

## 3. India and European Colonialism

### 3.1 Portuguese

### 3.2 British

### 3.3 Dutch

### 3.4 French

In the previous lesson, we learnt about European Colonialism and its impact on world history. In this lesson, we are going to learn about the spread of colonialism in India and its impact.

### 3.1 Portuguese

Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese seafarer reached the port of Calicut (Kozhikode) in 1498. Once landed on the Indian coasts the Portuguese did not take long to establish themselves in India. By the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese had brought a considerable portion of the Indian coasts under their control.

The Portuguese, took advantage of the strained relations among various rulers in South India. They established their colonies on the western coast and built forts for their protection and used them to protect their colonies from external attacks and to reinforce them continuously with supplies by using seaways. The Portuguese naval force was very strong. They used to launch sudden attacks on their enemy's territory from the sea and wreck it completely. The Indian local rulers could not match the Portuguese in their war tactics. Later, when they established their firm control on the Indian Ocean, it became necessary for the Indian rulers to get a license (Cartaz) from them for sailing on the Indian Ocean. If the locals rulers dared to set out on the sea without a Portuguese license, the ships were either seized or sunk by force. The Portuguese had become so powerful that even the mighty Mughals, and the Sultanates

in the south had to buy a license from them. By 1608, the Portuguese had their colonies on the western coast of India at Diu, Daman, Chaul, Goa (including Sashti and Bardesh), Honnavar, Gangoli, Basrur, Mangalore, Kannur, Kodungallur, Cochi and Kollam. Similarly on the eastern coast they had trader colonies at Nagpattinam, Mylapore (Mayilappore or also Sao Tome/San Thom), and Hugli in Bengal. This stretch of the Portuguese Empire had its capital at Goa.

### Try to do this :

Collect information of the church in Kerala, named after Vasco da Gama, with the help of internet.



### Do you know?

**Cartaz :** The Cartaz usually carried details like the name of the vessel (ship), the name of the captain of the ship, port of departure and arrival, the list of weaponry on the ship loaded for the purpose of self-defence, etc.

The Portuguese colonies had spread from Cape of Good Hope to Macau in China. They all were considered to be part of the Indian Empire of the Portuguese (Estado da India). There were several office holders appointed by the Portuguese king : 'Vice-rei' Capitaon-i-jaral' (Viceroy and General of the Army) for 3 years tenure. There used to be an advisory board to assist the Vice-rei, which included the Archbishop (Arcebispo) of Goa, Judge (Chancellor), In-charge of Company's possessions (Vedore da Fazenda), Captain (Capitaon) and a few aristocrats from

Portugal. Vice-rei used to be the presiding head of this administrative set up.

In the earlier half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century five ships used to arrive every year in the Indian ports. These ships were equipped with canons. The Portuguese had ship building facilities at Goa, Diu and Daman. Durable teakwood of best quality, essential for building ships was available in these regions. The Portuguese used to deploy seamen from Portugal to India. In those times, Indian rulers did not maintain a naval force, therefore, Indian rulers found it difficult to fight the strong naval forces of the Portuguese. Only one exception was that of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who had built his own navy. The Dutch and the British defeated the Portuguese naval forces in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the sea-battles.

The Portuguese prohibited building of any religions monument except churches in the Indian provinces under their rule. They also prohibited celebrations of religious festivals or wedding functions. The Portuguese rulers also tried to suppress the local languages. People were offered employment, with the intention to attract

them to Christianity. In the beginning of their rule they made Goa a free port. That resulted in attracting traders from various countries to Goa.

### 3.2 British

The British established 'East India Company' on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1600. Queen Elizabeth granted permission to the company to trade in the eastern countries.

