

History of India (c. 1757 to 1947 CE)

Unit-I

[c] The Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar-the establishment of the British rule in India.

[d] Robert Clive and Dual Administration in Bengal.

Course focus

- Battle of Plassey (1757): the political breakthrough that enabled the East India Company to dominate Bengal.
- Battle of Buxar (1764): the military victory that decisively strengthened Company power in eastern India and prepared the way for the grant of Diwani in 1765.
- Robert Clive: his role in the transformation of the Company from a commercial body into a territorial-political power.
- Dual Administration in Bengal (1765-1772): Clive's system separating the collection of revenue from the formal responsibility for administration and justice.
- Historical interpretation: from commercial privileges to political sovereignty, and from indirect control to more direct colonial administration.

Learning outcomes

- Explain the political, economic and military background of Plassey and Buxar.
- Distinguish clearly between the significance of the two battles.
- Assess Robert Clive's contribution to British expansion in Bengal.
- Describe the structure, working, contradictions and consequences of Dual Administration.
- Use key dates, personalities, treaties and concepts accurately in university examination answers.

I. Bengal on the Eve of British Political Expansion

1. Bengal as a prosperous province of the Mughal Empire

- Bengal was one of the richest regions of eighteenth-century India because of its fertile alluvial plains, dense population, textile production, riverine transport and extensive trade.
- The province included Bengal, Bihar and, under the Nawabs, a large political sphere centred on Murshidabad.
- The decline of effective Mughal authority after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 increased the autonomy of provincial governors.
- Murshid Quli Khan, Shuja-ud-din and Alivardi Khan consolidated provincial authority before Siraj-ud-daulah became Nawab in 1756.
- The Nawabs were formally subordinate to the Mughal emperor, but in practice exercised considerable autonomy in revenue collection, administration and military affairs.

2. Growth of European commercial competition

- The English East India Company, French Compagnie des Indes, Dutch VOC and other European trading groups maintained commercial settlements in India.
- In Bengal, the principal European centres included Calcutta (English), Chandernagore (French), Chinsurah (Dutch), Serampore (Danish) and the Portuguese settlement at Bandel.
- European companies sought trading privileges, customs concessions, investment opportunities and political protection for their factories.
- The Anglo-French rivalry in India intensified during the Carnatic Wars and encouraged European companies to maintain armed forces and intervene in Indian politics.

3. Why Bengal became crucial to the English East India Company

- Bengal supplied high-value textiles, especially cotton and silk manufactures, and was integrated into Indian Ocean and Asian trade networks.
- Control over Bengal promised access to large revenues, which could finance armies and further territorial expansion.
- Calcutta, with Fort William, developed into an important English commercial and strategic base.
- The Company's military resources increased as European officers, Indian sepoys and artillery were organized into increasingly effective forces.

4. Tensions between the Nawab and the Company

- The Company possessed privileges under earlier Mughal grants, but disputes arose over the interpretation and abuse of these privileges.
- The Company's use of the dastak (duty-free pass) became a major source of conflict because private Company servants also used or transferred passes for personal trade.
- The English strengthened the fortifications of Calcutta without adequately consulting the Nawab, who viewed this as a challenge to his sovereignty.
- The Company interfered in local politics and protected persons whom the Nawab considered offenders or rivals.
- The accumulation of private wealth by Company servants created an incentive for political manipulation.

5. Siraj-ud-daulah and the crisis of 1756

- Siraj-ud-daulah succeeded Alivardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal in April 1756.
- He faced internal opposition from influential figures such as Mir Jafar, Rai Durlabh, Yar Lutuf Khan and members of powerful banking and commercial groups.
- He also faced the growing assertiveness of the English and French trading companies.
- In June 1756, Siraj-ud-daulah captured Calcutta after the English failed to comply with his demands regarding fortification and political conduct.

- The English later recovered Calcutta under Robert Clive, supported by naval forces under Admiral Charles Watson.

