

Unit 1 : Twentieth Century: The World and India

During the twentieth century the World witnessed long term results of the research and progress made in various fields of human life. Activities of Colonialism that spread in Asia and Africa created enmity among the European powers interested in acquiring Colonies and that resulted in World War I, Russian Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and the rise of 'dictatorship' in Germany, Italy, Spain etc. and World War II, step by step, in world politics. The desire for colonialism and imperialism by the use of atomic and other destructive weapons had shaken the entire world. Of course, the desire, for peace and safety manifested in hearts of mankind, gave birth to the United Nations (UN). The race of expanding spheres of influence that continued between United States of America and Soviet Russia resulted in the Cold War. There were two centers of the Cold War: Washington DC and Moscow.

At the end of the twentieth century, the spirit of nationalism that arose from people's pride, divided powerful Russia, the Wall of Berlin was demolished and achieved the unification of Germany. These were unexpected and thrilling events. However the sudden flush of communism could not be prevented; European and Asian countries including China came under its influence. Oh! Some part of the world was colored in 'Red'. Yes, this is only one side of world politics.

The second side of world politics is also much strong and powerful and it is evident in the movements of 'liberalism' that has spread in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. This movement gave rise to fight for nationalism and freedom in many countries including India. It created and developed such a systematic spirit of newer aspects of all round sacrifice for achieving national independence that it inspired and encouraged Asian and African countries.

This unit describes the Indian national struggle which created such an image wherein the North-South, the East-West, young and old, men and women were made enthusiastic participants and this contributed towards a glorious history. It also includes events of revolutionaries who fought for the independence of their motherland and accepted martyrdom which will inculcate self-respect, patriotism and nationalism among children. Necessary maps and pictures have been provided to clarify the write-up. Industrial Revolution has been discussed in this unit with the aim that students understand the importance of how discoveries made in the field of science and technology can lead to the progress of future generation.

We have achieved the capacity and efficiency where by we can provide able leadership because of the independence that we have achieved with great difficulty, the internal and emotional integration as well as the responsibility we have taken up for the allround development of the nation.

