote that the capital of India is Delhi and also described something about the kingdoms of Malwa, Gujarat, Bahmani kingdom, Mewar and Vijayanagara.

The description of Hindustan by Babur is neither complete nor entirely correct. He made no mention of the states of Orissa, Khandesh, Sindh and Kashmir in his memoirs. Besides, as he got very little time to assess the Indian conditions and remained busy mostly in conducting wars, his description cannot be regarded accurate as well. If Babur would have got more time and would have got the opportunity to come in contact with the cultured people of India, he probably would have revised his opinion about the Indian people. Also, Babur viewed the Indian people from the eyes of a conqueror. If he had remained alive for a few years more, his opinion would have been certainly different.

## NOTES

The achievements of Babur can be summarized as follows:

- Babur fought and defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in the First Battle of Panipat in AD 1526. The outcome of the battle saw the establishment of the Mughal Empire in India and the end of the Delhi Sultanate.
- In AD 1527, Babur defeated the combined forces of the Rajputana under the command of Rana Sanga of Mewar and Mahmud Lodi in the Battle of Khanwah. The result of the battle saw the end of the dominance of the Rajput kingdoms, including Marwar, Gwalior, Ajmeer, and Ambar.
- In AD 1529, Babur engaged the Afghans who were powerful in eastern India, Bengal, Bihar, Assam, and Orissa, in the Battle of Ghagra. These forces led by Mahmud Lodi were defeated and scattered.
- Thus, after these initial conquests in India, Babur's territory extended from Kabul in the west to Gogra in the east, from the Himalayas in the north to Gwalior in the south.
- Being a patron of arts Babur welcomed many artists to his court from across the world. He was well-versed in Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and also penned his autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, in Turkish.
- Babur ruled over his empire only for a short duration of four years, a good part of which was spent in widening his empire. Hence, he was unable to bring about any transformation in administrative, judicial and financial fields.

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## EARLY CAREER AND CONQUESTS OF SHER SHAH SURI

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Sher Shah Suri is one of those great men in history who achieved greatness from a very ordinary position. The dynasty founded by him is known as the Sur dynasty. He was born in AD 1472. He was one of the eight sons of Mian Hassan Khan Sur, an employee of the governor of Punjab, Jamal Khan. In the reign of Sikandar Lodi, Jamal Khan was appointed the governor of Jaunpur. Hassan and his son Farid accompanied their master. Jamal Khan gave the *Jagirs* of Khawaspur, Sahasram and Tanda to Hassan. Farid's childhood was spent in Sahasram. Later, he came over to Jaunpur being fed up with the misbehaviour of his stepmother and his father. He was twenty-two years old at that time. He impressed Jamal Khan with his scholarly nature and ability, and Jamal Khan pressurized Hassan to appoint Farid as the manager of the *Jagirs* of Sahasram and Khawaspur.

Farid earned enough administrative experience by managing these *Jagirs*. But, soon he had to leave the place because of the machinations of his stepbrother and one powerful Afghan chief, Muhammad Khan who wanted that the *Jagirs* should be divided between the two. Farid, then, entered into the military service of the Governor of South Bihar—Bahar Khan Lohani. It is said that one day he slew a tiger with the help of a sword and impressed by his bravery, Bahar Khan gave him the title of Sher Khan and from then onwards, Farid became famous as Sher Khan. It is said that he entered Babur's service in AD 1527. The historians hold that his motive in entering this service was to acquire knowledge of the system of Mughal warfare and its effects. Babur became suspicious of his activities and asked his prime minister to keep a strict watch on Sher Khan and described him as a very clever person. Sher Khan is said to have quietly

### Check Your Progress

1. What are the factors that prompted Babur to conquer India?
2. What was the impact of the First Battle of Panipat?

slipped away from there and again entered the services of Bahar Khan Lohani. He was appointed the tutor and guardian of Jalal Khan, the minor son of the ruler.

After sometime, Bahar Khan Lohani died and his widow appointed Sher Khan as the regent of minor prince. In fact, Sher Khan became the de facto ruler of Bihar. He invited the younger brother of Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi, Mahmud Lodhi and made a plan of a military campaign against Babur. However, Babur defeated him in the battle of Ghagra (AD 1529). Sher Khan and Jalal Khan surrendered before the Mughals and got back their Jagirs on the condition of paying an annual tribute to Babur. Gradually, Sher Khan began to add to the number of his supporters. Meanwhile the ruler of Chunar, Taj Khan died in AD 1530. Sher Khan married his widow Lad Malika. This brought him the fort of Chunar and enormous wealth along with it.

Sher Shah was a daring soldier, a successful conqueror and an able administrator. He was a lover of knowledge, patron of scholars and a very good ruler. He was the forerunner of Akbar in many fields, though he was not equal to Akbar in greatness. The famous historian Dr Qanungo is right when he says, 'It is doubtful whether he would have done such deeds as Akbar if he had lived for fifty years more because Sher Shah had the drawbacks from which Aurangzeb suffered.'

### **Sher Shah's Struggle against Mughals on the Fort of Chunar**

In AD 1531, when Humayun encircled the fort of Chunar then Sher Khan pretended defeat at the hands of Humayun. In the mean time, he strengthened his army.

### **The sole matter of Bihar (AD 1534)**

The Lohani chiefs of Bihar became jealous of Sher Khan at his increasing power. They won over Jalal Khan to their side and also entered into an alliance with Mahmud of Bengal. They made a treaty with Mahmud Shah of Bengal in AD 1533, who himself was eager to check the rise of Sher Khan because it adversely affected his own prestige and power. However, Sher Khan defeated the combined armies of the Sultan of Bengal and the Lohanis at Surajgarh in eastern Bihar on the bank of the river Kieul. Mahmud Shah fled to Bengal and with him fled Jalal Khan and his associates. Thus, the whole of Bihar came under Sher Khan and he became the sole master. The victory of Surajgarh was an important event in Sher Shah's life. Taking advantage of the absence of Humayun in Agra, (February 1535–February 1537) Sher Khan had further strengthened his position. The Afghans from far and near had congregated under him. Although, he still talked of loyalty towards the Mughals, he had made a clever plan to drive the Mughals out of India. He had a close contact with Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Bahadur Shah had helped him with men and money as well. Having acquired these sources he assembled a capable and vast army so that fighting could be indulged in against the Mughals at the opportune time.

### **Invasion of Bengal**

Encouraged by his victory at Surajgarh, Sher Khan launched an attack against Mahmud Shah of Bengal in AD 1535. Mahmud Shah saved his life by giving a vast sum of money to Sher Khan but after few years Sher Khan again besieged Gaud, the capital of Bengal in AD 1537 and by conquering it forced Mahmud Shah to seek refuge with Humayun. When Humayun started from Agra for the support of Mahmud Shah, Sher Khan's son Jalal Khan kept him engaged for about six months at the fort of Chunar on his way to Bengal and during this period, Sher Khan came back to Bihar after amassing enough

## **NOTES**

wealth from Bengal. Humayun's brother Hindal declared himself as the emperor at Agra and another brother Kamran came to Delhi from Lahore as the head of 1000 soldiers. When Humayun received this news he started towards Agra from Gaur.

## NOTES

### Battle of Chausa

Facing many difficulties, Humayun was somehow advancing towards Agra when Sher Khan suddenly attacked him at Chausa in AD 1539. About 8000 Mughal soldiers were killed in this battle. Sher Khan's spirits were raised high as a result of this victory. He assumed the title of *Sher Shah Sultan-i-Adil*. Now Sher Khan had become the undisputed master of Bihar and Bengal.

### Battle of Kanauj or Bilram (AD 1540)

The following year, Humayun made an effort to regain his fortune, but despite his best efforts he could not secure the cooperation of his brother. On 17 May 1540, Mughals and Afghans again confronted each other near Kanauj. Humayun's army was defeated badly. Humayun managed to escape somehow. By this conquest, Sher Shah became the master of Delhi, Agra, Sambhal, Gwalior, etc. This ended the Mughal dynasty for the time being, and for the next fifteen years, power passed onto the hands of the Surs.

### Sher Shah's Conquests after Becoming the Emperor

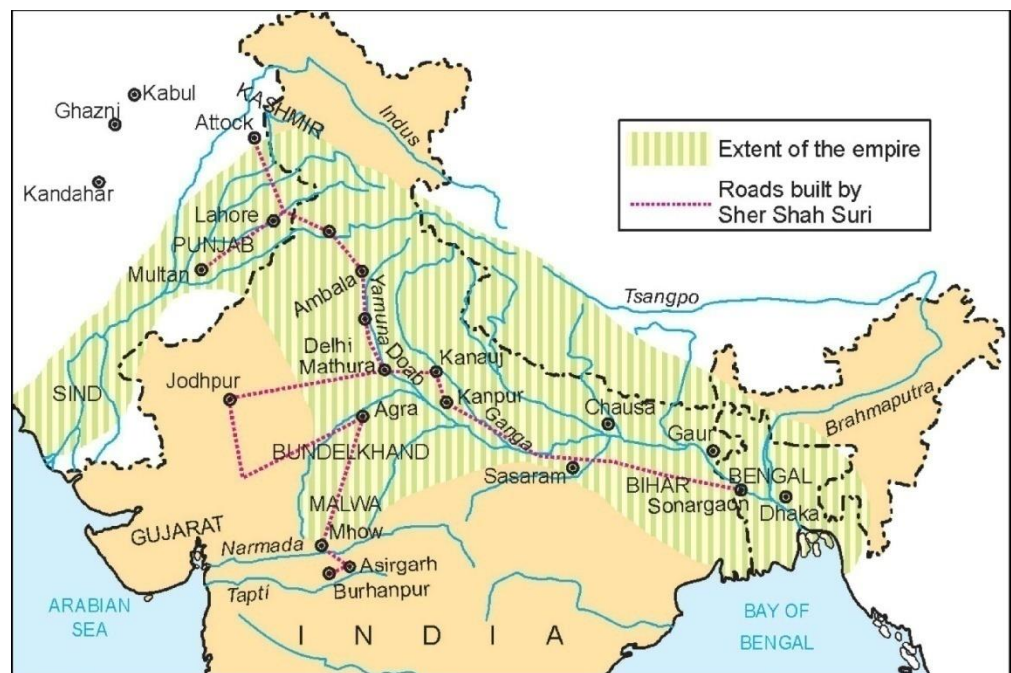


Fig. 1.2 Extent of Sher Shah's Empire and the Roads he Built

### Conquests of Punjab (AD 1540–1542)

Immediately after his accession on the throne at Delhi, Sher Shah snatched Punjab from Humayun's brother, Kamran. Alongside, he also suppressed the turbulent Khokhars of the northern region of the rivers Indus and Jhelum. About sixteen kilometers north of the river Jhelum, he constructed the fort of Rohtasgarh at the cost of about ` 8 crore for the security of the north-western Frontier of India.

**Conquest of Malwa (AD 1542)**

The ruler of Malwa was known as Mallu Khan 'Qadirshah'. At the time of war with Humayun, he had not helped Sher Shah. As a result, Sher Shah attacked Malwa. Qadirshah did not fight but ran away to Gujarat instead. Sher Shah made Malwa an integral part of his empire. When Qadirshah asked his pardon, Sher Shah excused him, treated him kindly and appointed him the governor of Lakhnauti.

**Conquest of Raisin**

Raisin was a Rajput principality in Central India ruled by the Rajput ruler Puranmal Chauhan. He had occupied Chanderi from the Mughal Chiefs. When Sher Shah came to know of it he attacked Raisin. According to Dr Quanungo, 'The motive behind the attack over Raisin was political not religious; Sher Shah wanted to make the Rajput principality of Raisin an integral part of the Delhi empire.' The fort of Raisin was besieged. After a prolonged siege negotiations for peace started. Puranmal was prepared to surrender on the condition that no harm would come on the members of his family and his associates. Sher Shah promised to see to their security and Puranmal surrendered. But, Puranmal and his followers were attacked without any prior information. One of his daughters and three of his nephews were caught alive and the others were murdered. In the words of Dr Ishwari Prasad, 'Sher Shah behaved with very inhuman cruelty towards his enemy who had reposed trust in him at the time of his bad condition.'

**Conquest of Multan and Sindh**

Sher Shah's general, at the behest of Sher Shah attacked Multan and Sindh in AD 1543. Both of these provinces were conquered and annexed to the empire of Sher Shah.

**Conquest of Marwar (AD 1543–1545)**

In AD 1543, Sher Shah attacked Maldev of Marwar. In AD 1544, the Rajputs and the Afghan armies fought each other at Semal, between Ajmer and Jodhpur. Sher Shah advanced very carefully in Rajasthan. He did not think it wise to indulge in a straight fight against Maldev and resorted to diplomacy. He caused some such letters to be dropped near Maldev which led Maldev to suspect that some of his chiefs had deserted him. Maldev was deeply grieved and decided to retreat. But his army launched a more fierce attack against Sher Shah's army. They fought very bravely, but ultimately Sher Shah was victorious. The battle was so fierce and the victory so difficult that Sher Shah proclaimed that he had almost lost the empire of India for a handful of grains. In AD 1544, Sher Shah brought Marwar under his occupation but soon after his death, Maldev reoccupied the lost regions in July 1555.

**Conquest of Chittor and Ajmer**

The ruler of Mewar, Rana Udaisingh was a minor at the time of Sher Shah. When the Rajputs came to know of Sher Shah's invasion they thought it better to accept his sovereignty rather than fight with him. Now the whole of Rajasthan except Jaisalmer was under Sher Shah. But Sher Shah left the Rajput kingdom with the Rajput chiefs themselves. After establishing his control over some important forts (Ajmer, Jodhpur, Abu and Chittor) he posted the Afghan army in large numbers there. Side by side he kept a strict control over the routes of communications.

## Conquest of Kalinjar and the Death of Sher Shah

After these conquests, Sher Shah planned an invasion of Kalinjar because its ruler Kirat Singh had given shelter to the ruler of Riva, Virbhan against the wishes of the Afghan ruler and then had refused to return him to the Afghans against Sher Shah's wishes. Because of all these causes, Sher Shah besieged the fort in AD 1544. But he could not achieve much success. On 22 May 1545, Sher Shah launched a fierce attack. Sher Shah was inspecting the arsenal when he was grievously injured by a bomb blast. He ordered to continue the invasion and by evening the fort was under his control, but Sher Shah was not fated to enjoy this conquest as he died of the injuries on the same day.

## Character, Personality and Achievements of Sher Shah

### As a man

Sher Shah Suri was farsighted, a lover of knowledge, dutiful, disciplined, industrious and a progressive thinker. He had a great love for his mother, as compared to his father because he disliked the partial behaviour of his father towards his step-mother. He was well educated. Along with studying Arabic and Persian language, he was also fond of studying history and literature. He had a great love for architecture. He had a feeling of love for the peasants, poor and destitute. He was busy for as many as sixteen hours every day in the state business. Though he became the emperor at the ripe old age of sixty-eight, his enthusiasm, ambitions and hard work did not cease. He used to say that great men should always remain active. Abbas *Sherwani* and Rizqualla Mushtaki both have written that he used to get up in the very early hours of morning and was busy throughout the day with the work of the state.

### As a commander, soldier and conqueror

Sher Shah was an able commander, a great soldier and conqueror. He is said to have lived like a common soldier in the battlefield. He was an experienced soldier. He had boundless bravery and patience. He attacked a weak army like a tiger; but faced with a powerful enemy he achieved victory through deceitful tactics of a fox. He was a great conqueror who annexed Bihar, Bengal, Punjab, Malwa, Gujarat, Rajputana, Sind and so on. His empire was very vast. The frontiers of his empire extended from Punjab to Malwa and from Bengal to Sind.

### As a ruler and administrator

- *Founder of Law and Order:* Sher Shah had many achievements as an administrator. He re-established law and order throughout his empire. He dealt very strictly with those *Zamindars*, thieves and dacoits who broke the social order or denied paying the land revenue. As an administrator, Sher Shah Suri had a great impact on his *Zamindars*, officials and chiefs. Abbas *Sherwani* writes, 'The *Zamindars* were so frightened of him that nobody liked to raise the boundary of revolt against him nor any of them dared to harass the travellers passing through his territory.' Though he did not bring about any change in the administrative units of the Sultanate period, he made such changes that nobody could be autocratic and harass the people. He was a first ruler of later Medieval India who thought it his duty to give a life of peace and comfort to his subjects, forgetting the difference between the Hindus and Muslims. He established democratic autocracy. In his central administration, he did not make any one minister more important than the



others and thus minimized the possibilities of mutual jealousy and plotting against the emperor. He organized his empire at the level of provinces, *sarkars*, *paraganas* and villages. He issued certain instructions for provincial rulers so that they did not minimize the importance of central administration. He divided very big provinces into smaller units and appointed separate officials there. He did not make the administration of all the provinces uniform because he thought that the administration of every province should be according to its special local needs. He appointed two separate officials of equal level in the provinces, *sarkars* and *paraganas*, so that one was responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the other for the financial resources. He left the work of local defense and peace to the local officials and thus not only lessened the work of central administration but tried to involve a greater number of people in the administration. He gave an evidence of his administrative ability by delegating the responsibility of arresting thieves, dacoits and murderers to the village headmen and government officials. During his time, the arrangements of the life and property of the subject was more satisfactory than ever before.

- *Able land administrator*: He gave special attention to land revenue system, army and judicial system. He fixed the land revenue on the basis of proper measurement of land, its productivity, actual produce and local prices, and prepared detailed lists of the amount of the revenue to be paid. He gave an option to the cultivators to pay the revenue in cash or in kind. He started the practice of *Kabuliat* and *Patta* and gave priority to the *Rayatwari* system as compared to the *Zamindari* and *Jagirdari* practices prevalent at that time.
- *A great army administrator and organizer*: As a ruler, he devoted attention to the army administration and organization. He created a vast standing and efficient army, brought an end to the system of supplying a fixed number of soldiers to the centre by tribal leaders and began direct recruitment of soldiers. He started the practices of '*Huliya*' and '*Dag*'. He constructed cantonments among various parts of the empire, and placed a strong contingent army in each of these cantonments. His army consisted of 15000 infantry, 25000 cavalry armed with bows and arrows, 5000 elephants, and an arsenal.
- *A just ruler*: Sher Shah Suri loved justice. He paid special attention towards the judicial system. He used to say that 'dispensing justice was the highest religious duty which should be discharged equally by Kafirs and Muslim Kings'. Sher Shah gave justice to everyone. He had assumed the title of *Sultan-i-Adil* or a just ruler. Sher Shah Suri had established law courts at various places which were called *Dar-ul-Adalat*. He never pardoned any criminal whether he was a big chief, his own caste person or a near relative. For the establishment of law and order, *Qazis* were appointed at various places but like earlier time village level *Panchayats* and *Zamindars* also heard civil and criminal cases. In his time, criminal law was very strict and educative for others. He was very successful as a just ruler and appreciating his judicial system Nizamuddin has written that so much was the fear of Sher Shah and his justice that in his time even dacoits and thieves guarded the properties of the travellers.
- *Supporter of a tolerant religious policy*: In spite of being a strict Sunni Muslim, Sher Shah was not a fanatic. Though he did not end *Jaziya*, he gave high offices to the Hindus in large numbers. He considered religion to be a personal affair and never let politics and religion to get mixed up. Dr. Qanungo writes, 'Sher Shah's

attitude towards the Hindus was not one of the hateful tolerance but that of respect.' He was the first Muslim emperor having a national outlook that established a secular state and looked to the welfare of all his subjects in an impartial manner. In his time religious tolerance like that of Akbar could not be established. Dr. Qanungo writes correctly that during Sher Shah's time, he had to struggle against religious and political orthodoxy as also against well-established traditions of communal Sultanate of the last 300 years. Therefore, he did not have the congenial atmosphere which was inherited by his successors.

- *Public welfare activities:* As a ruler, Sher Shah performed many acts of welfare for his subjects. He kept grain stores reserved for helping the people at the time of famines, and established charitable state 'langer' for feeding the persons destitute. He planted many trees to provide shade along roads, as well as constructed roads and schools. He issued pure and high quality coins and standard weights and measures. He adopted a liberal attitude. At the time of fixing land revenues he ordered military officials that they should not harm the standing crops while travelling. He opened government hospitals. Police and postal arrangements were made for the convenience of the public.

### **Cultural achievements (as patron of knowledge and art)**

Sher Shah had many achievements in the cultural field, because he was a great patron of knowledge, literature and art. He made good arrangements for the education of his subjects. Financial grants were given to many Hindu schools. For his Muslim subjects he opened many *Makhtabs* of Arabic and Persian and also established *Madrassas* for higher education. To encourage the pursuit of knowledge, he made arrangements for scholarships and arranged for the maintenance of the poor students by the state. Sher Shah showed interest in the field of architecture as well. He constructed many mosques, forts, *sarais*, etc. Some scholars hold the opinion that he constructed the Purana Qila desecrating the Dinapanah city of Humayun. In it he constructed the Qila-i-Kuhana mosque which is counted amongst his famous buildings in north India. Persian influence is discernible in the small minarets around the entrance gate and its artisanship. The other parts of the building are constructed on an Indian pattern. The mosque in Bihar constructed in the midst of a lake in Sahasram is a clear example of the Indo-Muslim architecture so far as its grandeur, beauty and proportionate structure are concerned. The outer structure is of Muslim style but the inside of the structure is decorated by the *Toranas* and pillars of the Hindu style. Its dome, shining in blue sky, appears beautiful. There is a stunning harmony of blue, red and yellow colours. In every corner there is the pillared pavilion on the top of the second storey. The construction of a lotus on the top has added to its decoration. Sher Shah constructed a new city on the banks of river Jamuna as well. Sher Shah patronized the scholars as well. Some of the best works of Hindu literature like *Padmawat* of Malik Muhammad Jayasi were written during his time. Sher Shah was not a religious fanatic. His social and economic policies are evidence of this fact. In brief, Sher Shah Suri was the first great national ruler of medieval times. After him, his dynasty did not last even for ten years, but his sword and diplomacy had founded such an empire that its policies (especially currency system, land revenue system, judicial and military departments) continued for a very long time, extended and progressed. The masters of the empire changed (first the Mughals and then the British) but the institutions of Sher Shah continued. Erskine says rightly, 'No Government, not even the British, had showed that much of wisdom as was evidenced by this Afghan.'

### 1.3.1 Sher Shah Suri: Administration

Though Sher Shah was given only a small period of five years to rule, but within this short span of time he brought such important changes in the administrative system that he is considered as one of the best administrators. In fact, he managed his administration keeping before him a model ideal. Without any religious discrimination he gave an opportunity to all his subjects to lead a comfortable life. According to him, the major aim of the state was public welfare. He tried to make the frontiers of the country so strong and powerful that Humayun or any other power should not be able to bring about any instability in the country. He brought about many reforms and gave safety to the people against anti-social elements.

Accepting his administrative efficiency, English historian Keive wrote that none of the rulers, not even the English Government evinced so much wisdom as this Pathan Chief. The main features of his administrative system can be studied under the following heads:

#### Central administration

Though Sher Shah tried to follow the Afghan tradition for running the Central administration, yet he tried to bring the office of the Sultan nearer to the Turkish ideal rather than the Afghan. To some extent, he continued the central administration present from the time of the Delhi Sultanate and established a despotic rule similar to that of Balban or Allauddin, but not before getting it endorsed by a committee of the Afghan chiefs. Thus, his despotism had a democratic base.

Probably, looking at the outer structure of his administration, Dr Qanungo remarked that Sher Shah Suri did not establish any new administrative system, but gave a new shape to the existing institutions. All the power of the state was centred in his hands. He was the highest official in the fields of administration, army, judiciary and law. There were four main ministers in his Central Government, viz., *Diwan-i-Wizarat* (Kept control over the income and expenditure of the state), *Diwan-i-Ariz* (looked after military responsibilities), *Diwan-i-Rasalat* (looked after foreign affairs), and *Diwan-i-Qaza* (head of judicial department). Sher Shah himself was so hard working and able that besides deterring the general policy of all the departments, he also supervised over their everyday activities. During his reign he did not let any person or *Amir* emerge as an important figure. This might have been due to the fact that because of the importance given to any one individual, other *Amirs* would grow jealous of him and their dissatisfaction would lead them to organize revolts etc. against the ruler. Removing corruption, he offered a clean administration to the people.

#### Provincial administration

The outline of the provincial administration under Sher Shah is somewhat dim. According to Dr Qanungo, 'There were no provinces during Sher Shah's time and the empire was divided in Sarkars.' As against this, Dr P. Saran holds that there were twelve provinces in Sher Shah's empire each ruled by the military governor. According to some historians, provinces did exist before Akbar's time, but their shape and administrative system was not uniform. Even during Sher Shah's time there were many provinces or *Subas* which were called *Iqtas*. Modern historians hold that during Sher Shah's time there was a definite provincial organization. According to them, Sher Shah brought about two new experiments in the provincial administration, but they were not so successful as to be

implemented in other provinces. His first experiment was in Bengal in AD 1541. When Khizr Khan after becoming its governor started behaving like a Sultan, Sher Shah got him imprisoned and after subdividing Bengal into many parts, appointed separate officials for each. An official was appointed so as to maintain peace and order in the province. Because they were appointed by the centre and their sphere of work was different, the possibility of any revolt was minimized.

Probably this system was implemented in Malwa, Punjab, Rajputana, etc. His other experiment was the appointment of deputy governors. He appointed two sub-deputy governors under Haibat Khan of Punjab. During his time, this scheme was probably implemented in Multan, Baluchistan, Sirhind, etc. During his time, the provincial governor was probably called *Hakim* or *Faujdar* or *Amin*. However, their rights were not the same. The governor of Punjab, Haibat Khan was probably the most powerful. He had 30,000 soldiers under him, whereas less powerful governors had just about 5000 soldiers under them. Sher Shah kept a strict control over the provincial governors and from time to time supervised their military and administrative activities.

### **Administration of a *Sirkar***

Sher Shah Suri organized the local administration at the district, *paragana* and village level. The highest unit of the local administration was the district or the *sirkar*. According to Dr Ishwari Prasad, ‘Sher Shah had sub-divided his empire into forty-seven parts, each comprising of many *paraganas*. This part or unit was called a *sirkar*.’ Each *sirkar* had two major officials – *Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran* or Chief Shiqdar and *Munsif-i-Monsifan* or Chief *Munsif*, responsible respectively for the maintenance of peace and order in the *sirkar* and supervising the officials of the *paraganas* and dispensing mobile justice. Sher Shah brought about some important changes in the administration of the *sirkar*. First, he established a satisfactory judicial system. Second, he ordered the officials to always look for the convenience of the people. Third, he made the Chief Shikdar and the Chief *Munsif* respectively the highest, but separate officials in the fields of army and finance. This minimized the possibility of revolt. Fourth, he kept with himself the right of appointing and dismissing the officials of the *sirkar* which strengthened the control of the centre over these units.

### **Administration of *Paragana***

Each *sirkar* or district was subdivided into many *paraganas*. Here, Shiqdar and *Munsif* were responsible for the maintenance of peace and order and the collection of revenues respectively. Besides these, there was one treasurer and two *Karkuns* or *Munsims*—one to keep the land records in Hindi and the other in Persian. The treasurer or *Fotdar* kept the cash of the *paragana*. The *Munsif* was responsible for the collection of the revenue of the whole *paragana* and also its land measurement.

### **Village administration**

The smallest unit of the empire was the village. In every village there was a *Mukhiya* or *Muqaddam*. The chief of village collected the revenue from the farmers and sent it to the treasurer of the *paragana*. *Muqadam* was responsible for maintaining peace and order in the village along with collecting the revenue. He arranged for night watchmen. If a theft was committed in his area, he had either to catch hold of the thief or suffer the punishment himself. According to the contemporary historian Abbas, ‘Because of this arrangements, the events of theft or *dacoity* in the empire were totally nullified and

even if an old women travelled from one end of the empire to the other tossing gold, nobody dared to interfere with her.’

During Sher Shah’s time, priority was given to the maintenance of peace and order throughout the empire. He dealt very strictly with thieves, dacoits and with those landlords who refused either to pay the revenue or refuse to obey the government’s instructions.

## NOTES

### Revenue administration

During Sher Shah’s time, there were seven main sources of state income—land revenue, *khams*, custom, *Jaziya*, *nazrana*, royal currency and sales tax. In his time, one-third of the produce was taken as the land revenue. The peasants paid in cash or in kind though the state preferred the cash payment. He effected many reforms in the sphere of land revenue administration. He evolved a system of land revenue rates called *Rai*, wherein there were separate rates of land revenue, different parts of the empire for different kind of produce. For the payment in cash, a list was prepared according to the prices, prevalent in the area. Besides the land revenue administration, he also imposed duties on the import and export of raw materials and finished products. A ruler like Sher Shah also did not abolish a tax like *Jazia*. This tax was levied on the non-Muslims and was an important source of governmental income. *Nazrana* or gifts were obtained almost from all tributary rulers, *Zamindars*, government officials, etc. Royal mint was also a good source of the royal income. Salt tax also yielded considerable income to the state. Sometimes, unclaimed property was also an important source of income for the government.

### Land revenue administration

Sher Shah paid great attention towards land revenue system and land administration. Sher Shah was well acquainted with every level of land revenue system having managed for many years the *Jagir* of Sahasram of his father Hassan and then having worked as a guardian of Jalal Khan, the ruler of Bihar. After becoming the emperor, he set the whole land revenue system right with the help of a few able administrators. A glance at the different aspects of his administration shows clearly that he managed the land revenue system with greatest ability and interest. Praising his land revenue administration Dr Ishwari Prasad writes, ‘He tried to fix the land revenue in accordance with the income of the people.’

### Military system

Sher Shah kept a strong army for defense of his vast empire. He knew very well the importance of the local army. According to the contemporary writer Abbas Sherwani, ‘There were about 150000 infantry, 25000 cavalry, 5000 elephants and artillery in his army.’ Sher Shah put an end to the practice of supplying a fixed number of soldiers to the state by the chieftains and started direct recruitment of the soldiers and fixed their pay according to their ability. The salary was paid in cash. Promotion was given to soldiers and officials on the basis of their ability and working capacity. The descriptive role of each soldier was recorded. His horse was also branded, so that it could not be replaced by a horse of inferior quality. Probably, these practices were adopted by Sher Shah following the example of Allauddin Khilji, who had first adopted these practices as part of his military reforms. He constructed many cantonments in different parts of his empire and kept a strong army contingent in each of them. In addition to a big artillery, Sher

Shah made arrangements for supplying good quality guns to his soldiers. He maintained a strict discipline in his army. He constructed a new fort near Peshawar.

### **Judicial system**

Sher Shah laid great emphasis on the dispensation of justice. He used to say, 'Doing justice is the greatest religious work which should be adopted alike by the state of *Kafirs* or *Momins*.' He never pardoned any criminal whether he was his near relative, big chief or any powerful person. He established law courts in the whole of his empire. At the centre the Emperor himself was the highest judge and next to him was the *Qazi-ul-Qazt*, who was the highest official of the judicial department. Besides big cities, provinces and their capitals *Qazis* dispensed justice. In the village, the work of the dispensation of justice was undertaken by the *Muqaddam* or *Mukhiya*. The civil cases were heard by the *Munsif*, *Amirs* and *Munsifi-Munsifan* (Amin and Chief Aman). In fact, during Sher Shah's time, not many changes were effected in the judicial system, but he inspired all the officials to dispense justice impartially and fearlessly and did so himself as well.

### **Police arrangements**

Sher Shah Suri made separate police arrangements. Before him, this function was also discharged by the army. Because of the police arrangements, it became easier to trace the criminals. In the *sarkars* the Chief *Shiqdar*, in the *paragana* the *Shiqdar* and in the villages *Muqaddams* used to perform police duties and hand over the criminals to the law courts. Abbas Sherwani wrote, 'During the time of Sher Shah, travellers were free from the botheration of keeping a check over their belongings. Even in the desert region they had no fear. They could camp freely in a locality or in the deserted regions. They could leave their belongings in the open place also. Cattle could be left to graze freely and the owners slept carefree as if they were in their home.'

### **Espionage system**

Sher Shah had spread a net of trusted and expert spies who kept on giving him information about the activities of the whole empire. Therefore, nobody dared to revolt against the emperor or shirk his duty. The daily report of the prices of commodities in the market used to reach the emperor. Messengers and spies were appointed in all the major cities and they had the orders to send any urgent message to the emperor at once.

### **Currency**

Sher Shah brought about many reforms in the currency system and got pure gold, silver and copper coins minted in the place of debased and mixed metal coins. His silver rupee was so authentic that even after centuries it continued to be used as a standard currency. Historian V.A. Smith wrote correctly, 'This rupee was the basis of the British currency system.' On the coins, the name of the emperor was inscribed in Devnagari as well as Persian scripts. The coins of Sher Shah were pure, beautiful and standard. He also issued small copper coins so that people may not have any difficulty in everyday transactions.

### **Public welfare activities of Sher Shah**

For the benefit of the peasants, Sher Shah Suri carried on many land reforms such as getting the land measured and fixing of the prices, keeping in view the cultivate of land, its productivity, the crops grown and the local prices prevalent. The cultivators were

given the option of paying the revenue in cash or in kind. He encouraged the *Ryotwari* system in place of the *Zamindari* system. For the benefit of trading community, he affected currency reforms. He showed special interest in the construction of roads, *sarais*, public kitchens, etc. He issued standard weights and ordered the officials to behave courteously with the traders. He is said to have constructed about 1700 *sarais* some of which still exist. Apart from constructing good roads for the travellers, he also planted many shade trees on both sides of the roads. He gave patronage to the artists and litterateurs. For the welfare of the poorest of the capital, he made arrangements for charitable *langar*. It is said that about 500 *Tolas* of gold was spent everyday on this *langar*.

