



UPSC CSE



PRE & MAINS

Union Public Service Commission

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Modern History & Post Independence



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Previous Year Questions

Modern History

Year	Question
2013	In many ways, Lord Dalhousie was the founder of modern India. Elaborate.
2013	Several foreigners made India their homeland and participated in various movements. Analyze their role in the Indian struggle for freedom.
2013	Defying the barriers of age, gender and religion, the Indian women became the torch bearer during the struggle for freedom in India. Discuss.
2014	In what ways did the naval mutiny prove to be the last nail in the coffin of British colonial aspirations in India?
2014	Examine critically the various facets of economic policies of the British in India from mid eighteenth century till independence.
2014	The third battle of Panipat was fought in 1761. Why were so many empire-shaking battles fought at Panipat?
2015	It would have been difficult for the Constituent Assembly to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for Independent India in just three years but for the experience gained with the Government of India Act, 1935. Discuss.
2015	How different would have been the achievement of Indian independence without Mahatma Gandhi? Discuss.
2016	Highlight the differences in the approach of Subhash Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for freedom.
2016	Discuss the role of women in the freedom struggle especially during the Gandhian phase.
2016	Explain how the Uprising of 1857 constitutes an important watershed in the evolution of British policies towards colonial India.
2017	Highlight the importance of the new objectives that got added to the vision of Indian independence since the twenties of the last century.
2017	The women's questions arose in modern India as a part of the 19th century social reform movement. What were the major issues and debates concerning women in that period?
2017	Examine how the decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India crippled the rural economy.
2017	Why did the 'Moderates' fail to carry conviction with the nation about their proclaimed ideology and political goals by the end of the nineteenth century?
2017	Clarify how mid-eighteenth century India was beset with the spectre of a fragmented polity.
2018	Throw light on the significance of the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times.
2019	Assess the role of British imperial power in complicating the process of transfer of power during the 1940s.

Previous Years Questions

Post Independence

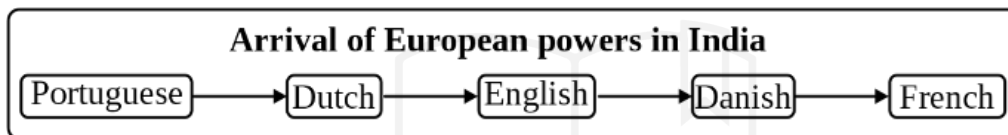
Year	Questions
2025	Trace India's consolidation process during the early phase of independence in terms of polity, economy, education and international relations.
2023	From being a net food importer in the 1960s, India has emerged as a net food exporter to the world. Provide reasons.
2022	The political and administrative reorganization of states and territories has been a continuous ongoing process since the mid-nineteenth century. Discuss with examples.
2021	Assess the main administrative issues and socio-cultural problems in the integration process of Indian Princely States.
2018	Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India.
2016	Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the causes of Indian Unity?
2016	Why are the tribals in India referred to as 'Scheduled Tribes'? Indicate the major Constitutional provisions for their upliftment.
2015	It would have been difficult for the Constituent Assembly to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for Independent India in just three years but for the experience gained with the Government of India Act, 1935. Discuss.
2015	Debate the issue of whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste
2014	Why did the Green Revolution virtually bypass Eastern India despite fertile soil and good water availability?
2013	Critically discuss the objectives of Bhoodan and Gramdan Movements initiated by Acharya Vinoba Bhave and their success.
2013	Write a critical note on the evolution and significance of the slogan, 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan'.
2013	Discuss contributions of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to pre & post independent India.
2013	Analyze the circumstances that led to the Tashkent Agreement in 1966. Discuss the highlights of the Agreement.
2013	Critically examine the compulsions which prompted India to play a decisive role in the emergence of Bangladesh.

1

CHAPTER

Arrival of European Powers in India

- After the fall of the Roman Empire, Arab control over Egypt and Persia disrupted Europe's direct access to India, especially for luxury goods like spices and silk.
- This situation worsened in 1453 when the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople, tightening their grip on trade routes & prompting Europeans to seek sea route to India.
- The Renaissance of the 15th century, with its advancements in navigation and shipbuilding, further encouraged exploration.
- While Italian cities like Venice and Genoa couldn't rival the Ottomans, northern Europeans backed Portugal and Spain. Under Prince Henry the Navigator, Portugal led these efforts, with papal support in 1454.
- Though Henry died before succeeding, his vision culminated in Vasco da Gama's landmark voyage to India in 1497. The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) had already granted Portugal the right to claim eastern territories, paving the way for its presence in India.



Attempts Made By Europeans to Conquer India

1454	Prince Henry of Portugal	1492	Christopher Columbus	1498	Portuguese Arrived
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received Bull from Pop Nicholas to navigate via sea to India • But died before attempting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the help of King of Spain attempted to find sea route to India • Reach America instead 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vasco Da Gama landed on Calicut • Met King Zamorin of Calicut • Set up a trading company at Cannanore
1487	Bartholomew Dias	1494	Treaty of Tordesillas	1498	Vasco Da Gama
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portuguese Navigator • Rounded Cape of Good Hope in Africa and sailed up the eastern coast 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed between monarchs of Spain and Portugal to divide the newly discovered lands outside of Europe. • Portugal-claim everything to east of the line. • Spain-claim everything to west. • Non Christian world divided between Spain and Portugal by an imaging line in Atlantic ocean. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Portuguese sailor, with the help of Abdul Majid, a Gujarati pilot • Discovered alternate sea route to India

1. Factors leading to the advent of Europeans:

- ✓ Weak rulers after Aurangzeb in 1707 and fragmented regional powers.
- ✓ The immense wealth of India attracted the European powers
- ✓ Heavy demand for Indian commodities like spices, calicoes, silk etc.
- ✓ Control of Arabs and technological advancement.
- ✓ Quest of expansion because of rapid industrialisation.

