

**EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF COLONIAL RULE
IN INDIA (1757-1858)**

**MA (HISTORY)
First Semester
(CDOE-HIS-101-CC-5130)**



**RAJIV GANDHI
UNIVERSITY**

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

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

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

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

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

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

There are 37 (thirty-seven) colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

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

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

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

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

About CDOE

The formal system of higher education in our country is facing the problems of access, limitation of seats, lack of facilities and infrastructure. Academicians from various disciplines opine that it is learning which is more important and not the channel of education. The education through distance mode is an alternative mode of imparting instruction to overcome the problems of access, infrastructure and socio-economic barriers. This will meet the demand for qualitative higher education of millions of people who cannot get admission in the regular system and wish to pursue their education. It also helps interested employed and unemployed men and women to continue with their higher education. Distance and Online education is a distinct approach to impart education to learners who remained away in the space and/or time from the teachers and teaching institutions on account of economic, social and other considerations. Our main aim is to provide higher education opportunities to those who are unable to join regular academic and Vocational education programmes in the affiliated colleges of the University and make higher education reach to the doorsteps in rural and geographically remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh particular and North-eastern part of India in general. In 2008, the Centre for Distance Education has been renamed as "Institute of Distance Education (IDE)." Continuing the endeavour to expand e-learning opportunities for distant learners, IDE has introduced Post Graduate Courses in 5 subjects (Education, English, Hindi, History and Political Science) from the Academic Session 2013-14 and Economics & Sociology from the Academic Session-2018-19. Subsequently a Post Graduate Diploma in Mass Communication and other certificate courses also have been introduced in the University.

Outstanding Features of Institute of Distance Education:

1. **At Par with Regular Mode**
Eligibility requirements, curricular content, mode of examination and the award of degrees are on par with the colleges affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University and the Department(s) of the University.
2. **Self-Instructional Study Material (SISM)**
The students are provided SISM prepared by the Institute and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC), New Delhi. This will be provided at the time of admission at the IDE or its Study Centres SISM is provided only in English except Hindi subject.
3. **Contact and Counselling Programme (CCP)**
The course curriculum of every programme involves counselling in the form of personal contact programme of duration of approximately 7-15 days. The CCP shall not be compulsory for BA. However, for professional (a) courses and MA the attendance in CCP will be mandatory.
4. **Field Training and Project**
For professional course(s) there shall be provision of field training and project writing in the concerned subject.
5. **Medium of Instruction and Examination**
The medium of instruction and examination will be English for all the subjects except for those subjects where the learners will need to write in the respective languages.
6. **Subject Counselling Coordinators**
For developing study material, the IDE appoints subject coordinators from within and outside the University in order to run the PCCP effectively Counselling Coordinators are engaged from the Departments of the University, The Counselling Coordinators do necessary coordination for involving resource persons in contact and counselling programme and assignment evaluation. The learners can also contact them for clarifying their difficulties in then respective subjects.

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(1757-1858)**

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Unit I

Rise of Colonial Domination

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1.0 Introduction

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century the rise of western colonialism outside Europe in Asia, America and Africa was the result of previous centuries transformation of Europe. This transformation came with the European Renaissance after which European outlook to see the world

changed completely. It was termed as the beginning of the modern age. This led to the rise of strong nation states, with little influenced by religion and orthodoxy. Navigation and spirit of adventure developed among the Europeans who started long voyages across the Atlantic. Thus, European colonies were established first in America. But the new spirit also started a fatal colonial struggle among the European nations, such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, England, and France for acquisition of territories and trade rights in Asia. In this way, they also entered India in the seventeenth century, when the Mughals were ruling in India. They sought trade rights and concessions from the Mughals. By the middle of eighteenth century two powers- England and France- in India were fighting for their colonial aspirations.

At that time, the central political authority in India was on decline. The Mughal rule had become weak after the death of Aurangzeb. There was no political stability. In this situation, the European trading companies took opportunity to interfere in their affairs and in the end the native states became their subordinates. It was seen first in the southern and eastern parts of India.

1.1 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to discuss and analyse-

- The forces and factors of decline of the Mughal rule in India
- Problems created by the Europeans, mainly the French and the British Companies in Carnatic
- Rise of the British power in Bengal, and foundation of the Company rule

1.2.0 Decline of the Central Authority of the Mughals

The Mughal rule was established in India in 1526 by Babar. He had come from Central Asia, and defeated the then ruling dynasty, the Lodi, in the Battle of Panipat in 1526. Since then, the Mughals were able to rule magnificently over a great part of India, including north-west frontier, for almost two hundred years under the so-called great Mughals. But, in the beginning of the eighteenth century their power started declining due to a number of factors, and by the end of the century they did not remain a power

to be reckoned with. Their decline was one of the reasons behind the foundation of European colonial rule in India.

There has been a critical debate over the question of the decline of central authority, the reasons behind its breakdown and final collapse of the Mughal authority. Historians like Irfan Habib (*The Agrarian System of the Mughal India*), M. Athar Ali (*Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb*), Satish Chandra (*Parties and Politics at Mughal Court*), William Irvine (*The Later Mughals*), J. N Sarkar (*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, 4 Vols, and *History of Aurangzeb*) have expressed their opinions in different ways on the decline and disintegration of the Mughal. William Irvine attributes the cause of deterioration in Mughal polity and decline due to the personal quality of the later Mughal rulers and their nobles. Later Mughal rulers lacked those qualities which their forefathers had. J.N.Sarkar, besides other factors, attributes to the downfall the Hindu-Muslim differences created due to Aurangzeb's religious policy. Other historians assess the decline of central authority due economic crisis and administrative demerits of the Mughal Empire.

1.2.1 Aurangzeb's Responsibility

Aurangzeb was the last of great Mughal rulers who ruled for a very longer period from 1658 to 1707. The Mughal rule under Aurangzeb had reached the climax in its size and wealth. He personally used to take care of all the minute details of administration and worked hard. In his personal life, he has been highly acclaimed by all, and often called as the *zinda pir*, the living saint. But within fifty years of his death in 1707, the weaknesses of Mughal Empire started appearing, and it was amidst grave crisis. So, historians naturally look at Aurangzeb's reign for the origin of problems of later period.

Aurangzeb is mostly criticised for his religious policy, or in common, his Hindu policy. He had reversed the policy of his great-grandfather Akbar who had adopted a liberal and inclusive policy in this matter. For example, Aurangzeb had reimposed Jizya on all Hindus, even did not spare the Brahmins. He did not allow the construction of new temples, and gave order for demolition of many old standing temples. It was done mostly at the time

when Mughals were at war with the Rajputs. It has been commented that “the atmosphere generated by Aurangzeb’s policy towards Hindu temples was bound to create disquiet among large sections of Hindus.” His policy towards Rajput, a powerful martial race of India centred in Rajputana, was also a departure from the policy of Akbar. Akbar had made friendship with them, and had given equal status in administration. Akbar fully depended upon them. But Aurangzeb’s policy had left them annoyed and there was Rajput war, due to his interference in the matter of succession in Marwar, from 1679 to 1681. The Rajputs, who were backbones of Mughal administration, were up in arms. While Akbar’s religious policy was a part of his political manoeuvre, Aurangzeb’s religious and political ideas clashed with one another, ‘which harmed the empire.’ J. N. Sarkar has stressed on this point, that is, religious fanaticism of Aurangzeb.

Not only the Rajputs but the Sikhs were also at war with the Mughals. Aurangzeb had got executed a Sikh guru Teg Bahadur. The Sikh later on rose to revolt under Guru Gobind Singh, and even further, they continued to resist Mughal domination. Guru Govind Singh lost his four sons in this struggle against the Mughals. His movement was not only a religious struggle, but it ‘turned into a political and militaristic movement’ which ultimately moved towards a regional independent state. But the biggest threat was posed by the Maratha, a sturdy Hindu community in the Deccan, led by Shivaji. Shivaji was able to create a strong Hindu kingdom challenging the Mughal authority. It had happened due to Aurangzeb’s miscalculation of rising Maratha power and his wrong policy. He could not make a compromise with the Maratha, and after Shivaji, his son Sambhaji continued the Maratha resistance even though his son Sahu was Aurangzeb’s captive. The Mughal-Maratha war continued even after Aurangzeb’s death. It is generally thought that Aurangzeb was a religious fanatic who lost faith of the majority population of India due to his anti-Hindu policy. In order to rule according to Islamic law, he relied more on Muslim support and thereby he alienated and disappointed the Hindus. Jats and Satnamis also revolted during his rule. The revolt had ‘peasant-agrarian background’, but ultimately, they created

independent regional states. It shows that Aurangzeb's policy was not based on prudence, rather on arrogance.

In the Deccan, Aurangzeb, a Sunni fanatic, laboured hard to crush the Shia states of Bijapur and Golkunda in order to punish them for their association with the Maratha. For that he stayed in the Deccan for a longer period, away from his capital. It weakened the Mughal administration at central level. The provincial governors behaved in undisciplined manner, often not supplying revenue to the central government. The military prestige of the Mughal was declining due their defeats in the Deccan. They lost fear of the central authority, and Aurangzeb's death many of them, for example, Bengal, Awadh, the Deccan, the Rohillas, became independent.

Aurangzeb had no faith on anyone, not even on his sons. He was suspicious of all. He himself was very hard working, and wanted to run the entire administration single headedly with iron-hand. In his way, he failed to develop an efficient bureaucracy who should be faithful to him.

1.2.2 The Mughal Nobility

In any government under kingship, the nobility always played a crucial role in running of administration. The Mughal administration was based on nobility of different types, the Turks, the Afghans, and the Persians. In the early days, they cooperated with the Mughal kings in their effort to make an empire. They were appointed on higher posts, and often rewarded with jagir, means landed estates. They were backbone of Mughal administration and army. Akbar had organised nobility in the *mansabdari* system in which officers of higher ranks were given ranks with their responsibility to maintain a fixed number of troops. This system worked very well with an efficient supervision of the central government. But in the later period, the character of Mughal nobility changed. It was becoming hereditary and laxed in the working pattern. The Mughal nobles lived life of ease and pleasure, and so the nobility was degenerating. Moreover, as writes, Satish Chandra, 'the Mughal court became the scene for faction fighting among the nobles, and soon ambitious provincial governors began to behave in an independent manner.'

This trend became more explicit particularly after death of Aurangzeb when sectional fighting among nobles, and court politics became intense.

The number of mansabdars was increasing in Mughal administration. At the time of Aurangzeb there were 11,456 mansabdars which was five times more than the number at the time of Jahangir. But the revenue resources of the empire were shrinking. The nobles holding jagirs were unable to maintain their quotas of troops. In order to maintain their troops and their opulent living style the nobles started 'squeezing the peasants and zamindars'. All such measures adopted by them resulted in the discontent and weakening of the Mughal monarchy.

1.2.3 'Crisis of Jagirdari'

Satish Chandra in his book 'Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court' has examined working of both the administrative systems of the Mughals, mansabdari and jagirdari, and holds responsible the failure of both the systems for the decline of the Mughal empire. Each noble in the Mughal court was given a rank, i.e mansab, according to his status, and the holder of the rank, means mansabdar was paid in the assignment of the land revenue, i.e. jagir. A mansabdar's responsibility was to maintain a troop of soldiers fixed according to his rank, and soldiers under him was paid and maintained out of his jagir. Mansabdar collected land revenue from his jagir. So, both the systems, mansabdari and jagirdari, are related to one another.

Coming to the 'crisis of jagirdari', Satish Chandra relates it to the administrative flaw, particularly during the time of Aurangzeb. There was lots of dissatisfaction and factionalism among nobility over jagir. The nobles could not realize the income from his jagir as was indicated on paper. So, they could also not maintain the fixed quota of troops. Moreover, there was shortage of jagirs. Even if new jagirs were available in Deccan, no noble wished to have it because those jagirs were less productive. Satish Chandra also points out the prevalence of corruption at lower level, where jagirdars were harassed and transferred to less productive jagirs. So, the Mughal nobility had to face several types of pressure in the working of his jagirdari. To meet the situation, Aurangzeb put a ban on new recruitment, which further led to disappointment

among the aspirants, mostly sons of old nobles, to serve the Mughal bureaucracy.

This should be remembered that the Mughal administrative system was centred on the pillars of mansabdari system. When this system became weaker, naturally the whole administrative set up started shattering. The discontentment erupted due to crisis of jagirdari accentuated after Aurangzeb, and ‘nobles began to assume independent airs.’ So, Satish Chandra sums up, ‘disintegration was speeded up not because of but as a result of the breakdown of the Mughal administrative system.’

1.2.4 Agrarian Crisis

The theory of agrarian crisis was put forward by Irfan Habib in his book ‘The Agrarian System of the Mughal.’ While the crisis of jagir is accepted, it is also theorised that agrarian relations between the state and peasants deteriorated since the time of Aurangzeb and continued to become dreadful, later on, for the Mughal empire. To meet the crisis of growing expenses and administrative flaws the nobles started squeezing peasants to the limit of breaking point. Land revenue was more or less half of the produce. No work was done to improve agriculture and agricultural production. State had become only the receiving institution. Satish Chandra writes, “While agricultural production increased slowly, the demands and expectations of the ruling classes expanded rapidly.” As has been mentioned, the jagirdars, failing to increase their income from other sources, tried to increase it from land ‘by squeezing the peasants and zamindars as far as they could.’ Peasants were so much squeezed that they were left without adequate means for survival. So, they reacted and protested, sometimes by deserting their lands, and the other times by refusing to pay land revenue, and even rising to revolt. The Jat and Satnami revolts had agrarian causes behind them. Habib’s opinion is that these peasants’ protests weakened the political and social fabric of the empire. C.A. Bayley (*Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaris*) and Muzaffar Alam (*The Crisis of the Empire of the Mughal North India, Awadh and the Punjab*) also reflect in their study of Awadh and Punjab that in the first half of the eighteenth century several zamindars rose to rebellion. Similar rebellions also occurred in Amber

(Rajasthan) and in the Maratha region. In most of the cases zamindars had established their complete control in respective areas.

1.2.5 Political Crisis of 18th Century and Rise of Autonomous States

After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mughal network of administration started declining. There started a war of succession among the three sons of Aurangzeb. In this fateful war Bahadur Shah, an old man of 65, became successful. He seized the throne in 1708. He was a man of moderate nature. He adopted a tolerant attitude towards the Hindu chiefs and rajas. He conciliated with the Rajas of Amber and Mewar (in Rajasthan), but failed in his attempt to bring a lasting solution to the Maratha problem. Bahadur Shah also made peace with the tenth and last Sikh Guru Gobind Singh, but after him the Sikhs again rose to revolt under the leadership of Banda Bahadur.

Bahadur Shah granted jagirs and promotions to numerous Mughal nobles and officers at the cost of treasury. His son Jahandar Shah ascended the Mughal throne in 1712 but he could hold it hardly for one year. He was replaced by his nephew Farrukh Siyar in 1713. In his succession a Mughal noble Zulfiqar Khan had played a leading role. Therefore, he was made the wazir or prime minister of the Mughal administration. Zulfiqar Khan was a thoughtful person and a good administrator. He tried to win over the faith of non-Muslims of the Mughal Empire. Thus, he got abolished the *jizyah* (the tax which Aurangzeb had re-introduced on the Hindus in 1679). He tried to conciliate with the Rajputs and the Marathas. Zulfiqar Khan also made peace with Churaman Jat and Chhatrasal Bundela, but policy of suppression of the Sikhs was continued as before.

Zulfiqar Khan reversed the previous policy of reckless grant of jagirs and offices. Mansabdars were asked to fulfil the state demand by maintaining the official quota of troops. But his policy of *ijarah* or revenue-farming developed into an evil practice. In this system the Mughal state made contract with some individuals who were known as the revenue-farmers. Those revenue-farmers collected revenue for the Mughal state in lieu of a commission. The revenue-farmers subsequently became corrupt and emerged

as a new class of gentry. The Mughal state also suffered a lot financially because the state demand was not fulfilled by them.

The Mughal court became victim of court-politics and intrigues of nobility. Abdullah Khan and Hussain Ali Khan, popularly known as the Sayyid brothers, had established their domination over the Mughal polity and made the emperor a puppet in their hands. Farrukh-Siyar had to lose his life in this struggle for power in 1719. The Sayyid brothers replaced three Mughal emperors in quick succession until Muhammad Shah was placed on the throne in the end of December 1719. He ruled up to 1748. Sayyid brothers adopted generous policy toward the Hindus and made peace with the Marathas, but they could not check the empire from further administrative disintegration mainly due to opposition from the rival Irani and Turani faction of the nobility. Nizam-ul-Mulk (a leading noble and later founder of Hyderabad state) led a conspiracy against the Sayyid brothers' anti-Mughal and anti-Islamic policies. The emperor Muhammad Shah also supported them to get rid of the Sayyid brothers, who were finally killed in 1720. The state revenue, during this period, declined sharply because zamindars and several rebellious elements refused to pay land revenue. Indiscipline and rebellions were growing among state officials and soldiers as they were not getting their salaries.

Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had become the wazir, tried to introduce reforms but was unable to do that as the emperor lacked foresightedness and skill. Muhammad Shah had little interest in administration and more in pleasure. In disgust, the Nizam left Delhi for Hyderabad where he established his influence. It has rightly been commented that "his departure was symbolic of the flight of loyalty and virtue from the Empire". It encouraged several ambitious nobles to carve-out semi-independent states out of the Mughal territory.

Practically, by the second half of the eighteenth century the Mughal Empire ceased to exist as a powerful political force. Decentralization of Mughal power started, giving birth to the regional powers such as Hyderabad, Awadh, and Bengal. They had been categorized as "*the succession states*" as

they were created by the working governors of the Mughal state. On the other hand, the Sikhs, Marathas, and Jats created independent states owing to political anarchy of the eighteenth century.

1.2.6 Invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali

The Mughal administration got a serious blow by the invasion of Nadir Shah, the ruler of Persia. He had conquered Afghanistan, and from there proceeded towards India. The Mughal king Muhammad Shah was blamed for giving asylum to Afghan rebels. But his ultimate aim was to plunder the wealth of India. At that time, the Mughal court was passing through the age of party-politics of selfish nobles and regional governors. So, the frontier and centre of Mughal administration were left defenceless. From Qandhar, Nadir Shah led his army, conquered Punjab, and sacked Delhi in 1739. He ravaged the city and massacred large number of people. His invasion left the whole Mughal administrative system shattered and demoralized. The invaders plundered Delhi and the royal treasury. They carried away immense wealth, including the famous Koh-i-Nur diamond and Peacock Throne of Shahjahan, from India. Nadir Shah's invasion caused irreparable loss to the Mughal empire. The central administration was paralyzed and economy ruined. It was a severe blow to Mughal Empire. After this event, the process of disintegration speeded up as it encouraged regional governors to assert their independence. The Mughal king had surrendered to Nadir Shah the territories lying to the west of the river Indus. It was permanent loss to the Mughal Empire. To compensate the loss the state put severe financial burden upon the people. The nobles began fight for rich jagirs and high offices. The weaknesses of Indian defence system had been exposed. It led to further invasions. Ahmad Shah Abdali, a general of Nadir Shah, repeatedly invaded and plundered the country between 1748 and 1767. He also defeated the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761. The Third Battle of Panipat had weakened the powers both of the Mughal and the Maratha at one time.

The invasions of Nadir Shah and Abdali put death-knells to the Mughal empire. The Mughal administrative machinery broke down completely. As has been mentioned earlier, the Mughal governors declared their independence in

the south and in the eastern India. The Mughal rule remained confined only to the city of Delhi. The Mughal king Shah Alam himself was under the hostage of the Maratha till 1771.

The central authority in India had become weak. In this situation, the East India Company, which had set up its trading factories in India under the protection of the Mughal, started looking for alternatives. In the south, it had already become a power to be reckoned with. With the help of Indian collaborators, the East India Company defeated the Nawab of Bengal in 1757 in the battle of Plassey which signalled the rise of British power in India. You will read about all such historical processes in the next topics.

2.1.0 Carnatic War

The southern states of Carnatic and Hyderabad were under the Mughals. But in the eighteenth century they emerged as independent states. In this process Hyderabad tried to dominate over Carnatic and later on both became victim of power-politics of the southern states as well as of the European power mainly the British and the French.

2.1.1 Carnatic

Both the British and the French vied with each other for supremacy over the southern provinces of India. In the struggle between the two, Carnatic was victimized. They fought three wars over the question of Carnatic, which have been described as *the Carnatic Wars* in the history of India. It is interesting to know that the origins of wars were not centered only in Indian situations but they broke out as a result of Anglo-French rivalry in Europe and America.

Carnatic or Karnatic was one of the south Indian states. It was a small state under the Mughal Viceroy of Deccan where the Nizan-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad had established his sway after death of Aurangzeb. But Carnatic had become virtually a separate and hereditary state with capital at Arcot, in present Tamil Nadu. It's ruler was known as the nawab. They tried to throw away sway of Hyderabad and become independent. For example, Saadatullah khan, the Nawab of Carnatic, without permission from the Nizam declared his

nephew Dost Ali to be his successor. Dost Ali succeeded in 1732. Carnatic also followed policy of aggrandizement and his son Safdar Ali and son in law Diwan Chanda Sahib captured neighbouring Hindu principality of Trichinapoly in 1736. Chanda Sahib was made the governor of Trichinapoly. But by capturing it Carnatic invited its own demise. The Marathas became furious at the capture of a Hindu principality. On the other hand the Nizam had already become unhappy with Carnatic's attempt to make it a hereditary state. The Marathas under Raghuji Bhonsle attacked on Carnatic and killed Dost Ali in 1740. They occupied Arcot and compelled Safdar Ali to sign a treaty by which he agreed to pay an indemnity of forty lakh of rupees and to pay regular *chauth* to Marathas. The Marathas recognized Safdar Ali as the Nawab of Carnatic. The Marathas also captured Trichinapoly in 1741 and made Chanda Sahib the prisoner. He was kept at Satara. Trichinapoly was placed under a Maratha governor. In this way the Marathas showed their supremacy in the region.

But very soon the French and British were dragged into the affairs of Deccan. The French had made a good progress and captured Mahe (1725) and Karikal (1739). They had already captured Pondicherry on the eastern coast in 1697. They had been following a vigorous policy to develop their political influence and commerce in the region. Dupleix, the governor of French East India Company had envisaged for the first time to carve out a territorial empire in India. The French needed territory in India because they were short of finance. The French government did not finance the Company adequately. So Dupleix realized the necessity of acquiring territory to get revenue from there and also to establish political power.