6. The so-called “Black Hole of Calcutta”

- English accounts described a tragic incident in which prisoners allegedly suffered severe deaths in a confined room after the fall of Calcutta.
- The traditional account was later amplified in British narratives and used to portray Siraj-ud-daulah as exceptionally cruel.
- Modern historians have questioned the numerical details and reliability of parts of the conventional story.
- For historical study, the event should be treated critically rather than simply as an unquestioned cause of British conquest.

Key concept: From commerce to political intervention

- The central transformation of the period was not instantaneous conquest but the gradual linking of commercial interests with armed force, diplomacy and intervention in succession politics.

II. The Battle of Plassey (23 June 1757)

1. Immediate background

- After recovering Calcutta, the English sought both security for their trade and the removal of Siraj-ud-daulah as a political obstacle.
- Robert Clive entered into secret negotiations with discontented Bengali elites and Company allies.
- The principal conspirators included Mir Jafar, the commander of the Nawab’s forces; Jagat Seth banking interests; Rai Durlabh; and other influential groups.
- A secret agreement was made to support Mir Jafar’s accession if Siraj-ud-daulah were defeated.
- The Company promised rewards, territorial and financial concessions, and recognition of claims held by its allies.

2. Why the conflict became a political conspiracy

- Plassey was not a simple contest between two equal armies fighting solely through battlefield tactics.
- The English deliberately exploited divisions within the Nawab’s court.
- The Company’s military force was relatively small compared with the nominal strength of the Nawab’s army, making political betrayal and non-cooperation decisive.
- The battle therefore demonstrates the importance of diplomacy, intelligence, finance and court politics alongside military power.

3. The opposing forces

Side	Main leadership	Approximate character of force	Key feature
East India Company	Robert Clive; naval support from Admiral Watson	A comparatively small but disciplined force of European troops, sepoys and artillery	Higher cohesion and unity of command
Nawab of Bengal	Siraj-ud-daulah	A very large army with cavalry, infantry, artillery and contingents of commanders	Serious internal divisions and unreliable cooperation

4. Location and course of the battle

- The battle took place at Plassey (Palashi), near the Bhagirathi River, north of Calcutta, on 23 June 1757.
- The Nawab's army was numerically much larger than Clive's force.
- Mir Jafar and other conspirators did not effectively commit their troops to decisive action against Clive.
- A monsoon rain reportedly damaged the Nawab's artillery ammunition because adequate protection from moisture was inadequate, while the Company's ammunition was better protected.
- After the death and confusion surrounding Mir Madan, one of Siraj's loyal commanders, the Nawab's position became increasingly weak.
- Clive eventually ordered an advance when the Nawab's camp was in disarray.
- Siraj-ud-daulah fled the field and was later captured and killed.

5. Why the English won at Plassey

- Internal conspiracy and betrayal within the Nawab's camp were more decisive than simple military superiority.
- Clive successfully combined diplomacy, secret negotiations, financial inducements and military pressure.
- The Company army had comparatively strong discipline, cohesion and artillery coordination.
- The Nawab's command structure was fragmented by factional politics.
- The English had strategic support from the Calcutta base and naval resources.

6. Immediate consequences of Plassey

- Mir Jafar was installed as Nawab of Bengal by the Company.
- The Company received enormous financial payments and commercial privileges.
- The English gained significant influence over Bengal's political decisions.

- The victory weakened French influence in Bengal and strengthened the English position during the wider Anglo-French struggle.
- Clive and other Company servants accumulated substantial private fortunes through gifts, payments and contracts.
- The Company moved from being a trading corporation with fortified settlements toward becoming a power capable of making and unmaking Indian rulers.

7. Payments and territorial concessions after Plassey

- Mir Jafar was required to meet large financial claims made by the Company and its servants.
- The Company received territorial concessions around Calcutta, while individuals associated with the Company also secured personal fortunes.
- The scale of the payments weakened the financial position of the Bengal government.
- The political relationship that emerged was unequal: the Nawab remained nominally sovereign, but the Company increasingly controlled the conditions under which he ruled.