2. Arrival of Europeans in India:

Details	Portuguese	Dutch	English	Danish	French
Year of establishment	1498	1602	1600	1616	1664
First Factory	Calicut in year 1500	Masulipatnam in year 1605	Surat in year 1613	Tranquebar near Tanjore in year 1620	Surat in year 1668
Headquarters	Goa	Pulicat	Calcutta	Tranqubar	Puducherry
Trading centres	Calicut Cannanore Cochin Goa Diu	Pulicat Surat Chinsurah Cochin	Surat Masulipatnam Madras Bombay Calcutta	Tranquebar Serampore	Mahe Yanam Karaikal Puducherry Chandernagore
Withdrawal from India	1961	1825	1947	1845	1954

Foreign Powers In India

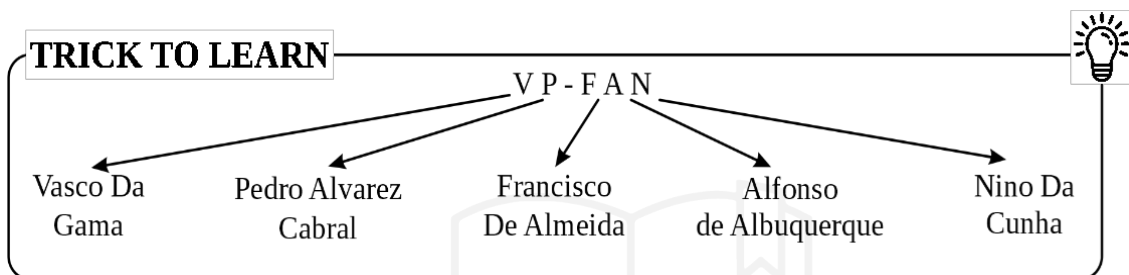
1. Portuguese

- ✓ **Bartholomew Dias** rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487, and Vasco Da Gama finally reached India in 1498, opening the sea route for European trade.

1.1 Key Portuguese Personalities in India:

Vasco Da Gama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arrived at Calicut in May 1498 by a ship led by Gujarati pilot named Abdul Majid. ➤ Received permission to establish business by King Zamorin of Calicut ➤ At Cannanore, he set up a trading factory after coming back to India in 1501. ➤ Came to India thrice in 1498, 1501 and 1524 before his death in Cochin in 1524.
Pedro Alvarez Cabral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established first European factory in India in 1500 at Calicut ➤ Successfully retaliated Arab attack on Portuguese ➤ Bombarded Calicut and made advantageous treaties with rulers of Cochin and Cannanore
Francisco De Almeida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1st Portuguese Governor in India who tried to consolidate the position of Portuguese in India. ➤ When the factory was attacked, he retaliated by seizing Arab ships, killing many and bombarding Calicut. ➤ He built fortresses at Anjadiva, Cochin, Cannanore and Kilwa. ➤ Vision: to make the Portuguese the master of the Indian Ocean. ➤ His policy was called the Blue Water Policy and cartaze system. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Blue water policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fortification of the Indian Ocean, not for the security but for the establishment of Portuguese business in the Indian ocean <p>Cartaz system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naval trade license issued by Portuguese in Indian ocean in 16th century. ➤ Similar British System = navicert system in the 20th century. </div>

Alfonso de Albuquerque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Real founder of the Portuguese power in India. ➤ 2nd Portuguese Governor in India. ➤ Introduced a permit system for other ships in the Indian ocean. ➤ Acquired Goa from Sultan of Bijapur in 1510 and Goa became “the first bit of Indian territory to be under the Europeans since the time of Alexander the Great”. ➤ In cities they settled as the artisans and master craftsmen beside being traders. ➤ Encouraged Portuguese men to take local wives and stressed on the abolition of sati.
Nino Da Cunha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assumed office of Portuguese Governor in 1529. ➤ Shifted headquarters from Cochin to Goa. ➤ In 1534, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat gave Bassein & promised Diu to the Portuguese for help against Humayun. After Humayun left, tensions rose, and in 1537, Bahadur Shah was killed by the Portuguese.



1.2 Portuguese Establishments in India

- ✓ Occupied regions around coast of Goa from Mumbai to Daman and Diu & then to Gujarat.
- ✓ Established military posts & settlements on the east coast at San Thome (in Chennai) and Nagapattinam (in Andhra).
- ✓ Imperial farman circa 1579 made them settle near Satgaon in Bengal for trading activities.

1.3 Portuguese Administration in India

- ✓ **Important Posts:**
 - Viceroy: head of the administration, serving for 3 years with his secretary and in later years a council.
 - Vedor da Fazenda: responsible for revenues & the cargoes and dispatch of fleets.
 - Captain: incharge of fortresses.
- ✓ **Policies:**
 - Monopolised the manufacture of salt. Introduced Papaya, Pineapple and Guava.
 - Built a custom house and started levying a duty on tobacco.
 - Started slave trade, purchased Hindu & Muslim children & converted to Christianity.