In the beginning the East India Company's operations were limited to send their cargos to the eastern countries, to sell the British goods in those countries, to buy spices with the profits earned there and the cash carried from home, to sell the spices in England and to earn profits. The sailboats of those days needed to plan their forward and backward voyages in specific periods of the year. Therefore, to carry out trade transactions was more tedious. Under such circumstances the British were in need of a permanent place to build warehouses to store the goods bought at low prices. The British boats used to sail from England during the months of December to April and used to return to England after an year in the month of January after completing trading transactions in India. This required that they to stay in India over a period of 9-13 months. Hence, the company decided to build their 'factories' (emporiums – a place where goods are bought, stored and sold) in India. The staff of the factories were called 'factors'. In 1623, the British Government, under the civil and military law, granted the company an authority of adopting punitive measures for the erring staff. The company was also given the right of monopoly to trade in the eastern countries. Charles II, the king of England, issued a charter allowing the company to build forts in India, to maintain an army and to make treaties with non-Christians.



#### Do you know?

**Portuguese Trade :** The king of Calicut wrote to the King of Portugal in a letter sent with Vasco-da-Gama, "Our state is rich in spices like cloves, ginger, black pepper and precious stones. We expect you to pay us in gold, silver, corals in exchange for our spices and precious stones." Vasco-da-Gama sold the commodities in Portugal, which he carried from India. He could earn huge amount of money in that trade, which was sixty times more that the money he spent for his return journey to Portugal.

### Try to do this :

Make a list of the ship building facilities in pre-independence and post-independence India and collect information about the development of the ship building industry.

In the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the company operated from Surat and Madras (Chennai). The eastern coast, Odisha, Bengal in India and other eastern countries were under the company's jurisdiction. The factories at Rajapur in Maharashtra, port city of Mokha (Mocha in Yemen) in the Red Sea, Basra in the Persian Gulf were controlled by the Surat centre. The Surat factory staff comprised of an accountant, an in-charge of the stores, a treasurer, some factors and clerks. In addition there was a Christian priest, a surgeon and his assistant, cooks, Company President's personal servants and a trumpet blower.



### Do you know?

**Factory :** The British used to acquire large plots of land for their factories. These plots were used to build warehouses, residential quarters and offices were built on these plots. The main building of the factory carried 'Union Jack'. The meals provided to the staff included bread, meat, rice, *khichadi* of pulses and rice, pickles, etc. Company had created beautiful gardens for the benefit of the staff at Surat, Karwar, Machilipatnam, Petapuli, Chennai and Mumbai.

The British citizens were also appointed in the factories as apprentices, clerks and factors. Everybody, right from the President to apprentices lived in the factory premises. All were provided food by the company mess. They were permitted to trade various

commodities except those which were banned by the company (such as textiles, indigo, spices, wool, lead, corals, ivory, etc.).

The company started building forts in India as part of their strategy. They built a fort and a factory in Chennai. The fort was named as 'Fort St. George'. A mint was also established in Chennai. The British issued their own coinage of gold, silver, alloys and copper from this mint.

### Try to do this :

The currency of various countries is known by specific names. Prepare a list of countries and their currencies.

In 1661, Charles II, the king of England was engaged to Braganza, the Princess of Portugal. The king of Portugal gifted the islands of Mumbai to Charles II on this occasion. Abraham Shipman, an Englishman was assigned 500 soldiers and was appointed as the 'Governor of Bombay'. In 1665, Mumbai was fully under the British control. Mumbai comprised seven islands, namely, Mumbai, Mahim, Paral, Wadala, Worli, Sion (Shiv) and Mazgaon. Charles II leased Mumbai to the East India Company because the expenditure for its maintainance exceeded than the income earned from it. In 1669, the company appointed Sir George Oxenden as Governor of Surat and Commander-in-Chief of Mumbai. A British mint was established in Mumbai and coins of silver, copper and zinc were issued from there. This encouraged merchants and artisans to come and settle down in Mumbai. The company had 5-6 small ships and around 300 soldiers to ensure the security of Mumbai. The soldiers were given guns and swords.