In essence, Sher Shah was the first great and able ruler of the later Medieval India. V. A. Smith has justly written, 'If Sher Shah remained alive for some more time and if his successors had been as able as he was, the Mughals might not have reappeared on the stage of India.'

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## AKBAR

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On 19 February 1556, Akbar was declared the Emperor at Kalanaur when he had just turned thirteen. At that time, he was virtually a ruler without a kingdom. Vincent Smith wrote aptly that before Akbar could claim to be an emperor in reality rather than just in name, he had to prove himself more capable than his other rivals for the throne, and at least had to recapture the lost kingdom of his father.

### Initial difficulties

At the time of his accession, Akbar was confronted with the following difficulties:

- **A small kingdom:** In fact, Akbar was in possession of only a small part of the Punjab. Though in theory Kabul, Kandhar and Badakshan were also the parts of the Mughal Empire, he had no hope of any help from there because Kabul was under his stepbrother, Mirza Hakim. He immediately declared himself independent. The Governor was in Bairam Khan's *jagir*, but was in danger of the Iranian invasion. The Governor of Badakshan, Mirza Suleman had become independent and he wanted to establish his control over Akbar as well as the ruler of Kabul, Mirza Hakim.
- **Akbar a minor:** Akbar was very young and he had to follow the instructions and work under the guidance of Bairam Khan till he attained maturity.
- **Sikandar Suri:** Though the ruler of Punjab had been defeated, his power had not as yet been crushed completely and he could become a danger for Akbar at any time. Adil Shah was in control of the region from Bihar to Chunar and his able minister Hemu was making preparations for war against the Mughals.
- **Ibrahim Suri:** Ibrahim Suri was occupying the Doab and Sambhal and he considered himself to be a claimant for the throne of Delhi.
- **Other Afghan chiefs:** Malwa, Gujarat, etc., were still in the hands of Afghan chiefs. They could at any time become a problem for Akbar.
- **Rajputs:** The Rajput chiefs of Marwar, Mewar, Jaisalmer, Ranthambhore, and Ajmer were continuously organizing their strength.

### Check Your Progress

3. When was Sher Shah Suri born?
4. What was the major aim of the state, according to Sher Shah Suri?

## NOTES

**Abdul Muwali:** The famous Mughal Amir, Abdul Muwali had revolted and he did not attend the coronation ceremony of Akbar. Though Bairam Khan had captured and imprisoned him in the fort of Lahore, he posed a threat for the Mughals at any time.

- **Tardi Beg:** He tried to fix the land revenue in accordance with Tardi Beg, the governor of Delhi who had also turned a rebel and Hemu, the minister of Adil.
- **The kingdoms of Kashmir, Sind, Multan and Himalayan region:** All these kingdoms were independent and Akbar planned to bring them under the Mughal Empire.
- **Bad financial condition:** The Mughal treasury was empty. A terrible famine was raging in Delhi and Agra. To arrange financial resources was a problem confronting Akbar. In the Deccan there were, besides the Vijayanagar Empire, five Shia states viz., Khandesh, Bidar, Berar, Ahmednagar and Golkunda. The country could be united politically only after bringing them under the Mughal fold.
- **Anarchy and confusion:** Everywhere in the country there was indiscipline, disorder and anarchy. One of the problems before Akbar was to end them and give to the people a capable administration, peace and order.

### Solving the Problems

Akbar gradually overcame all these difficulties in this conquest, where on the one hand, he was aided by his own good fortune and on the other hand, credit should go to the loyalty and ability of Bairam Khan. He called a conference of the Mughals in Sirhind and gave a death punishment to the governor of Delhi, Tardi Beg who had not been able to defend Delhi against Hemu. Bairam Khan defeated Hemu in the Second Battle of Panipat and seated Akbar on the throne. But, four years of power turned Bairam Khan into a vain person. In AD 1560, Akbar very deftly defeated him after he indulged in rebellion, but pardoned him keeping in view his past services. At a place called Patan, Bairam Khan was murdered by some rebel Afghans. Because of the treacherous activities of Akbar's foster mother and Adham Khan, Akbar was forced to give death punishment to Adham Khan in AD 1561 and his mother Maham Anga died of the shock and grief. In AD 1565, the rebellious Uzbek chiefs Sardar Khan, Abdulla Khan and Zaman Khan were also punished. In fact, Zaman Khan died fighting and his brother Bahadur was accorded death punishment. Abdulla Khan died (after some time, Akbar got all the supporters of his step brother, Hakim Mirza of Kabul, murdered and forced him to flee from Kabul). With the help of Bairam Khan, Akbar conquered (besides Agra and Delhi), the regions of Jaunpur, Ranthambhore and Malwa. After the acceptance of the sovereignty of the Mughals by Bihari Mal, the ruler of Ajmer and marrying his daughter, Akbar extended the sphere of his power till Ajmer. After that, he had to wage wars against Garkatanga (Gondwana), Gujarat, Bengal, Chittor, Kalinjar, etc. After Bengal, Kabul and Kandhar were brought under occupation. Khandesh accepted his suzerainty. After a prolonged struggle, Ahmednagar was conquered in AD 1600 and after the revolt of the new governor of Khandesh, Miran Bahadur Shah of Asirgarh was conquered militarily on 6 January, 1601. Briefly then, it can be said that Akbar had to struggle to overcome the various problems which confronted him.

### The Second Battle of Panipat

The Second Battle of Panipat was a battle between Hemu and Akbar in which Akbar won to re-establish the Mughal Empire. The Second Battle of Panipat occurred in



November 1556. Emperor Akbar, who was crowned in the same year after his father's death defeated Muhammad Adil Shah Suri of Pashtun Suri Dynasty and his Prime Minister Hemu (Hemchandra). This defeat of Adil Shah and Hemu initiated Akbar's reign.

Humayun, the second Mughal Emperor died suddenly on 24 January 1556, as he slipped from the steps of his library. That time his son Akbar was only thirteen years old. Akbar was busy in a campaign in Punjab with the Chief Minister Bairam Khan at the time of his father's death. That time Mughal reign was confined to Kabul, Kandahar and parts of Punjab and Delhi. Akbar was enthroned as the emperor on 14 February 1556 in a garden at Kalanaur in Punjab. Hemu or Hemchandra was the military chief of Afghan Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah. Adil Shah was the ruler of Chunar and was seeking an opportunity to expel the Mughals from India. They got the advantage of Humayun's death. Hemu occupied Agra and Delhi without much difficulty in October and became the ruler under the title 'Raja Vikramaditya'. It was a short-lived victory for Adil Shah and Hemu.

Bairam Khan, the Chief Minister and the guardian of Akbar proceeded towards Delhi with a large army. On 5 November, both the armies met at Panipat. Hemu had a large army including 1500 war elephants. He got the initial success, but unfortunately a stray arrow struck his eye and he became unconscious. His troops thought that they have lost their leader and panic spread among them and they retreated. The Mughals won the battle. Shah Quli Khan captured the Hawai elephant of Hemu and presented it directly to Akbar. Hemu was brought in unconscious condition to Akbar and Bairam Khan. Akbar then severed the head of unconscious Hemu and took his cavalry sword.

Some historians claim that Akbar did not kill Hemu by himself; he just touched his head with his sword and his followers killed Hemu. Hemu's cut off head was sent to Kabul to the ladies of Humayun's harem in order to celebrate the victory. Hemu's torso was sent to Delhi for a display on a gibbet. Iskandar Khan from Akbar's side chased Hemu's army and captured as many as 1500 elephants and a large portion of the army. Hemu's wife escaped from Delhi with the treasure she could have with her. Pir Mohammad Khan chased her caravan with troops, but his effort was not successful. The Second Battle of Panipat changed the course of Indian history as it initiated the re-establishment of Mughal Dynasty in India.

### **Character and Personality of Akbar**

Akbar was the greatest among the Mughal emperors who ascended the throne at a very early age, after the death of his father Humayun. During his reign, the Mughal Empire was at its peak. Akbar, who took charge of an empire that was besieged with many problems, both internal as well as external at a young age, made the Mughal Empire not only the strongest state in India, but also one of the best administered state of his times. He also implemented innovative policies which proved liberal, farsighted and successful which added a new chapter in Indian medieval history and established the Mughal Empire firmly in India. Therefore, he has been justly described as 'the Great' among the Mughal emperors of India.

### **Mansabdari System**

The *Mansabdari* system during the Mughal administration is discussed under the following heads.

## Akbar and the *Mansabdari* System

### NOTES

Akbar could not have been able to expand his empire and maintain his hold over it without a strong army. For this purpose, it was necessary for him to organize the nobility as well as his army. To realize both these objectives, Akbar organized his army on the basis of the *Mansabdari* system in place of the *Jagirdari* system. He saw that the *Jagirdars* did not keep the horses or the horsemen or the soldiers in the required number and the prescribed breed of horses.

On the contrary, they spent the government money on their own pleasure making. *Mansab* is a Persian word. It means an office or a status or an *Ohada*. The person whom the Emperor gave a *mansab* was known as the *Mansabdar*. Akbar gave some *mansab* or the *ohada* (status) to each of his military and civil official. The lowest rank was ten, and the highest was 5000 for the nobles; towards the end of the reign, it was raised to 7000.

According to Badayuni, we can say that towards the end of his reign, Akbar increased the highest rank to 12,000. Princes of the blood received higher *mansab*. During the period of Akbar, Raja Man Singh, Mirza Aziz Koka and one or two other top ranking officials were promoted to the rank of 7000. Thereafter, the *mansab* of 8000 and above were meant for the royal family.

### Meaning of *Zat* and *Sawar*

The ranks of *Mansabdars* were divided into two groups – *Zat* and *Sawar*. The word *Zat* means personal. It fixed the personal status of a person, and also the salary due to him. The *Sawar* rank indicated the number of cavalymen (*sawars*) a person was required to maintain.

Regarding the actual horsemen maintained by the *Mansabdar*, there was no definite view. This matter had been further complicated by the *Zat* and *Sawar* distinction introduced by Akbar in AD 1603-1604 on which the historians hold divergent views. According to Blachmann, *Zat* indicated the number of troops which a *Mansabdar* was expected to maintain, while the *Sawar* meant the actual number of horsemen that he maintained. On the other hand, Irvin holds that the *Zat* indicated the actual number of a cavalry, while the *Sawar* was an honour, and represented like the *Zat*, the actual number indicated by it. This view does not hold much water. Dr R.P. Tripathi holds still another view. He says that *Sawar* was simply an additional honour and it entitled the *Mansabdars* to some extra allowance. For the *Sawar* rank, he was not required to maintain any additional troops at all. C.S.K. Rao says that the *Zat* rank indicated infantry while *Sawar* indicated cavalry to be maintained by the *Mansabdar*. However, Abdul Aziz says that it is impossible that the Mughals could have such a large number of infantry. He is of the opinion that *zat* rank imposed an obligation to maintain a fixed number of elephants, horses, beasts of burden and carts but no horse men of cavalry, whereas *Sawar* represented the actual number of cavalry under a *mansabdar*. Both Abdul Aziz and Prof. S.R. Sharma hold that the *sawar* distinction determined whether a particular *Mansabdar* of the *Zat* rank belonged to the first or the second or the third class in that particular *mansab*.

A person who was required to maintain as many *sawars* as his *zat* rank was placed in the first category of that rank; if he maintained half or more, then in the second category, and if he maintained less than half, then in the third category. Thus, a rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  for every *sawar* was added to the *zat* salary. No one could have a higher quota of

*sawars* than his *zat* rank. Although modifications were made from time to time, this remained the basic structure as long as the Empire was held together.

### **Main Characteristics of the *Mansabdari* System**

The following are main characteristics of *Mansabdari* System:

#### **Mansab was granted to the military as well as the civil officials**

*Mansab* was granted not only to the military officials, but also to all Mughal officers in the revenue and judicial services. Even the scholars of the court were the holders of *mansab*. It is, therefore, that Irvin says, *mansabdari* meant nothing 'beyond the fact that the holder of *mansab* was the employee of the state'. R.P. Khosla in a way reiterates the same when he remarks, 'In the Mughal state the army, the peerage and the civil administration were all rolled into one'.

#### **Categories or grades of *Mansabdars***

In AD 1573-1574, the *mansabdars* were classified into thirty-three grades ranking from commanders of ten to those of 12,000. Those who held command of ten to 400 were called *mansabdars*. Higher up, those who held the command of 500–2500 were styled as *amirs*, while the holders of 3000 and upward were known as *Amir-i-Azam* or *Umra*. The highest graded commanders from 8000–12,000 were reserved for the princes of the royal blood. A common official could not hold a *mansab* beyond 7000.

#### **Appointment of the *Mansabdars***

The emperor used to appoint the *mansabdars* personally and they could retain the *mansab* so long as he desired.

#### **Pay and allowances of the *Mansabdars***

The *mansabdars* during the Mughal period were very highly paid. They were generally given salary in cash. Sometimes, the revenue of a particular *jagir* was assigned to them as salary.

They had to manage their own horsemen and the expenditures of horses from their own salary. They were necessary for the transport of the army. Prof. Satish Chandra says regarding the pay of the Mughal *mansabdars*, 'The Mughal *Mansabdars* were paid very handsomely; in fact, their salaries were probably the highest in the world, at that time'. A *mansabdar* of 5000 got from ` 28,000 – ` 30,000, out of which he would spend ` 16,000 to maintain the soldiers and the other obligations. A *mansabdar* of 1000 got nearly ` 8000 of which ` 3000 were spent to meet his obligations. Moreover, there was no income tax in those days. The purchasing power of the rupee in those days has been calculated to be sixty times of what it was in 1966. Even though the nobles had to spend roughly half of their personal salary in the keep up of the animals for transport and in the administration of their *jagirs*, they could lead lives of ostentation and luxury.

#### **Duty of the *mansabdars***

*Mansabdars* could be sent to the battlefield on military campaigns as the military commanders or under some commander, who himself was a *mansabdar*. They could be called upon to quell a revolt, conquer new area or perform non-military and administrative duties. Sometimes, they were allowed to recruit their own troops and to purchase their equipment.

## NOTES

### Restrictions on *mansabdars*

Great care was taken to ensure that the *sawars* recruited by the *mansabdars* were experienced and well mounted. Akbar started the practice of keeping a record of the description (*huliya*) of each horseman under a *mansabdar* and of branding their horses (*dag*) to prevent the *mansabdars* from going as they pleased. Each horse bore two marks—the government mark on the right thigh and the *mansabdar*'s mark on the left thigh. Every *mansabdar* had to bring his contingent for a periodic inspection before persons appointed by the emperor for the purpose. The horses were carefully inspected and only good quality horses of Arabic and Iraqi breeds were employed. For every ten cavalrymen, the *mansabdar* had to maintain twenty horses. This was so because the horses had to be rested while on march, and replacements were necessarily in the times of war.

### Pure and mixed troops of *mansabdars*

Generally, a provision was made that the contingents of the nobles should be mixed ones, and drawn from all the groups—Mughal, Pathan, Hindustani, Muslims, Rajputs, etc. Thus, Akbar tried to weaken the forces of tribalism and parochialism. The Mughal and Rajput nobles were allowed to have contingents exclusively of the Mughals or the Rajputs, but in course of time, mixed contingents became the general rule.

### Recruitment, promotion and dismissal

During the Mughal period, the recruitment, promotions and dismissals of *mansabdars* were in the hands of the emperor. A person desirous of joining the Mughal service may contact the emperor through a *mansabdar* or through *mir bakshi* to the emperor. It was up to the mood and satisfaction of the emperor to accept the recommendation of *mir bakshi* to assign a *mansab* to the concerned person. If he was granted a *mansab*, his whole record, known as '*hakikat*' was prepared. Promotions of the *mansabdars* were also in the hands of the emperor and were made generally on such occasions as (i) before and after an expedition, (ii) at the time of vacancy and (iii) on some auspicious occasions or festivals. A *mansabdar* could be dismissed at any time by the emperor if the latter felt that the former was disloyal or dishonest to him or had lost his utility for the empire.

### *Mansabdari* System during the Reign of Akbar's Successors

- (i) **Difference in the highest *mansab*:** In Akbar's time, the smallest *mansab* was of ten *sawars* and the highest of 10,000 even though, initially, *mansabs* higher than 5000 were given only to princes. Later on, Akbar increased the *mansab* of the princes to 12,000. He gave a *mansab* of 7000 only to three of his very famous *amirs*, namely Mirza Shah Rukh, Aziz Koka and Raja Man Singh. After Akbar's death, for ordinary *mansabdars*, the highest *mansab* remained that of 7000, but *mansab* of the princes was raised to 40,000 during Jahangir's time and 60,000 during Shah Jahan's time. Shah Jahan gave to his father-in-law a *mansab* of 9000 and Jahangir gave to Asaf Khan a *mansab* of 9000.
- (ii) **Rise of a new class of *sawars*:** The end of Jahangir's reign saw the rise of a new class of *sawars*. It was known as *do aspa sih aspa*, i.e., two-three horses. The *mansabdars* were to maintain additional horsemen and draw special allowance.

- (iii) **Reduction in the number of soldiers:** Shah Jahan reduced the number of soldiers kept by the *mansabdars* to one-third the original number. According to some historians, sometimes this number was even reduced to one-fourth or one-fifth of the original number. In other words, during the reign of Shah Jahan, a *mansabdar* of 6000 kept only 2000 soldiers. If any *mansabdar* was given the additional rank of *do aspa sih aspa*, he could keep 2000 soldiers.
- (iv) **Difference in the categories of *Mansabdars*:** Adul Fazal in his book *Akbarnamah* had mentioned thirty-three categories of *mansabdars* during the period of Akbar. During the time of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, this was reduced to eleven, and during Aurangzeb's time, their number was reduced to three.
- (vi) **Relaxation in rules:** After the death of Akbar, the Mughal Emperors started relaxing the rules of muster and descriptive roles, and also became less watchful on their activities, which resulted in degeneration and an inefficiently in administration.

### Merits of the *Mansabdari* System

- **End of the main defects of the *Jagirdari* system:** The *mansabdari* system brought to an end many of the defects of the *Jagirdari* system. The *mansabdars* had to come to the emperor every month for their pay. The emperor could maintain direct contact with the *mansabdars* every month.
- **Increased military efficiency:** The *mansabdari* system was an improvement over the military establishment of the medieval period. It was a sort of a compromise between the tribal chieftainship and the feudal system of giving troops. It combined the advantages of both the systems. Moreover, it was designed to tap every source of fighting strength in the country. Various units were particularly suited to certain special kinds of military duties. For example, certain Rajput *mansabdars* were diplomatically used against certain Rajput chiefs with whom they were at feud.
- **No more loss to royal treasury:** Under the *jagirdari* system, the *jagirdars* were assigned *jagirs* that covered huge areas of land, which resulted in a great loss to the royal treasury. In the *mansabdari* system, all the land became the state land. All the *mansabdars* were paid in cash on a fixed salary basis. This prevented extra revenues from going to the *jagirdars*, and the state treasury, thus, was enriched.
- **End of corruption:** According to some historians, the *mansabdari* system raised the moral standard of the military officials because after the death of a *mansabdar*, all his property used to be confiscated, and therefore, they did not indulge in dishonesty or show greed for hoarding more and more money.
- **Merit as the basis of selection:** All the ranks in this system were given keeping in view the ability of the officers. Moreover, incompetent officers were promptly removed from their positions. The son of a *mansabdar* did not inherit the *mansab* after the death of his father. With the appointment of efficient and able officials on different posts, all parts of the administrative machinery functioned smoothly.
- **Caste feeling and discrimination weakened:** People from different castes and religions formed the military group of *mansabdars*. This helped to weaken the feeling of caste and discrimination between the Hindus and the Muslims.

Thus, this system helped to create an atmosphere of emotional integration in the country.

### Demerits of *Mansabdari* System

- (i) Very expensive system: The fat salaries paid to the *mansabdars* made the whole army system of the Mughals very expensive, and later on, in Aurangzeb's time, this proved to be one of the factors which brought the downfall of the Mughal Empire.
- (ii) Within a *mansabdar's* division, there was no classification of the troops into regiments. All the troops were immediately under him and every soldier had personal relations with him. Nor was the numerical strength of each army regulated or fixed in a *mansabdar's* contingent.
- (iii) Each system was a great defect of the whole system. Hawkins, Bernier and Peter Mondy have referred to this in their accounts. Whenever a particular *mansabdar* died, his property was confiscated by the state. This made the nobles and the *mansabdars* lead a luxurious life, for they thought and very rightly too, that their savings could not be inherited by their children. Therefore, they spent whatever they possessed. This led to many corrupt practices in their private life. This generation of the nobility later on proved to be a potent cause of the downfall of the Mughal Empire.
- (iv) Corruption in some form or the other was unavoidable in a system which left the duties of the recruitment and the administration of the army to the *mansabdars*, i.e., the commanding officers themselves.
- (v) Moral degradation – Dishonest officials and dishonest *mansabdars* used to tally together, and during inspection, used to borrow horses from the other *mansabdars* and used to maintain their full quota only on paper.
- (vi) The *mansabdars* drew the money from the king and paid the troops their salaries with the result that the troops were more loyal to the *mansabdars* than to the king.

### Din-i-Ilahi

Contacts with the leaders of various religions, reading of their learned works, meeting with the Sufi saints and yogis gradually convinced Akbar that while there were differences of sect and creed, all religions had a number of good points which were obscured in the heat of controversy. He felt that if the good points of various religions were emphasized, an atmosphere of harmony and amenity would prevail which would be for the good of country.

Further, he felt that behind all the multiplicity of names and forms, there was but one God. As Badauni observed, as a result of all the influences which were brought to bear on His Majesty,

‘There grew gradually as the outline of stone, the conviction in his heart that there were some sensible men in all religions. If some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion.’ Hence, he brought a solution of the problem, i.e., of having a religion that has the excellent points of the existing creeds and the defects of none. So, he consulted the foremost leaders of the various religious communities and unfolded to them his scheme of having a religion which should

be the combination of the merits of all the faiths and the defects of none. He said, 'We ought, therefore to bring them all into one but in such fashion that there should be both one, and all, with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another. In that way honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the people and security to the empire.' So, having put together the general principles of all religions, he established a synthesis of various creeds and called them *Din-i-Ilahi*.

### **Main Principles of *Din-i-Ilahi***

Mohsin Fani, the author of *Debistani-i-Mazahib*, described some of the leading principles of *Din-i-Ilahi*:

- (i) Liberality and beneficence
- (ii) Abstinence from the worldly desires
- (iii) Forgiveness to the evil doer
- (iv) Soft voice, gentle words, pleasure speeches for everybody
- (v) Good treatment to all those who come in contact
- (vi) Dedication of the soul in the love of God

The whole philosophy of Akbar was 'the pure weapon (shastra) and the pure sight never err.' He found that the narrow minded religiously zealous was a menace to the society. Accordingly, he made an attempt to bring about a synthesis of all the important religions and styled it *Din-i-Ilahi* or *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* (Divine Monotheism). It was a socio-religious order—a brotherhood designed to cement diverse communities in the land. The followers of this religion believed in the following principles:

- (i) God is one and Akbar is his Caliph or representative. In this way its basis was the Unity of God, the cornerstone of Islam.
- (ii) The followers of this religion used to greet each other by one saying 'Alla-ho-Akbar' and the other replaying 'Jall-a-Jolalohu' when they met.
- (iii) As far as possible, the followers of his religion abstained from meat eating.
- (iv) The followers used to worship Sun God and considered the fire sacred.
- (v) The followers of this religion were opposed to child marriage and marriage of old women.
- (vi) The neophyte in the religion used to bow before the Emperor on Sunday and the Emperor used to instruct him and the neophyte used to repeat the instruction again and again.
- (vii) Every member used to host a party on his birthday and used to give charity.
- (viii) Apart from their own instructions the followers were not to honour any other ritual, place of worship or sacred book.
- (ix) Every follower vowed to keep his character high and do good to others.
- (x) The followers of this religion used to respect all religions equally.

### **Propagation of *Din-i-Ilahi***

Although there were a number of adherents of the so-called Divine Faith, it did not live for long after Akbar. Blochman has collected from Abul Fazlal and Badayuni the names of eighteen prominent members, Raja Birbal being the only Hindu in the list. The herd of

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the unnamed and the unrecorded followers probably never numbered. In order to complete the subject, it may be noted that in September, 1595, Sadr Jahan, the Mufti of the empire, with his two sons, took the Shasi joined the Faith, and was rewarded with a command of 1,000.' At the same time sundry other persons conformed and received commands' ranging from 100 - 500. Father Pinheiro, writing from Lahore on 3 September, AD 1595, mentions that in that city the royal sect had many adherents, but all for the sake of the money paid to them. No later contemporary account of the *Din-i-Ilahi* has been found.

*Din-i-Ilahi* perished with Akbar's death though Jahangir continued to make disciples after Akbar's fashion. Both Smith and Woolsey Haig have condemned Akbar for promulgating what they have termed a religion of his own. The Divine Faith' says Dr Smith, was a monument of Akbar's folly and not of his wisdom. Elsewhere, he calls it 'a silly invention'.

Following Badayuni, a bigoted and over-strict Muslim, with whom the omission of a single ceremony of Islam amounted to apostasy, and adopting the same line of argument as he, they have inevitably come to the same conclusion. As a profound student of India, as well as Islamic history, Akbar made a direct appeal to the innermost sentiments of his subjects by giving his Sangha a religious character. Neither the aim of the order nor the object of its author can be duly appreciated unless it is regarded as an instrument with which the master-mind endeavored to consolidate the Mughal Empire by eradicating from the minds of the ruled their sense of subordination to the Muslim rulers. The chief motive underlying the promulgation of the Divine Faith was the unification of India. Lanepool justly observes, 'But broad minded sympathy which inspired such a vision of catholicity left a lasting impression upon a land of warring, creeds and tribes and for a brief while created a nation where before there had been only factions.

According to a renowned historian S.M. Zaffar, 'The Divine Faith had far-reaching consequences. It completely changed the character of the Muslim rule in India. The Mughal Emperor was no longer regarded as a foreigner, trampling upon the lives and liberties of the sons of the soil and depriving them of their birth-rights. The members of the different Faith had bound themselves by an oath to stand by the emperor in weal and wore to sacrifice the religion, honour, wealth, life, liberty and all for him'. Prof. R.S. Sharma also supports the same view. According to him, Akbar's aim in propagating this Doctrine was political not religious but Dr Satish Chandra does not accept the view, he gives certain logic. First, the number of people embracing this religion was very small and even amongst them many were Akbar's personal friends. Second, when Akbar propagated this religion (AD 1582) then he had already consolidated his empire. In our view, Akbar was a true national leader. He started *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* only with the purpose to bring about harmony and peace amongst the various sects. He was the most liberal exponent of the principles of universal toleration. To his open mind there was truth in all faiths, so he did not permit anybody to be persecuted on the score of his religion. *Solh-i-Kull* (peace with all) was the principle he acted upon. The Hindus, the Christians, the Jains, and the followers of other religions enjoyed full liberty, both of conscience and public worship. Even when he promulgated the new religion of *Din-i-Ilahi* he never sought converts either by force or coercion. By starting *Din-i-Ilahi*, he promoted the feeling of cultural unity and humanism to an extent.

### Check Your Progress

5. When did the Second Battle of Panipat occur?
6. List some of the merits of *Mansabdari* system.
7. What are the main principles of *Din-i-Ilahi*?



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## EARLY CAREER AND ACCESSION OF SHAH JAHAN

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## NOTES

Shah Jahan ruled the Mughal Empire from AD 1628–1658. The son of Emperor Jahangir and his Rajput Queen, popularly called Jodhabai, Shah Jahan was born on 5 January 1592. Subsequent to the death of his father, he proclaimed himself the Emperor of the Mughal Dynasty. He extended the political supremacy which was established in India by Akbar. The kingdom enjoyed peace and opulence during his reign. His reign was said to be the golden age of Mughal Empire in India.

### Reign of Shah Jahan

The reign of Shah Jahan was marked as the golden age of the Mughal dynasty. Shah Jahan was well educated and cultured, and was known to have provided protection to scholars. Persian and Sanskrit literature flourished during his reign. He also patronized fine arts, appreciated music, painting and structural design. He had several wives; nonetheless, he was devoted to them. He constructed the Taj Mahal to commemorate his love for Mumtaz Mahal. He loved his children and gave them all necessary training and comforts. He was a hard fighter and an accomplished commander. He participated in all important campaigns not only during his life time, but also had led most of the conquests for his father Jahangir. Soon after he occupied the throne, he started his military campaigns and busied himself with extending the boundaries of the Mughal Empire. During his reign, Ahmednagar was completely annexed to the Mughal dominion, and Bijapur and Golconda were enforced to accept the suzerainty of the royal leader. He even attempted to conquer Central Asia and recover Kandahar.

Shah Jahan was a just sovereign and solemnly desired the welfare of his subjects. Trade, industry and agriculture flourished and the state as well as the subjects enjoyed prosperity during the entire period of his reign. He worked hard and personally supervised the administration of the Empire. He brought about enhancement in the *mansabdari* system. He helped his subjects generously in times of famines and natural calamities. With regard to religious affairs, he was unquestionably orthodox when compared with Jahangir and Akbar; yet he did not get in the way of the daily life of the Hindus and the Christians. He participated in fairs and festivals of the Hindus and he continued the practices of *Jharokha Darshan* and *Tula Dan* as before. He continued the policy of his father and grandfather towards the Rajputs and commanded their respect and loyalty. Trade activities flourished between Delhi, Agra, Lahore, and Ahmedabad during the reign of Shah Jahan as a result of improved network of roads and waterways.

The greatest achievement of this great good judge of art was the architectural structures and gravestones erected by him during his life time. A major revolution that occurred during his period was the replacement of red sandstone with the more expensive marble as the construction material as seen in the *Diwan-i-am* (hall of public audience) or the black marble exhibition area of the Shalimar Gardens in Srinagar. The Jama Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the tomb of Jahangir in Lahore unquestionably deserves mention here. The most famous of all his works is the legendary Taj Mahal at Agra built as a tomb for his wife, Empress Mumtaz Mahal.

## Achievements of Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan pursued the same guiding principles of his ancestors Akbar and Jahangir regarding the extension of the Empire's boundaries towards south India. Moreover, the fact that the states of south India sheltered the rebels in opposition to the Mughals did not sit well with Shah Jahan and hence, he desired to get the better of these states. In AD 1633 Ahmednagar was annexed to the Mughal Empire. The ruling family of Golconda was *Shia* and its rule had refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughals. Shah Jahan desired to conquer Golconda. He was able to manage this when Abdullah Qutub Shah ascended the throne, and he agreed to the terms and conditions of the Mughal Emperor. In AD 1636, Shah Jahan attacked Daulatabad. Bijapur was weak at that time due to rebellious attempts of its nobles. Consequently, Muhammad Adil Shah voluntarily agreed for peace and an agreement was signed between the two parties. The Deccan guiding principle of the Mughals proved fairly triumphant for the duration of the period of influence of Shah Jahan. Since the annexation of Ahmednagar, both Bijapur and Golconda also accepted the suzerainty of the royal leader. The rulers of these kingdoms were obligatory to pay the annual acknowledgment from time to time and parts of their territories for the Mughals to establish their forts and watch stations. Some other minor invasions also occurred during Shah Jahan's rule. These conquests include the following:

- The Bhils of Malwa and Gonda
- Raja Pratap of Palam
- The Raja of Little Tibet

Raja Pratap of Palam and the Raja of Little Tibet were pardoned after they accepted the suzerainty of the Mughals. Moreover, Assam was forced to establish trade relations with the Mughal kingdom after constant fighting for over a decade spanning from AD 1628 – 1639.

## War of Succession

Chaos and bloodshed related to wars of succession for the throne had become the order of Mughal Era. All the four sons of Shah Jahan – Dara Shikoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad, started fighting among themselves during the last years of Shah Jahan's rule. Shah Jahan personally chose Dara as the would-be-heir. But the Muslim nobles disliked the popular Dara for his liberal mindset. Ultimately, Aurangzeb cleansed all obstructions through coercion and bloodshed. He imprisoned Shah Jahan, and murdered Murad and Dara, while the helpless Shah Shuja ran away from India. Shah Jahan died on 22 January 1666, in Agra.

### 1.5.1 Shah Jahan: Art and Architecture

Shah Jahan was one of the greatest builders of the Mughal Empire. During his time, the arts of the jewellery and the painting were blended into one. The important buildings of Shah Jahan were the Diwan-i-aam and Diwan-i-khas in the Red Fort of Delhi (Figure 1.3), the Jama Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the Taj Mahal in Agra. It is pointed out that the palace of Delhi is the most magnificent in the East. The Diwan-i-khas is more highly ornamented than any other building of Shah Jahan.

The mosques built by Shah Jahan are of two kinds. The beauty of the Moti Masjid lies in its simplicity. The perfection of proportions and harmony of constructive designs make it one of the purest and most elegant buildings of its class to be found anywhere.



*Fig. 1.3 Red Fort, New Delhi*

The Jama Masjid in Delhi (Figure 1.4) is vast in size and more impressive than Moti Masjid. The interior of the Jama Masjid at Delhi is simple.



