

SECOND ANGLO MYSORE WAR

THE PATH TO THE WAR

- The global context - By 1780, the British were entangled in multiple major conflicts. The first Anglo Maratha war was ongoing & the American war of Independence had forced the British to divert significant resources. This created a strategic opening for their rivals.
- The spark: Attack on Mache - The British launched an offensive against the French settlement of Mache, which was under the protection of Hyder Ali. This attack served as the immediate justification for Hyder Ali to initiate war against the British.
- Strategic alliances - Hyder Ali viewed the attack as a violation of the earlier Treaty of Madras. He capitalized on the British being preoccupied with the Marathas & sought to build an anti-British Alliance with the French & Marathas.
- Declaration of war - Citing the British failure to honor the defensive pact from the Treaty of Madras during his previous conflicts, Hyder Ali formally opened hostilities, marking the start of the Second Anglo Mysore war.

STRATEGIC FACTORS

- Formation of the alliance - Hyder Ali did not initiate war on a whim. He acted based on specific circumstances that made the British vulnerable. He utilized these favorable conditions to build a powerful anti-British alliance. By leveraging the global conflict of the American war of Independence, Hyder Ali successfully brought both the French & the Marathas into an alliance against the company.
- British isolation - The British found themselves in a highly precarious position during this time. Facing a combined front from Mysore, France & the Marathas who were already fighting the British in a separate conflict, the company struggled to manage the multi-front pressure.

ESCALATION & INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

- Military fluctuations - Between 1780 & 1782, there were minor skirmishes with mixed results. Hyder Ali successfully defeated Colonel Baillie, but was later defeated by Hector Munro at the Battle of Porto Novo.
- Global political shifts - By 1781, the British faced a major setback in the American war of Independence after losing the conflict. The formal conclusion of

this global struggle came with the 1783 Treaty of Paris, which forced the British & French to reconsider their colonial strategies.

- Internal British policy - The passage of the 1784 Pitt's India Act mandated that the Company cease aggressive warfare in India to protect their interests & avoid further loss of resources. This shift in parliamentary policy made continuing the war in Mysore strategically undesirable for the British.

- Regional Realignment - By 1782, Hyder Ali had died. With his passing, the Marathas withdrew from the conflict, & the Nizam of Hyderabad became neutral, further isolating Mysore & creating a stalemate that pushed both sides towards peace.

TREATY OF MANGALORE

- The final stalemate - By 1784, both the British company & the new ruler of Mysore, Tipu Sultan, recognized that continuing the war was mutually destructive. With Hyder Ali deceased, the Marathas withdrawn, & the Nizam neutral, the strategic landscape had shifted, rendering the war essentially inconclusive.
- The treaty of Mangalore - Both parties signed

the treaty in 1784. The terms were similar to the earlier Treaty of Madras, focusing on restoring the status quo & returning to the territorial boundaries as they stood around 1780.

- British regional hegemony - While the war was inconclusive in terms of territory, the British successfully maintained their position in South India. By this time, both Hyderabad & the Carnatic regions were already effectively under British influence, which set the stage for their continued expansion in the region.

THIRD AND FOURTH ANGLO MYSORE WARS

THE ARRIVAL OF LORD CORNWALLIS

- Background - Lord Cornwallis arrived in India in 1786 following his defeat at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781. He was tasked by the British Govt to stabilize the East India Company & ensure they did not repeat the strategic failures committed in America.
- Strategic shift - Upon arrival, Cornwallis recognized that Tipu Sultan posed a significant threat, especially if he formed an alliance with the French.
- Military preparations - To counter Tipu Sultan, Cornwallis brought a highly efficient military

commander, Sir Archibald Campbell, to India. Campbell was placed in charge of Madras where he began formulating a long term design to undermine Tipu Sultan's power.

BRITISH DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGNS AND CONFLICTS WITH TIPU SULTAN

- Dismantling the Treaty - Despite the Treaty of Mangalore in 1784, which mandated non-interference between the Company & Mysore, Cornwallis sought to break this temporary peace to neutralize Tipu's power.
- Diplomatic Encirclement - Campbell initiated aggressive diplomatic outreach to neighbours of Mysore.
- Nizam of Hyderabad - In 1788 the British successfully convinced the Nizam to host British troops, providing a key strategic northern front against Mysore.
- King of Travancore - The British established a strong diplomatic connection with the king of Travancore. Although the king was initially hesitant as a Hindu ruler bordering the powerful Muslim kingdom of Mysore, he accepted British support, which allowed him to act against Tipu's territorial interests.