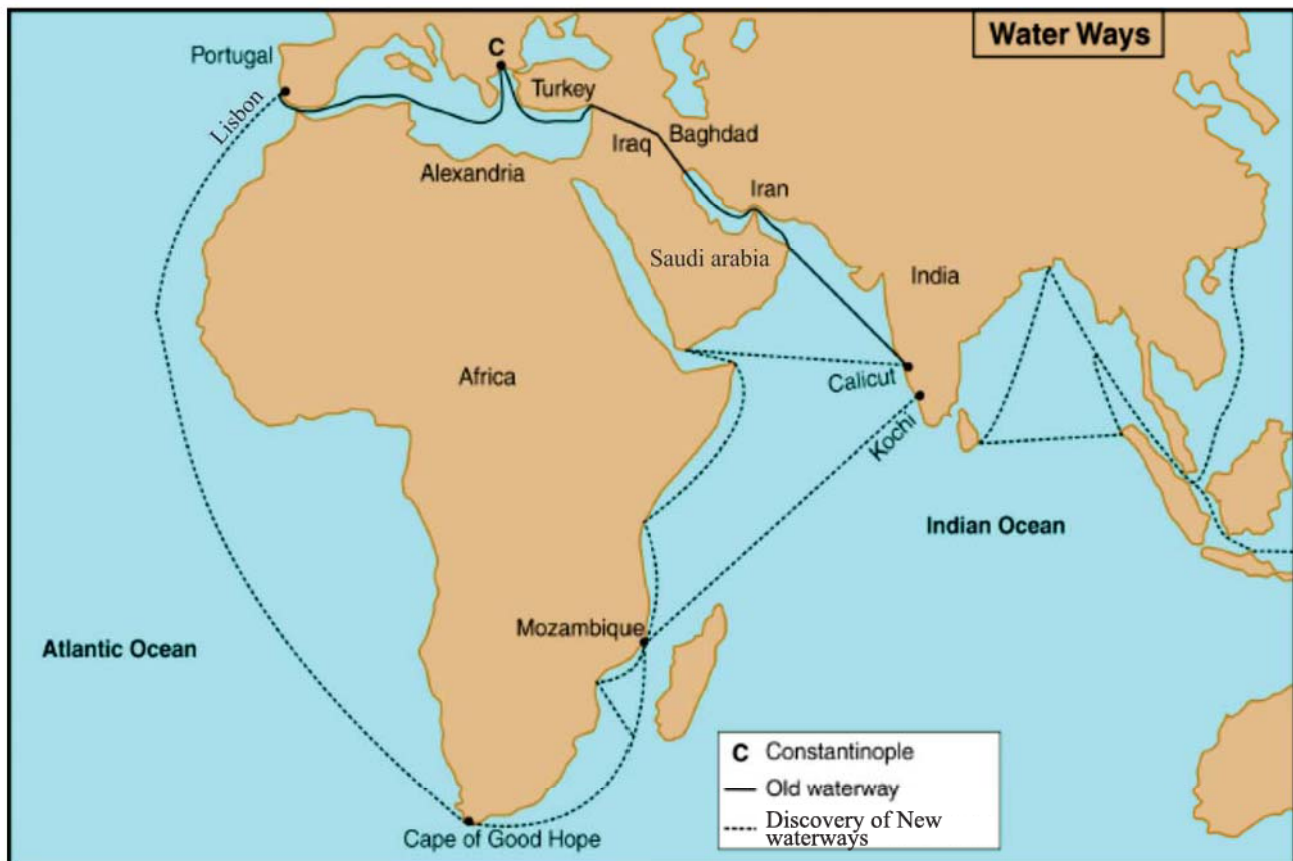


Since the ancient period, India has enjoyed an incomparable position in the whole world due to its economic, cultural and religious inheritance. Due to the economic prosperity and cultural inheritance, people from different nations of the world came to India. There was a lot of demand for the Indian spices, muslin, silk cloth, indigo etc in the European countries. Trade between India and Europe was carried out through land route and sea route and at the centre of these routes was Istanbul (Constantinople) in Turkey.

After the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 A.D. by Turkish Muslims, the sea route through Constantinople (Istanbul) was closed for the Europeans. Since they could not do without the spices, the Europeans felt compelled to discover a new sea route. So an era of geographical discoveries began.

Discovery of sea route to India

With the inspiration, encouragement and economic help from the Portuguese King Prince Henry, some brave people began efforts to discover new sea route. Many great men tried to discover sea route to India namely Bartholomew Diaz who discovered the 'Cape of Good Hope'. With the economic assistance from the King of Spain, Christopher Columbus began his adventure of discovering a new sea route, in 1492 which again came to a stop at an island, presently known as West Indies, situated in the Atlantic Ocean. Columbus, who had believed through out his life that he had discovered a new sea route to India, had actually discovered a new land. Since this clarification was made by Amerigo Vespucci, this new land began to be known as 'America'.

