

# THIRD BATTLE OF PANIPAT

- The expansion of the Maratha power in northern India brought them into direct conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Afghan ruler who staked claim over Punjab. The two sides finally met in January 1761 at the famous battle of Panipat. The rising tensions between the Afghans and the Marathas had its genesis in the invasions of Nadir Shah in 1739 and its outcome. Ahmad Shah Abdali who ascended the throne after the murder of Nadir Shah was tempted to invade India keeping in view the success of the latter. Unlike Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali focused on acquiring territories in India and managed to occupy Qandhar, Ghazni, Kabul and Peshawar. His political ambition brought him in direct conflict with Marathas who were at the zenith of their power and were trying to expand their territories relentlessly with the objective to establish a great Maratha Empire covering the entire Northern India.

## 1. Reasons for the defeat of Marathas

- Disaster at Panipat was net outcome of poor military organization, lack of coordination, over-confidence of Maratha leaders, absence of allies, poor utilization of available resources, the blunders committed by Maratha leaders, superior adversary etc.

## 2. Lack of Maratha sympathizers

- The Marathas who were expanding rapidly in North India confronted and ill-treated many local Rajput rulers of Rajasthan and Northern India. Infact Marathas hardly had any friend or sympathizer or ally when they were planning to meet the Afghans at Panipat. For instance Sadha Shiv Bhau failed in his diplomacy and did not get support from any Rajput ruler. He even lost the support of Suraj Mal Jat, the ruler of Bharatpur who had once agreed to support him.

## 1. Military weaknesses and failure

- The Maratha fighting force consisted of only 45,000 soldiers while Abadali had 60,000 soldiers with him. Marathas had a large number of women and slaves at their camp which were a liability to them in battle. They failed to maintain their line of communication and did not get supplies. When the Marathas were in short supply of everything, they were forced to fight on January 14, 1761. In fact they fought the battle when they did not have sufficient food to eat and no proper fodder for their horses for the last two months. The geographical distance of Panipat from Deccan, the home of the Marathas acted as an impediment as far as replenishment of men and supply of material is concerned. The Peshwa failed to keep contact with Bhau and send him the required reinforcement and supplies. The situation further worsened in absence of any North Indian friend or ally of Maratha.

## 2. Failures of the Maratha leadership

- Bhau failed as a military strategist and lost three months at Panipat facing Abdali. The choice of location for camping of Maratha troops and lack of coordination between Maratha Generals were also important factors for their defeat at Panipat.

## 3. Superior adversary

- Abdali and his soldiers were definitely superior in arms, organisation and fighting tactics. The superior military skills, planning and strategy adopted by the Afghans under the extraordinary generalship of Abdali decided the fate of the battle.

## 1. Outcome of the Battle

- The Marathas faced a very serious defeat at Panipat. They lost their best leaders. Bhau and Vishwas Rao alongwith many others lost their lives in the battle. Peshwa Balaji Rao could not tolerate the shock of the defeat of Panipat and died on June 23, 1761.
- The debacle at Panipat reduced the power and prestige of the Peshwa. This ultimately, resulted in the disruption of the unity of the Marathas and led to the creation of the confederacy of the rival Maratha chiefs.
- The Marathas lost their hold on the politics of the North and took time to recover from the reverses of this battle which made way for the capture of Bengal and Mysore by the English and Haidar Ali respectively.
- Apart from the Marathas the battle exercised tremendous influence on the fortunes the Mughal Empire which further weakened both politically as well as economically. Moreover, the prestige of the Mughal ruler further dwindled. Abdali annexed Punjab and Sindh to his dominions. Before his departure he recognised Shah Alam as the Emperor, Imad as the wazir and Najibuddaula as the Mir Bakshi. After Abdali's departure, Najibuddaula held authority at Delhi and denied Shah Alam the right of admission into the capital.
- Rajputs and Jats became completely independent and the provincial governors became more defiant and disrespectful.
- Therefore, it is generally accepted that third battle of Panipat was a turning point in the history of India in general and that of the Marathas in particular. Though the Maratha power was not destroyed by this battle, it was weakened permanently.

## Conflict between the English and the Marathas

1. Marathas were the most formidable power in India during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and had the strength to acquire a central political position in the country. Therefore, the conflict between the Marathas and the British was just a matter of time.

