British Policies – Part (1)

- ## Expansion Of Britishers

The British who came to India for trade eventually became the political master of India. From Battle of Plassey to annexation of Punjab in 1849, the entire Indian sub-continent had been brought under British control. Apart from outright wars they employed methods like Subsidiary Alliance and Doctrine of Lapse to expand and consolidate their empire in India.

Conquest of Bengal

The prosperity of Bengal province attracted many European Companies including English East India Company.
In 1717, English East India Company obtained Farman from the Mughal Emperor Farrukh Siyar. This Farman granted English East India Company freedom to export and import their goods in Bengal without paying taxes.
This Farman was a source of conflict between the Company and the Nawab of Bengal because it meant less revenue for the Bengal government.

Battle of Plassey (1757)

Finally the two sides fought in the battle field of Plassey on 1757. The major part of the army led by Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh took no part in the fighting.
In this battle Siraj was captured and killed.Mir Jafar was awarded by for his support to the English and was made the Nawab of Bengal.
Mir Jafar was deposed in 1760 as he was not being able to fulfill the ever increasing demands of the English. In his place Mir Qasim, son-in-law of Mir Jafar, was made the Nawab of Bengal.

Battle of Buxar(1764)
But even Mir Qasim did not prove to be a loyal subordinate of the English. A war broke out between the English and Mir Qasim. Eventually he fled to Awadh, and formed an alliance with Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Awadh and Shah Alam, the Mughal emperor. They together fought with the English in 1764 at Buxar but were defeated.

The Treaty of Allahabad was signed on 16 August 1765, between the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and Robert, Lord Clive, of the East India Company, as a result of the Battle of Buxar of 22 October 1764. Based on this treaty the Company was granted the diwani, or the right to collect revenue, in Bengal and Bihar and Orissa.

With this victory the English East India Company became the political master of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Conquest of Mysore (Anglo–Mysore Wars)

After annexation of Bengal, the English never looked back. Now, they turned their eye on Mysore.

Mutual conflict between the regional powers of Mysore, Nizam and Marathas gave the English an opportunity to interfere and extend their political dominance. This motive of the English resulted into four wars between the English and the Mysore Kingdom known as Anglo-Mysore Wars.

In the **First Anglo-Mysore war (1767-69)**, Mysore under Haider Ali gained some success against the Britishers.

The **Second Anglo-Mysore war (1780-1784)** proved indecisive and ended with the Treaty of Mangalore.

In the **Third Anglo–Mysore War (1789–1792)**, Tipu Sultan, invaded the nearby state of Travancore, which was a British ally. The war ended with the defeat of Tipu Sultan and the signing of the **Treaty of Seringapatam**. According to the treaty, Tipu had to surrender half of his kingdom to the British East India Company and its allies.

In **Fourth Anglo–Mysore War (1799)**, the British defeated Tipu Sultan. Tipu died while defending his capital. Nearly half of Mysore territory was divided between the British and the Nizam.

Conquest of Maharashtra (Anglo-Maratha Wars)

Conquest of Maratha Empire was done through a series of wars between the English and the Maratha Empire.

In **First Anglo Maratha War (1775–1782)**, the British were defeated and the **Treaty of Salbai** was signed.

In the **Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1806)** and the Third **Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1818)**, the British stood victorious.
The main reason behind the defeat of Maratha Chiefs was their mutual conflict. The British took advantage of this disunity and extended their dominance in western part of India.

Annexation of Awadh(1856)

The kingdom of Awadh was annexed by the British on account of 'misgovernance'. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Awadh was accused by the British of having misgoverned his state. His state was therefore annexed in 1856 by Lord Dalhousie.

Awadh was the only Indian state whose ruler Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was dispossessed on the ground of "misgovernnance".

Conquest of Sind (1843)
Since 18th century, Sind was being ruled by some Baluchi chiefs collectively known as "Amirs of Sind".
General Charles Napier captured the Sind province in 1843 through the Battle of Miani.

Conquest of Punjab
After the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, there was a state of anarchy in Punjab.
Conquest of Punjab was completed in 1849.
British efforts to control Punjab resulted into two wars.

In the **First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–1846),** the British defeated Sikh troops and the Treaty of Lahore was signed.

