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## Political Rulers of 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The 18<sup>th</sup> century in India was marked by many political upheavals. After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D, India was divided into many smaller states. Let's study about it.

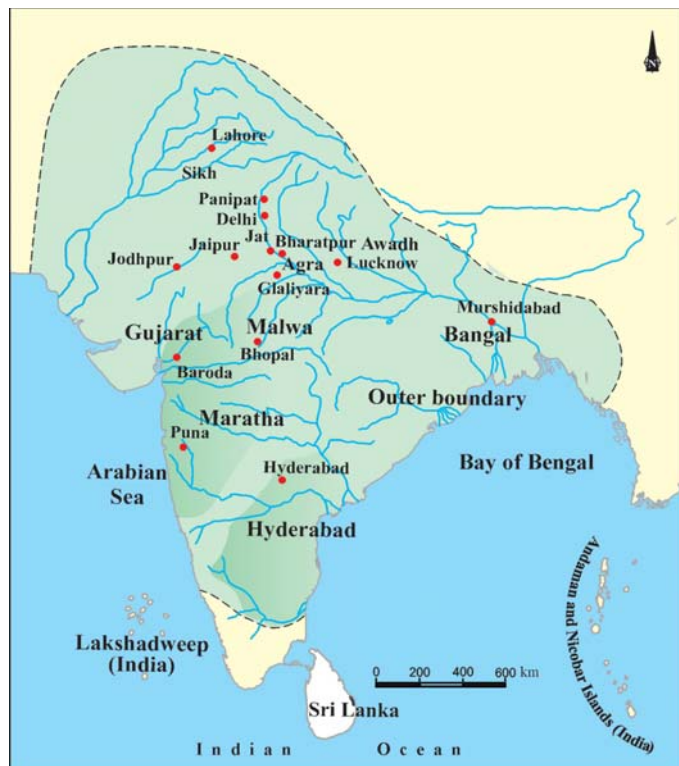
### The Last Rulers of the Mughal Dynasty

After the death of Aurangzeb, the last ruler of the Mughal dynasty, a sultan named Bahadur Shah came to the Mughal throne and established peaceful relations with the Rajput and the Maratha Kingdoms. However, he plotted inheritance war between the Marathas also. In his time, after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, Sikh Sardar Banda Bahadur revolted against the Mughal Empire.

After the death of Bahadur Shah in 1712 A.D Jahandar Shah came to the throne. In 1713 A.D he was overthrown by Farrukhsiyar. At this time two brothers, known as Saiyad brothers dominated the empire. They removed Farrukhsiyar from the throne and made Mohammad Shas the king. He ruled for a long time. During his time, Nadir Shah of Iran invaded India in 1739 A.D, who gave a heavy blow to the Mughal empire. Shah Alam-II, who came to the throne in 1759 A.D, was defeated by the Britishers in the Battle of Buxar and made a pensioner of the company.

### Bengal

Murshid Kulikhan and Alivardi Khan established an independent state in Bengal. In 1757 A.D, Siraj-ud-Daulah became the Nawab of Bengal. The battle of Plassey took place between Nawab of Bengal and East India company in 1757 A.D. With the victory of this battle, the Britishers, acquired the 24 Parganas. After the Battle of Plassey, Mir Jafar was dethroned and Mir Kasim was made the Nawab of Bengal. He fought the Battle of Buxar against the Britishers with the help of Nawab of Avadh and Mughal emperor but was defeated. This brought an end to the Nawab rule in Bengal. The victory of this war established the rule of British East India company in Bengal.



India of 18<sup>th</sup> century

### Rajput States

After the fall of the Mughal Empire, Jaipur was the most powerful state in Rajasthan. Raja Sawai Jai Singh was efficient statesman, reformer, jurist and science lover. He founded the city of Jaipur. He was a great astronomer. He set up modern observatories in Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain and Mathura. Other important Rajput states were Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kota, Mewar, Bundi and Shirohi.