The British, on the other hand, were not so powerful in the western coast in spite of getting Bombay in 1668. But their trade had been flourishing. The government of England was supporting the British East India Company. By the Charter Act of 1661 it was authorized to make peace and war and administer justice in the colony. So the EIC also dreamt of becoming a political power. Sir John Child, President of the Companies' factories at Surat and Bombay was determined to establish its authority both against their rivals and the Mughals. But the British had misjudged the Mughal power at that

time. Their factories were seized at Surat, Masulipatam and Vizagapatam when they tried to disobey the Mughal emperor. The British very humbly submitted before the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb who later on allowed them to remain in India 'provided they paid all the dues of the Indian merchants and gave compensation for the loss inflicted to the empire'. After this event the British went on the back foot, but they continued efforts to eliminate their European rivals, namely the Portuguese and the Dutch. They had established their settlements at Bombay on the western coast, Madras at Coromandal coast, and at Calcutta in Bengal.

In the beginning of eighteenth century situations both in Europe and in India were changing in favour of England. Powers of Spain, Holland and France had been exhausted due to long wars. In India the power of Mughal was declining and provincial governors had revolted against them. Centres of power had shifted from Delhi to Murshidabad, Lucknow and Hyderabad. In this situation the British started their policy of interference in Indian states and aggrandizement of political power.

The French were also very active in the Deccan. At the time of Marathas inroads in Trichinapoly the French had given shelter to families of the Nawab of Carnatic. The French Governor Dumas had resisted the Marathas with full vigour and in this way earned good reputation among states of Deccan. The Mughal emperor conferred upon Dumas the rank of Nawab and a mansab. The Nizam and nawab of Carnatic also honoured him with presents. But the chaotic situation in Carnatic continued. The Nizam was demanding arrears of revenue, whereas Chanda Sahib was a prisoner of the Marathas. Dupleix, the new Governor of French East India Company, was determined to protect the French interests. *The War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748)* which had begun in Europe also affected the Anglo-French relation in India. Since interests of both the European nations clashed with one another, the result was the beginning of war between them.

2.1.2 The Carnatic Wars: It was known as the Carnatic War which started in 1746 and fought in three phases. It began as a war between the British and the French interests but several Indian states of the south were also involved in it.

First Phase (1746-1748)

The first phase of war began in 1746 and continued up to 1748. Dupleix used his diplomatic skill and military maneuver which paid for the success of the French. La Bourdonnais came from Mauritius with his fleet to help Dupleix. They besieged the British establishment at Madras. The governor of Madras, Morse, got only a feeble assistance from Nawab Anwaruddin of Carnatic. The first struggle took place in September 1746 in which the British were defeated very badly and the French were able to capture Madras. In the meantime the Nawab asked both the parties not to disturb peace in Carnatic, but he was won over by Dupleix on the promise to hand over him Madras. But before that La Bourdonnais handed over Madras to the British on a ransom of forty thousand pounds. However Dupleix did not approve the transaction and recaptured Madras. He also brushed aside the previous promise made to the Nawab. In this way a direct clash started between the Nawab and the French.

Nawab Anwaruddin sent his son Mahfuz Khan to liberate Madras. But he was defeated by the French captain Paradis at St. Thome on the bank of river Adyar. On the significance of this battle Malleson comments in his book *The History of the French in India* thus, “it may well be asserted that of all the decisive actions that have been fought in India, there is not one more memorable than this. It was the very first of its kind that it proved to the surprise of both parties, the absolute and overwhelming superiority of the disciplined European soldier, to his Asiatic rival”. The British not only lost Madras but they were driven out from almost the entire Coromandal coast. The first phase of conflict came to an end when *the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle* was signed in 1748 which ended the War of Austrian Succession in Europe. The war in India also ended but the Anglo-French hostility continued.

Second Phase (1749-1754)

After this war the Indian states became more interested to get support of either the French or the British in their war against rivals. Most particularly, Hyderabad, Tanjore and Carnatic were facing serious internal threats from the disgruntled elements. The British took the opportunity and provided help to

the deposed ruler of Tanjore, Shahji against the usurper ruler Pratap Singh. Shahji promised to bear all the expenses of war and to give port city of Devikottai to the English. The English troops thus attacked on Pratap Singh and captured Devikottai. But Pratap Singh himself made peace and surrendered the port city and adjacent territory to the British. In this way case of Shahji was completely overlooked. He was given a pension of 400 rupees a month and allowed to live in Madras.

The French followed the British policy. After the Nizam's death in 1748 there began a struggle between his son Nasir Jung and his grandson Muzaffar Jung. On the other hand Chanda Sahib also desired to capture the throne of Arcot. Muzaffar Jung and Chanda Sahib made an alliance which was also supported by the French. They defeated Anwaruddin, the Nawab of Carnatic, and killed him in 1748 in the battle of Amber. After that Muzaffar Jung was declared the Nizam and Chanda Sahib the Nawab of Carnatic. The French received huge amount of money as rewards.

After the first Carnatic war the French position had become supreme in the Deccan. It was a matter of grave concern for the British. Therefore the English made alliances with the rival groups in Deccan. Thus alliances were made with Nasir Jung and Muhammad Ali, the son of Anwaruddin. This realignment of powers led to *the Second Carnatic war* in 1749. Supported by the British, Nasir Jung attacked on Carnatic and defeated Chanda Sahib on the bank of river Jingi. But in a counter-attack in December 1750 the French recaptured Jingi and Masulipatam. Nasir Jung was killed, after which the French declared Muzaffar Jung to be the new Nizam of Hyderabad. The French were rewarded with the grant of land. Chanda Sahib was declared to be Nawab of Carnatic. In this way the French had made their position strong in south.

Rise of the French power in south was a matter of great concern for the British. They were determined to protect Muhammad Ali of Trichinopoly. Rulers of Tanjore and Mysore also supported the English. But the French siege at Trichinopoly was very strong. Not only had this but the French domination in Deccan also become supreme.

In this situation Robert Clive provided conspicuous services to the British. He was a clerk in the East India Company, but he was having deep interest in military affairs. He had served the Company army at several occasions. At this moment Clive suggested to raise a siege of Arcot to defuse pressure from Trichinopoly. With approval from the governor Saunders, in August 1751 Robert Clive attacked on Arcot with only 500 soldiers. He captured Arcot and defended it for a long time. Chanda Sahib, who was also involved with the French in siege of Trichinopoly, in this way, lost Carnatic and went to Tanjore for shelter. But he was murdered there. The French continued the war but they were defeated. It brought the downfall of Dupleix, who was recalled by the French government. He was replaced by Godehu in August 1754. In the month of December a peace was settled between the British and the French and in this way the second Carnatic war came to an end. By the *Treaty of Pondicherry* (December 1754), both the parties promised not to interfere in affairs of Indian rulers and renounced for the future all Muslim offices and dignities. However, the British domination over forts of St. George and St. David, as well as on Devikottai was accepted. The French left their claim over Masulipatam.

Third Phase (1758-1763)

For the French the treaty of Pondicherry was disgraceful. Dupleix himself remarked that Godeheu signed “the ruin of the country and the dishonor of the nation”. James Mill also writes that by this treaty the British got everything for which they were fighting; and the French lost all. But it cannot be said that they were completely dominating over south. If the British were able to dominate over Carnatic (by making Muhammad Ali the nawab), the French were also dominating in Hyderabad. The French played the role of the king-maker. Muzaffar Jung was placed on the throne of Hyderabad by French support. After his death in February 1751, the French commander Bussy made Sadat Jung the Nizam. Bussy had marched up to Aurangabad and even planned for invasion of Bengal. But due to Marathas presence he could not fulfill his ambition. In fact, Bussy invested his energy more in protection of Hyderabad, so he could not give help to Dupleix in Carnatic. Even after Dupleix’s departure Bussy continued his support to Hyderabad till 1758. Both

Godehu and the Nizam depended too much on Bussy. This was the reason that when Bussy left Hyderabad, the French power became weak. Bussy was more a diplomat than a military general. He had a good understanding of political situation in the south. He respected rulers of Deccan and never tried to display his vigour. Among all of them, Bussy was the best and tactful.

The third phase of Carnatic war began as a response to *the Seven Years` War (1756-63)* between England and France. It was the final phase of war between the two colonial powers to prove their supremacy. The French had targeted Trichinopoly, whereas the British wanted to capture Hyderabad. Whereas the French attempt to capture Trichinopoly failed, they were able to capture a major part of Carnatic. The British captured the French settlement at Chandranagar in Bengal. They also captured other French factories at Balasore, Kasimbazar, and Patna.

The actual Anglo-French War began in April 1758 when Count de Lally arrived in India as the supreme commander of the French forces. He had come with two objectives- first, to chase away the English from India, and secondly, to reform French administration in India. But Admiral Count de Ache did not fully cooperate with Lally, neither did the French governor of Pondicherry. Amidst all such disadvantages Lally captured fort of St. David. But his mission of capturing Madras and Tanjore failed owing to owing to internal disputes in French camp. Count de Ache was defeated, after which he went to Mauritius besides Lally's opposition. In this way French position became weak in India. But Bussy extended his full support to Lally. However, after Bussy's departure from Hyderabad, the French position declined in south. Clive dispatched his troops from Bengal. They attacked on Masulipatam which was handed over to the British by the Nizam Salabat Jung. The French siege of Madras also failed. The French were not getting adequate provisions, money and soldiers from France, whereas the British were getting good support from Bengal where they had established their domination after Battle of Plassey (1757).

The French position was continuously becoming weaker as they were defeated in the *Battle of Wandiwash* in January 1760. It was the decisive battle

in favour of the British. Bussy was made captive. Dodwell writes that “the battle of Wandiwash destroyed the work of the previous nine years and left the work of Dupleix and Bussy only memories on the one side and hopes on the other”. Malleison also writes that “it shattered to ground the mighty fabric, which Martin, Dumas and Dupleix had contributed to erect; it dissipated all the hopes of Lally; it sealed the fate of Pondicherry”.

Lally tried, in vain, to protect Pondicherry with the help of Hyder Ali of Mysore. But he had to surrender before the British in January 1761. The British destroyed Pondicherry, after which they captured almost all French settlements in India.

In 1763, the Seven Years War came to an end in Europe by *the Peace of Paris*. After this peace treaty the Anglo-French hostility also came to an end in India. Pondicherry, Chandranagar and some other places were restored to the French but they were asked not to fortify them. In this way after *the Third Carnatic War* the French power became insignificant in India. On the other hand the British power was on the rise. They emerged as unchallenged European power in India.

British Success

It is also appropriate here to discuss causes of success of the British and failure of the French. The British East India Company was an independent company, free from interference from the government, whereas the French Company, on the contrary, was dominated by representatives of the king and powerful ministers. So the French Company was a victim of power-politics and regular intervention in its working. The French Company also had acute financial crisis from which it could never become free. On the other hand the British trade was flourishing and they even lend money to the government. So the government of England always supported the EIC in its projects.

The government of France was more interested in Europe and America than in India for colonial expansion. They had to fight in three continents at one time so their energy was divided. Moreover the French engagements against Spain and Holland had made their power weaker.

While the main ambition of the British was to earn profits through trade, the French desired more to acquire political power and territory in India. The result was that the British managed the whole cost of war by their own whereas the French had to depend on others. It had rightly been commented by Bussy that “laurels and conquests are for a commercial company a matter of simple calculation; always bad when the expense exceeds the receipts on even when the produce is not at least on an equality with the outgoings”. The French Company could not raise money even from Hyderabad where they had good position and was even unable to pay timely salary to its forces. In the last phase of war the British position became strong because of their victory in Bengal which was so far the richest province in India. A timely reinforcement and resources from Bengal helped the British in south to win the war.

Check Your Progress

1. Which European wars did influence Anglo-French relation in India?
2. Where was the capital of Carnatic state?
3. Which treaty brought the end of second Carnatic War?
4. Who was Count de Lally?

1.3.0 British Ascendency in Bengal

Bengal was the eastern province under the Mughal Empire. Akbar had laid the foundation of Mughal rule in Bengal in 1575-76. It was placed under a *subadar* or viceroy who mostly belonged to the royal family or close relations of the emperor. So he used to have great influence over it. But after the death of Aurangzeb the *subadar* emerged as de facto ruler of Bengal. It was also the richest province of the Mughal Empire. It yielded handsome annual revenue from land and foreign trade. By the middle of eighteenth century its land revenue demand was estimated at one crore and eighty-six lakhs. Bengal exported cloth, silk, sugar, jute, slatpetre, and opium to world markets. Its main trade centres were Dacca, Murshidabad, and Kasimbazar. By the middle of the eighteenth century ‘Bengal received in return for its exports nearly six and a half crore rupees and about 2.3 crore of merchandise’.

Bengal came under independent nawabs like MurshidQuli Khan, who was the founder, and his successors after death of Aurangzeb. After MurshidQuli Khan's death (1727) his son-in-law Shuja-ud-Daula became the nawab. He was deputy governor of Orissa at that time. He also annexed Bihar to his territory. It was placed under a deputy governor named Alivardy Khan. After Shuj-ud-Daula's death in 1739 his son Sarfaraz Khan succeeded, but he became a victim of conspiracy of Alivardy Khan who killed Sarfaraz in 1740 and usurped the throne. Alivardy Khan ruled Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from 1740 to 1756.

1.3.1 Battle of Plassey 1757

Causes: By the time the British East India Company had established its factories at several places in Bengal and carried on trade with Imperial *firman* given to it from the Mughal emperor in 1717. Although Alivardy Khan respected the Imperial *firman*, he did not give the Europeans a free hand and kept strict pressure and vigilance upon them. He gave them protection and received levy from the English, French and Dutch factories. By that he used to satisfy the Marathas who had invaded on Bengal and asked for payment of *chauth*. After Alivardy Khan's death in 1756 a son of his youngest daughter, Siraj-ud-Daula became the nawab, according to Alivardy's will.

Siraj-ud-Daula was aware of events that were happening in Deccan and also suspicious of Europeans design in Bengal. He did not want to fall prey to European powers that had played divisive game in the Deccan. His rivals in Bengal namely, Shaukat Jung (his cousin), GhasitiBrgum (his aunt) and DiwanRajballabh were suspected to having communication with the British. So Siraj became cautious towards the British. He was also supposed to have acted according to the advice of Alivardi Khan who had told him at his death-bed to reduce the power of Europeans in Bengal, most particularly the British. In this way since his coming to power in Bengal situation changed and within one year the war started between the British Company and Bengal which resulted in the foundation of British rule in India.

The British historians have blamed for Siraj's personal character for the outbreak of war. He was described by them as pleasure loving, cruel,

savage, and suspicious of the British. They also described that Siraj's rule was unpopular among natives and so conspiracies were hatched to remove him. J. N. Sarkar also writes in his book *History of Bengal* that Siraj-ud-Daula 'came to his long-assigned throne in a house divided against itself, with a hostile faction in the army and a disaffected subject population'. So he became tough against his rivals without seeking Europeans help.

The British merchants paid little respect to the nawab and did not pay presents and gifts to Siraj at the time of his accession. Once they refused to show their factory at Kasimbazar to the nawab. These events had hurt the sentiment of nawab, the head of the province. Besides them, the British had given unlawful shelter to a person fleeing from his justice and expelled his official from Calcutta. Their relation became strained on the matter of shelter given by the British to Krishnaballabh, the son of DiwanRajballabh who was involved in some embezzlement of money. Rajballabh had made escape his son to Calcutta with the money thus gathered. When the nawab demanded surrender of Krishnaballabh from the British, it was refused. It further developed bitterness between them.

There also appeared differences on the question of use of free trade pass (*dustak*) by the British merchants. By the Imperial *firman* of 1717 the British East India Company had been given permission to trade in Bengal without payment of custom duty. For that it paid to the Mughal emperor a fixed tribute. The nawab had also allowed it, but it was found that the servants of Company misused the *dustaks* in their private trade. They also used to sell the *dustaks* to Indian traders who utilized them for custom free trade. But it had caused loss to nawab's revenue. With great distress the nawab had complained against this practice but to no result.

Finally, on the matter of fortifications in Calcutta their relation became worse. The Company had erected a fort at Calcutta known as fort William after the name of King William III. Calcutta was far from the authority of the Bengal government so the Company behaved independently. On the possibility of renewal of conflict with the French, the British wanted to add more fortifications around Fort William. The French wanted to do the same

thing in Chandranagar. It needed permission of the emperor and nawab. As the nawab would not agree, the French abandoned their plan, but the British did it without permission of the nawab. The British had been prevented from doing this by the previous nawab Alivardi Khan by saying that “you are merchants, what need have you of a fortress? Being under my protection you have no enemies to fear”. But after him the British had become overlooked the authority of nawab. The contemporary records show that the nawab had not prevented European traders in any way, but he was not ready to bear their audacity.

The British were taking advantage of divided house of the nawab and further, they were emboldened by their recent successes in the Deccan. So the nawab captured the Kasimbazar factory of the British in May 1756. It was followed by an attack on Fort William on 16 June 1756. Governor Drake and his officials resisted the army of nawab but they were badly defeated and by 20 June the Fort was surrendered. The British took refuge in the ships, but many of them were made prisoners. According to Holwell’s story 146 Englishmen were detained in a small room for the whole night. The next morning 123 were found dead out of suffocation. It was described as the *Black Hole Tragedy*. However, there is doubt about the authenticity of the story as it was believed that Holwell, an official in the Company, made it to prepare ground for capture of Bengal.

After that Siraj-ud-Daula also defeated and killed Shaukat Jung in a battle in October 1756 as he was supposed to have conspired with Mir Jafar to overthrow the nawab. In this way by the capture of Calcutta and victory over Shaukat Jung, Siraj had become emboldened with successes.

The news of Bengal disaster agitated the British at Madras. Immediately Robert Clive and Admiral Watson were sent to set the score. But Clive decided first to tackle the matter with diplomacy. He very well knew that there was an anti-nawab group in Murshidabad, the capital. So he made contact with them and first won over Manikchand, the in charge of Calcutta. Clive re-captured Fort William on 2 January 1757. He was now ready for open war with the nawab and began assault on Hugli. A minor battle was fought

between the sides near Calcutta in February 1757. It was indecisive, but the nawab confirmed trading rights to the Company and also paid suitable compensation. The reasons for the nawab's readiness for treaty were that there was a possibility of Afghan invasion under Ahmad Shah Abdali in eastern India, and secondly, the nawab suspected the loyalty of a section of his officers and courtiers. At this stage the nawab was 'a prisoner of indecision and lacking in vision'. He was unable to unearth conspiracy against him from Calcutta to Murshidabad. Clive had attacked on the French settlement at Chandranagar and captured it in March 1757 with half-hearted consent of the nawab.

By the time Clive had come to know about real strength of the nawab and was ready for a big strike. So when Clive was asked to return the troops to Madras, Clive demanded for some more time to accomplish the work in Bengal. He did not want to give the nawab time to contact with the French. With approval of the Select Committee at Madras Clive searched for 'the dissatisfied' elements that were against the nawab of Bengal. Thus some Hindu bankers like Jagat Seth and zamindars like Krishnachandra of Nadia did not like Siraj-ud-Daula for his so-called anti-Hindu policies. So they were likely to support the British. But the biggest one of them was Mir Jafar, a commander of the nawab's army, who became ready to change his allegiance in favour of the British. He was promised the throne in return for suitable compensation with transfer of certain territories, besides many other privileges for the British. Other commanders of the nawab were also taken into confidence and plot against the nawab.

After this arrangement Clive laid the charge of violation of treaty of February 1757, but before getting a reply he advanced his troops which had about one thousand European soldiers and 2,200 Indians. The strength of nawab's troops was calculated at 50,000. On 23 June 1757, Clive camped at Plassey, a mango grove which was a few miles from Murshidabad. Siraj-ud-Daula also advanced his troops which were divided into four divisions, each under his commanders Mir Jafar, YarLatif Khan, RaiDurlabh and Mir Muin-ud-Din. He himself was leading a troop of two thousands. Since Clive had already got favour of nawab's commanders, so when actual war began the

three out of four commanders did not take part in war and remained silent. Only Mir Muin-ud-Din fought for the nawab and lost his life valiantly. The nawab was advised by his treacherous commanders to leave the battle field. So he moved away but was captured and brought back to capital where he was assassinated. In this way Clive won the Battle of Plassey with just 23 casualties on his side. From military point of view it was not at all a battle but “was a transaction in which the rich bankers of Bengal and Mir Jafar sold out the nawab to the English”.

Results: The battle of Plassey laid the foundation of British rule in India. Immediately after it Mir Jafar was proclaimed the new nawab by Clive on 28 June 1757. The British got hold over treasury from which it was rewarded heavily. The Company was also given the territory of ChoubishPargana (24 Pargana). Clive was also rewarded heavily. He got as much as sixteen lakh rupees. Likewise other officers were also rewarded. He was fleeced so much so that the treasury became empty. Clive`s services for the Company and the British empire was duly acknowledged by the British Parliament and he was appointed by the Directors of East India Company as the Governor of the British possession in Bengal.

The East India Company was given complete freedom to trade throughout the nawab`s dominion in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and power to mint for itself. The Company thus mint first rupee in August 1757 from Calcutta. The Company established a number of factories at different places in Bengal. In this way the Company`s trade flourished since the Battle of Plassey. On the strength of Bengal the Company was able to win the battles in Deccan.

Political significance of the Battle of Plassey was immense. Mir Jafar was the nawab just in name, the actual authority lied with the Company. In this way he was a puppet nawab who could be removed at the will of the Company. Clive took advantage of his dependence and acquired for the Company more rights and privileges. The nawab also became militarily dependent on the Company as there was presence of about six thousand Company`s troops in the capital. The nawab was unable to rule in free manner

because of regular intervention by the British. He could not punish Diwan Raidurlabh and deputy diwan of Bihar Ramnarayan because of the British interference.

The Battle of Plassey exposed the weaknesses of Indian political and military systems. Clive was so much encouraged that he wrote to the British Prime Minister William Pitt that “if the British government itself took interest and sent a few thousand soldiers to India, the whole Indian subcontinent could be brought down to the feet of the English monarch”. It paved the way for future expansion of the British territory in India. Malleon also writes that “there, never, was a battle, in which the consequences were so vast, so immediate and so permanent”.

