



Sambhav

Day 47

Question 1. There was the rise of independent, successor and new states in India during post decline of the Mughal Empire. Discuss the causes behind the rise of these states. (250 Words)

Question 2. Almost all the European powers who came India as a merchant, docked in the peninsular India though Northern India had more resources and fertile land. Discuss. (250 Words)

02 Jan 2023 | GS Paper 1 | History

Approach / Explanation / Answer

Answer 1

Approach

- Introduce the rise of several states in India after the fall of Mughal Empire.
- Discuss the factors behind the rise of these states.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

Aurangzeb's reign itself witnessed rebellions by regional groups like the Jats, Sikhs, and Marathas. They defied the authority of the Mughal state in their bid to create kingdoms of their own. They did not succeed in their efforts, but they influenced the future course of political events in their respective regions. Their continuous struggle against the empire for political ascendancy weakened the empire.

Body

Rise of Regional States: The states that emerged as a result of the decline of the Mughal Empire can be classified into the following three broad categories:

- **Successor States:** These were the Mughal provinces that turned into states after breaking away from the empire. Though they did not challenge the sovereignty of the Mughal ruler, but established independent and hereditary authority in several areas. Examples are Awadh, Bengal, and Hyderabad.
- **Independent Kingdoms:** These states came due to the destabilisation of the Mughal control over the provinces, examples being Mysore and the Rajput states.
- **The New States:** These were the states set up by the rebels against the Mughal empire,

examples being the Maratha, the Sikh, and the Jat states.

Causes behind the rise of these states:

- **Mughal empire-related causes or Mughal-centric view** sees the rise of the states within the structure and functioning of the Mughal empire itself.
 - **The region-related causes** are the turmoil and instability in the different parts of the empire.
 - The Sikhs, Marathas, and Rajputs did not possess the capacity to overthrow the Mughal empire; they merely resisted Mughal power to gain and keep their independence in their respective territories.
- **Shifting Allegiance of Zamindars:** The zamindars were hereditary owners of their lands who enjoyed certain privileges on hereditary basis. They helped in the collection of revenue and in local administration. Many local zamindars helped the nobility, the other powerful class within the empire, to take advantage of the weakness of the empire and carve out independent kingdoms for themselves.
- **Jagirdari Crisis:** Mughal rule has often been defined as “the rule of the nobility”, because these nobles played a central role in administering the empire. Rise of Regional Aspirations Aurangzeb’s reign itself witnessed rebellions by regional groups like the Jats, Sikhs, and Marathas. They defied the authority of the Mughal state in their bid to create kingdoms of their own. They did not succeed in their efforts, but they influenced the future course of political events in their respective regions.
- **Economic and Administrative Problems:** The number of amirs and their ranks or mansabs had increased sharply over time; there was little land left to be distributed among them as jagirs.
 - Then there were the wars, the luxurious lifestyles of the emperors and amirs alike, and the reduction in khalisa land, all of which burdened the state.
 - There was, moreover, no significant scientific and technological advance that could have improved a stagnant economy. The once flourishing trade did not enrich the empire’s coffers even as the inroads by European traders grew along coastal India.
 - These economic and administrative problems only multiplied following the death of Aurangzeb. The empire had become too vast to be efficiently administered by a centralised system when the rulers were weak and incompetent.
- **Rise of Regional Aspirations** of the local leaders to carve out separate states for themselves like Marathas, Rajput and Jat, etc.

Conclusion

- The independent political systems that emerged in the provinces continued to maintain ties with the Mughal imperial authority and acknowledged the emperor’s importance as an umbrella. Even rebel chieftains of the Marathas and Sikhs recognised the Mughal emperor as the supreme authority. The polity that emerged in these states was regional in character, and functional with the collaborative support of the different local groups.
- The provincial rulers failed to develop a system based on sound financial, administrative, and military organisation. In fact, these states were strong enough to challenge Mughal power, but none was able to replace it with a stable polity at an all-India level.

Answer 2

Approach

- Introduce the European powers that came to India.
- Discuss why Europeans as a merchant docked in the peninsular India though Northern India had more resources and fertile land.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

The European powers that engaged in trade with India, such as the British, Dutch, and Portuguese, tended to focus on the southern regions of the country, particularly along the west and east coasts.

- Some European powers also had trading posts and established commercial relationships in the northern region of India. For example, the British East India Company had a number of trading posts in the northern part, such as in Agra and Allahabad, and the Dutch East India Company also had a presence in the region.
- However, it is true that the majority of European powers tended to focus their attention on the peninsular region of India rather than the northern region. There are several reasons for this.

Body

There were several reasons behind the dominance of Europeans in the southern India. Like:

- **Quest for and Discovery of a Sea Route between India and Europe** after fall of Byzantine Empire or Eastern Roman Empire and disruptions of land trade route between India and Europe by Turks.
 - Portuguese came to India in the Quest for and Discovery of a Sea Route to India, after that Dutch, English, and French came to India by following similar suit.
- The peninsular region was more easily accessible by sea. The major ports of the peninsular region, such as Bombay (Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata), and Madras (Chennai), were located on the coast and were well-connected to the rest of the world through maritime trade routes.
 - These ports were also closer to the major European trading centers, such as the Netherlands and Britain, which made it easier for European merchants to establish trading relationships with Indian merchants.
 - Earlier southern kings like Cholas, Chalukya, Cheras, Vijayanagar and others had a good understanding of sea routes and trade than the Mughals. These things also favored Europeans and attracted them towards southern India.
- The peninsular region was home to a number of powerful kingdoms and empires that were more open to trade with the Europeans like Vasco da Gama was welcomed in Durbar as the ambassador of Portugal by Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut.
- **The Mughal Empire, which ruled much of northern India, was generally more inward-looking, centralised and less interested in trade with Europe on terms of Europeans.**
 - **In contrast, the kingdoms of the peninsular region, such as the Maratha Empire, were more open to trade and had a tradition of engaging in foreign commerce. This made it easier for European merchants to establish trading relationships with these kingdoms and to gain access to the resources and markets of the region.**
- The peninsular region also had a number of natural resources that were of interest to the Europeans, such as spices, textiles, and precious stones. These resources were in high demand in Europe, and the European powers were eager to establish a trade monopoly over these resources.
 - By focusing on the peninsular region, they were able to gain access to these resources and to control the trade in them.

Conclusion

- **Overall, the combination of the peninsular region's accessibility, political openness, and rich resources made it an attractive destination for European merchants, which is why they tended to focus their attention there rather than in the northern region of India.**
- Overall, while it is true that European powers tended to focus on the peninsular region of India, it is important to note that this was not exclusively the case, and there were also significant economic and trade activities in the northern region of the country.