

11th History Lesson 11 Notes in English

11. The Coming of the Europeans

Introduction

- The beginning of **British rule** in **India** is conventionally ascribed to **1757**, after the **Battle of Plassey** was **won** by the English **East India Company** against the **Nawab of Bengal**.
- But the **Europeans** had arrived in India by the beginning of the sixteenth century.
- Their original intention was to procure pepper, cinnamon, cloves and other spices for the European markets and participate in **the trade** of the **Indian Ocean**.
- **The Portuguese** were the first Europeans to establish themselves in India.
- **Vasco da Gama** discovered the direct **sea route** to India from Europe around the **Cape of Good Hope** at the end of the **fifteenth century**.
- Subsequently, the **Portuguese** conquered Goa on the **west coast** in **1510**.
- Goa then became the **political headquarters** for the Portuguese in India and further **east** in **Malacca** and **Java**.

The Portuguese started Trade

- The Portuguese perfected a pattern of controlling the Indian Ocean trade through a combination of **political aggressiveness** and **naval superiority**.
- Their **forts at Daman and Diu** enabled them to control the shipping in the **Arabian Sea**, using their **well-armed ships**.
- The other European nations who came to India nearly a century later, especially the **Dutch and the English**, modelled their activities on the **Portuguese blueprint**.
- Thus we need to understand the advent of the European trading companies as an ongoing process of engagement with Indian political authorities, local merchants and society, which culminated in **the conquest of Bengal** by the **British in 1757**.
- This lesson has two parts. **The political history of India** and the changing scenario that emerged after 1600 are discussed in the first part.
- The second part deals with **the arrival of European trading companies** in India and the impact each one made on Indian society.

Political Affairs

[1600-1650: The Mughal Empire]

- This was the period when **the Mughal empire** was at **the peak of its power**.
- **The Europeans** were quite **aware of the wealth and power** of the Mughals, and English poets even wrote about the fabulous **"wealth of India"**.

- Travellers from all parts of Europe visited India regularly during the **sixteenth** and **seventeenth centuries**.
- The journals of their travels present a detailed contemporary account of the empire and society in India.
- By 1600 **Akbar** had achieved his **imperial dream** and **extended the frontiers** of the Mughal empire through his conquests in **Rajasthan and Gujarat**.
- **Gujarat** was conquered in **1573**, and this gave the Mughal empire valuable access to the port of Surat, which was the gateway to **west Asia and Europe**.
- Besides trade, the ships carrying pilgrims to **Mecca left from Surat**.
- The importance of **Surat to the Mughals** can be appreciated from the fact that Surat had **two governors**, one the governor of **the city**, and the other, the governor of **the castle** which had been built on the **river Tapti to protect the city**.



British factory at Surat

The Europeans got Trade permission

- The governor of the city was in charge of **civilian affairs** and collecting the **revenues** from customs duties. **Akbar** had also tried to **extend his empire** in the east beyond **Bihar** by conquering **Bengal**.
- But Bengal was not really integrated into the empire until nearly three decades later, when it became one of **the provinces (subah)** under **Jahangir**.
- Under Akbar, the revenue system of the empire had been revamped by **Todar Mal** so that a unified system of governance and revenue collection could function throughout the empire.
- At his death, therefore, Akbar left a powerful, economically prosperous and well administered empire.
- The Dutch, followed by the **English**, **arrived in Surat** in the early years of the **1600s** to begin their **trading activities**.
- The Mughal governor **permitted** them to trade, and to set up their **"factories"** (as the business premises of the European traders which also functioned as **warehouses** were termed).
- But they were **not allowed** to have any **territorial authority** over any part of the city.
- This **frustrated** their ambitions to follow the **Portuguese** model.

- The English acquired the **islands of Bombay in 1668**, and set up their **headquarters in Bombay in 1687**.
- Their primary objective was to develop Bombay as an alternate base for their operations.
- But Surat under the protection of the Mughal state still remained the preferred centre of commercial activity for **the merchants**.

[1600-1650: South India after Vijayanagar]

- **South India**, especially the **Tamil region**, presented a sharp contrast to the centralized stability of the Mughal empire in these decades.
- Politically the region was fragmented and unsettled.
- Under Vijayanagar rule, **three Nayak kingdoms** had been set up in the Tamil region: in **Madurai, Thanjavur and Senji**.
- The objective was to provide financial and manpower resources to the empire.
- After the **defeat of Vijayanagar in 1565 in the Battle of Talikota** by the combined forces of the rulers of **Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda**, the central authority of the once dominant **kingdom became very weak**.
- The Nayak kingdoms became virtually autonomous, though they made a ritualistic acknowledgment of the authority of the **Vijayanagar emperor**.
- In addition to the larger Nayak kingdoms, several **local chiefs** also controlled some parts of the region.
- The most notable of them was probably the **Setupati of Ramanathapuram**, who was also keen to **assert his independence**.
- Between **1590 and 1649** the region witnessed several military conflicts arising out of these unsettled political conditions.
- **Madurai and Thanjavur** fought several times to establish their superiority.
- There were also **rebellions against** the Vijayanagar emperor.

The English builds the First Fort

- Besides these **on-going conflicts**, **Golkonda invaded the Coromandel in 1646** and **annexed** the area between **Pulicat and San Thome**, which also changed the political scenario in the region.
- **The Dutch and the English** were able to **acquire territorial rights** on the east coast during these years.
- They realized that they needed a base on the Coromandel coast to access the piece goods needed for trading with the **spice-producing islands of Indonesia**.
- **The Dutch** had successfully negotiated to **acquire Pulicat (Palaverkadu)** from the **Nayak of Senji** and constructed a **fort** there.



Fort St. George

- The English got a piece of land further south from the local chief, **Damarla Venkatadri Nayak** on which they built **Fort St. George in 1639**.
- Thus an **English settlement** came up which eventually grew into **Chennai (Madras)**, the capital of the Madras Presidency.

[1650-1700: The Mughal Empire]

- Emperor **Aurangzeb** began an ambitious programme of **extending his empire south to the Deccan, and the kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda** were conquered in the 1680s.
- This extended the **Mughal control** of the Deccan as far south as Chennai.
- But the overextended **Mughal empire** soon began to reveal its **inherent weakness**.
- This became most apparent when the **Marathas**, under **Shivaji**, began to grow in power and military strength.
- They attacked **Surat** with **impunity in 1664**, though it was soon abandoned.
- But their **second raid in 1670 devastated Surat** and its trade took **several years to recover**.
- This seriously challenged the claim of **Mughal invincibility** and it sounded the beginning of the gradual disintegration of the Mughal empire.
- In the 1660s, after the **attack on Surat**, **Shivaji** turned his attention to **south India**, and defeated the **Nayaks of Senji and Thanjavur**.
- Though **Senji** was conquered by the **Mughals** a few years later, **Thanjavur** survived as a **Maratharuled state**.
- The Maratha kings, with their inclusive policy of assimilating Tamil intellectual and cultural traditions, made **Thanjavur the cultural capital** of the Tamil region.