2. Meanwhile, the rout of Marathas in third battle of Panipat(1761) and subsequent developments like the death of Peshwa Narayan Rao, weakened the Maratha power.
3. In fact the period witnessed intense power struggle between the supporters of the infant Peshwa Madha Rao II led by Nana Phadnavis and Raghunath Rao (uncle of Narayan Rao). Raghunath Rao solicited English help and almost invited British to interfere in the power struggle.
4. The British officials in Bombay decided to intervene on behalf of Raghunath Rao
5. The Bombay Council signed the Treaty of Surat with Raghunath Rao whereby in return for their help they acquired Bassein, Salsette and a sum of 1.5 lakh rupees to maintain a subsidiary force. This involved them in a long war against the Marathas, popularly known as First Anglo-Maratha War (1775 to 1782).
6. Meanwhile the Calcutta Council did not approve of the Treaty of Surat and signed the Treaty of Purandar in March 1776 with Nana Phadnavis by which Madhav Rao II was accepted as the new Peshwa.
7. In fact, neither the Company agreed to the Treaty of Purandar nor did the Marathas endorse it and the war continued.
8. A British force sent by Bombay Government heading towards the Western Ghats suffered a defeat and signed the humiliating Convention of Wadgaon in 1779 by which the Company was required to give up all the advantages acquired by the Treaty of Purandar.
9. Later in May 1782 the Treaty of Salbai was signed between Warren Hastings and Mahadji Scindia whereby Salsette and Bassein were given to the British. Raghunath Rao was pensioned off and Madhav Rao II was accepted as the Peshwa.
10. The treaty gave the Company twenty years of peace in the north. The British used this interval to conquer Mysore. However, the Marathas spent the time quarrelling among themselves. The Treaty established the British influence in Maratha politics.
11. The stage for next phase of Anglo-Maratha conflict was set after the death of Madhav Rao II in 1795. Baji Rao II became the new Peshwa. Meanwhile in 1798 Lord Wellesley expanded the dragnet of his subsidiary alliances but the Marathas tried to keep away from this alliance. In 1800, immediately after the death of Nana Phadnavis the inefficiency of Baji Rao II began to surface.
12. The mutual conflicts amongst the Marathas gained momentum and a civil war like situation arose amongst the Maratha confederates.
13. In 1802 Holkar fought against the combined forces of Peshwa and Scindhia. Dismayed, the new peshwa Baji Rao II fled to British protection and sought their assistance. He signed the subsidiary treaty at Bassein in 1802, ceding territory for the maintenance of a subsidiary force, and agreeing to treat with no other power. He was re-installed at Poona by the English, without opposition, on 13 May 1803.
14. Later the British forces won a series of victories over the members of Marathas confederacy. Both Sindhi and Bhonsle concluded subsidiary alliances with the company, apart from surrendering some territories. The Peshwa himself became a puppet of the British Raj. In the final stages, Wellesley turned against Holkar. The army of Holkar proved to be powerful and the British armies were brought to a stand still. The Raja of Bharatpur, a ally of Holkar frustrated the attempts of Lord Lake to capture his fort. Once again Scindhia was itching to fight the British.
15. The company made peace with Holkar in 1806 and gave back most of his territories. As a result of the Second Anglo-Maratha War Sindhia and Bhonsle became subsidiary allies of the Company. The British gained control over the Orissa coast and the territories between the Ganga and Yamuna. Indeed, Wellesley's ambition was not completed, but the Company definitely became the paramount power of India.
16. There was a pause of eight years before the next phase of conflict between British and Marathas started in India. Peshwa took the lead in uniting the chiefs, but the Marathas would not evolve a good strategy. They made a last desperate attempt to regain their independence in 1817 and the lead in this was taken by the Peshwa. He attacked Poona, the Nagpur chief attacked Nagpur, and Holkar made preparations for war. Lord Hastings retaliated very quickly. He forced Scindhia to accept British supremacy and defeated the three armies of the Peshwa, Bhonsle and Holkar. The Peshwa was deposed and pensioned off and sent to Bithur near Kanpur. All his territories were annexed. Holkar and Bhonsle accepted subsidiary forces; All the Maratha chiefs gave away some of their territories to the company. A small kingdom of was given to a descendant of Chatrapati Shivaji who nothing but a puppet in the hands of British. From 1818 the British were free to reach out for the natural frontiers for their empire in India.