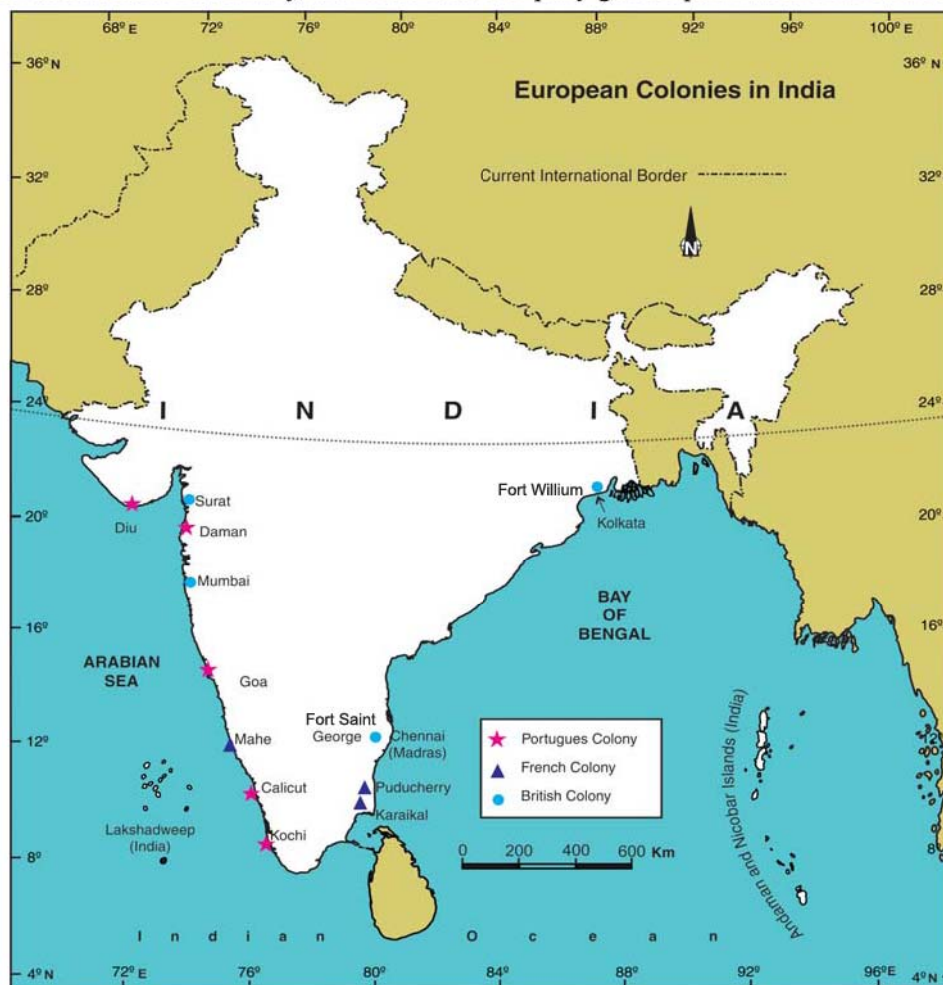


1.1 Sea Route to India

The Portuguese sailor Vasco-da-Gama discovered the sea route to India in 1498 A.D. When he reached Calicut in the western coast of India, with the help of indian Sailor he was welcomed by the then King Zamorin and allowed to carry out business there. Thus, this is considered as an important event in the world as this opened the doors for other Europeans to come to India.

Arrival of Europeans to India (Arrival of the British and establishment of trade centres)

The Portuguese were the first to arrive in India for trade after the discovery of the sea route to India. Within a span of a hundred years, the Portuguese took control of several territories like Diu, Daman, Goa, Cochin, Malacca etc. Inspired by the Portuguese success in trade, the Dutch (from Holland) and the Danish (from Denmark) arrived in India for trade. The English traders established the East India Company to carry out trade with India. In 1600 A.D., when Queen Elizabeth of England gave the permission to the East India Company to carry out trade with the eastern countries, the first ship, under the leadership of Captain William Hawkins arrived in Surat. But due to the dominance and opposition from the Portuguese, they were not allowed to establish their trade there. But finally, the East India Company got the permission from the Mughal Emperor



1.2 European Colonies

Jehangir and thus the British East India Company established its first trade centre (Kothi) in Surat in 1613 A.D. Initially, the Company established its trade centres in Surat, Bharuch and Ahmedabad.

But due to the strong presence of the Marathas in this region, the Company sensed danger to its existence and hence moved towards the south and east directions where they set up their centres in Machlipattanam (Andhra Pradesh), Saint George (Chennai) and Fort William (Kolkata). Mumbai became their headquarter in 1687 A.D.