[1700-1750: The Mughal Empire and the Successor States]

- **Aurangzeb**, the last of the “**great Mughals**”, died in 1707.
- One of the major developments following his death was the establishment of what have been called ‘**successor states**’.
- Mughal viceroys in various parts of **the country Oudh, Bengal, Hyderabad** and the **Carnatic** set themselves up as independent rulers.

- The English and the Dutch had understood this vulnerability of the Mughal state.
- In Bengal and the Carnatic, the Nawabs had borrowed heavily from the English, and assigned vast tracts of land to them so that the English could collect the land revenue as repayment for the loans.
- This marks the beginning of British rule as revenue collectors.

The English became the power to reckon

- By this time the Dutch had given up Pulicat and moved their headquarters further south to Nagapattinam.
- They had decided to shift their focus to the spice-producing islands of Indonesia and established their capital at Jakarta (Batavia).
- Chennai, in the meantime, had grown into a prosperous town.
- The English, after many years of struggle, became a power to reckon with in the region.
- Surat continued to suffer due to the uncertain political conditions, and by 1750, the local merchants had begun to declare themselves to be “under the protection” of the Dutch or the English in order to feel more secure.
- Bombay therefore became a viable alternative as a trade centre, attracting merchants from Surat and other parts of Gujarat.



Nagapattinam in 1702

The Economy

Agriculture

- India was primarily an agricultural economy.
- Most of the population lived in the rural areas and they depended on agriculture for their livelihood.
- In addition to food grains, they grew several commercial crops.
- These included sugarcane, oil seeds, cotton and indigo.
- There was a brisk trade in food grains, ghee, jaggery and other food products from the surplus areas to the deficit areas within India.

- Food grains, particularly, were **transported** on **coastal boats** and the Tamil region, for instance, imported food grains from the Andhra region and Bengal.
- On the west coast, **food grains** from Gujarat were **exported** to the Malabar region in **return for pepper, cinnamon and ginger**.
- Food grains were also **shipped** to the Dutch establishments in **Sri Lanka and Batavia**.

Cotton Manufactures

- India also had a **strong manufacturing base** and was particularly famous for the variety of **cotton fabrics** produced at various centres across the country.
- **Weaving** was the **second most important economic** activity in the country, supported by subsidiary activities like **spinning and dyeing**.
- Manufacturing – that is, **handicraft production** – was carried on both in urban and rural areas.
- Luxury crafts, like **metalwork** were **urban** based.
- **Weaving** was mostly done in **rural areas**.
- India had a great **advantage** in that **cotton** was **grown** in the country.
- Indian craft communities also possessed specialized knowledge about dyeing cotton using **chemicals like alum** to produce a **permanent colour**.
- **The Coromandel region** was famous for its **painted (kalamkari) fabrics** which had designs drawn on the cloth and then dyed.
- By the sixteenth century these had become **staple products** for consumers in south-east Asia, especially the Indonesian islands.
- **Cotton fabrics** were the most **important exports** from all parts of India to the rest of the world. This continued well into the eighteenth century.

Marketing

- Production for an **external market** was widespread, so that there was a high degree of **commercialization** of production beyond subsistence levels.
- This required the organization of marketing by agencies which were distinct from the producers, that is, **a class of merchants**.
- Merchants thus **linked producers** who were dispersed in the **rural areas** with **urban** markets within the country, and with **external markets outside the country**.
- **The extensive trade network** in the country operated in several circuits, from the village markets, to regional markets and large urban commercial centres, culminating in **the ports** which were the gateways to the markets outside the country.

Merchant Groups

- Just as the various kinds of markets functioned at different scales, merchants were also **not a homogeneous group**.

- There were **traders and retailers** who serviced markets in **smaller centres**.
- If mercantile activity can be deemed to be a pyramid, this class of merchants would be at the **base of the pyramid**.
- At its top were the great merchants, who were the prime movers in overseas trade with great reserves of capital, who controlled them producers in **the hinterland of the ports**.
- They generally employed the services of a **network of brokers and sub-brokers** to acquire goods from the interior regions or hinterland of the port towns.
- These agents could be said to form the middle tier of the **merchant pyramid**.

Banking and Rise of Merchant Capitalists

- **Commercial institutions** were also well developed to promote such **extensive trade**.
- Because a variety of **coins** were in **circulation**, there were **money-changers or shroffs** to test coins for their purity and decide their value in current terms.
- They also served as **local bankers**.
- Instead of transferring money as cash from one place to another, merchants issued bills of exchange, known as **hundis** which would be cashed by **shroffs** at different destinations at a specified rate of discount.
- This well-developed infrastructure and organization of trade enabled the rich merchants to **a mass large fortunes**.
- Such merchant princes or capitalists were found in all parts of India – **the banias and Parsi merchants of Surat, the nagarseths of Ahmedabad, the Jagat Seths of Bengal, and the merchant communities of the Coromandel**.
- Contemporary European observers noted that these **merchants** appropriated all the **profits** from trade to themselves, while the earnings and condition of **the weavers and peasants were pitifully poor**.
- This rendered them especially vulnerable to **natural calamities like famines**.
- In the Madras region, for instance, famine occurred at least ten times between **1678 and 1750**.
- Sometimes there was widespread famine which lasted for several years on end.
- This drove the **rural poor** to sell themselves into **slavery**.
- Dutch records from the Coromandel regularly mention **male and female slaves** among the **cargo sent to Batavia**.

Overseas Trade

- The overseas trade from both the **east and west coast** was incorporated into **Indian Ocean trade** which had stabilized into a well-set pattern by the sixteenth century.
- Shipping in the Indian Ocean was segmented and carried on over several demarcated stages.
- **Ships** coming from **China** and the **Far East** sailed up to **Malacca**, where their **cargoes** were **unloaded**, and in return, goods from the west were taken back.

- From **Malacca**, ships sailed to the west coast of India, to Calicut or Cambay or Surat in Gujarat.
- Such intermediate ports were known as “**entrepots**”.
- Goods from Europe and West Asia were **exchanged** in these **ports for goods** from the east, as well as locally produced pepper, spices, dyes, clothes and food grains.
- In the sixteenth century, Calicut gradually lost out to the **Gujarat ports** which were served by a much **larger hinterland producing** a wider range of products.
- The ports of the Coromandel coast, like **Masulipatnam, Pulicat** and other **ports further south** served as intermediate ports for the ships from **Burma and the Malay peninsula**.