8. Historical assessment of Plassey

- Plassey is often regarded as a turning point because it gave the Company decisive political influence in Bengal.
- It was not yet the complete establishment of British rule over Bengal; rather, it created the political and financial conditions for later consolidation.
- The battle illustrates how colonial expansion could be achieved through collaboration with Indian elites, manipulation of succession disputes and financial pressure.
- The “battle” itself was relatively brief compared with the magnitude of its political consequences.

III. From Plassey to Buxar: Company Power and Growing Conflict

1. Mir Jafar and the problem of dependence

- Mir Jafar became Nawab but faced the difficult task of meeting the financial demands of the Company while preserving administrative authority.
- He repeatedly struggled to satisfy Company officials and private traders seeking compensation and privileges.
- The Company’s servants increasingly interfered in Bengal’s internal affairs.
- Mir Jafar became less useful to the Company when he could not meet its demands and when opposition developed around him.

2. Mir Qasim’s attempt to restore autonomy

- In 1760, the Company replaced Mir Jafar with his son-in-law Mir Qasim as Nawab of Bengal.

- Mir Qasim attempted to establish a more efficient administration and reorganize his finances.
- He shifted his capital from Murshidabad to Munger and strengthened his army.
- He sought to reduce the Company's unfair commercial advantages and create a more balanced fiscal system.
- The key dispute concerned customs duties: Company servants used dastaks to avoid duties, while Indian merchants were subject to them.
- Mir Qasim attempted to remove this inequality by abolishing internal duties, thereby placing Indian traders and Company traders on a more equal footing.
- The Company considered this an attack on its commercial privileges and conflict escalated.

3. The conflict of 1763

- Hostilities broke out between Mir Qasim and the Company in 1763.
- Mir Qasim's forces fought the Company in several engagements but ultimately suffered defeat.
- Mir Qasim fled westward and sought allies against the Company.
- He formed a coalition with Shuja-ud-daulah, Nawab of Awadh, and Shah Alam II, the Mughal emperor.

4. The coalition at Buxar

- The combined forces of Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-daulah and Shah Alam II confronted the Company army under Hector Munro.
- The battle took place at Buxar in Bihar on 22–23 October 1764; 22 October is commonly used in many Indian textbooks, while some references emphasize 23 October depending on chronology used.
- Unlike Plassey, Buxar was a major pitched battle in which the Company directly defeated a substantial coalition force.

IV. The Battle of Buxar (1764)

1. Causes of the Battle of Buxar

- The Company's expanding political and commercial ambitions brought it into conflict with Mir Qasim's attempts to preserve Nawabi independence.
- The dispute over dastaks and customs duties created a major economic conflict.
- Mir Qasim's administrative and military reforms threatened the Company's privileged position.
- After defeat in Bengal, Mir Qasim allied with the Nawab of Awadh and the Mughal emperor.
- The coalition aimed to resist the Company's expansion and restore political balance in eastern India.

2. Opposing forces

Side	Leaders	Political objective
Company	Major Hector Munro; East India Company forces	Defeat the coalition and secure durable political leverage in eastern India
Coalition	Mir Qasim; Shuja-ud-daulah; Shah Alam II	Expel or restrain Company power and preserve political autonomy

3. Course and character of the battle

- The Company army used disciplined infantry, artillery and coordinated battlefield tactics.
- The coalition had numerical strength but lacked the same level of unified command and coordination.
- Company troops successfully resisted and then broke the coalition's attack.
- The defeat demonstrated that Company military power could defeat not only a regional Nawab but also a coalition involving the ruler of Awadh and the Mughal emperor.