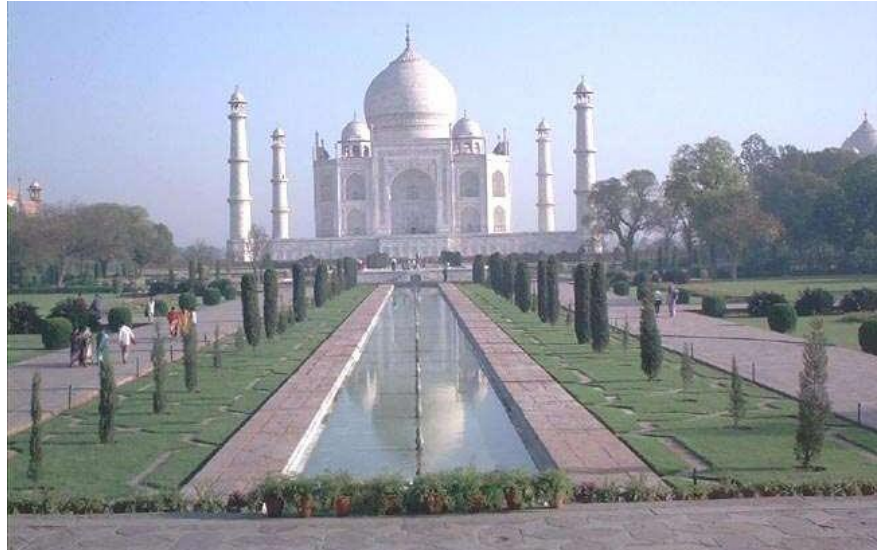
*Fig. 1.4 Jama Masjid, New Delhi*

Percey Brown opined, ‘Augustus boast that he found Rome of brick and left it of marble, its counterpart in the building productions of Shah Jahan who found the Mughal cities of sandstone and left them of marble’.

In the fort of Agra and Lahore and at other places, Shah Jahan demolished many of the sandstone structures of his predecessors and in their places constructed marble palaces. During his time, the building art acquired a new sensibility. Instead of the rectangular character of the previous period, there arose the curved line and flowing rhythm of the style of Shah Jahan. Most of the ornamentation was however of a much more subtle nature, colour and ornamentation being introduced. However, perhaps the most striking innovation was the change in the shape of the arch. At Agra and Lahore, the palaces within the forts were largely reconstructed and all the cities of Mughals display examples of Shah Jahan’s fondness for buildings.

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The greatest monument of Shah Jahan's era the Taj Mahal (Figure 1.5). It is the symbol of love and is considered as an architectural wonder in the world. It is the most graceful and impressive of the structures of the world.



*Fig. 1.5 Taj Mahal, Agra*

The Taj Mahal was built by Shah Jahan in the memory of his beloved queen Arjumand Bano (Mumtaz Mahal) who died in 1630. Prominent artisans were invited from various countries to help in designing and constructing the Taj. To begin with, a model of the Taj was prepared in wood and this was followed by the artisans. Finally, the Taj Mahal was constructed at Agra under the guidance of Ustad Isa and he was paid a salary of 1000 per month. It took twenty-two years to complete the construction of the Taj. It was estimated to have cost about three crores.

According to Percey Brown, 'It may be noted that while the structural portions seem to have been principally in the hands of Mohammedans, the decoration was mainly the work of Hindu craftsman, the difficult task of preparing the pietra dura, especially entrusted to a group of the latter (Hindu craftsman) from Kanauj'. At some other place, he says, 'The main dome by its shape is plainly of Timurid extraction, its remote ancestor being the dome of the rock at Jerusalem; on the other hand, the copulas with their wide caves are of indigenous origin being derived from the overlapping rings of masonry, which formed the vaulted ceiling of the Hindu temple'.

However, scholars describe the Taj as the finest monument of conjugal love and fidelity in the world. It is flawless in design and execution and it is a dream in the marble.

### **Later Mughal rulers and Mughal architecture**

After the death of Shah Jahan, Mughal architecture began to decline. Aurangzeb was not interested in architecture. He built a small mosque in the fort of Delhi for his own use. He has also built a mosque at Banaras on the ruins of the famous Kashi Vishwanath temple in 1660. The Badshahi Mosque was built at Lahore in 1674, which is the largest Mosque in the Indian subcontinent. However, it is a poor imitation of the Jama Masjid at Delhi.

Aurangzeb also destroyed several Hindu temples like the Keshava Rai temple, built by Raja Bir Singh in Mathura, the Kashi Vishwanath temple constructed by Raja

Man Singh in Banaras, besides several others in Kuch Bihar, Udaipur, Jodhpur and other places in Rajasthan.

After the death of Aurangzeb, Mughal architecture completely deteriorated. The buildings that were constructed in the eighteenth century during the time of later Mughals demonstrate the bankruptcy of taste and poverty of design, finishing and decoration.

## NOTES

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### SUMMARY

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- Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur was the son of Umar Sheikh Mirza, a descendent of the famous invader Timur Lane. His mother Qutulug Nigar Khanam belonged to the family of Genghis Khan, the great Mongol invader.
- When Babur was born in AD 1483, his father was the ruler of a small principality of Farghana in Turkistan. In AD 1494 Babur inherited the petty Kingdom of Fargana from his father.
- The first half of the 15th century witnessed political instability with the disintegration of the Tughlaq Dynasty. Both the Saiyyad (1414–1451) and the Lodi (1451–1526) rulers failed to cope with ‘the disruptive forces’.
- The Mughals called themselves so after their Mongol ancestry. Unlike the Delhi Sultanate, which was ruled by many dynasties, the Mughal period witnessed the rule by a single dynasty for nearly two- and- a -half centuries.
- Babur’s character has been praised by all historians—both modern and contemporary. He was numberless man of many virtues and excellences.
- The great grandson on Timur and Genghis Khan, Babur was the first Mughal emperor in India. He confronted and defeated Lodi in AD 1526 at the First Battle of Panipat, and so came to establish the Mughal Empire in India.
- Sher Shah Suri is one of those great men in history who achieved greatness from a very ordinary position. The dynasty founded by him is known as the Sur dynasty. He was born in ad 1472.
- He was one of the eight sons of Mian Hassan Khan Sur, an employee of the governor of Punjab, Jamal Khan.
- During Sher Shah’s time there were seven main sources of state income—land revenue, *khams*, custom, *Jaziya*, *nazrana*, royal currency and sales tax.
- On 19 February 1556, Akbar was declared the Emperor at Kalanaur when he had just turned thirteen.
- The Second Battle of Panipat was a battle between Hemu and Akbar in which Akbar won to re-establish the Mughal Empire.
- The *mansabdars* during Mughal period were very highly paid. They were generally given salary in cash. Sometimes, the revenue of a particular *jagir* was assigned to them as salary.
- *Din-i-Ilahi* perished with Akbar’s death though Jahangir continued to make disciples after Akbar’s fashion.
- Shah Jahan ruled the Mughal Empire from AD 1628–1658. The son of the royal leader Jahangir and his Rajput Queen, popularly called Jodhabai, Shah Jahan was born on 5 January 1592.

#### Check Your Progress

8. When was Shah Jahan born?
9. List some important buildings of Shah Jahan.

## NOTES

- Shah Jahan was one of the greatest builders of the Mughal Empire.
- The greatest monument of Shah Jahan's era the Taj Mahal. It is the symbol of love and is considered as an architectural wonder in the world.

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### KEY TERMS

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- **Tughluqid style:** It is the first Indian Islamic architecture to have integrated indigenous design components (pillars, beams and brackets) and local techniques (air cooling systems using water) with recognizably Islamic design elements (arches, vaults and domes).
- **Akbarnamah:** It is the Persian term for 'History of Akbar', is a book written by Abul Fazl Allami that traces the life and times of the earliest Mughal emperors in India.
- **Delhi Sultanate:** A term used to cover five Islamic kingdoms or sultanates of Turkic origin in medieval India, which ruled Delhi between AD 1206 and AD 1526.
- **Langar:** This term is used for common kitchen/canteen where food is served to all the visitors (without distinction of background) for free.
- **Makhtab:** It is an Arabic word meaning elementary schools. Though it was primarily used for teaching children in reading, writing, etc.
- **Mansabdar:** It is the generic term for the military-type grading of all imperial officials of the Mughal Empire. The mansabdars governed the empire and commanded its armies in the emperor's name. The term is derived from *mansab*, meaning 'rank'.

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### ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. The various factors that prompted Babur to conquer India are as follows:
  - Miserable political conditions of India
  - Immense richness of India and legal right to occupy some area
  - Meagre income from Kabul
  - Fear of Uzbeks
2. The following was the impact of the First Battle of Panipat:
  - End of the rule of Lodi dynasty
  - Foundation of the Mughal empire
  - Use of artillery in India
  - Tulugama became popular in India
3. Sher Shah Suri was born in AD 1472.
4. According to Sher Shah Suri, the major aim of the state was public welfare.
5. The Second Battle of Panipat occurred in November 1556.
6. Some of the merits of *Mansabdari* system are as follows:
  - End of the main defects of the Jagirdari system
  - Increased military efficiency

- No more loss to royal treasury
  - End of corruption
7. The main principles of *Din-i-Ilahi* are as follows:
    - (i) Liberality and beneficence
    - (ii) Abstinence from the worldly desires
    - (iii) Forgiveness to the evil doer
    - (iv) Soft voice, gentle words, pleasure speeches for everybody
    - (v) Good treatment to all those who come in contact
    - (vi) Dedication of the soul in the love of God
  8. Shah Jahan was born on 5 January 1592.
  9. The important buildings of Shah Jahan were the Diwan-i-aam and Diwan-i-khas in the Red Fort of Delhi, the Jama Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the Taj Mahal in Agra.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on the establishment of the Mughal Empire in India.
2. Trace the advent of Mughals and the establishment of the Mughal Dynasty in India.
3. Give an account of Sher Shah's conquests after becoming the emperor.
4. Analyse the features of the religious policy adopted by Akbar.
5. Why is the reign of Shah Jahan often referred to as the 'golden age' of the Mughal Empire?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the political scenario in India on the eve of Babur's invasion.
2. Analyse the various factors that prompted Babur to conquer India.
3. Describe the early career and conquests of Sher Shah Suri.
4. Highlight the features of Din-i-Ilahi.
5. List the various achievements of Shah Jahan.

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## FURTHER READING

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- Habib, Irfan 1982. *Atlas of the Mughal Empire*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Nizami, K.A. 1966. *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture*. New Delhi: Kitab Mahal.
- Smith, V.A. 1917. *Akbar the Great Mogul, 1542–1605*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.





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# UNIT 2 CRISIS OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

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NOTES

## Structure

Introduction  
Unit Objectives  
Emergence of Aurangzeb  
    Aurangzeb: Administration  
    Policies of Aurangzeb  
    Achievements of Aurangzeb  
Summary  
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Questions and Exercises  
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## INTRODUCTION

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In the war of succession amongst Shah Jahan's sons Aurangzeb occupied Agra and put Shah Jahan in prison. Aurangzeb put to death not only Dara and his other brothers, but also all other rivals. Shah Jahan died a broken man in AD1666 and was buried beside his wife. In this unit, you will learn about the life and times of Aurangzeb, who according to historians heralded the era of downfall of the Mughals. The unit also discusses the various policies adopted by Aurangzeb and analyses the reasons for the numerous rebellions during his life time.

The death of Aurangzeb was soon followed by the succession war among the Mughal princes. The Mughal Empire which gave Indian history an era of splendid accomplishments disintegrated with the irreparable mistakes of emperors like Aurangzeb.

At the time of the Mughal Empire, a powerful group emerged in the Deccan known as the Marathas. They were great warriors. When the Bahmani Empire collapsed, many Hindu kingdoms rose to high positions; Marathas were also among them. They lived in the Deccan, in the region of present Maharashtra and north Karnataka. Shivaji and Peshwa Baji Rao were the prominent Maratha rulers and they challenged the supremacy of the Mughal Empire. However, the Third Battle of Panipat shattered the dream of the Marathas to establish their supremacy on the whole of India and gave the opportunity to the East India Company to establish its rule in India. In this unit, you will also study about the historical background of the Marathas and the causes and consequences of the Third Battle of Panipat.

With fall of the Mughal Empire, the territories under its reign witnessed chaos and were fragmented into small princely states. Regional rulers who had till now nourished dreams of throwing out the Mughals started waging bitter wars. States like Bengal, Awadh, and Mysore came to the fore. This unit will also outline the rise of regional polities in Bengal, Awadh and Mysore.

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## UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the war of succession after Shah Jahan
- Discuss the early career and accession of Aurangzeb
- Explain the religious policy of Aurangzeb

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## EMERGENCE OF AURANGZEB

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The war of succession after Shah Jahan was a fierce battle waged by the sons of the royal leader—Shah Shuja, Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb and Murad—in order to seize the Mughal throne. Emperor Shah Jahan fell critically ill in November 1657. When he recovered from his illness and because of the embarrassment caused by his illness (dysentery and strangury), he commanded the fortress doors to be closed to everybody, except his elder son Dara Shikoh and daughter Jahanara. Moreover, he asked his faithful Rajputs, Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Ram Singh, to set a guard in his fort. This resulted in the rumours among the local population that the Emperor had passed away.

The news reached Shah Shuja. He instantaneously gathered a force of 40,000 cavalry and an authoritative infantry and marched towards Delhi with the intention of seizing the throne. Contrary to the prevalent rumours, Shah Jahan recovered completely from his ailments, even though Aurangzeb later confined him to a cell till his death in the Agra fort. At Dara's commencement, Shah Jahan sent a letter to his son telling him of his recovery. But Shuja's advisers told him that this might be a ruse and urged him to proceed with his revolt. In retaliation, the Emperor sent Suleman Shikoh with a strong force to oppose him. Despite the fact that he was very courageous and intellectual, he lacked the field know-how and was consequently backed by Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur and Daler Khan the Pathan. They laid an ambush for Shah Shuja and the prince walked into it. His force was in flight and he just about managed to break away from, abandoning his combat elephants, artillery and men.

Aurangzeb was in the Deccan when he heard of the rumours of the death of his father. Being a thorough diplomat, he started plotting the actions and being an experienced strategist, he bided his time. Murad Bakhsh's initial reaction, on the other hand, was to congregate a small armed force and rush to his father's side. He suspected someone had tried to poison him. Aurangzeb realized that whatever course events took, he would become involved in the conflict, so he took procedures to ensure an impermanent peace in his province. He struck conformity with Shivaji Bhonsle to ensure he would remain neutral and not rampage the prefecture in his absence. In return, the Maratha rebel

demanded a share of the revenue of the Deccan, and it is said he had the pact decorated on a golden-haired tablet. The Emperor, frightened by the news that his third son was also getting ready to attack the capital, returned to Agra, and Dara Shikoh wrote a threatening letter to Aurangzeb warning him against committing treason.

Aurangzeb's next move was to win Murad's confidence. He wrote to him suggesting an association. He averred that he had decided to maintain the claim of his youngest brother to the throne for the reason that of his zeal for the Holy Quran, and that he had long since relinquished the desire for power and had made a serious vow to spend his last part of his days in Mecca. On a more matter-of-fact level, he also sent Murad a war chest to help invest in his troops, which would seem to make believe that he was full-heartedly encouraging Murad to join the fray. Murad, little knowing the true intentions of Aurangzeb, even thanked his brother and congratulated him for his 'prudence' in supporting him and the zeal he had shown in this regard. He promised to take care of his family, as it was his significant privilege, and approved that his other brothers would obliterate the religious conviction if they gained power. Aurangzeb overwhelmed the naive Murad with obsequiousness to the point of bewitching him. Following this, Murad, intoxicated by these compliments, completely trusted his elder brother.

The Imperial family by then was once and for all split apart. This internal conflict also put other branches of the family in grievous dilemmas. Leaving Moazzam Shah in Aurangabad, Aurangzeb left his capital on 5 February AD 1658, reaching Burhanpur thirteen days later. On 20 March, he incarcerated his father-in-law, who had tried to oppose him. By 3 April, he crossed the river Narmada with his troops. Murad Bakhsh had left Gujarat with 70,000 cavalry, and the two joined up on the banks of Lake Ujjain. They halted at Dharmatpur. On 20 April, they encountered and overpowered Jaswant Singh's Rajput strength. Then the two armies had to cross the deep and turbulent Chambal River. They found a ford at a place called Kanira, but Siphur Shikoh (Dara's son) ambushed them while they were crossing and they lost 5,000 men by drowning and to the young prince's guns. Finally, on 29 May 1658, at Sambugarh, eight miles east of Agra, the two armies met Dara Shikoh who had been raising his army since 11 May. He had been able to gather a force of 30,000 cavalry, 20,000 infantry and musketeers, and 200 European artillery men. Transportation and supplies were carried by elephants and 500 camels. The army was a combination of butchers, barbers, carpenters, blacksmiths—in short, inexperienced men and many of the nobles had deserted because they were disappointed by Dara. However, he was better aided by his allies and generals. Khalilullah Khan commanded 30,000 Mughals; Ram Singh Rathore had 15,000 Rajputs, and Rustam Khan, 15,000 cavalry. They camped on the banks of the Yamuna River, between Agra and the joint armies of his two brothers.

Aurangzeb, accompanied by his son Mohammad Sultan, had fewer troops, 30,000, but they were more experienced. His collaborator Bahadur Khan commanded 15,000 cavalry, and Najabat Khan led 15,000 archers and musketeers. Murad Khan, supported him with Rajputs, 50,000 armed cavalry, and artillery. He had taken along his youngest son, who was still just a child

Dara made the mistake of letting the two armies settle down for the reason that his astrologers had advised against attacking after dusk. At sunrise, Aurangzeb's officers Asalat Khan, Safshi Khan, and Sheikh Mir got underway the attack. Their troops surrounded Dara's, who stood their ground. The Rajputs entered the fray courageously. They rushed into battle and were mown down by Aurangzeb's artillery. Ram Singh lay dead on the battlefield. Dara's archers responded by beginning a rain of arrows. On the

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other side, Khalilullah, a friend of Dara advised him to dismount from his elephant, as he presented himself as a clean target for stray arrows. But when the nobles and soldiers saw Dara dismounting, they thought he was abandoning the battle and were stricken with panic and started to abandon their posts. Dara's decision to come down from his howdah was a disaster. Dara and Siphur Shikoh managed to escape.

Aurangzeb sent 4,000 Afghan cavalrymen after them, but they were able to reach Delhi. Shah Jahan had advised his son to flee Agra and go to Delhi, which was easier to defend. Helped by Jahanara, he provided his son with a war treasury, and then Dara fled and became a fugitive. Still united, Aurangzeb and Murad marched towards Agra and halted near Mathura, fifty miles from Agra, where they camped in the green *Bagh-i-Dara*, in a hunting pavilion. Here, they were visited by Jahanara who had brought a message from the Emperor which chastized them for their attempt to seize the throne while their father was alive. She commanded them to give away their struggle for power and submit themselves to his wishes. This drew an indignant reply from Aurangzeb, who pointed out how Dara had always worked to alienate them from Shah Jahan and accused him of having violated the *Shariah*. He recalled that his father had occupied the throne for thirty-two years, peacefully and munificently, but he was now seventy years old and his faculties no longer functioned appropriately. As he was not able to perform his duties of supervision and administration satisfactorily for the sake of his subjects, it was now incumbent on the two brothers to substitute him. A very disillusioned Jahanara returned instantaneously to her father and reported that the princes demanded his renunciation of the throne.

Aurangzeb then began his negotiations. He first sent his eunuch Fahim to negotiate with his father, but these talks failed, so he sent his son, hoping he would be able to convince him. Meanwhile, according to the chronicler Ishwardas Nagar, Aurangzeb had one cannon placed on Jahanara's mosque and another on Dara Shikoh's residence on the banks of the Yamuna River. After three days and three nights, Aurangzeb shattered the fort's artillery. Seeing his defences shattered, Shah Jahan commanded the Tartar, Uzbek, and Afghan guards as well as the Turkish and Abyssinian slaves to protect him, about 15,000 troops in total. He then tried, unsuccessfully, to draw Aurangzeb to cross the threshold of the fort so that he could have him assassinated by his guards.

Mir Jumla's sons, Shaista Khan and Amin Khan, welcomed the prince as he advanced to a position near the Taj Mahal, opposite the fort of Agra, which Shah Jahan had left to his commanding officer, Itibar Khan, to defend. Aurangzeb then sent a messenger to the master of the weaponry, ordering him to surrender. Earlier, the commander had consulted the prince's horoscope, which showed that he was going to be victorious. So in order to save his honour, he fired some empty shots from his cannon and put up no resistance when Aurangzeb's men entered the fort. Mohammad Sultan entered the fort with some cavalry, closed the arsenals and magazines, imprisoned the servants, and put people he could rely on in their place. All the noblemen submitted to the two princes, and Shah Jahan's rule was over.

After the victory in Sambugarh, the two brothers went to Mathura, to the *Bagh-i-Dara*, where Murad tended to the appalling arrow wounds on his face, and at the same time as he was consequently laid up, Aurangzeb dealt with matters arising from their accomplishment. Aurangzeb invited his brother to dinner which he accepted even despite the fact that his eunuch and other officers expressed their suspicions about this hospitality. When Murad arrived, his brother treated him with eagerness and grace. He invited Murad to spend the night at his place where he was later overpowered by the

Prince's men in his sleepy and intoxicated condition and bound him with golden chains. He was first imprisoned in Salimgarh, which was guarded by four thousand soldiers, and later transferred to Gwalior on 25 June. Shah Shuja was defeated by Aurangzeb's forces at Khwaja on 9 January 1659; after that he without explanation disappeared. After a long chase, on 9 June 1659 Dara and his son Siphur were captured and Dara was beheaded and killed. The victorious Aurangzeb ascended the throne on 23 May 1658. On 8 June, Shah Jahan, Jahanara, and some other members of the royal family were made virtual prisoners in the palace at Agra.

### **Aurangzeb: Administration**

Aurangzeb was the son of Shah Jahan and he ascended the throne as the sixth Mughal Emperor in AD 1658. Even though he was an extremely able administrator, it was his religious intolerance and fanaticism which created unrest among his subjects and led to the gradual undoing of the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb was the third son of Shah Jahan and among the last great Mughal Emperors to rule over India. He was born in AD 1618 at Dohad near Ujjain.

Aurangzeb was a hardworking and thorough man who had proved himself as an able administrator in the years that he spent in the Deccan as well as other regions of the Empire. He learnt all the tactics of diplomacy due to his expertise as a skilled soldier and general. All this came handy when he waged the war of succession with his father and his brothers. The end of the conflict was marked by Aurangzeb succeeding his father to the throne. On taking authority as the supreme ruler of the mighty dynasty, he assumed the title of Alamgir (conqueror of the world), followed by Badshah (Emperor) and then Ghazi (Holy Warrior) to propound the essence of the roles he would play. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Dynasty was at its pinnacle with more regions of India becoming part of the Empire. From the time he was young, Aurangzeb had occupied various important positions during his father's reign. Thus, when he usurped the power of his father and ascended the throne, he had the rich experience as the governor of Gujarat, Multan and Sind to aid him in his day-to-day affairs. Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni Muslim and followed the principles of Islam. He led a disciplined life and abstained from drinking alcohol. He led a very simple life and spent little on his attire and food.

### **Administration of Aurangzeb**

Having succeeded Shah Jahan to the throne, Aurangzeb had the dominion over the largest area under him as a Mughal Emperor, compared to both his predecessors and successors. He proved himself as a capable ruler and ruled with an iron fist and keen intellect. His empire extended from Ghazni in the west to Bengal in the east and from Kashmir in the north to the Deccan in the south. In fact, one of the reasons cited by prominent historians for the downfall of the Empire was the over-extended empire that Aurangzeb ruled. Since his youth, Aurangzeb, being a staunch Sunni Muslim, was deeply devoted to Islam. Soon after occupying the throne, he felt the need to rule the country as much as was possible along Islamic injunctions. Aurangzeb felt that he had become superior not only to administer the empire in a better way, but also to protect and strengthen Islam, particularly its Sunni faith.

Aurangzeb believed that all Mughal rulers who ruled prior to him committed one blunder—they did not try to establish the supremacy of Islam in India. He therefore tried to reverse this trend during his reign because he believed that it was the foremost duty of a Muslim king. This duty of Aurangzeb limited his vision, narrowed his concept of kingship

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and made him intolerant towards the majority of his subjects. As the first step towards establishing the Muslim supremacy in his empire, he introduced various policies, most of which were a simple reverse of the policies that were introduced by his forefathers. Thus, his administration saw the birth of a new class of people whose responsibility was to cleanse the society of various non-Islamic practices such as gambling, alcohol consumption and prostitution. Besides banning the cultivation and production of narcotic substances, he did away with many of the taxes which found no mention in the Islamic law. Besides all this, he also banned *Sati*, a Hindu practice which was common in his time. Most of these steps when implemented found favour among his people. But with the passing of time, and in his attempt to realize his bigger objective of fulfilling his religious vows, he adopted more puritanistic ways. Some of these factors that made him unpopular among his subjects included banning music at the court which led to a number of state musicians losing their jobs, festivities on the Emperor's birthday and giving of gifts to the emperor .

His religious intolerance was reflected in a number of ways. He stopped celebrating the Hindu festivals like Holi and Diwali at the court. He also framed certain laws to be observed by the Muslims as their religious duty. That is why even liberal *Shias* and *Sufis* were punished during the reign of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb became quite intolerant towards the Hindus and ordered the provincial governors to demolish the schools and temples of the Hindus. In April AD1679, *Jaziyaw* was imposed on the Hindus. Pilgrimage tax on the Hindus was also revived and while the Muslim traders remained free from tax, their Hindu counterparts were asked to pay one part of the value of their commodities as tax.

While he went about with the demolition of schools and temples of Hindus, much resource were spent from the treasury for the construction of many masjids and the upkeep of the existing mosques and other Mughal buildings. Some popular and exquisite buildings that were erected during his time include the Moti Masjid in the Red Fort, which is a jewel in white marble, and the magnificent Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, with its imposing domes towering over the red sandstone walls.

### **Military Campaigns of Aurangzeb**

As a statesman his achievements have been quite immense. For one, the strong kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda were captured in less than a year. It is a tribute to Aurangzeb's control over the affairs of the Empire that no major upheaval occurred in the north during his prolonged absence in the Deccan, but there are clear indications of many minor disturbances and a general slackening of administration.

### **Revolts during the Reign of Aurangzeb**

The first organized revolt of the Hindus against the policy of religious persecution of Aurangzeb was that of the Jats. The Jats under their leader Gokul revolted against his tyranny in AD1669. To make matters worse Aurangzeb ordered to raze down the temple of Keshav Rai in AD 1670. With this incident, the Hindus rose up against him in the Battle of Tilpat, but however, they were defeated and the surviving Jat leaders were put to severe ordeal. The Jats who remained undaunted and determined, accumulated their forces under the leadership of Raja Ram and staged yet another revolt against the Moghul Emperor in AD 1686. Even though the outcome of the revolt was not a success for both the parties, the Jats continued their fight against the Mughals till the death of Aurangzeb. Finally, after his death, the Jats succeeded in founding their own independent kingdom and Bharatpur was made its capital.

Besides the Hindus, the Sikhs also had fallen out of the favour of the Emperor, who persecuted them also along with their Hindu brothers. The revolt of the Satnamis was also an important occurrence during the reign of Aurangzeb. They fought bravely but were ultimately defeated by the forces of Aurangzeb. The Sikhs under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh revolted against Aurangzeb. Though they did not succeed much against the mighty power of the Emperor, but it made the Sikhs a powerful fighting community in Punjab because of which they played an important part in the future politics of Punjab. The Rajputs, who were in the good books of all the Mughal Emperors from Akbar, became an eyesore to Aurangzeb. Doubting the loyalty of the Rajputs, Aurangzeb began a series of conflicts with them and wished to end their independent status by annexing their states to the Empire.

### **Combat with the Marathas**

Aurangzeb's aggressive Deccan Strategy turned to be a big blunder. His resolution was to subjugate the Shia states of Bijapur and Golconda. The people of Bijapur gave the Mughals a tough situation with the support of the Marathas and the Sultan of Golconda. The rise of Shivaji disrupted the dreams of Aurangzeb. The Mughal Governor, Shaista Khan could do no harm to the Marathas. But, the Mughals under Jai Singh, devastated Shivaji. However, in AD1665, Shivaji was forced to sign a peace treaty. All his lifetime, he thwarted Mughal programmes of quashing Maratha influence. He died in AD1680, asking his son Shambhuji to continue the war. Shambhuji gave shelter to Aurangzeb's rebellious son, Prince Akbar. This act bothered Aurangzeb who came down to the Deccan in AD 1682, to deal with the situation. After repeated efforts, on 22 September, AD 1682 he confiscated the land of the Bijapuris. Golconda too was besieged in AD1687. But the Marathas ignited a national resistance against the Mughals by AD 1691. Their resurgence continued beyond AD1700.

Aurangzeb was a well-read man and had command over Persian, Turkish and Hindi. He even wrote beautiful Persian poems. A selection of his letters ('Ruq`at-i-Alamgiri') is a testimony of simple and elegant prose composed by the Emperor. He understood music well, but he gave up this amusement in accordance with Islamic injunctions. However, his religious fanaticism did not allow the arts to flourish in his courts, as he disbanded the musicians, abolished the office of the poet-laureate, discontinued the work of the court chronicler, and offered little encouragement to painters. In the cultural field, the chief contribution of Aurangzeb was the spread of Islamic learning and general diffusion of education.

The Islamic academic curriculum, known as *Dars-i-Nizamiya*, began during his reign.

Aurangzeb resided in the Deccan till the last days of his life. Gradually with time, he could witness the errors he had committed in administration. His long-term warfare had turned the royal treasury bankrupt. He wrote to his son Azam, while brooding over his shortcomings. He died in AD1707. When he died, Aurangzeb left an empire faced with a number of menacing problems. The failure of his son's successors led to the collapse of the Empire in the mid-18th century.

### **Policies of Aurangzeb**

In this section, you will learn about religious, Deccan and Rajput policies of Aurangzeb.

## Religious Policy of Aurangzeb

Akbar had consolidated the Mughal Empire by his policy of religious tolerance. Jahangir had also followed the same religious policy. Though Shah Jahan was not liberal like his two predecessors, still he kept politics away from religion. But Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni Muslim and a fanatic. He wanted to win the sympathy of the fanatic Sunni Muslims by means of his fanatic religious policy. Therefore, to convert Hindustan from *Dar-ul-Harb* to *Dar-ul-Islam* he adopted two types of measures – the first, which were in accordance with the Islam and the second, those which were against the non-Muslims and non-Sunnis.

### Measures of Aurangzeb in accordance with Islam

First of all he brought to an end the musical gatherings, dances, painting, poetry reading, etc. Though, in spite of his restrictions on music, it continued among the ladies of the Harem and in the household of the chiefs. It is important that it was during his time that the most number of books were written in Persian on music. He ended the *Jharokha Darshan* describing it an individual worship, which was against Islam. He also ended the practice of *Tuladan* (Weighing of the Emperor with coins) thinking that it was a Hindu custom and a sort of superstition. Moreover, weighing the Emperor in gold caused a significant economic loss to the treasury. He also placed restrictions on the astrology and making of '*panchang*'. But he was not very much successful in this effort, because many members of the royal household and many chiefs continued to act against this order.

He also closed the brothels and gambling dens because Islam did not permit them. This act was morally and socially right. He decorated the royal court in an ordinary manner and the clerks were given mud-inkpots instead of silver ones. He gave up wearing silken clothes and in the *Diwan-i-Aam* golden railing was replaced by that of Lapiz Lazuli, which was inlaid with gold. These measures of Aurangzeb were commendable from an economic point of view. To decrease the state expenditure, he closed the government department responsible for recording history. He ended the inscribing of 'Kalma' on the coins so that it does not get dirty in exchange or it does not get trampled underfoot. He placed restrictions on *Nauroz* because it was a festival of the Parsis and it had the support of the Shias of Iran. He appointed *Muhatasibs* in all the provinces, whose main job was to see whether people lived according to the Shariat or not. They had also to check the people from indulging in liquor in the public places. The Emperor had issued clear instruction these that officials were not to interfere in the personal life of the people but to fully aid the government in raising the moral standards of the people. This encouraged the trading profession among the Muslims and Aurangzeb made it tax-free but when Muslim traders started indulging in dishonesty and started carrying the goods of the Hindu traders as their own, then this tax was reimposed on them. But still they had to pay only half the tax as compared to the Hindu traders. We can call it a discriminatory decision which proved to be dangerous for the Empire and he had to revise this decision very soon because of the opposition of the chiefs and the lack of able Muslims for the post. He also issued instructions to put an end to the practice of *Sati*. In fact, Aurangzeb took a commendable step in stopping this inhuman practice.

In view of the above-mentioned activities and measures of Aurangzeb, we cannot call him fanatic because these measures were inspired by different motives. Many of these measures were undertaken by Aurangzeb to fulfil his political and economic motives. Aurangzeb knew that in the Mughal Court there were a large number of members who



were influenced deeply by Islam. Yadunath Sarkar has pointed out towards the fact that Aurangzeb wanted to present himself as a strict Sunni and thus wanted to diminish the marks of his cruel treatment towards Shah Jahan. But whatever may have been his motives, it would have to be conceded that many of his measures were not in accordance with the liberal religious policy started by Akbar.