Advent of Europeans

- The arrival of the Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese, was the first major external shock to this **well established and regulated system of trade**.
- The primary interest of the Europeans was in **securing spices** for Europe directly.
- In the olden days, the spices were carried to **the Persian Gulf ports** and then overland to **the Mediterranean**.
- They soon learned that a simple **bilateral exchange** was **not workable** in the **Asian markets**.
- This was mainly because there was no demand in the local economies for the products of Europe, other than **gold or silver**.
- On the other hand, because of the **universal demand** in south-east Asian markets for **Indian textiles**, clothes from India served as a substitute medium of exchange.
- The demand for the painted fabrics of the Coromandel coast in the Indonesian islands, in particular, made the Dutch and the English set up their establishments on the east coast to **procure the cloth** that could be **profitably exchanged for spices**.

Collaboration with Indian Merchants

- From the beginning of their trading venture in India, the **Europeans** realized that they could succeed only with the **help and collaboration** of the leading **Indian merchants**.
- The merchants, on their part, saw in the Europeans a **great new business** opportunity for expansion, and worked with them.
- In **Surat**, the **merchants** were functioning with the **security of the Mughal** government to **support** them in case of any **problems**.
- But in **Pulicat**, and later in **Chennai** under the **English** and **Pondicherry** under the **French**, the merchants also saw in these early colonial enclaves a place of security from where they could carry on business safely, free from the continuing **political turmoil** in the **Tamil region**.
- The Indian merchants were not at a disadvantage in their dealings with the Europeans till about 1700.
- In **Surat**, the situation changed because of **the threat** posed by the **Maratha** incursions and the inability of the Mughal state to provide security.

The Merchant princes powers virtually disappeared

- In **Chennai** the English had **stabilized** and they could put **pressure** on **merchants** to accept unviable terms in order to increase their **exports of cloth to Europe**.
- Gradually, **the power relations** between the English and the local merchants began to **change**.
- The great **merchant princes** who were the dominant players on the trading scene in the previous century virtually **disappeared**.
- The expansion of demand from Europe for Indian textiles also had an impact on the **indigenous economy**.
- Initially, this **increased demand** was beneficial to the local economy.
- The productive resources (labour, raw materials and capital) could respond positively.
- However, as the demand from **Europe continued to grow**, the pressure to increase production exponentially began to **strain the productive resources**.
- The frequent famines in the south and the shortage of food grains and raw materials, for instance, were additional **burdens** which the **weaver** had to bear.
- Thus, though the increased trade opportunities were beneficial in the short run, the long term effects were not necessarily positive.
- Over these **one hundred and fifty years**, the English in India were gradually undergoing a **metamorphosis** from being traders to builders of a trading empire, eventually emerging as **the virtual rulers** of large parts of the country.

Arrival of Europeans and the Aftermath

Portuguese in India

- During his **first voyage** **Vasco da Gama** came with **170 men in three vessels**.
- The cordiality of **Zamorin**, the **ruler of Calicut**, made him comfortable.
- He journeyed back on **29 August 1498** with only **fifty five surviving men** and of the **three ships**, two were laden with Indian goods.
- Gama's success made **Portugal** to send **1200 men** with **13 vessels** under **Pedron Alvarez Cabral**.
- On **29 October 1502** **Gama** visited Calicut for the **second time** with a fleet of **20 vessels**.
- Gama moved from **Calicut to Cochin** as its harbour was better.
- He soon realized that the monopolistic **trade** of the **Arabs** needed to be **broken** if European trade was to thrive.
- He **used** the **enmity** between the **two Hindu rulers** of Cochin and Calicut for this purpose.
- Before he returned to Portugal he established a **factory [warehouse]** in **Cochin** and a **prison** at **Kannur**.



Zamorin

Consolidation of the Portuguese Trade

- **The Portuguese** stopped yearly expeditions and instead decided to appoint a **Viceroy**.
- The first Viceroy was **Francisco d' Almeida** who followed what is known as '**Blue Water Policy**,' and accordingly, he added more **ships** to strengthen the navy rather than adding more settlements.
- He destroyed the fleet of Zamorin and a **fleet** sent by the **Sultan of Egypt**.
- He befriended the ruler of Cochin and built **fortresses at Cochin, Kannur** and other places on the **Malabar coast**.
- **Albuquerque (1509-1515)**, the successor of Almeida, was the **real founder** of the **Portuguese empire** in India.
- He defeated **Yusuf Adil Khan**, the ruler of **Bijapur** in **1510** and **captured Goa**.
- He developed Goa into a **centre of commerce** by making all the ships sail on that route.
- He **encouraged people** of all faiths to **settle in Goa**.

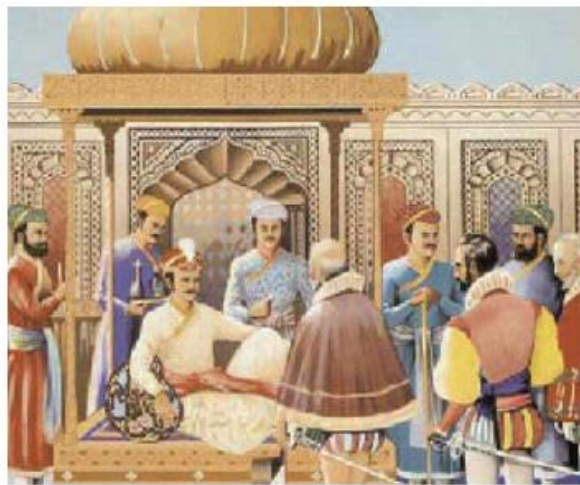


Albuquerque

The Viceroys played a significant role

- He was in favour of Europeans **marrying Indian women** and settling down in Portuguese controlled territories.

- His **conquest of Malacca** (in Malaysia) held by the **Muslims**, who commanded the trade route between **India- China and Mecca and Cairo**, extended the empire.
- He **attacked the Arabs** and was successful in taking **Aden**. In **1515** he took control of **Ormuz**.
- Two more **viceroy**s played a **significant role** in consolidating the Portuguese empire in India.
- They are **Nino da Cunha** and **Antonio de Noronha**. Da Cunha occupied **Bassein** and **Diu** in **1534** and **1537** respectively.
- **The port of Daman** was wrested from the hands of **Imad-ul Mulk** in **1559**.
- Meanwhile in the middle of the sixteenth century, the **Portuguese control over Ceylon** increased with the completion of a **fort in Colombo**.
- It was during the period of **De Noronha (1571)** the **Mughal ruler Akbar** visited **Cambay in Gujarat** and the first contacts between the Portuguese and the Mughal emperor established.