4. Immediate consequences

- Mir Qasim lost his political position and continued to live in exile.
- Shuja-ud-daulah was defeated and forced to negotiate with the Company.
- Shah Alam II came to terms with the Company and eventually granted the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the Company in 1765.
- The Company became the recognized revenue-collecting authority in major parts of eastern India.
- Buxar therefore provided a stronger constitutional and fiscal foundation for Company rule than Plassey.

5. Plassey and Buxar compared

Aspect	Plassey (1757)	Buxar (1764)
Nature	A relatively small battle shaped by conspiracy and non-cooperation	A major pitched battle between the Company and a coalition
Main opponent	Siraj-ud-daulah, Nawab of Bengal	Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-daulah and Shah Alam II
Political result	Mir Jafar installed; Company influence expanded	Coalition defeated; Company gained decisive political leverage
Long-term significance	Opened the door to political control in Bengal	Strengthened the Company's claim to revenue and political authority
Relation to Diwani	Created the conditions for later acquisition	Directly preceded the 1765 settlement granting Diwani

6. Why Buxar is often considered more decisive than Plassey

- At Plassey, the Company mainly exploited internal divisions in Bengal; at Buxar, it defeated a coalition in open battle.
- Buxar demonstrated that Company power could withstand and defeat multiple Indian political authorities acting together.
- The post-Buxar settlement gave the Company legal-fiscal authority through the grant of Diwani.
- The Company could now extract revenue from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and use those resources to finance further military expansion.

Key analytical formulation

- Plassey gave the Company political influence; Buxar gave it military credibility and a stronger fiscal-constitutional basis for territorial power.

V. The Establishment of British Rule in India: From Bengal to a Territorial Empire

1. The Company's transformation

- The East India Company began as a commercial corporation operating under royal and parliamentary charters.
- The victories of 1757 and 1764 enabled the Company to intervene directly in Indian politics.
- After 1765, revenue from Bengal became a major source for maintaining Company armies and financing trade.
- The Company increasingly used Indian revenue to sustain an expanding military-fiscal state.

2. The significance of the Diwani grant, 1765

- In August 1765, Shah Alam II granted the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company in return for an annual payment and political arrangements established after the war.
- Diwani meant the right to collect land revenue and exercise civil revenue administration in the emperor's name.
- The grant strengthened the Company's legitimacy and shifted it from an influential trader to a revenue-collecting power.
- The Company could now finance its own territorial expansion increasingly from Indian revenues rather than relying mainly on British capital.

3. The Treaty of Allahabad, 1765

- The settlement of 1765 is closely associated with the Treaty of Allahabad and the arrangements made between the Company, Shah Alam II and Shuja-ud-daulah.
- The settlement restored Shuja-ud-daulah to Awadh, but under conditions that strengthened the Company's strategic position.

- The Mughal emperor accepted Company authority over revenue collection in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.
- Awadh became a buffer between Company Bengal and the western/north-western political powers, while also coming under growing Company influence.

4. Why Bengal became the financial base of British expansion

- Bengal's large agricultural revenue allowed the Company to pay soldiers, purchase goods and finance administration.
- The Company increasingly bought Indian goods using revenue collected in India, reducing the need to export large amounts of bullion from Britain.
- The military-fiscal resources of Bengal enabled later campaigns against Mysore, the Marathas and other Indian powers.
- Thus, the conquest of Bengal had all-India consequences beyond the province itself.

5. Historiographical caution: was 1757 the "beginning" of British rule?

- 1757 is conventionally treated as a major turning point, but British rule in India was not established in one event.
- The process involved commercial penetration, political alliances, military conquest, revenue collection, legal arrangements and administrative restructuring over several decades.
- The Company did not immediately abolish all indigenous institutions; for long periods it ruled through or alongside existing Indian officials and rulers.
- Therefore, "establishment of British rule" is best understood as a process of state formation and imperial expansion, not a single date.