### **Anti-Hindu steps and activities**

Now, we will turn our attention towards the measures which Aurangzeb took against non-Muslims and for which he is described by many historians as intolerant and fanatic. It is said that he destroyed many Hindu temples, did not give permission for repairing the old temples and placed restrictions on the building of new temples. Some modern historians defend Aurangzeb against the charge of fanaticism and hold that the *Firman* issued by Aurangzeb to the Brahamins of Banaras and Brindabana clearly show that he neither desecrated the old temples nor prohibited the repair of old temples. But even these historians agree that he did not give permission for the construction of new temples. According to them, Aurangzeb caused old temples to be destroyed to give warning and punishment to the elements which were against him. He considered the religious places of the Hindus to be a centre for propaganda against him. In fact, Aurangzeb did not issue any specific instructions for destructing the temples; temples were destructed only in times of war. Some of the temples that were destroyed during his time were the temples in Thatta, Multan and Banaras in AD 1669 and in Udaipur and Jodhpur in AD 1679-1680. Though we have very few instances of Aurangzeb giving grant to the Hindu temples, but often, he adopted a hostile attitude towards temple building.

### **Jaziya**

In AD 1679, Aurangzeb revived *Jaziya*, the trade tax imposed on the Hindus. According to contemporary historians, he imposed it to oppress the Hindus. Some modern historians are of the opinion that Aurangzeb imposed this tax after considering its pros and cons. He spent much time in taking this decision—in fact, he introduced this tax only in his twenty-second year of rule under pressure from staunch Muslim chiefs. Italian traveller Manuchi wrote that ‘Aurangzeb wanted to improve his economic condition by means of the imposition of *jaziya*’. In fact, Manuchi’s view does not appear to be correct. Some scholars hold that he imposed this tax to attract the Hindus towards Islam. But like that of Manuchi, even this view does not appear to have been effective because the economic burden of this tax was very light. Moreover, it was not imposed on children, women and handicapped and even on the poor and the government servants. The truth is that Aurangzeb imposed *jaziya* due to both – political as well as principle reasons. According to Satish Chandra, ‘Its real motive was to organize the Muslims against the Marathas and the Rajputs, who were bent upon to start a war.’ The money collected by *jaziya* was given to *Ulemas*, as most of them were unemployed. But whatever might have been the reason for the imposition of *Jaizya*, it proved to be more harmful than beneficial. This tax was responsible for spreading discontent among a majority of Hindus because they considered it a discriminatory practice by the government, against themselves. Besides, the Hindus who came to pay the tax had to suffer humiliations at the hands of the *Ulemas*.

### **Removing the Hindus from the government posts**

Another charge levelled at Aurangzeb was that he removed the Hindus from government posts. But recent research proves that this charge was false because during the later

part of Aurangzeb's reign the number of the Hindus who were at government posts was more than in the time of Shah Jahan. It is said that whereas the Hindus enjoyed 25 per cent of posts under Shah Jahan, the number had increased to 33 per cent by the time of Aurangzeb.

### **Restriction on the festivals of the Hindus**

Some scholars hold that Aurangzeb imposed a restriction on the celebration of the Hindu festivals like Holi, Diwali, and Dussehra in the cities. This charge appears to be true to a certain extent, but it will have to be conceded that Aurangzeb could not enforce this restriction on all the cities and towns of the Empire, and it was restricted to the areas in the neighbourhood of the royal palace.

### **Anti-Shia measures**

Aurangzeb not only adopted anti-Hindu religious policy, but also an anti-Shia policy as well. In this context, two charges are levied on Aurangzeb that are worth mentioning. He removed the Shias from the government posts and annexed two Shia states of the Deccan—Bijapur and Golkunda to the Mughal Empire. But recent studies disprove both the charges. The historians who refuse the charges hold that many important Shia officials like Zulfikar Khan, Asad Khan and Mir Jumla enjoyed special favours from Aurangzeb. He followed only the traditional expansionist policy against Bijapur and Golkunda. He wanted their annexation to the Mughal Empire so that they are prevented from giving support to the rise of the Maratha power in the Deccan.

### **Consequences of the Religious Policy of Aurangzeb**

Some scholars hold that Aurangzeb tried to bring about a transformation in the nature of state through his religious policy, but could not do so because he knew that in India the majority was Hindus and they were loyal to their religion. Though, Aurangzeb did emphasize Islam for his political motives, as he himself was a staunch Muslim. He wanted to enforce Shariat but his main aim was the extension and consolidation of his empire. Historians are of the opinion that the religious policy of Aurangzeb neither aided in the extension nor in the consolidation of the empire because it led to many revolts against him. Besides, most of the revolts against him such as that of the Jats, Sikhs, and Marathas occurred due to his religious fanaticism. Some scholars hold that the fanatic policy of Aurangzeb accelerated the process of decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire. Because of this policy, very often, he had to adopt contradictory steps which ultimately proved injurious to the Empire.

### **Rajput Policy of Aurangzeb**

Aurangzeb adopted many policies for Rajputs that were contradictory to those policies adopted by his ancestors—Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The Rajput policies were stern and he attempted to destroy the power of the Rajputs and annex their kingdoms. Aurangzeb reversed the policy which was enunciated by Akbar and pursued by Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The Rajputs were the greatest obstacle in his pursuance of his policy against the Hindus. Aurangzeb, therefore, attempted to destroy the power of the Rajputs and annex their kingdoms. There were three important Rajput rulers at that time, viz. Raja Jaswant Singh of Marwar, Rana Raj Singh of Mewar and Raja Jai Sing of Jaipur. All the three were at peace with the Mughals when Aurangzeb ascended the throne. But, Aurangzeb never kept faith in the loyalty of these Rajput rulers.

Aurangzeb deputed Raja Jai Singh in the Deccan where, ultimately he died in AD1666. Raja Jaswant Singh was deputed to defend the north-western frontier of the Empire. Two of his sons died fighting against the Afghan rebels and he himself died in Afghanistan in AD 1678. Aurangzeb was waiting for this opportunity. At that time, there was no successor to the throne of Marwar. He occupied Marwar immediately and, with a view to disgrace the ruling family, sold the throne of Jaswant Singh for rupees thirty-six lakhs. It seemed that the existence of Marwar was lost for ever. But, Marwar was saved. While returning from Afghanistan, the two wives of Rana Jaswant Singh gave birth to two sons at Lahore. One of them died but the other named Ajit Singh remained alive. Durga Das, the commander-in-chief of the Rathors came to Delhi with the prince and requested Aurangzeb to hand over Marwar to Maharaja Ajit Singh. Aurangzeb did not agree. Ajit Singh was declared the ruler of Marwar and the war of independence of Marwar commenced from that time.

Rana Raj Singh of Mewar, who realized that it was in the interest of Mewar to fight against the Mughals, gave support to Marwar. In AD1681, Akbar, the son of Aurangzeb revolted against his father with the support of the Rajputs. The revolt of Akbar failed and he fled to Maharashtra under the protection of Durga Das. Aurangzeb offered peace to Mewar and it was accepted. The Rathors of Marwar, however, continued their fight against the Mughals. Pursuing his son Akbar, Aurangzeb left for Deccan and could never return from there. Marwar fought against the Mughals till the death of the Emperor in 1707.

Thus, Aurangzeb failed to subdue either Mewar or Marwar. The only result of his policy against these states was that he lost the support of the Rajputs. The Rajputs, who were one of the best supporters of the Mughal Empire since the reign of Akbar, revolted against Aurangzeb. Their services could no more be utilized in strengthening the Mughal Empire. On the contrary, it added to the troubles of the Empire. It encouraged other revolts also. Thus, the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb was a failure that contributed to the failure of Aurangzeb and resulted in the weakening of the Mughal Empire.

The consequences of Aurangzeb's Rajput Policy can be summarized as follows:

- (i) The majority of Rajputs turned hostile towards the Mughals.
- (ii) Aurangzeb had to face many difficulties in his Deccan campaigns and even after a struggle of twenty-seven years he could not succeed in his campaign.
- (iii) Disorder spread in many parts of the empire; for example, in Malwa and Gujarat.
- (iv) For about thirty years the Mughal Empire had to suffer untold loss of mass and money.
- (v) In the absence of Aurangzeb, Mughal armies were defeated by Durga Das at many points which dealt a blow to the prestige of the Empire.
- (vi) The pace of disintegration and decline of the Mughal Empire was accelerated because of the fact that the Rajputs, instead of contributing to the security of the Mughal Empire had really created many problems for it.

### **Deccan Policy of Aurangzeb**

The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb had political as well as religious purpose. The extension of the Empire was also one of the purposes of adopting this policy. Aurangzeb believed that the complete destruction of the states of Bijapur and Golconda was a prior necessity for the destruction of the power of the Marathas in the Deccan. Besides this political

## NOTES

motive, he desired to annex these states because their rulers were Shias. Therefore, Aurangzeb was not satisfied simply by acceptance of his suzerainty by them, but he desired to annex them to the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb remained busy in the north for the first twenty-five years of his rule. Therefore, the responsibility of looking after the affairs of the Deccan was left to his different nobles. Bijapur had failed to fulfil the terms of the treaty of AD1657. Therefore, Raja Jai Singh was deputed to attack it in 1665-66. But, Jai Singh failed to get the submission of Bijapur. The situation, however, changed when Adil Shah II died in AD1672 and was succeeded by his four-year son, Sikandar Adil Shah. The Sultan being minor failed to keep his nobles under control. The nobles were divided into two groups, viz. the foreigners and the Indian Muslims. Both these groups tried to capture the power of the throne which resulted in maladministration of the state. The Mughals took advantage of it and attacked Bijapur in AD1676, but with no results. The Mughals failed to get any success in the coming years till Aurangzeb himself reached the Deccan.

Aurangzeb deputed his son, Azam against Bijapur. Azam besieged the fort and Aurangzeb also reached there in person in July 1686. The fort surrendered in September, 1686. Sikandar Adil Shah was granted a pension and Bijapur was annexed to the Mughal Empire. Golconda was ruled by Abul Hasan Qutub Shah at that time. Aurangzeb deputed Prince Shah Alam to attack Golconda. Abul Hasan left Hyderabad and sought shelter in the fort of Golconda. He pleaded for a treaty with the prince, which he agreed. But Aurangzeb was not prepared for any treaty. He besieged the Golconda Fort in 1687 and captured it. Sultan Abul Hasan was imprisoned in the fort of Daulatabad and was given a pension for his life. Golconda was annexed to the Mughal Empire.

The conquests of Bijapur and Golconda were not the end of the conquests of the Deccan by Aurangzeb. The newly-risen power of the Marathas under Shivaji was yet a powerful challenge to him. Shivaji had established an independent kingdom in Maharashtra. In order to conquer it, Shivaji had to fight both against Bijapur and the Mughals. Shivaji first came into conflict with the Mughals in 1656. But Aurangzeb forced him to agree for peace in AD1657. When Aurangzeb became the emperor, he deputed Sayista Khan to suppress Shivaji. But Sayista Khan failed. Shivaji succeeded in making a surprise night-attack on him when he was resting at Pune and he fled away. Aurangzeb recalled him and deputed Raja Jai Singh to attack Shivaji. Jai Singh forced Shivaji to sign the Treaty of Purandar by which he surrendered three-fourths of his territory and forts. Shivaji visited Agra in AD1666 where he was virtually imprisoned. However, he managed to escape from Agra. He started fighting against the Mughals in AD1670. In AD1674, he held his coronation and made Raigarh his capital. Shivaji died in AD1680. But prior to his death he had succeeded in establishing quite an extensive kingdom in the south. He was succeeded by his son, Shambhuji. Prince Akbar, son of Aurangzeb sought shelter with him. But Shambhuji was an incapable ruler. Aurangzeb reached the Deccan in AD1682 and succeeded in capturing Shambhuji in AD1689. Shambhuji was killed and the whole of Maharashtra was occupied by Aurangzeb. This completed the conquest of the south by Aurangzeb. But, his success remained short-lived. The Marathas rose as one force against the Mughals to liberate their motherland. The Maratha War of Independence was first led by Raja Ram and then by his widow, Tara Bai. This war continued till the death of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb failed in subduing the Marathas and died in the Deccan fully realizing his failure against the Marathas. Thus, the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb, ultimately failed.

*Self-Instructional*

Even though the Deccan policy of the Mughals had reached the perfection of its success during the rule of Aurangzeb, it was only a temporary success. Aurangzeb

failed to consolidate his success. The Marathas rose against him and brought about the collapse of his Deccan policy. The failure of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb also contributed to the disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

### Achievements of Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb had made some remarkable achievements, both before and during his reign. His constant aim during the entire duration of his reign was to expand the boundaries of the Mughal Empire. One of his greatest achievements was the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda, which were Maratha strongholds, to the Mughal Empire.

Since the beginning of his reign right up till his death, he was engaged in almost constant warfare in order to try and increase the boundary of the Mughal Empire. He had managed to build up a huge army and started a programme of military expansion along all the boundaries of his empire. In keeping with this policy of expansion, he pushed northwest into Punjab and what is now Afghanistan and in the south towards Bijapur and Golconda.



Fig. 2.1 Extent of Mughal Empire during Aurangzeb's Reign

### Conquests of Aurangzeb in the East

The earliest conquests of Aurangzeb were in the eastern parts of the Empire. During the time when Aurangzeb was still fighting with his brothers, the Ghinud rulers of Cooch Behar and Assam had taken advantage of the troubled conditions and invaded certain imperial dominions. In AD 1660, on Aurangzeb's orders, Mir Jumla marched to Dhaka

and occupied Cooch Behar within a few weeks. They then left for Assam and on 17 March 1662 the Ahom Kingdom was annexed and the Raja was forced to sign a humiliating treaty. The Mughals got an immense tribute and also conquered some forts and towns near the frontier of Bengal. Another major addition to the kingdom that came during this time was the Chittagong, which was a stronghold of the Arakan pirates who had made the entire area unsafe.

Chittagong was later renamed as Islamabad and proved to be a valuable addition to the kingdom.

The conquest of the region known as East Pakistan too was an achievement particularly of Aurangzeb's reign. The area that lies east of the Brahmaputra River had remained isolated from the rest of the subcontinent for a long time mainly due to its geographical situation, climate, terrain, and the ethnic origin of the population. The isolation of this region was broken during the reign of Aurangzeb and it became a part of the Mughal Empire.

### **Conquests of Aurangzeb in the Northwest**

As soon as the eastern region was dealt with, trouble started in the north-west frontier regions of the empire. Bhaku, a Yusufzai leader, rebelled in AD 1667. Aurangzeb succeeded in suppressing this rebellion for some time. Later in AD 1672, trouble broke out again when large numbers of people from different tribes formed groups and revolted against the authorities. Though the governor of Kabul tried to take on the rebels he was defeated and Aurangzeb himself intervened in the situation. He directed the operations in the troubled area for a year and finally with the use of force and diplomacy was able to restore peace in the area. Despite all this trouble, Aurangzeb's reign saw a transformation of the Mughal–Afghan relations and order was established along the frontier regions.

### **Aurangzeb and the Sikhs**

Aurangzeb faced a number of problems from the Sikhs. In fact, it was this community which ultimately played a pivotal role in weakening the Empire. Aurangzeb dealt with them in a harsh and ruthless manner. Initially, the relationship between the Sikhs and the Mughals had been quite friendly. When the religion of Sikhism had been established by Guru Nanak, it was seen as part of a general religious movement to bring Hinduism and Islam closer together. In fact, Emperor Akbar had also visited the third Sikh Guru and had gifted him the land on which the Golden Temple now stands. However, gradually conflicts started between the Sikhs and the Mughal authorities. Troubles started cropping up during Jahangir's reign following which the Sikhs started organizing armies which had only Sikh cadres. The ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, became extremely authoritative and even started gathering tributes from the local population. He was defeated by the Mughal forces and taken to Delhi where he was put to death by Aurangzeb. The Hindu Rajas of the Punjab Hills were suffering due to the increased military strength of the Sikhs and at last they approached Aurangzeb for help. Aurangzeb sent forces to assist them and defeated the Guru in his stronghold at Anandpur.

### **Aurangzeb and the Marathas**

Aurangzeb faced the biggest trouble from the Marathas and there ensued a long and bitter struggle between the Mughals and the Marathas. The Marathas were helped greatly in their uprising by the fact that in the Deccan, the Muslim conquest was not as extensive as in the north. Most of the high offices in the administrative set-up of the

region were occupied by the Hindus. Since Maratha statesmen and warriors controlled various departments of the Muslim states of Ahmednagar, Golconda and Bijapur, the conflicts of the Mughals with these states provided them with an opportunity to advance their sectional interests. Shivaji was among the most successful of the Maratha leaders who revolted against the Mughals. During the entire period of his reign, Aurangzeb sent out many Mughal generals to usurp the power of Shivaji. All his generals—Shayista Khan, Dilir Khan and Mirza Raja Jai Singh as well as his own son, Prince Muazzam failed in their attempts to overpower Shivaji. In the numerous conflicts that occurred between the two forces, Shivaji emerged successful to the indignation of Aurangzeb. Later, the atrocities unleashed against Muslims of Burhanpur by Shivaji's son Shambhuji was the last straw of patience for Aurangzeb, who then took things into his own hands. In the third week of March, AD 1682, he reached Aurangabad in his attempt to conquer the Deccan, and the last twenty-five years of his life were spent in that part of the subcontinent. Bijapur and Golconda which often gave shelter to the Maratha raiders were finally annexed in AD 1686 and AD 1687, respectively and Shambhuji was captured and executed in AD 1689. Even though the Mughals had many successes to their credit, they were all temporary. Following the death of Aurangzeb, the Marathas became a major factor in the downfall of the Mughal Empire.

Thus, the achievements of Aurangzeb have been quite a few and rather remarkable. His constant policy of expansion, even though it cost him many lives and an enormous amount of money from the treasury, led to a widening of the boundaries of the Mughal Empire and the quelling of long-drawn out issues of contention.

### **Revolt of Jats during Aurangzeb**

Revolts of the Jats during the reign of Aurangzeb took place under the leadership of Gokul in AD 1669. The Jats organized the first revolt of the Hindus against Aurangzeb in AD 1669. The local Muslim officer at Mathura, Abdul Nabi destroyed the temples of the Hindus and disrespected their women. In the year AD 1661, Abdul Nabi destroyed a Hindu temple and raised a mosque on its ruins. The Jats under their leader Gokul revolted against the oppression in AD 1669, killed Abdul Nabi and looted the *Tehsil* of Sadabai. In AD 1670, the temple of Keshav Rai was destroyed on the orders of Aurangzeb. It further inflamed the Hindus and Gokul could collect 20,000 followers and he defeated a few small Muslim forces which were sent against him. He was, however, defeated and killed at the Battle of Tilpat. The Jats were punished severely. But, the Jats remained undaunted. In AD 1686, they again raised the standard of revolt under their leader Raja Ram who gave serious trouble to the Mughals for many years, defeated a few Mughal officers and attacked even Agra. Raja Ram was, however, defeated and killed in AD 1688. Following the death of Raja Ram, Churaman, his nephew led the Jats. This revolt of the Jats continued till the death of Aurangzeb and, ultimately, the Jats succeeded in establishing their independent kingdom with its capital at Bharatpur.

## **SUMMARY**

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- The war of succession after Shah Jahan was a fierce battle waged by the sons of the royal leader—Shah Shuja, Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb and Murad—in order to seize the Mughal throne.
- Aurangzeb was the son of Shah Jahan and he ascended the throne as the sixth Mughal Emperor in AD 1658.
- Aurangzeb believed that all Mughal rulers who ruled prior to him committed one blunder—they did not try to establish the supremacy of Islam in India.

His religious intolerance was reflected in a number of ways. He stopped celebrating the Hindu festivals like Holi and Diwali at the court.

- The first organized revolt of the Hindus against the policy of religious persecution of Aurangzeb was that of the Jats. The Jats under their leader Gokul revolted against his tyranny in AD1669.
- Aurangzeb not only adopted anti-Hindu religious policy, but also an anti-Shia policy as well.
- The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb had political as well as religious purpose. The extension of the Empire was also one of the purposes of adopting this policy.
- Aurangzeb believed that the complete destruction of the states of Bijapur and Golconda was a prior necessity for the destruction of the power of the Marathas in the Deccan.

## KEY TERMS

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- **Shias:** Shia Islam is the second largest denomination of Islam, after Sunni Islam. The followers of Shia Islam are called Shi'ites or Shias. The term 'Shia' refers to 'followers of Ali', 'faction of Ali', or 'party of Ali'.
- **Sunni Muslims:** People of the tradition of Muhammad and the community. Sunni Islam is sometimes referred to as the orthodox version of the religion.
- **Peshwas:** The Peshwas were the Brahmin prime ministers to the Marathas who began commanding Maratha armies and later became the de facto rulers of the Maratha Empire.
- **Nyayadhisha:** He was the highest official of judicial department in the Maratha Empire. He heard both the civil and the criminal cases.

## ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. Aurangzeb was born in AD 1618 at Dohad near Ujjain.
2. The measures of Aurangzeb in accordance with Islam were as follows:
  - (i) Anti-Hindu steps and activities
  - (ii) Jaziya
  - (iii) Removing the Hindus from the government posts
  - (iv) Restriction on the festivals of the Hindus
  - (v) Anti-Shia measures



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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the outcome of the Deccan Policy of Aurangzeb?
2. Summarize the various achievements of Aurangzeb.
3. Write about the nature and consequences of various conquests of Aurangzeb with the Marathas.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the War of Succession after Shah Jahan.
2. Discuss the early career and accession of Aurangzeb.
3. Explain the religious policy of Aurangzeb, with special reference to the revolt by the Jats.
4. Describe the early career and conquests of Shivaji. Add a note on Shivaji's relations with Aurangzeb.

## FURTHER READING

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# UNIT III RISE OF MARATHAS

## Structure

Introduction  
Unit Objectives  
Marathas  
Administration of Shivaji  
Coronation and Death of Shivaji  
Successors of Shivaji: Mughal-Maratha Relations and Rule of Peshwas  
Summary  
Key Terms  
Answers to 'Check Your Progress'  
Questions and Exercises  
Further Reading

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

The death of Aurangzeb was soon followed by the succession war among the Mughal princes. The Mughal Empire which gave Indian history an era of splendid accomplishments disintegrated with the irreparable mistakes of emperors like Aurangzeb.

At the time of the Mughal Empire, a powerful group emerged in the Deccan known as the Marathas. They were great warriors. When the Bahmani Empire collapsed, many Hindu kingdoms rose to high positions; Marathas were also among them. They lived in the Deccan, in the region of present Maharashtra and north Karnataka. Shivaji and Peshwa Baji Rao were the prominent Maratha rulers and they challenged the supremacy of the Mughal Empire. However, the Third Battle of Panipat shattered the dream of the Marathas to establish their supremacy on the whole of India and gave the opportunity to the East India Company to establish its rule in India. In this unit, you will also study about the historical background of the Marathas and the causes and consequences of the Third Battle of Panipat.

### UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the early career and conquests of Shivaji
- Analyse Mughal-Maratha relations
- Analyse the Peshwas and expansion of Maratha power

### MARATHAS

At the beginning of the 17th century, most parts of Maharashtra were under the possession of Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar and Adil Shah of Bijapur. They took the help of local Marathi speaking people to run their administration. They recruited a large number of Maratha sardars and soldiers in their armies. The Mores, Ghatages, Nimbalkars, Jadhavs, Gorpades, Sawants and Bhonsales were sardar families who rose to fame during the

#### Check Your Progress

1. When was Aurangzeb born?
2. List the measures of Aurangzeb in accordance with Islam.

## NOTES

16th and 17th century. The Desphandes and Deshmukhs traditionally performed the duty of collecting land revenue. They were granted tax-free land in return for their services. Such a land grant was called *watan*.

The Bhonsle family of Pune district acquired military and political prominence in the Ahmadnagar kingdom at the close of the 16th century. Shahji Bhonsle was the major ruler of this clan and he was married to Jijabai. He sought his fortune under the Sultan of Bijapur and had his *jagir* at Pune.

Shivaji was the son of Shahji Bhonsle. Shivaji was born in AD 1630 as the second son of Shahji and Jijabai. The early life of Shivaji was led in great simplicity and austerity, influenced by his mother's beliefs. Dadaji Kondadev was entrusted with the responsibility of being a guardian to Shivaji. He showed rather early signs of rebellion in opposition to the Muslim rule as he was highly resentful of the inequality that existed between the Mughal rulers and the Hindu subjects.

The early life of Shivaji was conditioned to a great extent by his mother, Jijabai. When he was fourteen years old, his father entrusted the administration of the Pune *jagir* to him. The peasants living in Shivaji's *jagir* had grown tired of the despotic rule of the *watandars*. Shivaji's administration responded to the aspirations of the masses. Shivaji realized that he could establish a welfare state for the benefit of his subjects only by controlling the neighbouring forts and building new ones.

Shivaji showed his mettle at the young age of eighteen, when he overran a number of hill forts near Pune–Rajgarh, Kondana and Torana in the years, AD 1645–1647. Shivaji began his real career of conquest in AD 1656, when he conquered Javli from the Maratha chief, Chandra Rao More. The Mughal invasion of Bijapur in AD 1657 saved Shivaji from Bijapuri reprisal. In AD 1659, Bijapur, free from the Mughal menace, sent in the army against Shivaji under Afzal Khan, whom he murdered treacherously. In AD 1660, the combined Mughal–Bijapuri campaign started against Shivaji. In AD 1663, Shivaji made a surprise night attack on Pune, wounded Shaista Khan (maternal uncle of Aurangzeb) and killed one of his sons. In AD 1665, the Purandhar Fort, at the centre of Shivaji's territory was besieged by Jai Singh and a treaty was signed between the two. Shivaji's visit to Agra and his escape from detention in AD 1666, proved to be the turning point of the Mughal relations with the Marathas.

The Treaty of Purandhar was signed in AD 1665, according to which Shivaji agreed to help the Mughals against Bijapur. Shivaji ceded twenty-three forts to the Mughals and agreed to visit the royal court of Aurangzeb. Shivaji reached Agra in AD 1666, and was admitted in the Hall of Public Audience. The Emperor gave him a cold reception by making him stand among the *mansabdars*. A humiliated and angry Shivaji, walked out of the court. He was put under house arrest, along with his son. However, they tricked their guards and managed to escape in a basket of sweets which was to be sent as a gift to the Brahmins. Shivaji reached Maharashtra in September, AD 1666. After consolidating his position and reorganizing his administration, Shivaji renewed his war with the Mughals and gradually recovered many of his forts. Shivaji declared himself the independent ruler of the Maratha kingdom and was crowned Chattrapati in AD 1674. Politically speaking, two factors contributed to the rise of Maratha power under Shivaji. These were as follows:

- (i) The comparatively advantageous position of the Marathas under the Deccan Sultanates

- (ii) The threat to Bijapur and Golkonda from the annexationist policy of the Mughal Empire

The poets and writers of Maharashtra played a significant role in provoking and sustaining the national spirit of the Marathas. Among the poets, special mention should be made of the following:

- Jnaneswar and Namdev (13th and 14th centuries)
- Eknath and Tukaram (15th and 16th centuries)
- Ramdas (17th century)

Apart from the above reasons, the Mughals' control over the Deccan had weakened. Also, the Marathas had worked out a revenue system by which they attained large revenue and could maintain strong armies.

Shivaji's coronation symbolized the rise of people to challenge the might of the Mughals. By coronating himself king under the title *Haindava Dharmodharak* of the new and independent state *Hindavi Swarajya*, Shivaji proclaimed to the world that he was not just a rebel son of a *sardar* in Bijapur court, but equal to any other ruler in India. Only a coronation could give Shivaji the legitimate right to collect revenue from the land and levy tax on the people. This source of income was necessary to sustain the treasury of the new kingdom.

### **Shivaji's Relation with Aurangzeb**

Shivaji's relations with the Mughals may be discussed under the following heads:

#### **1. Struggle against Shaista Khan**

The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb became very much worried upon seeing the growing Maratha power in the Deccan. He ordered his maternal uncle Shaista Khan (who was a newly appointed Mughal Subedar of Deccan) to invade Shivaji's territory and the Sultan of Bijapur was asked to cooperate with him. It is said that in accordance with the instructions of Aurangzeb, the Sultan of Bijapur at first sent his General Siddi Jauhar who besieged Shivaji in Panhala, but Shivaji managed to escape from there and the fort of Panhala was occupied by the Bijapur army.

After this, the ruler of Bijapur thought that he could use the Marathas as a shield in the struggle between the Mughals and Bijapur and he showed no interest in taking further any action against Shivaji. It is said that he entered into a secret understanding with Shivaji. On the other hand, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Shaista Khan occupied Pune in AD 1600 and made it his headquarter. Shivaji was on the lookout for a suitable attack. His headquartered at Poona disguised as a marriage procession. Shivaji's army managed to kill one of Shaista Khan's sons and one of his generals and Shaista Khan himself were wounded badly. Aurangzeb was so annoyed that he transferred Shaista Khan from the Deccan to the Bengal and did not even see Shaista Khan at the time of proceeding of the transfer as was the usual custom.

#### **2. Plunder of Surat**

The success in Poona against Shaista Khan greatly increased the morale of Shivaji and the Maratha army. Immediately, he resorted to one more attack and launched a terrible attack on the Mughal port of Surat. From 16 – 20 January, 1664 he plundered the rich city to his heart's content. Shivaji got enormous wealth from this first plunder of Surat City.

### 3. The campaigns of Muazzam and Jai Singh against Shivaji and the Treaty of Purandar

The earlier-mentioned activities of Shivaji made the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb very worried. He sent a vast army against Shivaji under the leadership of his principal advisor. Jai Singh of Amer and his own son, Prince Muazzam Rai, Jai Singh was given all the necessary military and administrative rights so that he did not have to depend upon the Mughal Governor of Deccan. He was also ordered to keep in direct contact with the Emperor himself. Jai Singh was an able and brave general and a far-sighted politician. He did not commit a mistake like his predecessors in assessing the military strength of Shivaji. He tried first to win over all the opponents of Marathas to his side and also manage to win over the Sultan of Bijapur to his side. Then, with full military preparations attacked the main centre of Shivaji, viz. the fort of Purandar. Shivaji's treasury was there and he lived there, with his family. He besieged the fort of Purandar and appointed an army to plunder and terrorize the Maratha regions. Not seeing any help coming from anywhere, Shivaji thought it necessary to start negotiations for peace because in the fort of Purandar, families of the *amirs* also lived and Shivaji considered it his duty to protect their lives and honour. Shivaji met Jai Singh and settled the peace terms. This treaty is famous in history as the Treaty of Purandar (June 1665). The terms of this treaty were as follows:

- (i) Shivaji had to surrender to the Mughals twenty-three of his thirty-five forts yielding an annual land revenue of 4 lakh Huns. Shivaji was left with just twelve forts of one lakh Huns of the annual land revenue.
- (ii) Shivaji promised to remain loyal to the Mughal Emperor.
- (iii) Shivaji's hold over the Konkan region yielding 4 lakh Huns annually was allowed to remain as before.
- (iv) Besides some regions in Balaghat yielding 5 lakh Huns annually which Shivaji had yet to conquer from Bijapur were allowed by Mughals to remain with him. In return, Shivaji had to give to the Mughal 40 lakh Huns in installments.
- (v) Shivaji was granted the permission not to go personally to the Mughal court but his son Sambhaji was granted a *mansab* of 5000.
- (vi) Shivaji promised to help the Mughals against Bijapur.

As far as a critical assessment of the treaty of Purandar is concerned, it would have to be conceded that the treaty represented a great political and diplomatic success of Jai Singh against Shivaji. Within a short period of three months Jai Singh forced a rapidly rising Maratha leader and the rising power of Marathas, to accept Mughal sovereignty. With great cleverness he sowed the seeds of a conflict between Bijapur and Shivaji. But the success of the treaty's settlement depended on the extent to which the Mughals helped Shivaji to conquer the regions of Bijapur to enable him to pay the instalment of the war indemnity. This plan could not come through. Aurangzeb was yet not assured about Shivaji and viewed suspiciously any prospect of a combined attack by the Mughal and Shivaji on Bijapur. Jai Singh wanted to take Shivaji to Agra so that he could enter into a permanent treaty with him. According to Jai Singh for the conquest of Deccan, friendship with Shivaji was essential for the Mughals. Shivaji was suspicious of Aurangzeb and he did not agree to go to Agra till Jai Singh assured him completely by putting the responsibility of his protection on his son Ram Singh. Probably, Shivaji also wanted to go to the north to view the situation there and prepared a group of his supporters in the Mughal court. He also expected that by negotiating with Aurangzeb he would get Mughal

help to conquer Janzira island and thus safeguard his western-frontier. Jai Singh started on his first campaign against Bijapur in alliance with the Marathas. But it was not successful. Shivaji was given the task of conquering the fort of Panhala but even he did not succeed. Seeing his plans failing like this, Jai Singh persuaded Shivaji to come to Agra and meet the emperor and Shivaji reached Agra in AD 1666.

#### 4. Shivaji in Mughal court and his successful escape from prison

Shivaji came to the Mughal Court on 12 May, AD 1666 along with his son Sambhaji and 350 soldiers. Aurangzeb made him stand among 'Panch Hazaris' and did not even talk to him. Shivaji was very annoyed. Aurangzeb made him and his son prisoners, but after some time both effected their escape from the prison through a clever device and in the guise of Sadhus reached Raigarh on 22 September, AD 1666. Aurangzeb held his own carelessness responsible for this successful escape of Shivaji. After reaching the Deccan, Shivaji was quiet for about two years. Actually, Aurangzeb did not give much importance to the friendship with Shivaji because for him Shivaji was no more than a petty *Zamindar*. But subsequent events showed that this disregard of Shivaji and the Maratha power by Aurangzeb proved very dangerous for the Mughals.