To avenge the defeat in the First Anglo-Sikh war, Sikh troops started a number of revolts leading to the **Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-1849).** The war ended with whole up Punjab under British control.

Important Events during British Expansion in India.

Events	Year
Battle of Plassey	1757
Battle of Buxar	1764
The Treaty of Allahabad	1765
First Anglo-Mysore war	1767-69
Second Anglo-Mysore war	1780-1784
Third Anglo–Mysore War	1789–1792
Treaty of Seringapatam.	1792
Fourth Anglo–Mysore War	1799
First Anglo Maratha War	1775–1782
Treaty of Salbai	1782
Second Anglo-Maratha War	1803-1806
Third Anglo-Maratha War	1817-1818
Annexation of Awadh	1856
Conquest of Sind	1843
First Anglo-Sikh War	1845–1846
Second Anglo-Sikh War	1848-1849

- ## Black Hole Tragedy

Siraj, a young man of 23 years sat on the throne of Nawab of Bengal amid plots and counter-plots by the friends and family members. One of the adversaries was his maternal aunt Ghaseti Beghum who was placed by him in confinement. Another adversary was the greatest traitor of all times Mir Jafar who was not appointed him Mir Bakshi.

The young Nawab was wary of the growing intervention of the British in the affairs of the province. The ungovernable temper of Siraj led to a rupture with the English within two months after his accession. He marched upon Calcutta with a large army and laid the siege of the site of the Fort William.

Many British fled down the river in their ships and the remainder 146 people were compelled to surrender. These people were stuffed for a night in a room of 18 square feet, with only two windows and 123 people (Including natives) got suffocated to death. This is called the **Black Hole of Calcutta** (1756).

British Policies – Part (2)

- **Land Revenue System: Introduction**

Land Revenue Systems before British Rule

Tax from the land was a major source of revenue for the kings and emperors from ancient times. But the ownership pattern of land had witnessed changes over centuries. During Kingship, land was divided into Jagirs, Jagirs were alloted to Jagirdars, these Jagirdars split the land they got and allocated to sub-ordinate Zamindars. Zamindars made peasants cultivate the land, in-return collected part of their revenue as tax.

Land Revenue Systems in British India

Land Revenue System under British. British got Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in 1765. The major aim of British East India Company was to increase their land revenue collection. So its policies were aimed at getting maximum income from land without caring about its consequences on cultivators and peasants.

Three major systems of land revenue collection existed in India. They were – Zaminidari, Ryotwari and Mahalwari.

Zamindari System (Permanent Settlement)

Zamindari System

British Government
Zamindars
Peasants

Zamindari System
(Permanent Settlement)
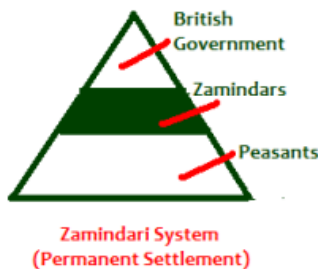
- Zamindari System was introduced by Cornwallis in 1793 through Permanent Settlement Act.

- It was introduced in provinces of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Varanasi.

- Also known as Permanent Settlement System.

- Zamindars were recognized as owner of the lands. Zamindars were given the rights to collect the rent from the peasants.

  - The realized amount would be divided into 11 parts. 1/11 of the share belongs to Zamindars and 10/11 of the share belongs to East India Company.

Ryotwari System

- Ryotwari System was introduced by Thomas Munro in 1820.

- Major areas of introduction include Madras, Bombay, parts of Assam and Coorgh provinces of British India.

  - In Ryotwari System the ownership rights were handed over to the peasants. British Government collected taxes directly from the peasants.

  - The revenue rates of Ryotwari System were 50% where the lands were dry and 60% in irrigated land.

Mahalwari System

- Mahalwari system was introduced in 1833 during the period of William Bentick.

- It was introduced in Central Province, North-West Frontier, Agra, Punjab, Gangetic Valley, etc of British India.

- The Mahalwari system had many provisions of both the Zamindari System and Ryotwari System.

- In this system, the land was divided into Mahals. Each Mahal comprises one or more villages.

- Ownership rights were vested with the peasants.

- The villages committee was held responsible for collection of the taxes.