VI. Robert Clive: Career and Historical Role

1. Who was Robert Clive?

- Robert Clive (1725–1774) entered the English East India Company as a young "writer" and later became a soldier and political leader.
- He played a prominent role in the Carnatic conflicts and became famous for military and diplomatic actions in Bengal.
- His career illustrates the growing importance of Company servants who combined commercial, military and political functions.

2. Clive and the recovery of Calcutta

- After the fall of Calcutta in 1756, Clive was sent from Madras with Company forces.
- He helped recover Calcutta in January 1757.
- The recovery restored the Company's strategic base and strengthened its bargaining position with Siraj-ud-daulah.

3. Clive and the road to Plassey

- Clive moved beyond defending commercial interests and actively participated in political negotiations regarding the Nawabship of Bengal.
- He cultivated alliances with discontented Bengali elites and negotiated the installation of Mir Jafar.
- He used intelligence, diplomacy, secrecy and military force as complementary instruments.

4. Clive's second administration in Bengal, 1765-1767

- Clive returned to Bengal in 1765 to reorganize Company affairs after the rapid expansion of its power.
- He attempted to stabilize the relationship between the Company and Indian rulers while preserving Company control over revenue.
- He sought to restrict private trade and corruption among Company servants through regulations and agreements.
- He helped create the institutional conditions under which the Company could exercise Diwani while avoiding direct assumption of all administrative functions.

5. Clive's reform measures

- Clive recognized that unchecked private enrichment by Company servants threatened the Company's financial and political stability.
- He sought to limit private trading abuses and introduced measures concerning the acceptance of gifts and presents.
- The famous "covenant" system required Company servants to agree to restrictions on private trade and related practices.
- Clive also reorganized military arrangements and attempted to control the financial privileges of Company officers.
- His reforms were incomplete and often resisted, but they reflected the changing needs of a company that had become a territorial power.

6. Historical assessment of Clive

- Supportive interpretation: Clive was a skilled strategist and administrator who protected Company interests and built the foundations of British power in Bengal.
- Critical interpretation: Clive benefited personally from Bengal's political upheaval and helped create systems that facilitated economic extraction and political domination.
- Balanced assessment: Clive's importance lies less in any single battlefield achievement than in his integration of military force, diplomacy, financial demands and political manipulation.

7. The “Clive and the Plassey Plunder” issue

- The wealth acquired by Clive and Company officials after Plassey became controversial in Britain as well as India.
- Clive later defended his conduct before the British Parliament and argued that the opportunities were extraordinary in the circumstances.
- His career contributed to a growing British debate over “nabobs,” corruption and the constitutional dangers of a private company controlling a wealthy Asian province.

VII. Dual Administration in Bengal (1765–1772)

1. Definition

- Dual Administration refers to the system introduced in Bengal after the Company received the Diwani in 1765, under which the Company controlled revenue while the Nawab nominally retained responsibility for criminal justice and internal administration.
- The system is closely associated with Robert Clive’s second governorship and the arrangements made in 1765.
- It created a separation between de facto authority and de jure or nominal authority.

2. Basic structure of the system

Area of authority	Nominal holder	Effective influence
Diwani / revenue collection	East India Company	Company directly controlled revenue collection through its agents and supervisors
Nizamat / criminal justice and internal administration	Nawab of Bengal	Company exercised decisive influence through financial control and political supervision
Commercial privileges	East India Company	Company enjoyed major concessions and influence in trade

3. The Company’s arrangement with the Nawab

- The Company did not initially assume every visible function of government.
- The Nawab remained nominally responsible for administration under the Nizamat, including policing and criminal justice.
- The Company controlled the financial foundation of government through the Diwani.
- Because administration required money, control of revenue gave the Company overwhelming practical leverage over the Nawab’s government.

4. Indian intermediaries and the working of Dual Administration

- The Company did not immediately build a large European bureaucracy in Bengal.
- It relied heavily on existing Indian revenue officials, accountants, zamindars and intermediaries.

