



Anglo-Mysore Wars

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The Anglo-Mysore Wars was a series of **four military confrontations** in India between the **British and the rulers of Mysore**.

First Anglo-Mysore War (1767-69)

Background

- In **1612**, a Hindu kingdom under the **Wodeyars** emerged in the region of Mysore. **Chikka Krishnaraja Wodeyar II** ruled from **1734 to 1766**.
- **Haider Ali** who was appointed as a soldier in the army of Wodeyars became the **de-facto ruler of Mysore** with his great administrative skills and military tactics.
During the second half of the 18th century, Mysore emerged as a formidable power under his leadership.
- **Mysore's proximity with the French** and **Haidar Ali's control** over the rich trade of the **Malabar coast** threatened the political and commercial interests of the English and their control over Madras.
- The British, after their success in the **Battle of Buxar** with the nawab of Bengal, signed a treaty with the **Nizam of Hyderabad** persuading him to give them the **Northern Circars for protecting the Nizam from Haidar Ali** who already had disputes with the **Marathas**.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, the Marathas, and the English allied together against Haidar Ali.

Haider diplomatically turned the Marathas neutral and Nizam into his ally against Nawab of Arcot.

Haider Ali

- **Haider Ali (1721-1782)**, born in an obscure family, started his career as a **horseman in the Mysore army** under the ministers of king **Chikka Krishnaraja Wodeyar**.
He was uneducated but **intellectual** and **diplomatically & militarily skilled**.
- He became the **de facto ruler of Mysore in 1761** and **introduced western methods** of training into his army with the **help of the French army**.

- With his excellent military skills, **he took over the Nizami army and the Marathas** and captured **Dod Ballapur, Sera, Bednur and Hoskote** in 1761- 63 and brought to submission the troublesome **Poligars of South India** (Tamil Nadu).

Poligars or Palaiyakkarars were appointed as **military chiefs and administrative governors** from the time of the **Vijayanagara Empire** in parts of Southern India. They also collected taxes from the cultivators.

- Recovering from their defeat, the Marathas under **Madhavrao attacked Mysore**, and **defeated Haidar Ali in 1764, 1766, and 1771**.
- To buy peace, Haidar Ali had to give them large sums of money, but after Madhavrao's death in 1772, **Haidar Ali raided the Marathas** a number of times **during 1774-76**, and **recovered all the territories** he had previously lost, besides **capturing new areas**.

Course of War

- The war continued for **a year-and-a-half** without any conclusion.
- Haidar changed his strategy and suddenly appeared before the gates of Madras causing complete chaos and panic at Madras.
- This forced the English to conclude a **treaty with Haidar on April 4, 1769** known as the **Treaty of Madras**.
 - The treaty provided for the **exchange of prisoners** and the **conquered areas**.
 - Haidar Ali was **promised the help of the English** in case he was attacked by any other power.

Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84)

Background

- The British **failed to adhere to the treaty of Madras** when Mysore was attacked by the **Maratha army in 1771**.
Haider Ali accused them for breach of faith.
- Moreover, **Haider Ali found the French more resourceful** in terms of fulfilling the army requirements of guns, saltpetre and lead.
Consequently, he started **importing French war materials** to Mysore **through Mahe**, a French possession on the Malabar Coast.
- The increasing friendship between the two raised concern for the British.
Consequently the British tried to capture Mahe which was under Haider Ali's protection.

Course of War

- Haidar Ali forged an **alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam** against the British.
He **attacked the Carnatic and captured Arcot** and **defeated the English** army under **Colonel Baillie in 1781**.

- In the meantime, the English (**under Sir Eyre Coote**) **detached both the Marathas and the Nizam from Haidar's side**, but the undeterred Haidar faced the English boldly only to suffer a **defeat at Porto Novo** (present day Parangipettai, Tamil Nadu) in **November 1781**.
However, he regrouped his forces and defeated the English and captured their commander, Braithwaite.
- Haidar Ali **died of cancer** on **December 7, 1782**.
His son Tipu Sultan carried on the war for one year without any positive outcome.
- Fed up with an inconclusive war, both sides opted for peace, negotiating the **Treaty of Mangalore (March, 1784)** under which both the parties gave back the territories they had taken from each other.

Tipu Sultan

- Born in **November 1750**, Tipu Sultan was Haidar Ali's son and a **great warrior** also known as the **Tiger of Mysore**.
- He was a **well educated man** fluent in **Arabic, Persian, Kanarese and Urdu**.
- Tipu, like his father Haider Ali, gave maximum care to the raising and maintenance of **an efficient military force**.
 - He organised his **army on the European model with Persian words of command**.
 - Though he took the help of the French officers to train his soldiers, he never allowed them (French) to develop into a pressure group.
- Tipu was well aware of the importance of a naval force.
 - **In 1796**, he set up a Board of Admiralty and planned for **a fleet of 22 battleships and 20 large frigates**.
 - He established **three dockyards at Mangalore, Wajedabad and Molidabad**.
However, his plans did not fructify.
- He was also a **patron of science and technology** and is credited as the '**pioneer of rocket technology**' in India.
 - He wrote a military manual explaining the operation of rockets.
 - He was also a pioneer in **introducing sericulture to the Mysore State**.
- Tipu was a **great lover of democracy and a great diplomat** who gave his support to the French soldiers at Seringapatam in setting up a **Jacobin Club in 1797**.
 - Tipu himself became a member of the Jacobin Club and allowed himself to be called **Citizen Tipu**.
 - He planted the **Tree of Liberty at Seringapatam**.

Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92)

Background

- The Treaty of Mangalore was not enough to resolve the conflicts between Tipu Sultan and the British.

Both were aiming to establish their own political supremacy over the Deccan.

- The **Third Anglo-Mysore War** began when **Tipu attacked Travancore**, an ally of the English and the **only source of pepper for the East India Company**.

Travancore had purchased Jalkottal and Cannanore from the Dutch in the Cochin state which was a feudatory of Tipu, he considered the act of Travancore as a violation of his sovereign rights.

Course of War

- The British sided with Travancore and attacked Mysore.
The Nizam and the Marathas who were jealous of Tipu's growing power joined the British.
- In 1790, Tipu Sultan defeated the British army under **General Meadows**.
- In 1791, **Lord Cornwallis** took the leadership and at the head of a large army marched through **Ambur and Vellore to Bangalore** (captured in March 1791) and from there to **Seringapatam**.
 - Coimbatore fell to them, but they lost it again, and at last with the support of the Marathas and the Nizam, the British attacked Seringapatam for the second time.
 - Tipu offered serious opposition, but the odds were against him.
- The war was concluded with the **Treaty of Seringapatam, 1792**.
 - Under this treaty, nearly **half of the Mysorean territory was taken over** by the alliance of the British, Nizam and the Marathas.
Baramahal, Dindigul and Malabar went to the British, while the **Marathas** got the regions surrounding the **Tungabhadra and its tributaries** and the **Nizam acquired the areas from Krishna** to beyond the **Pennar**.
 - Besides, a **war damage of three crore rupees** was also taken from Tipu.
Half of the war indemnity was to be paid immediately while the rest was to be given in installments, for which Tipu's two sons were taken as hostages by the English.
- The Third Anglo-Mysore War destroyed Tipu's dominant position in the south and firmly established British supremacy there.

Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799)

Background

- The period of 1792-99 was used by both the British and Tipu Sultan to recoup their losses.
Tipu fulfilled all the terms of the Treaty of Seringapatam and got his sons released.

- In 1796, when the Hindu ruler of the Wodeyar dynasty died, Tipu declared himself as the Sultan and decided to avenge his humiliating defeat in the previous war.
- **In 1798, Lord Wellesley**, an imperialist to the core, **succeeded Sir John Shore** as the new Governor General.
- Tipu's growing friendship with the French raised concerns for Wellesley.
Aimed at annihilating Tipu's independent existence, he forced him into submission through the system of **Subsidiary Alliance**.
- Tipu was accused of plotting against the British by sending emissaries to Arabia, Afghanistan and to the Isle of France (Mauritius) and Versailles, with treasonable intent. Tipu's explanation did not satisfy Wellesley thus the fourth Anglo-Mysore war began.

Subsidiary Alliance

- In 1798, **Lord Wellesley introduced the Subsidiary Alliance** system in India, under which the ruler of the allying Indian state was **compelled to pay a subsidy** for the **maintenance of British army** in return for **getting protection from the British** against their enemies.
 - It provided for the posting of a **British Resident at the ruler's court** restricting the ruler from employing any European in his service without the approval of the British.
 - Sometimes the ruler ceded part of his territory instead of paying annual subsidy.
 - The first Indian ruler to sign the **Subsidiary Alliance was the Nizam of Hyderabad**.
- Those native princes or rulers who would enter into Subsidiary Alliance were not free to declare war against any other power or enter into negotiations without the consent of the British.
The princes who were comparatively strong and powerful were permitted to retain their armies, but their armies were placed under British generals.
- The Subsidiary Alliance was a policy of **non-interference in the internal affairs of the allied state**, but this was a promise seldom kept by the British.
- The payment of the arbitrarily-fixed and artificially-bloated subsidy invariably disrupted the economy of the state and impoverished its people.
- On the other hand, the British could now maintain a large army at the cost of the Indian states.
They controlled the defence and foreign relations of the protected ally, and had a powerful force stationed at the very heart of his lands.

Course of War

- The war began on **April 17, 1799** and ended on **May 4, 1799** with the fall of Seringapatam. Tipu was defeated first by British General Stuart and then by General Harris.
Arthur Wellesley, the brother of Lord Wellesley, also participated in the war.

- The Marathas and the Nizam again helped the British as the **Marathas had been promised half of the territory of Tipu** and the **Nizam had already signed the Subsidiary Alliance**.
- Tipu Sultan died in the war and all his treasures were confiscated by the British.
- The British chose a boy from the earlier Hindu royal family of Mysore as the maharaja and also imposed the subsidiary alliance system on him.
- It had taken the English 32 years to subjugate Mysore. The threat of French revival in the Deccan was permanently eliminated.

Post War Scenario

- Lord Wellesley offered **Soonda and Harponelly districts of Mysore Kingdom** to the **Marathas**, which the latter **refused**.
- The **Nizam** was given the districts of **Gooty and Gurramkonda**.
- The British took possession of Kanara, **Wayanad, Coimbatore, Dwaraporam and Seringapatam**.
- The new state of Mysore was handed over to the old Hindu dynasty (Wodeyars) under a minor ruler Krishnaraja III, who accepted the subsidiary alliance.