#### 5. Second plunder of Surat, conquest of other Mughal territories

Shivaji started his second campaign against the Mughals in AD 1666–1670. Though he had started his campaign against Bijapur a short while before but he did not gain anything from Bijapur side so he started his campaign against the Mughals again. He reconquered gradually all the twenty-three forts he had surrendered to the Mughals by the treaty of Purnadar. Shivaji plundered Surat the second time on 6 October, AD 1670. In a plunder of three days he got about 66 lakh rupees. According to J.N. Sarkar, 'This plunder of Surat affected trade quiet adversely and the merchants of Surat stopped getting goods from the internal parts of the country.' After this Shivaji attacked Barar, Badlana and Khandesh and conquered the forts of Salher and Muler. So much was the terror of Marathas in the Deccan and they even exacted *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from Mughal regions there. *Chauth* was one-fourth of the revenue of a province effected as tribute by Marathas as a tax of their protection against the Mughals and *sardeshmukhi* was an additional surcharge of one-tenth of the land revenue. In return, the Marathas protected these regions from the external attacks. Mughals were fighting the Afghans in the North-West at this time, therefore, they could not pay much attention towards Shivaji. Shivaji renewed his struggle against Bijapur also. Through bribery he occupied Panhala, and Satara and also attacked the region of Canara.

### Administration of Shivaji

Shivaji is famous in Indian history not only as a brave and daring person, a successful general and the founder of an empire, but also as a great administrator and a ruler who had the well wishes of his subjects at heart. He laid the foundation of a strong administrative system. To some extent his administration was based on those of the Deccan administration system, but it had some original features of its own. A study of the various levels of his administration and the administration of its various departments can be made under the following heads.

#### Central Administration

1. **The King:** Shivaji was a despotic and an autocratic ruler who enjoyed all sovereignty. All the powers of the state were vested in him. He was the supreme

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judge, administrative head, law giver and the General. In spite of being autocratic, he never used his power for meeting his selfish ends. He used to run his administration with the help of a council of ministers called the *Ashtapradhan*. It consisted of eight ministers who were responsible to Shivaji. Their continuation in office depended upon the wishes of Shivaji.

2. **Ashtapradhan:** To help Shivaji with the work of administration, there was a Council of eight ministers called the *Ashtapradhan*. The ministers were as follows:
  - (a) *Peshwa or Mukhya pradhan:* The Prime Minister was known as the Peshwa or Mukhya pradhan. His main task was to look after the efficiency of administration. For the fulfilment of this duty he kept a control over all officials of the government. He acted on behalf of the king in his absence. In all governmental documents there was his stamp and signatures below those of the Chhatrapati. He had to follow the instructions of the Chhatrapati.
  - (b) *Sare-Naubat or Senapati:* He was responsible for the organization and supervision of the army, he used to command the army in the battlefield. He used to give an accurate account of the booty to the Chhatrapati. It was he who informed the Chhatrapati about the requests and requirements of the soldiers. His main duties were recruitment of soldiers, organization of army and maintenance of discipline.
  - (c) *Amatya or Finance Minister:* He was in charge of the income and expenditure of the state. He was not only the finance minister, but also had to perform active military service at the time of war. He had to acknowledge the orders of the 'Chhatrapati' in all the acts performed by him.
  - (d) *Sumant or Foreign Minister:* He used to perform all the functions connected with the foreign affairs. He used to look after the foreign ambassadors and deputies and acquired a knowledge about the political activities of the other states through the spies. The king took his advice at the time of entering into peace treaties with the enemy rulers.
  - (e) *Sachiv or Shurunvish:* He was a sort of superintendent in the central ministry. His main duties were the arrangement for the official posts and to set the language and style of royal letters right.
  - (f) *Wakianavis or Mantri:* He kept an account of the daily activities of the king and the important events at the court. He also prepared a list of the people desirous of visiting the king and kept a strict watch over the food, etc. prepared for the king.
  - (g) *Panditrao or Danadhyaksha:* Panditrao or Danadhyaksha was in charge of religious activities. His main function was the hospitality of the Brahmins on behalf of the king, to give them donation and prizes and to fix dates for religious activities, to arrange for the punishments for anti-religious or other perverse activities, to make the regulations for religious ceremonies, etc. and to give his decisions on the religious questions. It was his responsibility to reform the conduct of the people.
  - (h) *Nyayadhisha:* He was the highest official of judicial department. He heard both the civil and the criminal cases. He also decided about the land-right and chefship, etc. It was also his duty to implement the decisions of the Gram Panchayat. He also interpreted the law. Out of the above mentioned eight ministers, everybody had to perform military service at the time of necessity except Panditrao and Nyayadhisha. With the exception of Senapati



and Wakianavis, very often all the members of the Ashtapradhan were Brahamins. No office was hereditary. On all official documents, firmans and peace documents, on the top there were the signatures of the king, then the Peshwa and at the bottom were those of Amatya, Wakianavis, Sachiv and Sumant.

### Provincial and Local Administration

Shivaji had divided his whole empire into four provinces:

1. **Northern provinces:** This part included Balaghat, Kori region, Southern Surat, Northern Konkan, Northern Bombay and Poona. It was under Peshwa Maro Trimbak Pingle.
2. **Southern provinces:** This part included Southern Bombay, Southern Konkan, Coastal regions, Samantvari regions, etc. This province was under Annaji Pant.
3. **South eastern province:** This province included the regions of Satara, Koljpur, Belgaon and Dharwad and Kopal. Its Sar-Karkun was Dattaju Trimbak.
4. **Four southern provinces:** These included districts from Kopal to Vellure like Zinzi, Velari, Chennai, Chittore and Arcot. This province was under the military officials.

These provinces were known as *Swarajya*. Every provincial ruler respected the wish of the king. Like at the centre, there was a committee of eight ministers in every province.

In order to maintain central hold over the Sar-i-Karkun or the Prantpati and the provincial ministers, Shivaji did not make their offices hereditary and to some extent kept central hold on their appointments under the Prantpati or the Sar-i-Karkun and the Subedars. Perhaps, Karkun was responsible for the maintenance of the empire and Subedars was in charge of the land yielding about ` 1 Lakh annual revenue. According to one estimate, Shivaji got the income of ` 3.5 crores annually barring the income from the *chauth*. On the basis of this account, it can be maintained that there were about 350 subedars in his empire. The office of Subedar was generally given to the Brahmins. In the local administration of Shivaji, forts played an important part. The responsibility for the defense of the neighbouring area of the fort was of the Havaldar. He made arrangements for all administration of the fort. Shivaji's empire included about 240 forts. Thus, he had appointed about 240 Havaldars. The post of the Havaldar was generally given to a Maratha. He managed the entire administration of the fort. In every fort, besides the havaldar, there were two other officials of equal rank – first *Sar-i-Naubat* (who was generally a Maratha), who led and supervised the army stationed in the fort and the other equal ranking officer was *Sabnis*. He was generally a Brahmin. The financial arrangements of the fort and the neighbouring area, the correspondence and the management of the official stores were his responsibilities. *Karakhanis* (who were generally Kayasthaa) helped him. Shivaji paid all his provincial or local officials either in cash or ordered their salaries to be given out of the revenues of a particular area.

### Military Administration/Army Organization

The organization and discipline of Shivaji's army was worth emulating. He paid cash salaries to his soldiers. He adopted the practice of branding the horses and writing the descriptive rolls of the soldiers. Soldiers of his army did not carry their wives with them. Shivaji ordered his soldiers to carry a minimum burden or luggage so that the mobility of

the army should be efficiently maintained. His army had the four branches of cavalry, infantry, artillery and navy.

Cavalry consisted of two parts. The horsemen who were provided horses and weapons on behalf of the state were called the *Bargirs* and the horsemen who arranged for their own horses and weapons were called *Siledars*. All cavalry was under *Sar-i-Naubat*. Infantrymen were good archers. Shivaji recruited the Mawalis in big numbers in his army. His army had 700 Pathan soldiers as well. Shivaji's artillery consisted of only the mortar guns. It was managed by the Portuguese. Shivaji got gunpowder, etc. from the French of Bombay. The main purpose behind organizing the navy was to arrest the plunder of the Abyssinians.

The army remained in the cantonment only for the period of four months of rainy season. During the remaining eight months, it went out either to conquer fresh territory or to collect supplies from the enemy-land. Every article of every soldier was accounted before he left the cantonment and when he returned to it, so that no soldier will possibly hide his booty. Shivaji formed elaborate rules and regulations to maintain discipline in the army and all of them were rigorously enforced. Consequently, he succeeded in organizing a well-disciplined, strong and highly mobile army for the period of his own life-time. The forts and their security occupied an important place in the army organization of Shivaji. Shivaji had as many as 250 forts which were important for him both for purposes of defence and offence. Consequently, he took all necessary measures for the security of his forts. There were three important officers, viz., a *havaladar*, a *sabnis* and a *sar-i-naubat* in every fort. All the three were jointly responsible for the safety of their fort. The *sar-i-naubat* and the *havaladar* were Marathas at the same time as the *sabnis* was a Brahmana by caste. There was a mother officer called *kharkhana-navis* who was responsible for the maintenance of all sorts of supplies in the fort. He also kept an account of every income and expenditure incurred in the fort. The *havaladar* had to look after the working of his subordinates, the right to dismiss them, to receive and dispatch letters, to close the gates of the fort in the evening, to open the gates in the morning and to check the measures taken for the security of the fort. Shivaji maintained a navy as well. Once he conquered the Konkan coast, it became necessary for him to safeguard his coastal territory from the invasion of the Sidis of Janjira. Shivaji had four hundred ships of different types in his navy. The navy was divided into two parts and each part was commanded by *daria nayak* and *mai nayak* respectively. The navy of Shivaji fought against the Dutch, the Portuguese and the English at several occasions.

### Land Revenue Administration

Shivaji organized his land revenue administration most probably after the pattern of that of Malik Amber, the minister of Ahmednagar. Four main sources of revenue in his kingdom were the land revenue, custom, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*. He brought the *jagir* system under control to some extent to make his land revenue system effective and successful. In AD 1679, Annaji Datta made a revenue survey of the cultivable land and fixed the land revenue according to the productivity of the soil. Initially, he fixed it 30 per cent of the produce but later on it was increased to 40 per cent. To protect the peasants, Shivaji exempted the revenue demands at the time of natural calamities and gave them Takvi loans to purchase seeds, etc. Takavi loans were taken back in easy instalments. According to some historians, Shivaji completely ended the Zamindari or Deshmukhi system but it does not appear to be correct from our point of view because he gave salary to many officials in the form of *jagir* though they were kept under control. During his time there was strict supervision over the officials who acquired a

hereditary right over land. Shivaji did not permit them to keep soldiers or build forts in their *jagirs* and took from every *jagir* a fixed amount as the State's share. Besides revenue, a fixed percentage of the custom duty was charged on the import and export of the goods of businessmen. Shivaji augmented his income by exacting revenue from the neighbouring regions of the Mughals. This was one-fourth of the revenue imposed on the land and was called the *chauth*. Probably, it was a sort of military tax. It was levied on those regions where Marathas promised not to have any military raid. A similar type of tax was *sardeshmukhi* which was one-tenth of the state income. It was levied on those Maratha Deshmukhs who acknowledged Shivaji as their Sardeshmukh. By levying this tax, Shivaji proved that he was very farsighted and the builder of a strong empire. By means of the *sardeshmukhi* tax he achieved success in bringing the various Maratha Chiefs under one sovereign power and established the Maratha empire. Recent research has proved that the financial system of Shivaji was beneficial to the people.

### **Judicial System**

Shivaji did not establish organized courts like the modern courts nor did he establish any Law Code. His judicial administration was based on the traditional ways only. At the centre, the eight ministers of the *Ashtapradhan*, viz. *Nyayadhish* decided both the civil and the criminal cases according to the Hindu Scriptures only. In the provinces same function was performed by the provincial judges only. In the villages judicial work was performed by the Panchayats. Justice was impartial and the penal code was strict.

In brief, Shivaji was an able administrator and he laid the foundations of a powerful empire. Undoubtedly his kingdom was a regional kingdom but it was based on popular will. Shivaji adopted a secular policy in his empire. In the words of Dr Ishwari Prasad, he organized an administrative system which in many respects was better than even that of the Mughals.

### **Coronation and Death of Shivaji**

Although Shivaji was able to conquer land and gather enough power, he was not considered a ruler or a superior. This led Shivaji to organize a formal coronation.

#### **Coronation of Shivaji**

Shivaji had conquered a large tract of land. He also started behaving like an independent ruler. Yet, the Sultan of Bijapur considered him no more than a rebel Jagirdar. The Mughal Emperor considered him as just a petty *Zamindar*. Many Maratha families looked upon him only as a *Nayab Amir* or *Zamindar* whose ancestors were just ordinary peasants. To prove his superiority among other Maratha families also Shivaji thought it advantageous to get his coronation done in a formal manner. On 15 June, AD 1674, Shivaji held his coronation with great pomp and show. On the auspicious occasion, Pandit Gang Bhatt who presided over the function proclaimed Shivaji to be a high ranking *Kshatriya*. To improve his social standing, Shivaji entered into matrimonial relations with traditional Maratha families like Mohite and Shirke. The coronation greatly enhanced Shivaji's political position. Now he could enter into the independent treaty relationship with the Sultans of the Deccan or the Mughal Emperor unlike previously when he was treated like a powerful dacoit or a rebel *Jagirdar*.

#### **Conquests after Coronation and Death of Shivaji**

In AD 1675, Shivaji again started encounters with the Mughals and acquired a lot of booty by defeating the Mughal commander Bahadur Khan. In AD 1676, he took an

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important step. With the help of the two brothers Madanna and Akhanna in Hyderabad he decided to attack Bijapuri Karnataka. Seeing the growing power and influence of Shivaji, Abul Hassan Qutubshah of Golkunda accorded a grand welcome to Shivaji in his capital and a peace treaty was signed between the two. Abul Hassan Qutubshah promised to pay Shivaji one lakh Huns annually and permitted him to reside at his court. Shivaji took upon himself the responsibility of defending Golkunda from the foreign invasions. Shivaji and the Golkunda ruler also decided to divide among themselves the wealth of Karnataka and its conquered areas. Abu Hassan Qutubshah gave to Shivaji his artillery and adequate money for the military expenditure. This treaty proved to be very advantageous for Shivaji. He seized Vellore and Zinji from the Bijapuri commanders and got enough money from the region of Karnataka. When Shivaji returned after the conquest, the ruler of Golkunda asked for his share. But Shivaji gave him neither territory nor money. This made Abul Hassan Qutubshah angry and he entered into an agreement with Bijapur to lessen Shivaji's power, but at that very time Mughal army under Diler Khan attacked Bijapur and the ruler of Bijapur instead of fighting against Shivaji requested his help against the Mughals. Shivaji rendered him help immediately. Shivaji made Bijapur agree to many favourable terms in favour of Velari. It is said that Adil Shah not only gave him the areas of Kopal and Belldibut, but also abandoned his claim over Tanjore and the Gagir of Shahaji Bhonsle. Shivaji also established his hold over many areas of his stepbrother Ekoji. Karnataka expedition was the last of Shivaji's important campaigns.

After establishing administrative arrangements in Karnataka, Shivaji came back to Maharashtra. In AD 1678, he and his stepbrother Ekoji entered into an agreement with each other and Shivaji returned him all his areas which he had conquered. But that very year his eldest son Sambhaji started behaving like an independent young man and he first went over to the Mughals and later to Bijapur. Though he came back to Shivaji after remaining rebellious for about a year, yet Shivaji was very unhappy with his conduct and behaviour.

With this very worry and after an illness of just twelve days he died on 12 April AD 1680, at the age of fifty-three.

Shivaji had begun his life as a manager of his father's *jagir* at Pune and succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom due to his military ability and qualities of character.

Maharashtra, Konkan and a large part of Karnataka were included in his empire. His kingdom had about 240 forts. He laid the foundation of a strong administrative system in his kingdom. He proved himself to be an able military commander and a capable politician. He kept check over the power of the Deshmukhs and laid the foundation of a powerful empire which lasted for a long time, even after his death.

### **Successors of Shivaji: Mughal-Maratha Relations and Rule of Peshwas**

Shivaji had two wives. Following his death in AD1680, their sons got into a fight over the throne of the newly created Maratha kingdom. Let us read about this in more detail.

#### **Successors of Shivaji and Mughal-Maratha Relations**

##### **1. Shambhaji (AD1680–1689)**

There was a dispute about succession between the two sons of Shivaji (Sambhaji and Rajaram) from his two different wives. Finally, after deposing Rajaram from the throne, Sambhaji or Sambhuji ascended the throne on 20 July 1680. For more than a year

afterwards, however, his position continued to be insecure. As a matter of fact, his whole reign was disturbed by frequent conspiracies and desertions among, his officers. Shambhaji, the eldest son of Shivaji, found a faithful adviser in a Kanauji Brahmin on whom he conferred the title of *Kavi Kalash*. Aurangzeb was determined to crush Shambhaji. In AD 1689, Shambhaji and *Kavi Kalash* were captured by a Mughal general and put to death.

Rajaram was crowned by the Maratha ministers at Raigarh as Shambhaji's son Shahu, was too young. Then Raigarh was captured by the Mughals. By the end of AD 1689, Aurangzeb's Deccan policy appeared to have achieved complete success. However, animated by desire to avenge their wrongs, the Maratha bands spread over the Mughal territories harassing Mughal armies, destroying their outposts. The Mughals could not deal effectively with such raiders. When Aurangzeb died in AD 1707, he was aware that his efforts to crush the Marathas had failed.

## 2. Rajaram (AD 1689 – 1700)

At the time of Sambhaji's death, his son Sahu was only seven years old. Rajaram, the younger son of Shivaji and stepbrother of Sambhaji, who had been kept in prison by the latter, was proclaimed King by the Maratha Council of Ministers and crowned at Raigarh in February AD 1689. But soon thereafter, apprehending a Mughal attack, Rajaram left Raigarh and, moving from one place to another, ultimately reached Jinji (South Arcot district, Tamil Nadu). The Maratha Council of Ministers and other officials also joined him at Jinji which, till AD 1698, became the centre of Maratha activity against the Mughals.

Shortly after Rajaram's flight to Jinji, the Mughals under Zulfiqar Khan captured Raigarh in October 1689 and all members of Sambhaji's family, including his son Sahu, fell into Mughal hands. Although, Sahu was given the title of Raja and granted *amansab*, he virtually remained a prisoner in the hands of the Mughals till the death of Aurangzeb (AD 1707). Thus, at the close of AD 1689, the situation in the Maratha kingdom had completely changed. The royal family was virtually immobilized, the Maratha country no longer had a common head or a central government and the whole of the Deccan was divided into different spheres of influence under various Maratha commanders. With a nominal Maratha king living at a distance from the Maratha homeland, the resistance to the Mughals in the Deccan was organized by the Maratha leaders and commanders. This situation changed the basic character of the Mughal–Maratha struggle into a civil war or a war of independence.

## Tarabai (1700–1707)

After Rajaram's death, his minor son by his wife Tarabai, named Shivaji II, was placed on the throne. Tarabai's energy and ability made her the de facto ruler of the state. She saved the Maratha state during a period of grave crisis. The succession to the throne was in dispute. Personal jealousies divided the throne in dispute. It divided the Maratha leaders. Several thousands of *mavles* (Maratha hill infantry) were in the Mughal pay.

Aurangzeb, after the fall of Jinji, concentrated all his resources on the siege of successive Maratha forts. In this situation, Tarabai played a role which elicited high praise from the hostile Muslim historian Khafi Khan who says 'Under Tarabai's guidance, Maratha activities began to increase daily. She took into her own hands the control of all affairs, such as the appointment and change of generals, the cultivation of the country and the planning of raids into the Mughal territory. She made such arrangements for

sending troops to ravage the ‘six subahs’ of the Deccan and winning the heart of her officers to the extent that all the efforts of Aurangzeb against the Marathas down to the end of his reign failed.’

Tarabai moved from place to place with a view to guiding the Maratha operations against the Mughals.

### **Sahu’s release from Mughal captivity and the rise of the Peshwas**

Nearly three months after Aurangzeb’s death, Sambhaji’s son Sahu (born 18 May 1682) who had been in Mughal captivity since 3 November 1689 was liberated on 8 May 1707 by Aurangzeb’s second son, who ascended the throne as Bahadur Shah I. Sahu was recognized as the king of the Marathas and his right to the Maratha swaraj and to *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* of the Deccani *subahs* of the Mughals was also probably recognized. The Mughal suzerainty was protected through the arrangement that he would rule as a vassal of the Empire. The intention of the Mughals was to end long-drawn wars in the Deccan or to create dissensions in the Maratha camp. Both situations were advantageous to the Mughals and they were not disappointed. Sahu’s release was followed by a civil war between the forces of Tarabai and Sahu, which lasted up to AD1714.

### **Balaji Viswanath (AD1713–1720) — Rise of Peshwas**

Balaji Viswanath began his career as a small revenue official and was given the title of ‘*Sena Karte*’ (maker of the army) by Shahu in AD1708. He became *Peshwa* in AD 1713 and made the post the most important and powerful as well as hereditary. He played a crucial role the final victory of Shahu by winning over almost all the Maratha sardars to the side of Shahu.

He concluded an agreement with the Sayyid brothers (AD1719) by which the Mughal Emperor (Farukhsiyar) recognized Shahu as the king of the Swarajya. Balaji’s character and capacity and the peculiar circumstances of the country favoured the rise of the Peshwas to power and renown. One of the first things Balaji was called upon to do was to secure the restoration of Sahu’s mother to him from the custody of the Mughals who had detained her at Delhi as hostage for the good behaviour of her son Sahu. Balaji opened direct negotiations with the Saiyyid brothers and in February 1719 all his demands were accepted.

Accordingly, Sahu’s mother and family was released, he was recognized as the ruler of Shivaji’s home dominions and was allowed to collect *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the six *subahs* of the Deccan, as also in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In return for all this, the Marathas were expected to keep a contingent on 15,000 horses in the service of the Mughals and to maintain order in the Deccan. Balaji’s success in Delhi greatly increased his power and prestige.

Balaji Vishwanath has been rightly called the ‘second founder of the Maratha state’. He perceived that the revival of Maratha power in its old monarchical form was no longer possible and it would be difficult to harness the nation’s military resources to the common cause unless concessions were made to the great warlords who had won an important place for themselves. He made them subordinate allies or confederates of the sovereign, granting them a free hand in administering their conquests and called from them no greater sacrifice than uniting on matters of common policy. This arrangement, however, left too much authority in the hands of these chiefs, without providing for checks to call them to account, which was responsible for the speedy

expansion of the Maratha power and its rapid dissolution. The term of Balaji's Peshwaship marks the transition from the royal period to the age of the Peshwas.

Balaji was credited with 'a mastery of finance'. Though constantly engaged in war and diplomacy, he took firm measures to put a stop to anarchy in the kingdom. He suppressed freebooters and restored civil government. Solid foundations were laid for a well-organized revenue system in the Swaraj territory, which was under direct royal administration.

### **Baji Rao I (AD 1720–1740)**

Baji Rao, the eldest son of Balaji Viswanath, succeeded him as *Peshwa* at the young age of twenty. He was considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji and Maratha power reached its zenith under him.

Under him, several Maratha families became prominent and got themselves entrenched in different parts of India. Some of these places were as follows:

- Gaekwad at Baroda
- Bhonsles at Nagpur
- Holkars at Indore
- Scindias at Gwalior
- Peshwas at Poona

After defeating and expelling the Siddhis of Janjira from the mainland (AD1722), he conquered Bassein and Salsette from the Portuguese (AD1733). He also defeated the Nizam-ul-Mulk near Bhopal and concluded the Treaty of Durai Sarai by which he got Malwa and Bundelkhand from the latter (AD1737). He led innumerable successful expeditions into north India to weaken the Mughal Empire and to make the Marathas the supreme power in India. He said 'Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree and the branches will fall of themselves.'

### **Balaji Baji Rao (AD 1740–1761)**

Balaji Baji Rao was popularly known as 'Nana Saheb'. He succeeded his father at the age of twenty. After the death of his father, the management of all state affairs was left in his hands. In an agreement with the Mughal Emperor (Ahmad Shah), the Peshwa (AD1752) was to protect the Mughal Empire from the internal and the external (Ahmad Shah Abdali) enemies in return for the *Chauth*. He remained dependent on the advice and guidance of his cousin Sadashiva Rao Bhau.

With regard to the future policy of his government, he asked Sadashiva Rao Bhau to continue the policies of his father and said 'The elder Bajirao achieved great deeds in the devoted service of the king. But his life was cut short. You are his son, and you ought to consummate his policy of conquering the whole of Hindustan and establish an Empire and lead your horses beyond Attock.'

One of the earliest achievements of Nana Saheb was better financial management of the Empire by exercising careful supervision over all financial transactions. He later discussed the affairs of northern India with Holkar and Scindia and in April 1742 marched northwards to consolidate the Maratha authority in Bundelkhand. In AD 1743 he undertook the second expedition to the north to help Ali Vardi Khan (in Bengal) whose territories had been ravaged Raghuji Bhonsle. The Peshwa reached Murshidabad and met Ali Vardi Khan who agreed to pay him the *chauth* for Bengal and ` 22 lakh to the Peshwa

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for the expenses of his expedition. By this arrangement the Peshwa freed Ali Vardi Khan's territories from the ravages of Raghuji's troops. During the first half of his Peshwaship he established Maratha supremacy in Karnataka and sent expeditions to Rajputana.

Shahu died childless on 15 December 1749. He had nominated Ramraja, a grandson of Tarabai, as his successor before his death. Ramaraja was crowned as Chhatrapati in January 1750. Since, he was weak and incompetent, Tarabai tried to make him a puppet in her own hands, which caused utter confusion and crisis in the Maratha kingdom; it deepened further when the Peshwa learnt that Ramaraja was not the grandson of Tarabai but an impostor. When this fact came to knowledge, the Chhatrapati was virtually confined in the fort at Satara and lost all contacts with political developments. Hence forth, Pune became the real capital of the Maratha Confederacy, and the Peshwa its virtual ruler. During the second period of Balaji's regime (AD1751–1761), four campaigns were organized in the north. The Punjab politics was at the time in a confused state and as a result the first two invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the subahs of Lahore, Multan and Kashmir were annexed by Abdali to his dominions. After the third invasion, the Mughal wazir, Safdarjung, persuaded the Emperor to enter into an agreement with the Marathas in May 1752 for undertaking defence of the Empire against its internal and external foes. In return the Marathas were to get the *Chauth* of the north-western provinces usurped and occupied by the Afghans. However, that *Chauth* could only be secured by the actual conquest. The Marathas were also given the subahs of Agra and Ajmer. As a result of this agreement the Maratha military force was posted at Delhi and they repeatedly interfered in the politics of North India and established their supremacy at Delhi.

This arrangement would have marked the fulfilment of Balaji Baji Rao's dream of 'a Mughal–Maratha alliance for the governance of India as a whole'. But Safdarjung lost his wazirship and retired to Awadh in AD1753, and power in the imperial court passed to Imad-ul-Mulk, grandson of Nizam ul-Mulk. He terrorized the helpless Emperor with Maratha help and secured the office of *wazir*, dethroned Ahmad Shah and placed Alamgir II, grandson of Bahadur Shah, on the imperial throne in AD1754.

There was never a wazir of Delhi whose rule was so barren of good result and so full of misery to himself and to the Empire, to his friends and foes alike, as Imad-ul-Mulk's. At first he 'clung like a helpless infant to the breast of the Marathas'; but being unable to pay 'the cash nexus on which alone Maratha friendship depended', he agreed to Ahmad Shah Abdali's project of ousting the Marathas from the Doab and Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh, son and successor of Safdarjung, from provincial governorship (AD1757). This drew Shuja-ud-daula, Surajmal Jat and the Marathas together and left Imad-ul-Mulk utterly friendless during the absence of Abdali from India. As per the above arrangements early in AD1758, Raghunath Rao, accompanied by Malhar Rao Holkar, entered the Punjab. He was joined by Adina Beg Khan and the Sikhs.

Sirhind fell, Lahore was occupied and the Afghans were expelled (April 1758). Timur Shah fled, pursued by the Marathas up to the river Chenab. They did not cross the river because it was too deep for fording and the districts beyond it were inhabited mostly by the Afghans.

Raghunath Rao returned from the Punjab after leaving the province in charge of Adina Beg Khan. Confusion followed the latter's death a few months later (October 1758). The Peshwa sent a large army under Dattaji Scindia who reached the eastern bank of the Sutlej (April 1759), and sent Sabaji Scindia to Lahore to take over the governorship of the province.



Within a few months, a strong army sent by Abdali crossed the river Indus. Sabaji fell back precipitately, abandoning the entire province of the Punjab to the Afghans. Abdali established his government at Lahore, resumed his march and entered Sirhind (November 1759).

The Maratha adventure in the Punjab has been acclaimed by some historians as ‘carrying the Hindu paramount up to Attock’. It is doubtful if the Maratha army actually advanced as far as Attock and the collection of revenue in the trans-Chenab district was a purely temporary affair. The Peshwa did not realize that the Punjab could not be retained without keeping a large well-equipped force constantly on the spot. This was not possible because the necessary funds were not available and no Maratha soldier could stand the winter of Lahore. No first-rate Maratha general was posted in the Punjab as warden of the North-west frontier. The Peshwa sanctioned ‘a provocatively advanced frontier’, which made war with Abdali inevitable, but he made no adequate arrangement for its defence.

### **North India: Bhau’s expedition (AD1760)**

On return towards Delhi (May 1759) after the conquest of Punjab, Dattaji Scindia was involved in hostilities with Najib-ud-daula in Rohilkhand. He suffered defeat and retreated towards Panipat (December 1759), and heard that Abdali’s forces were advancing from Sind and had occupied Ambala. His resistance failed and he was killed in a battle with Abdali at Barari, some 16 km north of Delhi (January 1760). Malhar Rao Holkar was routed by the Afghans at Sikandarabad. Thereafter, the Maratha army in Hindustan ceased to exist.

When the news of these disasters reached the Peshwa at Pune, he realized that ‘all his gains in North India had been wiped out, and he must again fight for the Maratha control over the Delhi Empire and build up his supremacy in Hindustan from the very foundations.’ This crisis could be met only by sending a strong army to the North. Soon the Peshwa dispatched the Maratha troops under his cousin Sadashiv Rao Bhau and his eldest son Vishwas Rao. The Maratha artillery was to be commanded by Ibrahim Khan Gardi. In July 1760, the Marathas occupied Delhi. This small success added to the prestige of the Marathas, but they were friendless in the whole of North India. Even the Jat king Surajmal deserted them at the last moment. On the other hand, Ahmad Shah Abdali had been able to secure the support of the Ruhela Chiefs Najib-ud-daula and Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh. During this period some futile attempts were made for peace between Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Peshwa, but they could not succeed due to the exorbitant demands of the Marathas and self-interest of the Muslim rulers. This culminated in the unfortunate and disastrous battle of Panipat. The Battle of Panipat (14 January 14 1761) resulted in the death of Viswas Rao (son of Nana Saheb).

Madhav Rao (AD 1761–1772), Narayana Rao (AD1772–1773), Sawai Madhav Rao (AD 1773–1795), and Baji Rao II (AD 1795–1818) succeeded him thereafter.

## **SUMMARY**

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- Aurangzeb believed that the complete destruction of the states of Bijapur and Golconda was a prior necessity for the destruction of the power of the Marathas in the Deccan.
- At the beginning of the 17th century, most parts of Maharashtra were under the possession of Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar and Adil Shah of Bijapur. They took

the help of local Marathi speaking people to run their administration.

- Shivaji was the son of Shahji Bhonsle. Shivaji was born in AD 1630 as the second son of Shahji and Jijabai. The early life of Shivaji was led in great simplicity and austerity, influenced by his mother's beliefs.
- Shivaji is famous in Indian history not only as a brave and daring person, a successful general and the founder of an empire, but also as a great administrator and a ruler who had the well wishes of his subjects at heart.
- In AD 1675, Shivaji again started encounters with the Mughals and acquired a lot of booty by defeating the Mughal commander Bahadur Khan.

## KEY TERMS

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- **Peshwas:** The Peshwas were the Brahmin prime ministers to the Marathas who began commanding Maratha armies and later became the de facto rulers of the Maratha Empire.
- **Nyayadhisha:** He was the highest official of judicial department in the Maratha Empire. He heard both the civil and the criminal cases.
- **Chauth:** A tax or tribute imposed from early 18th century by the Maratha Empire.

## ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. The two factors that contributed to the rise of Maratha power under Shivaji were as follows:

(i) The comparatively advantageous position of the Marathas under the Deccan Sultanates

(ii) The threat to Bijapur and Golkonda from the annexationist policy of the Mughal Empire

2. The main duties of the *Sare-Naubat* or *Senapati* were recruitment of soldiers, organization of army and maintenance of discipline.

3. The four main sources of revenue under the administration of Shivaji were the land revenue, custom, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write about the nature and consequences of various conquests of Aurangzeb with the Marathas.
2. Highlight the important features of Shivaji's administration.
3. Analyse the military organization adopted by Shivaji.
4. Trace the events that led to the coronation and later the death of Shivaji.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe the early career and conquests of Shivaji. Add a note on Shivaji's relations with Aurangzeb.
2. Discuss the events that led to the Third Battle of Panipat. What were the consequences of the battle?