The French East India Company arrived in India for trade in 1668 A.D. and eventually set up their trade centres in Mahe, Karaikal, Pondicherry (Puducherry), Chandranagar, Machlipattanam etc. In the 18th century, the English and the French were constantly busy establishing their rule in the entire world and conquering more territories. Between 1746 and 1763, there were three Karnataka Wars between the French East India Company and the British East India Company in India which the French East India Company lost, thus, making easy, the expansion of the British East India Company. Thus, at the end of this battle for power, the Portuguese were left

with Diu, Daman, Goa, while French had their trade centres at Chandranagar, Mahe, Karaickal and Pondicherry. Meanwhile, the Dutch had to leave forever.

Battle of Plassey

Siraj-ud-Daula was ruling over Bengal. Due to his impulsive nature, he had some opponents in his state. During this period, the British East India Company built a fortress around the trade centre in Kolkata on pretext of security reasons, without taking the permission of the Nawab. But Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula destroyed the fortress. When this news reached Madras (Chennai), a small army of the Company, led by Robert Clive, reached Bengal in order to help the Kolkata trade centre.

In spite of the army of the East India Company being strong, they realised that it was not easy to defeat the Nawab's army. So Robert Clive resorted to treachery. A conspiracy was planned in order to defeat the Nawab, in which the Nawab's commander-in-chief Mir Jafar and Seth Amichand were coaxed to join. On the pretext that the Nawab is unnecessarily harassing the people, a war was declared at a ground near a village named Plassey.

- The Battle of Plassey was fought on 23rd June, 1757 A.D..
- The battlefield of Plassey is situated 38 km from Murshidabad (West Bengal).

According to the plan, Mir Jafar lost the battle. Siraj-ud-Daula was defeated. Due to Robert Clive's treachery, the Battle of Plassey ended in just half a day. The Company, as a result, got a freehold over 24 Parganas. Mir Jafar was made the Nawab of Bengal. Thus, the foundation of the Company's rule in India was laid with the Battle of Plassey in 1757.

Battle of Buxar

The Britishers made Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal and under different pretexts, tried to extract plenty of wealth from him. Due to their greed to gain more powers, the East India Company managed to dethrone Mir Jafar and made Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal. Mir Qasim proved to be more ambitious than Mir Jafar and thus became a threat for the Company. Hence, Mir Qasim was removed and Mir Jafar was again made the Nawab. Mir Qasim took refuge with the Nawab of Awadh. During this time, the Mughal emperor Shah Alam had come to Awadh. So, all three of them decided to join hands and fight the Company unitedly and thus declared a war.

At Buxar, the East India Company fought against the united army (22nd October, 1764), in which the united army lost. Thus the Company got the Diwani rights (right to collect revenue) to Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Expansion of the Company Rule

The English government passed a regulating act in 1773 A.D. according to which the Governor of Bengal was made the Governor General and all the trade and political activities of the Company were brought under his direct control. The Mumbai-Madras Governor and his council were brought under him. Thus, Warren Hastings



Governor General Warren Hastings



Tipu Sultan

became the first Governor General of India. During his tenure, the First Maratha War and the Second Mysore War with Haider Ali of Mysore, was waged. The problems for the East India Company increased because it had to face both the powers simultaneously.

Cornwallis took over as Governor General after Warren Hastings. During the tenure of Cornwallis, the Third Mysore War took place with Tipu Sultan, famously known as the Tiger of Mysore. The Company had to join hands with the Marathas and the Nizam to defeat the Tipu Sultan. Tipu could not win against the combined forces and had to accept the treaty.

