

# Anglo-Maratha War

## [UPSC Notes]

### History of the Anglo-Maratha War

The third Peshwa of the Maratha empire, Balaji Bajirao, died in 1761 due to the shock of losing the third battle of Panipat. After his death, his son Madhavrao succeeded him and was able to successfully bring back some of the territories of the Maratha empire that they had lost in the battle of Panipat.

- After the death of Madhavrao, there was a strong tassel in the Maratha empire for the ownership of the throne.
- There was a constant struggle between Narayan Rao and his uncle as both wanted to become the Peshwa. However, Narayan Rao became a Peshwa, and his uncle tried to seek help from the Britishers.
- In 1775, the Surat agreement was signed, and Raghunath Rao considered the Bassein to the Britishers and returned it.
- The British army under Raghunath Rao attacked Peshwa Narayan Rao, had a battle with him, and won the battle.
- The British Calcutta Council cancelled the agreement under Warren Hastings, and a new treaty was signed in 1776, which was the agreement between the Calcutta Council and the Minister of Maratha.
- As part of his agreement with the Calcutta Council, Nana Fadnavis approved a French port on the West Coast in 1777. As a result, the Britishers sent their soldiers to Pune and held a battle at Vadgaon in which the Marathas, led by Mahadji Shinde, won the battle of Vadgaon near Pune decisively.
- After the English lost the battle in 1779, the British were forced to sign an agreement with the Indians called the Vadgaon agreement.

### First Anglo-Maratha War

The first of three Anglo-Maratha wars fought in India between the Maratha Empire, and Great Britain was known as the first Anglo-Maratha War. The treaty of Salbai marked the end of the war, which had started with the Treaty of Surat.

- The demise of Madhavrao Peshwa in the year 1772 and the conspiracy killing by Raghunath Rao of his nephew made Raghunath the Peshwa, even though he was not a legal descendant.
- When the question of an infant, Narayana Rao's child, to be named the next year arose, Nana Phadnis and 12 other Maratha chiefs were in favour of this decision.

- Reluctant to surrender his position of authority, Raghunath Rao sought assistance from the British in Bombay and, on March 7, 1777, signed the treaty of Surat.
- In accordance with the terms of the treaty, the Salsette and Bassein regions, as well as a portion of the earnings from the Surat and Bharuch districts, were transferred by Raghunath Rao to the British.
- In exchange, the British provided 2500 soldiers to Raghunath Rao. On the other side of India, the British Calcutta Council denounced the Surat treaty and dispatched Colonel Uttan to Pune to void it.
- Nana Fadnavis violated the treaty in 1777. In response, the British sent forces in the direction of Pune. After being cornered, the Maratha cavalry attacked the British by adopting a “scorched earth” strategy.
- The British started to retire to Talegaon, forcing them to flee to Wadgao. The British finally gave up by signing the treaty of Wadgao, which required the Bombay administration to cede all lands it had won since 1775.
- Warren Hastings, the British governor-general in Bengal, rejected this pact and dispatched an army.
- In August 1780, a second Bengali force under the command of Captain Popham took Gwalior. Mahadaji Shinde was pursued by yet another troupe dispatched by Hastings.
- The British eventually beat Shinde at Sikri in February 1781. Following the loss, Shinde suggested the treaty of Salbai between the Peshwa and the British, which would acknowledge the young Madhava Rao as the Peshwa and provide Raghunath Rao with a pension.
- This treaty was signed in May 1782 and ratified in June 1782 by Hastings and in February 1783 by Phadnis.

## Second Anglo-Maratha War

The United Kingdom and the Maratha empire in India engaged in battle once more during the second Anglo-Maratha War (1803 to 1805). On September 23, 1803, the British crushed the Maratha rebels on behalf of Bajirao, who they restored to power in accordance with the treaty of Bassein.

- The Bhosale rulers of Nagpur and Berar, as well as the Sindhia kings of Gwalior, resisted the agreement and were overthrown by Sir Arthur Wellesley. When they finally entered the battle, the Holkar rulers of Indore were defeated as well.
- Following the signing of the peace treaty in 1805, the British took possession of Orissa as well as portions of western Gujarat and Bundelkhand from the Marathas who continued to rule freely over most of central India.
- A large portion of Rajasthan was still ruled and dominated by Sindhia maharajas.