1.3.2 Battle of Buxar (1764)

Causes: Mir Jafar was a weak ruler who neither could protect Bengal nor could satisfy ever rising greed on the British. He was completely dependent on the British for internal and external managements. Clive made important appointments in Bihar and Bengal on behalf of the nawab. He supported only those elements that could protect British interests. Clive compelled the nawab to give permission to the British to purchase eighty five percent of saltpeter which was used for making gunpowder. In 1759, the British foiled the attack on Bihar by the Mughal Prince Ali Gauhar who later became Mughal emperor Shah Alam, along with Shuja-ud-Daula, the nawab of Awadh. Although in this success Ram Narayan, the local chief of Patna had played a crucial role, but Clive took the opportunity to secure a jagir as reward for his service to the nawab. In this way Clive projected the British as protector of Bengal. The Dutch had also attacked on Bengal in 1759, but they were defeated in the battle of Bedara. The British also suspected nawab's secret alignment with the Dutch, however it was proved wrong. Nawab's son Miran also came with a force to fight against the Dutch. After this victory the Dutch were sent out of Bengal and in this way the British were relieved from the Dutch menace. All such events had emboldened the position of British in Bengal. But nawab found it too difficult to satisfy the demands of the British. His treasury became empty. Mir Jafar had to give the British the revenues of Burdwan, Nadia and

Hoogly until British demands were fulfilled. Clive returned to England in February 1760, giving charge to Holwell.

In July 1760, Henry Vansittart came to Bengal as new Governor of Fort William. He found Bengal in the state of bankruptcy and there were also threats of invasion of Prince Gauhar as well as of the Marathas on Bengal. Another conspiracy was hatched to replace Mir Jafar. This time his son-in law Mir Kasim was made the nawab in October 1760. There was discontent among army for non-payment of salary. Mir Kasim, who had gathered immense wealth, had helped in that situation to overcome financial crisis of the British. So he was supposed to be a right man to be the nawab. According to the treaty, after becoming the nawab, Mir Kasim gave to the British the zamindari of Bardwan, Chittagaon and Midnapur. Besides it, he gave away five lakh rupees to meet the expense of Deccan war, and twenty lakh rupees as presents to the members of the Calcutta Council, which had been functioning as advisory body of the Governor.

By a number of reforms and strict measures Mir Kasim improved the condition of finance of Bengal. He confiscated property of corrupt officers. With this he also reorganized his army in order to tackle internal and external threats. He shifted his capital to Monghyr in Bihar, a central place to administer the whole province. In fact he also wanted to remain away from the British strict surveillance. He got constructed a fort at Monghyr, a gun factory, and employed French and American officers to train his army. He suppressed the rebellious zamindar. He also helped the British in repulsing the Mughal invasion on Bengal. In this way Mir Kasim proved his ability as a good ruler within a short period of time.

But very soon the nawab developed antagonism with the British. The nawab complained to Vansittart about rough behavior of English servants of the Company towards his people. There also appeared a number of conflicting interests between Mir Kasim and the Company, the most serious being private trade of Company's servants. They were indulged in private trade, free of duty, that caused a big financial loss to the nawab's treasury. Mir Kasim also resented the abuse of *dastaks* by the servants of the Company. *Dastaks* were

issued by chiefs of the factories to move company's goods without paying any duties on them. But it so happened that private traders, even some Indians too, used to get *dastaks* illegally from the Company and thus escaped from payment of duties to the nawab. Mir Kasim complained about it to Vansittart who was actually interested to solve the problem, but under pressure from the Calcutta Council no solution could be achieved. After that Mir Kasim, in disgust, abolished trade duties completely, both for the British and Indian traders. It was also not acceptable to the Calcutta Council because it was going to help the India traders. The Council asked the nawab to re-impose trade duties on Indian traders, but he refused to do so. Further, the nawab also rejected demands of the Company for proprietary rights on the three districts ceded to the Company by the treaty of 1760. The nawab arrested the Company's official, Hay, who had come with those demands and promised to release him after his men detained by the Company's authorities at Calcutta were freed. In this way the situation became far from cordial. Ellis, the chief of English factories at Patna attacked and captured Patna. He robbed merchants and inhabitants of the city. The nawab also retaliated and reoccupied Patna and made Ellis and some other Englishmen as prisoners.

These events resulted in an open war between the nawab and the Company. The Company again made a treaty with Mir Jafar and agreed to make him nawab once again on conditions which were most favourable to the Company. Major Adams was dispatched with 1,100 Europeans and four thousands Indian force against the nawab. The nawab also advanced his troops and the first battle took place at Katwa on 19 July 1763. The nawab was defeated. In three more battles he was again defeated. The nawab left his capital, Monghyr, and came to Patna where he killed Hay and Ellis, and some Indian prisoners, including Raja Ram Narayan and the Seth brothers, Rajballabh and Umid Ray. He had also killed his commander-in chief Gurin Khan on suspect on infidelity. From there Mir kasim proceeded toward Awadh. After much persuasion he made agree the nawab of Awadh Sujauddaulah and the fugitive Mughal emperor Shah Alam for his support. However, Sujauddaulah was vacillating in his support, the emperor's support was ineffective. In a series of battles, the last being the *Battle of*

Buxar, (22 October 1764), the allies were defeated. Mir Kasim abandoned all hopes of getting back his power and fled to some safe place. He died in June 1777 amidst grim poverty.

Results: The victory of the Company in the Battle of Buxar had far reaching consequences. It is said that 'Plassey transferred power, the battle of Buxar in 1764 created rights'. The Mughal emperor, by a firman conferred upon the Company the *Diwani* (civil government) of provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In this way the Company got right to rule over an Indian province and collect revenue from there on behalf of the emperor. Thus the Company was now no more an economic entity but a political power. Vast resources of Bengal came under its control and it started utilizing Indian revenue directly for its own trade. The nawab of Bengal became a titular nawab because his position in the office was completely at the mercy of the Company. The nawab of Awadh also came under the control of Company, and the emperor became a pensioner of the Company. The Company's prestige was established in Indian political fields and it became an eyesore for other powers, such as Marathas, Nizam, and Mysore. The Battle of Buxar, in this way established the Company as a political power in India and paved the way for conquests of other territories.

1.4.0 Let Us Sum Up

From the discussions above you have thus come to know that by the year 1764 the British East India Company had become a political power in India. It first overcame its European rivals in the south and expelled the French from Deccan. By doing so the both the powers had entangled themselves in internal politics of the Indian states which were suffering from internal dissensions. The Battle of Plassey and Battle of Buxar firmly established the British power in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from where they extended the British dominion in other parts of India.

1.5.0 Key Terms

Coromandal coast – the eastern coast of India

Dastak - free pass for transportation of goods

Nawab - designation of the governor of Bengal

1.6.0 Questions and Answers

1.7.0 Short-Answer Questions

1. Why did Dupleix aspire for territory in India?
2. What were the phases of Carnatic wars?
3. Discuss the significance of Battle of Wandiwash
5. What was 'Black Hole Tragedy'?

1.8.0 Long-Answers Questions

1. Discuss the causes and phases of the Carnatic Wars.
2. Discuss the causes and results of the Battle of Plassey.
3. Discuss the causes and results of the Battle of Buxar.

1.9.0 Suggested Readings

H. H. Dodwell, ed., The Cambridge History of India, Vol.I

Sir Alfred Lyall, The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India, reprint

R. C. Majumdar, and others, An Advance History of India

Ramsay Muir, Making of British India

P. E. Roberts, History of British India

Vincent A. Smith, The Oxford History of India

Percival Spear, The Oxford History of Modern India

E. Thompson, and G.T. Garratt, Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India

1.10.0 Answers to Check Your Progress

1. The War of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War.
2. Arcot
3. Chin Quilich Khan, the Nizam-ul-Mulk

4. Treaty of Pondicherry 1754
5. Count de Lally was supreme commander of French forces in India.
6. MurshidQuli Khan

Unit II

Territorial Expansion (Phase-I, 1757-1818)

- 2.0** Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Awadh
 - 2.2.1 Annexation of Awadh
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 - 2.3.1 First Anglo-Mysore War
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 - 2.3.4 Fourth Anglo-Mysore War
- 2.4 Annexation of Marathas

- 2.4.1 First Anglo-Maratha War
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- 2.5 Let us sum up
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- 2.7 Questions and Answers
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 - 2.7.2 Long-Answer Questions
- 2.8 Suggested Readings
- 2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 Introduction

In the previous unit you have studied that the British East India Company laid the foundation of its rule in Bengal after the Battle of Buxar in 1764. It opened new avenues for the British in India. By becoming a political power the British were able to utilize the maximum resources of Bengal for their own trade as well as to fulfil their desire to become an all-India power. It could be done by subjugation of other powerful states of India, namely, Awadh, Hyderabad, Marathas, Mysore, and Sikhs that were ruling in different parts of the country. The British adopted both diplomatic and aggressive policies to annex those states in the British Empire and by 1856 it emerged as the sole power in the Indian sub-continent.

2.1 Objectives:

The objectives of this unit are to describe the political conditions of Indian states such as Awadh, Mysore and Maratha after the decline of the Mughal power. Further to discuss the circumstances leading to their defeats and annexations by the British. After defeating them the British emerged as the supreme power in India. By reading this unit you will be able to make your own analysis regarding the forces and factors of change in Indian political field in the eighteenth and nineteenth century in India.

2.2. Awadh

Awadh was a province under the Mughal. In 1722 Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk was appointed Governor of Awadh. By his merit and sagacity he suppressed rebellions of zamindars and established order in Awadh. He had functioned

independently and thus established an autonomous rule in Awadh. His successor Safdar Jang was also an able ruler. But very soon Awadh also became a party in the conflict between the British and nawab of Bengal.

2.2.1 Annexation of Awadh: The nawab of Awadh, Shujauddaulah had also taken part in battles against the British in support of Mir Kasim of Bengal, but he was badly defeated. After the Battle of Buxar(1764) Robert Clive, the Governor of Bengal made a separate agreement with the nawabSujauddaulah in 1765. By this, Awadh was restored to the nawab for which he paid fifty lakh rupees and fort of Chunar to the British. The nawab also gave away Kara and Allahabad to the emperor. In return the Company got the *Diwanir*right of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the emperor for which the Company agreed to pay twenty six lakh rupees to the emperor annually. The Mughal emperor was asked to stay temporarily in Awadh so that he could not make an alliance with the Marathas. The British got right to trade throughout in Awadh without payment of any duty. The nawab also agreed to take British help for protection of his boundary at his cost. In this way Awadh had become a dependent state under the British.

When Warren Hastings (1772-1785) became the governor of Bengal he returned Kara and Allahabad to nawab on payment of fifty lakh rupees. He also captured Banaras from the nawab by a treaty in 1775. Gradually Awadh became more dependent on the British and its internal administration also deteriorated. The Governor –General Lord Cornwallis (1786-1793) demanded huge amount of money for upkeep of the British army in Awadh. A British representative always remained in Awadh who also used to interfere in internal affairs of the state. For the British, Awadh was important because it had served as a buffer or barrier between the British and the Marathas. It had also become an instrument to be used against Maratha invasion of British territory. So Cornwallis refused the demand of nawabHaiderbeg for removal of British army from Awadh, however Cornwallis reduced the maintenance amount of the army in Awadh.

The British interfered in the matter of succession in 1797 following the death of nawabAsaf-ud-daulah. Sir John Shore (1793-1798) made Saadt Ali the nawab in 1798 for which he increased the amount to be given to the British from fifty lakhs to seventy-six lakhs. The British also occupied fort of Allahabad. The new nawab agreed

not to have any relations with other Indian states without British permission and would not employ any European in the state. In this way the new agreement made Awadh more dependent on the British and increased the British power in the state.

Lord Wellesley (1789-1805), the governor-general made new alliance with Awadh. By *the Subsidiary Alliance* of 1801 Awadh was compelled to accept fresh treaty by which the British got direct possession of Ruhelkhand and territory of Lower Doab to meet expenses of subsidiary army in Awadh. He practically captured half of nawab's dominions. The nawab would have no relations with other states and a British Resident was placed in Awadh capital at Lucknow. The Subsidiary Alliance further made the nawab dependent on the British. The real power did not vest in the hands of nawab but in the British as the British resident used to interfere in internal administration. Militarily the nawab became weak as he did not have his own army to protect the state. The nawab was isolated in making political relations with any other Indian states. The internal conditions of the state deteriorated in absence of a strong responsible government. The administration the nawab became unpopular. The talukdars used to harass people. The British also kept increasing their demands regularly. Lord Hastings (1813-1823) collected two crore of rupees from the nawab to meet expenses of British war with other states. For that the nawab was given the title of 'Raja'. Lord Amherst (1823-1828) and Lord William Bentick (1828-1835) also collected huge amount of money from the nawab. The nawab was also threatened for annexation of his state if he did not improve administration of the state. In such conditions the nawab was unable to rule effectively. In fact the British did not want improvement in administration because they wanted a pretext for usurping it on this ground. In spite of this, the nawab remained a good and faithful ally of the British.

Due to British engagements in Afghanistan, Punjab, and Sindh they could not give too much attention to Awadh. But the successive governor-generals continued to blame upon the nawab for mismanagement of state affairs. But Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856), who came to India as Governor General in 1848, was determined to annex Awadh to the British empire. He had already annexed Punjab after the Second Sikh War (1848-49). Further, he had also annexed a number of Indian states, such as, Satara, Jhansi, Sambhalpur, and Nagpur on the ground of his *Doctrine of Lapse*. It was a theory by which he refused adoption of a child by the rulers of dependent Indian states and thus claimed Britishparamountcy over them. Further he adopted

other means to annex Indian states. For the annexation of Awadh he prepared ground on the basis of bad administration and mismanagement of state affairs. Dalhousie asked the British resident Sleeman to prepare a report on Awadh. Whereas Sleeman gave a report on poor administrative affairs of the state he did not favour complete annexation. Sir Henry Lawrence also did not favour annexation. But Lord Dalhousie did not entertain any view other than annexation. In 1854 Sleeman was replaced by Outram as Resident of Awadh. His report on Awadh was same as that of Sleeman. Wazid Ali Shah was the nawab of Awadh at that time. He did not have any interest in administration but in pleasure of love, music, poetry and dance. He had left the whole works of administration in the hands of British Resident. He was given warnings a number of time for improvement of administration which had collapsed altogether.

On 23 January 1856 Lord Dalhousie directed General Outram to take over Awadh. On 4 February 1856 Outram presented the letter of Governor-General to Wajid Ali Shah. He did not sign any treaty but surrendered completely before the Resident. He even did not agree for his maintenance allowance. On 7 February the Resident took over the administration of Awadh as Chief Commissioner of the province.

The ground for annexation was not solid at all. Awadh did not declare a war on the British, neither did it disobey ever. Several contemporary writers also write that the condition of Awadh was not as pathetic as had been described by Sleeman or Outram. Bishop Heber wrote in 1824-25 that agriculture and industry were in very good condition in Awadh. Improvement of administration had also become a responsibility of the British because they were holding complete dominance over the state. But the British did not cooperate in this regard rather they discouraged reform attempts of some of the nawabs. The condition of Awadh did not improve even after its takeover by the British.

2.3 Annexation of Mysore

Mysore emerged as a powerful regional state under Hyder Ali and his son Tipu. Hyder Ali was born in 1721 at Budikot in Mysore. He led a very hard life after the death of his father Fateh Muhammad who was a petty jagirdar and military officer in service of the state. Hyder Ali also joined the military service under the Mysore

king Krishnaraj. The king of Mysore was a puppet king. The de facto rulers were two brothers Devraj and Nanjraj who virtually had usurped all powers in their hands.

2.3.1 First Anglo-Mysore War (1766-69)

The political turmoil of Deccan had also affected the state of Mysore. Hyder Ali had also taken part in the war of succession of Hyderabad and was in the attendance of Nasir Jung. Hyder Ali fortunately gathered huge amount of money from the treasury of the Nizam Nasir Jung when he was murdered in the war of succession. It helped Hyder to rise to power and his position gradually increased in the Mysore army. He had become acquainted with the war techniques of the Europeans and organised his army on their pattern. He also led the Mysore army to invade on Trichinopoly. In 1755 he became the fauzdar of Dindigul where he established a modern arsenal with the help of the French. After five years since then he became the most powerful man in Mysore and in 1761 Hyder Ali overthrew Nanjraj from the throne and established his authority in Mysore. He further increased his dominions in the neighboring territories of Bidnur, Sunda, Sera, Canara and Malabar.

Certain factors such as wars of succession in Hyderabad and Carnatic, defeat of the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat (1761), and the Anglo-French rivalry in the south, helped in rise of Hyder's power. But the Marathas and Nizam did not remain passive spectators of this rise. The Maratha Peshwa MadhoRao defeated Hyder Ali in a war in 1764. Hyder Ali had to agree to give some portions of his territory and twenty-eight lakh rupees annually to the Marathas. In 1766 the Nizam with the help of the British also attacked on Mysore. It was the *First Anglo-Mysore War (1766-1769)*.

After remarkable success in Bengal the East India Company wanted to do the same in the south. Hyder Ali had given more importance to the French in his court. Hyder Ali had also given shelter the British enemies such as Mahfuz Khan (brother of Carnatic nawab Muhammad Ali) and Raja Sahib, a son of Chanda Sahib. Due to those reasons the British were unhappy with Hyder. On the other hand, Hyder also did not like concentration of British troops at Vellore. When Hyder was trying to make an alliance with the Nizam for his march on Carnatic, the British became alert and immediately they signed a treaty in November 1766 with the Nizam. Peshwa MadhoRao was already in an alliance with the Nizam against Hyder Ali.

In this way Hyder Ali faced attacks from three sides. But he was a diplomat. First of all he separated the Marathas from the alliance by promising to pay them

thirty five lakh rupees, half of which was paid instantly, and also gave Kolar district as mortgage. Being satisfied with them, the Marathas went back. The Nizam and the British army under Joseph Smith attacked on Mysore. Hyder Ali used Mahfuz Khan to break this alliance and so in September 1767 the Nizam after breaking alliance with the British made an alliance with Hyder Ali. Combined forces of Mysore and Hyderabad now were fighting against the British. It was a masterstroke of the diplomacy of Hyder Ali. But the Nizam was not a dependable partner. In the battle of Trichinopoly in December 1767 both the Nizam and Hyder Ali were defeated. Having come to the notice that the British were planning to attack on Hyderabad, the Nizam was perturbed and soon deserted Hyder Ali to make an alliance with the British. This alliance of the British and Hyderabad in March 1768 became the source of permanent conflict between the British and Mysore state. The Nizam declared Hyder Ali a rebel and did not accept his authority over Mysore. The Nizam agreed to give the Diwani of Mysore to the British when it was defeated. In this way Hyder Ali again was alone in the war. Colonel Smith and Colonel Wood had led the British army in this war. But Hyder was able to recapture Manglore and in March 1769 he attacked on Madras. He compelled the Madras government to make a treaty on 4 April 1769. By this treaty both agreed to restore territories captured in the war to one another. Both the British and Hyder Ali agreed to support one another in case either of the two was attacked by its enemies. Evidently, Hyder Ali had upper hand in the first Anglo-Mysore war. Hyder Ali himself was a good soldier and commander. His cavalry was superior for that he had good mobility in the battle-field. It paralyzed the British defense. He had dictated the terms of the peace.

2.3.2 Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84)

The treaty made after the first Anglo-Mysore war was not a treaty between the two friendly states. The British neither wanted to make friendship with Hyder nor to assist his enemy in war against Mysore. When the Marathas attacked on Mysore in 1770-71 the British did not provide help to Hyder Ali. In this way he was deceived. However, he was still hopeful of an alliance with the British. Hyder Ali helped the Bombay government establish a factory at Onore and also gave exclusive right to purchase sandal wood and peeper on the Malabar Coast. In return he wanted military help from the British, but again the British refused. So Hyder Ali was looking for support elsewhere.

The British under Warren Hastings had increased their activities in the south. He encouraged the nawab of Carnatic to capture Tanjore. The British captured Mahe on the Malabar Coast in March 1779. It was a French settlement under Mysore protection. From this port Hyder Ali imported war materials from Europe. So this event aggravated relations between the British and Mysore. Further, the British had annoyed both the Nizam and Hyder Ali when the British troops passed through their territories in spite of their opposition to capture Guntur. In the meantime, the Anglo-Maratha war had also begun in 1775. In this way all the three powers were anti-British at that time. So they made a triple alliance against the British in 1780. According to the plan the Nizam was to invade the North Sarkars; the Marathas would march on Berar and Central India and attack on the British in the North; and Hyder Ali would attack on Madras and capture the neighbouring territories in the south. In this way background of the *Second Anglo- Mysore War (1780-1784)* was prepared.

Hyder Ali marched from Seringapatam with 83,000 troops in May 1780 and captured a number of places including Porto Novo, Kanchivaram, Trinomali and Arni, and laid a siege of Arcot. The Madras government sent Colonel Baillie and Sir Hector Munro from two sides but Tipu, son of Hyder Ali, prevented them to meet one another. Baillie was killed near Kanchivaram in a battle, and Munro returned to Madras. By December 1780 Hyder Ali captured Arcot. It was a great victory for Hyder Ali but the British prestige had suffered a great loss. Sir Alfred Lyall writes that “the fortunes of English in India had fallen to their lowest water-mark”.

Hyder Ali had established his dominion over whole of Carnatic, except some coastal areas. In this crucial period of time Governor General Warren Hastings dispatched a big army under Sir Eyre Coote from Bengal to Madras. Warren Hastings also became successful in separating the Marathas (Scindhia and Bhonsle) and the Nizam from Hyder Ali. The Nizam was given the district of Guntur. Eyre Coote defeated Hyder Ali at Porto Novo in 1781. Colonel Pearse had also arrived from Bengal. They further defeated the Mysore army at several places. However, Tipu earned some victories over the British. In the beginning of 1782 a powerful French fleet arrived under Admiral Suffrein off the Coromandal Coast. The French occupied a few ports and foiled an attempt of Eyre Coote to occupy Arni. In such situation Hyder Ali died on 7 December 1782.

