

THE FRENCH

The French commercial interest - Compagnie des Indes Orientales (East India Company, founded in 1664) - came late but the French also established themselves in India, emulating the precedents set by their competitors, as they founded their enclave at Pondicherry (Puducherry) on the Coromandel Coast. In 1664, they set up centres near Chennai and Chandernagore on the Hooghly to trade with India. They also established naval bases in the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. Initially, they flourished till 1706 but afterwards declined until 1720. After 1720 it was because of Governors Lenoir and Dumas that the French regrouped in India. However, during 1742, the French Governor Duplex started repulsing English power, which resulted in the Carnatic wars an eventually the defeat of the French.

THE DANISH AND THE AUSTRIANS

Besides the presence of the Portuguese, Dutch, British and French there were two lesser but noteworthy colonial groups. In 1616, the East India Company of Denmark reached Indian coasts and established settlements in Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu (1620) and Serampore in Bengal (1676), Danish entrepreneurs established themselves at several ports on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, in the vicinity of Kolkata and inland at Patna, between 1695 and 1740. Austrian enterprises were set up in the 1720s in the vicinity of Surat, in south eastern Gujarat. As with the other non-British enterprises, the Danish and Austrian enclaves were taken over by the British between 1765 and 1815.

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