Jantar Mantar



## The Sikh Empire

Guru Nanak founded Sikhism in 15<sup>th</sup> century. Sikhism is associated with the Guru tradition, in which the 10<sup>th</sup> Gurus were born. The 10<sup>th</sup> guru Guru Govind Singh united the Sikhs and established the Sikh state. After Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Bahadur staged a fierce revolt against the Mughal Empire. The Sikh were divided into 12 groups. Ranjit Singh, a powerful leader of Sukarchakia clan, developed the Sikh empire. He conquered Lahore, Amritsar, Kashmir, Peshawar and Multan and established a vast territory of the Sikh empire. His army consisted of the European general and soldiers. He made his army as modern as the armies of Europe. In Lahore, he set up a canon factory. He was religiously liberal. However, after his death the Britishers annexed the Sikh Empire in 1849 A.D.

## The Maratha Empire

Chhatrapati Shivaji is at the forefront of the great rulers of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Shivaji created an independent state by troubling the Sultan of Bijapur, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and the Portuguese etc.

Under the leadership of Chhatrapati Shivaji, Marathas adopted Guerrilla warfare in the South. He established an efficient, systematic and democratic regime for an independent state. Along with these achievements, Shivaji's noble character and generous policies were also included. After Chhatrapati Shivaji, Shivaji's grandson Shahuji was imprisoned by Aurangzeb. After 1707 A.D, when Shahuji was released, an inheritance conflict broke out between him and his aunt Tarabai. Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath, associated with Shahuji helped him in his conquest. Peshwa practice began in the Maratha Kingdom from his time.



**Chhatrapati Shivaji**



**Balaji Vishwanath**

Balaji Vishwanath was the first Peshwa. He developed Maratha Kingdom and took all the powers in his hands. In 1720 A.D, when he dies, his son Baji Rao-I became the Peshwa. He was a skilled warrior and a shrewd politician. He merged many Mughal territories into the Maratha Empire and expanded Maratha state. He conquered Malwa, Gujarat and Bundelkhand. Not only this, he defeated the Nizam of Hyderabad also. He transformed Maharashtra into a great Maratha Empire.

After his death in 1740 A.D, his son Balaji Bajirao became the Peshwa. He achieved victories from Bengal to Mysore.

Iran's Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded India in 1761 A.D. The third battle of Panipat took place between the Marathas and Ahmed Shah Abdali, in which Marathas were defeated. Balaji Baji Rao died after hearing the traumatic news. This war weakened the Marathas. As a result the British power rose in India.

### Exercise

#### 1. Answer the following questions in one-two sentences :

- (1) What was the name of Bengal's first Nawab ?
- (2) Which sikh clan did Ranjit Singh belong to ?
- (3) Between whom, was the third battle of Panipat fought ?
- (4) Who founded Jaipur ?

#### 2. Answer the following questions in points :

- (1) Give outline of the political scenario of India in the 18<sup>th</sup> century ?
- (2) State the achievements of Peshwa Bajirao-I.
- (3) Explain the contribution of Sawai Jaisingh in the field of science.
- (4) Prepare a chart of the names of the last rulers of the Mughal dynasty.

#### 3. Find the appropriate option from the following options and write the correct answer :

- (1) Which of the following Mughal emperor died in 1707 A.D ?  
(A) Akbar (B) Bahadur Shah  
(C) Jahangir (D) Aurangzeb
- (2) Which of the following Sikh chiefs revolted against the Mughals ?  
(A) Amardas (B) Ramdas  
(C) Banda Bahadur (D) Arjundev
- (3) Who established the observatory in India ?  
(A) Akbar (B) Sawai Jaisingh  
(C) Jashwant Singh (D) Rana Pratap
- (4) Who was the first peshwa among the following ?  
(A) Balaji Vishwanath (B) Bajirao-I  
(C) Madhavrao-I (D) Balaji Bajirao

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