



TOPIC 2

Reasons for the arrival of the EIC in the Sub Continent:

The main prospects which attracted Britain was certainly trade and for that the British East India Company was founded in 1600 with the permission to **trade** with India. The first British ship anchored near Surat in 1608. They were also granted permission by the Mughals to trade in 1612. The British established their headquarters in Bombay in 1674 and at Calcutta in 1690. Main trading items were cotton and silk textiles, spices, tea, indigo, precious stones and salt peter.

S.M Burk (famous historian) believed that one of the most important reasons for British arrival was the spreading of **Christianity**. Churches and Chapels were established all over India and Christian missionaries also began with their arrival.

The **Portuguese** and the **Dutch** were already in the field. But they turned their attention to East **Indies** and didn't allow EIC to come over there. That also provoked company to come here in India. The French also came but they were eliminated after their defeat by the British in 3 battles.

Therefore it was trade and **high profit** that allowed the EIC to keep on coming India which was later also known as the Golden Sparrow on account of its natural resources and wealth. It was found that 10 % of the income of British government was obtained from taxes on trade with India.

Another reason which provoked Britain to come towards India was the **Russian expansion** in Central Asia. It worried the British so much that they also had to make moves to secure Afghanistan. Although the British first major adventure in Afghanistan in 1839 failed miserably, but in 1858, after the failure of the war of Independence 1857, the British assumed full and proper control of whole of India.

BRITISH EXPANSION AND UNSUCCESSFUL INDIAN RESISENCE 1750-1850:

The British were almost completely successful in taking control of lands in the S.C between 1750 and 1856. The British had come to India for trade and to increase and ensure their trade they found it necessary to have political control of lands in the sub-continent. The first opportunity came in 1757 when battle of Plassey took place. In this battle the forces of the East India Company under **Robert Clive** met the army of **Siraj-ud-Doula**, the Nawabs of Bengal. Clive had 800 Europeans and 2200 Indians whereas Siraj-ud-doula in his entrenched camp at Plassey was said to have about 50,000 men with a train of heavy artillery. Unfortunately **Mir Jafar**, met with Clive, and the greater number of the Nawabs soldiers were bribed to throw away their weapons, surrender prematurely, and even turn their arms against their own army. Siraj-ud-Doula was defeated. Battle of Plassey marked the first major military success for British East India Company.

It was followed by battle of **Buxar**. **Mir Kasim** the Nawab of Bengal took help from **Nawab Shuja-ud-daulah** and the Emperor **Shah Alam II**. But the English under the **General Major Hector Munro** at Buxar defeated the combined army on 22 October, 1764. Mir Kasim fled and died in 1777. After winning the Battle of Buxar, the British had earned the right to collect land revenue in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. This development set the foundations of British political rule in India. After the victory of



the English in Buxar, **Robert Clive** was appointed the governor and commander in chief of the English army in Bengal in 1765. He is claimed as the founder of the British political dominion in India. Robert Clive also brought reforms in the administration of the company and the organization of the army.

The British wanted full control of south India to ensure their spice trade. **Lord Wellesley** became the Governor General of India in 1798. **Tipu Sultan** tried to secure an alliance with the French against the English in India. Wellesley questioned Tipu's relationship with the French and attacked Mysore in 1799. The fourth Anglo-Mysore War was of short duration and decisive and ended with Tipu's death on May 4, 1799 who was killed fighting to save his capital.

Besides that Marathas were also defeated and Maratha power destroyed by British in several wars during 1817- 1818. **Holkar's** forces were routed at Mahidpur December 21, 1817 and **Baji Rao II**, who was trying to consolidate Marathas, finally surrendered in June 1818. British abolished the position of Peshwa and Marathas were limited to the small kingdom of Satara. This ended the mighty Maratha power.

British wanted to make sure that Afghanistan didn't fall into Russian hands. British agreed with Ranjit Singh (ruler of Punjab) that Afghanistan should remain independent. A rebellion broke out in Afghanistan in 1841 in which British troops were killed. British felt that their pride had been hurt in Afghanistan and decided to turn in Sindh. Sindh was ruled by collection of **Amirs** who had signed a treaty with British in 1809. British General **Sir Charles Napier** provoked the Amirs of Sindh so much that they attacked British residency in 1843. Amirs were defeated and Sindh was annexed by British.

Punjab was the next target. Ranjit Singh had signed a perpetual friendship in 1809 but after his death in 1839, the rival chiefs argued themselves over who should be a king. Army attacked British possessions south of River Sutlej and provoked the British to invade Punjab. War began but British remained victorious. Gulab Singh Dogra, a chief who helped the British and was given Kashmir as a reward. In 1849, after a revolt against British, Punjab, NWFP were annexed and became part of British Empire on 30 March 1849. Hyderabad, Deccan, Oudh and the local Nawabs had been forced to sign treaties with EIC; this gave their external affairs to Britain.