1.4 Religious Policy of the Portuguese

- ✓ Jesuit missionaries, driven by a strong zeal to promote Christianity, sought to convert Mughal emperors, including Akbar, showing persistence through multiple missions (1579, 1590, and 1595).
- ✓ Akbar, intrigued by theology, welcomed Jesuits like Rodolfo Aquaviva and Antonio Monserrate, though their efforts to convert him were unsuccessful; they made a lasting intellectual impression.
- ✓ Initially indifferent, Jahangir later renewed support in 1606, permitting Jesuits to maintain a church and collegium in Lahore, with around 20 baptisms recorded in Agra by 1608.

1.5 Decline of the Portuguese in India

- ✓ Rise of regional powers: Regional powers as Marathas, Egypt and Persia challenged control.
- ✓ Marathas Challenge: Portuguese lost key territories like Salsette and Bassein (1739).
- ✓ Religious Intolerance: Forced conversions angered the local Hindus.
- ✓ **Discovery of Brazil:** The discovery shifted the focus of the Portuguese towards the west.
- ✓ **European Rivalry:** The Dutch and the English replaced Portuguese in the trade aspects.

1.6 Portuguese Contribution in India

- ✓ The Portuguese introduced certain cash crops in India as tobacco and cashew.
- ✓ They built forts in India at San thome and Nagapattinam.
- ✓ They brought architectural styles as they brought Manueline church styles to coastal India.
- ✓ The use of military innovation as firearms, matchlocks and body armour can be attributed to the Portuguese.
- ✓ The Portuguese setup the first printing press in Goa in 1556, boosting literacy.
- ✓ India's first herbal treatise was written by Garcia da Orta, providing a major boost to medicine.

2. Dutch

- ✓ In 1596, Cornelis de Houtman → first Dutchman to reach Sumatra and Bantam.
- ✓ In 1602, many trading companies amalgamated → EIC of the Netherlands.- "United East India Company".

2.1 Dutch Settlements in India

- ✓ First factory in Masulipatnam (in Andhra) in 1605.
- ✓ In 1609 opened a factory in Pulicat, north of Madras.
- ✓ Other principal factories at Surat (1616), Bimlipatam (1641), Karaikal (1645), Chinsurah (1653), Baranagar, Kasimbazar (near Murshidabad), Balasore, Patna (1632), Nagapatam (1658), Cochin (1663).
- ✓ The factory in Patna was closed in the same year in which it was opened.

2.2 Trade under Dutch in India

- ✓ Manufactured:
 - Indigo: The Yamuna valley and Central India,
 - Textiles and silk: Bengal, Gujarat and the Coromandel coast.,
 - Saltpeter: Bihar
 - Opium and rice: The Ganga valley.
- ✓ Monopolized trade in black pepper and spices.

2.3 Decline of the Dutch

- ✓ Got drawn into the trade of the Malay Archipelago.
- ✓ In the 3rd Anglo-Dutch War (1672-74)- English ships captured in Bay of Bengal by Dutch forces → retaliation by the English → defeat of the Dutch, in the battle of Hooghly (1759).
- ✓ Battle of Colachel (1741) between Dutch and the king of Travancore Marthanda Varma leading to complete rout of Dutch power in Malabar region.
- ✓ **Anglo-Dutch Treaty (1814):**
 - Signed between Dutch & English which facilitated restoration of Dutch Coromandel and Dutch Bengal to Dutch rule
 - The Anglo-Dutch Treaty (1824) returned these places to the British and also made it binding on the Dutch to ensure all transfers of property and establishments.

3. English

✓ Factors contributed:

- Charter of Queen Elizabeth I → Francis Drake's voyage the world in 1580
- English victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588
- ✓ In 1599, a group of English merchants 'Merchant Adventurers' formed a company.
- ✓ On December 31, 1600, Queen Elizabeth I issued a charter with rights of exclusive trading to the company named the 'Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies'.
- ✓ Initially, a monopoly of 15 years was granted, extended indefinitely in May 1609
- ✓ Shifting Dutch focus to the East Indies, the English turned to India for trade.

3.1 Timeline

1609	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Captain Hawkins arrived at Jahangir court to establish a factory at Surat but, didn't succeed➤ Faced opposition from the Portuguese➤ Left Agra in November 1611.
1611	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Started trading at Masulipatnam and later established a factory in 1616.
1612	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Captain Thomas Best defeated the Portuguese in the sea off Surat;➤ Received permission from Jahangir to establish a factory at Surat in 1613.
1615	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador of James I, came to the court of Jahangir, staying till February 1619.
1619	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Obtained privileges for factories at Agra, Ahmedabad and Broach.
1632	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Received 'Golden Farman' issued by the Sultan of Golconda to trade freely in the ports of Golconda in exchange for 500 pagodas per year.
1633	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Factories established in Hariharpur and Balasore (Odisha)
1662	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Bombay had been gifted to King Charles II by the King of Portugal as dowry when Charles married the Portuguese princess Catherine.
1687	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Seat of the Western Presidency shifted from Surat to Bombay.
1691	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Royal farman issued by mughal emperor Aurangzeb.
1698	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Acquired Zamindari of Sutanuti, Gobindapur and Kalikata and established Fort William as the eastern presidency seat.
1717	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Royal farman from emperor Farukhshiyar. Farrukhsiyar's Farmans<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ In 1715, John Surman secured farmans from Farrukhsiyar giving the Company privileges in Bengal, Gujarat and Hyderabad. Magna Carta of the Company and its important terms are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ In Bengal:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Imports and exports were exempted from additional customs duties in Bengal accepting the annual payment of 3,000 rupees as settled earlier.▪ Permitted to issue dastaks for the transportation of such goods.▪ Permitted to rent more lands around Calcutta.✓ In Hyderabad, privilege of freedom from duties in trade<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Had to pay the prevailing rent only for Madras.✓ In Surat, for an annual payment of 10,000 rupees, exempted from levy of all duties.✓ Coins of Company minted at Bombay to have currency throughout the Mughal Empire

