

ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS - BRITISH

ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH AND SUCCESS FACTORS

- * Background on European Rivalries - Portuguese & Dutch were among the first Europeans to arrive in India. While the Dutch East India company (formed in 1602) became the world's first joint-stock corporation they eventually shifted their primary interest from India to Indonesia.
- * The British motivation - The British were inspired to enter the eastern trade following the successful & profitable ventures carried out by Dutch traders in the East during 1594 & 1598. This success created a sense of urgency for the British to establish their own presence.
- * Formation of the company - In preparation for trade, the British formed the English Association of Merchant Adventurers. This organization was the precursor to the British East India company & was created in September 1599.

THE BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY

- * Securing monopoly (1600) - To prevent competition & secure trade, the founders petitioned Queen Elizabeth. In Britain numerous other companies were vying for trade, & a royal monopoly was reqd

to organize these efforts & ensure the success of this specific venture.

- * Joint stock model - Unlike other European approaches the British established the company as a joint stock corporation. This structure allowed for pooled resources & shared investment

- * Leadership - The company was led by figures like Sir Thomas Smythe, who served as the Auditor of London. He was the central figure behind the company's early leadership & organization, distinguishing the Merchant-led corporate structure from other contemporary European trading initiatives

- * Royal Charter (December 31, 1600) - After securing the petition, Queen Elizabeth I officially granted a royal charter to the East India company. This document established a 15 year monopoly over trade in the East

- * Exploration begins - Once the monopoly was guaranteed, the company immediately began organizing expeditions to identify viable trade routes to India. While the Portuguese & Dutch were already familiar with these routes, the British were newcomers to this maritime endeavour & needed to establish their own path

INITIAL TRADING ADVENTURES AND CHALLENGES

- * Early exploratory adventures - Following the granting

of the Royal Charter in 1600, The British East India Company initiated several exploratory voyages to find a sea route to India, as the traditional land routes were restricted by the Ottoman empire.

• The four major voyages

- First & second attempts - The early voyages were largely unsuccessful. The first attempt resulted in the ships heading to Indonesia, where they encountered established Dutch competition, forcing them to return. The second attempt in 1604 also ended in failure, with ships unable to reach their destination.

- Third adventure - Led by Captain William Keeling this expedition included the ship "Hector". Captain William Hawkins arrived in Surat during this period, establishing the first British factory in India.

- Establishing contact - After building the factory in Surat, Captain William Hawkins was tasked with seeking official trade permission from the Mughal emperor Jahan-gir. He travelled to Agra in 1609 to petition the court.

ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST FACTORY IN SURAT

The British first arrived & landed at Surat where they successfully established their very first factory in India.

- Captain William Hawkins' Mission - Captain William

Hawkins travelled to Agra to meet Emperor Jahangir to secure trade concessions for the company. Hawkins spent nearly three years waiting in the region without achieving his primary goal, as Jahangir was initially reluctant to grant an audience. When he finally met the Emperor in 1611 he was gifted an army position, but the mission failed to secure significant trading rights, making it a limited success for the company.

- * Sir Thomas Roe's diplomatic mission - Realizing the need for a more formal diplomatic approach after the initial 1600 royal charter which granted a 15 year monopoly was nearing a crucial stage, the East India company sought further help.

- * Formal negotiations - King James I dispatched Sir Thomas Roe to Jahangir's court in 1615 to negotiate more favourable trade terms & solidify the company's standing in India.

EXPANSION OF BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY-

- * Negotiations - Following Sir Thomas Roe's successful mission, he spent three years in the court of Emperor Jahangir. He successfully secured permission to establish additional factories in key trading hubs, specifically Agra, Ahmedabad &

Broach in 1615.

- Establishing a foothold in Masulipatnam - Sir Thomas Roe is also credited with expanding company operations into South India. He dispatched Captain Hippon to the court of Golconda, resulting in the opening of a factory at Masulipatnam in 1611.

DEVELOPMENT OF MADRAS, BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA

- Acquisition & development of Madras (1639) - Francis Day purchased the region of Madras from local Nayaka rulers. He subsequently developed the city & established "Fort St. George" to secure the company's trading interests in the south.
- Acquisition of Bombay (1661-1668) - The Bombay island was acquired by the British following the marriage of King Charles II of Britain to Catherine of Braganza, a Portuguese princess. It took 6 years to finalize the administration of the territory & in 1668, the British monarch transferred the control of Bombay to the East India company.
- Expansion into Bengal (1690-1698) - By the late 17th century, the company secured the zamindari rights for the villages of Sutanuti, Kalikata & Gorindpur. Following the acquisition of these lands the company established "Fort William" in what

would become the prominent city of Calcutta, completing their primary territorial foothold in the Bengal region.