#### Reasons for victory of British over the Marathas.

- There were several reasons for the defeat of the Marathas in the Anglo-Maratha Wars some of them being:-

#### Lack of Capable Leadership

- The beginning of the 19th century lacked capable leadership. Peshwa was reduced to a nominal entity. The ability of the other Maratha chiefs was also no better.
- The main reason was the lack of capable leadership the like of which" Shivaji and the first three Peshwas had provided to the Marathas. Indeed there were other dynamic and great leaders like Mahadji Scindia, Madhav Rao Peshwa, Rani Ahalyabai Holkar, Tukoji Holkar and Nana Phadnavis.

#### Military Reasons

- The military weakness of the Marathas was also responsible for their defeat. The English army was trained on the

European pattern and was armed with modern arms and ammunitions. The British artillery and navy also proved to be decisive. The abandonment of the policy of guerrilla warfare by Marathas also proved fatal because it weakened the striking capacity. In fact guerrilla warfare suited the geographical conditions of the western Ghats and was the basis for initial success of the traditional Marathas.

### Rivalry between Maratha Chiefs

- Maratha confederacy started acting as rivals and there was a continuous power struggle amongst them. This led to rise of mutual bitterness and jealousy amongst them and any chance of cooperation amongst them became a distant dream. They fought against each other over petty issues. Moreover, the Maratha Confederacy was a loosely knit confederation and for the fulfilment of their objectives they resorted to mutual conspiracies. This element of enmity amongst the Marathas increased especially after the Third Battle of Panipat.

### Economic Reasons

- The Maratha economic structure and administration lacked a sound system of economy. They did not have any set provision for the proper collection of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi and therefore the income of the State varied. It in fact depended on the efficiency of the ruler. No doubt, such a defective system affected the vitals of their state. Their economic system relied heavily on the use of force rather than on any definite policy. There was hardly any reliable source that could be used in the moment of crises and an overall absence of contingency fund made things all the more worse.

### Other Reasons

- There were certain mistakes committed by the Marathas for instance, initially by taking the assistance of the Pindaris who always had intentions to loot and Plunder after the end of the War they relied on unreliable lot. Moreover, the Pindaris were not even steadfastly loyal to their own leaders. They could easily ditch their allegiance to another band for money.
- The Marathas failed to leave any positive impact on the vanquished, since they were usually cruel to the people of the conquered territory. The latter generally preferred to view them as villains rather than as heroes. In fact they failed to win the confidence of any such people by undertaking public welfare activities etc. The approach of the Marathas towards other contemporary rulers did not leave sufficient scope for any kind of cordial relations with other princes and Nawabs of India.
- Furthermore, the Marathas failed to estimate correctly the political and diplomatic strength and potential of the British and ignored their early achievements in eastern and northern India. Above all they failed to seize the opportunity to strike at the enemy when they were involved in struggle, conflict and war with other powers in India and Europe.

### Anglo- Mysore Wars

- The second half of the eighteenth century was a period of great confusion in Indian history, which witnessed the rise of a colonial power. The only state that offered stiff resistance to their expansion was Mysore, which fought not one but four wars. The military confrontations between the British and the rulers of Mysore are popularly known as Anglo-Mysore wars. Apart from the struggle on the battlefield which of course required military skills and strategies the outcome of these wars were also influenced by the political permutations and combinations during the period. Moreover, the period witnessed new groups and allies who came together for short term gain without realizing the far reaching ill effects and impact on the overall political condition of India.
- The first two wars involved Haider Ali who was not just an efficient military commander but a man known for diplomatic and tactful skills. It was the growing power of Haider Ali in the south that made British suspicious about the intentions of ruler of Mysore. The primary objective of the English was to check the rising influence of Mysore in south India and consolidate its position in the region.

#### I. First Anglo- Mysore War [1767- 1769]

- In 1766 the British, the Marathas, and the Nizam of Hyderabad entered into a triple alliance against Haider. The British attacked Mysore simultaneously from Bombay and Madras in 1767 and thus started the First Anglo Mysore War (1767—1769). British acquired south-eastern Mysore. However, Haider soon bought off the Marathas. The Nizam abandoned the war in 1768, leaving the British to face Haider Ali alone. The latter attacked Arcot and reached the outskirts of Madras. He dictated peace on the basis of the status quo. The English also agreed to help Haider Ali against any third party invasion in future.
- The British did not honour their promise when the Marathas invaded territories under the control of Haider Ali, in 1771. Offended by this, Haider Ali decided to strengthen his army with the help of French and European soldiers and joined in a confederacy with the Nizam and the Marathas against the British, who had further provoked him by capturing the French settlement of Mahé, which was within Hyder's territories. In 1780 he warred on the Carnatic, and destroyed a British detachment of 2,800 men, and seized Arcot. The British then succeeded in detaching the Nizam and the Marathas from Hyder and defeated him three times successively in 1781 at the battles of Porto Novo, Pollilur, and Sholinghur.