### 3.3 Dutch

In 1602, several Dutch companies came together to form a company, named 'United

East India'. The Dutch Government issued a license to the company to conduct trading with the eastern countries. The same license permitted them to appoint staff, to establish factories, to build forts, to engage in battles against the eastern countries and also to sign treaties with them. Accordingly, the company appointed a Governor-General to take care of the Indian affairs. By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the company had established Dutch colonies and factories right from the eastern coast of Africa to Japan. It encompassed the present day regions of Mozambique, South Africa, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Siam, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Taiwan, China, Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia. The Dutch built various buildings in the premises of their factories and also fortification walls around them. They installed canons on the fortification walls for security. The Dutch also had native people in their staff. They established their first factory in 1602 at Petapuli in the northern parts of Coromandel coast. Their other factories were built in Machilipatnam, Pulicat, Thirupapuliyur, Port Nova, Karikal, Agra, Ahemdabad, Bharuch, Chinsura, Thatta, Khambayat, Surat and Nagapattan. They obtained permission from the Vijaynagara court and built forts in Pulicat and Nagapattan. Later, they defeated the Portuguese and acquired the forts at Kochi, Kodunglur, Kannur and Kollam. They also obtained monopoly in black pepper trade by entering a treaty with the king of Kochi. At the beginning

of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Dutch naval force was very strong. At any given moment they could deploy at least 20 war ships and an army of 3-4 thousand soldiers. The Mughal, Adilshahi and Qutubshahi ships were required to obtain license from the Dutch. If any ship was launched without a license, it was seized by the Dutch.

### 3.4 French

In 1664, 'French East India Company' (La Compagnie des Indes Orientalis) was established, with the initiative of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the French finance minister to King Louis XIV. The company was given the authority to trade with eastern countries, to maintain army and navy and also exemption from taxes. The company was also given the authority to enter a war or treaty with the eastern rulers. In 1666, the company sent a diplomatic contingent to the court of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and obtained the permission to establish a factory in Surat. The first French factory in Surat was established in 1668. Then the factories at Pondicherry (Puducherry), Chandranagar, Mahe, Karikal and Machilipatnam were built. During this period the French were fighting with the Qutubshahi ruler and the Dutch. Pondicherry was the main centre of the French operations. It was ruled by the Nawab of Karnataka. The members of the Nawab's family were fighting amongst themselves for the throne. The British and the French started intervening in the matter. It resulted in three battles between the British and the French from 1744 to 1763 C.E. These are known as 'Carnatic Wars'. The French were defeated by the British in the third battle. With the defeat of the French, there was no European rival left in India for the British.



#### Do you know?

The Dutch established their first colony at Machilipatnam. This port city came into existence in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. It is also mentioned in 'Periplus' of Erythrean Sea as 'Mosalia'.

In the next lesson, we are going to learn about the resistance to the foreign powers in India, put up by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

## Exercise

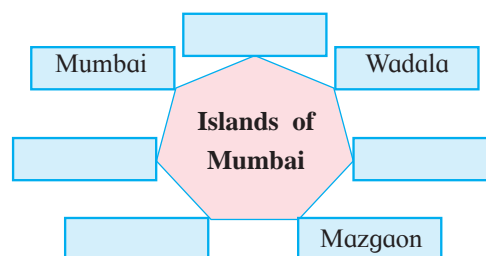
**Q.1 (A) Choose the correct alternative and rewrite the statement.**

- Vasco da Gama was a seafarer from .....  
 (a) Poland (b) England  
 (c) France (d) Portugal
- The license was given by England to the East India Company to trade with the eastern countries by .....  
 (a) Sir George Oxenden  
 (c) Princess Braganza  
 (b) Queen Elizabeth  
 (d) Homer

**(B) Find the incorrect pair from group 'B', and write the corrected one.**

- | Group 'A'           | Group 'B'                          |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Arcebispo        | Chief Executive Officer            |
| 2. Chancellor       | Judge                              |
| 3. Vedor da Fazenda | In-charge of Company's possessions |
| 4. Capitaon         | Captain                            |