Akbar's Contact with European Traders

- In **1580 Philip II, King of Spain**, defeated **Portugal** and annexed it.
- In India the **Dutch** defeated the **Portuguese** in **Ceylon** and later **seized** the Portuguese **fort on Malabar Coast**.
- Thereafter rather than protecting their settlements in India, **Portuguese** began to evince greater interest in **Brazil**.

The Impact of Portuguese Presence

- For the first time in the political history of India the **Europeans conquered and seized territories** from the **Indian rulers**.
- Indian rulers remained divided and **Europeans took advantage** of it.
- The Europeans adopted new methods in the warfare.
- **Gun powder** and **superior artillery** played a significant role.
- The Portuguese could contain the monopolistic **trade of the Arabs**. But it did not really help them. Instead, it benefited the **British** who **removed pirates** on the sea routes and made the **sea voyage safe**.

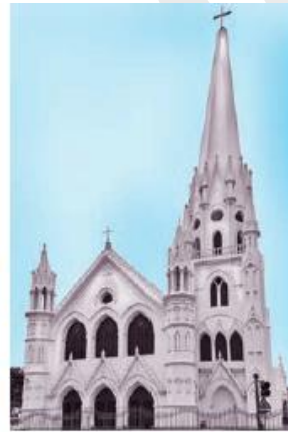
- The **marriages** between **Europeans and Indians**, encouraged by the Portuguese in the territories occupied by them, created a **new Eurasian racial group**.
- They were the ones who were later taken to other **Portuguese colonies** in **Africa and Asia**.
- The presence of Portuguese is very much evident in **Chennai's San Thome**.
- **Mylapore** was the Portuguese '**Black Town**'. (Black Town of the British period was George Town)
- Following the establishment of Portuguese settlements, **Jesuit missionaries** visited India.

The Portuguese in TamilNadu

- Notable among them are: **Fr. Roberto de Nobili**, whose linguistic ability enabled him to **write** extensively in **Tamil and Sanskrit**. He is considered the **father of Tamil prose**.
- **Fr. Henriques** introduced **printing in Tamil** and is called the **father of printing press**.



Roberto de Nobile



San Thome Church

- **Clashes** occurred between the **Portuguese** and the **Muslim** groups on the **pearl fishery coast** in the **1530s** over the **control** of fishing and pearl diving rights.
- **Delegation of Paravas** complained to the **Portuguese** authorities at **Cochin** about the atrocities inflicted on them by **Arab fleets** and sought **protection**.
- Seizing the opportunity, the **Portuguese** sent their **Roman Catholic priests** (Padres) who converted thousands of **fisher people to the Catholic religion**.
- Following this **St. Francis Xavier**, one of the **founders** of the **Society of Jesus**, arrived in **Goa** in **1542** and **travelled** as far as **Thoothukudi** and **Punnakayal** to **baptize the converts**.
- **Xavier** established a network of **Jesuit mission centres**.
- His visit is evident from the **shrines dedicated** to **St. Xavier** and the **towering churches** that came up in the **fishing villages on the Coromandel Coast**.
- The Portuguese threatened disruption of trade by violence unless their protection, **cartaz**, was bought.
- Under the cartaz system, the **Portuguese exacted money** from the **traders** as price for protection against what they termed as piracy.

- But much of this was caused by Portuguese **freebooters** themselves and so the whole system was a **blatant protection racket**.

The Dutch

- The first Dutch expedition to the **South East Asia** was in **1595** by a trader (Jan Huyghen van Linschoten), a **merchant** from **Netherlands** who lived in **Lisbon**.
- There were **several companies** floated by the traders and individuals to trade with the East.
- The **state intervened and amalgamated** them all and created a **Dutch East India company** in **1602** [known as the United East Indies Company (in Dutch: Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie-abbreviated to VOC).
- The **newly created company** established its **hold over the Spice Islands (Indonesia)**.
- In **1641** the **Dutch captured Malacca** from the Portuguese and in **1658** the **Dutch forced Portuguese to part with Ceylon**.
- The **Dutch** were **successful in Spice Islands** but they suffered reverses in India at the hands of the British.

Dutch in Tamil Nadu

- The Portuguese who established a **control over Pulicat** since **1502** were overthrown by the Dutch.
- In Pulicat, located **60 kilometers north of Chennai**, the Dutch built **the Castle Geldria**.
- The remains of this **400 year old fort** can be seen even **now**.
- This fort was once the seat of Dutch power. The **Dutch** established **control** of **Masulipatnam** in **1605** and they established their settlement at Pulicat in 1610.
- The other **Dutch colonial forts** and possessions include **Nagapattinam, Punnakayal, Porto Novo, Cuddalore (Tiruppathiripuliyur) and Devanampatinam**.
- **Pulicat** served as the Coromandel **headquarters** of the **Dutch East India Company**.
- **Diamonds** were **exported** from Pulicat to the **western countries**. **Nutmeg, cloves, and mace** too were sent from here to **Europe**.



Dutch Cemetery, Pulicat

- A **gun powder factory** was also set up by the Dutch to augment their **military power**.
- One less known fact about the Dutch is they were involved in **slave trade**.
- People from Bengal and from settlements such as **Tengapattinam** and **Karaikal** were brought to **Pulicat**.
- The Dutch employed **brokers at Madras for catching and shipping slaves**.
- **Famines, droughts and war** that resulted in **food shortage** led to the **flourishing of the slave trade**.
- A subsequent **invasion of the Bijapur army** led to the destruction of fertile agricultural lands of **Thanjavur** pushing more **people into slavery**.
- This time (1646) around **2118 slaves**, mostly drawn from places situated along the coasts like **Adirampattinam, Tondi and Kayalpattinam**.

The French

- **The French** attempted to **establish a trade link** with India as early as **1527**.
- Taking a cue from the Portuguese and the Dutch, the French commenced their commercial operations through **the French East India Company**, established in **1664**.
- Unlike other European powers which appeared in India through the private trading companies, the French commercial enterprise was a project of **King Louis XIV**.
- His **minister of finance, Colbert**, was instrumental in establishing the French East India Company.
- As the French effort was a government initiative, it did not attract the general public of France who viewed it as yet another way to **tax people**.

Pondicherry through Madagascar

- The **French traders** arrived in **Madagascar** (in Africa) in **1602**.
- Though the **French colonized Madagascar**, they had to **abandon it in 1674**, excepting a small coastal trading post.

