

Anglo-Marathas

Presented by Dr. Phoibi Lalniropui
Tuolor

- The EIC had become a dominant power in the Indian subcontinent after winning the battle of Buxar in 1764
- The Bengal region was under their control.
- On the other hand the Mughal empire had weakened terribly, only the small territory in North India was still under the Mughal control, their power didn't exceed beyond the Red Fort.
- But look southwards, there was another empire in the Indian subcontinent there was an empire stronger than either of them, the Maratha Empire.
- Their territory was much larger than the EIC, they had more resources and more power
- So how did the EIC defeat the Maratha Empire?

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was an Indian ruler and a member of the Bhonsle Maratha clan.
- Shivaji carved out his own independent kingdom from the declining **Adilshahi sultanate of Bijapur** which formed the genesis of the Maratha Empire.
- In 1674, he was formally crowned the Chhatrapati of his realm at Raigad Fort.

- The Maratha Empire was founded in the year 1674 by Chhatrapati Shivaji.
- Since the very beginning they were a powerful force.
- Even during the time of Aurangzeb, The Maratha Empire was a big threat to the Mughal Empire.
- Then the Mughal Empire was rapidly weakening and losing territory. The Marathas contributed greatly to it.
- The Maratha Empire was at its peak in 1759. This year the territories of the Marathas began from parts of Afghanistan in the North and extended to Tamil Nadu in the South. From the Sindh in the West to Odisha in the East.
- But 2 years later in 1761, the Maratha Empire was greatly shocked. The infamous **Third Battle of Panipat** was fought in which the Afghan ruler, Ahmad Shah Durrani defeated the Marathas.
- The Marathas Empire had to loose a lot of territory in this war.

- But a decade after this, the Marathas regained their power. They restored several territories under the leadership of their new Peshwa Madhavrao I.
- During the Peshwaship of Madhavrao I Maratha Empire remained strong.
- The EIC did dare to attack the Marathas instead they tried to remained aloof from them.
- By the treaty of Allahabad in 1765, Awadh (UP) was declared as a buffer state between EIC and the Maratha Empire.
- The Company did not want its territory to border the Maratha Empire.
- It is not that the Company was not interested in the Maratha territory but was patient and was waiting for the right opportunity.
- The opportunity came in 1772

- Shivaji was coronated as the king of the Marathas on 6th June 1674.
- Maratha Confederacy, alliance formed in the 18th century after Mughal pressure forced the collapse of Shivaji's kingdom of Maharashtra in western India.
- Shivaji succumbed to fatal illness and died in 1680 and was succeeded by his son Sambhaji
- After the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's death (1707), Maratha power revived under Shivaji's grandson Shahu.
- He confided (trust) power to the Brahman Bhat family, who became hereditary peshwas (chief ministers).
- Peshwa served as subordinates to Maratha King (Chhatrapati) and later became the defacto leaders of the Maratha Confederacy with Chhatrapati as a nominal ruler.

- He also decided to expand northward with armies under the peshwas; control.
- In Shahu's later years the power of the peshwas increased.
- After his death(1749) they became the effective rulers.
- The leading Maratha families—Sindhia, Holkar, Bhonsle and Gaekwar
- Bhonsle of Berar
- Gaekwad of Baroda
- Holkar of Indore
- Scindhia of Gwalior
- Peshwa of Poona
- They extended their conquests in northern and central India and became more independent and difficult to control.