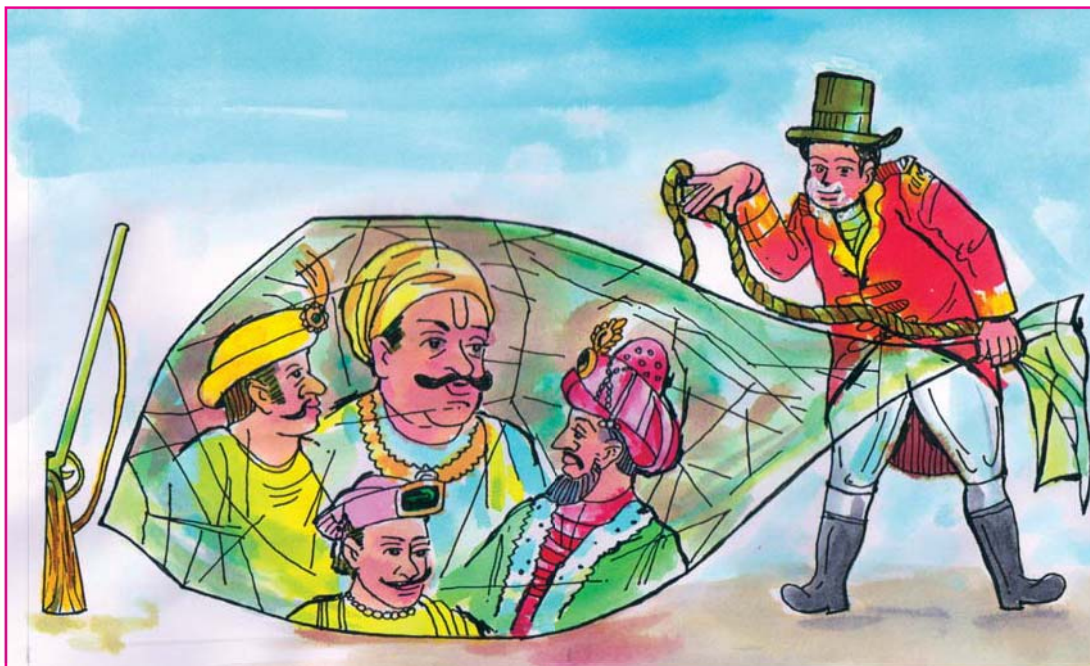
After Cornwallis, Sir John Shore became the Governor General. Due to some rigid policies adopted by him, the East India Company's fame declined and Marathas became stronger. So Governor General Wellesley, who came after John Shore, got the responsibility of making the Company supreme in India. For this, Wellesley introduced the Subsidiary Alliance System. The conditions of the System and the states adopted under this are as follows :

Terms and Conditions of Subsidiary Alliance System

- The army trained by the East India Company Government will be provided to the state that accepts the System. This army would protect the state from internal and external attacks.
- In return, the state accepting the System will provide for the army or give away provinces with equivalent income to the British.
- Without the permission of the Company, the state will not wage war or sign treaty with other states.
- There will be one English representative in the state assembly.
- Other foreigners not to be employed in the state.

The States - Rulers who accepted the Subsidiary Alliance System

- Nizam
- Mysore
- Awadh
- Gaikwad
- Scindia
- Bhosle
- Holkar



1.5 Wellesley and Subsidiary Alliance System

This System was like “sweet poison”. By implementing this System, Wellesley annexed many provinces and expanded the rule of the East India Company. Governor General Wellesley asked Tipu Sultan to accept the Subsidiary Alliance System, which he refused. For declining the Alliance System, the Company, with support from the Nizam, attacked Mysore in 1799. During this Fourth Mysore War, Tipu lost his life while fighting against the British.