- **Berber**, a French agent in India obtained a **firman** [a royal command or authorization] on **September 4, 1666 from Aurangzeb**.
- The **first French factory** was **established at Surat in December 1668**, much **against** the opposition of the **Dutch**. Within a year the French established **another factory at Masulipatnam**.
- Realizing the need for a stronger foothold in India, **Colbert sent a fleet to India**, led by **Haye** (Jacob Blanquet de la Haye).
- The **French** were able to **remove the Dutch from San Thome in Mylapore in 1672**.
- The **French** sought the **support of Sher Khan Lodi**, the local Governor, who represented the **Sultan of Bijapur**, against the **Dutch**.
- The **Dutch befriended the King of Golkonda** who was a traditional **foe of Bijapur**.
- It was **Sher Khan Lodi who offered Pondicherry** (Puducherry) as a suitable site for their settlement.
- **Pondicherry in 1673** was a **small fishing village**.
- **Francis Martin** who became the **Governor of Pondicherry** later had spent four years in **Madagascar** before arriving **Surat**.
- He made **Pondicherry the strategic centre of French settlements in India**.

Rivalry and Wars with the Dutch

- **French** attempts to **capture Pondicherry** were not easy.
- They had to **deal with their main rivals, the Dutch**.
- From **1672 France and Holland** were **continuously at war**.
- In India the French lacked men, money and arms, as they had diverted them to **Chandranagore**, another **French settlement in Bengal**.
- Therefore the Dutch could capture Pondicherry easily in **1693**. It remained with the **Dutch for six years**.
- In **1697**, according to the **treaty of Ryswick**, **Pondicherry** was once again **restored to the French**.
- However, it was **handed over to the French** only in **1699**.
- **Francis Martin** remained as its governor till his **death in 1706**.
- The French secured **Mahe in 1725** and **Karaikal in 1739**.
- The French were also successful in establishing and extending their settlements in **Qasim Bazaar, Chandranagore and Balasore** in the Bengal region.
- **Pierre Benoit Dumas (1668–1745)** was another able French governor in Pondicherry.
- However, the **French** had to **face the threat of the English** who proved too strong for them.
- Eventually they **lost out on their hard earned fortunes** to the English.
- The **influence of the French** can **still** be seen in present day **Pondicherry, Mahe, Karaikkal, and Chandranagore**.

The Danes

- **Denmark and Norway** (together till 1813) possessed colonial settlements in India and **Tamil Nadu**.
- **Tarangambadi or Tranquebar** in Tamil Nadu, **Serampore** in West Bengal and **Nicobar Islands** were their possessions in India.
- On March 17, 1616 the **King of Denmark, Christian IV**, issued a **charter** and created a **Danish East India Company**.
- This Company did **not get any positive response** from the Danish traders.
- **Admiral Ove Gjedde** led the first expedition to **Ceylon in 1618**.
- The Danes **could not get any trade** contract in Ceylon.
- While they were **returning in disappointment** their main **vessel** was **sunk** by the **Portuguese at Karaikkal**.
- **Thirteen stranded sailors** with their trade director **Robert Crappe** were taken to the **Nayak ruler of Thanjavur**.
- **Robert Crappe** ably **negotiated** with the **Thanjavur King** and **struck an agreement**.
- According to the agreement **signed on 20 November 1620**, the **Danes received the village of Tarangambadi or Tranquebar** and the **right to construct a Fort** there.
- The **Danish fort at Tarangambadi** was **vulnerable** to high tidal waves which frequently damaged roads and houses.

The Danish East India Company emerges

- Despite their involvement in the Thirty Years War and the financial loss they suffered, **the Danish** managed to set up a **factory at Masulipatnam**.
- Small trading posts were established at **Pipli (Hoogly River)** and **Balasore**.
- **Investors in Denmark wanted to dissolve the Danish East India Company**, but **King Christian IV resisted it**.
- Finally after his **death in 1648** his son **Frederick abolished it**.
- A **second Danish East India Company** was started in **1696**.
- **Trade between Denmark and Tarangambadi** resumed and many new trade outposts were also established.



Tarangambadi Fort

- The **Nayak king of Thanjavur** gifted **three more villages** surrounding Tarangambadi. Two Danish Missionaries, the first **protestant missionaries**, arrived on **9 June 1706**.

- The **Danish** settled in **Andaman and Nicobar** in **1755**, but due to **the threat of malaria** they abandoned it in **1848**.
- During **the Napoleonic wars** the British caused heavy damage to their possessions.
- **Serampore** was sold to the **British** in **1839** and **Tranquebar** and other settlements in **1845**.

The Danes in Tamil Nadu

- The **Danish Fort** built in **Tarangambadi** is **still intact**.
- **Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg** along with **Heinrich Pluetschau** arrived in **Tranquebar** in **September 1706**, as the **first Lutheran missionaries** in **India**.
- They began **preaching**, and **baptized** their first **converts** within **ten months** of their stay.
- Their work was **opposed** both by **Hindus** and by the **local Danish authorities**, and in **1707-08** **Ziegenbalg** had to spend four months in **prison** on a charge that by **converting the natives** he was **encouraging rebellion**.
- The **Copenhagen Missionary Society** wanted to **encourage** an indigenous **Christian Church**, and accordingly instructed its missionaries simply to **preach the Gospel**, and not to bother about other matters.
- **Ziegenbalg**, however, contended that a concern for the **physical welfare of "others"** was implicit in **the Gospel**.



Bartholomaeus
Ziegenbalg

- Ziegenbalg set up a **printing press**, and **published studies of the Tamil language** and of **Indian religion and culture**.
- His translation of the **New Testament into Tamil in 1715** was first in any Indian language.
- **The church building** that he and his associates **constructed in 1718** is still in use today.
- He succeeded in establishing a seminary for **the training of local clergy**.
- When he **died on 23 February 1719**, he left behind a full **Tamil translation** of the complete **Bible and of Genesis to Ruth** (Bible Story book series), many brief writings in **Tamil**, two church buildings, the seminary, and 250 baptized Christians.

Advent of the British

The English East India Company

- A group of wealthy merchants of **Leadenhall Street in London** secured a royal **charter** from **Queen Elizabeth I** to have a share in the lucrative spice trade with the East.
- **The Company**, headed by a **governor**, was managed by a **court of 24 Directors**.
- In 1611, **King James I** obtained from Mughal Emperor **Jahangir** through **William Hawkins**, **permission for regular trade**.
- **The English** obtained some **trading privileges in Surat**.
- In 1615–19 **Sir Thomas Roe** was sent as an **Ambassador** of the **English King James I**.
- The **Viceroy of Gujarat, Prince Khurram** granted trading privileges, but the British could not operate freely because the Portuguese exercised a powerful influence in the region.
- **Madras was ceded to East India Company in 1639** by the **Raja of Chandragiri** with permission to **build a fortified factory** which was named **Fort St. George**.



