

Ques: - The Third battle of Panipat was fought in 1761. Why were so many Empire-shaking battles fought at Panipat?

Ans: - The third battle of Panipat was the result of the Afghan-Maratha contest as both the powers tried to assert their hegemony over the region of northern India. In fact, after the decline of the Mughal Empire, a power vacuum was created. Therefore, both Afghans under Ahmad Shah Abdali and Marathas under Peshwas moved forward to fill up the vacuum.

Finally, in this battle Afghans emerged to be victorious while defeating the Marathas but the actual winner of this war was the British. British benefitted from the exit of Maratha power from the political scene of north India.

The unique feature of Panipat is its strategic location. It is due to this factor that even earlier some important battles had taken place at Panipat alone. The first, as well as the second battle of Panipat, was a contest between Mughals and Afghans

In fact, whenever defence lines of India in the North West were subverted it became easy for invading army to move to Delhi. The first such defence line was the Kabul-Ghazni-Qandahar line. The second one was in the Indus region while the third defence line lay at Lahore, Multan and Divalpur. If a North Indian power lost control over these lines it was easy for an invading army to reach Delhi. As Panipat was a gateway of Delhi, the power based on Delhi made a last attempt here to halt the progress of invading power. Apart from that Panipat was strategically and geographically more favoured. It was having a clear route as well as an open field area.

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