DOCTRINE OF LAPSE:

In 1852, the British annexed several Indian states under doctrine of lapse. In 1852 Governor **General Dalhousie** extended British control by applying Doctrine of Lapse which was that when a ruler died without a natural heir, the British would annex his lands. Due to this Satara, Nagpur and Jhansi came to British hands. Nawab of Oudh died in 1856 and he had the natural heir but instead of that his land was grabbed by the British.

TIPU SULTAN:

Tipu Sultan (20 November 1750 – 4 May 1799), also known as the **Tiger of Mysore** and **Tipu Sahib**, was a ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore and a scholar, soldier, and poet. He was the eldest son of Sultan Hyder Ali of Mysore. Tipu introduced a number of administrative innovations during his rule, including his coinage, and a new land revenue system which initiated the growth of Mysore silk industry. Tipu expanded the iron-cased Mysorean rockets and wrote the military manual Fathul Mujahidin, considered a pioneer in the use of rocket artillery. He deployed the rockets against advances of British forces and their allies in their 1792 and 1799. In the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War, the combined forces of the British East India Company and the Nizam of Hyderabad defeated Tipu, and he was killed on 4 May 1799 while defending his fort of Srirangapatna.

RANJIT SINGH:

Maharaja Ranjit Singh (13 November 1780 – 27 June 1839) was the founder of the Sikh Empire, which came to power in the Indian subcontinent in the early half of the 19th century. The empire, based in the Punjab region, existed from 1799 to 1849. Ranjit Singh was succeeded by his son, Kharak Singh.

EXPECTED QUESTIONS :

- Question No.1:** Why did the East India Company become involved in the India Sub continent?
(7) June 2001 Q.1 b
- Question No.2:** How successful was Indian resistance to British attempts to take control of Lands in the Sub Continent? Explain your answer.
(14) June 2002 Q.1c
- Question No.3:** Why did the British government take control of the affairs of the East India Company in the early 19th century?
(7) June 2004 Q.1b
- Question No. 4:** Why were the British able to replace the Mughals as the dominant force in the sub-continent by 1850?
(7) November 2004 Q.1b
- Question No.5:** Explain why the East India Company became involved in the Indian sub-continent during the 17th century.
(7) June 2005 Q.1 b
- Question No. 6:** Why was Britain so successful in expanding its control of the sub-continent between 1750 and 1850?
(7) November 2006 Q.1 b
- Question No. 7:** Why did the Indian Sub-Continent attract European traders in the late 16th and early 17th centuries?
(7) June 2007, Q.1 b
- Question No.8:** Indian resistance to British attempts to take control of lands in the S.C was totally unsuccessful. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
(14) June 2008, Q.2 c
- Question No.9:** why was Britain successful in increasing its control of some parts of the S.C in the years 1750 to 1850?
(7) June 2009, Q.2 b
- Question No.10:** Explain why the East India Company got involved in the S.C during the 17th Century?
(7) June 2009, Q.1 b
- Question No.11:** with the slow crumbling of the Mughal Empire, the only question left in the early 18th century was who would pick up the pieces. Few observers could have guessed that the EIC would have played such a major role.

What was the East India Company?
(4) June 2010, Q.1.a
- Question No.12:** Why did EIC become involved in the Indian S.C during the 17th Century? (7)
November 2010 Q.1 b
- Question No.13:** how successful were the British attempts to take control of lands in the S.C between 1750 and 1856?
(14) November 2010 Q.1 c



Question No.14: Explain why Britain was so successful in extending its control of the S.C between 1750

and 1850.

(7) June 2011, Q.1 b

Question No.15: In 1756 the French encouraged the nawab of Bengal, siraj ud daula to attack east India

Company's base at Calcutta. He captured the city but was unable to keep control of it. Robert Clive

decided to go to the city with a force of soldiers to retake it. This led to the battle of plassey.

Describe the battle of plassey.

(4) June 2012, Q.1 a

Question No.16: How successful was Indian resistance to British attempts to take control of Lands in the Sub-Continent between 1750 and 1850? Explain your answer.

(14) November 2012 Q.1c

Question No.17: Why was Britain successful in maintaining its control of the sub-continent in the years 1750 to 1850?

[7] June 2013 Q.2 b

Question No.18: Was the Industrial Revolution in Britain the most important reason why the British were able to take control of India between 1750 and 1850? Explain your answer.

[14] November 2013 Q.1 c

Question No. 19: Explain why the East India Company became involved in the sub-continent during the seventeenth century.

[7] May/June 2014 Q.1 b

Question No.20: At first the East India Company had a neutral point of view towards religion in India. However, with the work of missionaries in the sub-continent, the Christian faith of British people living in India was strengthened. As a result people became more intolerant of Indian traditions and behaviour and the British began to impose changes on the way Indians lived, which caused resentment and anxiety.

What was suttee?

[4] Oct Nov 2014 Q.1 a

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