Chandragiri Fort

- This was the **first landholding** recorded by the **Company on Indian soil**.
- In 1645, the ruler of **Golkonda** overran the territories **under the Company's control in Madras**.
- **Aurangzeb** conquered **Golkonda in 1687** and brought the Company territories under **Mughal rule**.
- But the **privileges granted** to the **English** continued.
- Within a short time **Madras replaced Masulipatinam** as the **headquarters** of the **English** on the **Coromandel Coast**.
- The **island of Bombay**, which **Charles II** had inherited as dowry, was transferred to **the Company in 1668**.
- **The Charter of 1683 empowered the Company** to raise **military forces** and the right to declare war or make peace with the powers in **America, Africa and Asia**.
- In 1688 **Madras** had a municipal **government with a Mayor**.
- In 1693 **the Company** obtained another grant of three villages surrounding Madras and in 1702 five more villages were granted.

Bengal

- In **Bengal** it was a long drawn struggle for the British to obtain trading rights.
- The **Company** obtained **trading privileges** from **Shah Shuja**, the second son of **Shajahan** and the **Governor of Bengal**, but there was no royal confirmation of such privileges.

- The **trading rights for the British in Bengal** were obtained only in **1680**.
- Local officials interfered with the trading rights of the British and this resulted in the **Company declaring war** with the ruler representing the Mughals.
- Peace was restored in 1690 and the Company established its **first settlement at Sultanuti**, a site which became **the future Calcutta**.
- The **factory was fortified in 1696** and in **1698 the Company secured the zamindari rights** over three villages, Sutanuti, Kalikata and Gobindpur in return for a payment of **1200 rupees a year**.
- The fortified factory was called **Fort St. William** which became the **headquarters of the Presidency in 1770**.

The Carnatic Wars

- The **British had to fight three wars (1746-1763)** with the **French** to establish their supremacy, which in history are called the **Carnatic wars**.

First Carnatic War 1746-48

- The **Austrian War of Succession** and **Seven Years War** fought in Europe had their repercussions in India.
- The Austrian ruler **Charles VI died in 1740** and was succeeded by his daughter **Maria Theresa**.
- **France did not support her succession** and joined hands with German-speaking territories of Austria such as Bavaria, Saxony and Spain.
- **Frederick II** (known as Frederick the Great of Prussia) taking advantage of the emerging political situation **invaded and annexed Silesia**, an **Austrian province**, with the **support of France**.
- The wars fought between **Britain and France in Europe** also led to clashes between these two countries over their **colonial possessions in North America and India**.
- When the war broke out, the **new Governor of Pondicherry, Dupleix** appealed to **Morse, the Governor of Madras**, to remain neutral.
- But a **British squadron** under **Commodore Barnett** captured some of the **French vessels** with Indian goods and precipitated the situation.
- **Dupleix, shocked** by this incident, appealed to **Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic**, to help him to avoid war with the English.
- Calm prevailed for some time. Meanwhile **Dupleix contacted La Bourdonnais, the French Governor of Isle of France**, who appeared in the **Indian waters with eight warships**.
- **Peyton**, who led the **English squadron** with his **four ships**, intercepted the French squadron and in the **battle on 6 July 1746 Peyton** suffered reverses and retreated to **Hoogly, Calcutta** expecting some more ships from Britain.

Fall of Madras

- The **French** squadron succeeded in **capturing** the undefended **Madras** on **15 September 1746**.
- **Governor Morse** was asked to **surrender** but the **Madras Governor** turned to **Anwar-ud-din** for help.
- **Dupleix** was clever in **convincing** the **Nawab** that he was **securing Madras** from the British to be handed over to him.
- On **21 September 1746** the English were forced to part with Madras.
- But when the **Nawab of Carnatic** asked the **French** to **hand over Madras** to him as promised, the **French dodged**.
- Thereupon the **Nawab** sent a force of **10,000 men** under the **command** of his son **Mahfuz Khan**.

The Battle of San Thome and Adyar

- **Nawab's forces** blockaded **Fort St. George** but the **French forces** pushed the **Nawab's forces** to **San Thome**.
- The French received reinforcement and **Mahfuz Khan** attempted to halt the progress of the French on the **banks of river Adyar**.
- The **French forces** were able to **wade through the water** and inflict a **severe attack** on the **Nawab's forces** resulting in heavy losses.



Dupleix

- **Dupleix** then set his eyes on **Fort St. David at Cuddalore** which was in British possession.
- The English, with the help of the **Nawab of Arcot**, was trying to regain the places lost but **Dupleix** again played a **diplomatic game** by promising that he would hoist the flag of the Nawab in the **Fort St. George** for a week and after that he requested the **Nawab to hand over the town to the French**.
- The **Nawab** agreed to **withdraw** his proposed help to the British.
- Two attempts of the **British** under **Rear- Admiral Boscawen** to take **Pondicherry** failed.
- By this time, in **1748**, **France** and the **English** had signed the **Treaty of Aix La Chapelle**.
- Under this treaty the British and the French **ceased their hostilities** in India.
- It was agreed that the **French** would **hand over Madras** to the **British** in return for **Louisburg in North America**.

The Second Carnatic War: 1749-54

- In Europe peace prevailed between the British and the French.
- But the two colonial powers could not live in peace in India.
- They played one native ruler against the other.
- Dupleix wanted to enhance the French influence by involving in the wars of succession in both Hyderabad and Arcot.
- Dupleix supported the claims of Muzzafar Jung, the grandson of Asaf Jah, who died in 1748 in Hyderabad, as the Nizam of Hyderabad.
- In the Carnatic, he supported the claim of Chanda Sahib. A triple alliance was formed amongst the French, Nizam and the Nawab of Carnatic.
- The English, after losing Madras, a precious possession, had only Fort St. David under their control.
- In order to reduce the influence of the French, the English supported the rival candidates Nasir Jung for the throne of Nizam of Hyderabad and that of Muhammad Ali after the death of Anwar-ud-din in the Battle of Ambur in 1749.



Arcot Nawab Muhammad Ali

The Battle of Ambur (1749)

- The battle of Ambur was followed by the entry of victorious forces to Deccan.
- Nazir Jung was killed by the French Army and Muzaffar Jung was made the Nizam of Hyderabad in December 1750.
- Dupleix's dream of establishing a French empire appeared good for some time.
- Dupleix received huge money and territories both from the Nizam and the Nawab of Arcot.
- When Muzaffar Jung required French protection, Dupleix sent Bussy, the French general, with a large French force.
- Muzaffar Jung did not live long and the same people who killed Nasir Jung also killed him.
- Bussy promptly placed Salabat Jung, brother of Nazir Jung, on the throne.

- In order to **reduce the influence of British** and also with a view to **capturing Mohammad Ali** (who fled to Tiruchirappalli after Anwar-uddin was killed) **Chanda Sahib** decided to **take Tiruchirappalli**, with the **help of the French and the Nizam**.