- Muhammad Reza Khan became an important figure associated with revenue and administrative management during this period, especially in the role of Naib Nazim and Naib Diwan arrangements.
- This dependence allowed the Company to extract revenue while limiting its direct administrative costs.

5. Why did the Company adopt Dual Administration?

- The Company wanted the financial benefits of Diwani without immediately assuming the political and administrative burdens of full government.
- The arrangement reduced the Company's immediate costs of establishing a large bureaucracy.
- It allowed the Company to preserve the appearance of Mughal-Nawabi legitimacy while exercising real authority.
- The Company could avoid direct responsibility for many failures of administration while retaining control of the revenue system.

6. Main characteristics

- Division between revenue authority and administrative responsibility.
- Nominal survival of the Nawab's political authority alongside Company dominance.
- Heavy dependence on Indian officials and intermediaries.
- Revenue extraction prioritized over long-term administrative reform.
- Limited direct accountability of Company officials for the social consequences of policy.
- Commercial and political interests of the Company overlapped.

7. Economic consequences

- The Company gained access to Bengal's revenue resources but did not initially develop a stable system for protecting the productive base of the economy.
- Revenue demands could be rigid, and intermediaries had strong incentives to maximize collections.
- Company servants continued to participate in private trade, creating tension between official authority and private profit.
- The system contributed to administrative confusion because the institutions collecting revenue were separated from those formally responsible for governance.

8. Social consequences

- Peasants and local producers could face pressure when revenue collections were intensified or when intermediaries sought to compensate for fiscal demands.
- The privileges enjoyed by Company traders distorted local commercial competition.
- The system did not establish a coherent welfare-oriented administration; revenue extraction remained central.

- Indian officials and zamindars continued to play important roles, but increasingly within a framework shaped by Company financial interests.

9. Political consequences

- The Nawab's authority became increasingly nominal.
- The Company acquired the real resources necessary for military and political expansion.
- The political sovereignty of Bengal became fragmented: formal titles and practical power did not coincide.
- The arrangement highlighted the contradiction of a private trading company exercising sovereign functions without initially assuming complete governmental responsibility.

10. Administrative weaknesses of Dual Administration

- There was no clear single centre of accountability.
- Revenue officials served Company interests, while the Nawab formally carried responsibility for many civil and criminal functions.
- The Company had incentives to maximize income but fewer incentives to invest in social administration.
- Corruption, private trade and administrative confusion remained persistent problems.
- The system weakened effective governance because power was separated from responsibility.

11. The Bengal famine of 1769–1770 and the debate over responsibility

- A devastating famine struck Bengal in 1769–1770, following crop failure and wider ecological and economic pressures.
- Large numbers of people died, and agricultural production suffered severe disruption.
- The famine exposed the weaknesses of the existing fiscal and administrative arrangement.
- Historians debate the relative weight of natural factors, revenue demands, market conditions, grain trade, hoarding and administrative failures.
- It is therefore too simplistic to explain the famine through a single cause, but it is historically important as evidence of the severe stresses of early Company rule.

12. End of Dual Administration, 1772

- Warren Hastings, who became Governor of Bengal in 1772, moved toward ending the system.
- The Company assumed more direct responsibility for revenue and administration.
- Revenue collection was brought more directly under Company supervision, with greater reliance on district-level arrangements.
- The end of Dual Administration marked a transition toward a more openly bureaucratic form of Company government.

VIII. Why the Dual Administration Failed

1. Structural contradiction

- The Company had the power to collect revenue but attempted to avoid full responsibility for administration.
- This produced a fundamental mismatch between authority and accountability.

2. Revenue extraction without adequate administrative capacity

- The Company inherited an existing revenue system but did not immediately establish the bureaucratic mechanisms needed for efficient and accountable governance.
- Intermediaries became essential, increasing the opportunities for corruption, concealment and local oppression.