BRITISH ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

- * London-based administration - The administration was overseen by the Court of Directors. This body was central to the company's decision making process ensuring that trade operations were managed in line with the objectives set by the company's leadership & shareholders. The organization was bolstered by the Levant Corporation, which handled the trade of goods from India to London & across Europe until 1847. The East India company was founded by Sir Thomas Smythe, who gathered 22 financiers to raise an initial capital of £30000 in 1600. The Court of Directors comprised a Governor, a Deputy Governor & 24 members.

Decisions regarding the company's direction were made by the Court of Proprietors where every shareholder had one vote, reflecting an early model of a modern corporation. The company exercised both administrative & judicial power over its officials.

- * India based Administration - The company adopted a factory-based administration system similar to the Dutch model.

Each factory in regions like Bengal & Madras was governed by a Council headed by a President. Decisions in these councils were consistently made based on a majority vote. Power eventually concentrated in Calcutta due to significant treasury of Bengal following the Battle of Plassey & Buxar.

RELATIONS WITH THE MUGHALS

- * Early diplomacy (1608-1615) - Following Captain William Hawkins' unsuccessful initial audience with Jahangir, the British turned to a more formal diplomatic approach. Sir Thomas Roe, acting as an agent for King James I, secured significant trade concessions from Jahangir between 1615-1618.
- * Relations with Shah Shuja (1650s) - During Shah Jahan's reign, the company cultivated ties with his son, Shah Shuja, who governed Bengal. In 1651, the company was granted the right to trade in Bengal for a fixed annual payment of 3000 rupees. By 1656 the company was further permitted to enter Bengal without paying custom duties.
- * Shift in Bengal Governance - After Shah Shuja was defeated by Aurangzeb & fled, the administration of Bengal transitioned to Shaista Khan in 1662.
- * The Salt peter trade - A key component of the company's economic interest was the trade of

salt peter, a raw material for gunpowder, which Shaista Khan had attempted to monopolize. The company established direct contacts to continue this lucrative trade, primarily sourcing it from Bihar

THE CONFLICT WITH AURANGZEB

- * The Aggressive strategy - (1680s) - During this period, Josiah Child, a key figure in the company, directed an aggressive expansion strategy. He ordered the company to challenge the Mughals militarily to gain a firmer foothold in India.
- * The Conflict - The timing of this challenge proved catastrophic. By 1689, Aurangzeb had consolidated his power in the Deccan after defeating the Sultanates of Bijapur (1686) & Golconda (1687) & subduing Sambhaji.
- * The aftermath - Aurangzeb launched a swift response, leading to a disastrous defeat for the British in Bengal. Josiah Child was forced to send a formal apology - mushira to the Emperor.
- * Re-entry (1690) - The company was permitted to return to trade in Bengal only after paying a heavy fine of 1.5 lakh rupees. Indian rulers often kept the British in their territories because they provided essential tax revenue & resources that the

state could not otherwise capture.

- Long term impact - This episode highlights the financial dilemmas faced by Mughal rulers, which eventually led to later concessions like the Golden Farmans of 1717 & set the stage for future conflicts like the Battle of Plassey.

FACTORS FOR BRITISH SUCCESS IN INDIA

- Administrative structure - The company benefited from a highly organized, dual-level administration, which ensured accountability & consistent profit generation, a requirement for its survival.
- Financial model - Unlike some other European entities, the British model as a private joint stock company forced a continuous pursuit of maximum profit, which motivated its expansion & efficiency.
- Technological & military superiority - The late 17th century saw significant developments in Britain - the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the onset of the Industrial Revolution (1750) & the strengthening of the Royal navy. These advancements enabled Britain to establish global maritime supremacy & break the Portuguese & Dutch control over Indian Ocean. The British began training Indian mercenary soldiers leveraging local manpower to defend their interests.

ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY

EUROPEAN ARRIVAL AND RIVALRY

- * Earlier entities - Portuguese arrived early but focused on a "Blue Water Policy" to control the Indian Ocean. The Dutch were also present but were significantly more interested in the spice trade in Indonesia. The Danish presence, which began in 1664, was short lived & never reached the status of a major European superpower in India.
- * The Anglo French conflict - By the 18th century Britain & France emerged as the primary contenders for influence in India. This rivalry was driven by Mercantile Capitalism & the era of exploration that followed the Fall of Constantinople in the 15th century. The conflict was not merely local it mirrored the broader geopolitical tensions between the two nations across Europe.
- * Strategic shift - Initially, these companies sought tax free trade concessions from local rulers. However, as private enterprises, they craved monopoly over trade, which pushed them to start interfering in the internal politics of Indian kingdoms. Because France & Britain were late entrants to the colonial race, they focused their attention on India, which would become the

central stage for their struggle for global dominance.