3.2 Why English became the dominant power in India?

- ✓ Strengths of the company in terms of efficient structure, naval power and military strength boosted the English power in India.
- ✓ Strong leadership led by Robert Clive and Wellesley led key military-political wins.
- ✓ Profits from the Indian trade financed the British expansion and governance.
- ✓ Funding from the Bank of England enabled sustained military efforts of the English.
- ✓ The western education created a class of Indians loyal to British values.
- ✓ Uniform legal codes and Indian civil services ensured loyal and efficient governance.
- ✓ Better communication, weapons and administration systems provided societal and technical edge to the English.

4. The Danes (Denmark)

- ✓ In 1616 the Danish EIC was founded.
- ✓ In 1620, a factory at Tranquebar near Tanjore was established.
- ✓ Their principal settlement was at Serampore near Calcutta.
- ✓ Danish factories were sold to the British government in 1845.
- ✓ Danes are better known for their missionary activities than for commerce.

5. French

5.1 Foundation of French Centers in India

- ✓ Last Europeans to come to India with the purpose of trade. Louis XIV, the king's minister Colbert laid the foundation of the Compagnie des Indes Orientales (French EIC) in 1664.
- ✓ In 1667, Francois Caron headed an expedition to India, setting up a factory in Surat. Mercara, a Persian who accompanied Caron, founded another French factory in Masulipatnam in 1669.
- ✓ In 1673, French obtained permission from Shaista Khan, Mughal Subahdar of Bengal, to establish a township at Chandernagore near Calcutta.
- ✓ In 1674, French established bases at Pondicherry and Chandernagore with Pondicherry becoming their main base.

5.2 Pondicherry- Center of French Power in India

- ✓ In 1674, Pondicherry was founded and Francois Martin became French governor.
- ✓ Established its factories in coastal regions of India. Important trading Centers: Mahe, Karaikal, Balasore and Qasim Bazar.
- ✓ The Dutch captured Pondicherry in 1693 but it was later returned under the Treaty of Ryswick.

5.3 British French Rivalry

- ✓ Anglo-French rivalry in India reflected the traditional rivalry of England (continuing since the 12th century) and France beginning with the outbreak of the Austrian War of Succession and ending with the conclusion of the Seven Years War. Fighting among them had also started on the Indian soil for supremacy.
- ✓ In 1740, the political situation in south India was uncertain and confused. Nizam Asaf Jah of Hyderabad was old and fully engaged in battling the Marathas in the west.
- ✓ Decline of Hyderabad was the signal for the end of Muslim expansionism and the English adventurers got their plans ready.

5.4 Carnatic Wars (Carnatic was the name given by the Europeans to the Coromandel coast & its hinterland.)

First Carnatic War (1740-48)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Extension of the Anglo-French War in Europe, caused by the Austrian War of Succession.✓ The English navy under Barnet seized French ships to provoke France.✓ Admiral La Bourdonnais, French governor of Mauritius retaliated by seizing Madras in 1746 with the help of the fleet from Mauritius.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ended in 1748 with Treaty of Aix-La Chapelle where, Madras handed back to English, & French got territories in North America. ➤ Eye opener war for the Europeans in India which revealed that even a small disciplined army could easily defeat a much larger Indian army.
Second Carnatic War (1749-54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dupleix, the French governor → moved away from commercial gains to a policy of imperialism in a way to increase his power & French political influence in southern India. ➤ Hyderabad → After the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk → civil war between Nasir Jang (son) & Muzaffar Jang (grandson) ➤ Carnatic → Anwar-ud-din Khan vs Chanda Sahib. ➤ The French supported Muzaffar Jang & Chanda Sahib while the English sided with Nasir Jang & Anwar-ud-din. ➤ Robert Clive attacked and captured Arcot, Mysore, Tanjore. The French faced heavy financial losses. Dupleix was recalled in 1754. ➤ Godeheu succeeded Dupleix, as the first Governor-general in India & adopted a policy of negotiations with English and concluded a treaty with them. The English and French further decided no-interference in each other's territories. ➤ The war ended with the Treaty of Pondicherry in 1754 affirming Muhammad Ali Khan Wallajah as Nawab and reaffirming French withdrawal.
Third Carnatic War (1758-63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In Europe, the Seven Years War (1756-63) started, with Britain and France once again on the opposite sides. ➤ In 1758, after the French captured St. David & Vizianagaram, the English retaliated by heavily defeating the French fleet at Masulipatnam. ➤ Battle of Wandiwash- decisive battle of Third Carnatic War → English (won) in 1760. ➤ Treaty of Paris (1763): French were allowed to use their settlements for commercial purposes only & banned fortification. Their political influence disappeared after the war and they were now confined to small enclaves and to commerce. ➤ French possessions in India were made protectorate states and were not allowed to maintain a standing army.