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## FURTHER READING

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# UNIT IV RISE OF REGIONAL POLITICS

## Structure

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Unit Objectives  
Rise of Regional Polities: Bengal, Awadh and Mysore  
    Bengal  
    Awadh  
    Mysore  
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Answers to 'Check Your Progress'  
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### INTRODUCTION

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At the time of the Mughal Empire, a powerful group emerged in the Deccan known as the Marathas. They were great warriors. When the Bahmani Empire collapsed, many Hindu kingdoms rose to high positions; Marathas were also among them. They lived in the Deccan, in the region of present Maharashtra and north Karnataka. Shivaji and Peshwa Baji Rao were the prominent Maratha rulers and they challenged the supremacy of the Mughal Empire. However, the Third Battle of Panipat shattered the dream of the Marathas to establish their supremacy on the whole of India and gave the opportunity to the East India Company to establish its rule in India. In this unit, you will also study about the historical background of the Marathas and the causes and consequences of the Third Battle of Panipat.

With fall of the Mughal Empire, the territories under its reign witnessed chaos and were fragmented into small princely states. Regional rulers who had till now nourished dreams of throwing out the Mughals started waging bitter wars. States like Bengal, Awadh, and Mysore came to the fore.

This unit will also outline the rise of regional polities in Bengal, Awadh and Mysore.

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### UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain how the British annexed Awadh
- Outline the rise of Tipu Sultan and the interpret the Anglo-Mysore wars

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### RISE OF REGIONAL POLITIES: BENGAL, AWADH AND MYSORE

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In this section, we will learn about the rise of regional polities in Bengal, Awadh and Mysore.

## NOTES

### Bengal

In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *farman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal. However, this concession did not ensure that they could trade in Bengal without paying any taxes. The Company servants like other Indian traders had to pay taxes. This misinterpretation of the *farman* became a constant cause of dispute between the nawabs of Bengal and the Company. All the nawabs of Bengal, beginning from Murshid Quli Khan to Alivardi Khan, refused to sympathize with the Company's misconstrued explanation of the *farman* and even forced them to pay a huge amount as indemnity if they used the *dastaks* wrongly.

In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad. In 1756, with Alivardi's demise, and in the absence of any rightful successor, several factions vied with each other to make their chosen candidate the Nawab of Bengal. Though Alivardi wanted his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daulah, son of his youngest daughter, to acquire the nawabship, the latter's succession to the throne was not accepted by other contenders, such as Shaukat Jang (*faujdar* of Purnea) and Ghasiti Begam, eldest daughter of Alivardi. In the wake of increasing court intrigues, the English East India Company took the opportunity to win factions in their favour and work against the Nawab, and thereby lead to a headlong confrontation with the Nawab.

As Bengal, in the 18th century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal. They wanted to base their operations in Calcutta. There were other European contenders too in Bengal, namely, the Dutch, having their factory at Chinsura, and the French with their factory at Chandernagor.

Siraj-ud-Daulah became the Nawab of Bengal in 1756. Apart from having several foes in the family who were not happy with the succession, he was immature and lacked adequate skills to tackle the situation. In the South, the English East India Company and the French were vying against each other. Without seeking Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's consent, the English began to build fortifications in Calcutta. They even chose to disregard the Nawab's order to curtail augmentation of their military resources and abuse the use of *dastaks* granted to them by the *farman* of 1717. Also, Company servants began misusing the concessions granted by the *farman* of 1717 by extending the privileges over their private trade too. Causing further economic loss to Bengal, the officials began to profit by selling off the *dastaks* to the Indian merchants. Another cause of discontentment towards the English for Siraj was their conscious move to give protection to Siraj's foe Krishna Das, the son of Raja Rajballava.

### Awadh

The second half of the 18th century witnessed gradual expansion of the British East India Company's role in North India and this had a strong bearing on the economy and politics of Awadh. Until 1801, Awadh was treated as a buffer state protecting Bengal against the powers to the Marathas and the question of encroachment and annexation did not arise. It was only around the turn of the 19th century that Awadh became a block to further British expansion. This eventually led to the takeover of the province in 1856.

The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar. In this battle, the English defeated the combined forces of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, Mughal emperor Shah Alam and Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim. After the battle, the Treaty of Allahabad was signed between Nawab of Awadh and the British. According to this treaty, Shuja-ud-Daula was allowed to retain Awadh. However, Kora and Allahabad were ceded to the Mughal emperor. A war indemnity of ` 50,00,000 to be paid in instalments was imposed on Shuja who entered into a reciprocal arrangement with the company for defence of each other's territory. The nawabs were aware of the company's burgeoning strength and aspirations and, like the Bengal nawabs, they were not prepared to let go without at least a semblance of a struggle. This assumed in the initial stages the form of a concerted drive against British commercial penetration of Awadh. Alongside, a major reorganization and reform of the Awadh army was initiated.

The military reforms initiated by Shuja-ud-Daula after the humiliation at Buxar were not intended to either intimidate the English or promote a war against them. Rather, it would seem that the overall military effort reflected the Nawab's anxiety to defend his political authority at a time when it was being steadily undermined by the alien company. For the Company, Awadh was too important and lucrative a province to be left alone. Its vast amount of revenue could be used to subsidize the company's armies. In carefully planned stages, the company stepped up its fiscal demands. In 1773 the first definitive treaty was concluded between Awadh and the English East India Company. By this treaty, the Nawab agreed to pay ` 2,10,000 monthly for each brigade of company troops that would remain present in Awadh or Allahabad. This provision established the beginning of Awadh's chronic indebtedness to the company and represented the initial British thrust into the region's political system.

It was in and after 1775 that the vulnerability of the nawabi came into sharp focus. It was also in these years, ironically enough, that the emergence of a provincial cultural identity centered on the new court and capital at Lucknow (the capital had been shifted from Faizabad) was more clearly identifiable than before. Asaf-ud-Daula's succession to the throne in 1775 went without a hitch notwithstanding the hostility of some of Shuja's courtiers and of the opposition faction of his brother Saadat Ali, the governor of Rohilkhand. Soon, however, under the stewardship of Murtaza Khan (Asaf's favourite who received the exalted title of Mukhtar-ud-Daula), the stability of the existing political set up was strengthened as older nobles and generals were displaced. Furthermore, Mukhtar allowed the Company to negotiate a treaty with the Nawab ceding to English control the territories surrounding Benaras, north to Jaunpur and west to Allahabad, then held by Chait Singh. The treaty also fixed a larger subsidy than before for the Company brigade and excluded the Mughal emperor from all future Anglo-Nawabi transactions. Finally all diplomatic transactions and foreign intelligence were to be controlled by the English through the Resident at the Nawab's court. The disintegration of the political system, the blatant intervention of the English in Awadh's affairs and Asaf-ud-Daula's excessively indulgent disposition and disregard of political affairs alarmed a sizeable section of the Awadh nobility. The situation worsened as troops were in arrears and at places mutinied. These acts of disturbance and lawlessness smoothed the way for British intervention. In the 1770s, the English East India Company persistently eroded the basis of Awadh's sovereignty. The rapid inroads of the English made by virtue of their military presence seriously undermined the Nawabi regime which in 1780 came up with the first declaration of protest. The supreme government in Calcutta was forced to realize that unremitting pressure on Awadh's resources could not be sustained indefinitely

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and that the excessive intervention of the English Resident would have to be curtailed if Awadh's usefulness as a subsidiary was to be guaranteed.

Thus, in 1784, Warren Hastings entered into a new series of arrangements with Asaf-ud-Daula which reduced the debt by ` 50 lakh and thereby the pressure on the Awadh regime. In the following decade and a half, the Awadh regime continued to function as a semi-autonomous regional power whose relations with the company were cordial. This state of affairs lasted until 1797, the year of Asaf's demise, when the British once more intervened in the succession issue. Wazir Ali, Asaf's chosen successor, was deposed in favour of Saadat Ali. With Saadat Ali a formal treaty was signed on 21 February 1798 which increased the subsidy to ` 76 lakh yearly.

Amore forward policy was initiated by Lord Wellesley who arrived in 1798 only to reject the Awadh system. The Nawab's declaration of inability to pay the increased financial demand of the company gave Wellesley a suitable pretext to contemplate annexation. In September 1801, Henry Wellesley arrived in Lucknow to force Saadat's surrender of his whole territory. After protracted negotiations, the company accepted the perpetual sovereignty of Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur and the Doab which yielded a gross amount of ` 1 crore 35 lakh. The annexations inaugurated a new era in Anglo-Awadh relations. The shrunken subah could no longer pose a threat to the stability of the Company dominions nor did the rulers of Awadh entertain any notion of resistance to the relentless forward march of the English. Deprived of their army and half of their territory, they concentrated their energies in cultural pursuits.

In this, they were following the footsteps of Asaf-ud-Daula who had built up around the Lucknow court a vibrant and living cultural arena. The patronage extended to luminaries and poets like Mirza Rafi Saada (1713-86) and Mir Ghulam Hasan (1734-86). Lucknow had been a second home for these sensitive men of letters who had left Delhi and lamented for the world they had loved and lost. The assumption of imperial status by Ghazi-ud-din-Hyder (1819) and the formal revocation of Mughal sovereignty was an integral part of the blooming court culture of Awadh. But this coincided with the decline in the ruler's control over the administration and province. The heavy price that had to be continually paid to the Company for 'protection', the devolution of administrative responsibility to ministers, and the dominant position of the British Resident, were facts which no regal pomp and ceremony could conceal.

The Nawab of Awadh had many heirs and could not, therefore, be covered by the Doctrine of Lapse. Some other pretext had to be found for depriving him of his dominions. Finally, Lord Dalhousie hit upon the idea of alleviating the plight of the people of Awadh. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was accused of having misgoverned his state and of refusing to introduce reforms. His state was, therefore, annexed in 1856. Undoubtedly, the degeneration of the administration of Awadh was a painful reality for its people.

### Mysore

Mysore, which lies between the two Ghats—the eastern and western—were ruled by the Wodeyar dynasty. However, between 1731 and 1734 there began a fierce contest between Devaraja, the head of the army, and his brother Naniaraja, the guardian of the state's finances, to gain suzerainty over Mysore. Corresponding to this phase, the entire Deccan had become a battleground for several powers, namely, Marathas, the Nizam, English and the French.

Owing to frequent Maratha invasions, Mysore had become financially insolvent, making it more susceptible to attacks. Being under Mughal suzerainty earlier, Mysore, in the Nizam's eyes, was a legitimate part of his kingdom.

Hence, began the scramble for power over Mysore between the Peshwa and the Nizam. The French and the English also became a part of this struggle with the involvement of the English during the Second Carnatic War. Nanaraja had approached the English for help. However, loyalty towards the French later, embroiled both the English and the French in the political tussle in Deccan.

### **Haider Ali (1760–1782)**

Hyder Ali was a great Indian general whose outstanding martial splendour saw him become the factual ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in south-western India. Haider Ali's father, Fatah Mohammad, belonged to the lineage of Qurush of Mecca, and was an administrative servant in Mysore. From such humble parentage, Haider Ali brought himself into limelight by annexing Devanhalli in 1749 and by raiding Hyderabad and amassing a large booty. Using the looted resources, he strengthened his army. With French aid, Haider Ali trained his troops as well. In 1775, as *faujdar* of Dindigul he brought the Poligars under his control. Soon, with the help of French engineers, he set up an arsenal.

Subsequently, using the enmity that existed between the Raja of Mysore and Nanajaraja, he took over the reins of administration in his own hands in 1761, making the Raja, a de jure head, who had practically no powers and received a fixed amount as pension. Interestingly, Haider Ali never wanted to proclaim himself with a new title or establish a new dynasty as an independent ruler. Even the term 'Sultan', in the name of his son and successor Tipu Sultan, did not denote any title, but was a part of the name.

In 1760, Haider Ali was defeated by the Marathas. He could only establish himself firmly after the Battle of Panipat, where the Marathas faced a humiliating defeat. During the period between 1764 and 1776, Haider Ali was engaged in constant wars with the Marathas, whom he managed to appease by offering a huge booty or by granting territories.

However, post 1776, Haider Ali retrieved all lands granted earlier, and brought under his sway the strategically significant areas lying in the Krishna–Tungabhadra Doab. His stance posed to be most challenging to the English. He overwhelmed the English in the First Anglo–Mysore War (1767–69) with the help of the French and the Nizam and in 1769 compelled them to draw an embarrassing pact with him. During the Second Anglo–Mysore War (1780–84) he faced the English with a combined army comprising the Nizam and the Maratha forces. In 1782, Arcot was annexed by Haider after crushing the English forces. However, on 7 December 1782 Haider Ali died during the course of the war. His son Tipu Sultan took over the reins of Mysore to fulfill his father's unaccomplished mission and carried on fighting against the English.

### **Tipu Sultan (1782–1799)**

The eldest son of Hyder Ali, Tipu ascended the throne on his father's death in 1782, following the Second Mysore War. The Second Anglo–Mysore War, which was prolonged further under Tipu Sultan's leadership, finally ended in 1784 when both parties had been waned of their resources. The Treaty of Mangalore was drawn in March 1784, and both parties agreed to compensate each other for the losses suffered.





Under Tipu Sultan, Mysore's hegemony increased further; this caused its foes, the Marathas and the Nizam, to ally against him. But, showing his astounding military skills, Tipu Sultan resisted such attempts and defeated them. This in turn prompted the Marathas and the Nizam to look for help from the English, who wanted to take revenge of their earlier defeat. This culminated into the Third Anglo–Mysore War (1790–92). With the cooperation of the Marathas and the Nizam, the English proceeded to Srirangapatnam.

Despite putting up a fierce resistance, Tipu Sultan failed to quell the combined forces for long. The Treaty of Srirangapatnam was signed in March 1792, owing to which Tipu Sultan had to give away more than fifty per cent of his kingdom. In 1799, with the conclusion of the Fourth Anglo–Mysore War, Tipu Sultan lost his suzerainty completely. The Fourth Anglo–Mysore War was triggered by English accusations against Tipu of having conspired with the Marathas and the Nizam to launch an attack against the English in India. They claimed that to attain his goal, Tipu had sent embassies to Arabia, Afghanistan, the French in Mauritius and to Versailles.

Lord Wellesley as Governor-General of India became increasingly concerned at Tipu Sultan's growing power and acquisitions. Though Tipu had put up a brave resistance against the English, he lost his life in May 1799 during the course of the war. With Tipu's demise, Mysore lost its autonomy and the English finally became successful in ousting their most formidable foe. The East India Company captured larger portions of Mysore state. Following Lord Wellesley's subsidiary alliance, a minor from the Hindu royal family was put on the throne of Mysore.

Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were remarkable rulers of the second half of 18th century. They were benevolent and allowed the practice of all religions. As the Peshwa remained subordinate to Shahu and accepted the latter as the de jure head of the state, so also Haider Ali refrained from assuming any title. However, in 1786, Tipu Sultan proclaimed himself to be the Sultan after dethroning the king. Coins belonging to Haider and Tipu's regime show images of Hindu deities and refer to the Hindu calendar, which reflect on the tolerant attitude of the rulers.

Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Sringeri was greatly regarded by Tipu Sultan and the latter had even provided monetary aid for the restoration of temples. Being competent rulers Haider and Tipu were also great patrons of architecture. It is interesting to note that Tipu Sultan even tried to restructure his administration according to the Western model, a novel step initiated for the first time by an Indian ruler. He considered the Almighty to be the real sovereign for whom his subjects had complete faith. He encouraged trade, both internal and foreign. He looked after the welfare of the peasants. He was fair and just with judicial disputes. Office holders in his administration were selected because of their merit and not owing to their lineage to a particular social strata, race or religion. Hence, the dynamism of the reign of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan has left a permanent mark in the history of India as no other sovereign of the period showed such vibrancy.

### **First Anglo-Mysore War (1767–1769)**

To oust Haider Ali, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas joined hands with the English. This led to the First Anglo-Mysore War (1767–1769). The key factors that led to the war are listed below.

- Haider Ali's desire to oust the English from the Carnatic and establish his suzerainty, and the English apprehension of him being an obstacle to their imperial designs.

- The formation of a coalition among the English the Nizam and the Marathas to expel Haider Ali.
- Haider Ali's proclamation of war against the English after being able to split the tripartite coalition formed against him.

Being a competent general and an astute diplomat, Haider Ali was able to rupture the coalition formed against him. Following his instructions, Tipu Sultan paid a visit to the Nizam and appeased him by addressing him at the Nizam's court as Nasib-ud-daulah (the Fortune of the State) and Fateh Ali Khan Bahadur. Tipu always provided with the necessary aid whenever required. In Tiruvannamalai, when Haider was embroiled in a difficult situation Tipu saved his father. Their combined efforts won them the forts of Tirupattur and Vaniyambadi. With the annexation of Mangalore by Tipu, Haider drove out the English from the Malabar Coast. This crystallized into the signing of the Treaty of Madras between the English and Haider Ali, whereby the English had to comply with Haider's demands.

### **Treaty of Madras (1769)**

The signatories of this treaty were Haider Ali and the East India Company with its allies – the Raja of Tanjore and the sovereign of Malabar. The clauses of the treaty were as follows:

- Apart from Karur and its districts, which would remain with the ruler of Mysore, the other annexed territories would be restored back.
- Each party to the treaty was to be mutually responsible to help each other if attacked. Prisoners belonging to the Madras government were to be freed by Haider Ali.
- The Raja of Tanjore was to be accepted as friend of Haider Ali.
- The Bombay Presidency and English factories were to get back their trading benefits.

### **Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780–1784)**

The important events that led to the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Mysore War are listed as follows:

- When the Marathas attacked Haider Ali in 1771, the English refused to come to Haider's aid, thereby refuting the clause of mutual assistance as agreed earlier in the Treaty of Madras. The antagonism between the English and the French during the American War of Independence was extended to the Indian soil. As Haider was an ally of the French, the hostility against the French was directed against Haider too. Mahe, a French settlement in Haider Ali's territories, was captured by the English.
- Haider Ali created anti-English coalition with the Nizam and Marathas in 1779.

The attack on Mahe by the English triggered the Second Anglo-Mysore war (1780–1784). Haider and Tipu immediately proceeded to strike Arcot, the capital of Carnatic, to oust the English from the Carnatic, and simultaneously attacked Porto Novo where the offensive was led by Karim, Haider's second son. At Perambakkam, where Tipu disrupted the troops led by Baillie, the English suffered defeat. Tipu's constant assaults on Baillie's troops, prevented the latter from reaching and annexing Conjeeveram.

## NOTES

When Tipu advanced his offensive against Baillie, the latter mistook Tipu's extremely disciplined infantry to be English troops, headed by Hector Munro, sent to his aid. At the end, Baillie had no option but to accept defeat. Thomas Munro had commented that Baillie's defeat was 'the severest blow that the English ever sustained in India.'

However, Haider had made a slight miscalculation. While Tipu was fighting Baillie, if he had ousted Munro too, he could have also captured Madras. But he sent Tipu armed with a small contingent after Munro. Such was the progress of events in the earlier half of September 1780. Thereafter, Tipu made a series of annexations: Arcot, Satghur, Ambar and Tiagar forts. His plan to advance to Wandiwash was marred when he learned about Haider's defeat at Porto Novo.

After ousting Col. Braithwaite at Tanjore in February 1782, Tipu, with French assistance, proceeded to annex the Malabar Coast, but knowing about his father's death, he had to withdraw. On 7 December 1782, Haider Ali died at Narasingarayanpet near Chittoor. It is believed that he died from multiple carbuncles. To prevent any outbreak of any possible rebellion in the army, his death was not declared till the time Tipu arrived. Tipu became Haider's successor to a huge empire that stretched from river Krishna in the north to Travancore and Tinnevely in the south, Eastern Ghats in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west. He declared himself as Nawab Tipu Sultan Bahadur. After consolidating his newly acquired empire, he resumed the Anglo-Mysore War. However, in 1784, the parties of the war were too tired to continue further. They understood the need to conclude a peaceful treaty and concluded the Treaty of Mangalore on 11 March 1784.

### **Treaty of Mangalore (1784)**

The Treaty of Mangalore was signed between Tipu Sultan and the British East India Company on 11 March 1784. It was signed in Mangalore and brought an end to the Second Anglo-Mysore War.

The terms of the treaties were as follows:

- None of the parties could offer direct or indirect help to the foes of any party to the treaty. Neither could they declare war against any of the allies of the parties to the treaty. Apart from restoring the former trading benefits granted by Haider Ali in 1770 to the Company, no further privileges were to be given.
- Except the Amboorgur and Satgur forts, the parties acceded to grant the territories back. Tipu also promised to refrain from raising any cause of contention over the Carnatic. Around 1,680 captives of war were to be freed by Tipu.
- Tipu consented to reinstate all benefits enjoyed by the Company until 1779 as well as the factory at Calicut.

In return, Tipu Sultan gained back all territories, which he had lost to the English during the war. Both sides mutually agreed to refrain from helping each other's foes, directly or indirectly, or to declare war against their allies. Owing to this clause, the Treaty of Salbai became inconsequential.

**Consequence:** For Tipu, the Treaty of Mangalore was a great diplomatic feat. The treaty was beneficial for the English who signed it when they realized that they could not afford to continue with the war further. With this treaty, Tipu got an opportunity to strengthen his position, and look into the organization of the administrative machineries and army. He emulated his administrative structure on the Mughal and Western models

and named it Sarkar-i-Khudadad (Government given by God). As Dodwell observes, 'Tipu was the first Indian sovereign to seek to apply western methods to his administration'.

### **Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790–1792)**

Pursuing his father's dream of gaining control over southern India, in 1789, Tipu struck Travancore. This aroused Cornwallis' apprehensions of affecting British interests. Even the Marathas and the Nizam were more skeptical about Mysore's annexation policies than that of the English. Fear of Tipu became the common ground for the English, Marathas and Nizam for forging a coalition against him. In 1790, the English planned a three-pronged attack and advanced towards Mysore. General Medows headed the army towards Coimbatore, while another brigade proceeded towards the Malabar Coast. However, seeing Tipu's prompt defensive measures, Lord Cornwallis decided to head the English troops. After annexing Bangalore, Cornwallis proceeded to Srirangapattinam. Though Tipu had managed to put the English forces under pressure by cutting off their food supplies, the Marathas rescued the latter by providing them with large quantities of grain. When the English occupied Srirangapattinam in January 1792, Tipu had got no other option but to agree to the Treaty of Srirangapattinam (23 February 1792).

### **Causes of Third Anglo-Mysore War**

The key factors that led to the Third Anglo–Mysore War are listed as follows:

- Tipu's accomplishment in consolidating his empire internally through several reforms made his stance against the other powers more formidable
- Tipu's policy of annexation posed a serious threat to the British, Nizam and Marathas
- Tipu's plans to seek the help of France and Turkey against the British as evident by the envoys he sent to these countries posed a direct threat to British interests
- Tipu's policy of annexation, incorporating the territories of his neighbouring kingdoms, namely, the kingdom of the Raja of Travancore, an ally of the British (1789), aroused British apprehensions.

### **Treaty of Srirangapatna**

The parties to the treaty were Tipu Sultan and the English along with their allies. The terms of the treaty are listed as follows:

- Former treaties between the English and the sovereigns of Mysore were reaffirmed.
- Fifty per cent of Tipu's territories were to be distributed among the allies of the British.
- Tipu had to pay three crores and thirty lakh rupees, in gold or bullions, as indemnity. Out of this amount, a crore and sixty-five lakh rupees, had to be paid immediately, while the remaining amount could be paid in three installments, within the span of a year.
- All captives of war were to be freed.
- Till the time, the treaty was completely realized, Tipu's two sons, Abdul Khaliq (eight years) and Muiz-ud-din (five years old), to remain in English custody. Both of them were looked after well and it is believed that Cornwallis had even gifted them gold watches.

## NOTES

The main cause of Tipu Sultan's failure was that he had three foes that had to keep under control individually. If Tipu were given the task of only tackling the English, he would have been successful. Such an assumption is confirmed by Cornwallis' comment, 'Tipu's looties were the best troops in the world for they were always doing something to harass their enemies' and Munro's observation that 'Cornwallis could not have reduced Tipu without the assistance of the Marathas.'

Another reason for Tipu's failure lay in the fact that he was stronger in his offensive attacks than in his defensive actions. Hence he remained unsuccessful in defending Bangalore and Srirangapattinam. Also, had he decided to proceed beyond Arikere on 15 May 1791 after defeating the English troops and taking advantage of their weakness he would have inflicted formidable damage to them. Even Haider Ali had made a similar miscalculation during the Second Anglo-Mysore War. However, it must be noted that the European army was generally superior to the Tipu's forces as they had access to more advanced military equipments and had a more structured military organization.

Despite having modernized their troops Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan failed to raise an equally strong infantry and artillery as possessed by the English army. The English enjoyed the advantage of getting constant supplies of men, money and material from England, as well as from the Nizam and the Marathas. However, Tipu had to constantly struggle to maintain his supplies of recruits and money as they were often disrupted by Maratha incursions. Overcoming all such drawbacks, Tipu had faced the English and their allies bravely and had kept them at bay for almost two years. Even after the Treaty of Srirangapattinam, his indomitable spirit could not be dampened. The English had realized that without surrendering Mysore, they could not become the 'Power Paramount' in India. This led Lord Wellesley, as soon as he became Governor-General, to draw Tipu Sultan into the Subsidiary Alliance, and Tipu's reluctance perpetuated the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (March–May 1799).

### **Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (March–May 1799)**

The primary causes behind Fourth Anglo-Mysore War have been listed below:

- Tipu Sultan's determination to win back his lost territories and his ability to make Mysore regain its strength
- Tipu's attempts to obtain aid from France and the Muslims of Arabia, Kabul and Turkey to oust the English from India
- Lord Wellesley's firm plan to eliminate all possibilities of attack from Mysore permanently

By forging a neutral pact with its allies against Tipu, the English again followed a three-pronged offensive: one under General Harris, the second led by General Stewart, and the third headed by Arthur Wellesley marched from three different directions on Tipu's kingdom.

Stewart defeated Tipu Sultan at Sadasere on 8 March while Harris inflicted a crushing blow on 27 March. On 17 April Srirangapattinam was besieged and Mir Sadiq, betrayed Tipu and allowed the English to attack the fort. Despite putting up a brave fight, Tipu was killed on 4 May 1799. Lord Wellesley succeeded in imposing the subsidiary alliance by placing Krishnaraja, a descendant of the Woodeyar dynasty on the throne.

#### **Check Your Progress**

6. When did Lord Wellesley come to India?
7. How did Dalhousie annex Awadh?
8. What are the factors that led to the first Anglo-Mysore war in 1767?
9. Who all signed the Treaty of Mardas?
10. When did Haider Ali die?
11. Who succeeded Tipu after his death?

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## SUMMARY

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- As Bengal, in the 18th century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically extremely lucrative.
- The second half of the 18th century witnessed gradual expansion of the British East India Company's role in North India and this had a strong bearing on the economy and politics of Awadh.
- The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar.
- Mysore, which lies between the two Ghats—the eastern and western—were ruled by the Wodeyar dynasty.
- Hyder Ali was a great Indian general whose outstanding martial splendour saw him become the factual ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in south-western India.
- The eldest son of Hyder Ali, Tipu ascended the throne on his father's death in 1782, following the Second Mysore War. The Second Anglo–Mysore War, which was prolonged further under Tipu Sultan's leadership, finally ended in 1784 when both parties had been waned of their resources.
- Stewart defeated Tipu Sultan at Sedasere on 8 March while Harris inflicted a crushing blow on 27 March. On 17 April Srirangapattinam was besieged and Mir Sadiq, betrayed Tipu and allowed the English to attack the fort.
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## NOTES

*Self-Instructional*

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## ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. Lord Wellesley came to India in 1798.
2. The Nawab of Awadh had many heirs and could not, therefore, be covered by the Doctrine of Lapse. So, Lord Dalhousie accused Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of having misgoverned his state and of refusing to introduce reforms. His state was, therefore, annexed in 1856.
3. The key factors that led to the first Anglo–Mysore war were:
  - i. Haider Ali's desire to oust the English from the Carnatic and establish his suzerainty, and the English apprehension of him being an obstacle to their imperial designs.
  - ii. The formation of a coalition among the English, the Nizam and the Marathas to expel Haider.
  - iii. Haider's proclamation of war against the English after being able to split the tripartite coalition formed against him.
4. The signatories of the Treaty of Madras were Haider Ali and the East India Company with its allies, the Raja of Tanjore and the sovereign of Malabar.
5. Haider Ali died on 7 December 1782 at Narasingarayanpet near Chittoor.
6. After Tipu Sultan's death on 4 May 1799, Lord Wellesley imposed the subsidiary alliance and placed Krishnaraja, a descendant of the Woodeyar dynasty on the throne of Mysore.

### • QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. Why was Asaf-ud-Daula's succession a turning point in the history of Awadh?
2. Name the various treaties signed between the Maratha chiefs and the Company.

#### Long-Answer Questions

2. Discuss the annexation of Awadh.
3. What led to the second Anglo-Mysore war? What were its consequences?
4. What were the causes of Tipu Sultan's failure in the late 18th century? Discuss in detail.

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# UNIT V STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY: EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF COLONIAL RULE

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NOTES

## Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- Anglo-French Rivalry
- Advent of British Rule in India
- Dual Government
- Battle of Buxar
  - Hastings, Cornwallis, Wellesley and Dalhousie
- Warren Hastings
- Cornwallis
- Wellesley
- Lord Dalhousie: Doctrine of Lapse
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- Questions and Exercises
- Further Reading

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## INTRODUCTION

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The 18th century in India was an important period of transition and remains the subject of continuing debate among scholars of late medieval and modern Indian history. The two main debates on the 18th century are the nature of transition from a centralized Mughal polity to the emergence of regional confederations, and the nature of the transformation brought about by the increasing role of the English East India Company in the economic, commercial, and financial life of the subcontinent. We see the rise of a new economic order, and decentralization of political power which went hand-in-hand with a broader localization process.

As you learnt, the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 laid bare a patchwork of several sovereignties, a network of fragmented and layered forms of regional political powers that had been partly masked and managed by the practices of Mughal state and sovereignty. The 18th century was marked by the emergence of regional polities, the so-called successor states like Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad, although they were politically and financially independent from Mughal state, but always used the Mughal symbols and titles for legitimacy and political stability. It is generally viewed that the East India Company's expansion in India took place due to a power vacuum left after Aurangzeb's death. In the debates of continuity and change, historians have presented enduring

socio-economic structures such as financial institutions and information networks that emphasize the utility of Indian agents or collaborators in facilitating early company rule.

In this unit, you will get acquainted with the advent of British rule in India, as well as resistance to it.

## NOTES

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### UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss various aspects of the Anglo-French rivalry
- Critically analyse the Battle of Plassey
- Describe the system of dual government
- Examine the events that led to the Battle of Buxar
- Identify the key aspects of administration under Warren Hastings
- Explain the system of judicial administration under General Charles Cornwallis
- Describe Lord Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse

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### ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY

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Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India. Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted authority for this company in 1664. After this, the planning of this French company was done by Colbert, the then finance minister of France.

Under this company, the first factory was established in 1668 at Surat. The founder of the first factory was Coron, a Dutchman in the French Service. The next factory was set up in 1669 at Masulipattinam. In 1674, Pondicherry became their capital. From 1690 to 1692, the French set up one more factory at Chandra Nagar, Bengal on the bank of river Hugli. Mahe (now Malabar) and Karikal (now Coromandel) were acquired by the French in 1725 and 1739 respectively.

The company was given a loan of 3,000,000 livres by the king. For this loan, the king did not charge any interest. The Company had the monopoly for 25 years to conduct trading activities from the Cape of Good Hope to India and the South Seas. Aurangzeb gave a *farmaan* in the favour of the company according to which the company had the permission to conduct trading activities in the Gujarat coast as well.

#### The English

The Company named 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies' was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth. The company was given rights for carrying out trading activities in the East. Later, the company became popular as the English East India Company.

For many years, the company traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas. At this time, they dealt only in the trading of spices. In 1608, Captain William Hawkins met Jahangir. He showed him the letter which he brought from James I, King of England.

In this letter, James I had requested Jahangir to allow the English merchant to establish trade in the country. The merchants of Portugal and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India. Thus, Jahangir had to decline the request of James I.

In 1609, Jahangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda. However, for this the sultan made a condition that the company will have to pay fixed custom duty of 500 pagodas per year. In 1651, Nawab Shuja-ud-din permitted the company to continue their trading activities for which the company would be obliged to pay ` 3,000 annually.

In 1656, the English was given the security of trade as well. According to this directive, the English received permission to carry on their import and export activities on land as well water without the need to pay customs or tolls.

In 1691, Ibrahim Khan who was the successor of Shaista Khan issued a *farmaan* in the favour of the English. According to this *farmaan*, the English were given permission to carry out duty free trade, but they were asked to pay ` 3,000 annually. After 1691, the company prospered by leaps and bounds in Bengal. In the year 1696, the company gave an excuse that it is at risk from Sobha Singh, a zamindar of Burdwan as he might rebel against the company. With the help of this excuse, the company got the rights for the fortification of their factory.

The zamindari of three villages: Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata or Kalikata, was given to the English in 1698. In return, they were to pay ` 1,200 to Sabarna Chaudhari who was the zamindar of these three villages before the zamindari was granted to the English. In 1700, a separate President and Council took charge of the factories of Bengal. Also, the English constructed a fort. This fort was named after King William II of England. Later, this fort became the seat of the Council which took charge of the factories. The first President and Governor of this Council was Sir Charles Eyre.

In 1714, the English sent John Surman to the Delhi court to arrange all trading facilities for the East India Company. When he met Emperor Farukhsiyar, the emperor issued a *farmaan* by which the company was granted permission to carry on custom free trade in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In addition to this, the company was also allowed to mint his own coins.