18TH CENTURY INDIA AND THE CARNATIC REGION

- Key political dynamics - Once under the domain of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Carnatic gained independence under the leadership of Asaf Mohammed. By 1740-1744 it was led by Nawab Anwaruddin. The region was highly significant because it provided access to both the Eastern & western coasts of India, making it a prime territory for colonial powers.
- Competing interests - Important settlements like Madras (British), Pondicherry (French) & Machilipatnam (French/British) were located in or near this area. The region saw conflicting claims from Nizam of Hyderabad & the Marathas. The Marathas, having historically captured areas from the Deccan to South India, maintained a hereditary claim over these southern territories.
- Period of chaos - By 1737, the central power of the Mughals in the North was declining. Simultaneously, the Nizam of Hyderabad, Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, was aging & ailing, which caused his control over southern territories to weaken. This power vacuum allowed local kingdoms like Mysore & the Carnatic to assert independence, while

the Marathas continued to expand their influence. Because the primary settlements of the British & French were concentrated in this volatile area the region became the theatre for the major conflicts known as Carnatic wars.

FIRST CARNATIC WAR

- * Austrian war of succession - The primary catalyst was a succession crisis regarding the Habsburg throne in Austria. When the ruling Habsburg king died, a dispute arose over his successor. The British chose to support the daughter of the late king Maria Theresa, while the French aligned with the late king's younger brother, Charles.
- * Strategic significance - Austria was a major power with a vast empire & the Habsburg dynasty held significant influence over the Roman Catholic church. Control over this dynasty was seen as a major prize for any European power, effectively mirroring the grand geopolitical ambitions the French & British held for global supremacy.
- * Separation of theatres - Although the war had been raging in Europe since 1740, the rivalry remained relatively contained for several years. It wasn't until later that these tensions boiled over into the Indian subcontinent, marking the beginning of the

local Anglo French military struggles.

- Outbreak & French Aggression - Hostilities in India began in 1746 when British forces destroyed French ships near Pondicherry. In retaliation, the French Governor general Dupleix orchestrated an attack on the British settlement of Madras, forcing the British to surrender.
- The Battle of St. Thome - Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic intervened in 1746 after the French captured Madras from the British. He viewed this conflict as a direct violation of his authority, as the events were unfolding within his territory. Anwar-ud-din sent his son, Mahfuz Khan, with an army of 10,000 soldiers to challenge the French. The French forces, led by Commander Paradise, numbered only 1000.
- Tactical defeat - The French successfully defended their position & pushed the Nawab's forces back to St. Thome. Despite being heavily outnumbered, the French utilized modern, military training, discipline & superior artillery, which proved devastating against the traditional Indian army structure.
- Strategic Realization - This clash served as a harsh lesson for regional rulers. It confirmed that European naval power & organized trained

infantry could overcome significantly larger, conventional local forces, fundamentally shifting the power dynamics in the Carnatic region.

- Conclusion of the war - The war ended with the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in Europe. As per the treaty terms, the French were required to return Madras to the British, marking the end of the first phase of Anglo-French conflict.

ROLE OF JOSEPH FRANCOIS DUPLEX

- Early career in Chandannagar - (1730-1741) -

Initially stationed in Chandannagar Duplex was tasked with managing a post often considered a "punishment posting". However, he transformed it into a highly successful & militarized commercial hub by the time he left for Pondicherry in 1741.

- Appointment as Governor-General (1742) -

Recognizing his administrative & business acumen, he was appointed as the Governor-General of the French East India company in India. He officially assumed his duties in Pondicherry by early 1742.

- Strategic vision & fortification - Duplex understood that for the French to compete effectively with the British, they needed to secure their settlements. Between 1741 & 1743, he invested his own personal funds to strengthen the fortifica

tions of Pondicherry. This move proved crucial during the First Carnatic War (1746-1748), as it rendered the French settlement resilient against British & local attacks.

- * Shift towards political intervention - Duplex realized that mere trade concessions were insufficient. To achieve long term success & financial independence from the French home government, he devised a strategy to intervene in the internal politics of local Indian rulers. He observed the instability in the Carnatic & Hyderabad regions & believed that by backing favorable claimants to local thrones, the French could gain political control, secure a steady stream of revenue, & eventually expel the British from the region.