British Policies – Part (3)

- ## Malguzari System

The land tenure prevailing in the erstwhile Central Provinces was known as Malguzari system in which the Malguzar who was merely a revenue farmer under the Marathas. When the Marathas came into power in this region, they farmed out the revenues of villages to persons of influence and wealth, who were called Malguzars. During the British Rule, they were given proprietory rights and were held responsible for payment of reveue. If the headman was weak or was for any other reason, unable to answer for the sum the authorities expected, or if a court favourite wanted the village, the headman was replaced without hesitation by a farmer. The farmer, or manager was at first called Mukaddam (the Hindi or Marathi form of Arabic Mugaddam). But under the rule for summary settlement of 1855, the title of Malguzar was given. Under the Malguzari system, the Lambardar/Sadar Lambardar appointed from among the Malguzars, was the revenue engager. Other cultivators were either Absolute occupancy tenant, Occupancy tenant, Sub-tenant, Raiyat-Malik or lessees, who could be ejected from their holdings on various grounds. Malguzar (proprietor or co-sharer) held land under special description, namely, Sir land and Khudkast land.

Subsidiary Alliance System

Subsidiary Alliance System was first introduced by the French East India Company Governor Joseph Francois Dupleix. It was later used by Lord Wellesley who was the Governor-General of India from 1798 to 1805. Early in his governorship, Lord Wellesley adopted a policy of non-intervention in the princely states. However, later, he adopted the policy of forming subsidiary alliances, which played a major role in the expansion of British rule in India.

Different Forms of Subsidiary Alliance

The subsidiary alliance took different forms in its gradual evolution:

1. In its first form, the English agreed to help the native rulers with a fixed force in return for a fixed sum of money.

2. In its second form, the English agreed to maintain a fixed and permanent military force to help their ally in return for a fixed annual amount of money. The subsidiary force, however, was kept in the territory of the Company.

3. In its third form, the English not only agreed to maintain a permanent and fixed subsidiary force to help their ally in return for a fixed annual amount of money but also kept the force within the territory of the ally.

4. In its fourth and final form which was introduced by Lord Wellesley, the English agreed to maintain a permanent and fixed subsidiary force within the territory of their ally. However, in return, they did not take money but took over a part of the territory of the ally permanently to themselves. This is how the subsidiary alliance system became a means of extending the Company's territory in India.

Features of Subsidiary Alliance System

- The subsidiary alliance in India was planned and executed by Lord Wellesley to extend the company's rule in India but this term was initially introduced by French Governor Dupleix.

- The native Indian ruler who entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to dissolve his own armed forces while accepting the British forces in his territory.

- He also had to pay for the maintenance of the British army. If he failed to make the payment, a portion of his territory was taken away and ceded to the British.

- In return of this, the British would protect the native state against any foreign attack or internal revolt with the help of their army.

- Although the British promised non-interference in internal affairs of the native Indian state, this was rarely maintained.

- The Indian state who entered into subsidiary alliance with the Britishers could not enter into any alliance with any other foreign power. It means, he could also not employ any other foreign nationals other than Englishmen in his service. And, if he were employing any, on the signing of the alliance, he had to terminate them from his service. The idea was also to curb the influence of the French.

- After entering into the subsidiary alliance with the Britishers, the native Indian state could also not enter into any political connection with another Indian state without the approval of the British.

- The native Indian ruler, thus, lost all of his powers in respect of foreign affairs and the military affairs.

- Thereafter, he virtually lost all his independence and became a British 'protectorate'.

Terms of Subsidiary Alliance

In the fourth and final phase of Subsidiary Alliance system, Lord Wellesley added the following terms to the alliance –

1. A British resident was kept at the court of the native ruler.

2. The native ruler was not allowed to employ any European or a citizen of a state which was enemy of the Britishers in his service.

3. The native ruler could not maintain any friendly relation with any other ruler without the approval of the Britishers.

4. The Britishers agreed to protect the territory of the native ruler from foreign aggressions or attacks.

5. The Britishers had agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the native rulers.

Every native ruler who entered into the subsidiary alliance with the English had to accept all the above mentioned terms besides permanently ceding a part of his territory to the Britishers in the final phase of Subsidiary Alliance. This is how this became a tool for the Britishers to extend the company's rule in India.