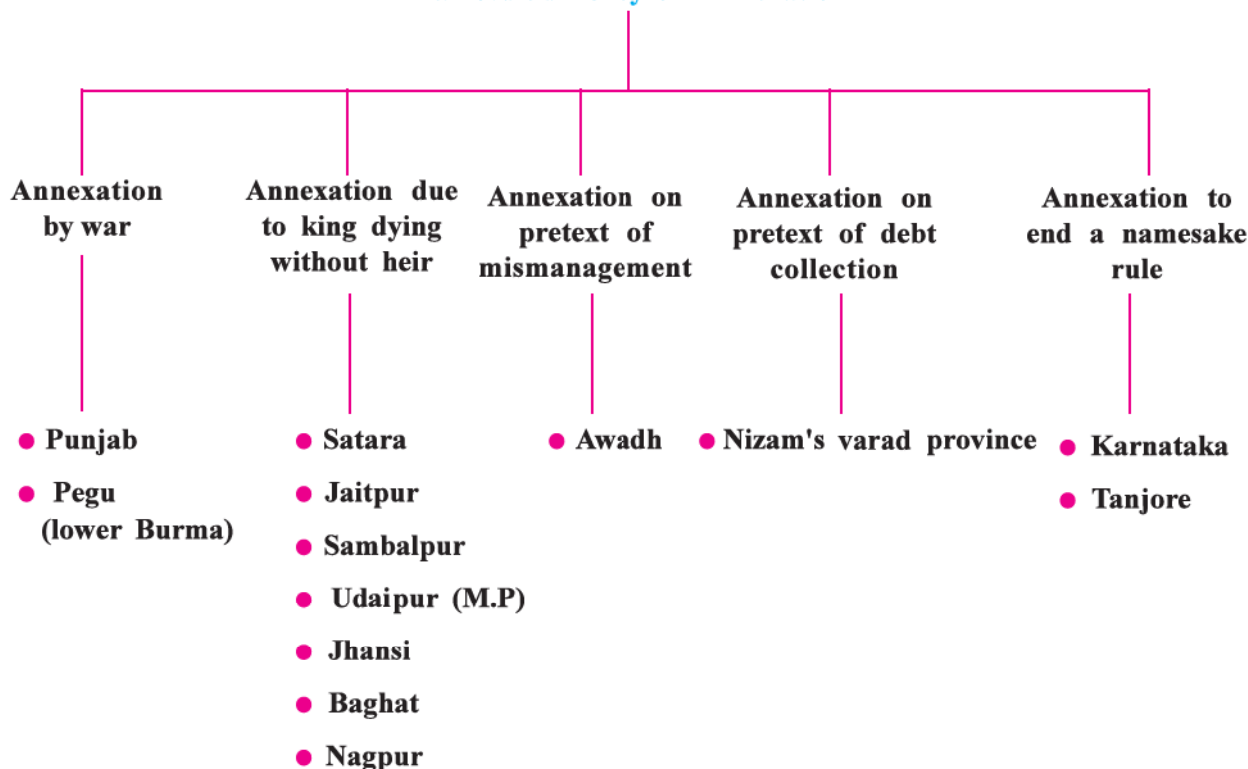
After Wellesley, Hastings came to India as Governor General. He waged a war with Nepal and made the

Gurkhas to join the army. Hastings fought a battle with the Pindharas and took control over them. With the Third Maratha War, the supremacy of the Company was established.

In comparison to the earlier Governor Generals, William Bentinck is known as a “liberal Governor General”. Bentinck believed that the dissatisfaction in different states due to the imperialist policy adopted by the previous Governor Generals could not bring about any unity. So he was very liberal in his deeds.

Dalhousie came to India as the Governor General in 1848. He was a fierce imperialist. Dalhousie adopted the Policy of Annexation for the expansion of the Company and British imperialism in India.

Dalhousie's Policy of Annexation



Besides being an imperialist, Dalhousie was also a reformist. The first railway line in India (between Mumbai-Thane, 1853 A.D.), wireless system between India and England, establishment of public works department, English education etc. were all introduced during his tenure. He passed laws to ban child marriage and advocated widow remarriage.

Within 100 years, from the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the British rule and the empire, both expanded. But, in the process, they had to face the dissatisfaction of the Indian states and this was manifested in the form of the first struggle for independence in 1857 A.D.

