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## ADVENT OF EUROPEANS

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# ADVENT OF EUROPEANS

## Introduction

- Commercial contacts between India and Europeans were ancient via the land route, but there were various shortcomings of Land-based routes like multiple taxations, theft, conflicts with tribes/kingdoms etc.
- Therefore in 1494, Columbus of Spain started for India searching for a Sea Route and discovered America instead.
- In 1498, Vasco da Gama of Portugal discovered a new sea route from Europe to India, utilising which he reached Calicut by sailing around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope. This was the first arrival of European in India by Sea route.

## Why Europeans came to India?

- Trade-in Agro-based products like Cotton and handicrafts was the primary reason which led to the advent of Europeans.
- India was the primary source of spices. Some spices have antibiotic properties as well as they were also used to preserve the food.
- Sea routes were discovered in order to reduce conflicts, taxation etc., which were generally faced during land-based journeys.

## Portuguese in India

- The Portuguese came to India to trade, and they wanted to take away the spice trade from the Arab traders. They even resorted to piracy in order to capture the spice trade.

- Francis de Almeida was the first governor of the Portuguese in India. Later, in 1509 Albuquerque became the governor.
- Albuquerque captured Goa from the ruler of Bijapur in 1510. Subsequently, Goa became the capital of the Portuguese settlements in India.
- Portuguese influence declined in India by the end of the 16th century as naval and commercial powers of France, English and Dutch had given solid competition to Portuguese and Spanish trade monopoly.
- Around the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they had lost all their possessions in India except Goa, Diu and Daman as the Marathas captured Salsette and Bassein in 1739.
- Portuguese lived for temporary periods in the settlements and then returned to Portugal.
- Portuguese were intolerant of the existing religions of India and tried to force people to become Christian.

## Causes of decline of Portuguese Power in India

- Rise of other trading powers, i.e. English, French, Dutch.
- Spain won Portugal in 1580 A.D. Phillip II of Spain neglected Portuguese dominions in India.
- The Portuguese administration had become corrupt.
- The religious policy backfired them.
- In the 17th century, the Dutch also expelled the Portuguese from most parts of India.

## British East India Company

- The British East India Company, sometimes also called John Company, was a Joint- Stock Company established in 1600 as The Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies.

- William Hawkins stayed at the Court of Jahangir from 1608 to 1611.
- The British Company gained a foothold in India in 1612 when Mughal emperor Jahangir granted the rights to establish a factory in Surat to Sir Thomas Roe.
- The Court of directors was the supreme authority in framing policies for the company.

## Move of British towards Colonisation

- In the first 50 years of its arrival, the British East India Company had no interest in developing colonies; it preferred to be engaged in trade only.
- This policy saw a change by 1650 when the power of the old guard British royalist merchants was broken, and a new class of merchants wrested control of the Company.
- Later, they tried to establish political power to compel the Mughals to free trade and keep the rival European out.
- In 1686 hostilities between the English and Mughal emperor broke out when the English had declared war on Emperor. English lost the war and apologised for the same.
- In 1717 Farrukh Siyar confirmed the privileges granted in 1691 Farman and extended them to Deccan and Gujarat.

## The Dutch East India Company

- The Dutch East India Company was established in 1602.
- Dutch established their settlements at Masulipattinam, Karaikal, Nagapattinam, Pulicat, Surat, Chinsura and Kasimbazar.
- Dutch exported indigo, cotton textiles, saltpetre, raw silk, and opium from India.
- It was the first company to issue stock.
- In the 17th century, before the prominence of the British, they emerged as the most dominant power in European trade in the East.

- The main centre of the Dutch in India was Pulicat, and later it was replaced by Nagapattinam.
- Indonesian Islands of Java, Sumatra, and the Spice Islands, where the spices were produced, were the main interest of the Dutch.
- In 1667, the Dutch agreed to leave English settlements in India alone, while the English gave up all claims to Indonesia.
- Dutch commercial activities started to decline by the beginning of the 18th century, and with the Battle of Bedera with the English in 1759, it came to an end.
- Short sited commercial policy, which was mainly based on trade in spices, was also a significant cause of the decline of Dutch Power.

### The Danish East India Company

- The Danish formed an East India Company and arrived in India in 1616.
- Substantial Danish settlement in India was Serampore in Bengal; it was also their headquarters in India.
- They could not establish their position in India and finally sold all their Indian settlements to the English in 1845.
- They were more concerned with missionary activities.

### French East India Company

- French East India Company was established in 1664.
- The first French factory in India was established at Surat.
- The French company was created, financed and controlled by the State, and it differed from the English company, which was a private commercial venture.
- The duplex was an influential French governor in India (1742).



- Duplex began the policy of extending territorial empire in India and started political occupations, leading to series of conflicts with English in the form of Carnatic Wars.
- Battle at Wandiwash against the East India Company in 1760 was the decisive battle for the French existence in India through which they lost almost all their possessions in India.



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