#### II. Second Anglo- Mysore War

- In 1782, Haider Ali inflicted a severe defeat on the English compelling them to flee Madras. But he died shortly afterwards and the war was carried on by his son, Tipu Sultan. Since neither side was capable of

overpowering the other, the war came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Mangalore. Under this treaty both sides restored all conquests and promised to release each other's prisoners of war.

### III. Third Anglo- Mysore War [1790- 1792]

- The Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-1792) was extension of the earlier inconclusive wars. Governor-General Lord Cornwallis dropped Tipu's name from the list of the company's "friends." Meanwhile Tipu Sultan acquired Travancore in 1790, the English extended help to the Raja of Travancore and attacked Mysore. In this conflict, Coorg, Cochin and Malabar sided with the British. The war came to an end by the treaty of Seringapattam. Under the terms of the treaty, Tipu had to pay a war indemnity of over three crore rupees and send his two sons as hostages to the English. He also ceded half of his territories to the English.

### IV. Fourth Anglo- Mysore War [1799]

- Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799) was an outcome of tense relation of British and French in Europe. Apprehensive of the increasing political activities of Tipu Sultan and the designs of the French in India, the British asked Tipu Sultan to sign the subsidiary alliance. His refusal led to war and the British supported by the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas attacked Mysore from three sides. Tipu died while defending his capital, Seringapattam. Nearly half of Tipu's dominions were divided between the British and their ally, the Nizam. The reduced Kingdom of Mysore was restored to the descendants of the original Wodeyer dynasty and he was forced to sign the subsidiary alliance. Mysore was thus made a complete dependency of the Company.

### Anglo- Sikh Relations (including Wars)

- The friendship between the British and the Sikh could be traced back to 1809 when the two sides signed treaty of Amritsar popularly known as treaty of friendship . The friendship continued even after the death of Ranjit Singh 1839 but the ambition of the British to expand its frontiers led to deterioration of the relation between two powers.
- The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, was followed by political instability in Punjab. Selfish and corrupt leaders came to power. The disorder that prevailed at Lahore provided the British a good opportunity to play important role in the province. Lord Auckland and Lord Ellenborough were keen to acquire Punjab.
- However, things had to wait till the news of rapid march of the governor-general towards the frontier in November 1845 and the report of Sir Charles Napier's speech in the Delhi Gazette saying that the British were going to war with the Sikhs reached Lahore and filled it with rumors of invasion.

- By now the power in the province actually fell into the hands of the patriotic but undisciplined army popularly known as army Panchayats. The emergence of as a new centre of power that had now assumed the role of the Khalsa perturbed the British authority that termed it as "unholy alliance between the republican army and the Darbar". Undoubtedly the Sikh army had witnessed transformation and was ready for any struggle that may take place to fulfill the hidden agenda of the British policy of expansion through annexation.
- The rising suspension and tension between British and the Sikh led to the collapse diplomatic relations between two powers. Meanwhile , the Sikh army began to cross the Sutlej on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1845 to forestall the movement of the British army. The crossing over the Sutlej by Sikhs was made a pretext by the British for opening hostilities and on 13<sup>th</sup> December Governor-General Lord Hardinge issued a proclamation announcing war on the Sikhs. Lahore was captured and a treaty with Maharaja ( the Treaty of Lahore) was signed on 9 March, 1846 . According to the treaty the territories lying to the south of the river Sutlej i.e. Jalandhar Doab were surrendered to the Company. The Sikhs committed to pay 1.5 crore rupees to the Company as war indemnity. The vanquished were to reduce their army to 20,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, hand over all the guns used in the war and relinquish control of both banks of the Sutlej to the British. The Darbar/court was unable to pay the full war indemnity. 50 lakh rupees were paid in cash and the remaining amount was adjusted by ceding territories between the Beas and the Indus. A further condition was added two days later on 11<sup>th</sup> March according to which the posting of a British unit in Lahore till the end of the year on payment of expenses was added.
- According to the peace settlement of March 1846, at the end of First Anglo-Sikh war, the British force in Lahore was to be withdrawn at the end of the year, but a severer treaty was imposed on the Sikhs before the expiry of that date. The governor-general had his Agent persuade the Lahore Darbar to request the British for the continuance of the troops in Lahore. According to the treaty, which was consequently signed at Bharoval on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1846, Henry Lawrence was appointed Resident with "full authority to direct and control all matters in every department of the State."
- Treaties were used as an instrument through which British got time to cripple the Sikh kingdom and wait for its natural death. The time for the final blow arrived soon after the coming of the new Governor-general. The first issue which caught the attention of Lord Dalhousie on his arrival in India in January 1848, was Punjab.
- When Mulraj, Governor of Multan revolted against the Company, Lord Dalhousie got a chance to interfere in the affairs of Punjab. The English raised its demand from Mulraj and imposed certain restrictions on him