First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-82)

- Internal dissensions overtook Maharashtra
- Death of Fourth Peshwa Madhav Rao I (son of Balaji Baji Rao) due to TB (1772)
- After that power struggle begun among the Marathas as to who would be the next Peshwa?
- Peshwa Narayan Rao became the next peshwa but was disliked by his uncle Raghunath Rao, who also wanted to become the Peshwa since 1761 (when his brother Balaji Baji Rao died)
- Murder of fifth Peshwa Narayan Rao (1773) (was killed by Raghunath Rao)
- Raghunath Rao became the next Peshwa but for a short duration as
- Madhav Rao II (Posthumous son of Narayan Rao) was born in 1774
 - Headed by Nana Phadnavis (leader of the Maratha Council)
- Raghunath Rao was sent to exile but due to his greed for power signed a treaty with EIC.
- Raghunath Rao solicited (urged) English and concluded with the Bombay Government the **Treaty of Surat** (1775)
 - Military assistance to R. Rao.
 - Occupied Salsette (Bombay) and Bassein

- Supreme Council strongly condemned the war as ‘impolitic, dangerous, unauthorised and unjust’.
- Battle of Adas (British were defeated by the Marathas in 1775)
- Both the party lost immensely
- Warren Hasting cancelled the Treaty of Surat
- **Treaty of Purandhar** (1776) was signed with EIC’s Supreme Council of Bengal in Calcutta with Nana Fadnavis
 - Retained Salsette by EIC
 - Accept war indemnity of 12 lakhs
 - Pensioned Raghunath Rao with 3 lakhs per year and warned him not to interfere in politics
 - Maratha promised not to form any other alliance with any foreign power.
- **(The treaty of Purandhar nullified the Treaty of Surat)**
- Bombay Presidency came in support of Raghunath Rao and breached the Treaty of Purandhar and in response Nana Fadnavis gave a port to French
- The Bengal and Bombay Presidency joined hands together and planned to attack the Marathas.
- The Bombay Presidency was defeated before help came from Bengal.

- **Battle of Wadgaon in 1779** (Maratha won)
- **Treaty of Wadgaon** was signed in 1779
 - the Marathas recovered all the lost territories from the Bombay Presidency in 1773.
- Nana fadnavis realized the real motives of the British that the British actually wanted to defeat the Marathas and rule the whole subcontinent.
- Therefore, formed an alliance with other neighboring kingdoms in the sub continent to defeat the British.
 - Hyder Ali
 - Nizam of Hyderabad
 - Ruler of Arcot
 - Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II
- Stalemate situation, nor Marathas win neither British win.
- Finally both decided to end the war
- As the Marathas were in the upper hand so they were declared as the winner of the war.

- **Treaty of Salbai (1782)**
 - Marathas and British EIC
 - Status quo was maintained
 - 20 years peace
 - The Marathas promised not to form any alliance
 - The EIC promised not to support Raghunath Rao
 - Exercised pressure on Mysore with the help of the Marathas

- The alliance of the Marathas with the Indian states which was made against the British in 1779 lasted till 1780
- During the 20 years peace established by the treaty of Salbai, the British used the Marathas and Nizam of Hyderabad to fight against Mysore kingdom
- A very powerful kingdom was finally eliminated from the map of India.
- 1801 in fighting among the Marathas
- Maratha Empire was now replaced by the Maratha Confederacy
 - Gaekwards of Baroda
 - Bhonsles of Nagpur
 - Holkars of Indore
 - Scindias of Gwalior
 - Peshwas of Poona (Head)
- There were several minor conflicts among the fractions.

Second Anglo-Maratha War

1803-1805

- **Wellesley** came to India as Governor- General in 1798, he was an imperialist to the backbone and believed that the only possible way to safeguard India against French danger was to reduce the whole of India to a position of military dependence on the Company.
- He relentlessly pursued that object by the infamous **Subsidiary System of alliance**.
- The Marathas refused all offers of the Governor- General for acceptance of the subsidiary alliance, but were driven into Wellesley's trap by their internal differences and criminal self-seeking.
- In March 1800 Nana Fadnavis, the Chief Minister at Poona died.
- Internal conflict started.
- Peshwa Baji Rao II (Raghunath Rao's son) became the next Peshwa.
- He took the opportunity and sought to keep up his position by putting the Maratha chiefs one against another.
- However, Baji Rao was caught in the net of his own intrigues.