His son Tipu continued the war. He not only defeated Brigadier Mathews, who had come from Bombay, but also made him a prisoner. In the meantime, England and

France signed a peace in Europe and so they also stopped war in India. In this way Tipu again remained without an ally. The British captured Palghat and Coimbatore in November 1783. While Colonel Fullerton was marching towards Seringpattam he was recalled by the Madras government because it wanted peace with Mysore in want of adequate provisions. Tipu also agreed for the peace which was signed at Mangalore on 7 March 1784. In this way the second Mysore war came to an end. By this treaty Tipu evacuated Carnatic and the British vacated all the Mysore territories occupied during the war. But Warren Hastings was not satisfied with this treaty because it had not established British supremacy in the south.

2.3.3 Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92)

Like his father, Tipu Sultan was also an ambitious ruler. His ambition to become supreme in the south and to drive away the British from India brought him in conflict with the Nizam, the Marathas, and the British. He believed in innovations, and so he had brought a number of changes in internal administration and foreign relations. He raised a well disciplined and trained army. His infantry was armed with muskets and bayonets, mostly manufactured in European style at Mysore. He established two dockyards for ship-building. He had made close relations with France and had sent his embassies to France, Turkey, Iran and Pegu to develop foreign trade. In this sense Tipu was a different sort of ruler.

Lord Cornwallis, the governor-general, initially followed the policy of non-interference as set by the Directors of the Company, but he was convinced that suppression of the power of Mysore was in the interest of the Company. Cornwallis started negotiations with other powers of the south. In 1789 the British made a permanent treaty with the Nizam on the subject of Guntur. Tipu was not included in this treaty. It gave the impression that the British were also preparing for the war. In December 1789 Tipu attacked on Travancore, a friendly state of the British. In reaction the British also declared war on Mysore. Mysore had old enmity with Travancore as it had given shelter to enemies of Tipu. Tipu wanted to purchase two ports of the Dutch on the Malabar Coast but they were occupied by Travancore. Besides them Tipu had also border disputes with Travancore. Tipu tried to settle the issues with mediation of the Madras Council of the British but he was not successful. In this situation Tipu attacked on Travancore. But the British wanted to make it sure before declaration of war on Mysore that the Nizam and Marathas should not help Mysore. So the British made an alliance with the Marathas on 1 June 1790 and the

next on 4 July 1790 with the Nizam. Both the Nizam and the Marathas agreed to provide military help to the British and would divide the conquered territories after the war. Tipu was unable to get any assistance from France because of the outbreak of a revolution in France in 1789. It was the *Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-1792)*.

It was so important for the British that in December 1790, after initial setbacks in the war, Lord Cornwallis himself took the command. He occupied Bangalore in March 1791 and he was only a few miles away from Seringapatam. But due to onset of the rain he had to return. Tipu captured Coimbatore in November 1791 but his power was on decline. Cornwallis had resumed the attack and by February 1792 he reached up to the gate of Seringapatam. In desperation Tipu signed the *Treaty of Seringapatam* in March 1792. By this treaty Tipu lost almost half of his territory which was divided among the allies. The British occupied the major portion which consisted of Malabar, Dindigul and its neighbouring districts, Baramahal and its adjoining hilly areas. The British also occupied Coorge. Tipu paid an indemnity of three million rupees and he surrendered his two sons as hostages to the British.

The British agreed for the peace mainly due to a number of reasons. The British troops were falling sick due to outbreak of disease. Moreover, the revolution in France had calmed down and there was a possibility of French help to Tipu, and above all the Directors also wanted to stop the war. Cornwallis did not want to divide the whole Mysore among the allies. He was satisfied with the outcomes of the war.

2.3.4 Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1798-1799)

In spite of defeat and *Treaty of Seringapatam* in 1792 Tipu continued his fortifications and increased the number of cavalry and infantry. He had also improved the condition of economy in the state. He sent emissaries to Kabul, Arabia, Turkey and Mauritius to forge an anti-British alliance. He got some assistance from the French who had come to Mysore and planted a '*Tree of Liberty*'. Tipu also became the member of a *Jacobin Club*. The French governor of Mauritius recognized Tipu as Sultan of Mysore after the death of Hindu Raja of Mysore. A French regiment was also stationed at Mangalore. All these activities only aggravated the British discontentment. Lord Wellesley, the Governor General, thus became desperate to destroy the power of Mysore altogether. He made Subsidiary Alliance with the Nizam in September 1798, and induced the Peshwa to give him half portion of Mysore after its conquest.

After these arrangements Wellesley attacked on Mysore in 1799. This was the fourth and final *Mysore War*. General Harris and Arthur Wellesley marched from Vellore and attacked on Mysore in March 1799. General Stuart marched from Bombay. They defeated Tipu at Siddheshwar Pass and Malvalli and he was forced to take shelter at Seringpatam. The British forces laid siege of fort of Seringpatam in April 1799. Tipu still refused to peace, and continued fighting. He did not wish to be a dependent ruler under the British. The British captured the fort on 4 May 1799. Tipu was killed in war operation, fighting on the wall of fort.

In this way the long Anglo-Mysore war came to an end. The British transferred some territories to the Marathas. The Nizam was given some portions of Mysore territory bordering north-east of the Nizam state. The British captured Kanara, Coimbatore, Dharapuram, Seringpatam and other territories. The rest part of Mysore was restored to the descendant of the Hindu raja of Mysore who had been deposed by Hyder Ali forty years back. A British Resident was placed in his state to exercise a general control over the administration. This crippled Mysore state signed a subsidiary alliance with the British and agreed to pay twenty one lakh rupees annually to the British. The victory over Mysore was one of the greatest achievements of the British since their conquest of Bengal. By this the British set their stronghold in the south and became a tough contender of power against the Marathas. It has rightly been pointed out that “as a military, financial and pacificatory settlement, the consequence of Mysore was the most brilliant success of the British power since the days of Clive”.

2.4 Annexation of Maratha

After decline of the Mughal authority in India the Marathas emerged as an alternative power which could have replaced the Mughal. Not only in the Deccan but in the north, west and in the eastern India the Marathas had extended their dominions. The Mughal emperor was also under their influence. But the Maratha state itself became victim of power politics of several Maratha chiefs. During the crisis of the war of succession between Shau (a grandson of Shivaji, the founder of Maratha kingdom) and Tarabai (widow of Rajaram), two power centres of the Marathas emerged- one at Satara under Shau and the other at Kolhapur under Tarabai. But gradually the power was transferred into the hands of Peshwa (in -charge of finance and general administration during Shivaji, later on prime minister during Shahu) since the appointment of Balaji Vishwanath to this post in 1713. The post of Peshwa became

hereditary and he became the *de facto* ruler. Under Peshwa Bajirao I and Peshwa BalajiBajirao alias Nana Saheb the Maratha dominions extended to a larger extent. But the Marathas involvement in the politics of the north India imperiled their own position in Indian politics. In 1752 the Mughal emperor had made an alliance with the Marathas for defense of his territory from the Afghan invasions. The Marathas had been given the subas of Agra and Ajmer and in return they had posted their military at Delhi. The Marathas invaded Punjab and reached up to Peshwar. In this way they directly came in conflict with the Afghans. The Afghan leader Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded India in January in 1761. He defeated the Mughal in the *Third Battle of Panipat* defeated and also destroyed the Maratha power. It was a great loss of the Maratha military and political power.

3.4.1 First Anglo-Maratha War

The Maratha power further declined due to the rise of different Maratha sardars who carved out semi-independent states out of the Maratha dominions. Thus the Holkar at Indore, Gaekwad at Baroda, Bhonsle at Nagpur, and Sindhia at Gwalior established their dominions. Peshwa was the head of this so-called *Maratha Confederacy* but practically each Maratha Sardar was independent and they kept their own army and collected revenue for themselves. They paid only nominal allegiance to the Peshwa. But above all they started conspiring against the Peshwa and against each other over petty issues. This was the situation when Peshwa MadhavRao died in 1772. After that there started struggle for power between RaghunathRao, the younger brother of Peshwa BalajiBajirao and Narayan Rao, the younger brother of MdhavRao. In August 1773 Narayan Rao was killed after which RaghunathRao proclaimed himself as the Peshwa. But Nana Phadnavis, the minister of ex-Peshwa resisted him. He and other Maratha sardars accepted the posthumous son of MadhavRao as the legitimate Peshwa. In this way, finding no way out, RaghunathRao turned towards the British for help. The British government at Bombay accepted RaghunathRao's proposals and without the approval of the governor-general made an alliance with him. Thus in March 1775 they signed the *Treaty of Surat* by which the British agreed to support Narayan Rao with 2,500 force to become peshwa; he would bear the whole expenditure of the forces; Narayan Rao would give Salsette, Bassein and some other islands to the British; he would also give a share of the revenue of Broach and Surat to the British. It led to the beginning of the *First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-1782)*.

The Bombay government started the war against the Poona government. But at that time the Bengal government was not ready to accept this treaty as it did not want a conflict with the Marathas. So the Bengal government annulled the treaty and sent Captain Upton to sign a fresh treaty with the Poona government. On 1 March 1776 the *Treaty of Purandar* was signed. Both the governments agreed for restoration of peace. The British demanded only Salsette. RaghunathRao was to be given a monthly pension of 25,000 rupees. In spite of this treaty the Bombay government continued protection to RaghunathRao. The Poona government was also not interested to implement the treaty. On the other hand, the French had again started their activities following the revolution in the American colonies against the British rule. In this situation the Court of Directors supported the Bombay government and approved the Treaty of Surat. They decided to help RaghunathRao against the Poona government. In this way the war was renewed in November 1778. But the British were defeated badly and the Bombay government signed *the Convention of Wadgaon* with the Poona government in January 1779. The British agreed to restore all acquisitions made in the Maratha region since 1773; and the Company's troops were to be stopped from advancing from Bengal.

3.4.2 Second Anglo-Maratha War

The Indian sides were in high spirit at that time as all the three major powers of the south, namely the Marathas, the Nizam, and Mysore had made an alliance against the British. But Warren Hastings was not ready to give up. He did not follow the Wadgaon Convention and dispatched an army from Bengal under Doddard. He captured Ahmedabad (February 1780) and Bassein (December 1780), but he was defeated by the Marathas in April 1781. But another British army under Captain Popham defeated the Sindhia and captured Gwalior in August 1780. Sindhia was again defeated in February 1781 at Sipri. These victories again raised the prestige of the British among the Indian powers. Following this defeat, in October 1781, Sindhia made an alliance with the British and he further tried to settle a compromise between the Poona and the British governments. The British had also created a rift in the Maratha camp by winning over the Gaekwad and the Bhonsle. By the mediation of Sindhia the *Treaty of Salbai* was signed on 17 May 1782 between the Poona government and the British. By this treaty both the governments agreed to restore to one another all territories conquered in the south and Bombay since the Treaty of Purandar. But the British were allowed to keep Salsette. The British would not help

RaghunathRao anymore and he would be given a monthly pension of Rs. 25,000 from the Peshwa. By this treaty Hyder Ali was also to return all territories conquered from the British. Sindhia also got back his territory west of the river Yamuna.

From the British point of view this treaty did not bring territorial gain, except Salsette but it led to the British supremacy in India. Warren Hastings was able to shatter the hopes of Indian powers from becoming united and powerful. Peace with Marathas for twenty years was established. It gave time to British to consolidate their position. On the other hand, the Marathas also just got a lease of life for twenty years amidst discord and confusion amongst them.

Both the British and the Marathas were aware of the fact that treaty of 1782 was not final. For the British the Marathas were the biggest hurdle in their way to becoming an all- India power. The British got the opportunity to overcome the Maratha menace due to the internal conflicts of Maratha sirdars. After the death of Nana Fadnavis in 1800, who was the last diplomat of the Marathas, the court of Peshwa became centre of conspiracy. Mahadji Sindhia, one of the ablest Maratha sardar, had died in 1794. After that both Sindhia and Holker tried to dominate over the Peshwa. Peshwa Baji RaoII had made an alliance with Daulat Rao Sindhia against Holker chief Jaswant Rao. In this triangular struggle Jaswant Rao Holker defeated both Sindhia and the Peshwa. He also captured Poona in October 1802. In this way the Peshwa took shelter at Bassein under British protection. Behind him the Holker declared Vinayak Rao (the adopted son of RaghunathRao) as the Peshwa. Under this situation, BajiRao sought the British help and on 31 December 1802 he signed a subsidiary alliance. It was known as the *Treaty of Bassein*. It was based on mutual cooperation. BajiRao agreed to keep six thousand British troops and artillery in his territory along with a portion of land for maintenance. The Peshwa also promised not to have any relation with any European or enemy of the British. He renounced his claim over Surat. He also accepted British mediation in making relations with an Indian state. So the Peshwa got British protection but he lost his independence. In May 1803 BajiRao II was restored at Poona with the help of Arthur Wellesley. P.E. Roberts writes that “the treaty of Bassein gave the Company the supremacy of the Deccan”. However, Lord Wellesley firmly believed that this treaty was not final and the war with Marathas was inevitable.

But the Maratha sardars resented over the treaty because they treated it to be the loss of their independence. The Peshwa himself was not satisfied with the treaty so

he started correspondence with Maratha sardars to undo the treaty. Whereas DaulatRaoSindhia and RaghujiBhonsle immediately agreed for cooperation, Holker stood apart and went to Malwa. Gaekwad remained neutral. In this way the war was renewed in August 1803. While the British had made a definite strategy the Marathas did not have any such. General Lake was leading an army from the north and Arthur Wellesley from the south. They began simultaneous wars at many places in Gujarat, Bundelkhand and Orissa so that Marathas could not become united. The Marathas tried to copy the European mode of warfare in which they were still not expert, and in this way they left their traditional mode of warfare too, which was a great mistake on their part. Sindhia had in his army several French military experts but they had left before the beginning of the war. Due to all those reasons the Marathas were badly defeated. Arthur Wellesley defeated both Sindhia and Bhonsle in August and September 1803 in the Deccan at places like Assey and Argaon. General Lake captured Aligarh, Delhi and Agra and in September 1803 he made the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam his captive. In November 1803 he also defeated Sindhia at Laswari in the central India and captured Sindhia territory south of the river Chambal. The British also captured Cuttack in Orissa, and got success in Gujarat and Bundelkhand. In this way within a few months the British defeated Sindhia and Bhonsle and compelled them for treaty.

On 17 December 1803 the Bhonsle raja of Berar signed the *Treaty of Deogaon* and ceded the eastern districts of Orissa (Cuttack and Balasore) to the British. He accepted the subsidiary alliance and placed his territory completely under the British protection. A British Resident, Elphinston, was posted at Nagpur, the Bhonsle capital.

On 30 December 1803 Sindhia signed the *Treaty of SurjiArjangaon* by which he surrendered his entire territories in the Doab (i.e. between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna) and territories north of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Gohad to the British. Sindhia also surrendered Ahmedabad, Broach and territories between Ajanta and Godavari river in the Deccan. He also accepted a subsidiary alliance and Major Malcolm was posted as British Resident in the Sindhia capital. Both Sindhia and Bhonsle acknowledged the Treaty of Bassein of 1802.

Both the treaties had strengthened the British position in India. But the Maratha war had not come to an end. In April 1804 the British declared war on Holker, a powerful Maratha sardar, as he had attacked on Jaipur which was a friendly state of the British. In the beginning Holker defeated the British at MukundFara Pass

near Kota and laid a siege on Delhi. The Raja of Bharatpur also joined Holker. But he had to lift it as the British Lieutenant Colonel Ochterlony resisted him powerfully. Later on in November 1804 General Lake defeated Holker at Dig and Farukhabad. The British also made an unsuccessful attempt to capture the fort of Bharatpur. In the end the Jat Raja of Bharatpur made an alliance with the British in April 1805.

In the meantime, Lord Wellesley was recalled because the Directors were worried of his pro-interference policy which had created imbalances and anxiety in Indian political community. Pitt, the Younger (British Prime Minister), directly accused Lord Wellesley of this situation in India. After him, Lord Cornwallis was once again sent to Calcutta in July 1805. He desired to make a satisfactory alliance with all the Maratha sardars. But on 5 October 1805 he died. Sir George Barlow took over the office temporarily. He made an alliance with Holker and signed on 7 January 1806 the *Treaty of Rajpurghat*. By this treaty Holker renounced his claim over territories north of the river Chambal whereas the British agreed not to interfere in the Holker territories south of the Chambal. Holker agreed not to have any European in his service without the permission of the British. The British government did away with its protection from Indian states such as Tonk, Rampur and Jaipur and restored the whole territory north of the hills of Bundi to Holker. Barlow also made peace with Sindhia and revised the treaty of Surji-Arjungaon. As a result, Sindhia got back the fort of Gwalior and Gohud. It was also agreed upon that Sindhia would not claim over territory north of the Chambal and the British over the south of the Chambal.

In this way George Barlow adopted a mild policy in comparison to Wellesley, but contribution of Wellesley cannot be delimited for advancing British position in India. The British government became defensive due to its poor economic condition as well as the Napoleonic wars in Europe. In this way Lord Wellesley paved the way for British Paramountcy in India in the nineteenth century.

3.4.3 Third Anglo-Maratha War

The British government was convinced that another war with Marathas was inevitable as both were not satisfied with the peace treaties. The Marathas could not consolidate their position taking advantage of the British policy of non-interference. All Maratha sardars were struggling with their internal problems. Moreover, they were still disunited. Peshwa BajiRao II was inefficient and puppet in the hands of his advisor Triambakji. But BajiRao II was earnestly trying to break British control over him. On the advice of Triambakji he sent messengers to Bhonsle, Sindhia and Holker

to encourage them to rise against the British. But Gaekwad remained loyal to the British. The Peshwa demanded from him the territory of Ahmedabad to settle revenue arrears. In 1815 Gaekwad sent his messenger Gangadhar Shastri to Poona to settle the matter but he was murdered treacherously at Poona. The British Resident at Poona, Elphinstone held Triambakji responsible for the murder and demanded his surrender from the Peshwa. Reluctantly Triambakji was handed over to the British, but after one year of confinement at Thana Triambakji escaped from British custody. The British suspected Peshwa's hand in his escape, but they had no proof for that. In this way their relation deteriorated.

By 1817 Bajirao II was determined to overthrow the British power with the combined forces of Maratha sardars. On the other hand, Lord Hastings, the governor general, was also ready for the final engagement against the Marathas. The British had stopped their policy of non-interference. In March 1816, after the death of Raghujibhonsle, the British interfered in the matter of succession and in May 1816 concluded the *Treaty of Nagpur* with Appa Sahib. It reduced the strength of Maratha Confederacy and made the British position strong in the north of river Narmada. Malcolm writes on the significance of the treaty for the British that "in the actual condition of India, no event could be more fortunate than the subsidiary alliance with Nagpur".

In June 1817 Elphinstone forced the Peshwa to renew the old treaty and signed the *Treaty of Poona*. This treaty was a serious blow on the status of Peshwa. He ceded Konkan and other territories to the British and renounced all claims for arrears on Gaekwad. The Peshwa agreed not to admit into his territory any European or American subject without prior permission of the British. But the most important provision was that the Peshwa Bajirao II renounced the leadership of the Maratha Confederacy and recognized its "dissolution in form and substance". In November 1817 the British also revised the treaty with Gaekwad and placed some additional forces in his territory. Treaty with Sindhia was also revised in November 1817. By the treaty of Gwalior Daulat Rao Sindhia was called upon to assist the British in suppression of the Pindari. Further, Sindhia renounced his claims over some of the Rajput states, such as, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kota and Bundi. Immediately after this, the British made subsidiary alliances with twenty Rajput states. In this way, by the diplomacy, the British had made their position strong before the beginning of the *Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-19)*.

For the Peshwa BajiRao II and the Maratha sardars those treaties were humiliating so they wanted to get rid of them. BajiRao was the first to strike. In November 1817 he attacked on the British Residency at Kirki. Simultaneously, Appa Sahib at Nagpur and Malhar Rao Holker at Indore also attacked on the British. Holker was defeated at Mahidpur. On 6 January 1818 he signed the *Treaty of Mandisor* with the British. By this treaty Holker made over all his possessions south of the Narmada to the British and agreed to keep a British subsidiary force in his territory. He also surrendered his foreign policy into the hands of the British. Now Peshwa did not have any hold over the Holker state. Appa Sahib after being defeated at Sitabaldi (November 1817) fled to the hills and continued his resistance for some time but ultimately he left the ground and went to Jodhpur where he died in 1840. The Bhonsle court made a treaty with the British by which the British obtained possessions of the Saugar and Narbada territories belonging to the Bhonsle. Peshwa BajiRao continued his struggle. His final defeat took place on 29 February 1818 at Asthi after which he surrendered to Sir John Malcolm in June 1818. The post of Peshwa was abolished and the British captured his whole territory. He was given an annual pension of Rs 8 Lakh and was settled at Bitthur near Kanpur.

In this way the third and final Maratha war came to an end in 1818. It was the final defeat of the Marathas and after that their dream of becoming an all India power shattered. Peshwa and different Maratha sardars were reduced to the status of petty zamindars. The nominal Maratha raja at Satara, of the line of Shivaji, was more than powerless. This was a great step towards the British Paramountcy in India.

Check Your Progress-

1. Who founded the independent state of Awadh?
2. When did Awadh make subsidiary alliance?
3. Which two treaties Tipu had to sign with the British?
4. Which were two power centres of the Marathas?
5. What were the periods of three Maratha wars?

2.5 Let Us Sum Up

In this way in this unit you have come to know about the factors and situations in which some of the India states, namely Awadh, Maratha, and Mysore either merged completely into the British dominion or accepted a subservient position under the British. This happened mainly due to the breakdown of a central authority in India and very intense regional rivalry for power. This political rearrangement reflects that India

was not a nation but a conglomerate of several regional powers, divided on the basis of self-interest, so they were very easily occupied by a small power like the British East India Company.

2.6 Key Terms

Tree of Liberty – Actually founded in Boston, during American Revolution.

It was founded by a French officer in Mysore, signifying liberty.

Jacobin Club—It was political group founded in France in 1789 during revolution. Its branch was founded in Mysore with the help of Tipu.

Subsidiary alliance—the alliance by which an Indian state was made dependent on the British in the matter of defense and foreign relations.

Doctrine of Lapse – a theory which rejected the right of adoption by the Indian Rulers dependent on the British government

British paramountcy- claim of British supremacy over native states

Talukdar – village level land revenue officer

2.7 Questions and Answers

2.7.1 Short-Answer Questions

1. What were terms of Subsidiary Alliance with Awadh?
2. What were terms of Treaty of Seringpatam, 1792?
3. What was the Maratha Confederacy?
4. What was the Treaty of Purandhar 1776?
5. What were results of the Third Anglo-Maratha War?