and asked him to abide by certain conditions. Mulraj refused to pay the amount of money demanded by the Company and resigned from Governorship in 1847. In March 1848, the British appointed Kahan Singh as the new Governor of Multan. However, the people of Multan revolted against the decision and the manner in which the change of governor took place. Soon severe revolt against the Company took the whole of Punjab in its grip.

- Lord Dalhousie decided to suppress the revolt of the Sikhs and used it as pretext for the annexation of the Punjab in the British Empire. On 16<sup>th</sup> November 1848, the English army crossed the river Ravi and made a fierce attack on the Sikhs. There were encounters at Ram Nagar, Chillianwala and Gujarat. The battle at Gujarat under the command of Sir Charles Napier was decisive. The English caused huge losses to the rebel Khalsa forces. On 29 March 1849, Lord Dalhousie claimed the annexation of Punjab with the British Empire.
- Annexation of Punjab was of amount importance for the English border of the British Dominion reached the last limit of the north-west. For the annexation of Punjab, Lord Dalhousie was severely criticised. It was called morally and legally unjustifiable. It was blatant breach of trust. Therefore, “Annexation of Punjab was not an annexation but a treachery”.

#### EXPANSION: TOOLS AND METHODS

- Shifting its role from a trading corporation, the English East India Company gradually became supreme political power in India.
- Haidar Ali and his son Tipu Sultan the legendary rulers of Mysore gave a tough time to the British forces in the second half of the eighteenth century. Haidar Ali was in command of the army in Mysore from 1749; he became the ruler of the state in 1761. Until his defeat by Sir Eyre Coote in 1781 Haidar Ali continued his struggle against the Company.
- Mysore finally fell to the Company forces in 1799, with the slaying of Tipu Sultan in 1799.
- With the gradual weakening of the Maratha Empire in the aftermath of the three Anglo-Maratha wars fought during 1772-1818, the British also secured the Maratha territories. It was during these campaigns, both against Mysore and the Marathas, that under the command of Arthur Wellesley, the British had secured the entire region of Southern India (with the exception of small enclaves of French and local rulers), Western India and Eastern India.
- The second method was the use of subsidiary agreements (sanad) between the British and the local rulers. This development created what came to be called the Native States, or Princely States. The Subsidiary Alliances system was also introduced by Lord Wellesley in and after 1798. The British, under the subsidiary alliance system, agreed to protect the Indian rulers against external threats and internal disorder but, in return, the Indian rulers who accepted the Subsidiary Alliance system were to agree to the stationing of British contingent for whose maintenance they would pay a

subsidy to the British. The ruler under the system of alliance could neither enter into alliance with any other power nor fight a war without prior permission from the British. A British resident was stationed at these ruling states that had the authority to interfere in state politics. This system was suited best to the advantage of the British as, without even spending a single penny the British were able to maintain large forces. Moreover this system enabled the English to weed out the foreign influence from the Indian courts.