Clive in the Second Carnatic War

- **Dupleix** was also determined to take over **Tiruchirappalli** with the **help of Chanda Sahib**.
- **Chanda Sahib's troops** were joined by 900 Frenchmen. Muhammad Ali had only 5000 soldiers and not more than 600 Englishmen to help him.
- **Robert Clive's idea changed the course of history**.
- He suggested the idea of **storming Arcot** when the French and the Nawab were busy concentrating on Tiruchirappalli.
- **Clive moved** from Fort St. David on **26 August 1752** with only **200 English and 300 Indian soldiers**.



Robert Clive

- As expected the **English received help** from **many rulers** from small territories.
- **The Raja of Mysore and the ruler of Thanjavur** rallied to support Muhammad Ali.
- Chanda Sahib dispatched a force of 3000 under his son Raja Sahib to take Arcot.
- **Clive seized Arcot on August 31** and then successfully withstood a 53-day siege by Chanda Sahib's son, Raja Sahib, who was helped by the French forces.
- **In the battle of Arni the English and the Maratha** ruler Murari Rao faced an unequal number of French and the forces of Nawab of Arcot.
- In several battles that followed, including one at **Kaveripakkam**, **Chanda Sahib** was captured and **executed**.
- **Muhammed Ali** became the **undisputed ruler of Carnatic**.
- In **Europe, Britain and France** were **not involved in any war** and so neither of them approved the policy of their Companies fighting in India.
- The **French government recalled Governor Dupleix**.
- **The Treaty of Pondicherry was signed in 1755** with the English; both countries agreed not to interfere in the quarrels of the Indian princes.

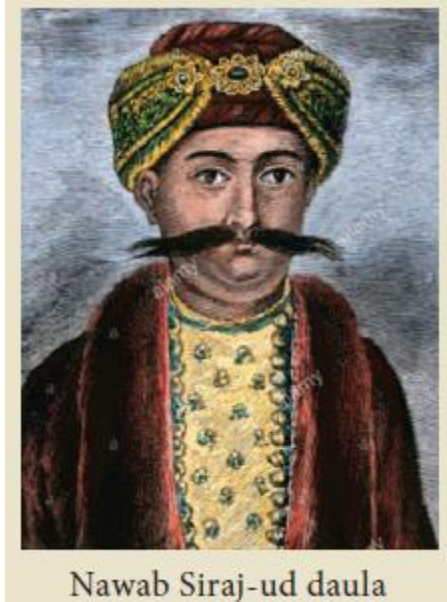
- The Treaty also defined their **mutual territorial** possessions in India, a situation that was **maintained** for nearly two centuries **until Indian independence**.

The Third Carnatic War: 1756-1763

- The **third Carnatic War** was an **echo of the Seven Years War** (1756-1763) which **broke out in Europe in 1756**.
- It was a **global conflict** and was fought between the **two arch-rivals Britain and France**.
- **The war** was fought in **North America** (resulting in the American War of Independence), and **West Africa** (which later became the French West Africa).
- In **India** it **manifested** itself in the **Third Carnatic war**.
- Before turning our attention to the Third Carnatic War, let us see what happened in Bengal in the meantime.

Battle of Plassey (1757)

- The East India **Company abused the trade permits** (dastaks) granted by the Mughal Emperor by **not paying taxes** to the Nawab of Bengal, and by involving itself in internal trade.
- This apart, the Company had given asylum to **the son of the Nawab Sirajud- daula's** hostile aunt.
- As the Company refused to oblige the Nawab, who demanded the return of his nephew, **Fort St. William was captured and Europeans imprisoned**.
- Responding to this situation, the **Company** at Fort St. George **despatched** a strong **contingent under Robert Clive and Watson**.
- The battle that ensued is called the **Battle of Plassey**.
- **The battle of Plassey (1757)** changed the position of the British from being a **commercial power** to that of a **territorial power**.
- It confirmed the privileges obtained by the Company and **replaced Siraj-ud-daula** with the betrayer **Mir Jaffar**.



- The **Company's sovereignty** over **Calcutta** was **recognized** and it was given sufficient **land** to **maintain a military force**.
- Mir Jaffar also agreed for a Company's resident in the court.
- **Mir Jaffar was replaced by Mir Qasim** and the latter tried to assert his independence, which was not to the liking of the Company officials.

Battle of Buxar (1764)

- After fleeing from Bengal Mir Qasim aligned with the Mughal Emperor **Shah Alam II** and the **Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daulah**, who were equally **aggrieved** by the interference of the **Company in their internal affairs**.
- They declared **war against the British**.
- **The battle was fought at Buxar (1764)**.
- By virtue of its superior armed **the Company forces won the battle**.
- The victory of the British led to **the signing of the Treaty of Allahabad (1765)** by Robert Clive with **Shah Alam II**.
- By this treaty the **Company got the Diwani right to collect land revenue** from the princely states of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Besides, the Company obtained three districts,
- Burdwan, Chittagong and Midnapur, in Bengal and sovereignty over Calcutta. **British virtually became the rulers of Bengal**.

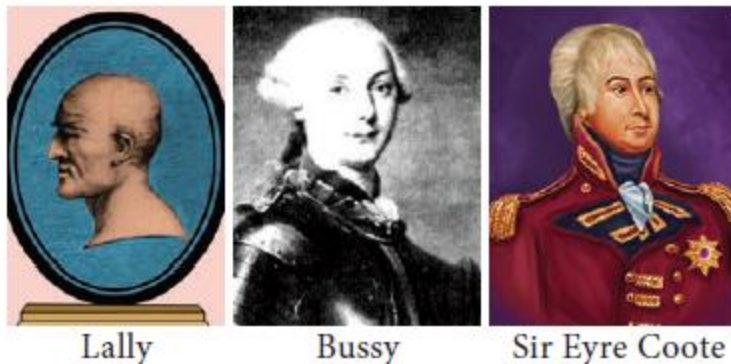


Outbreak of Third Carnatic War

- With the outbreak of the Seven Years War, Clive captured Chandranagore, the French settlement in Bengal.
- With this the French influence ended in Bengal. But they retained their power in the south.
- **The French** government sent **Count de Lally** as the **Supreme Commander** of the French forces in India.
As the **British were active in Bengal**, Lally promptly secured Fort St. David after a short siege.
- **Lally's next move** was **Thanjavur** but the French were after money from the Raja which he could not give.
- Without a penny the siege of **Thanjavur** was lifted because there was a **threat of British attack on Pondicherry**.