- On 12 April 1800, the Governor-General advised the Resident at Poona to exert his “utmost endeavors to engage’ the Peshwa to conclude a secret treaty with the Company offering British help in turning out the Sindhia from the Deccan.
- The Peshwa refused the offer.
- Events took a serious turn at Poona
- In April 1801, the Peshwa brutally murdered Vithuji, the brother of Yaswant Rao Holkar.
- This brought the Holkar with a large army in the field against the Peshwa and the combined troops of the Peshwa and the Sindhia were defeated on 25th October 1802 at Hadapsar, near Poona.
- The Holkar placed Vinayak Rao, son of Amrit Rao, on the gaddi of the Peshwa.
- Baji Rao fled to Bassein and on 31st December 1802 signed a treaty with the English.

- The Treaty gave great political advantages to the English
- The paramount British influence was established at Poona
- The Marathas entered into a Subsidiary alliance with the British.
- The head of the Maratha Confederacy had accepted a position of dependent relationship on the Company with its natural corollary that the other Maratha chiefs were reduced to a similar position of **subordination to the Company**--- --a relationship which they had feared and would not accept without a fight.
- The Company became arbiter in the disputes between the Peshwa and other Marathas chiefs and the Peshwa and other Indian rulers.
- The **Treaty of Bassein** provided the Company's mediation in all cases of disputes between the Peshwa and the Nizam. The state of Hyderabad definitely passed under the Company's protection.
- The Company's **subsidiary troops** were encamped at the capitals of four Indian powers--- at Mysore, Hyderabad, Lucknow and Poona.
- From these four military focal points the Company's troops could spread and meet any opponent.

- The **Treaty of Bassein** did not establish the Company's political supremacy in India but certainly was an **important milestone** in that direction.
- The national humiliation was too much for the Marathas.
- The Sindhia and the Bhonsle refused to accept the Treaty and started the 2nd Anglo-Maratha War in 1803.
- The **Sindhia** and the **Bhonsle** challenged British power, while Gaikwar and the Holkar keep aloof.
- Peshwa and Gaikwar supported the British.
- Why did the Gaikwar supported the British ?
 - Because the british had helped a Gaekwad leader in becoming the leader.

- Quick blows dealt by Arthur Wellesley in the Deccan and by Lord Lake in Northern India shattered Maratha power and the two chiefs accepted humiliating treaties.
- In 1803 in the **Battle of Assaye** and the **Battle of Argaon** the British forces defeated the Sindhia and Bhonsle.
- Bhonsle Raja signed the **Treaty of Deogaon** on 17th December 1803.
- Sindhia signed the **Treaty of Surji- Arjangaon** on 30th December 1803
- Delhi, Agra, Bundelkand, Ahmednagar and several parts of Gujarat, all went to the British.
- Holkars were left alone and the conflict continue till 1805.
- Finally they lost and signed the **Treaty of Rajpurghat** on 25th December 1805.
- In the Second Anglo-Maratha war the Maratha power had been shattered though not completely annihilated.

The Third Anglo-Maratha War, 1817-1818

- The Third and the final phase of the struggle began with the coming of Lord **Hastings** as Governor-General in 1813.
- English forced humiliating treaties on the Raja of Nagpur (27 May 1816)
 - Peshwa (13 June 1817)
 - Sindhai (5 November 1817)
- Exasperated (irritated, annoyed) the Peshwa made the last bid to throw off the British yoke.
- Daulat Rao Sindhia, Appa Sahib of Nagpur, Malhar Rao Holkar also rose in arms.
 - Peshwa was defeated at Khirki
 - Bhonsle's army routed at Sitabaldi
 - Holkar's army crushed at Mahidpur
- The entire Maharashtra force was routed by superior military power of the Company
- Baji Rao's possession of Poona and its districts were merged in the Bombay Presidency, while other princes were confined to greatly reduced