## Third Anglo-Maratha War

The Third Anglo-Maratha War from 1817 to 1818 was the one that engaged the British against the Maratha empire in India, and the UK gained control of the majority of the country.

- As part of operations against Pindare robber groups, the British governor-general, Lord Hastings, invaded Maratha territory to start all of. Although the soldiers of the Sindhia of Gwalior rose out against the British, despite losing control of Rajasthan, British diplomacy was able to persuade him to remain neutral. His region was mostly included in the Bombay presidency.
- Despite this, the Maharaja of Satara continued to rule a princely state until 1848, when it was annexed by the Bombay state.
- The Saugor and Nerbudda Territories, which included the Peshwa's possessions in Bundelkhand in the northern section of the Nagpur Bhosale dominion, were ceded to British India.
- The Maratha kingdoms of Indore Gwalior, Nagpur, and Jhansi accepted British rule by becoming princely states.
- The British had practically complete authority over modern-day India South of the Sutlej river following the third Anglo-Maratha War.

## Central India and Deccan in Anglo-Maratha War

Goddard marched towards Pune after conquering Bassein. He was defeated in the battle of Bhor Ghat in 1781.

- Mahadji challenged Camac at Malwa in Central India. At first, he was supported by the British, but Camac was later harassed, and he had to return to Hadur.
- In late March, the British made a desperate raid capturing both their supplies as well as weapons and elephants after defeating Shinde of the town of Sipri in February 1781.
- After that, Shinde forces were then less likely to pose a military threat to Britain and hence the contest was equally balanced.
- The victory of Mahadji over Camac was significant, but they had to pay for it in 1781 in the battle of Durdah.
- After that, in April 1781, a new force led by colonel Murre aided Pophem and Camac.
- Mahadji Shinde became enlarged following his defeat, and finally, he successfully defeated the forces of Murai on the first of July 1781.
- From that time, Mahadji became a powerful leader who was difficult to defeat.

## Treaty of Salbai

- The agreement of Salbai was signed and approved by Hastings on May 17th, 1782, and it was signed by Nana Fadnavis on June 1782.
- This Treaty ended the First Anglo-Maratha War, followed by restoring the status and establishing fees among both parties for two decades.

## Results of the Anglo-Maratha War

The British East India Company preserved Salsette and Broach, and they also obtained a promise from Maratha to take their precessions from Hyder Ali. The Marathas agreed to their point of view and agreed not to share their land with the French. Raghunath Rao decided to be given a pension every year.

All the territories that were captured by the British were surrendered back to the Marathas after the Treaty of Purandhar. The East India Company accepted Madhavrao as Peshwa of the Marathas.

## Reasons for the Fall of Marathas

The following were the reasons for the fall of the Maratha empire:

- Incompetent leadership.
- Inadequate political vision.
- The Jagirdar system.
- Weakness in the Marathas' social structure.
- The Marathas were weak in the military.
- Economic affairs were neglected by the Marathas.

## Anglo-Maratha Wars and Subsidiary Alliances

Under the subsidiary alliance formed between the Indian state and the British, the Indian rulers would be protected by the British from attacks from other rulers. In return, the British required their army to be kept in the capital of these states, provided with money or some land, and take a British personal as a resident at their capitals who would be the participant in all the decisions and would act as an intermediate between other rulers and the state.

In 1782, the "Treaty of Salbai" was ratified. The agreements conditions were as follows:

- A. Prisoners of war or treated
- B. Raghunath Rao received a pension from the Poona government in exchange for mutual restitution of conquest.
- C. The surrounding islands around Bombay and Salselte were allowed to stay in English control.

Bajirao made his getaway and ratified the treaty of the basin in 1802. A subsidiary forces with:

- A. A minimum of 6000 regular infantrymen,
- B. An equal number of field and artillery and European artilleryman.
- C. Rs.26 lakh was to be set aside for the upkeep of the army.