

Chapter 10 Eighteenth-Century Political Formations

1. Match the following:

Subadar	a revenue farmer
faujdar	a high noble
ijaradar	provincial governor
misl	Maratha peasant warriors
Chauth	a Mughal military commander
kunbis	a band of Sikh warriors
umara	tax levied by the Marathas

Answer:

Subadar	provincial governor
faujdar	a Mughal military commander
ijaradar	a revenue farmer
misl	a band of Sikh warriors
Chauth	tax levied by the Marathas
kunbis	Maratha peasant warriors
umara	a high noble

2. Fill in the blanks:

- (a) Aurangzeb fought a protracted war in the _____.
- (b) Umara and jagirdars constituted powerful sections of the Mughal _____.
- (c) Asaf Jah founded the Hyderabad state in _____.
- (d) The founder of the Awadh state was _____.

Answer: 2(a) Aurangzeb fought a protracted war in the **Deccan**.

2(b) Umara and jagirdars constituted powerful sections of the Mughal **administration**.

2(c) Asaf Jah founded the Hyderabad state in **1724**.

2(d) The founder of the Awadh state was **Burhan-ul-mulk-Sa'adat Khan**.

3. State whether true or false:

- (a) Nadir Shah invaded Bengal.

- (b) Sawai Raja Jai Singh was the ruler of Indore.
- (c) Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth Guru of the Sikhs.
- (d) Poona became the capital of the Marathas in the eighteenth century.

Answer: 3(a) False

3(b) False

3(c) True

3(d) True

4. What were the offices held by Sa'adat Khan?

Answer: The offices held by Sa'adat Khan were subadari, faujdari and diwani.

5. Why did the Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal try to do away with the jagirdari system?

Answer: The Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal tried to do away with the jagirdari system to decrease Mughal influence in the regions by reducing the number of officeholders (jagirdars) appointed by the Mughals. They also reduced the size of jagirs, and appointed his own loyal servants to vacant positions. The accounts of jagirdars were checked to prevent cheating and the revenues of all districts were reassessed by officials appointed by the Nawab's court. In an effort to reduce the Mughal influence in Bengal, Murshid Quli Khan transferred all Mughal jagirdars to Orissa and ordered a major reassessment of the revenues of Bengal. Revenue was collected in cash with great strictness from all zamindars. As a result, many zamindars had to borrow money from bankers and moneylenders.

6. How were the Sikhs organised in the eighteenth century?

Answer: The organisation of the Sikhs into a political community during the seventeenth century helped in regional state-building in Punjab. Several battles were fought by Guru Gobind Singh against the Rajput and Mughal rulers, both before and after the institution of the Khalsa in 1699. Under a number of able leaders in the eighteenth century, the Sikhs organized themselves into a number of bands called jathas, and later on misls. Their combined forces were known as the grand army (dal khalsa). Guru Gobind Singh had inspired the Khalsa with the belief that their destiny was to rule (raj karega khalsa). Their well-knit organization enabled them to put up a successful resistance to the Mughal governors first and then to Ahmad Shah Abdali who had seized the rich province of the Punjab and the Sarkar of Sirhind from the Mughals. The Sikh territories in the late eighteenth century extended from the Indus to the Jamuna but they were divided under different rulers. One of them, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, reunited these groups and established his capital at Lahore in 1799.

7. Why did the Marathas want to expand beyond the Deccan?

Answer: The Marathas wanted to expand beyond the Deccan in order to decrease the Mughal influence. Between 1720 and 1761, the Maratha empire expanded. By the 1720s, they seized Malwa and Gujarat from the Mughals and by the 1730s, the Maratha king was recognised as the overlord of the entire Deccan peninsula.

8. What were the policies adopted by Asaf Jah to strengthen his position?

Answer: Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, the founder of Hyderabad state (1724-1748), was one of the most powerful members at the court of the Mughal Emperor Farrukh Siyar. Taking subsequent advantage of the turmoil in the Deccan and the competition amongst the court nobility, he gathered power in his hands and became the actual ruler of that region. Asaf Jah brought skilled soldiers and administrators from northern India who welcomed the new opportunities in the south. He appointed mansabdars and granted jagirs. Although he was still a servant of the Mughal emperor, he ruled quite independently without seeking any direction from Delhi or facing any interference.