3. Commercial interest versus public responsibility

- The East India Company was fundamentally a profit-seeking corporation.
- Once it became the main revenue-collecting authority, this commercial objective came into tension with the responsibilities of government.
- The result was a system in which public authority was used to secure resources for a private corporation.

4. Administrative ambiguity

- The formal division between Diwani and Nizamat confused lines of authority.
- The Nawab lacked adequate financial independence, while the Company often claimed that it was not directly responsible for all aspects of administration.

5. Political instability

- Changes in the position and status of the Nawab, Company officials and Indian intermediaries made the administration unstable.
- The system was increasingly difficult to manage as the Company's responsibilities expanded.

6. Outcome

- By 1772, the logic of indirect control had become difficult to sustain.
- The Company moved toward direct administration, laying the groundwork for later reforms under Warren Hastings and, eventually, more systematic colonial bureaucracy.

IX. Major Concepts and Terms for Examination

Term	Meaning / significance
Dastak	A duty-free trade pass granted under Mughal authority, whose use by Company servants became a major source of conflict with Bengal's Nawabs.

Diwani	The right to collect revenue and exercise civil revenue authority in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, granted to the Company in 1765.
Nizamat	The sphere of criminal justice, policing and executive functions nominally associated with the Nawab after 1765.
Dual Administration	The system in which the Company controlled the Diwani while the Nawab nominally retained Nizamat responsibilities.
Nawab	The provincial ruler of Bengal, formally under the Mughal emperor but increasingly autonomous in the eighteenth century.
Mir Jafar	Commander in Siraj-ud-daulah's service who allied with the Company and became Nawab after Plassey.
Mir Qasim	Nawab of Bengal from 1760 to 1763 who attempted to strengthen the state and reduce Company commercial privileges.
Shuja-ud-daulah	Nawab of Awadh who allied with Mir Qasim and Shah Alam II against the Company and was defeated at Buxar.
Shah Alam II	Mughal emperor whose political settlement with the Company in 1765 helped legitimize the Company's revenue authority.
Plassey	Battle of 23 June 1757 that enabled the Company to dominate Bengal's political succession.
Buxar	Battle of 1764 in which the Company defeated the combined forces of Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-daulah and Shah Alam II.
Company state	A form of territorial rule exercised by the East India Company before the British Crown assumed direct authority in 1858.

X. Chronology: Essential Dates

Date	Event
1707	Death of Aurangzeb; acceleration of Mughal political fragmentation.
1756	Siraj-ud-daulah became Nawab of Bengal; captured Calcutta.
January 1757	Company forces under Clive recovered Calcutta.
February 1757	Treaty of Alinagar between Siraj-ud-daulah and the English.
23 June 1757	Battle of Plassey; Siraj-ud-daulah defeated.
1757	Mir Jafar installed as Nawab of Bengal.
1760	Mir Qasim became Nawab of Bengal in place of Mir Jafar.
1763	Open conflict between Mir Qasim and the Company intensified; Mir Qasim was defeated and fled.
22 October 1764	Battle of Buxar (date commonly given in many Indian textbooks).
1765	Treaty of Allahabad and grant of Diwani to the Company.

1765–1767	Clive's second governorship in Bengal and the consolidation of Company power.
1765–1772	Period commonly identified with Dual Administration in Bengal.
1769–1770	Bengal famine.
1772	Warren Hastings ended Dual Administration and moved toward direct administration.

XI. Model Analytical Frameworks for University Answers

1. How to answer: "Discuss the Battle of Plassey and its significance."

- Introduction: Place Plassey within the crisis of Bengal and the growing Anglo-French and Company-Nawab rivalry.
- Background: explain dastaks, fortification, political opposition to Siraj and the Company's recovery of Calcutta.
- Conspiracy: discuss Mir Jafar, major financial interests and Company diplomacy.
- Battle: explain date, location, approximate imbalance of forces, non-cooperation and Clive's tactics.
- Consequences: Mir Jafar's accession, financial payments, commercial concessions and Company political influence.
- Assessment: argue that Plassey was primarily a political turning point rather than merely a military one.