INTERVENTION IN LOCAL POLITICS -

- * Strategy of political interference - To gain financial independence & regional power, he decided to back specific claimants in the Carnatic & Hyderabad succession disputes. He aimed to install puppet rulers who would grant the French commercial monopolies & control over key ports, essentially using military aid to influence governance.

* The Succession crisis in Hyderabad & Carnatic - Following the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah in 1748, a struggle for the throne emerged between Nasir Jung (the Nizam's son) & Muzaffar Jung (the Nizam's grandson). Similarly a rivalry existed between Anwaruddin (the reigning Nawab) & Chanda Sahib. Dupleix formed a strategic alliance with Muzaffar Jung & Chanda Sahib, promising French military support to help them seize power.

* Implementation & outcomes - In 1749, the French backed alliance attacked Carnatic's capital, Arcot, killing Anwaruddin & placing Chanda Sahib on the throne. In 1750, they successfully targeted Hyderabad, leading to the death of Nasir Jung & the installation of Muzaffar Jung as the new ruler. By 1750-1751, the French had achieved significant influence in both regions, granting them exclusive trading monopolies & displacing the British East India Company from these critical power centres.

SECOND CARNATIC WAR AND BATTLE OF ARCOT

* The Siege of Trichinopoly (1751) - While the French backed Chanda Sahib besieged Trichinopoly, the British moved to support Muhammad Ali, the son of the

late Nawab Anwaruddin.

- * Robert Clive's strategy - A pivotal moment occurred when Robert Clive, then a clerk for the British, proposed a bold diversionary tactic. Instead of attacking the French directly at Trichinopoly, he led 500 soldiers to capture Arcot. This forced Chanda Sahib to divide his forces, ultimately leading to his defeat & the success of the British supported Muhammad Ali.
- * Hyderabad's internal conflict - Simultaneously, in Hyderabad, the French ally Muzaffar Jung was killed. The French commander Bussy, who was stationed in Nizam's court, installed Salabat Jung as the new ruler to maintain French influence.
- * Recall of Dupleix (1754) - By this stage, the constant warfare was straining both the British & French companies. The British Home government pressured the French authorities in Paris to recall Dupleix. His departure in 1754 marked the end of Second Carnatic war.

REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF DUPLEIX'S STRATEGY

- * Lack of home government support - The French government was more focused on European conflicts than on their Indian interests & provided insufficient financial backing.

- ★ Absence of second rank leadership - Unlike the British, who had a clear succession of capable leaders like Robert Clive & Warren Hastings, the French failed to nurture effective secondary leadership.
- ★ Financial constraints - Dupleix often had to use his own resources to sustain military efforts. The lack of a steady, independent stream of revenue despite temporary control over Hyderabad made the French enterprise unsustainable compared to the more commercially driven British operations.

THIRD CARNATIC WAR

- ★ The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) The conflict in India was a direct extension of the Seven Years' war occurring in Europe between Britain & France. This global power struggle between the two nations triggered major hostilities in the Indian subcontinent.
- ★ Battle of Wandiwash (1760) - A decisive military confrontation took place in modern-day Tamil Nadu. The British forces, led by Cote, defeated the French army under the command of Count Lally. This battle effectively dismantled French military standing in the region.
- ★ The fall of Pondicherry (1761) - Following their defeat at Wandiwash, the French stronghold of

Pondicherry was captured by the British in 1761. This event is widely considered the end of the French colonial enterprise's major political influence in India.

- Diplomatic resolution (1763) - After the war, the Treaty of Paris in 1763, restored certain French settlements, but France was forbidden from building fortifications or maintaining significant military forces in India. By 1766, an agreement ensured that while France retained certain trading posts like Pondicherry, to support their operations in Indo China, India firmly remained within the British sphere of influence.

REASONS FOR FRENCH FAILURE -

- Commercial vs. State-Sponsored Models - The British East India company was a private entity that could raise funds through the market & promote meritocracy, whereas the French company was government-sponsored & suffered from undercapitalization & lack of autonomy.
- Governmental control - Britain had moved towards a constitutional monarchy after the Glorious revolution of 1688, allowing the company more independence, while France remained

an absolute monarchy with total state control which proved inefficient for colonial business.

- * Naval superiority - The British possessed a stronger navy, which was essential for maintaining colonial power. The French were primarily a land based power in Europe, & they could never secure the seas effectively to protect their Indian interests.

- * Later attempts - Despite their decline, the French tried to re-enter Indian politics by collaborating with Hyder Ali & Tipu Sultan. Napoleon even dreamed of Invading India in 1799, but these efforts ultimately failed due to logistical & naval constraints.

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