2.7.2 Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the circumstances leading to the annexation of Awadh.
2. Discuss the circumstances leading to the annexation of Mysore
3. Discuss the causes and results of the Anglo-Mysore wars.
4. Describe the Anglo-Maratha relations from 1775-1819.

2.8 Suggested Readings

H. H. Dodwell ed., The Cambridge History of India, Vol.I, Delhi

Sir Alfred Lyall, The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India, reprint

Ramsay Muir, Making of British India

R.V. Nandkarni, Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire

P. E. Roberts, History of British India

G. S. Sardesai, New History of the Marathas

V. A. Smith, The Oxford History of India

Percival Spear, The Oxford History of Modern India

E. Thompson and G.T. Garratt, Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India

2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk

2. In 1801

3. First, Treaty of Mangalore in 1784 after the Second Mysore War; and second, Treaty of Seringapatam in 1792 after Third Mysore war.

4. First, at Satara under Sahu; and second, at Kolhapur under Tarabai

5. First Maratha War 1775-1782; Second Maratha war 1803-1805; Third Maratha War 1817-1819

Unit III

Territorial Expansion (phase II- 1818- 1858)

Structure

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Objectives

3.2 Annexation of Punjab

3.2.1 Rise of Sikh Power under Ranjit Singh

3.2.2 Treaty of Amritsar, 1809

3.2.3 Internal Condition of Sikh state after Ranjit Singh

3.2.4 First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-1846)

3.2.5 Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-1849) and Annexation

3.3 Annexation of Sindh

3.3.1 Situation of Sindh in early 19th century

3.3.2 British-Sindh Relations

3.3.3 Treaties with the Amirs

3.3.4 Effect of First Afghan War on Sindh

3.3.5 Policy of Sir Charles Napier

- 3.3.6 Battle of Miani, February 1843
- 3.3.7 Significance of Annexation of Sindh
- 3.4 Doctrine of Lapse
 - 3.4.1 Meaning of Doctrine of Lapse
 - 3.4.2 Background
 - 3.4.3 Application of Doctrine of Lapse
 - 3.4.4 Assessment of the Doctrine of Lapse
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Key Terms
- 3.7 Questions and Answers
 - 3.7.1 Short-Answer Questions
 - 3.7.2 Long-Answer Questions
- 3.8 Further Readings/Suggested Readings
- 3.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 Introduction

So far, as you have read in previous chapters, the British East India Company was trying hard to set its foot on Indian soil, and was fighting against the Indian powers like Bengal, Mysore and Maratha. By 1818 the East India Company had got victory over all of them and was emerging as paramount power in Indian sub-continent. However, this paramountcy was unfulfilled until it got victory over the Indian state of Punjab and Sindh which were lying on the North Western Frontier and blocking the British ambition to move towards the Central and West Asia. So, after their success over the Marathas, the British concentrated over this part of India, and by 1848 both the states were brought under the Company rule. Here the British followed the policy of war and diplomacy as instruments of expansion. Punjab, where Ranjit Singh had established a powerful independent state, was annexed after two wars fought between 1845 and 1849. Internal dissensions and conflicts among Sikh chiefs following the death of Ranjit Singh led to the decline of Sikh power. Sindh was a weak state, and a dependent state of Afghanistan,

became victim of power play among the British, the Punjab and Afghanistan and thus lost its independence.

An aggressive phase of British imperialism started with the coming of Lord Dalhousie as Governor-General of India. He adopted both the policy of war as well as the policy of diplomacy to annex Indian states into British Dominion. While he conquered Punjab by means of war, he annexed a number of states by following the Doctrine of Lapse by which Indian states were denied their age-old right of adoption. His policy left dissatisfied the Indian states who rose to revolt in 1857. In this sense, the period of Lord Dalhousie was stormy and epoch making.

3.1 Objectives

After reading this Unit you will be able to understand and analyse-

- The reasons behind further territorial expansion of the British East India Company towards the North West Frontier and annexation of Punjab
- The British policy in Sindh and its annexation, and
- The policy of annexation of Lord Dalhousie under his Doctrine of Lapse and its consequences on the Indian political system

3.2 Annexation of Punjab

You have read in the previous Unit about rise of the Sikh state during the second half of the eighteenth century in the North West part of India. The Sikh were converted into a military sect by their sixth Guru Har Gobind following the assassination of fifth Guru Arjun in 1606 by the order of the Mughal emperor Jahangir. Since then, the Mughal-Sikh struggle began which continued throughout the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century. Tenth Guru Govind Singh (1675-1708) was 'the real founder of the Sikh military power'. He established Sikh fraternity and brotherhood among the whole Sikh community by removing caste barriers through the communion. He started war against the hill states and local Muslim officers. He was murdered by an Afghan in 1708 at Nander in Deccan. His followers, the prominent being Banda Bahadur, continued their war against the rule of later Mughals. So, it can be said that, in the eighteenth century "from a religious

movement it became a separate religion, from a sect a distinct community and from a passive religious group a dynamic socio-political movement". Later on, the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh were able to establish a strong state in the north-western part of India.

3.2.1 Rise of Sikh Power Under Ranjit Singh

From 1740s to 1760s, following the invasions of Afghans under Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, the central authority in Delhi was disappearing. In such situation, the Sikh started reappearing in the plains of Punjab and they established their sway over several places including Lahore, Saharnpur, Attock, Kangra and Jammu. But they were not united under one leader. Sikhs were divided into twelve *misl*s each led by a chief. Among all of them the *Sukerchakia misl* emerged as the most powerful one. Its leader was Maha Singh. His son Ranjit Singh, born in 1780, became the leader of his *misl* in 1792. At that time Zaman Shah of Afghanistan had been invading on the Northern India. In 1799 Zaman Shah confirmed Ranjit Singh in the possession of Lahore as a mark of his assistance to the former during his Indian campaign. After that Ranjit Singh rapidly increased his power by defeating in 1801 the most powerful of the Sikh *misl*s, the Bhangis. In 1802 he also conquered Amritsar and in 1806 Ludhiana, but his eastward movement was stopped by the British. The British prevented Ranjit Singh from interfering in the states of Nabha, Patiala and Jind.

In the beginning of nineteenth century, the British in order to ward off the Afghan and French menace on western frontier made friendship with Ranjit Singh. In 1806 Ranjit Singh, the British government and Fateh Singh of Kapurthala made an alliance by which the British assured of non-interference in the Sikh territory provided they did not make friendship with enemy of the British. This alliance helped Ranjit Singh to establish his supremacy to the north of river Sutlej. But Ranjit Singh was not ready to forego his claim over states east of the Sutlej altogether. In the meantime, the French menace over India was reducing because of Napoleon's involvement in the Peninsular War in Europe. Moreover, the British had also made good relations with Turkey which was a strong state in the middle east under the Ottoman empire. So, the British had no impending threat on North West frontier. The British became

alarmed at the rise of Sikh power, and decided to deal with Ranjit Singh who had become ambitious to establish his sway over whole Punjab.

3.2.2 Treaty of Amritsar 1809

The British government started negotiations with Ranjit Singh. Lord Minto, the Governor-General, sent Sir Charles Metcalf to the court of Ranjit Singh, where Metcalf presented the British demand forcefully. At the same time the British government put pressure on the Sikh by dispatching a troop under Major-General David Ochterlony who advance to the Sutlej region. He had acquired a good knowledge over the Sikh affairs, and on the basis of his observation he prepared a report on the Sikh state. He had recommended that the Sikh chiefs should be brought under the British protection. He had also recommended to curtail the rising power of Ranjit Singh in the cis-Sutlej region. On 9 February 1809 Ochterlony declared that cis-Sutlej states (states east of the Sutlej) were under the British protection. Ranjit Singh, though was dissatisfied with the declaration, very diplomatically decided to make an alliance with the British. Thus, on 25 April 1809 the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between the two parties. By this treaty the British acknowledged Ranjit Singh`s dominance over 45 parganas north of the Sutlej. Ranjit Singh avowed not to cross the east of the Sutlej and the British would also do the same to west of Sutlej. In this way both the parties accepted river Sutlej to be the boundary of their dominions. This treaty established ‘perpetual amity’ between the two parties.

The Treaty of Amritsar remained in effect throughout the life of Ranjit Singh, though it restricted his ambition to become the master of the whole of Punjab. In the words of Percival Spear “he realized the power of the Company without the bitter experience of defeat”. But he took advantage of this sacrifice to increase his dominions in the north and west. He reorganized his army and started his north-west campaigns. In August 1809 Ranjit Singh occupied Kangra. In 1813 he captured Attock from the Afghans. By 1823 he captured all the Sikh states west of the Sutlej. In 1818, after repeated attempts he captured Multan and in 1819 he captured Kashmir in his third attempts. In 1823 he conquered Peshwar from the Afghans and placed it under an Afghan chief Yaar Muhammad. In this way till his death in June 1839 Ranjit Singh continued to hold dominant position in the North West of India. He remained a

faithful ally of the British and did not take advantage of their adverse situation either in the Nepal war (1814-1816) or in the Burmese war (1824-1826). He also did not align with the Marathas when they approached him in war against the British. But the British never respected the treaty of 1809 and encouraged his adversaries, such as the Wahabis, to rise against him. The British also did not allow Ranjit Singh to establish his domination on Sindh and Ferozpur, which was barely 40 miles away from Lahore, the capital of Sikh state. In 1835 the British captured Ferozpur. Ranjit Singh, like a practical politician, very well knew his limits of power and tacitly acknowledged the supremacy of the British in India.

3.2.3 Internal Condition of Sikh state after Ranjit Singh

After the death of Ranjit Singh the Sikh state fell into internal wars and chaos. His son and successor Kharak Singh and grandson Nao Nihal Singh (the de facto ruler) both died in November 1840. Mai Chand Kaur, widow of Nao Nihal Singh, claimed the throne for her expected son. She was supported by Sindhanwallia chiefs. But Sher Singh, another son of Ranjit Singh usurped the throne in January 1841. Chand Kaur was given a jagir. But her supporters fled to the shelter of the British. Two years of Sher Singh's rule was full of internal chaos. In 1843 the Sindhanwallia chiefs murdered Sher Singh, his son Pratap Singh and the Wazir Dhyhan Singh. The British hands in those assassinations were also suspected, as the chiefs had been getting the British protection. Hira Singh, son of Dhyhan Singh, with assistance from the army, placed Dalip Singh on the throne. His mother Rani Jindhan Kaur or Jindan (who was wife of Ranjit Singh) was made the regent, as Dalip Singh was a minor. Hira Singh himself became the Wazir. But there was no peace in the country as both Rani Jindan and Hira Singh were not in good terms. In December 1844 Hira Singh was killed and the power came directly in the hands of Jawahar Singh, the brother of Rani Jindhan, and Lal Singh, a favourite of the Rani. In September 1845 Lal Singh got killed Jawahar Singh and himself became the Wazir. But the internal conflicts continued unabated. The result was that finally the Khalsa Army (means army of the Sikh Community) became the most powerful because every usurper had some sorts of army backing in getting the power. The power of Khalsa army increased so

much so that the Rani and other chiefs were ready to seek British help to crush the power of their own army.

3.2.4 First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-1846)

In this way a favourable condition was created for the British to interfere in the Punjab. In fact, the British had already a design to occupy the Punjab during the First Afghan War. It was necessary for the British to occupy Punjab in order to expand the British Empire in the North West frontier. So, after the death of Ranjit Singh they started taking interest in the matter of Punjab but due to their debacle in the Afghan war the British could not take proactive part in Punjab. However, they were successful in creating conflict between the Sikh and Dogra chiefs.

The new Governor General Lord Ellenborough had already begun plan to attack on Punjab. Sind had been occupied in 1843, followed by the occupation of Kaithal, a Sikh state. The British army was being concentrated in Karnal and Ferozpur. Lord Hardinge, the next Governor General, continued this policy by placing about forty thousand British force and 94 artilleries on the Punjab frontier. The British navy in Bombay was in readiness to cross the Sutlej. Major Broadfoot, the British representative in Punjab, was engaged in creating internal dissensions. He encouraged the Sikh chiefs for war so that the British could get right opportunity to interfere and declare war on Punjab. The Khalsa army was thus made to believe that the British were ready to attack on Punjab. On the other hand, the insulting and provocative behaviour of the British officers, most particularly Broadfoot, had annoyed the Lahore Durbar. On 13 December 1845 the Khalsa army crossed the Sutlej, but the British treated this act as violation of the treaty of 1809, and declared war on Punjab. This was the beginning of the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46).

The British justification for war was not based on sufficient grounds as the Sikh chiefs were not hostile to the British till the crossing of the Sutlej. Even several British observers also believed that the Sikh had not violated the treaty. Campbell writes in his Memoirs that “it is recorded in the annals of history that the Sikh army invaded British territory in pursuance of a determination to attack us. And most people will be very much surprised to hear that they did nothing of the kind. They made no attack on our outlying cantonments, nor set foot in our territory. What they did was to cross the river

and to entrench themselves in their own territory”. In fact, it was the first example of `British invasion of the independent kingdom of the Punjab`. Though the Sikh army was defeated in the war, they were, as V.A.Smith writes, “the bravest and steadiest enemy ever encountered in India by a British army”. Most particularly the battle of Sobraon (10 February 1846), which was the last battle, “proved to be the hardest fought battle in the history of British India”. The Khalsa army was defeated not because of the weakness of the army, but because of treachery of their big Sikh chiefs and generals (such as Lal Singh and Tej Singh) who wanted the defeat of their own army to fulfil their greed. Firozpur could not be occupied from the British because of the treachery of Lal Singh who informed every movement of his own army to the British general Nicholson. They even stopped supplying provisions to the Sikh army and destroyed the bridge over the Sutlej so that the defeated Sikh army could not return to their homes. Gulab Singh, the Dogra chief of Jammu, had made a secret alliance with the British in 1846 by which he agreed to disband the Sikh army after its defeat. For this service Gulab Singh was to receive Kashmir.

Results

The British occupied Lahore on 20 February 1846. On 1 march 1846 the Treaty of Lahore was signed. The British did not annex the Punjab to British dominion, but Maharaj Dalip Singh was recognized the ruler of Punjab, Rani Jindhan as the Regent, and Lal Singh as the Chief Minister of the state. The Maharaja renounced his claim over the whole territory south of the Sutlej and between the Sutlej and the Vyas. The war indemnity was fixed at 1.5 crores but the Maharaja could pay only half a crore. So, to compensate the balance payment Kashmir was sold to Gulab Singh in one crore. The Sikh army was reduced to 12,000 cavalries and 25 battalions of infantry. All those guns which the Sikh had used against the British were surrendered to the latter. The British army was allowed to pass through Punjab. The Maharaja agreed not to employ any European subject without prior permission of the British government. The British agreed not to interfere in the internal matters of Punjab but a British troop was placed in Punjab for the protection of the Maharaja. Henry Lawrence was appointed as the British Resident at Lahore.

The Treaty of Lahore thus had left the state of Punjab at the weakest position. Its boundary had been reduced and army weakened. Several Sikh chiefs were unhappy with the transfer of Kashmir to Gulab Singh. Lal Singh fomented a revolt in Kashmir but it was suppressed and he was removed from the post of Chief Minister. In December 1846 the British made the Treaty of Bhairawal with the Lahore Durbar. By this treaty an eight- members Council of Regency under the guidance of British Resident was formed. A permanent British force was placed at Lahore at the expense of the Lahore Durbar and Rani Jindhan was pensioned off. In this way the administration of Punjab came under the control of the pro-British Council of Regency. Lord Hardinge did not annex the Punjab due to several political reasons but it had been crippled and made dependent upon the British government. The task of annexation was completed by Lord Dalhousie, the next Governor General who came to India in 1848.

3.2.5 Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-1849) and Annexation

Lord Dalhousie was an expansionist and did not lose any chance to annex an India state on some ground or the other. The Sikhs were dissatisfied with the British domination in their state. They were unhappy with the reforms introduced in Punjab in 1847-48. They had lost their jobs because of disbanding of Khalsa army. Further they also did not like concessions being given to the Muslims in Punjab. Amidst the environment of discontent, the banner of revolt was raised by Mul Raj, the Governor of Multan. He had become the Governor in 1844 but was continuously under pressure of payments in various forms to the British as well as the Lahore Durbar. In disgust he resigned in April 1848. He surrendered the fort of Multan to the new Governor Khan Singh. Two British officers, Angew and Anderson, were sent with him to assist him in administration. Following this, Mul Raj revolted on 20 April 1848 and the two British officers were murdered. The revolt also spread to other parts of Punjab. The Rani Jindhan was also held responsible for the revolt in Multan and so she was deported out of Punjab. According to the Resident Currie the Rani had become “the rallying point of the rebellion”. In August 1848 Chhatra Singh, the governor of Hazara, and his son Sher Singh also revolted. This was the beginning of the Second Sikh War (1848-49).

The British operations against the Sikhs began after several months. In October 1848 Lord Dalhousie declared that “unwarned by precedents, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my word, Sirs, they shall have it with a vengeance”. But this declaration was misleading as the Lahore Durbar was still faithful to the British. Even the British generals were confused at the declaration as they did not know against whom they had to fight. It is blamed upon the British government that it allowed deliberately the revolt to spread so that a genuine ground for the war could be prepared. The Lahore Durbar was forced to be recognized as enemy.

Results

The British army was fully involved in the war in October 1848. Some of the very serious engagements took place at Ramnagar, Multan, and Chillianwala. The decisive battle took place at Gujarat on the bank of Chenab in February 1849. The Sikhs were badly defeated. All powerful Sikh chiefs surrendered by March 1849. On 29 March 1849 Lord Dalhousie announced the annexation of Punjab in the British Empire of India. Maharaj Dalip was pensioned off and sent to England along with his mother Rani Jindhan.

Lord Dalhousie was not at all in favour of re-instating old ruler on Punjab, rather he wanted ‘subjection of the Sikh people.’ He justified his act saying that, ‘while deeply sensible of the responsibility I have assumed, I have an undoubting conviction of the expediency of the justice and of the necessity of my act.’ For him it was his duty to the state. But his act has been criticised in the way that the British Government was also a party in the treaty with Punjab, by which it was government’s responsibility to help the Punjab administration in suppression of revolt. But Lord Dalhousie deliberately allowed the flame of revolt to spread, and prepare ground for annexation. According to Evans Bell, the author of Annexation of the Punjab, it was ‘a violent breach of trust.’

Although the act of Lord Dalhousie was criticized even by some British writers, it fulfilled the British ambition of reaching out the frontier of British Empire to its natural frontier in the North West, but at the cost of heavy burden of expenditure. The administration of Punjab was handed over to a Board of three members. Later on, the Board was abolished, and its administration was handed over to John Lawrence as the its Chief

Commissioner. The Punjab was divided into four provinces, and they were placed under commissioners. The Khalsa Army, the army of the state of Punjab was disbanded. The government tried to disarm the Sikh. System of administration, from apex to lower level was established on the basis of police force. It is theorised that Dalhousie's decision of annexation and his administration in Punjab was successful from the colonial point of view because during the revolt of 1857, which occurred immediately after his departure from India, this state remained peaceful in comparison to other states which were also annexed by Dalhousie on other grounds.

Among the British circle, there were a number of admirers of Lord Dalhousie who praised his great work of annexation of Punjab. For example, Duke of Argyll and Marshman defended the annexation on the ground that it was forced on Dalhousie by the sheer force of circumstance. They put forward their arguments that the Sikhs had violated the obligations as had been reached upon by the treaties of Lahore and articles of agreement at Bhairawal. Lord Dalhousie himself said that 'the Sikhs had broken the peace and made war on the British.' The Sikhs sardars had plunged themselves into rebellion against the British. Lord Dalhousie was sure that the rebellion was not against the Maharaja but against the British. They wanted to release the minor Maharaja from the hands of the British. So, Dalhousie was forced to take strong action.

However, several British statesmen held the view that Dalhousie's policy was "unprincipled and unjustifiable." The British could have easily crushed revolt of the Diwan Mulraj. But Dalhousie deliberately delayed his action "to arouse a high-spirited people to take up arms against the British and thus furnish him with a fair excuse for annexing the whole dominion." Dalhousie, later on, refuted this allegation on the ground that it was not feasible owing to forces of season and difficulties of communication.

But, annexation of Punjab cannot be justified on such grounds. Major Evan Bell was very critical of Dalhousie's action in this war. He writes that Dalhousie's annexation of Punjab was a violent breach of trust. Dalhousie had violated the treatise with Sikhs and failed to fulfil his duty in protection of Maharaja or the state of Punjab according to them. Dalhousie had no intention of any such matter. So, his action in Punjab has been called as 'the Burglary of the Punjab.'

Check Your Progress I

1. What were the Sikh misls?
2. What were terms of Treaty of Amritsar, 1809?
3. Who was Dalip Singh?
4. What were results of First Anglo-Sikh War?
5. Who revolted before the Second Anglo-Sikh War?
6. When was Punjab formally annexed?

3.3 Annexation of Sindh

Sindh was annexed during the time of Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General of India from 1842-1844. It was a sheer act of British imperialism motivated by ambition to spread their influence in Central Asia. Sindh was annexed at the time when British-Sikh relations were at lowest ebb. In fact, Sindh was annexed before the final annexation of Punjab by Lord Dalhousie. It was one of the most criticised victories of the British in India.

3.3.1 Situation of Sindh in early 19th century

Sindh was nominally part of Afghanistan, but actually ruled of a number of Baluch Amirs (means chiefs) of Talpura. Some of its parts were on the western coastal region. Karachi was its main port city of commercial importance. River Sindh or Indus flowed through it in the Arabian Sea. Forts of Shikarpur and Gakkhar not only protected navigation on the Indus, but were vital also for security and commerce towards the west. River Indus could serve as a link between Arabian Sea and Central Asia through upper Punjab. On the north of Sindh was strong and independent state of Punjab under Ranjit Singh. British had eyes both on Sindh River as well as on the Punjab after they had got control over the northern India in early nineteenth century.

As it was mentioned, Sindh was ruled by a number of Amirs. But among them three were the main- first in the upper Sindh at Khairpur, second in the lower Sindh at Hyderabad, and the third at Mirpur. There was no central authority to control them, so they behaved like independent rulers. Neither had they any standing army. So, they became easy target both for the British and the Punjab.