5.5 Causes of English Success against French

- The English company was a private enterprise, whereas the French company was a State concern & was controlled by the French government.
- The English navy was superior to the French navy.
- English held Calcutta, Bombay and Madras whereas French had only Pondicherry.
- The French company was short of funds whereas the British had sound finances.
- Royal navy of Britain stood as the most advanced amongst other European powers.
- Stable government with efficient monarchs provided stability to the Britishers.
- The phase of Industrial revolution which brought major developments in Britain.
- Disciplined and well trained army of the British added a major advantage to the English.
- Less focus on the religious aspects as compared to other European powers.
- Use of the debt market by the Britishers prevented them from having scarcity of capital.

English, now left as a strong contender who would gain control over all of India gradually until 1947, when India achieved independence.

2

CHAPTER

Decline of the Mughal Empire

- After Aurangzeb's death, the empire weakened further due to incapable successors and internal conflicts, leading to the rise of powerful regional states.
- This growing instability made the empire vulnerable to foreign invasions, notably Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739, during which he captured Lahore and defeated the Mughal army at Karnal.

Foreign Invasions

1. Nadir Shah's Invasion (1739) (Emperor of Iran/Persia)

1.1 Causes behind the invasion

- ✓ In 1736, Muhammad Shah Rangeela broke all diplomatic ties with Persian court.
- ✓ Nadir's envoy was detained by Rangeela, which probably infuriated him.
- ✓ Rangeela gave shelter to some Afghan nobles who had escaped from Nadir Shah when he had invaded Afghanistan.
- ✓ Nizam-ul-Mulk & Saadat Khan sent special messages to Nadir Shah inviting him to invade India.

1.2 Course of Nadir Shah's Invasion

- ✓ He captured Jalalabad, Peshawar, and proceeded towards Lahore.
- ✓ Zakariya Khan, the governor of Lahore, surrendered without much of a fight.
- ✓ Nadir and Muhammad Shah fought at Karnal in 1739 CE.

1.3 Outcome of the Invasion

- ✓ Muhammad Shah was defeated and agreed to pay an indemnity of Rs. 25 crores.
- ✓ Trans-Indus provinces including Sindh, western Punjab, Kabul were ceded to Nadir.
- ✓ Nadir Shah's took away the famous Kohinoor Diamond.

2. Ahmad Shah Abdali (or Ahmad Shah Durrani)

- ✓ Successor of Nadir Shah and invaded India several times between 1748 and 1767. In 1757, captured Delhi and placed an Afghan caretaker to watch Mughal emperor.
- ✓ Abdali had recognised Alamgir II as emperor & Rohilla chief, Najib-ud-Daula, as Mir Bakhshi of empire.
- ✓ In 1759, Ahmad Shah Abdali returned to India to take revenge on the Marathas.
- ✓ In 1761, Abdali defeated the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat.

Third Battle of Panipat, 1761

- Fought between: Marathas under Sadashiv Rao vs Afghan forces under Ahmed Shah Abdali + two Indian Muslim allies (Rohilla Afghans of the Doab, and Shuja-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Awadh)
- Military: French cavalry support Maratha against heavy cavalry and mounted artillery (zamburak and jezail) of Afghans
- Financial Support to Afghans provided by Shuja-ud-Daula. Afghans cut off the supplies of Marathas and weakened them
- Result: Marathas lost

Panipat as the Strategic Battlefield

Panipat emerged as a decisive battlefield in Indian history, witnessing major battles in 1526, 1556, and 1761. Located about 90 km north of Delhi, its geographical setting made it a natural choice for military confrontations. The region's open plains, strategic connectivity, and logistical advantages made it ideal for large-scale warfare and control over North India.

Key Reasons Why Panipat Became a Strategic Battlefield:

1. Close Proximity to Delhi

- Panipat lies very near Delhi, the political heart of North India.
- Any force aiming to capture or defend Delhi had to secure Panipat first.
- It acted as a buffer zone protecting the capital from northern invasions.

2. Favorable Terrain for Warfare

- The region consists of vast, flat, and open plains.
- Ideal for deployment of large armies, especially cavalry and artillery.
- Enabled decisive battles with clear formations rather than guerrilla warfare.
- Played a crucial role in battles like the First Battle of Panipat (1526), where gunpowder and field artillery were effectively used.

3. Gateway to the Gangetic Plains

- Panipat functioned as the entry point to the fertile Indo-Gangetic plains.
- Invaders from the northwest (via passes like the Khyber) naturally advanced through this route.
- Control over Panipat meant easier expansion into northern and eastern India.

4. Strategic Location Between Major Regions

- Lies between the Indus region and the Gangetic basin.
- Acts as a transitional zone connecting Central Asia routes to inner India.
- Historically, it became the meeting ground of invading and defending forces.

5. Strong Logistical Support

- Proximity to the Yamuna River ensured continuous water supply.
- Fertile surroundings supported food production for armies.
- Availability of nearby settlements helped in provisioning troops and animals.
- Reduced strain on long-distance supply chains during campaigns.

6. Connectivity via Historic Trade Routes

- Located along the famous Grand Trunk Road.
- This route connected Delhi with northwest regions and Central Asia.
- Facilitated rapid troop movement and communication.
- Made it a natural halt and assembly point for armies.