**Q.2 Complete the concept map.**



**Q.3 Explain the following statements with reasons.**

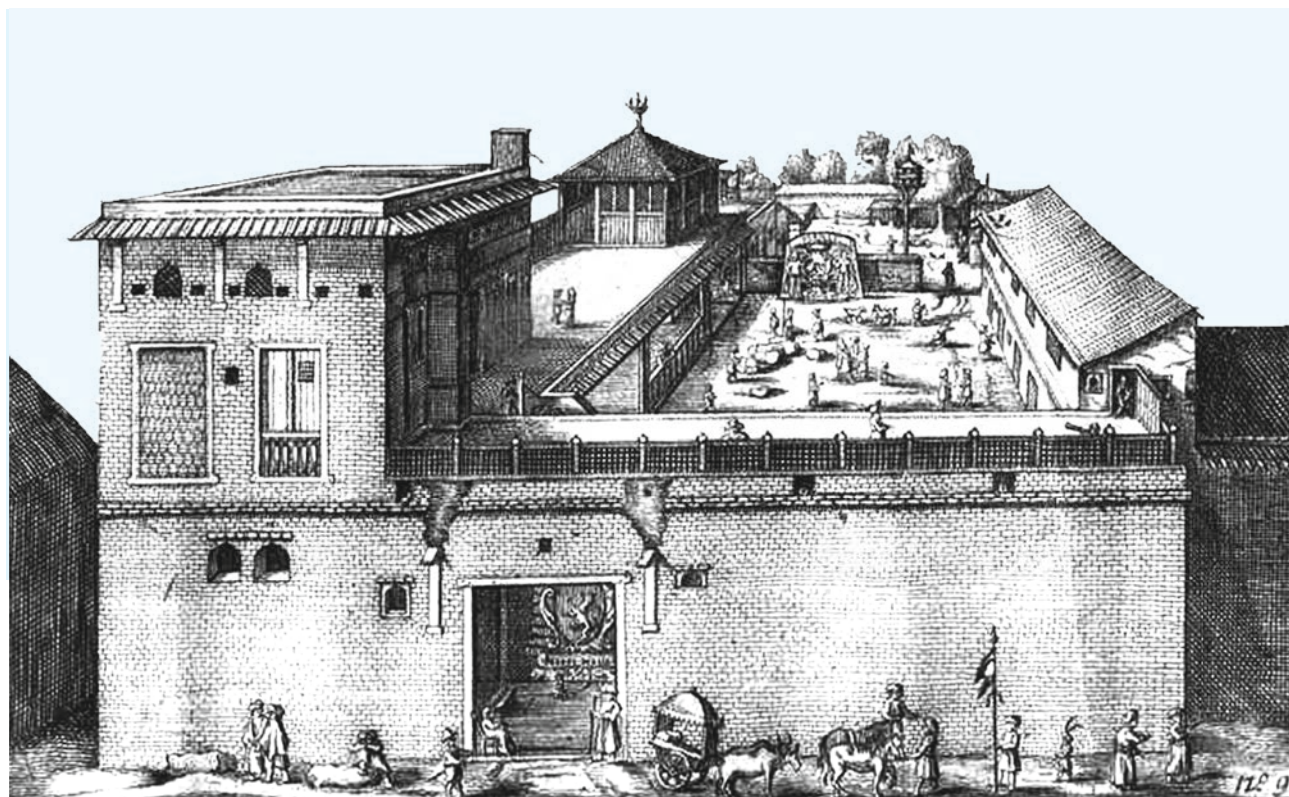
- The Indian rulers had to obtain cartaz.
- Indian rulers found it difficult to fight the Portuguese.

**Q.4 Answer the following questions in detail.**

- Which are the places where the Portuguese established their colonies?
- What were the rights given to United East India Company by the Dutch government?

### Project

Compile the names of the Governors of British East India Company from 1600 to 1857 C.E.



British Factory - Surat