3.3.2 British-Sindh Relations

The British had well-understood the importance of Sindh since their arrival. They had established their factories in Sindh in the seventeenth century after getting *firman* from the Mughal king. However, after the rise of France under Napoleon in the beginning of nineteenth century the British were scared in Asia. Both England and France were rival states and constantly at wars. The British were able to diminish the power of French in India by the end of eighteenth century. But in the changing international situation the British became concerned with protection of her Indian colony on all sides. Thus, suddenly for them importance of Sindh reappeared. Moreover, after successful victory over the Marathas, only two big states had remained out of British direct control; they were Sindh and Punjab.

Out of such urgency, the British East India Company made a treaty with the Amirs of Sindh in 1809. By this, the Amirs agreed not to allow the French to settle in their territories. Later on, such restrictions were imposed on other Europeans and Americans.

By the time, Ranjit Singh, after getting his foot firmly in Punjab, also became interested to win Sindh. In 1823-25 he had made preparations for his ambitious project, but the British would not allow him to do that. Ranjit Singh wanted to have a share of Sindh by its partition between the two. But British Governor General William Bentick did not agree even for this. Ranjit Singh, who had already made a treaty of friendship with the British, did not venture ahead.

But for the British the real threat at that time was coming from the side of the Russians. French menace was over, but now the Russian advance in Central Asia was creating another threat to balance of power. Both the powers had strained relations in Europe. Britain was trying to stop Russian advance in the Balkan and Turkish territories. So, Russia also intended to threat British's Indian colony by interfering in Afghanistan. In this situation strategic importance of Sindh suddenly increased because any possible Russian advance could be only through 'Bolan Pass' which was in the hands of Amirs of Sindh.

So, such impending crisis led the British to establish better relations and explore Sindh in a new way. In 1831 Sir Alexander Burnes, a Scottish explorer and diplomat, travelled in disguise through the valley of Indus.

Ostensibly, he was going to present horses from King William IV to Maharaja Ranjit Singh by river route of Sindh; but in fact, his intention was to survey route through Kabul to Bukhara via Punjab. Burnes' travel memoir known as 'Travels into Bokhara' is an interesting piece of travel account on the then Central Asian politics and Great Game. He visited several places in Sindh, such as Thatta, Hyderabad, Bukkur, and Shujabad. Thus, Sindh was exposed and suddenly it became a vulnerable place. He met Ranjit Singh in Lahore. The people of Sindh were very much scared of Burnes visit. Someone commented at that time, 'the mischief is done, you have seen our country.' And a Sindhi said, 'Sindh is now gone, since the English have seen the river, which is the high road to its conquest.' Those words proved to be true soon.

3.3.3 Treaties with the Amirs of Sindh

After Burnes survey the British became eager to make commercial treaties with Amirs. British Resident of Kachchha Lieutenant Colonel Pottinger was directed to contact the Amirs. In the beginning they were reluctant fearing English political involvement in Sindh, but in the end in April 1832 Amirs of Hyderabad and Khairpur had to agree for a treaty related to transport of goods and merchandise of traders of India through the Indus river and roads of Sindh on certain conditions that, no person shall bring any description of military stores by the river Indus and roads; that no armed vessel or boats shall come by the river Indus; and that no English merchant shall be allowed to settle in Sindh.

Even if it was a commercial treaty, the British continue to increase their influence in Sindh and by a tripartite treaty (1838) among the British, Afghanistan and Punjab, the British forbade both Shah Shuja of Afghanistan and Ranjit Singh of Punjab to stay away from Sindh. In this way Ranjit Singh's ambition to capture Sindh was dooming. On the other hand, the British influence was increasing. In April 1838 previous treaty was revised and Amirs were made agree to have a British resident in Hyderabad who could move anywhere in Sindh and could keep some soldiers with him. The new treaty was dangerous for Sindh, as it is commented, 'it placed a loaded shell in the palace of Amirs to explode at the pleasure of the Governor-General.'

At that time British were very much concerned with the Persian advance (supported by the Russians) in Herat. This step had alarmed both Afghanistan

and the British. Afghanistan was also facing internal problems of succession in which British anticipated intervention. So, in 1838 the British clearly said to the Amirs of Sindh about impossibility of obeying the treaty of 1832 in true spirit, and that armies both of the British and Shah Shuja might pass through Sindh to Afghanistan. Ranjit Singh had denied passage of British army through Punjab. The Amirs were also asked to pay a sum of rupees twenty-five lakhs to Shah Shuja.

In December 1838 the Amir of Khairpur was compelled by a treaty to accept British supremacy; to help British with his army and by other means; and to surrender fort of Bukkhar to the British. When Amir of Hyderabad objected to this treaty, he was attacked and the British occupied Karachi. The Amir of Hyderabad was also compelled to accept a treaty in March 1839 by which Karachi was given to the British; a subsidiary British troop of five hundred was to remain on the boundary of the Amir; and Amir was to pay rupees three lakh per year for that. In 1841, a similar treaty was also finalised with the Amir of Mirpur.

In fact, Governor-General Lord Auckland had imposed arbitrary treaties over the Amirs of Sindh. Result of those treaties was that the Amirs of Sindh came under the British control and they lost their freedom.

3.3.4 Effect of First Afghan War on Sindh

The British fought first Afghan war from 1839 to 1842. At that time the British attention was centred on the events happening on the north west frontier. Growing Russian influence in Central Asia and Persian advance towards Afghanistan had alarmed the British. In 1837 Muhammad Shah of Persia, under the influence of Russia, had attacked on Herat, a province of western Afghanistan. It had made the British north west frontier vulnerable. But due to British strong reaction Persia left Herat in 1838. However, the British wanted a secured position in Afghanistan, for that reason they started interfering in its internal matters. By this British intended to place Shah Shuja on the throne of Afghanistan in opposition to Dost Muhammad who was at that time ruler of Afghanistan and supposed to be anti-British. The British made a tripartite treaty in 1838 combining the three, that is Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh, and the British. By this treaty Ranjit Singh's claim over Peshawar was accepted; in return Ranjit Singh agreed to help Shah Shuja with his 5000

soldiers in Peshawar. It was also agreed that neither Shah Shuja nor Ranjit Singh would have any claim over Sindh.

When the war started between the British and Afghanistan in 1839, Sindh also became one of the main centres of war operation. Amirs of Sindh helped the British on this occasion. But as soon as the war was over the British made plan for conquest of Sindh. The significance of Sindh was assessed during the war, and even after. So, R. C. Majumdar has written that 'the conquest of Sindh was not merely a sequence but a consequence of the Afghan war.' Governor-General Lord Auckland had miserably failed to complete the Afghan campaign even after getting victory over it, for that he had to go back, and was replaced by Lord Ellenborough. Elphinstone also commented that 'it was the tail of the Afghan storm.'

3.3.5 Policy of Sir Charles Napier

The new Governor-General was eager to conquer Sindh. So, he sent Sir Charles Napier to Sindh with full military and political power. He replaced Major James Outram in Hyderabad. Napier was a veteran British soldier who had fought against Napoleon of France in his peninsular war. At that time, he was a Major General of the British Indian army in the Bombay Presidency. Although the Amirs had been loyal to the British during the Afghan war, the British laid charges of disaffection and hostility upon them and asked Napier to put down the rebels. Accordingly, Napier demanded from them right to mint coins; coals for British ships in Indus River; and cessation of Karachi, Thatta, Bakkar and many other places to the British. In fact, Napier was ready to adopt all means and methods, be they mischievous, to annex Sindh.

Napier showed his highhandedness in internal matters of Sindh and interfered in the succession of Khairpur. Amir of Khairpur Rustam Khan had declared Mir Muhammad his successor, but Napier disrespected his choice and accepted Ali Murad the successor instead. At the same time, Napier intended to revise old treaties by imposing new ones on the Amirs. He prepared fresh treaty and asked all the Amirs to come to Khairpur and accept the treaty by 20 January 1843. Outram had arranged a meeting of Amirs at Khairpur. But Napier was in too much haste, and so he attacked on Khairpur before Amirs could take any decision, and destroyed the fortress of Imangarh. However, a number of Amirs signed the treaty with the persuasion of Outram. Some other

Amirs also wanted to sign the treaty two days later, but they were sent back by Napier. Outram tried to solve the issue, but Napier did not permit him, and immediately he marched towards Hyderabad. In fact, Napier had made up his mind to annex Sindh, so he did not allow any further negotiation.

3.3.6 Battle of Miani, February 1843

Amirs were too much annoyed at the highhandedness of Napier in the matter of Sindh. He was regularly humiliating them. This became the reason for revolt of the Amirs. The Baloch Amirs attacked on the residence of Outram. He managed to escape. This incident became the main ground for war against Sindh. Napier started war against Amirs of Sindh. On 17 February 1843 Napier defeated the Baluch in the battle of Miani. The Baluch army, roughly 8000, was led by Mir Nasir Khan Talpur. They were loosely organised. While the British army was armed with muskets and artillery, the Baluch army was armed mostly with muskets, spears and swords. It was a fierce battle in which the Baluch were defeated. Napier occupied Hyderabad. In another battle at Dabo on 27 March 1843 Napier defeated Amir Sher Muhammad of Mirpur. Following this, Amirs of Sindh surrendered. Napier sent a short message of victory, "Peccavi", to Governor-General Lord Ellenborough. It's meaning was 'I have Sindh.' Sher Muhammad tried once again to recapture Sindh but he was again defeated in June 1843. It was the conclusion of Anglo-Sindh war. In August 1843 Sindh was formally annexed to the British Empire.

3.3.7 Significance of Annexation of Sindh

Annexation of Sindh was one of the most criticised episodes in Indian history. British writers and statesmen, including the Court of Directors, also criticised the mode of behaviour of Charles Napier and operation in Sindh. It presents a picture of injustice to the Amirs. The main reason of war, as told by Napier, was revolt of the Baluch and their attack on Outram; however, Outram himself has said that the Amirs were not responsible for the revolt, and rather they tried to defend him. Outram had warned Napier not to move towards Hyderabad, otherwise Amirs would not be able to stop Baluch from revolting. In this way, the main reason of the war was Napier's advance towards Hyderabad, because he had taken such step even after the signing of treaty by Amirs. So, their revolt was justified.

It was a sheer example of British imperialism and arrogance of Charles Napier. It was 'not necessitated by circumstances' rather it was an act of aggression. The Sindh episode was full of immorality on the part of British administration. The Court of Directors also commented on it and said that it was 'unjust and impolite and inconsistent with the true interests and honour of the Indian Government.' But the Directors had no desire to revoke it. After all it had advanced British dominion towards the north-west frontier and made its position secured in case of any Russian advance. Napier himself thought that the British had no right to seize Sindh. He further wrote, 'yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality it will be.' Napier received a handsome reward for this useful victory. Outram was also rewarded but he donated the prize money for charity.

Though many criticised the annexation on moral ground, it was seen as political expediency. Governor-General Lord Ellenborough had to face criticism from all sides, and he was recalled in June 1844. So, Dodwell has commented that 'Ellenborough, like Wellesley, was more concerned to consolidate and strengthen the position of the East India Company than to make benevolent gestures in the idle hope that others would follow so futile an example.' The British were working to get immediate advantage.

3.4 Doctrine of Lapse

British had adopted various policies to establish their political supremacy and expansion of territories in India. You have read about policy of subsidiary alliance of Lord Wellesley, by which Indian princes were made subordinate to the East India Company. The British also declared war against such states which did not follow British instructions. Doctrine of Lapse was another form of instrument of expansion. So, let us understand first its meaning.

3.4.1 Meaning of Doctrine of Lapse

It was the principle adopted for annexation of Indian states on the ground of absence of an heir in the subordinate states, mostly Hindu states. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India from 1848 to 1856 applied this principle with utmost cause of expansion of British Empire. By this principle, a ruler of such Indian state as was subordinate to the British East India

Company and had no son to succeed him was denied to adopt a child who should succeed to throne after his death. It was based on the view that such a ruler had got right to continue his rule on the basis of an alliance reached upon between the British East India Company and the Indian state. So, such Indian ruler could rule only up to the pleasure of the paramount power, means the British. Here, meaning of lapse was that if there was absence of a rightful ruler in such state, the right to rule would come to an end, or lapse, and it would come back to the paramount power. In this way, the British government kept reserved this right to its pleasure. Lord Dalhousie did not allow to fill the absence by adoption of a child which was an age-old practice in case of the Hindus.

3.4.2 Background

The Doctrine of Lapse was related to the practice of adoption which had been an acceptable social practice in Hindu family for long time. A Hindu parents used to adopt a child in case they were issueless, and such an adopted son inherited the property of his parents or throne, in case of a royal family. No question was raised on this social practice. In the beginning the British also accepted this practice in full. In 1825 the British government had declared that 'sovereign princes in their own right have by Hindu law, a right to adopt, and that the British government is bound to acknowledge the adoption.' However, later on the British government started changing its stand on this matter. It was said that the princes of subordinate states should get prior permission from the British government before any adoption. In 1831 the British government in Bombay also claimed that it had right to accept or reject any such request for adoption as came from the Indian princes. It is important to note here that the meaning of subordinate state was that such a state which had signed a subsidiary alliance with the British and according to the terms of the alliance had placed his state under the protection of the British.

The British stand on this question had not been uniform all the time. It depended on the circumstances and personal character of the Governor-Generals. Many times, they accepted right of adoption of the Indian princes, but at other occasions they denied the same right. The British government wanted that a ruler should adopt a child for succession during his lifetime, if required. But sometimes, the British did not follow this rule strictly and

accepted an adopted child for succession even after the death of a ruler. In 1827 Daulat Rao Sindhia died without an heir, but the British government accepted the adopted child by his widow. At that time such instances were appearing frequently, and it is said that between 1826 and 1848 the British government acknowledged for succession at least fifteen adopted sons of different princes.

On the other hand, there are several examples when the British government did not accept right of adoption. In 1835 Ramchandra Rao, the ruler of Jhansi had adopted a child before his death without the British permission. After his death, the British government did not recognise this adoption and in his place acknowledged Raghunath Rao the ruler, who was uncle of the deceased ruler. Rejection of the right of adoption did not mean the annexation of such state, which happened in the later period, during the time of Lord Dalhousie. But before Lord Dalhousie, too, annexation of certain states took place over this question. In 1832 Govindrao II, ruler of Jalaun (a Maratha princely state in present U.P.) was allowed to adopt a child but in 1840 when that child died Lord Ellenborough did not allow to adopt a child second time and Jalaun was annexed. In Kolaba, which was a subordinate state, the ruler was not allowed to adopt a child, and it was annexed after his death. State of Mandavi was annexed in the same way.

It is clear that by that time the British government had not adopted a definite policy on the matter of adoption by the Indian princes. Many times, the matter was discussed sincerely but to no avail. It was during the time of Lord Dalhousie this policy took a definite shape.

3.4.3 Application of Doctrine of Lapse

Lord Dalhousie came to India as Governor-General in 1848. Before coming to India, he had a brilliant career as a politician and parliamentarian in England. He was elected to British House of Commons in 1837 at an early age. He had impressed statesmen of his time by his speeches in Parliament. In 1843 he became Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and in 1845 became its President. In January 1848 he was given the responsibility of the office of Governor-General of India at the age of 35. On the one hand Dalhousie was regarded as a moderniser of India's infrastructure, on the other hand he was a die-hard imperialist who wanted to expand British dominion in Indian sub-

continent far and wide. For that, he adopted all methods possible for annexation of Indian states. Thus, he annexed Indian states on various pretexts such as on the charges of mismanagement and mal-administration in subordinate states; by abolition of pensions and titles; by means of direct war against them; or by adoption of Doctrine of lapse.

You have learnt about the meaning of the Doctrine of Lapse. It was related to the matter of adoption of a child by subordinate Indian princes in the situation of his being issueless. And you have also seen how, before Lord Dalhousie, other governors-generals had adopted different types of policies in this matter. But Dalhousie set definite rules in this matter. He categorised Indian Princely states in three groups. First, those states which had been established directly or indirectly with the help of the British; second, those states which were subordinate to the British; and third, those states which were independent. After that Dalhousie decided that princes of the first group of states would not be given right of adoption. The princes of subordinate states were required to get prior permission of the British government for adoption, which could be accepted or denied. Independent rulers were free to adopt a child. It was his arbitrary categorisation of rules, motivated purely by expansionist design.

On the ground of the Doctrine of Lapse Dalhousie annexed a number of Indian States to British dominion. Those states were- Satara (1848), Jaitpur (1849), Sambhalpur (1849), Baghat (1850), Udaipur (1852), Jhansi (1853), and Nagpur (1854).

Satara (near Poona) was ruled by a descendant of the Shivaji. This state was created by the British after the end of third Anglo-Maratha War in 1818. At the time of Dalhousie its ruler was Shahji who died without leaving a natural heir in 1848. The adoption of a son before his death was not accepted, and Satara was annexed.

Jaitpur was a state in Bundelkhand. It became a British protectorate in 1807. Its last ruler, Khet Singh died without an heir, after which this state was annexed by Lord Dalhousie on the ground of Doctrine of Lapse.

Sambhalpur was a state in Odisha. It was occupied by the Maratha in 1800, but after the end of Anglo-Maratha war, Sambhalpur was restored to its previous ruler Jayant Singh, with limited authority. It became a British

protectorate, and after the death of its ruler without an heir, it was annexed in 1849.

Baghat, a small state in present Himachal Pradesh, was annexed after the death of Rana Bije Singh who had no direct heir to succeed. However, it was restored in 1861 to Ummed Singh who had appealed for this cause in the Court of Directors. He died soon, and was succeeded by his minor son Dalip Singh.

Udaipur was Princely state in present Raigarh district of Chhatisgarh. It became a British protectorate in 1818, but it was annexed in 1852. However, in 1860 Udaipur was restored to its lawful successor due to his service to the British empire during the mutiny.

Annexation of Jhansi and Nagpur had created severe discontent and directly influenced the revolt of 1857. Jhansi, in Bundelkhand, was a Maratha principality under Peshwa who had ceded it to the British in 1804. The British raised it as a Princely State, with hereditary succession. In November 1853 Gangadhar Rao, the Raja of Jhansi died. But just before his death Gangadhar Rao, who had married Lakshmi Bai, adopted a son of a near relative. The adopted son was named Damodar Rao. Before his death the Raja had appealed to the British government that Jhansi should be given to his widow for her lifetime. But Lord Dalhousie neither did accept the adoption nor Lakshmi Bai's claim over the throne and the Jhansi state was annexed. She was given a pension. Her appeal to the highest authority was also rejected. Later on, Lakshmi Bai fought against the British in the revolt of 1857.

Nagpur was under the Bhonsle (Maratha) dynasty. After the third Anglo-Maratha War, 1818, it became a Princely State. In 1853, its ruler Raghoji III died without an heir. His widow adopted a child, and claimed for the throne, but Lord Dalhousie rejected the demand and applied Doctrine of Lapse. The Nagpur state was annexed in 1854.

So, we find that in the matter of adoption Lord Dalhousie did not entertain old tradition of Indian states and went on rejecting it as and when the chance came. It clearly shows that he was functioning with sheer motive of expansion of British Dominion in India.

3.4.4 Assessment of the Doctrine of Lapse

It is a highly criticised issue among the Indian scholars who do not treat categorisation of states logical, and thereby the annexation. Even many British writers have also criticised it and called it 'law of the strongest.' It is wrong to say that the British created any state, directly or indirectly, in India. Every state was, in some form or the other, existing before the British. Legally, the Mughal Emperor was the emperor of India till 1858, when the British deposed him. Even the British, in the beginning, also accepted his supremacy in India, and got royal declarations or firmans from the Mughal Emperor. So, it is wrong to say that some states were under the British. The British became the paramount power only by force. There was no legal or moral sanction behind it. Even, the Court of Directors did not accept Dalhousie's decision at all occasions. He had treated Karauli as a dependent state and denied adoption there. But the Directors did not support this view and allowed adoption. So, it could not be annexed.

The right of adoption was an age-old practice, and by rejecting it the British had uprooted a social practice, supported by religious sanction. No previous rulers had questioned this right before the British. Even the British did not insert any such provision on adoption at the time of an alliance with the Indian states. Neither was any law enacted on it later on. So, the British had no legal or moral right to ban the right of adoption. It was done only with an imperialist design of Lord Dalhousie.

Lord Dalhousie had wrongly calculated the consequences to appear following the Doctrine of Lapse. After the annexation of Nagpur, Jhansi and Awadh (annexed in 1856 on the charge of mal-administration) he had commented that 'not a murmur was heard beyond the palace walls.' But it was mis-judgement of Dalhousie. All the three states mentioned above were simmering with discontent following their annexations. Discontent was not only among the ruling circles of previous dynasties, but people in general were dissatisfied with British policies. A powerful revolt broke out in 1857, just after the departure of Lord Dalhousie from India, and it was very powerful in those states. Dalhousie had annexed Indian states as security and aggrandisement of the British Empire, but it was proved a mistake. So, after the end of revolt, the British government changed the administrative set up in India, and adopted a different policy. One of them was that the British acknowledged the right of

adoption by the Indian princes. This step itself refuted Dalhousie's belief that it was justified and pragmatic.

Check Your Progress II

1. How was the political situation in Sindh in 19th century?
2. What was the tripartite treaty of 1838?
3. Who was Charles Napier? What was his policy in Sindh?
4. What was the significance of Battle of Miani?
5. What was Doctrine of Lapse?
6. Name the states annexed under Doctrine of Lapse.

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

As you have seen, in this unit the political events discussed are mainly those which happened after the end of the Maratha war in 1818. This was a milestone in the history of British expansion. After the victory over Maratha, the British concentrated their attention mostly on the north-western frontier where a strong Sikh state was existing. Another was a small state, Sindh. Both had strategical significance. Punjab had blocked further expansion of the British towards the north and west; whereas Sindh was becoming vulnerable due to its proximity to Indian Ocean, and its relations with Afghanistan. During that time, Russian interest in Central Asia was posing a big threat to the British colony in India. Due to all such reasons the British started taking interest in both the states, and finally they were annexed. Punjab fought bravely, but it was at that time a divided house, so the British took advantage of this, and after two successive wars, Punjab was annexed. In the case of Sindh, this weak and small state fell prey to British greed for expansion. Some other states in central and eastern India were annexed by Lord Dalhousie on the ground of a political instrument which was termed as Doctrine of Lapse. By its application, the British government disallowed Indian princes to exercise their age-old right of rightful adoption.