7. Accessibility for Invaders

- Easy approach from the northwest frontier without major geographical barriers.
- Armies entering India preferred this route due to its navigability.
- Became the first major confrontation point before reaching Delhi.

8. Space for Large-Scale Battles

- Unlike forested or mountainous regions, Panipat allowed massive troop deployment.
- Suitable for decisive, one-time battles rather than prolonged campaigns.
- Encouraged winner-takes-all style warfare.

9. Defensive Advantage for Rulers of Delhi

- Provided rulers time to organize defense before enemies reached Delhi.
- Allowed strategic positioning and preparation of troops.
- Served as the first line of defense against invasions.

10. Historical Precedent and Military Tradition

- Successive battles reinforced Panipat's importance as a battleground.
- Armies deliberately chose it due to its proven strategic value.
- Became a conventional battlefield in medieval Indian military thinking.

Later Mughals After Aurangzeb

Bahadur Shah I (1709 – 1712)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Eldest son of Aurangzeb. Adopted a pacific policy with the Marathas, the Rajputs and the Jats.➤ Granted sardeshmukhi to maratha, but failed to grant chauth.➤ Followed a policy of compromise towards the nobles, granting them appropriate territories and postings.➤ Never abolished the jizya.➤ Given the title of “Shah-i-Bekhabar” by Khafi Khan.
Jahandar Shah (1712 - 1713)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Abolished Jaziya & introduced the izara system.➤ Zulfikar Khan was appointed the PM.
Farrukhsiyar (1713-1719)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ With the help of Sayyid brothers - Abdulla Khan & Hussain Ali (called ‘King Makers’), Farrukhsiyar became the emperor.➤ Followed a policy of religious tolerance by abolishing Jizya and pilgrimage tax. Gave farmans to the british in 1717➤ Banda Bahadur, the Sikh leader, was executed.➤ Friction between Farrukh Siyar & Sayyid brothers → Sayyid brothers + Maratha = killed Farrukh Siyar. First time in Mughal history, an emperor was killed by his nobles.
Rafi-ud-Darajat (February - June 1719)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Placed by Saiyyad brothers in place of Farrukh Siyar. Died of consumption (tuberculosis) within four months.➤ During his reign Nikusiyar (grandson of Aurangzeb) revolted and set himself as Emperor at Agra with the help of Mitrasen.
Rafi-ud-Daula (June - Sept 1719)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The Sayyid brothers placed Rafi-ud-Daula (Shah Jahan II) on the throne. An opium addict. Shortest reign; died very quickly suffered from tuberculosis.
Muhammad Shah (1719 - 1748)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Given the title of ‘Rangeela’ due to his luxurious life-style.➤ He and Nizam-ul-Mulk Chin Qilich Khan, killed the Sayyid Brothers.➤ In 1724, Nizam-ul-Mulk became wazir and founded the independent state of Hyderabad.➤ In 1739, Nadir Shah defeated the Mughals in the Battle of Karnal and later imprisoned Muhammad Shah & annexed areas west of Indus into the persian empire.➤ Autonomous states emerged under his reign:<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Nizam-ul-Mulk – Deccan✓ Saadat Khan – Awadh✓ Murshid Quli Khan – Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa.
Ahmad Shah (1748-1754)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Incompetent ruler left state affairs to Udham Bai (‘Queen Mother’)➤ Invaded Delhi and Punjab along with Multan was ceded to him.➤ His Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk, imprisoned him at Salimgarh.
Alamgir II (1754-1758)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Grandson of Jahandar Shah.➤ The Battle of Plassey (c.1757 CE) was fought during his tenure.➤ Murdered by his Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk.
Shahjehan III (1758-1759)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Placed on the throne in December 1759 with help of Imad-ul-Mulk.➤ He was later deposed by Maratha chiefs.

Ali Gauhar / Shah Alam II (1759-1806)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ His reign saw two decisive battles, the Third Battle of Panipat (1761) & the Battle of Buxar (1764). ➤ He fought the Battle of Buxar (1764) along with the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal, and Shuja-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Awadh, against the British EIC. ➤ Forced to sign the Treaty of Allahabad (1765). He was taken under the EIC's protection & resided at Allahabad.
Akbar II (1806-37)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of Hindu–Muslim unity festival Phool Walon Ki Sair. ➤ Gave the title of Raja to Rammohan Rai. ➤ In 1835, coins bearing names of Mughal emperors were stopped
Bahadur Shah II (1837-1857)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Last Mughal Emperor & nominal head of India. Urdu poet pen name 'Zafar' ➤ Participated in the revolt of 1857 & deported to Rangoon by the British, where he died in 1862. ➤ In legal terms, the Mughal Empire came to an end with the declaration of Queen Victoria.

Causes of Decline of Mughal Empire

1. Intolerant Policies of Aurangzeb

- ✓ Aurangzeb's rigid religious & Deccan policies alienated groups like Marathas, Rajputs & Jats.
- ✓ His intolerance weakened traditional Mughal alliances and created more enemies.

2. Weak Successors and Succession Wars

- ✓ None of Aurangzeb's successors could provide strong and stable leadership.
- ✓ Later emperors were inefficient puppets controlled by powerful nobles.
- ✓ Wars of succession from 1707 to 1719 further destabilized the empire.

3. Nobility Crisis and Internal Power Struggles

- ✓ Nobles engaged in mutual rivalries, jealousy, and power struggles.
- ✓ Nobles diverted military funds from jagirs for personal gain, weakening the armed forces.

