



# Lecture-7



## **Settlements: Surat, Madras, Bombay and Calcutta**

### **SETTLEMENTS OF MADRAS**

The Madras Presidency, officially the Presidency of Fort St. George and also known as Madras Province, was an administrative subdivision of British India. At its greatest extent, the presidency included much of southern India, including the present-day Indian State of Tamil Nadu, the Malabar region of North Kerala, Lakshadweep Islands, the Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions of Andhra Pradesh, Ganjam, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangapur and Gajapati districts of southern Odisha and the Bellary, Dakshina Kannada, and Udupi districts of Karnataka. The presidency had its winter capital at Madras and summer capital at Ootacamund.

In 1639, the English East India Company purchased the village of Madraspatnam and one year later it established the Agency of Fort St George, precursor of the Madras Presidency, although there had been Company factories at Machilipatnam and Armagon since the very early 1600s. The agency was upgraded to a Presidency in 1652 before once more reverting to its previous status in 1655. In 1684, it was reelevated to a Presidency and Elihu Yale was appointed as president. In 1785, under the provisions of Pitt's India Act, Madras became one of three provinces established by the East India Company.

Thereafter, the head of the area was styled "Governor" rather than "President" and became subordinate to the Governor-General in Calcutta, a title that would persist until 1947. Judicial, legislative and executive powers rested with the Governor who was assisted by a Council whose constitution was modified by reforms enacted in 1861, 1909, 1919 and 1935. Regular elections were conducted in Madras up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. By 1908, the province comprised twentytwo districts, each under a District Collector, and it was further subdivided into taluks and firqas with villages making up the smallest unit of administration.

Following the Montague-Chelmsford reforms of 1919, Madras was the first province of British India to implement a system of dyarchy, and thereafter its Governor ruled alongside a prime minister. In the early decades of the 20th century, many significant contributors to the Indian independence movement came from Madras. With the advent of Indian independence

on 15 August 1947, the Presidency was dissolved. Madras was later admitted as a state of the Indian Union at the inauguration of the Republic of India on 26 January 1950, and was reorganized in 1956.