It can be said that, Lord Dalhousie was a die-hard expansionist who did not loose any minor chance to annex Indian states. He did marvellous duty for the British Empire, but he had left Indian ruling class disappointed. The result was

that the British had to face a powerful rebellion soon after his departure from India, for which policies of Lord Dalhousie are also held responsible.

3.6 Key Terms

Misls- twelve separate groups of Sikh community

Cis-Sutlej – on this side, means southern side of Sutlej

Amir- Chief of Sindh

Khalsa Army- Army of the Sikh state

Firman – The Royal declaration by the Mughal Emperor often granting some kind

of privileges to an individual or a group such as East India Company

paramount power- unchallenged authority, superior to all others

Doctrine of Lapse- the principle on which right of adoption by subordinate

Indian states were denied and thereby they were annexed

3.7 Questions and Answers

3.7.1 Short-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the background and terms of Treaty of Amritsar, 1809.
2. Discuss the background and results of First Anglo-Sikh War.
3. Discuss the British-Sindh relations before its annexation.
4. Discuss the effects of Afghan war on Sindh.
5. Discuss the policy of Charles Napier in Sindh.
6. What were the results of annexation of Sindh.
7. Write a short note on the Doctrine of Lapse.

3.7.2 Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the circumstances leading to annexation of Punjab.
2. Discuss the background and significance of annexation of Sindh.
3. What do mean by the Doctrine of Lapse? Discuss its application by Lord Dalhousie on Indian states.

3.8 Further Readings/Suggested Readings

A. C. Banerjee, Anglo-Sikh Relations

Evans Bell, Annexation of the Punjab

H. H. Dodwell (Ed), Cambridge History of India, Vol V & VI

Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, 2 Vols.

K. S. Narang and H. R. Gupta, History of the Punjab 1500-1858

N. K. Sinha, The Rise of Sikh Power

P. E. Roberts, History of British India

Percival Spear, A History of India

V. A. Smith, The Oxford History of India

W. W. Hunter, The Marquis of Dalhousie

3.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

Answers to Check Your progress I-

1. Answer, see 3.2.1; 2. Answer, see 3.2.2; 3. Answer, see 3.2.3; 4. Answer, see 3.2.4; 5. Answer, see 3.2.5. 6. Answer, See 3.2.5

Answers to Check Your Progress II-

1. Answer, see 3.3.1; 2. Answer, see 3.3.3; 3. Answer, see 3.3.5; 4. Answer, see 3.3.6; 5. Answer, see 3.4.1; 6. Answer, see 3.4.3.

Unit IV

Revolt of 1857

Structure

4.0 Introduction

4.1 Objectives

4.2 Causes of the Revolt

4.3 Nature and Characteristics

4.3.1 Significance

4.4 Transition from Company to Crown

4.4.1 Government of India Act, 1858- Background

4.4.2 Enactment of Act of 1858 and its Main Provisions

4.4.3 Significance

4.5 Let Us Sum Up

4.6 Key Terms

4.7 Suggested Readings

- 4.8 Questions and Answers
 - 4.8.1 Short-answer Questions
 - 4.8.2 Long-answer Questions
- 4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 Introduction

Revolt of 1857 was first major challenge to the East India Company's rule in India. Perhaps no other topic got the attention of historians more than this one. Historians, both contemporary and of the later generations, wrote extensively on the revolt which was the result of Company's policies, such as administrative, social and religious, military, political and economic, being followed since 1757. The revolt began as the mutiny of Indian soldiers of the Company but very soon it took a national character and spread to several parts of India. It was suppressed and the British rule survived in India for another ninety years. The revolt brought structural changes in the system of government and in the British policies thereafter.

4.1 Objectives:

The revolt of 1857 was an important part of modern Indian history. So, objectives of this unit are to provide a critical description on the causes, nature and impacts of the revolt of 1857. After reading them you will be able to form your own opinion on this topic.

4.2 Causes of the Revolt

Revolt of 1857, which began as the mutiny of sepoy that means the British Indian soldiers of Bengal Army, had been preceded by a number of such revolts in several parts of India. Between 1763 and 1857 there were as many as forty major rebellions besides hundreds of minor ones. Thus mention may be made of the Sanyasi rebellion (1763-1800) in Bengal, Chuar uprising (1766-72) in Bengal and Bihar, revolt of Poligars in Tamilnadu in 1790s, revolt in Vizagapatnam (1830-34), in Ganjam (1835), Kurnool (1846-47), Saurashtra (1816), revolt of Koli in Gujarat (1824-28), Bhil uprising (1818-31), Satara uprising (1841), Santhal uprising (1855-56), and so on. These uprisings show that the rule of East India Company was not received with choice but as compulsion by the Indians and as and when they found opportunity they tried to overthrow it. A number of causes can be attributed to the revolt of 1857.

4.2.1 Political Cause

Since 1757 the Company had followed an aggressive policy of expansion of British dominion in India. Starting from Bengal the Company had begun the process of annexation in other parts of India under the policy of war, subsidiary alliance or doctrine of lapse. Warren Hastings started war against the Marathas and Mysore state which was also continued by Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley. Wellesley destroyed the Mysore state in 1799 and also concluded subsidiary alliances with a number of states such as Hyderabad, Awadh, Peshwa and a few other Maratha states on the basis of mutual benefits but practically benefitting the Company. Lord Wellesley also captured India states such as Carnatic (1801), Tanjore (1799) and Surat (1800) on other pretexts such as mismanagement or the ruler being a minor. Lord Hastings brought the Maratha war to an end with the dissolution of the Maratha confederacy in 1818.

The largest number of states was annexed during the time of Lord Dalhousie. Punjab was annexed after the Sikh war in 1849. Dalhousie applied his ***Doctrine of Lapse*** and annexed small states like Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, Sambhalpur and Tanjore because of the failure of natural heirs. By this doctrine the right to adopt a son by a dependent Indian ruler, if he was childless and had no successor, was rejected. Dalhousie did not miss a single opportunity to annex an Indian state, be it on the ground of Lapse, or mismanagement of a protected state. His theory of “benevolent imperialism”, i.e. imperialism for the benefit of Indian people was deceptive. There were immediate reactions among the native rulers against annexations. The Rani of Jhansi, Lakshmibai made representation against it when her adopted son was not accepted as ruler of Jhansi. Members of the royal family of Sambhalpur rose to arms. In 1853, after the death of Peshwa Bajirao II, Lord Dalhousie did not grant a pension of eight lakh rupees to his adopted son Nana Saheb. So he openly defied the British rule. In 1856 the annexation of a friendly state Awadh alienated all the talukdars and headmen because they did not like bad treatment meted out to their ruler, i.e. nawab. So a general anti-British feeling was afloat among the ex- ruling families of India states because they had lost their age-old possessions of estates, rank and honour. The Muslim community was unhappy with Lord Canning’s attitude towards Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor of Delhi. Canning had announced that after the death of Bahadur Shah the post of Emperor shall come to an end and the Mughal palace at Dehli would also be seized. Indian Muslims still paid honour to Bahadur Shah as the

last ruler of Timur dynasty so they were deeply hurt at Canning's announcement. When the revolt broke out the mutineers proclaimed him as the emperor.

4.2.2 Administrative Cause

The Company had founded a new administrative system in India uprooting the old ones. In this system the previous jagirdars, talukdars, members of the royal families who had been closely associated with administration and power were not given any space. In the new system peasants had to pay more revenue so they were dissatisfied. Land revenue policy so detested that at many places army was called for collection of land revenue. On the other hand zamindars and other local potentates were devoid of powers. Thousands of Talukdars and zamindars lost their estates due to new revenue system and law of sale of land. Land of a defaulter zamindar was sold immediately. It was not only the financial loss to a zamindar but it also affected his social status. Zamindars paid bribe or sold their valuables to save land. Often their estates were purchased by moneylenders who had little sympathy with the village community. They were loyal to the British government in the changing situation. The British officers were unapproachable as they did not meet with Indians. So they did not have real attachment with the people of India. Persia language had been replaced with English as official language but it was unintelligible to the Indians. It created lots of problem in understanding of administrative matters.

Moreover, the Indian aristocracy could not digest the new situation in which the equality of all persons in the eye of law had been established. However this theory had not been made universal. Indians were not appointed on higher posts in civil and military services. All such posts were reserved for Englishmen or Europeans. The highest office to which an Indian could reach was that of a Deputy Collector in the executive and of Sadr Amin in the judicial administration. In the military service the highest post to which a sepoy could reach was that of a subedar with a monthly salary of 60 or 70 rupees. In spite of the provision in the Charter Act of 1833 that for appointment in public services no discrimination would be made on the basis of religion, birth, or colour, this theory was not followed in practical sense. The British judiciary system was complex and common men had no understanding of British judicial processes. Earlier all cases were heard and solved at local level and according to traditional laws of the land. The court was also open to all without any fear and without any lawyer. In the new system an ignorant cultivator had to recourse to a lawyer and pay court fee for justice. There was also a nexus between the court and

police. The rich used to purchase justice in their favour. In such situation administration of justice was not fair. Police and petty officers were notoriously corrupt. So the people disliked the British system as was also acknowledged by a judge of Agra.

4.2.3 Social-Religious Cause

The Company government in the beginning did not interfere in social and religious matters of India and kept itself away from it. But ultimately it came under of the pressure of Christian missionaries and allowed them to preach and proselytize in the country. By the Charter Act of 1813 Christian priests were also allowed to preach in India. They opened schools in India with the sole intention of propagation of Christianity. Children were taught about Christianity and contempt for their own religions. Even prisoners in jail were also daily instructed in Christianity. British officers and judges also helped in propagation of Christianity. If a culprit accepted Christianity he was acquitted. After 1845 a non-Brahmin prisoner cooked food for all inmates including the Brahmins. In this way the upper caste prisoners feared to lose their religion and face excommunication after acquittal. There were riots in Patna and Banaras prisons against the regulation of common messing. The British induced Indians to be Christians by acceptance of posts, honour and money. In 1837 during the famines in North West Province a number of orphans were converted to Christianity. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, a contemporary judicial officer and later a Muslim leader, also believed that the government was interfering with the religion and customs of the people, and trying to convert them to Christianity. He also thought that the European manners and habits were being imposed upon people. The Company government passed a number of laws related to social and religious issues which were disliked by majority of Indians. Even there was severe protest by the orthodox Hindus over the banning of sati in 1829. Due to the propagation of Evangelists and Jesuits the number of Indian converts to Christianity was increasing. It had created some social problems such as excommunication of such converts and their prohibition from acquiring ancestral property. But the Act XXI of 1850 came to support the converts as it enabled them to inherit the ancestral property. Both Hindus and Muslims considered this act as a concession to the Christian converts. To the Hindus this act was offensive in the sense that it established “a right without the inherent obligations”. It means a convert could inherit father’s property without performing the religious services required at the death of father. To the Muslims the act was “an incentive to apostasy”.

So there was an impression among people and soldiers that the British rule was in fact intended to harm their religion. This feeling was very strong among the sepoys who believed that the government wanted to make them Christian. Apart from Christian missionaries several British officers of high rank were also genuinely involved in this practice. Behavior of Christian missionaries was intolerant and they thought conversion of Indian people was only a matter of time as the country was moving towards unrest. They were preaching at all places such as in churches, schools, prisons and market places. At the same time they also ridiculed Indian social and religious practices.

In several proclamations made by leaders of the mutiny religious matters were highlighted in particular. They were concerned for protection of their religions and called for a holy war against the Englishmen.

People not only suspected religious motive of the Englishmen but also social reforms of the government. They suspected any work of public utility, the railway and the telegraph among others as a means of destroying the social order. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 was vehemently criticized by the orthodox. Only a few number of educated minority in Presidency towns welcomed social legislations of the government and introduction of western education. A general discontent was prevailing in the country against British policies as the Indian people were treated with contempt. In day to day life Indians had to face arrogant and prejudiced behavior of the Company's servants. They considered them as creatures of low origins. So the Company government was losing love of the people.

4.2.4 Economic Cause

Economic condition of people of India deteriorated under the Company rule. It was felt mostly by the peasant and rural community of the country. The Company government imposed highest ever revenue demand upon the peasants of India and drained away Indian wealth to England. The Company's collaborators, such as zamindars or tax farmers, in revenue collection also exploited the peasant community. Due to the policy of exploitation of people and resources it was observed that in the eighteenth century population of Bengal was reduced to one-third and its land was converted into jungle. The company government utilized its political power to extend its trade at the cost of Indian revenue. The Englishmen also believed that industrial development of India was not at any rate inferior to that of the more advanced nations of Europe. But due to the policy of British government Indian industries were ruined.

According to a Parliamentary Report of 1840 while British cotton and silk goods imported into India paid a duty of 3.5 percent and woolen goods 2 percent, Indian cotton goods imported into Britain paid 10 percent, silk goods 20 percent and the woolen goods 30 percent. It had resulted in the ruining of Indian textile industries and increase in unemployment. Lord William Bentick himself accepted that “the misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India”. The industrial revolution of England had an adverse effect on industrial development of India. India was converted into a colony of Great Britain to supply only raw materials required for industries in England on the one hand, and a market place for sale of British manufactured goods on the other. In this way India was converted purely into an agricultural country in an unjust manner. In several studies on the revolt of 1857 these factors have been highlighted and on this ground the revolt has been equated with a civil rebellion because people in general were badly hit by economic policy of the government.

4.2.5 Military Cause

Since the revolt began as a mutiny of sepoy, i.e. Indians soldiers of the Company it is important to know their grievances at that time. Their main grievances were-

1. They were unhappy with the annexation of Awadh as majority of Bengal Army came from this state.
2. The sepoy frightened to lose their religion because of government's policy.
3. In 1856 when they were asked to take an oath to serve anywhere for war their doubt became strong.
4. The greased cartridge further confirmed their fear of losing religion.

The Bengal Army was main army of the Company government. Mostly people of high castes, Brahmin and Kshatriya of Utter Pradesh and Bihar were recruited in it. But later on the government included people of low castes so the dominating communities were unhappy because of taboos of free mixing and dining. The Annexation of Awadh changed the opinion of people in regard to the EIC. They thought that the Company used their service for the break-up of Awadh state. So they felt deceived.

The Sepoys were deployed in far off places without any extra allowance. Previously the Indian soldiers used to get a share in the spoils of war but in the new government all such things ceased. In 1824 the 47th Regiment of Barrackpur refused

to go to Burma so it was disbanded. They did not want to cross the sea for fear of losing their religion. During the first Afghan war General Pollock had paid his troops extra batta (allowance) when they crossed the Indus. It was treated by as soldiers as precedent. In 1843 Sind had been annexed so it became a part of British Empire but still in 1844 the Bengal Army refused to go to Sind until extra allowances were paid to them. In 1843 the 6th Maratha Cavalry felt a breach of promise when they were asked to move Arkot, thousands miles away from their presidency. On the refusal of Bengal Army to serve in Sind the government of Madras sent some selected regiments of Madras Infantry on the promise of additional allowance but they found to be deceived. Because of a number of such other grievances the Indian soldiers of different regiments, such as the 22nd Native Infantry (1849), 66th Native Infantry (1850), and 38th Native Infantry (1852) had revolted.

There was big disparity of pay between native and European soldiers. An Indian infantry soldier got seven rupees per month and in Cavalry twenty seven rupees per month. "The entire army of India amount to 315520 men costing £ 9802235. Out of this sum no less than £ 5668110 are expended 51316 European officers and soldiers". The Indian soldier could hardly save anything because he had also to arrange his ration and uniform out of his salary. The behavior of European officers and soldiers was not good towards the Indian soldiers. They behaved like strangers. The officers used rough and abusive words such as "nigger" or "pig" for sepoy. Lieutenant Colonel William Hunter of Bengal Army also referred to sepoy discontent arising from "the permanent position of inferiority to which Indian officers had been relegated".

Some of the facilities given to Indian soldiers earlier were stopped. For example, in 1854 free mailing facility of sepoy was stopped. In 1856 Lord Canning framed the General Enlistment Rule for recruitment of Indian army. Under this rule Indian soldiers were required to serve in any part of the Empire. This rule demolished the monopoly of Awadh soldiers in Bengal Army as many of them were reluctant to serve in foreign countries.

Religious prejudices of the Sepoys were very strong. In 1806 the government banned the use of distinctive caste marks, beards, turban etc. by the soldiers. They were asked to use leather cockade which they thought would degrade their position in their family. It was the main grievance of soldiers of Vellore. The soldiers also suspected activities of missionaries.

Because of their experiences in war the Indian soldiers had come to believe that British generals were not “invincible”. Debacles of the British force during the Afghan war and the Crimean war confirmed this view of Indian soldiers. They came to believe that they could be worsted by a purely Asian force led by Asian officers.

In this way the Indian soldiers were dissatisfied with the British government on account of a number of factors and were being motivated to rebellion. R. C. Mazumdar writes, “A discerning eye could see that the mine was loaded and the train prepared, and the spark might be easily furnished by an inflammable passion. The story of the greased cartridge supplied the spark and caused an explosion which shook the British Empire in India to its very foundation”.

4.2.6 Immediate Cause- The Greased Cartridge Controversy

The Company government supplied new Enfield rifle to its soldiers because it had been very effective during the Crimean War in Europe. Its cartridge was in a cover which had a greased patch on the top. This greased patch had to be torn off with teeth to load the cartridge in the rifle. The Indian Sepoys (soldiers) came to believe that the greased used in the cover contained fat of a cow or a pig. For the Hindu and Muslim soldiers this news was disgusting as both did not even touch the fat of a cow or a pig due to religious belief. It was against their religions. They viewed this step as an attempt to pollute their religions and thereby to convert them to Christianity. Some British officers had advised the government about emergence of possible discontent among Indian soldiers but Lord Canning, the Governor General, overlooked this advice and ordered for the use of greased-cartridge. Having come to know this, the soldiers started refusing the use of such cartridge. Thus on 26 February 1857 the 19th Native Infantry at Behrampur refused to use the cartridge and they marched to Barrackpur near Kolkata. On 29 March an Indian soldier MangalPande of 34th Native Infantry also refused to use it and fired on the British officer present there. He also called upon other soldiers to revolt in order to save their religion. MangalPande was arrested after a minor struggle and later on hanged. The regiment was disbanded. This event showed that Indian soldiers were not happy with British attitude. On 24 April 1857 a number of soldiers of 3rd Native Cavalry at Meerut further refused to accept the cartridges. On 9 May eighty five such cavalrymen were court-martialled and given ten years rigorous imprisonment. This event directly resulted in the outbreak of mutiny. On 10 May 1857 Indian soldiers stationed at Meerut killed British officers, seized arms and freed their fellow-soldiers from jail. Soon after this they proceeded to

Delhi where they proclaimed Bahadur Shah Zafar the Emperor of India. This was the beginning of the revolt.

In this way the revolt of 1857 actually began as a mutiny, i.e. soldier's revolt. But soon it took the form of a popular revolt of civilians. The main centres of revolt were at Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Bareilly, Jhansi, and Arrah in Bihar. And the main leaders were Bakht Khan (Delhi and Bareilly), Nana Sahib and Tantia Tope (Kanpur), Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi, Kunwar Singh of Arrah, Maulavi Ahmadullah of Faizabad and many others. Later on the revolt was joined by thousands of peasants and artisans. Many rulers of Princely States, zamindars and money-lenders did not join the revolt, rather they supported the British. This was one of the reasons that the revolt failed.

4.3 Nature

The nature of revolt of 1857 has been one of the most debatable topics of Indian history. Both the British and Indian historians have described it in different ways. Since this was the first serious challenge to British rule in India so the British government and historians tried to show it in most harsh and ugly words.

From the very beginning the revolt was termed as only a "**Mutiny**". This revolt was started by the Indian soldiers and it had no popular base. A host of British writers such as T.R.Holmes (*History of the Indian Mutiny*), Charles Ball (*The History of Indian Mutiny*), M. Innes (*The Sepoy Revolt*), G.W.Forrest (*The Indian Mutiny 1857-58*), Sir J.W.Kaye (*A history of the Sepoy War in India*), G.B.Malleson (*The Indian Mutiny of 1857*), John Seeley and C.T.Metcalf used the term 'Mutiny' for this revolt. Sir John Lawrence also thought that it was a mutiny. Since the soldiers were unhappy with the greased cartridge so they revolted. He pointed out that 'disarming and dismounting caused panic and panic caused revolt.' It is a fact that Indian soldiers had a number of grievances and due to all of them there was discontent among them. It is also a fact that the revolt was started by the soldiers so naturally in the beginning it was termed as the "Mutiny." But as the researches went on the topic it was proved that it was not only a mutiny but a popular revolt in which a large section of people joined hands with the soldiers.

Many historians also put forward the view that the revolt was a **Hindu or a Muslim conspiracy**. This theory was supported with the view that before the revolt in some regions chappatis (Indian home-made bread), red lotuses, coconut, betel nut or green betel leaf were being circulated by Hindu sadhus, sanyasis or faqirs. They symbolized some religious obligations and were meant to spread message of readiness

for the revolt. The British government was also alarmed with the proclamation of Bahadur Shah as the Emperor of India. It was seen as an attempt by the Muslims to bring back the Mughal rule. However it was proved later on that Bahadur Shah was too old and also unwilling to lead the revolt. It is also a fact that in this revolt there was equal number of Hindu and Muslim leaders. In fact it was first time in history that both the communities had fought together for a common cause. So it cannot be termed as a conspiracy by a particular community. The British government, however, utilized this theory in the post-revolt period to create a divide between the two communities.

The view that the revolt was actually a “*War of Indian Independence*” became very popular during the national movement phase and in the post-independence period. This view was made popular by a nationalist leader Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in his book ‘*The Indian War of Independence*’ which was published in 1909. He had written this book to mark the occasion of fifty years of the revolt. Savarkar highlighted the principles of *swadharma* and *swarajas* main factors behind the revolt. He glorified Indian civilization which was a great nation, and the ‘mutiny’ was ‘a war to liberate Indian nation from the shackles of British tyranny.’ This view support the theory that the revolt had in fact a national character which was also pointed out by Asoka Mehta in his book “*1857, The Great Rebellion.*” Even some British statesmen also did not hesitate to call it ‘a national rising’ or ‘a national war than a local insurrection.’ Among them Lord Disraeli and Lord Canning were most prominent.