4. Ineffective Military and External Invasions

- ✓ The Mughal army became inefficient, demoralized, and outdated.
- ✓ Invasions by **Nadir Shah (1739)** & **Ahmad Shah Abdali** damaged finances.

5. Depleting Economic Resources

- ✓ Rise in number of amirs (nobles) and mansabdars led to shortage of jagirs.
- ✓ State expenditure exceeded income & European traders bypassed Mughal control, hurting the treasury.

6. Weak Administrative Machinery

- ✓ Mughal rule was personalized monarchy, dependent on the emperor's character.
- ✓ Later rulers neglected administration, allowing chaos and corruption to grow.
- ✓ The empire had become too vast to manage effectively with weak leadership.

7. Shifting Allegiance of Zamindars

- ✓ Zamindars shared power with nobles and played key roles in revenue collection.
- ✓ Mughals failed to control them & allied with nobles to form independent kingdoms.
- ✓ Their shifting loyalty weakened central control and increased local rebellions.

8. Rise of Regional Aspirations

- ✓ Regional powers like the Jats, Sikhs, and Marathas rose during Aurangzeb's rule.
- ✓ Their quest for political independence led to continuous conflict with the Mughals.
- ✓ This fragmented imperial authority and accelerated the decline.

The decline of the Mughal Empire began with Aurangzeb's rigid policies & was worsened by weak successors & internal conflicts. Regional powers rose as central authority collapsed, while invasions by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali exposed the empire's fragility. By the mid-18th century, the empire had fragmented, paving the way for British expansion in India.

3

CHAPTER

Emergence of New States

- With the decline of the Mughal Empire in the early 18th century, central authority weakened, leading to the rise of several independent and semi-independent regional powers across India.
- These new states emerged as ambitious local rulers, former Mughal governors, and powerful nobles asserted autonomy, filling the political vacuum.
- This period marked a transition from imperial unity to regional fragmentation, laying the groundwork for new political identities and conflicts.

Thus, the regional states of this period can be divided into three categories:

- A. **Successor states** like Bengal, Hyderabad, Awadh
- B. **New Warrior states** like Maratha, Sikh and Jats
- C. **Independent Kingdoms** like Mysore and Rajputs

A. Successor States

- Mughal provinces that turned into states after breaking away from the empire.
- Though they did not challenge the sovereignty of the Mughal ruler, the establishment of virtually independent & hereditary authority by their governors.

Bengal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Founder: Murshid Kuli Khan.➤ In 1727, he was succeeded by his son Shujaud-din & in 1740, Shujaud-din's successor Sarfaraz Khan, killed by Alivardi Khan➤ Alivardi Khan assumed power and made himself independent of the Mughal emperor by giving yearly tribute.➤ From 1756 to 1757 CE, the successor of Alivardi Khan, Siraj-ud-daulah fought against the English EIC over the trading rights & his defeat at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 paved way for the subjugation of Bengal as well as India by the British.
Awadh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Founder: Saadat Khan (Burhan-ul-Mulk).➤ Maintained a well-paid, armed and well-trained army.➤ His successors, Safdar Jung and Asaf-ud-Daulah gave a long-term administrative stability to the Awadh province.➤ Faizabad and Lucknow emerged as centres of cultural excellence in the spheres of arts, literature, and crafts. Regional architecture reflected in Imambargahs.➤ Dance form Kathak was the outcome of the cultural synthesis.➤ Saadat Khan committed suicide due to pressure from Nadir Shah. He was succeeded by Safdar Jung as the Nawab of Awadh.
Hyderabad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Founder: Kilich Khan (Nizam-ul-Mulk).➤ Disgusted with the Mughal emperor who had appointed Mubariz Khan, as a full-fledged viceroy of the Deccan, decided to fight Mubariz Khan in the Battle of Shakar-Kheda (1724) and succeeded.➤ In 1725, he became the viceroy and conferred the title of Asaf-Jah and assumed the control of Deccan.

B. New Warrior States

- Established by rebels against the Mughal Empire.

Marathas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Under leadership of Peshwas, the Marathas uprooted the Mughal authority from Malwa, Gujarat & established their rule.➤ Maratha Soldiers expert in guerilla tactics. Held important positions in the administrative & military systems of Deccan Sultanates of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar.➤ Bhakti movement in Maharashtra under the influence of spiritual leaders like Tukaram, Ramdas, Vaman Pandit & Eknath fostered social unity. The Political unity was conferred by Shahji Bhonsle and his son Shivaji.➤ Lost the Third Battle of Panipat (1761) against Abdali. Quickly recovered from defeat and offered a great challenge to the English EIC in the struggle for political supremacy in India.
The Sikhs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Guru Gobind Singh transformed the Sikhs into a militant sect. Later Sikhs were organised under Banda Bahadur who was defeated and killed in 1708.➤ In wake of invasions of Nadir shah and Ahmed Shah Abdali the Sikhs organised themselves into 12 misls or confederacies.➤ Strong kingdom of Punjab established by Maharaja Ranjit Singh who belonged to Sukerchakia misl, unified all the 12 misls. Culmination of Sikhs against Mughal rule.➤ Brought under control the area extending from Sutlej to the Jhelum, conquered Lahore in 1799 and Amritsar in 1802.➤ The Treaty of Amritsar with British, acknowledged British control over Sutlej territories.➤ English forced him to sign the Tripartite Treaty in 1838 with Shah Shuja and agreed to provide passage to the British troops through Punjab.➤ Ranjit Singh died in 1839, his successors could not keep the state intact and the British took control over it.
The Jats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Agriculturist & pastoral caste inhabiting the Delhi-Mathura, Agra region. Began to revolt against the Mughal state from the time of Jahangir.➤ Revolted against the oppressive policies of Aurangzeb and Churaman and Badan singh succeeded in setting up the Jat state of Bharatpur. Under Suraj Mal Jat power of Jat reached its zenith.➤ His state included territories from Ganga in the east to Chambal in the south and included the Subahs of Agra, Mathura, Meerut and Aligarh.➤ Jat state suffered a decline after the death of Suraj Mal in 1763 and the state was split into smaller areas controlled by petty zamindars.