- The Nizam of Hyderabad was first to enter into a subsidiary alliance with the English in 1798. He was forced to replace the French officers from his court and put English officers in their place. He also granted the territories of Bellari and Cudappah to British for the maintenance of the army.
- The annexed regions included the North Western Provinces (comprising Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur, and the Doab) (1801), Sindh (1843). Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, and Kashmir, were annexed after the Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1849.
- Kashmir was sold under the Treaty of Amritsar (1850) to the Dogra Dynasty of Jammu, and thereby became a princely state.
- In 1854 Berar was annexed, and the state of Oudh two years later. The Main purpose of the subsidiary alliance system was to expand the British Empire in India by bringing new territories under its control and to decrease the French influence so that The British could become the paramount power in India.
- Punjab remained the last Indian state to be conquered by the British in 1849. It was under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who had united the various Sikh misls into one state. He had established a modern administrative system. His army was the second largest modernized regular army in Asia after the British army.
- The East India Company maintained friendly relations with Ranjit Singh .But just within one decade of his death in 1839, two Anglo-Sikh wars were fought and in 1849 Punjab also became part of the British India.
- The Doctrine of Lapse was an annexation policy devised by Lord Dalhousie, who was the Governor General of India between 1848 and 1856. There was a widespread custom of adoption among the Indian kings to secure an heir in the absence of a natural successor i.e. son. But as per the doctrine of lapse any Indian state created by or under the direct influence (paramount) of the British East India Company , as a vassal state under the British Subsidiary System, would automatically “lapse” or annexed by the British if the ruler was either incompetent or died without a natural male heir. Thus not only the long-established right of the Indian sovereigns without an heir to choose successor was taken over, but the British also took over the authority of deciding the competence of the Indian rulers. With the introduction of this policy of

lapse, the Company could establish absolute, imperial administrative control over many regions spread over the subcontinent. The Company took over the princely states of Satara, Jaitpur, Sambalpur, Nagpur and Jhansi using this Doctrine. Often the annexation, such as that of Awadh [Oudh] in 1856, was justified on the grounds that the native prince was of evil disposition, indifferent to the welfare of his subjects.

## COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS

- The need for constitutional change arose after the East India Company became the political power in 1757.
- The British Government was no longer willing to allow the Company's affairs to continue unsupervised. Pressure from merchants and manufacturers to end the monopoly of the Company mounted. Public opinion was critical of corruption in the Government in Bengal. Free enterprise was a major demand. The British Parliament enacted a series of laws among which the
- Regulating Act of 1773 stood first, to curb the Company traders' unrestrained commercial activities and to bring about some order in territories under the Company control. Limiting the Company charter to periods of twenty years, subject to review upon renewal, this act gave the British government supervisory rights over the Bengal, Bombay, and Madras presidencies. The Regulating Act also created a unified administration for India, uniting the three presidencies under the authority of the Bengal's governor, who was elevated to the new position of governor-general. Warren Hastings was the first incumbent governor-general (1773–1785).
- The Pitt's India Act of 1784 sometimes described as the "half-loaf system", as it sought to mediate between Parliament and the company directors, enhanced Parliament's control by establishing the Board of Control, whose members were selected from the British cabinet.
- As governor-general from 1786 to 1793, Lord Cornwallis, professionalized, bureaucratized, and Europeanized the company's administration. He also outlawed private trade by company employees, separated the commercial and administrative functions, and enhanced the salaries of company's servants.
- As revenue collection became the company's most essential administrative function, Lord Cornwallis granted legal ownership of land to the zamindars in Bengal. In return, zamindars had to pay the government fixed revenue by a certain particular date. This arrangement was to last for ever; hence the title "permanent settlement" was given. This system was also known as the zamindari system. The immediate consequence was that as now zamindar became the owner of the land, the peasant was reduced to the status of the tenant on his own land. Moreover now land became a negotiable property and the state was excluded from agricultural expansion and development, which came under the purview of the zamindars.

- In Madras and Bombay, however, the ryotwari (peasant) settlement system was set in motion, in which peasant cultivators had to pay annual taxes directly to the government.
- The Charter Act of 1813 ended the monopoly of the Company over trade with India. The Company's control over revenue, administration and appointments remained untouched.
- The Charter Act of 1833 abolished the Company's monopoly of the China trade. The Act also deprived the presidencies of the power to make laws, concentrating legislative power with the Governor-General and his council. With such expansion of the British territories and the increasing administrative responsibilities, a bureaucracy was also required to control British possessions.
- In 1785, Lord Cornwallis created a professional cadre of Company servants who had generous salaries, had no private trading or production interests in India, enjoyed the prospect of regular promotion and were entitled to pensions. All high-level posts were reserved for the British, and Indians were excluded.
- Cornwallis appointed British judges, and established British officials as revenue collectors and magistrates in each district of Bengal.
- From 1806 the Company trained its young recruits in Haileybury College near London. Appointments were still organized on a system of patronage.
- In 1829 the system was strengthened by establishing districts throughout British India small enough to be effectively controlled by an individual British official who henceforth exercised a completely autocratic power, acting as revenue collector, judge and chief of police. After 1833 the Company selected amongst its nominated candidates by competitive examination. After 1853, selection was entirely on merit and the examination was thrown open to any British candidate. The Indian civil service (i) was very highly paid; (ii) it enjoyed political power which no bureaucrat could have had in England.