2. How to answer: "Why was the Battle of Buxar more decisive than Plassey?"

- Begin with the nature of Plassey as a conspiratorial political victory.
- Explain the later conflict with Mir Qasim and the dispute over commercial privileges.
- Describe the coalition at Buxar.
- Emphasize that Buxar was a major open military victory against three important political authorities.
- Link Buxar to the 1765 settlement and the grant of Diwani.
- Conclude that Buxar gave the Company a stronger basis for fiscal and territorial sovereignty.

3. How to answer: "Explain Dual Administration in Bengal."

- Define Dual Administration and identify the period 1765–1772.
- Explain the distinction between Diwani and Nizamat.
- Show how the Company exercised real power through control of revenue.
- Discuss the role of Indian intermediaries and the Nawab's declining authority.
- Analyze the economic, administrative and social consequences.
- Explain why the famine and administrative failures intensified criticism.

- End with Warren Hastings' reforms of 1772 and the move toward direct Company administration.

4. Strong conclusion formula

- The events of 1757–1765 transformed the East India Company from a privileged trading corporation into a territorial power; the Dual Administration of 1765–1772 represented an intermediate stage in which the Company sought the revenues of sovereignty without initially accepting the full administrative responsibilities of government.

XII. Short-Answer Revision Questions

- 1. Why was Bengal economically important to the East India Company?
- 2. What was a dastak?
- 3. Who was Siraj-ud-daulah?
- 4. When and where was the Battle of Plassey fought?
- 5. Why did Mir Jafar support the conspiracy against Siraj-ud-daulah?
- 6. Mention two consequences of Plassey.
- 7. Why did the Company replace Mir Jafar with Mir Qasim?
- 8. Why did Mir Qasim abolish internal duties?
- 9. Who were the three principal leaders of the anti-Company coalition at Buxar?
- 10. When was the Battle of Buxar fought?
- 11. Why was Buxar more decisive than Plassey?
- 12. What is meant by Diwani?
- 13. What was the significance of the Treaty of Allahabad, 1765?
- 14. Who was Robert Clive?
- 15. What was Clive's role in the rise of Company power in Bengal?
- 16. What is Dual Administration?
- 17. Distinguish between Diwani and Nizamat.
- 18. Why did the Company rely on Indian intermediaries during Dual Administration?
- 19. Why did Dual Administration fail?
- 20. When and under whom was Dual Administration ended?

XIII. Long-Answer / Essay Questions

- Discuss the causes, course and consequences of the Battle of Plassey.
- "Plassey was won more by conspiracy than by military strength." Discuss.
- Examine the circumstances leading to the Battle of Buxar and analyze its historical significance.
- Compare the Battles of Plassey and Buxar as stages in the establishment of British power in India.
- Assess the role of Robert Clive in the transformation of the East India Company from a trading company into a political power.

- Explain the system of Dual Administration in Bengal and examine its major defects.
- How did the grant of Diwani in 1765 change the character of Company rule in Bengal?
- Critically examine the relationship between revenue extraction, commercial privilege and political power in early Company rule.

XIV. Suggested Readings and Source Orientation

- Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India* - useful for the broad political and economic transition from Mughal decline to Company rule.
- Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition and After* - useful for the long-term development of colonial rule and historiographical context.
- P.J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead* - important for understanding Bengal's political economy and the early Company state.
- Sushil Chaudhury, *From Prosperity to Decline: Eighteenth-Century Bengal* - useful for Bengal's economy, trade and the transition under Company rule.
- R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaudhuri and Kalikinkar Datta, *An Advanced History of India* - useful as a conventional narrative reference for examination preparation.
- Contemporary materials to consult: Company correspondence, farmans and sanad-related records, Persian administrative materials, European travel and commercial accounts, and later parliamentary inquiries into Company conduct.