C. Independent States

The Rajputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Great support to the Mughal, in controlling the peripheral areas.➤ Mughal relations suffered, due to Aurangzeb's interference in the succession dispute of Marwar.➤ Tried to re-establish their independence in the 18th century. Forced Bahadur Shah I to march against Ajit Singh (1708), who had formed an alliance with Jai Singh II and Durgadas Rathor.➤ But the alliance was broken and the situation was saved for the Mughals.➤ Most of the larger Rajput states were constantly involved in conflicts.➤ At one time the Rajputs controlled the entire territory extending from the south of Delhi up to the western coast.
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Mysore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ruled by the Wodeyars, various powers, interested in this territory, turned the area into a constant battlefield. ➤ In the end the Mysore state was brought under the rule of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan who ruled the state but not without trouble. Series of 4 Anglo-Mysore wars marks their reign. ➤ Later annexed under the Subsidiary alliance clause of the britishers.
Travancore (Kerala)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Founder: Martanda Varma (Travancore as capital), extended the boundaries of his state from Kanyakumari to Cochin. Organised army along the Western model. ➤ After Martanda Varma, Rama Varma (1758–98 CE) succeeded.

Fragmented Polity in Mid-Eighteenth Century India

By the mid-eighteenth century, India experienced political fragmentation, a situation marked by the decline of centralized authority, regional assertiveness, and rising internal conflicts. This period laid the groundwork for the gradual establishment of colonial dominance.

1. Decline of the Mughal Empire

- ✓ After Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the Mughal Empire weakened due to succession disputes, administrative inefficiency, and financial strain.
- ✓ Imperial authority became nominal in many regions, with provincial governors (subahdars) and jagirdars asserting autonomy.
- ✓ Key Mughal territories, including Awadh, Bengal, and Deccan, effectively operated as semi-independent states.

2. Rise of Regional Powers

- ✓ **Marathas:** Expanded north and south, controlling central India, and challenging Mughal authority.
- ✓ **Sikhs:** Established strongholds in Punjab, consolidating political and military control.
- ✓ **Nawabs and Rajas:** States like Nizam of Hyderabad, Nawab of Bengal, and rulers of Mysore exercised increasing independence.
- ✓ **Rajputs:** Maintained autonomous control over their principalities, balancing between Marathas, Mughals, and Afghans.

3. Foreign Interventions

- ✓ European trading companies, especially the British East India Company, French, and Dutch, exploited regional rivalries.
- ✓ Military and economic interventions by these companies further fragmented political authority.

4. Internal Conflicts and Instability

- ✓ Frequent wars between regional powers (Marathas vs. Nizam, Mysore vs. Marathas, Bengal succession disputes) weakened states.
- ✓ Peasant revolts and local insurgencies, due to taxation and warfare, contributed to social unrest.

5. Consequences of Fragmentation

- ✓ The absence of a strong central authority led to political vacuum and vulnerability.
- ✓ Regional powers were often isolated, overextended, or internally conflicted, paving the way for colonial expansion in India.

In the 18th century, regional powers emerged by adapting Mughal traditions to new political contexts. They retained some imperial institutions but used them for local governance and power consolidation. Despite their wealth and strength, none could unify India or replace the Mughal Empire at the national level.

4

CHAPTER

Consolidation and Expansion of British Power in India

- The decline of the Mughal Empire and the fragmentation of regional powers in the 18th century created a political vacuum in India.
- The British East India Company capitalized on this instability through warfare, alliances, and strategic diplomacy.

Characteristics of British Expansion in India

- **Gradual and Strategic Expansion:** The British expanded their control slowly through diplomacy, military conquest & alliances, avoiding large-scale conflicts when possible.
- **Use of Military Superiority:** Advanced weaponry, disciplined armies, and naval strength gave the British a significant edge over the Indian rulers.
- **Political Opportunism:** They exploited internal conflicts, succession disputes, and rivalries among Indian kingdoms to intervene and gain control.
- **Subsidiary Alliance and Doctrine of Lapse:** Policies like Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance and Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse helped annex territories without direct war.
- **Transformation from Trade to Rule:** Initially traders under the East India Company, the British gradually assumed administrative and military control.
- **Control over Economic Resources:** British expansion focused on gaining access to revenue sources, trade routes, and raw materials.
- **Dual Government System:** In some regions, they exercised indirect rule through puppet rulers, maintaining the façade of native authority.
- **Suppression of Resistance:** Popular uprisings and regional opposition were swiftly suppressed using military force and harsh punitive measures.

British Policy of Annexation in India

- The British policy in India primarily involved using both military conquest (wars) & diplomatic tactics (non-wars).