## JUDICIAL ORGANIZATION

- By the mid- eighteenth century, the British had a political presence in the three presidency towns of Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta which also saw the emergence of British judicial system in India.
- The Mayor's Court was established in 1727 for civil litigation in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. In 1772 an elaborate judicial system, known as adalat, established civil and criminal jurisdictions.
- Both Hindu pandits and Muslim qazis (Sharia court judges) were recruited to aid the presiding judges in interpreting their customary laws, but in general, British common and statutory laws became applicable.
- The two main theoretical principles underlying the entire British judicial system in India were the notions of the Rule of Law and Equality before law; thus as per

theory no one was above the law (certain rules which defined the rights, privileges and obligations of the people) and all the citizens irrespective of their caste, class and other status, were now equal before law.

- The principle of habeas corpus provided that no person could be arrested or kept in prison without a written order from the local executive or the judicial authority. Even the Government servant, if the acts done in their official capacity could be sued in the court of Law.
- The natural upshot of the Rule of Law was the Equality before the Law, which subsequently followed the Rule of Law. The Equality before the Law appeared as a novel feature in the caste-ridden Indian society.
- Under the Regulating Act of 1773 the King-in-Council created a Supreme Court in the Presidency town of Calcutta. Under the charter, the Supreme Court also had the authority to exercise all types of jurisdiction in the region of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, with the only caveat that in situations where the disputed amount was in excess of Rs. 4,000, their judgment could be appealed to the Privy Council at London.

- The Supreme Courts in Madras and Bombay were finally established in 1801 and 1823, respectively.
- Lord Cornwallis separated the executive and judicial duties at district level.
- For the civil cases Sadar Diwani Adalat was the highest appealing body followed by the four Provincial Courts of Civil Appeal at Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna. Then at local levels District Courts, Registrars' Courts and a number of Subordinate Courts were making the hierarchy. A large number of magistrates were active to deal with criminal cases, above them were four Courts of Circuit at Calcutta, Dacca, Murshidabad and Patna which were governed by Sadar Nizam Adalat at Calcutta. In 1831 William Bentinck abolished the four Provincial civil and criminal courts and redistributed their work to Commissioners and District Collectors.
- By the Government of India Act of 1858 the direct rule of the British Crown was finally established in place of the Company's rule.

### Key Words

- **Nawab:** Governor of a semi-autonomous province during the time of the Mughal empire.
- **Nizam:** Title of the hereditary ruler of Hyderabad.
- **Pindaris** - were militias of Rajputana and the Central Provinces regions. They served the Maratha army without any payment but instead were allowed to plunder.
- **East India Company:** The Company was a Joint- Stock Company established in 1600, as The Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies. Initially involved in trading with India, it remained ruling power in India till 1858.
- **Dual or Double Government:** This system was introduced in Bengal after the battle of Buxar. As the Diwan of Bengal the Company directly collected its revenue, while the nizam or the Police and Judicial powers remained with the Nawab.
- **Subsidiary Alliance system:** The Subsidiary Alliance System was used by lord Wellesley to bring the Indian states within the boundary of the British political power. Under this doctrine, Indian rulers under British protection suspended their native armies, instead maintaining British troops within their states. They surrendered control of their foreign affairs to the British. In return, the East India Company would protect them from the attacks of their rivals.
- **Doctrine of Lapse:** It was an annexation policy by the British East India Company, introduced by lord Dalhousie Governor -general of India. Under the doctrine princely territory under the direct rule of the East India Company would automatically be annexed if the ruler was either incompetent or died without a direct heir.
- **Charter Acts:** The Charter Acts were passed by the British Parliament to govern the activities of the East India Company, endowed it with enormous Commercial privileges and granted them the powers to rule India up to 1858. The Charter Acts issued enabled the East India Company, commercial privileges in several series, for twenty years each. The first Charter Act was granted in 1793, granting the company provision of 20 years. Later the Charter Act was renewed in the year 1813, 1833 and 1853 respectively.