• Direct confrontation - As the king of Travancore began encroaching on Tipu's territory with British backing, Tipu demanded the return of captured forts. When Tipu threatened the King in response to his expansion, Archibald Campbell used a formal Treaty of Friendship between the Company & Travancore to warn Tipu against any military retaliation.

• Escalation (1789-1790) - In 1789 international political shifts, specifically the French revolution, meant Tipu could no longer rely on French military assistance. Following Sir Archibald Campbell's retirement John Holland became the Governor of Madras. Amidst rising tensions between Travancore & Cochin, Tipu moved his army to the Malabar coast, in 1790 to restore order. When refugees fled to Travancore, Tipu attacked the state, which served as the casus belli for the Company to formally declare war.

THIRD ANGLO MYSORE WAR

• Military escalation - After Tipu Sultan initially defeated British forces, Lord Cornwallis took personal command. He successfully convinced the Marathas & the Nizam of Hyderabad to join the British side, breaking their previous neutrality agreements with Tipu. Their combined forces eventually launched two major attacks on Seringapatam.

Treaty of Seringapatam Following the fall of Seringapatam, a treaty was signed, which imposed harsh terms on Tipu Sultan. Tipu lost nearly 40% of his territory, which was divided among the British, the Marathas & the Nizam. He was forced to pay a war indemnity of around 3 crore rupees. As a guarantee for payment, two of Tipu's sons were taken as hostages to Calcutta. This outcome left Tipu Sultan deeply resentful & set the stage for 4th Anglo Mysore war.

TIPU SULTAN'S DEFEAT

Key factors for Tipu's surrender & overall defeat.

- British military supremacy - The British maintained superior military organization & tactical execution.
- Local alliances - The British leveraged support from key Indian powers, including the Marathas led by Parashuram Bhanu Hari Pant, & the kingdom of Travancore led by Keshav Pillai, which provided vital supply lines & geographical intelligence.
- French inability to assist - Due to the impact of the French Revolution beginning in 1789, French officers abandoned their Indian settlements, leaving Tipu without his expected European military support.

INTERWAR PERIOD & ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

- Administrative reforms - After the Treaty of Seringapatam (1792), Tipu Sultan implemented extensive administrative & economic reforms. This was largely driven by the urgent need to raise 3 crore rupees to pay off the war indemnity imposed by the British.
- Hostages & succession - Tipu successfully paid the indemnity allowing his two sons, who were held as hostages in Calcutta to return. In 1796, the Wodeyar king, Chamaraja Wodeyar IX passed away. Instead of appointing a successor, Tipu took the title of Sultan for himself, effectively ending the Wodeyar dynasty's rule in Mysore for that period.
- Revolutionary measures - Influenced by the French revolution, Tipu adopted several radical measures such as declaring himself Citizen Tipu, planting the Tree of Liberty, actively supporting the Jacobin Club.
- Diplomatic contacts - Tipu sought external support to challenge the British. He established elaborate contact with the French Directory - the ruling body in France from 1798 - 1799. Tipu communicated with the French Finance Minister, Talleyrand & instructed Napoleon Bonaparte to move towards India to assist him in defeating the British.

FOURTH ANGLO MYSORE WAR

- ♥ Arrival of Lord Wellesley - Upon arriving in India in 1798 as the new Governor General, Lord Wellesley was already aware of Tipu Sultan's ongoing military correspondence & alliances, thanks to British military intelligence.
- ♥ Strategic offensive - Wellesley initiated a full scale invasion of Mysore in 1799 to decisively end Tipu Sultan's influence. He appointed Arthur Wellesley to lead the military campaign. This period is also notable for the military observations of William Congreve, who studied Tipu Sultan's advanced rocket mechanism during these conflicts & later implemented it in Europe.
- ♥ Fall of Seringapatam - The culmination of this invasion occurred in May 1799 with the final British assault on Seringapatam. This victory led to the death of Tipu Sultan & the collapse of his power, effectively removing the last significant obstacle to British dominance in the region.

AFTERMATH AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR

Following the death of Tipu Sultan in 1799, the British restored the Wodeyar dynasty to the throne of Mysore. They enforced a Subsidiary Alliance treaty upon the reinstated ruler, solidifying British control over

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the state. The Anglo Mysore wars were fought specifically to remove the last major stumbling block to British dominance in India. British military commander George Harris notably reported to the British government that with the fall of Tipu Sultan, there was no longer any significant personality or king left in India capable of challenging British power.