Economic impact of the Company

When we evaluate the 100 years of Company rule in India, we realise that, India, which had an enviable position in the world in the previous centuries, became merely a country that produced raw material for England and a prospective market for goods produced in factories. Bengal exported cotton cloth, raw silk, sugar, jute, muslin (1708 to 1756), but after the Dual Power Policy, the glitter of the economic prosperity of Bengal faded. [The Dual Power Policy (Dwimukhi Shasan) was introduced for the first time in Bengal whereby the power of collecting revenue was with the British while the responsibility of people's welfare was with the Nawab. Thus, the British got the power without any responsibility and the Nawab had the responsibility without any power. This was known as the Subsidiary Alliance System which ruined Bengal economically]

The unfair revenue collection policy by the Company made the Indian peasant a debtor. The British government imposed unfair taxes on the Indian cloth industries. They adopted various deceitful practices to ruin the prosperous Indian industries, because of which it completely collapsed. The Indian artisan became poor and

unemployed. The Company traders forced the weavers of Bengal to sign contracts for providing definite quantity of cloth in a short period. If the weaver refused, he would be punished by being lashed or jailed.

Before the arrival of the Company, the Indian villages were self-reliant and prosperous. But under the Company rule, they became dependent and poor.

During the rule of the East India Company, the first railway line between Mumbai and Thane and steamer service between India and England was started and development of the ports in Mumbai, Madras(Chennai) and Kolkata also took place.

Social impact of the Company Rule

During the British administration, the spirit of freedom of speech and thought developed among people due to the development of newspapers. In the Indian society, certain wrong social customs, rites and rituals were prevalent during this time like Sati System, female infanticide, child marriage etc. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Durgaram Mehta, Behramji Malbari etc. were the stalwarts whose role was instrumental in getting the laws passed with the help of Britishers. As the administrative framework in India was anglicised, there was a demand for people with knowledge of English. English education began to be imparted in India due to Lord Macaulay's endeavours. As recommended by Charles Wood, universities were established in Mumbai, Madras and Kolkata.

A whole class of people with knowledge of English developed because of English education. With the passage of time, this group made demands for social reforms and gave momentum to the process of reforms.

Conclusion

Thus, the East India Company came to India being allured by the prosperity and trade opportunity. The Company rule in India produced certain good and bad results in the political, economic, social and cultural fields. The Company adopted the policy of making England prosperous at the cost of India and the reforms they made in the administration, for their own interest, indirectly proved to be beneficial for India.

Exercise

1. Answer the following questions briefly.

- (1) Europeans felt the need to discover a new sea-route to India. Explain the statement.
- (2) What reforms did Dalhousie bring about ?
- (3) What were the important terms and conditions of the Subsidiary Alliance System ?
- (4) Which states were annexed under Dalhousie's Policy of Annexation ?

2. Answer the following questions in detail.

- (1) Give brief information about the Battle of Plassey.
- (2) Explain the economic impact of the Company Rule in India.
- (3) Explain the social impact of the Company Rule in India.

4. Choose the correct options from those given below.

- (1) Who discovered the sea route to India ?
 - (A) Columbus
 - (B) Prince Henry
 - (C) Vasco-da-Gama
 - (D) Bartholomew Dias

- (2) During whose tenure was the Public Works Department established in India ?
- (A) Wellesley (B) Dalhousie
(C) Warren Hastings (D) William Bentinck
- (3) Which of the following statements is false ?
- (A) The Battle of Plassey was fought in 1757.
(B) The Company got a freehold over 24 Parganas of Bengal due to the Battle of Plassey.
(C) The Company got the Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa due to the Battle of Plassey.
(D) Siraj-ud-Daula was the Nawab of Bengal during the Battle of Plassey.
- (4) Who became the first Governor General of India ?
- (A) Warren Hastings (B) Wellesley
(C) Dalhousie (D) Canning
- (5) With whom did the British fight the Third Mysore War ?
- (A) Tipu Sultan (B) Marathas
(C) Nizam (D) Haider Ali

Activity

- Collect information on the social and religious reformists of the middle ages and prepare an article on them.
- Prepare a list of states ruled by Indians during the Company Rule in India.
- Collect information about different places discovered and discoveries made during the era of geographical discoveries.
- Collect information about the economic prosperity of India during the ancient and middle ages.

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