### **The French vs The English**

In 1749, the French company seemed to a serious rival of the English Company, but it could not survive for a long time due to the following reasons:

- The French Company was controlled by the government, but the government was not too interested in the company's affairs. On the other hand, the English company was a private concern company.
- The English company had more money as compared to the French company. The area of the English trade was also vast.
- The English were strong on the waters as well. They had big ships and their merchants made regular voyage for trading activities.

### **War between the English and the French**

From 1746 to 1763, the English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as the Carnatic wars. They

## **NOTES**

fought with each other in order to get monopoly over trade in India. The Indian rulers, the Mughals, the subedar of Deccan did not participate in these wars.

### **The First Carnatic War (1746–1748)**

#### **NOTES**

The First Carnatic War was directly linked to the events in Europe. The English and French were fighting on the issue of Austria's succession (1740–48). Once the war broke in March 1740, the two companies in India started preparing for it. Dupleix, the French Governor-General in India since 1742, was the first to realize the necessity of obtaining political influence and territorial control. But he had to face many difficulties. The French East India Company was the Government's company which was in trouble. Although the trade of the company had increased in recent past, its expenditure was more than its income. Naturally, it fell into heavy indebtedness. If this was not enough, the rivalry between two senior leaders-Dupleix and La Bourdonnais, worsened the situation for French. La Bourdonnais arrived near Pondicherry in July 1746 with 10 vessels, 406 canons, 2,350 white soldiers and 700 black soldiers. He wanted to act with complete independence, while Governor-General Dupleix considered himself superior.

On September 21, 1746 the French troops, led by La Bourbononais, captured Madras, an important English trading centre since mid-17th century. Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic, sent a large Indian army to drive the French out of Madras. He was 'guided' by the English. In the Battle of St. Thonie (November 4, 1746) situated on the bank of Adyar river, Mahfuz Khan, son of Anwaruddin, was defeated by French captain Paradis. He had less than a thousand soldiers and had to fight 10,000 men. But the disciplined and organized army of the French, led by capable officers, won the battle.

The English on the other hand besieged Pondichery from 6th September to 15th October 1748. But Dupleix made a strong defense and forced the English to retreat. This triumph of Dupleix made him a known and popular figure in the Indian courts. The war came to an end by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), under which Madras was given back to the English. The French got Quebec (Canada) in exchange of Madras. The English promised not to attack Pondicherry.

The first Carnatic war taught the lesson to the French that a small army of Europeans, aided by Indian troops and trained after the European fashion could easily defeat much larger Indian armies.

To secure political advantages, Dupleix started interfering in the internal matters of Hyderabad and Carnatic. Chin Qilich Khan Nizam-ul-Mulk, the founder of independent Hyderabad kingdom, died in 1748. Dupleix supported Muzaffar Jang, the grandson of Nizam instead of Nasir Jung, the son. The Nawab of Carnatic, Anwaruddin also died in 1749. Dupleix supported Chanda Sahib to the throne of the Carnatic as against Mohammad Ali, the illegitimate son of late Nawab. The English had no other option except to support Nasir Jung for Hyderabad and Mohammad Ali for Carnatic. Thus the war of succession in these two kingdoms led to second Anglo-French War (1749–1754).

### **The Second Carnatic War (1749–1754)**

The war started at the time when the English and French had peace in Europe. This proved that the two were fighting in India for commercial supremacy and not merely because of their traditional rivalry.

On 3 August, 1749, French soldiers with sepoy (from 'Sipahi' of Persian) attacked Arcot in Ambur, the capital of Carnatic. Anwaruddin was killed and his elder son, Mahfuz Khan was captured but his younger son Mohammad Ali Khan Wallajah fled. He took

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shelter at Trichinopoly, proclaimed himself the Nawab of Arcot and received support from the English. Chanda Sahib and the French officer, Jacques Law seized Trichinopoly. At this critical juncture, a young English officer, Robert Clive seized Arcot, the capital of Chanda Sahib on September 11, 1751 with only 200 European soldiers and 300 sepoys. The purpose was to free Trichinopoly from Chanda Sahib's seize. The plan worked and Chanda Sahib had to withdraw his large army from Trichinopoly to lay siege to Arcot to recapture it. Clive and his small army stood the seige for 50 days. Chanda Sahib had to withdraw; later the English defeated him and his Indian allies at several places; he surrendered and was finally executed, the French gave up their entire claim over Carnatic.

However, the French supremacy over Hyderabad continued. Muzaffar Jung was installed as the Nizam and Subedar of the Deccan. In return, the French got command of a vast area from Krishna to Cape Camorin which was the jagir of Valdavur. Though Muzaffar Jung was killed in 1751, his successor Salabat Jung continued his 'friendship' with the French. Bussy, the French officer at Hyderabad, even succeeded in obtaining 'farmaan' from the Mughal emperor Ahmad Shah, confirming Salabat as the ruler of the Deccan.

The failure of the French in Carnatic was a great setback. The French Government, which was always in trouble, could not bear this defeat. So it recalled Dupleix to France in 1754. The Second Carnatic War had ended with English acquiring dominance in Carnatic and French, a place in the Court of Nizam.

### **The Third Carnatic War (1758–63)**

The Third Carnatic War (1758–63) began with the Seven Years' War (1756–63) of Europe. This war was no longer confined to Carnatic. Robert Clive, the English governor of Fort St. David and Lieutenant Colonel seized Chandan Nagar, the French settlement in Bengal in 1757. He was also responsible for the victory against Siraj-ud-daula, the Nawab of Bengal, in the Battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757). Thus, financially, English East India Company was more secured.

However, the most decisive battles of the war were fought in the Carnatic. The French appointed Count de Lally as the new governor of Pondichery. He besieged Fort St. David and captured on 2 June, 1758; also captured Nagur and entered Tanjore. He then attacked Madras where he called Bussy to assist him. This was a blunder because Hyderabad was well under French control. Bussy himself was reluctant to come. The British forced Salabat Jung to cede 80 miles long and 20 miles wide territory to them. After their victory over Plassey, the English troops led by Col. Forde, captured Northern Sarkar (December 1758) and Masulipattinam (April 1759). But the most decisive battle was fought at Wandiwash (January 22, 1760) where Lally was defeated by English troops, led by Eyer Coote. Lally retreated to Pondicherry, which was besieged by the English and Lally was forced to surrender in 1761.

The Seven Years' War ended in 1763 and a treaty was signed at Paris (February 10, 1763). Among other things, it was decided that Pondicherry would go to France along with five trading ports and various factories but merely as a trading centre without any fortification and armies.

Lally, was accused of treason and executed when he returned to France. He was made a scapegoat. It is wrong to blame only Lally for French failure. Though, some of his moves like calling Bussy from Hyderabad (1758)-were blunders but the real reason for French failure lies in the structure of its company and the policies and attitude of the French Government.

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The French East India Company was a state undertaking company whose directors were appointed by the crown. The lethargy and bureaucratic control of this company could be compared to the bureaucratic control of many public sector companies of post Independent India. The English East India Company, on the other hand, was a private undertaking based on free enterprise and individual initiative. It earned profits from the Asian trade and did not depend on the state.

The French could never focus towards India as their priority remained Europe whereas England gave their full attention to the oceans and distant lands, especially India. The French failed to understand the complex political situation of India unlike the British. The French also failed to compete with the English in naval supremacy.

Thus, the third Carnatic war ended the French challenge in India and paved the way for the establishment of the British Empire in India.

### Causes for the success of the British against the French

1. The English company was a private enterprise-this created a sense of self-confidence among the people, the French Company was state-owned.
2. Superior geographical position of England in Europe. France had to pay more attention to its border while at war as compared to relative secure position of England.
3. The English navy was superior to the French navy. It helped to cut off the link between the French possessions in India and France.
4. French government never took interest in Indian affairs.
5. The English held three important places i.e. Calcutta, Bombay and Madras whereas the French had only Pondicherry.
6. The French subordinated their commercial interest to territorial ambition, which made the French Company short of funds.

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## ADVENT OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

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### Check Your Progress

1. Name the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
2. Which state became the Dutch capital in India in 1674?
3. Why did Jahangir decline the request of James I to let Captain William Hawkins establish trade in India?
4. In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, who was the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a *farmaan* in favour of the English. What was this *farmaan* all about?

In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *farmaan* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal. However, this concession did not ensure that they could trade in Bengal without paying any taxes. The Company servants like other Indian traders had to pay taxes. This misinterpretation of the *farmaan* became a constant cause of dispute between the nawabs of Bengal and the Company. All the nawabs of Bengal, beginning from Murshid Quli Khan to Alivardi Khan, refused to sympathize with the Company's misconstrued explanation of the *farmaan* and even forced them to pay a huge amount as indemnity if they used the *dastaks* wrongly.

In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad. In 1756, with Alivardi's demise, and in the absence of any rightful successor, several factions vied with each other to make their chosen candidate the Nawab of Bengal. Though Alivardi wanted his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daulah, son of his youngest daughter, to acquire the nawabship, the latter's succession to the throne was not accepted by other contenders, such as Shaukat Jang (*faujdar* of Purnea) and Ghasiti Begam, eldest daughter of Alivardi. In the wake of increasing court intrigues, the English

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East India Company took the opportunity to win factions in their favour and work against the Nawab, and thereby lead to a headlong confrontation with the Nawab.

As Bengal, in the 18th century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically, extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal. They wanted to base their operations in Calcutta. There were other European contenders too in Bengal, namely, the Dutch, having their factory at Chinsura, and the French with their factory at Chandernagor.

Siraj-ud-Daulah became the Nawab of Bengal in 1756. Apart from having several foes in the family who were not happy with the succession, he was immature and lacked adequate skills to tackle the situation. In the South, the English East India Company and the French were vying against each other. Without seeking Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's consent, the English began to build fortifications in Calcutta. They even chose to disregard the Nawab's order to curtail augmentation of their military resources and abuse the use of *dastaks* granted to them by the *farmaan* of 1717. Also, Company servants began misusing the concessions granted by the *farmaan* of 1717 by extending the privileges over their private trade too. Causing further economic loss to Bengal, the officials began to profit by selling off the *dastaks* to the Indian merchants. Another cause of discontentment towards the English for Siraj was their conscious move to give protection to Siraj's foe Krishna Das, son of Raja Rajballava.

### **The Battle of Plassey (1757)**

To punish the highhandedness of the Company, Siraj-ud-Daulah retaliated by striking Calcutta on 16 June 1756 and bringing it under his sway by 20 June 1756. The English were caught unawares and the Nawab's huge force was no match to their troops. Most Englishmen escaped to Fulda, only twenty miles down the Hoogly, and the rest were held back as prisoners.

It was Siraj's folly to have allowed the English to flee to Fulda and not annihilate them entirely from Fulda. Again, after capturing Calcutta, he did not attempt to consolidate his position and ensure its defense from any counter attack. Such errors are seldom overlooked in history. In January 1757, the English troops, headed by Robert Clive and Watson, attacked Calcutta and recaptured it. Siraj-ud-Daulah was compelled to consent to the Treaty of Alinagar (as Calcutta was renamed in 9 February 1757), agree to all their claims. Having strengthened their position, the English wanted to embarrass the Nawab further and in March 1757, they sent their troops to strike at the French settlement at Chandernagor.

As Siraj wanted to seek French support in his fight against the English, he requested Clive to refrain from aggression towards the French. This prompted Clive to conspire against the Nawab and ally with those in the court and army who were dissatisfied with Siraj's succession to the throne, namely, Mir Jafar, Mir Bakshi, Jagath Seth and Amin Chand.

Owing to the betrayal of Mir Jafar and Rai Durlab, Siraj, despite being armed with a huge contingent, was defeated by the small army of English soldiers under Robert Clive in the Battle of Plassey (23 June 1757). Siraj-ud-Daulah was held captive and finally was killed by Mir Jafar's son Miran. Clive placed Mir Jafar on the throne of Bengal. In lieu of nawabship, Mir Jafar had to pay a huge sum to the English, and part with the 24 Parganas. The enormity of the wealth looted from Bengal can be gauged by the fact that almost 300 boats were required to carry the spoils to Fort William.

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The Battle of Plassey was not a battle in the real sense, as the Nawab's army was headed by Mir Jaffer and Rai Durlabh, who had shifted their allegiance towards the English and made no effort to contest the English troops. As demands for more presents and bribes from the Company's servants increased, the coffer of Mir Jafar soon became barren. When Mir Jafar became unable to meet the Company's expectations any further, the English replaced him by his son-in-law Mir Qasim. The newly appointed nawab won the favour of the English by granting them the zamindari of the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong and rewarding them with expensive gifts.

### Consequences of Plassey

According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, an eminent historian, 23 June 1757, marked the end of the medieval period in India and the beginning of the modern period. Retrospectively speaking, in the years following Plassey (1757–76), that not even covered a single generation, one notices the waning out of the medieval practice of theocratic rule, which can be considered as a fallout of the Battle.

The Company's resident at the Nawab's *darbar*, Luke Scrafton, in his observations on post-Plassey Bengal had commented, 'The general idea at this time entertained by the servants of the Company was that the battle of Plassey did only restore us to the same situation we were in before the capture of Calcutta (by Siraj-ud-Daulah); the *Subah* (*subedar*) was conceived to be as independent as ever, and the English returned into their commercial character...' This observation overlooks the fact that most of the restrictions inflicted on the nawab post Plassey had been already been enforced on Mir Jafar in a treaty signed (5 June 1757) before the onset of the battle.

However, Plassey did not make the English the rightful legal rulers of Bengal. The Supreme Court of Calcutta even pointed out that apart from those living in Calcutta, other English officials were not British subjects. Thus, post Plassey, the English did not shed their 'commercial character'. This was all the more evident when the English won the Battle of Buxar (1764). However, the commercial activities of the English were gradually becoming political as Clive, determined to yield more benefits, pressurized the meek puppet nawab, Mir Jafar, to concede more privileges. During this period, the Marathas also suffered a crushing defeat at Panipat and the French underwent heavy losses owing to a shipwreck in South India, thereby leaving no serious contenders to challenge the English in Bengal.

After Plassey, it was quite unexpected that the Marathas would be routed, or the French would be subdued, thereby allowing the English to gain control over Bengal. It was the event of the next ten years that turned paramount influence into a new regime.

The English obtained a few immediate military and commercial benefits after Plassey. They worked their way to consolidate their position politically in the 'three provinces abounding in the most valuable production of nature and art'. Their confidence got further boosted when the French were ousted from Bengal. They took this opportunity to consolidate their position in the south. In fact, foreseeing perhaps the potentials of the English, Clive had advised Pitt the Elder, a prominent member of the King's government in London, to request the Crown to take over direct control over Bengal and lay the foundation of the British Empire.

### Dual Government

In Bengal's history, the Treaty of Allahabad (1765) is extremely significant as it ushered in a new administrative mechanism, which laid down the foundation of the British



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administrative system in India. Hence, the Nawab's administrative powers were clipped, bringing in a new mechanism of power devoid of responsibility and vice versa.

We need to understand the meaning of the *diwani* and *nizamat* functions to understand the dual system of government better. The provincial administration in the Mughal period was divided into two levels: the *nizamat* (military defense, police and administration of justice) functions which were looked after by *subedar* or governor and his officials, and the *diwani* affairs (management of revenues and finances) which were handled by another similar set of officials under another *subedar*. These officers were answerable to the central government and they kept a check on each other. Murshid Quli was in charge of Bengal, when Aurangzeb died.

By signing the treaty of Allahabad (with Shah Alam II), the English obtained *diwani* and *nizamat* rights in lieu of `26 lakh as annual pension and `53 lakh, respectively. However, the Company had received the *diwani* rights from the Mughal emperor and the *nizamat* powers from the nawab. In a treaty signed earlier in February 1765 with Nawab Najm-ud-Daulah, the Company had already secured all *nizamat* powers, including military, defence and foreign affairs. Though the Company kept all administrative matters under his control, the *diwani* and the *nizamat* operations were handled by its Indian representatives. As this administrative mechanism involved both the Nawab and the Company, it is referred as the Dual or double Government of Bengal.

The Dual Government had badly affected the administration. While there was no discipline and order, trade and commerce suffered, and merchants almost became paupers, thriving industries, such as of silk and textiles, collapsed, agriculture was evaluated by the Company to be unyielding and thereby, peasants were subjected to dire poverty. The outbreak of the great famine of 1770 reflected the flaws of the Company's indirect governing policy. Around 10 million people lost their lives in the famine, which meant almost a third of the population of Bengal and Bihar. However, during this period of utter distress when the people in desperation were even feeding on the dead to survive, Company's servants and *gomastas* continued with their illegal private trade. While exercising monopoly over the obtainable grain, they even seized the seeds to be used for successive harvests from the peasants.

The Company, under Cartier's governorship (1769–1772), chose to overlook the high mortality and the reduction of cultivable land, granted absolutely no remittance on land revenue, instead increased it by 10 per cent for the following year.

The high mortality rate affected the obtainable quantum of production from agriculture and seriously upset the economic well-being of the province. As the revenue-paying capacity dwindled, the zamindars failed to collect adequate revenue. This in turn had an impact on the Company's income and as it lost its cultivators and artisans.

### **East India Company as Sovereign Ruler of Bengal**

Clive's Dual Government proved to be a complete failure. In 1772, Warren Hastings became the governor of Bengal, and embarked upon an offensive plan that would remove 'the mask of Mughal sovereignty' from the soil of Bengal, and make the English the rightful rulers. The Company servants were made responsible for dual administration. The Nawab practically had no share in administration. The pension granted to Shah Alam II was discontinued and he was compelled to part with Allahabad and Kora, which were sold out to shuja-ud-Daulah.

In this way, within a span of two decades, the reins of Bengal's administration passed over to the Company. Unfortunately, under Company rule, the most prosperous

and industrially developed province soon became steeped in abject poverty and suffering that became augmented in the wake of famines and epidemics. Gaining control over Bengal, the English had become successful in founding a colonial empire and fulfill its imperial designs.

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### Battle of Buxar

The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.

When Robert Clive and his Company officials had emptied the Nawab's treasures completely, they thought Mir Jafar to be incapable of yielding any further benefits. Few English officials like Holwel were lobbying against Mir Jafar. Mir Qasim, son-in-law of Mir Jafar replaced him as nawab on 27 September 1760. As rewards of his nawabship, Mir Qasim had to concede Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagaon to the East India Company. He shifted the capital to Mungher. Though during the initial years, he accepted British domination, however, the increasing misuse of the *dastaks* by the Company servants and the consequent losses to the treasury exasperated him to abolish the *dastak* system and exempt duties on trade for all. This precipitated the deposition of Mir Qasim, with Mir Jafar being reinstated to nawabship. Mir Qasim planned an offensive at Buxar (22 October 1764) against the English by allying with Shah Alam II, the Mughal king and Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Awadh. However, the joint forces of the Indian sovereigns could not win against the well-trained and regulated English troops, armed with advanced ammunitions. The failure at Buxar made it evident that India lacked in industrial and technological development.

After reinstating Mir Jafar to the throne of Bengal, the English negotiated a treaty with Shah Alam at Allahabad in 1765 by which the latter conceded *diwani* rights to the Company in lieu of a pension of `26 lakhs from the Company and `53 lakhs from the Nawab of Bengal. Shuja-ud-Daulah, who was a party to the same treaty had to agree to give Allahabad and Kara to the Mughals as well as part with the zamindari of Banaras to Balwant Rai, who was an English loyalist.

In Bengal, between 1765 and 1772, an innovative governing machinery, the dual system of administration, was introduced. With the Company's consent, the Nawab appointed Raja Shitab Rai and Reza Khan as deputy *diwans*, who in actual terms were delegated to work for the English rather than the Nawab. By acquiring the *diwani* rights (authority of revenue collection), the Company virtually became the de facto power, while the Nawab remained the titular head responsible for civil and criminal administration. The inhabitants of the region suffered the most through this arrangement. To understand the motive behind such a decision, it may be reasoned out that this system of administration reflected the Company's inexperience in matters related to administration, as the Company was essentially a trading body.

Since 1765, the Company became the actual sovereign of Bengal, gaining exclusive rights over all military and political affairs. The Nawab was made responsible for the defense of the British, within and outside Bengal. The East India Company exercised direct control over *diwani* functions, which gave them the right to collect the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Company had indirect hold over the *nizamat* functions, namely, judicial and police rights, also possessing the right to nominate the deputy subedar.

## **Political Implications of the Battle of Buxar**

The Battle of Buxar established British control over Bengal. Buxar revealed the political and military shortfalls of the Indian rulers and the decadence of the Mughal Empire. With increasing intrigues and factionalism at the Nawab's court, and with vested interests coming into play, corruption increased and Company officials like Clive used the opportunity to become wealthy. The Treaty of Allahabad signed by Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam II with the English granted the latter the right to trade freely in Awadh. Moreover, the English possessed the right to station an army at Awadh, which were to be maintained by Shuja-ud-Daulah. In lieu of transferring the *diwani* rights over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the English, Shah Alam II received Kora and Allahabad and an annual pension of `26 lakhs.

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### **Consequences of the Battle of Buxar**

Though the Battle of Buxar was precipitated by the alliance drawn by Mir Qasim with Shuja-ud-Daulah and thereby had caused political repercussions in Bengal, Mir Qasim's decision to break up the alliance even before Munro's attack, saved him. It appears that Shuja-ud-Daulah was the most affected by the defeat at Buxar, making him a nominal power. The influential position that he held in North India got curbed overnight. To get back his lost prestige, he tried to annex Varanasi, Chunar and Allahabad, but could not progress further when his troops abandoned him. Trying to launch another offensive against the English, he went from place to place to ally with other powers. He even sought shelter from the Ruhelas and Bangash Afghans, who had been traditional enemies of his family. However, with all his attempts becoming futile, he surrendered to the English in May 1765 and sought shelter. Prior to Shuja's surrender, Shah Alam had accepted the English supremacy and remained under their protection.

Militarily Buxar was very significant for the English. The English victory at Plassey was not entirely commendable as Siraj suffered defeat when his generals betrayed him. However, there was no instance of betrayal at Buxar. The English troops emerged victorious defeating an experienced politically influential personality like Shuja. After having established their position in Bengal, Buxar laid out the path for British supremacy over north India.

### **Treaty of Allahabad**

In May 1765, Clive was entrusted the governorship of Bengal for the second time. The Company officials were looking for the appropriate means to tackle Shuja and Shah Alam. There were no further annexation plans with regard to Shuja's territories, which was already under the sway of the English forces. The newly acquired responsibility of governing both Awadh and Allahabad prompted the English to look for innovative designs.

According to the Treaty of Allahabad, the concluding agreement drawn with Shuja-ud-Daulah, (16 August 1765), the territories earlier belonging to Shuja, except Allahabad and Kora, were given back. Shah Alam was given Allahabad and Kora. Also, Shuja was assured regular revenue payment from his zamindari of Varanasi, which was presented by the English to Balwant Singh for having helped them during Buxar. In this way, the Company established 'Perpetual and universal peace, sincere friendship and firm union' with the Nawab. It was also agreed that if a third party attacked any one of the powers, the other party to the Treaty would assist him in ousting the intruder by sharing his troops

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totally or partially. The Nawab had to bear the expenses of the Company's army if it assisted the Nawab. However, it is not clear if the Company met the expenses of the Nawab's army when the Company used its services. Also, the Nawab had to pay ` 50 lakh as compensation for the war, and grant permission to the Company to continue duty-free trade in his territories.

### The Puppet Nawabs of Bengal

Post-Buxar, Mir Jafar was reinstated to the throne of Bengal by the English. By agreeing to reduce his troops, Mir Jafar had curbed the military powers of the nawab further. He was unable to bring in any formidable political or administrative changes in Bengal at this stage because he had a very weak personality and had developed a negative approach considering the unpleasant political situation he had to tackle and his ailment (believed to be suffering from leprosy). The English success at Buxar, followed by Mir Jafar's demise sealed the fate of the nawabs in Bengal and laid the foundation of the British empire in Bengal.

The Company made Najm-ud-Daulah, Mir Jafar's minor son, the nawab and signed a treaty with him that made the throne completely subservient to the English. Muhammad Reza Khan was appointed deputy governor by the nawab under English directives. Khan looked after the entire administration, and he could only be replaced with the approval of the governor and Council. The governor and Council's approval were also essential while appointing or removing revenue collectors.

Subsequently, the Nawab's status deteriorated further. After resuming for his second term of governorship in May 1765, Clive pressurized Najm-ud-Daulah to grant all the revenues to the Company in exchange of an annual pension of ` 50 lakh. When Najm-ud-Daulah died in 1766, he was succeeded by his minor brother Saif-ud-Daulah, who was granted a pension of ` 12 lakh only. Before his death (1770), he had signed a treaty with the English in 1766 by which he had granted all matters related to the administration and protection of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the English.

The pension amount was further reduced to ` 10 lakh when Najm-ud-Daulah was succeeded by his minor brother Mubarak-ud-Daulah. That the powers of the nawabs had been completely curbed is evident from the following comment made by a judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta in 1775 regarding the status of the nawab and calling him as 'a phantom, a man of straw'.

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## HASTINGS, CORNWALLIS, WELLESLEY AND DALHOUSIE

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Let us now study the efforts taken by the following British Governor Generals of India.

### Warren Hastings

Working as an administrative clerk in the East India Company, Warren Hastings reached Calcutta in 1750. He gradually climbed up the ladder and was appointed as the President of Kasimbazar, by Governor of Bengal in 1772. Later, he became Governor General of Bengal in 1774 under the Regulating Act.

#### Check Your Progress

5. What was the outcome of the dual government?
6. Identify the warring sides in the Battle of Buxar.
7. Outline the political implications of the Battle of Buxar.
8. What were the consequences of the Battle of Buxar?

## **Administrative reforms**

Warren Hastings embarked upon the task of initiating the following administrative measures:

- **Setting up a Board of Revenue at Calcutta:** Replacing the *diwans*, a Board of Revenue was created at Calcutta. It was entrusted with the task of overseeing the collection of land revenue.
- **Appointment of English collectors:** Revenue was to be collected by English collectors directly chosen by him.
- **Transfer of treasury from Murshidabad to Calcutta:** Bengal became the administrative capital when the coffer was shifted to Calcutta.
- **Reorganization of the Nawab's affairs:** Munnī Begum, the widow of Mir Jaffer was given the responsibility to supervise household affairs and become the regent to the minor Nawab.
- **Stoppage of tribute to Shah Alam:** Hastings discontinued the payment of pension to Shah Alam II.
- **Reduction of pension of the Nawab of Bengal:** The pension to the Nawab of Bengal was decreased to ` 16 lakh.

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## **Judicial reforms**

The judicial reforms, initiated by Hastings include:

- Clipping judicial powers of zamindars
- Setting up civil and criminal courts in every district
- Creating the Sadar Diwani Adalat
- Writing out judicial proceedings
- Selecting the Indian judges in criminal courts
- Changes initiated in existing rules and laws wherever deemed necessary
- Meting out justice to Muslims as per the Quran, and insisting on following the *shastras* to settle matters related to marriage, succession and religion

## **Financial reforms**

To improve the financial status of the Company, at a time when the treasury was almost bare and the Company was compelled to take loans, Hastings introduced the following measures:

- In lieu of a payment of ` 30 lakhs, the districts of Kara and Allahabad were sold to Shuja-ud-Daulah–Nawab of Awadh.
- The annual tribute to the Nawab of Bengal was reduced to ` 16 lakhs from ` 32 lakhs.
- To enhance the financial position of the Company, he wanted to develop trade relations with Bhutan and Tibet where he sent a mission.
- When Shah Alam sought Maratha protection, he stopped the payment of the annual pension of ` 25 lakh payable to him.

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- In lieu of the district of Benaras and a sum of ₹ 40 lakh, he agreed to assist Shuja-ud-Daulah .
- To reduce expenditure the amount of money given as pension to Company servants were reduced.
- Currency was regularized.
- Unyielding offices were closed to minimize expenditure.

### Revenue reforms

The following revenue reforms were proposed by Hastings:

- British land revenue collectors were directly chosen by him to collect land revenue and execute the reforms.
- The Board of Revenue at Calcutta was appointed to supervise land revenue administration.
- The Quinquennial land revenue system was initiated.
- To help the members of the Revenue Board, local officers called *Rai Rayan*, were appointed.
- The Quinquennial system was replaced by the one-year settlement which was decided in favour of the highest bidder.
- Understanding the sufferings of the people, other taxes were removed, but land revenue was collected at a set rate.

### Commercial reforms

Hastings introduced the following commercial reforms:

- **Decreasing customs duties:** Apart from salt, betel nut and tobacco, duties on all goods were decreased by 2.5 per cent. Both locals and Europeans had to pay customs duties.
- **Removing numerous customs posts:** As trade got affected owing to a large number of customs posts, only five customs posts were retained, namely, Calcutta, Hughli, Murshidabad, Patna and Dhaka.

### Abolition of the *dastak* system

With the removal of *dastaks*, the Company servants had no option but to pay duties for their personal goods, which reduced corruption and augmented the Company's revenues.

**Sending commercial mission to other countries:** To improve trade, commercial missions were dispatched to countries like Bhutan, Tibet and Egypt.

### Social reforms

To encourage Islamic studies, he founded the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781, which was the first educational institution founded by the British Government. Thereafter, the Sanskrit College was established at Benaras by Jonathan Duncan in 1792. Under Hastings' patronage William Wilkins had translated the *Gita* and Nathaniel Halhed had compiled a digest of Hindu laws.

### Consequences of these Reforms

Though he succeeded in improving the governing machinery, he did not receive adequate government support. Also, he had to entertain the whims and fancies of his seniors who

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wanted to fill up the posts by their favoured candidates and not by those chosen on the basis of their merit. Struggling against all odds, he managed to provide his successor, Lord Cornwallis, with a strong administrative structure. Hence, it may well be said that if Lord Clive had established the territorial foundation of the British Empire in Bengal, Hastings had given the British administrative structure a solid foundation.

### **Impeachment**

In protest against the Pitts India Bill, Warren Hastings resigned from office in 1785. Accused of the Rohilla War, Nand Kumar's murder, the case of Chet Singh and for having accepted bribes, he was impeached for seven years from 1788 to 1795. By the time he was acquitted (23 April 1795), he had no money left and had become a pauper.

### **Regulating Act of 1773**

The British government directed the affairs of the Company through the Regulating Act, 1773. It was particularly initiated with to serve this purpose. Warren Hastings was formally declared to be as Governor General of Bengal and he was to be assisted by an executive council comprising four members.

The Act empowered the Governor General-in-council to make rules, ordinances and regulations that were meant to bring order and establish civil government. Through this Act, Hastings was able to convert a trading company into an administrative body that formed the basis of the British Empire in India.

### **Main Provisions**

The main specifications of The Regulating Act, 1773 are listed below:

- The King of England was in charge of the East India Company. High officials of the company, judges and member of the court of directors were to be nominated.
- The qualifying sum to gain voting right in the court of proprietors was increased from £500 to £1000.
- The directors, who were earlier elected annually, had to continue office for four years, and a quarter of the number were to be re-elected annually.
- A Supreme Court comprising a Chief Justice and three other judges was established in Bengal. Apart from the Governor General and the members of his Council, it entailed civil, criminal, admiralty and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all British subjects in the Company's dominions.
- The Governor General and his four councillors were to look after civil and military affairs and they who were mentioned in the Act in the first instance. They were to hold office for five years and during their tenure they could only be removed by the king on the representation of the court of directors.
- Though he had a casting vote which were to be used to break a stalemate, the Governor General had to abide by the decision of the majority of the Council.
- In matters of war and peace, the Governor General's decision was considered final, above the opinions expressed by the Governors of Madras and Bombay. Salaries were augmented if officers showed better merit. Company servants were not permitted to accept presents or bribes and indulge in private trade.
- Only with the prior permission of the Home Secretary could the Governor General-in-council make rules.

- The Governor General-in-council had the right to issue rules, ordinances and regulations, though they had to be registered in the Supreme Court.

### **Important Features of the Act**

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Important features of this Act include:

- It made it clear that the administration of Indian territories was not a personal affair of the Company servants. The British Parliament was empowered to make amendments.
- This Act initiated the course of territorial integration and administrative centralization in India.
- It started a process of parliamentary control over administrative decisions taken by the Company.
- The Act set up a Supreme Court of Judicature comprising a Chief Justice and three other members. The Act provided the license to the British government to have a say in the internal affairs of the Company.
- A council of four members was established to help the Governor General. Though these members were to hold office for five years, they could only be removed by the British Crown.
- The Supreme Government was entrusted 'from time to time to make and issue rules, ordinances, and regulations the good order and civil government' of the British territories.
- The Presidency of Bengal was made superior to other presidencies and the governor of Bengal was appointed as Governor General. Governors and the Councils of Madras and Bombay were had to follow the decisions taken by the Governor General and Council of Bengal.

### **The Defects of the Regulating Act**

The defects of the Regulating Act of 1773 have been outlined below:

- The Governor General did not have any veto power. Hastings often had to struggle with his councillors who could easily impose their decisions on him by majority voting.
- The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and its relation with the Governor General in Council was not specified.
- The presidencies of Madras and Bombay often declared war, without consulting the Governor General and Council of Bengal. In case of Marathas and Haidar Ali, the Bombay government and Madras Council, respectively, chose to decide on their own.
- The reports sent by the Governor General in council in India was not considered seriously and was not analyzed systematically.
- The Court of Directors had become 'more or less permanent oligarchy' Also, the Court of proprietors enjoyed immunity from any scrutiny based on moral grounds. These privileges gave them allowance to participate in intrigues and create factions which plagued the home government internally.