In fact after a close examination it can be found that the Indian soldiers were the main force behind the revolt for which they faced the most brutal suppression. But at the same time the British retaliation was equally brutal upon the civilians. They were killed during the war or were hanged in this process. The spread of rebellion from one region to another itself was the evidence of people’s participation in it. The popular leaders of the revolt could not have continued it without people’s support. The revolt was not restricted to army everywhere. It was joined by every section of population. The Hindus (high and low castes) and Muslims also joined the revolt. Bhils(a tribal community) in Rajputana and Central India, and Santhals (a tribal community) in the Bengal fought against the government because it protected the moneylenders. In Awadh (Utter Pradesh) and Shahabad (Bihar) people’s participation was most powerful which gave it a national character. Because majority of the Bengal Army was recruited from those regions so people’s reaction was stronger there.

Tenants in Awadh were fighting not only for their rights and religion but also for their king who had been removed unlawfully. On these grounds the mutiny can be called as war of independence.

After independence of India S.N. Sen wrote a book titled 'Eighteen Fifty Seven' on the basis of all available sources in India and England. It was published by the Government of India. He gives the opinion that religious and other grievances had aggrieved the Indian soldiers and so they began the revolt. But Sen further says that "what began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence for there is not the slightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the king of Delhi was the rightful representative." Thus he also supports the popular character of the revolt. In Awadh this belief was most popular.

For the charges of '*barbarism*' and '*fanaticism*' during the revolt both sides may equally be treated at par. Rather the British were more barbarous and fanatic than Indians were. The British cruelty was reflected after the revolt became a failure. They hanged people in thousands and beaten them publicly as revenge. So such allegations made by the British writers are not valid points. On the inevitability of the mutiny Sen says that due to no common ties between the ruler and the ruled it was inevitable. The ruler *i.e.* the British was foreigners, who had no sympathy for the ruled. They were oppressive, and had only one purpose in India, that is to extract more and more from the people. So it was natural for the people to revolt.

Some other historians, such as S.B.Choudhary, R.P.Dutt, Eric Stokes, R. Mukherjee, Tapti Roy, K.S.Singh and others give different characters to the revolt. Their main arguments are that in any sense the revolt was a *civil rebellion* as it was joined by peasants and tribals at different places. The revolt was not limited to army. Peasants and tribals who were suffering from exaction and burden of heavy taxation also took the opportunity to revolt. They targeted more the zamindars and moneylenders because they were also partners in such activities.

But many writers questions it to be called as 'national war of independence' because they think that at that time India was not yet a nation in full sense. There was no central authority and even the rebels had no common leaders. It was the main weakness of the revolt. It was not fully planned and regional leaders had their self-interested agenda. R.C.Mazumdar in his book '*The Sepoy Mutiny and the Rebellion of 1857*' also questions it to call as a national movement on this ground. He writes that it was neither first, nor national, nor war of independence. Before 1857 a number of

mutinies had taken place in different places of India. But there is no doubt that the revolt was a fight for liberation of India from foreign rule. Every leader wanted to end the British rule in spite of their different strategies.

Various other points have been raised on the nature of the revolt. It has been termed as '*a fight between civilization and barbarism*' (T. R. Holmes) or '*a war of fanatic religionists against Christianity*' (L. E. R. Rees). Such points have been raised by the British writers in order to darken the Indian character. But the British brutality during the revolt or after the revolt narrates about the more dark side picture of their behavior. The works of Christian missionaries had created a sense of fear among Indians. So it was natural to react for safety of their religions. But it was certainly not a religious war; otherwise the picture would have been different.

4.3.1 Significance

The revolt of 1857 was one of the most memorable events of freedom struggle in India. It was a reflection of Indian sentiment towards the oppressive nature of British rule. We may call it by any name but its significance was historic. Though the revolt failed to put an end to British rule it was a glorious moment for any Indian. Generations to come continued to seek inspiration from the revolt of 1857. Still the leaders of the revolt such as Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, Kunwar Singh, Nana Sahib, Tantia Tope, Azimullah Khan, Bahadur Khan and many others are remembered for their patriotic feelings and sacrifice. Besides them thousands and thousands of Indian soldiers and civilians including peasants and tribals sacrificed their lives in the effort of freeing their country from foreign yoke. The revolt was a very significant factor in the birth of Indian nationalism in the last decade of eighteenth century and further in the twentieth century.

The British rule not only survived but it remained in India for another ninety years. However several significant changes were brought into Indian administration. The most important one was the abolition of the rule of East India Company. By an Act of Parliament of England passed in 1858 the administration of India was transferred from the Company to the British Crown. A post of Secretary of State for India was created. He was assisted by a Council which was known as the India council. The Parliament now directly controlled Indian administration through the Secretary of State.

The Governor-General of India was now also designated as the Viceroy of India. It meant he was now acting as a representative of the British Crown. He came

directly under the control of British Parliament. In India the Governor-General was provided with an Executive Council to discuss all important matters. But his position in the Council remained supreme. By the Indian Councils Act of 1861 the Council was enlarged and it was authorized to make laws for India. It was known as the Imperial Legislative Council. A few non-official Indian members were also included in the Council but they have no effective voice. It was just a beginning of experience for Indians in legislative affairs.

For the British government the revolt was a great lesson. The government changed the policy territorial expansion and annexation. No further annexation was made and policy toward Indian states was modified. On 1 November 1858 *Queen Victoria's Proclamation* came which declared that the British government had no desire for extension of territorial possessions, and further declared to 'respect the right, dignity and honour of native princes as their own.' This was done keeping in mind the dissatisfaction among the native princes over previous policies of annexation. After the revolt the British government tried to conciliate with the princess in order to get their support in India. It was also important for the government to acknowledge the loyalty of those states which had remained either neutral or supported the British during the revolt. They were seen as big supporters of British imperialism and accordingly rewarded with many rights such as right of adoption and succession. Further, the Crown was declared the Paramount power in all India. In 1878 Queen Victoria assumed the title of *the Empress of India*. All the Indian princes became subordinate to the Crown.

Since the revolt was started by the Indian soldiers so the British government decided to reorganize whole army in India. The government could not trust on them anymore. So more number of Europeans was included in the army, and the proportion of Europeans to Indians was fixed at 1:2 in the Bengal Army. In the Madras and Bombay armies it was 2:5. Superior posts were still reserved only for the Europeans. Artillery and tanks were kept only in hands of the European soldiers. Regiments of Indian soldiers were created on the communal lines. Sikhs, Gurkhas, and Pathans, who had helped the British in suppression of revolt, were recruited in large number and were given preference over the soldiers from Awadh, Bihar, Central India, and South India. The new army was organized with a mixture of soldiers of different castes and religions with a view to create a balance. But its main purpose was to prevent the growth of nationalism among them.

Indians were also excluded or discouraged to get higher posts in civil administration. It became rather impossible for Indians to get higher posts through Civil Service examinations as the maximum age for entry was reduced from twenty-three in 1859 to nineteen in 1878. All superior posts were reserved for the British. In this way the British supremacy was maintained in administration and Indians were thought to be unworthy for them. Later on the Indians demanded the Indianisation of army and civil services. It became one of the main demands of the nationalists.

After the revolt the British government further continued its policy of 'divide and rule.' Different castes, groups and religious communities were raised against one another. Thus, the Hindu-Muslim divide became the unhealthiest for Indian unity. Soon after the revolt the British attitude toward the Muslim was very suppressive as they were seen as prime conspirator against the British. But seeing the sudden rise of Hindu intelligentsia and birth of nationalism among them the British government started promoting the Muslim cause to separate them from the national mainstream. It resulted in the birth and growth of communalism during the period of freedom struggle.

In spite of all the efforts made by the British to keep Indian people subservient to the British rule the rise of nationalist sentiments could not be fully checked. Awakened with fiery nationalist spirit they devoted their energy in the struggle for freedom. Thus the revolt of 1857 was a major milestone in the freedom struggle.

4.4 Transition from Company to Crown

The revolt was suppressed by July 1858, and by the end of 1859, the British authority over India was completely re-established. However, the nature of government and administration changed. The rule of East India Company was ended and the authority passed over directly into the hands of the British Crown. It was done by enacting the Government of India Act, 1858 by the British Parliament.

4.4.1 Government of India Act, 1858- Background

The revolt of 1857 had agitated the mind of Indian people, and there was a strong anti-British feeling in the country. This feeling was against the policies of the East India Company, which had come to India after getting the Charter of trade to the East in 1600 by the British Crown under Elizabeth I. The Company was managing its affairs by formation of its own governing body; however, the Crown and Privy Council regulated the internal management of the Company. Since then, the Company had adopted various policies, from being a gentle and submissive merchant to an

aggressive competitor in Indian affairs. It has been narrated in the previous units, how the Company got a strong foothold in India, and it became a paramount political power by the second half of the nineteenth century. But its policies – social, economic, religious, and political- were highly disliked by Indian ruling classes as well as the common people of India. The result was a powerful revolt of 1857. The revolt was suppressed, and the British rule survived.

The British Parliament had been revising the provisions related to administration of Company rule in India. It had enacted several acts from time to time which had limited the economic interests and political authority in India. The mention may be made of Charter Act of 1813, 1833, and 1853. By the Charter Act of 1813, the Company's monopoly of trade with India was ended, and Indian trade was opened for all British merchants. The Charter Act of 1813 redefined the powers of the Board of Control to superintend, control and direct the Indian affairs. It reduced the power of patronage of the Company. Governor General, Commander in Chief and Governors were to be appointed by the Court of Directors subject to the approval of the Crown. The constitution of the Company was continued as before. Its territorial acquisitions in India were extended under the Company for another twenty years. However, the sovereignty of the Crown over them was clearly proclaimed.

Further, the Charter Act of 1833 had brought a number changes in the constitutional history of the Company. Its monopoly of tea trade and trade with China was abolished; however, its administrative and political powers were continued. The Charter Act of 1833 separated the functions of the legislative and executive of the central government of India. The Act also provided with the supreme authority in law making for the whole British possessions in India to the Governor General-in-Council and deprived the governments of the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras of their legislative function. However, the permanent right of the British Parliament to make laws for India was not affected by this Charter Act. The Charter Act of 1853 curtailed the powers of the Court of Directors. Its number was reduced to eighteen, out of which six were to be nominated by the Crown. The Crown was given power to appoint a Law Commission in England which was report on the Indian legislation. In this way the Home Government in England got the right to interfere in the Indian legislature. The Company was allowed to retain possession of Indian territories "in trust for Her Majesty, her heirs and successors." The Parliament retained all rights to

override the Company's authority in India. In this way, the Company's activities and its working were continuously being moderated by the British Parliament.

4.4.2 Enactment of Act of 1858 and its Main Points

As has been mentioned, the policies of East India Company had left the Indians discontented and they were forced to revolt. So, after the end of the revolt there was huge opposition among the political circle in England against the continuation of the Company's rule in India. Questions were being raised on its working pattern. The revolt by Indians had substantiated their ground of doubts. Likewise, the British Government decided to bring big changes in political set up of British Indian colony, in order to win the confidence of the Indian people and princes. The British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston introduced a bill to this effect in the British parliament. He himself believed that the power be transferred to the Crown. He was a veteran statesman who had a long experience of international affairs from Napoleonic war to the Crimean War. During the Indian rebellion he had immediately sent Colin Campbell as Commander-in-Chief in India. He had got immediate success in the mutiny by evacuating Lucknow, and defeating Taty Tope in Kanpur.

Palmerston had faith in supremacy of parliament, and minister's responsibility to the Parliament. While introducing the bill in Parliament he expressed the view that 'the chief functions in the Government of India are committed to a body not responsible to Parliament, not appointed by the Crown but elected by persons who have no more connection with India.' Thus, an environment was created for a big transition from Company to Crown. The Company defended its position and continuation in India on the ground of its achievements. The Company had toiled hard to establish a big empire in India. But all its pleas were disregarded and the bill was passed, which became the Government of India Act of 1858.

Main Points of the Act and their Criticism:

1. By the Government of India Act 1858 a big change was introduced in the administration of India. The authority directly passed into the hand of the British Crown. It was said that 'India shall be governed by and in the name of the Crown.' Likewise, all the British Indian territories and powers of the Company were vested in the Crown. In this way, the Company rule came to an end. The post of Governor-General was continued; however, he was now representing the Crown in India, and by this he was also designated as the Viceroy. Thus, Lord Canning, who was at that time the Governor-General in

India, was continued to the post, and he was designated as the Viceroy. All the military and naval forces of the East India Company was transferred to the British Crown.

2. The Governor-General for India and Governors of Indian provinces were to be appointed by the Crown. The Governor-General suggested names of Lieutenant-Governors of Indian provinces for approval to the Crown. The Governor-General did not remain free to take independent decisions on India, and subsequently he got subordinate status in relation to the British government in the matters of policy and execution.
3. Both the controlling bodies of the Company, namely the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, were abolished. A new administrative post was created, known as the Secretary of State for India. He was to be a member of British Cabinet and vested with 'full power and responsibility for the government and revenues of India.' In this sense, the Secretary of State inherited the duties of the Court of Directors and Board of Control. His office was to be in England, and he would be a member of Parliament. Thus, his responsibility to British Parliament was established. But his payment was to be made from Indian revenue.
4. A council, known as India Council, with fifteen members was established at Whitehall in England to advise the Secretary of State. The Englishmen who had lived in India and had good knowledge about Indian affairs were given preferences in the selection of members of the Council. Gradually, it became a place of civil servants who served in India. Of the fifteen members, seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors, and eight to be appointed directly by the Crown. Members were also to be paid from the Indian revenue. In this way, an extra burden was laid upon the Indian exchequer. This also became one of the reasons of the drain of wealth from India. Later on, the Indian nationalist leaders and writers made it a point of criticism of the British rule.
5. Office of the Secretary of State and the India Council became the most important bodies to take all decisions on Indian affairs. The Secretary of State was presiding over the meetings of the India Council. He had the power to over-rule the decisions of the Council, with his casting vote. But he could not do so in the case of grants related to Indian revenues, and on many important matters such as contracts, sale or purchase. The India Council also controlled

the civil and military servants serving in India. But by 1869, the Council came under complete control of the Secretary of State.

6. The Secretary of State was directly responsible to the British parliament. Every year he was required to present his reports on India before the Parliament. It was open for debates and discussions.
7. The Governor-General was to have an Executive Council to help him and advice in administration of India. Members of Executive Council were to act as in-charges of different departments. They discussed all important matters in the Council and decision was taken by a majority vote. In practice, the Governor-General had the power to take final decision.
8. Patronage system in appointment had already been stopped by the Act of 1853, by which the Company was stripped off its power to appointment in Indian administrative services, which were to be filled up through open competitive examinations. In the new Act of 1858, the Secretary of State was empowered to make rules with the help of Civil Service Commissioners for the conduct of open competition. It is to remember here that such examinations were held at that time only in England and so it was very difficult for any Indian to attend and compete for it. So, Indians' demand for holding competitive examinations in India remained one of their agendas.

In fact, the ground for this administrative transformation had already been prepared by the Act of 1853 by which the powers of the President of the Board of Control and the Directors had already been curtailed. Their number had been reduced from twenty-four to eighteen. The Company's charter had not been renewed. The Secretary of State played the role of President of the Board of Control, and the India Council was like the Court of Directors. So, the ground for taking over was being prepared, and 'the assumption of the Government of India by the Crown was rather a formal than a substantial change.'

However, the role of Secretary of State became very important in the supervision of Indian government. He exercised greater authority over India. With the development of communication system, he could connect to Indian authority quickly, and take necessary decisions immediately. Governor-General could not take any independent decision. Now, India was being controlled more from London. The role of Indians in the new system was

nowhere. Neither did they get a seat in the India Council, nor in the Governor-General Council. So, it was purely a British rule.

Queen's Proclamation of 1858

British rule was made more firm on India, however, by the Queen's Proclamation on 1st November 1858, read out by Viceroy Lord Canning in the Allahabad Darbar, a message was given to the princes and people of India. At this occasion he formally declared the assumption of the government of India by the Crown. The Proclamation explained the principles of the Crown's government that it would be benevolent, generous, and supporting religious toleration in India, and it would be 'placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization.'

This Proclamation had come when the revolt was suppressed. The British had well understood the causes of the revolt, as the discussions were going on among the political circles of England. They knew the princes of India had been too much annoyed with the policies of Lord Dalhousie. So, it outrightly rejected Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse. The Proclamation, thus, declared, 'We hereby announce to the Native Princes of India that all treaties and engagements with them by or under the authority of the Honourable East India Company are by us accepted, and will be scrupulously maintained..., and we desire no extension of our present territorial possession.' Further, it was said, 'We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of our Native Princes as our own.' The princes were free to adopt anyone as their sons and successors. The new government pledged to make no differentiation among her British and Indian subjects. The Proclamation pledged to respect native religions and customs, and Indians would get equal chance to compete for civil services examinations and to serve the British empire. A general amnesty was offered to all those Indians who were still in arms against the British government and who were not guilty of killing of any British subjects. Queen Victoria formally became the "empress of India" in 1877, and so the Crown Raj began in India.

4.4.3 Significance

The Government of India Act, 1858, and the Queen's Proclamation were landmarks in the constitutional history of British India. Both had come as a result of wrong policies of the Company's government in India. The new government was trying to mitigate the situation by offering amnesty and

promising for equal rights. By the Act of 1858, as you have seen, the whole administrative set up was changed. However, the British nature of rule remained as before, as it was dominated by the British bureaucracy and rules. Indians were not given due share in administration.

The British government became cautious of the resurgence of any such event as of 1857. So, immediately the army administration was reorganised in 1858. The European army of East India Company was merged with the Crown army. The main prop of the revolt had been the native's army. So, the British government tried to minimise its threat by raising the proportion of Europeans to Indians in the army. It was fixed at one to two in the Bengal Army and two to five in the Madras and Bombay armies. European troops were deployed in all key locations across India, and they were armed with artilleries and tanks. Indian soldiers were still not given higher ranks in army. Such steps were taken to take immediate actions in case of breaking out of a revolt. It shows that the British government was still having the sense of threat of rebellion in spite of new proclamation and changes in the system. Loyalty was new recruits was examined very carefully. In place of the Bengalis, Biharis, the Awadhis, and the Marathas the government placed Sikhs, Gurkhas, Pathans in the front ranks. The government divided Indian soldiers on the basis of 'martial races' and 'non-martial races' and thus created differences among them. This was a policy of 'divide and rule'. Indian soldiers were recruited on communal, caste and regional lines. All such steps show that the British had no good intention in administration of India. The cause of imperialism was supreme.

4.5 Let Us Sum Up

From the above discussion you have come to know about the causes of the revolt, its nature and significance. Its causes were inherent in the very nature and background of the East India Company's functioning in India. Due to the crisis of eighteenth century the Company took advantage and became a political power from mere a trading entity. Thereafter its nature changed and it adopted aggressive policy for annexation of Indian states thereby creating a political crisis in the country. The Company's social and economic policies aggrieved the common people of India. They were unable to adjust and compromise with the new situations. The Indian soldiers, sepoys, were one of

them who were equally dissatisfied with the Company's policies which resulted in the outburst of the revolt.

The revolt was started by the Indian soldiers but it was later on joined by various sections of Indian population. So the revolt did not remain limited to the soldiers and it took the form of a civil rebellion, and also a 'national rising.'

The outcomes of the revolt were of far-reaching significance. The revolt failed to get its objective, i.e. to get rid of the British rule. The British government became cautious and initiated significant changes in its policies and administration in order to strengthen British imperialism in India.

The revolt of 1857 continued to inspire the generations to come. It resulted directly in the rise of Indian nationalism.

Check Your Progress

1. What was Doctrine of Lapse?
2. Which states were annexed under the Doctrine of Lapse?
3. What were social impacts of the Charter Act of 1813 in India?
4. What was General Enlistment Rule of 1865?
5. Why did Indian soldiers refuse to use new cartridge?
6. Who was Mangal Pande?
7. Name the main leaders of the revolt?
8. Who called it the War of Indian Independence?

4.6. Key Terms

Swadharma- one's own religion

Swaraj-self-rule

Dalit - depressed class people

Sepoy - an Indian soldier serving under the British

4.7 Suggested Readings

G.B.Malleson - History of the Indian Mutiny, 3 vols

S.N.Sen - Eighty Fifty Seven

R.C.Mazumdar - The Sepoy Mutiny and the Rebellion of 1857

S.B.Choudhary - Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies 1857-59

Bipan Chandra and others - India's Freedom Struggle

Tara Chand - History of Freedom Movement in India, vol. 2

4.8 Questions and Answers

4.8.1 Short-answer Questions

1. Discuss the methods by which Indian states were annexed to British Empire?
2. What were social-religious grievances of Indian people before the revolt?
3. How did the Industrial Revolution in England adversely affect Indian economy?
4. What were main grievances of Indian soldiers of the Company?
5. Discuss the greased-cartridge controversy as immediate cause of the revolt.
6. Is it right to call the revolt War of Indian Independence? Justify your answer.

4.8.2 Long-answer Questions

1. Discuss the causes of the revolt of 1857.
2. Discuss the nature of the revolt of 1857. How far was it the First War of Indian Independence?
3. Discuss the results and significance of the revolt of 1857.

4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Doctrine of Lapse was applied by Lord Dalhousie by which an Indian ruler was denied adoption of a child. It was used to annex a number of states.
2. Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, Sambhalpur and Tanjore were annexed under Doctrine of Lapse.
3. The Charter Act of 1813 allowed the missionaries to work in India. While they did educational work, at the same time they worked to propagate Christianity in India. So Indians looked at them with suspicion.
4. General Enlistment Rule was brought by Governor General Lord Canning in 1856. By this Indian soldiers were required to serve in any part of the empire.
5. Indian soldiers refused to use new cartridge as it contained the fat of cow and pig. For both a Hindu and a Muslim soldier it was taboo to touch it.
6. Mangal Pande was a soldier in 34th Native Infantry at Barrackpur who first raised the banner of revolt in March 1857.
7. The main leaders were Bakht Khan (Delhi and Bareilly), Nana Sahib and Tantia Tope (Kanpur), Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi, Kunwar Singh of Arrah, Maulavi Ahmadullah of Faizabad and many others.
8. V. D. Savarkar called it the War of Indian Independence