Lally and Bussy against The British

- **Lally wanted Bussy** to come from Hyderabad to **help** him to **defend Pondicherry** in the case of attack.
- **Bussy** left Hyderabad and **joined Lally**.
- In Deccan the political situation changed quickly and **the French lost both Rajahmundry (1758) and Masulipatam (1759)**.
- **Salabat Jung**, the Nizam of Hyderabad, **without fighting a battle** signed an **agreement with the British**.
- The Nizam **transferred Masulipatam and Northern Circars** from the French to the **English**.
- The combined forces of **Bussy and Lally captured Kanchipuram** and proceeded to take Madras.
- As the British were busy in Bengal, Madras had only about **800 Englishmen and 2500 Indian soldiers**.
- The **Siege of Madras** began on **12 December 1758**.
- The French could not progress till February 1759, but both sides suffered casualties.
- The **French**, however, could not continue with the siege as supplies were **dwindling**.
- Meanwhile **General Pocock brought a fleet** to the **relief of Madras**.
- Lally was forced to lift the siege and fall back on Kanchipuram.



The Battle of Wandiwash and the Fall of Pondicherry

- **Lally retired to Pondicherry** leaving a French contingent in Arcot.
- **The British** moved towards Wandiwash but suddenly fell upon **Kanchipuram** and captured it.
- A fresh detachment of **British forces** arrived under **the command of Sir Eyre Coote**.
- **The last ditch battle** was fought between **Eyre Coote and Lally** at Wandawashi (Wandiwash) in **January 1760**.
- **Bussy** was **defeated** and taken **prisoner**.
- Lally retreated to Pondicherry but it was not besieged immediately. Meanwhile the **British captured Senji** and proceeded to Pondicherry and laid siege to it.

- Lally had reorganized the defences and put up a heroic resistance to the British. The siege of Pondicherry continued for several months and finally on **4 February 1761 Pondicherry fell**.
- In the same year the **British took control of Mahe**, another French possession in the west coast.
- All French possessions were now lost. Finally, the hostilities came to an end with the signing of **the Treaty of Paris (1763)** at the end of the Seven Years War.
- **Pondicherry and Chandranagore** were restored to the French.
- The French had to henceforth be content with **Pondicherry, Karaikal** and **Yanaon** (Yanam) (all in Union Territory of Puducherry), **Mahe** (Kannur district in Kerala), and **Chandranagore** (Chandannagar in Bengal).
- **The English** emerged as the **undisputed colonial power in India**, changing from a trading company into that of a territorial power.

More To Know

- The name Carnatic originally referred to the region occupied by the **Kannada speaking people**.
- In the **eighteenth century** it included the region lying between the **Eastern Ghats** and the **Western Ghats**, in the modern Indian states of **Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and southern Andhra Pradesh**.
- The **Nawab of Arcot** controlled this region.
- **Albuquerque** attempted to **stop** the practice of Sati.
- The **Amboyna Massacre** – **twenty servants of British East India Company, Portuguese and Japanese** were tortured and killed by the agents of **Dutch East India Company** at Ambon Island in Indonesia in the year 1623.
- **Wil O Dijk**, a Ph.D. Scholar at **Leiden University** in one of her research papers noted that the passenger list of **slaves transported** in **VOC ships** within and from **the Bay of Bengal** from **June 1621 to November 1665** showed a total of **26,885 men, women and children** – of which **1,379 died**.
- She further wrote that the **export of Coromandel slaves** surged during a famine caused by the **Nayak rulers of Thanjavur, Senji and Madurai**, after the **fall of Vijayanagara empire**.
- **Factory** in the then context referred to a **warehouse** or a place where factors, or commercial agents, resided to transact business for their **employers abroad**.
- **"The countryside** through which we passed (outskirts of Pondicherry) was well cultivated and very beautiful. **Rice** was to be found in **abundance**... where there was water while **cotton was grown**...."
- **Francis Martin** about the landscape of Pondicherry in his diary.

Norris Mission

- **Sir William Norris**, sent by the **English King William III** in **1698**, met **Aurangzeb** to get full **English jurisdiction** over the English settlements.
- This was to confirm the **existing privileges** and to **extend** their **trading rights** further.
- But this **request was conceded** only during **1714-17**, when a mission under **Surman** sent to the **Mughal Emperor Farukhsiyar** obtained **firman** (grant of trading rights) addressed to the **local rulers of Gujarat, Hyderabad and Bengal**.
- The Carnatic is a region in **South India** lying between the **Eastern Ghats** and the **Coromandel Coast**.
- This region **constitutes** the present day **Tamil Nadu, eastern Karnataka, north-eastern Kerala** and **southern Andhra Pradesh**.

Anandarangam Diary

- **Anandarangam (1709-1761)**, was born to a **leading merchant** of the time named **Tiruvengadam Pillai**.
- After his **father's death at Pondicherry**, in view of the **support** given by the **French Governors Dumas and Dupleix** became the greatest merchant at Pondicherry.
- Dupleix appointed him the **Chief Dubhashi** (one who knows two languages) and **Chief Commercial Agent (1746)**.
- This enabled him to emerge as a man of substantial **political influence at Pondicherry**.
- But his real fame rests on his **voluminous Diary in Tamil** which is a very valuable source of history for **the period from 1736 to 1760**, particularly for **the Governorship of Dupleix**.
- It is also a good summary of Anandarangam's views and impressions on contemporary events.
- The **Battle of Ambur: Muzaffar Jung**, the contender for **Nizami of Hyderabad**, and **Chanda Sahib**, a claimant to the Nawabi of Carnatic, with the help of the disciplined French infantry inflicted huge casualties on the Nizam and Anwar-ud-din's forces.
- **Anwar-ud-din was killed. Chanda Sahib entered Arcot as the Nawab.**
- **Muhammad Ali**, son of Anwar-ud-din, **escaped to Tiruchirappalli**.
- **Robert Clive** was born in **September 29, 1725**.
- He had no interest in studies and was **expelled** from **three schools** for his **indiscipline** and lack of interest in studies.
- However, Clive had developed **notoriety for fighting**.
- Disgusted by his behaviour his father secured him a writer's post in **the East India Company** and **sent him to Madras**.
- Clive was later **promoted** as the **governor of Fort St David** and was involved in the **Carnatic Wars and the siege of Trichinopoly**.
- He **won the Battle of Plassey in Bengal** from where the British Empire came to evolve in India.

- Clive returned to India to take up his governorship and **secured the Diwani rights** from the defeated **Mughal emperor in 1765**.
- Clive **amassed huge wealth** and **left India** a fabulously rich man, with a personal fortune to the then **value of 234, 000 pounds**.
- This apart, his jagir in Bengal fetched him an annual rental income of 27,000 pounds.
- When **he returned to England** he faced a parliamentary inquiry over **allegations of corruption**.
- Though exonerated, **Clive committed suicide**.
- It was alleged that **146 European prisoners** were kept in a **room measuring 18 by 15 feet** and it is said that all **except 23 prisoners died of suffocation**.
- The veracity of this incident, known as the "**Black Hole Tragedy of Calcutta**" in British accounts, has been **debated** among **historians**.