### **Relations with Gurkhas**

The Gurkhas wanted to expand their territory. Thus, they annexed approximately two hundred villages from Darjeeling to Seinal, and Gorakhpur as well. Lord Minto sent



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them an ultimatum of protest but they ignored it. They invaded two districts named Sheroraj and Butwal. Hastings again sent a message to the Gurkhas to leave these districts, but they did not pay heed to his message. Thus, Hastings declared war on Nepal.

For the preparation of the war, Hastings borrowed one crore rupees from the Nawab of Awadh. He decided to send four armies in the war against Nepal. The Gurkhas defeated three of these armies, however, they were defeated by the fourth. Then, Hastings forced the Gurkhas to sign the Treaty of Sanguali in the year 1816.

### **The Treaty of Sugauli (1816)**

As per this treaty, the Nepalese had to surrender districts of Garhwal and Kumaon to the Company. These districts were situated on the west coast of the River Kali. A British resident was appointed at Kathmandu. However, the English agreed that he would not interfere in the internal affairs of the country. Also, Nepal lost the right to employ Americans or Europeans in its country without seeking permission from the English. Some of the features of this treaty were as follows:

- The treaty benefitted the English in many ways, for instance, the Nepalese supported the English in the ‘mutiny’ of 1857.
- The East India Company started employing Gorkha soldiers in the English army.
- The territory under the British increased.
- The treaty ensured perpetual peace and friendship between the Company and Nepal.

### **Relations with Sikhs**

Anglo-Sikh relations can best be described as strained not just during the time of Warren Hastings, but even before and after. Moreover, the history of the Anglo-Sikh relations also reflects the changing face of the East India Company from a mere commercial enterprise into a political power. The consolidation of Bengal and Oudh under the Company was crucial in establishing the British as a formidable power gradually setting up base in the Indian subcontinent. By August 1765, through the grant of the *diwani* rights to the Company, Shah Alam concluded the transfer of power to the British, thereby making them the supreme ruling authority over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. During 1765—1767, the numerous invasions of India by Ahmad Shah Durrani was observed by Robert Clive (the victor of Plassey and Governor of Bengal), with curious anticipation.

Warren Hastings, became the Governor General in 1773. He was concerned about the increasing power and influence of the Sikhs. He made great efforts to know more about them. Examples of this can be seen in the different publications and travelogues that were submitted to the Company on the Sikhs. Louis Henri Polier, a Swiss engineer in the Company’s military service submitted a detailed account of the Sikhs in the year 1776. Even though never published, this paper was quoted by George Forster, a civil servant of the Company who at the behest of Warren Hastings, journeyed through the regions of Punjab, Kashmir and Afghanistan disguised as a Turkish traveller and wrote *A Journey from Bengal to England*.

### **Punjab**

Ranjit Singh made himself the master of Punjab. The first regular contact between Ranjit Singh and the British seems to have been made in 1800, when India was threatened

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by an invasion of Zaman Shah, the Afghan ruler who had been invited by Tipu Sultan, a bitter enemy of the British. As a precautionary measure, the British sent Munshi Yusuf Ali to the court of Ranjit Singh with rich presents to win the Maharaja over to the British side. Soon, however, he learnt that the danger of Zaman Shah's invasion receded and Yusuf Ali was recalled.

The second contact was made in 1805, when the Maratha chief Holkar entered Punjab with help from Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh had gone to conquer Multan and Jhang but came to Amritsar on learning about Holkar's arrival. He called a meeting of a Sarbat Khalsa to decide about the policy to be followed towards Holkar. Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Bhag Singh of Jind advised Ranjit Singh not to come in conflict with the British by helping Holkar. Ranjit Singh told Holkar politely that he would not help him against the British. General Lake and Maharaja Ranjit Singh concluded an agreement in January, 1806.

As the danger of French invasion on India became remote, the English adopted a stern policy towards Ranjit Singh. He was given a note by the Governor General Metcalfe which contained some soft-worded warnings against his aggressive policy. Ranjit Singh was asked to restore all the places he had taken possession of since 1806 to the former possessors which will confine his army right to the bank of the Sutlej. Ranjit Singh was not prepared to accept the demand. However, he withdrew his troops from Ambala and Saniwal but continued to retain Faridkot. Ranjit Singh fortified the fort of Govindgarh. But in the last stage, Ranjit Singh changed his mind and agreed to sign the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809.

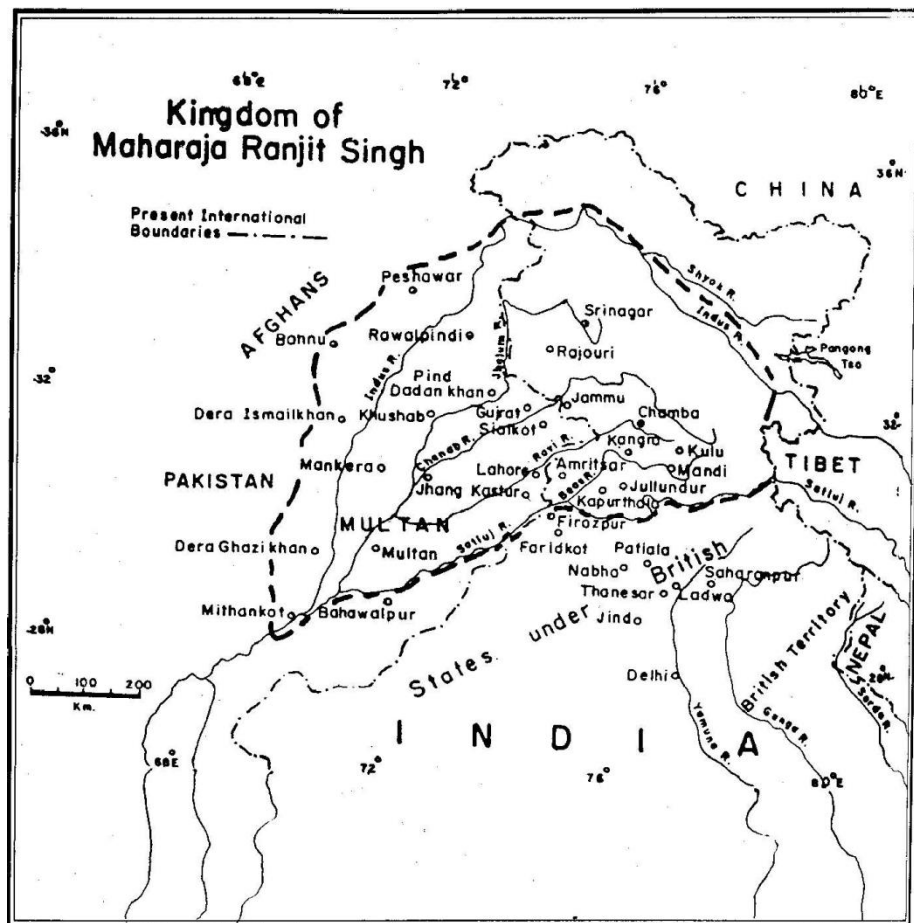


Fig. 3.1 Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

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One of the effects of the treaty of Amritsar was that the British government was able to take the Sutlej states under its protection. Ranjit Singh's advance in the east was checked but he was given a *carte blanche* so far as the region to the west of the Sutlej was concerned.

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in June 1839 was followed by political instability and rapid changes of government in the Punjab. Selfish and corrupt leaders came to the front. Ultimately, power fell into the hands of the brave and patriotic but utterly indisciplined army. This led the British to look greedily across the Sutlej upon the land of the five rivers even though they had signed a treaty in 1809. Figure 3.1 shows a map displaying the kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

### **First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–1846)**

The First Anglo-Sikh War was fought at Mudki on 18 December 1845 in which the Sikhs were defeated. The English again won the battle at Ferozepur on December 21. The Sikhs, under Ranjit Singh Majithia, however, defeated the English at Buddwal on 21 January 1846. But, the Sikhs were again defeated at Aliwal on January 28. The decisive battle was fought at Sobraon on 10 February 1846 and the Sikhs were routed. The English then crossed the Sutlej on February 13 and captured the capital of Lahore on February 20. Under these circumstances, many people advised Lord Hardinge to annex the Empire, but he did not accept this.

The war came to an end by the Treaty of Lahore which was signed on 9 March, 1846. This treaty left the Sikhs with no capacity for resisting the English. Another treaty was made with the Sikhs on 16 December 1846. This treaty is known as the Second Treaty of Lahore or the Treaty of Bhairawal.

### **Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–1849)**

The Sikhs considered their defeat in the first Sikh War as a great humiliation. They had been accustomed to victories during the time of Ranjit Singh and this defeat gave a rude shock to their mentality. The Sikhs wanted to restore the fallen fortunes of their kingdom and the Second Anglo-Sikh War was fought between them in 1848–1849.

Lord Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief, reached Lahore with the grand army of the Punjab on 13 November. On 22 November, the rebels were defeated in a battle at Ramnagar. Another indecisive action was fought at Sadullapur on 3 December.

### **Third Anglo-Sikh War (1849)**

The third battle was fought on 13 January 1849 at Chelianwala. On 21 February, Lord Gough met the Sikhs in another battle at Derajat. The Sikhs were utterly defeated. They surrendered themselves at Rawalpindi.

The complete defeat of the Sikhs sealed the fate of their kingdom. Lord Dalhousie, on his own responsibility, annexed Punjab on 29 March, 1849.

The annexation of Punjab extended the British territories in India up to the natural frontiers of India towards the north-west. Besides, after the destruction of the power of the Sikhs, there remained no active power which could pose a threat to the security of the English in India.

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### **Relations with Rajputs**

The establishment of British influence over Rajput states and some minor states in Central India was presided over by Lord Warren Hastings. Due to a large number of internal and external factors, the Rajputs became prey to external aggression at hands of the Pindaris, Pathans and Marathas. The rulers of Rajasthan had lost their former glory because of petty skirmishes within their territories as well as pseudo norms of heroism and chivalry. These factors combined with other serious administrative lapses led to anarchy, plunder and economic ruin. Bankrupt and vulnerable, the Rajputs were ready to acknowledge British supremacy.

In consolidating the Mughal Empire in India, the Rajputs had played a significant role. The English realized the strategic advantage of forming an alliance with the Rajput states would give them the boost they needed to establish control over central India. Moreover this (the alliance with the Rajputs) was something that the Marathas had failed to achieve in their expansionist strategies.

Thus, with the sanction of the home authorities he opened negotiations with the following Rajput States, which, one by one, entered into treaties of defensive alliance, perpetual friendship, protection and subordinate cooperation with the Company: the State of Kotah, then under the able guidance of Zalim Singh, on 26 December, 1817; Udaipur on 16 January, 1818, Bundi on 10 February, 1818; Kishangarh, near Ajmer, and Bikaner, in March, 1818; Jaipur on 2 April, 1818; the three kingdoms of Pratapgarh, Banswara and Dungarpur, branches of the Udaipur house and situated on the border of Gujarat, on 5 October, 5 December, and 11 December, 1818, respectively; Jaisalmer on 12 December, 1818 and Sirohi in 1823.

In other words, the Rajput states, who as per Hastings' account, proved to be an asset to the Company, subordinated their independence to British supremacy and secured their protection. It is difficult to agree with Prinsep that the 'good government and tranquillity' of Rajputana were 'the exclusive aims' of the Company in interfering in its affairs. In fact, the guiding considerations of Lord Hastings in his relations with the Rajput States were political expediency and convenience and strategic advantages.

### **Relations with Pindaris**

Pindaris were a group of plunderers. The Pindaris included fugitives from justice, disbanded soldiers and idle people. They came to be known to people during wars between the Marathas and the Mughals.

### **Causes of the Pindari war**

Lord Hastings was angry at the plunders of Pindaris in the dominions of Nizam, Northern Circars and the Gangetic valley. Thus, he took permission from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to exterminate them. After getting permission from the Directors he waged a war against the Pindaris.

### **Events of the war**

To begin his preparations for the War, he tried to understand several powers which were active in India. After this, he made a military plan to surround the Pindaris. This campaign by Hastings came to be known as the Pindari War or the Third Anglo-Maratha War.

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He made a plan to attach the Pindaris from the west from Gujarat, from the east and North from Bengal and from the south from the Deccan. Thus, he wanted to surround the Pindaris from all sides. He created a strong and big army of 1,20,000 men and 300 artillery pieces to kill Pindaris. The Pindaris made three groups and their leaders named Chitu Pindari, Karim Khan Pindari and Wasil Muhammad Pindari led these groups in the war.

When Karim Khan Pindari came to know that the British are going to attack the Pindaries, he tried to persuade other Pindari leaders to make a plan for defence. However, the Pindari leaders did not agree to him. Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad went to Gwalior for the war and Chitu Pindari united with the forces of Holkar. After some time, all Pindari parties went back to south as they had a base in south. Towards the end of December, Jaswant Rao Bhau invited Karim Khan Pindari, thus, he went to north and Chitu Pindari went to the area near Jawar. After making a number of failed attempts to reach an agreement with the British, almost all the Pindari leaders gradually surrendered in February, 1819.

The English made arrangements at Gorakhpur for the settlement of Pindari leaders and their families. They gave them pensions and lands.

### Cornwallis

Charles Cornwallis was sent to India by the Court of Directors in the year 1786. He was entrusted the responsibility of executing the policy of peace given in Pitt's India Act and to restructure the administrative system in India. Some of his major responsibilities were as follows:

- To find out a solution for land revenue problem.
- To set up a judiciary which is honest as well as efficient.
- To restructure the commercial division of the East India Company.

In order to restructure the administrative system, Cornwallis used the basic structure of administration designed by Warren Hastings and made some modifications in it. The structure designed by Cornwallis remained in force till 1858.

### Reforms in Judicial Administration, Public Revenue and Other Services

Cornwallis became Governor General of Bengal and he introduced a number of reforms, which are as follows:

- **Reforms in the judicial system:** Cornwallis believed that District Collector should have more authority than they already had. The Court of Directors had also instructed the same. Thus, in 1787, Collectors were appointed judges of *Diwani Adalats* and were given charge of districts. The District Collectors were given powers of Magistrates so that they could judge criminal cases. However, some limitations were imposed on them in trying these cases.

Some more changes were made in the administrative structure from 1790 to 1792. *Foujdari Adalats* were abolished and four circuit courts were established in their place. Out of these four circuit courts, three were for Bengal and one was for Bihar. The European servants were given the authority to preside over these courts. These European servants took help from Muftis and Qazis while trying the cases. These courts went to districts two times in a year and tried cases.

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The *Sadr Nizamat Adalat* at Murshidabad was also abolished. A Mohammedan judge used to preside over this court. In place of this court, another court was established in Calcutta. These courts consisted of the Governor General and members of the Supreme Council. The Chief *Qazis* and two Muftis assisted them.

Thus, the new judicial system had petty courts, districts courts, four provincial courts and *Sadr Diwani Adalat*. *Daroga* courts and district courts, four circuit courts and *Sadr Nizamat Adalat* were established for trying criminal cases.

- **Cornwallis code:** In 1793, Cornwallis made a code of regulations for guiding those servants of the East India Company who were working in the judicial department. Cornwallis took Sir George Barlow's help for preparing this code. The commercial and administrative services were demarcated clearly in this code. Before the preparation of this code, Cornwallis realized that the Board of Revenue was not able to settle a large number of cases. In order to solve this matter, *mal adalats* were formed in every district. Collectors were made the heads of these courts and they were given revenue powers as well. The administrative structure was in existence even before Cornwallis but he was the one who made the system harmonious and cohesive.

Cornwallis introduced a system in which people could lodge a complaint against collectors and servants for not fulfilling their duties. The government could also be sued in the court. He abolished inhuman punishments such as capital punishment and mutilation of limbs. The European people living in the districts had to follow the new judicial system.

- **Reforms in Public Services:** The servants of East India Company wanted to earn a lot of money. Since, the salaries of these servants were low, they accepted bribe from people in order to earn more money. They also confiscated the lands of zamindars in an unjust manner. In order to solve these problems, Cornwallis raised their salaries and terminated some of the servants. After this, he hired employees for the Company solely on the basis of their merits. He did not allow any of the employees to carry out trade in their private capacity.

He did not trust Indians and behaved with them in a scornful manner. Thus, his behaviour towards Indians was criticized. He did not recruit Indian on high posts and gave such posts to Europeans. He divided districts into small units and took away police powers from the zamindars. A superintendent and representative of the company, who resided in those districts, were given the charge of these units.

- **Reforms in the Commercial Department of the Company:** When the Board of Trade was established, it were asked to obtain goods from Indian and European contractors. These contractors supplied goods of inferior quality at a very high price. The Board instead of checking these practices, took bribe through them. Due to these corrupted practices of the commercial department, Cornwallis took action against the Board of Trade. He reduced the number of Board members from eleven to five. The method of obtaining goods was also changed and the Board was instructed to obtain goods from commercial agents and residents. This way, he brought reforms in the commercial department.
- **Reforms in the Collection of Revenue and Permanent Settlement:** It is really important to find a suitable method for revenue collection in order to improve the condition of farmers. The methods used by Robert Clive and Warren Hastings worsened the situation of farmers. Thus, in 1786, the Court of Directors

recommended that Cornwallis should make ten years settlement with zamindars which can later be made permanent. Cornwallis with the help of John Shore tried to find a suitable method for revenue collection. To solve this problem, they had a discussion on the following three questions:

1. Should the settlement be made with zamindars or tillers?
2. How much share should the state get in the produce of land?
3. Should the settlement be permanent or for a fixed term?

On the first question, John Shore believed that settlement should be made with zamindars as they own the lands. Cornwallis was an English landlord, thus, he agreed with John Shore. Moreover, the Court of Directors also supported Cornwallis.

On the second question, Shore believed that the state's share should be decided on the basis of the actual collection of the year 1790–1791. Cornwallis was also of the same opinion.

However, their opinions differed on the third question. Shore believed that settlement should be made for ten years, but Cornwallis wanted permanent settlement of revenue. Finally, in the year 1790, he declared settlement to be for ten years but in 1793, the settlement was made permanent. Therefore, permanent settlement was made in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Benaras and Northern part of Tamil Nadu.

### **Permanent Settlement**

Some of the important features of Permanent Settlement were as follows:

- The settlement was made with zamindars as they were recognized as owners of land as long as they pay revenue.
- Zamindars were asked to pay land revenue to the government. The amount of land revenue was made fixed and they were promised that it would not be increased. In case zamindars failed to pay revenue, the government had the authority to sell their land through public auction. They were required to pay 89 per cent of the collected rent to the state and could keep the rest with themselves.
- Zamindars were allowed to sell or mortgage their land. They were also allowed to give their land to someone else if they wanted to.
- It was expected that zamindars would make efforts to improve the conditions of the farmers or tillers who were working on their land.
- The Government promised them that it would not interfere in its matters till the time they pay their revenue in time.

### **Merits of Permanent Settlement**

Some of the merits of permanent settlement are as follows:

- Under Permanent Settlement, zamindars had to pay fixed amount as land revenue. In cases when zamindars were not able to pay their land revenue, the government used to sell their lands to recover their land revenue. Thus, the British government was sure of its income.
- The fixed income in the form of fixed land revenue gave economic stability to the British government. This made the province of Bengal prosperous.
- Permanent Settlement saved the British government from the expenditure which it had to incur in order to extract land revenue from zamindars. Earlier the British government spent a lot of money in order to assess land on a regular basis.

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- This settlement encouraged zamindars to improve the agricultural land to earn more money. Earlier the zamindars did not make efforts to improve their land as the British government used to take away most of their profit in the name of land revenue.
- This settlement made zamindars wealthy and they could invest money in trade, commerce and industry. It helped the provinces to prosper at a fast pace.
- The settlement made zamindars loyal to the British so much so that they supported the British even during the rebels in India.
- Though the government could not increase the amount of land revenue yet it could extract more money from the zamindars in the form of taxes.

### **Demerits of Permanent Settlement**

Some of the demerits of permanent settlement were as follows:

- Since the zamindars did not take part in the cultivation of land, they moved to cities to spend a luxurious life. Before moving to cities, they appointed some middlemen to take care of their land. These middlemen exploited the farmers and tillers and made their lives miserable.
- The system of the Permanent Settlement ignored the interests of peasants, farmers and tillers. They were left on the misery of zamindars who oppressed them for earning more.
- In the long run, the Permanent Settlement proved disadvantageous to the government as they could not increase the amount of land revenue when the prices of the crops increased.

### **Wellesley**

Though the Subsidiary Alliance System was formed in the second half of the 18th century, yet the credit of this policy goes to Lord Wellesley as it developed from 1798 to 1805 when Lord Wellesley was the Governor General of India.

The system of Subsidiary Alliance was introduced by Dupleix, the French Governor by giving his army to Indian rulers on rent. The same policy was adopted by many Governor Generals of the East India Company such as Robert Clive. In 1765, the English signed a treaty with Awadh at Allahabad. As per this treaty, the English promised that their troops would protect Awadh and the Nawab would bear the expenses of the troops. They also appointed an English resident in the court of the Nawab and was asked to bear his expenses as well.

In 1787, when Lord Cornwallis was the Governor General, the Nawab of Carnatic promised that he would not take help from any foreign power without obtaining permission from the Company. Similarly, in 1798, the Nawab of Awadh promised Sir John Shore that no European would be employed in Awadh.

In this way, the Subsidiary alliance system was in existence even before the Governor Generalship of Lord Wellesley. However, the system developed fully when he added some elements in this system. Indian states were asked to yield some of the territories to the Company if they wanted to sign this treaty. This way, the company succeeded in expanding its empire in India. Let us study the development stages of the policy of Subsidiary Alliance:



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**Stage 1:** The Company offered its army on rent to Indian states. These states were asked to pay cash in return. In 1768, Hyderabad signed this pact.

**Stage 2:** The Company offered that it would keep its army 'near the boundaries of Indian states' in order to 'protect' the states. In lieu of this service, the state was asked to pay an annual fee. In 1784, Sindhia accepted this offer.

**Stage 3:** The Company offered that it would keep its army 'inside the boundaries of Indian States' to 'protect' the state. The states were asked to pay annual fee in return. In 1798, Hyderabad agreed to sign treaty with the company.

**Stage 4:** The Company offered to keep its army inside the boundaries of the Indian states to protect the state. In lieu of this 'service', the company asked the states to give some part of their territory. In 1800, Hyderabad signed this treaty and in 1801, Oudh also signed the treaty with the Company.

### Features of the Subsidiary Alliance

Some features of the Subsidiary Alliance were as follows:

- The Company promised to protect the states from outside attack.
- The rulers had to bear the expenses of the British force which was employed for the protection of the state.
- The rulers could not employ any foreigner in their states without the permission of the Company. They could not build diplomatic ties with other States.
- The rulers had to bear the expenses of the British resident which was appointed in their court.
- The Company followed the policy of non-interference as far as the internal matters of the states were concerned.

### Advantages of the Subsidiary Alliance to the Company

The Subsidiary Alliance benefited the Company in the following ways:

- The Subsidiary Alliance proved advantageous for the Company in many ways.
- With the help of this system, the Company maintained a large army at the expense of the Nawabs. They could use this army in annexing other territories or protect their own empire.
- As per the treaty, the Nawabs were not allowed to employ any foreigner in their states without their permission. This reduced the threat which the Company had from Europeans and the French.
- Since the states were not allowed to build ties with other states, the Company felt secured in India as Indian states could not stand united to rebel against the Company.
- The treaty made Nawabs puppets in the hands of the Company as they had to seek permission from the Company on a number of issues.
- In lieu of the 'services', the Company asked for fertile lands of the territories of Nawabs so that they could earn more money with the help of these lands. This way, Nawabs lost a lot of money of the States and this made the states poor.

### Lord Dalhousie: Doctrine of Lapse

The youngest Governor General of British India was Lord Dalhousie. His methods of annexing Indian States were as follows:

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### (a) Annexations by conquest

1. **Punjab:** The Sikhs were defeated by the British in the First Sikh War but had not made Punjab part of the Empire. Even after the defeat the Sikhs were strong and powerful. They were keen on taking revenge. Lord Dalhousie was part of the second war. After the war, Punjab became part of British Empire. Maharaja Dalip Singh sent to England on a pension. Under Sir John Lawrence as Chief Commissioner of the province, Sikhs became loyal to the British. After this, he made the settlement of the province.
2. **Sikkim:** When the King of Sikkim arrested two British officers, Dalhousie attacked Sikkim and made it a part of the Empire.
3. **Lower Burma.** After the defeat of Burma after the Burmese War in 1824, trade relations were established with Burma and it also became part of the Empire.

### (b) Doctrine of Lapse

The rulers of Indian princely states had the right to adopt a child and make that child the successor. The British government agreed to this and made this right official by declaring, 'Every ruler, under Hindu laws, is free to nominate his successor, real or adopted son. The Company's government is bound to accept this right'. In 1831, the Company declared, 'The Government may accept or reject, according to the situation, the application of Indian rulers to nominate his adopted son as his heir.'

The policy of the British administration was not clear. At times it rejected such an application at times it accepted. There was no real logic given behind such decisions. For example, it permitted Baijibai, the widow of Daulat Rao Sindhia, to nominate Jankoji, her adopted son, as the successor king in 1827. However, the Company rejected the claim of Ram Chandra Rao's adopted son at Jhansi in 1835.

Lord Dalhousie made three distinct categories for Indian States:

1. British Charter created states: If there was no biological heir then the British Empire would annex the state.
2. Subordinate States: Permission of the East India Company was needed to validate the heir in case of adoption.
3. Independent States: These had the freedom to appoint any heir as they chose.

The first policy was called the Doctrine of Lapse. Satara was the first State to which this policy was applied in 1848. Appa Sahib, the king of this state, did not have any child and before his death he had adopted a son. Other states to which this policy was applied were Jaipur, Sambhalpur, Baghat, Udaipur, Jhansi and Nagpur.

The queen of Jhansi, Rani Laxmi Bai stood up for her right and fought the British. But when her struggle was not successful she rebelled against the Empire in the revolt of 1857.

Dalhousie also annexed the state of Karoli and did not accept the adopted son as heir. But this decision was overruled by the court. The rules of annexure between the second and third category were not clear. Even though many of the states so annexed were under the control of the Mughals, they had no power to decide the legality of the heir, as the East India Company by then had become very powerful. And on the pretext of some excuse or the other, the states were annexed.

This arbitrary rule of annexure became one of the reasons for the Revolt of 1857 and all united to stand up against the British. Lord Canning another Governor General, later legalized adoption.

## Reforms

Lord Dalhousie also brought about many reforms, such as follows:

- (a) **Social Reforms:** He enacted the Widow Remarriage Act. And also amended the conversion laws of Hindus which made it possible for Hindus who converted into other religion to inherit. Even though this could have led to opposition from orthodox Hindus, it was a bold step on his part.
- (b) **Administrative and Military Reforms:** He revamped the working of the administration and made different departments for different jobs and got rid of old systems. He appointed a separate Lieutenant Governor for Bengal. A separate District Magistrate was appointed for each district and given greater powers. He introduced Non Regulation System in newly conquered territories. In newly annexed states of Punjab and Pegu in Burma he made many new administrative changes which were appreciated widely. By appointing a Chief Commissioner with civil and military powers the efficiency of the Government improved. This system was introduced in Punjab, Central Provinces, Oudh and Burma. The Commissioner reported directly to the Governor General and Simla became the summer capital of India.

The policies helped expand the British Empire. This enabled to take strategic steps regarding deploying of troops. Thus the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery were shifted from Calcutta to Meerut. Simla became the permanent headquarters of the army.

- (c) **Commercial Reforms:** Lord Dalhousie advocated a free trade policy which immensely benefitted the British.
- (d) **Establishment of Public Works Department:** The public works department that he set up made roads, bridges and canals. The Grand Trunk Road and a road from Dhaka to Arakan made it possible for army movement from Bengal to Burma. He modernized the postal and telegraph system in India. He was the one who introduced a uniform postage stamp for all in India. Through irrigation canals and steamer services on major water ways like Hooghly, Indus and Irravaddy also improved and so did other means of communication.
- (e) **Educational Reforms:** Many reforms were also made in the field of education, one of them being the introduction of the Indian Civil Services Examination. In 1853 Sir Charles Wood sent out a policy document on education. This was known as the Woods Dispatch.
  - Regional language was to be taught in the Anglo-Vernacular Schools
  - Universities were set up in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
  - Colleges offering degrees were affiliated to the Universities
  - Education was made secular in nature
  - Each province set up an education department
  - Teacher's Training Institutions were to be set up
  - Privatization of education was encouraged and Government aid was given
  - A Director General of Education was recommended for the whole of India

## NOTES

(F) **Post, Railways, and Telegraph:** A lot of attention was paid to this area as the defense and law and order of the country depended on this. Through this he encouraged British enterprises to invest in India. Lord Dalhousie also promised all facilities to these companies. The railways changed the face of the country and brought people from all corners and regions together.

## SUMMARY

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- Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
- Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted authority for this company in 1664.
- The Company named 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies' was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth.
- From 1746 to 1763, English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as Carnatic wars.
- The First Carnatic War was directly linked to the events in Europe. The English and French were fighting on the issue of Austria's succession (1740–48).
- In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *farman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal.
- To punish the highhandedness of the Company, Siraj-ud-Daulah retaliated by striking Calcutta on 16 June 1756 and bringing it under his sway by 20 June 1756.
- According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, an eminent historian, 23 June 1757, marked the end

## NOTES

- In Bengal's history, the Treaty of Allahabad (1765) is extremely significant as it ushered in a new administrative mechanism, which laid down the foundation of the British administrative system in India.
- The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.
- Working as an administrative clerk in the East India Company, Warren Hastings reached Calcutta in 1750. He gradually climbed up the ladder and was appointed as the the President of Kasimbazar, by Governor of Bengal in 1772.
- Charles Cornwallis was sent to India by the Court of Directors in the year 1786. He was entrusted the responsibility of executing the policy of peace given in Pitt's India Act and to restructure the administrative system in India.
- The youngest Governor General of British India was Lord Dalhousie.
- The word 'Confederacy' is derived from Anglo-French word '*Confederate cie*', which means a league or union, whether of states or the individuals.
- As a result of the Third Anglo-Maratha War, the Peshwa was dethroned and all his territories were annexed by the British.

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## KEY TERMS

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- **Farmaan:** *Farman* was a royal order bearing the seal of the emperor during the Mughal period of Indian history.
- **Nawab:** Nawab is an honorific title ratified and bestowed by the reigning Mughal emperor to semi-autonomous Muslim rulers of princely states in South Asia.
- **Subedar:** *Subedar* is a historical rank in the Nepal Army, Indian Army and Pakistan Army, ranking below British commissioned officers and above non-commissioned officers.
- **Dual government:** The dual government of Bengal was a double system of administration, which was introduced by Robert Clive. The British East India Company obtained the actual power; whereas the responsibility and charge of administration was entrusted to the Nawab of Bengal.

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## ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
2. In 1674, Pondicherry became the Dutch capital.
3. Jahangir declined the request of James I to let Captain William Hawkins establish trade in India because the merchants of Portugal and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India.
4. In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, who was the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a *farmaan* in the favour of the English. According to this *farmaan*, the English were given permission to carry out duty free trade but they were asked to pay `3,000 annually.



## NOTES

5. The outcome of the Dual government was that it had badly affected the administration. There was hardly any discipline and order and commerce suffered heavy losses.
6. The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.
7. The Battle of Buxar established British control over Bengal. Buxar revealed the political and military shortfalls of the Indian rulers and the decadence of the Mughal Empire.
8. The consequences of the Battle of Buxar are as follows:
  - English supremacy was accepted by Shah Alam.
  - Militarily Buxar was very significant for the English.
9. The consequence of abolishing the *dastak* system was that Company servants had no option, but to pay duties for their personal goods, which reduced corruption and augmented the Company's revenues.
10. Warren Hastings, to encourage Islamic studies, founded the Calcutta Madrassa in 1781 which was the first educational institution founded by the British government.
11. Warren Hastings was impeached for seven years from 1788–1795 on the charges of having accepted bribes, the Rohilla war, Nand Kumar's murder as well as the case of Chet Singh.
12. The Cornwallis Code was created in 1793 for the purpose of guiding those servants of the East India Company who were working in the judicial department.
13. The word 'Confederacy' is derived from Anglo-French word '*Confederate cie*', which means a league or union, whether of states or the individuals.
14. The areas of Northern and Southern India that came under control of the Marathas, during the leadership of Baji Rao I were as follows:
  - Gwalior under Ramoji Scindia
  - Baroda under Damaji Gaekwad
  - Indore under Malhar Rao Holkar
  - Nagpur under Raghujji Bhonsle
15. Ranjit Singh agreed to sign the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Which was the first French company that succeeded in establishing permanent trade relations in India?
2. When did the Third Carnatic War begin?
3. What were the reasons that encouraged the British to come to India?
4. What were the features of the Dual government?

5. What were the causes that led to the Battle of Buxar?
6. What were the political repercussions of the Battle of Buxar?
7. What was the premise of the judicial reforms implemented by Warren Hastings?

## NOTES

### Long-Answer Questions

1. How did the French established factories in India?
2. Give a detailed account of the British-French rivalry.
3. Give a detailed explanation of the Battle of Buxar, its political implications and consequences.
4. Describe the Battle of Plassey and its consequences.
5. Comment on the term: ‘puppet nawabs’ of Bengal with reference to the Treaty of Allahabad.
6. Highlight the importance of the Cornwallis Code with reference to reforms that were implemented in the judicial system.
7. Discuss the terms and conditions of the Doctrine of Lapse implemented by Lord Dalhousie.

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## FURTHER READING

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