

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORY OF MYSORE

VIJAYA M. *

Asst Professor, Department of History,
Government First Grade College For Women,
Doddaballapura, Bangalore Rural District. Pin-561203.

Abstract: This article refer to the history of Mysore relating to History of Karnataka. Anglo Karnatik war between Haider Ali / Tippu Sultan and Britishes. The data collected for this article is from secondary sources. The overall objective of this article is to study about the History of pre-independency of India.

Introduction:

The emergency of **Mysore** under the Leadership of Haidar Ali which gave formidable challenge to the British imperialism in South India is one of the interesting events in Modern Indian History.

Haidar Ali was born at Budikot in the State of Mysore in 1721. His father entered into the military ser ice of the Hindu ruler of Mysore, received the rank of Faujdar and the Jagir Budikot.

He died in 1728 when Haidar Ali was only seven years of age. His family suffered very much till Haidar Ali got job in the Army. At that time, the king was Krishna Rai, but the de-facto power of the State was in the hands of his minister Nani Raj.

The Karnataka war helped in the rise of Haidar Ali. When Nasir Jang, Nizam of Hyderabad was murdered, a part of his treasure, per chance, fell into the hands of Haidar Ali. He increased the number of his soldiers and trained them on the model of the French army. In 1775, he was appointed the Faujdar of Dindigul.

During the next five years, he enhanced his power and prestige at the Court enormously and finally succeeded in capturing power of the State from the hands of Nani Raj. In 1761, he became the de-facto ruler of Mysore though the Hindu ruler remained as the nominal sovereign, who was simply shown to his subject once a year.

The War of succession in the Karnatak and Hyderabad, the conflict of the English and the French in the South and the defeat of the Marathas in the third battle of Panipat helped him in consolidating his position. He gradually conquered the neighbouring territories like Bednur and Kanara and forced the Chiefs of the important forts like those of Ballapur,

Raidung, Chiltaldung to accept his suzerainty. Thus the potential rise of Haidar Ali provoked the jealousy of the Maratha and the Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1764 he was defeated by Peshwa Madhav Rao and fored to sign a treaty in 1765. Surrendered him a part of his territory and also agreed to pay rupees 28 Lakhs per annum. The Nizam however preferred to act in league with the English which resulted in the first Anglo-Mysore War.

The First Anglo-Mysore War (1766-1769):

The first clash between Mysore and the English took place in the shape of the first Anglo-Mysore War. The English suspected that Haidar Ali had designs on the Carnatic and were keen to check him.

Accordingly they reached an understanding with the Nizam and the Marathas for a combined action against Haidar Ali. The Marathas were annoyed with him because he had not agreed to pay the Chauth and was busy in expanding his territory. The Nizam hated Hyder Ali and considered him as an Upstart.

But the alliance faced its premature death. Very soon the Marathas and the Nizam came to terms with Haidar Ali. The Nizam even went to the extent of joining hands with Haidar Ali against the English. In spite of that, in 1767 English troops under the command of Col. Smith inflicted a defeat on the combined forces at Chamgama.

The Madras Government reached an understanding with the Nizam and concluded the treaty of Masaulipatam, by which he agreed to abide by the terms of earlier treaty concluded with the English before he deserted to Haidar Ali. He agreed to assist the English and the Nawab of Carnatic in chastising Haidar Ali.

Despite desertion of Nizam; Haidar Ali continued his fight. He defeated the Bombay troops and recovered Mangalore. In March 1769 he reached within five miles of Madras and dictated a Peace Treaty to the English.

This treaty, formally concluded on 4 April, 1769, provided for the exchange of prisoners and mutual restitution of conquests. The English gave an assurance to Hyder Ali to help him when he was attacked by any other power.

The Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-1784):

The treaty of 1760 between Haidar Ali and the English Company proved more in the nature of a truce. Because the Company did not observe the terms of the treaty, in 1771, when Maratha invaded Mysore, the English did not come to help.

As a result, Haidar Ali was defeated in 1771 and concluded a treaty dictated by the Marathas. Further in 1779, the English captured French possessions at Mahe which were under the protection of Haider Ali. This infuriated Haidar Ali.

Because Mahe was important centre through which French military hardware naturally found their way to Mysore. The outbreak of the American War of Independence and the French alliance with American Colonist made Warren Hastings extremely suspicious of Haidar Ali's relation with French. So occupation of Mahe was regarded as hostile act and would result in a War.

In 1779 Haidar Ali joined a grand confederacy consisting of Nizam and Maratha against East India Company. In July, 1780 Haidar Ali with about 80,000 soldiers and 100 guns captured Arcot, defeating Colonel Bailie.

The situation was critical. As Alfred Lyall has put it, "The fortunes of the English in India have fallen to their lowest water mark". But the English succeeded to improve their fortune and detached the Marathas and Nizam from the confederacy of Haidar Ali.

Despite all these set-backs Haidar Ali continued the War, defeated at Porto Novo by Sir Eyre in 1781. Haidar Ali's son inflicted a crushing defeat on the English Commander at Tanjore.

Haidar Ali was encouraged to give a fight back to the English due to the arrival of the French fleet under Sufferein and he succeeded in capturing Cuddalore. But Haidar Ali died on 7 December, 1782 and his son Tipu continued the War and captured Bidnore. The English also took possession of Palghat and Coimbatore.

The Second Mysore War ended by the treaty of Mangalore concluded in March 1784. Under this treaty both the parties agreed to return the territories conquered from each other and also the prisoner of war. Again it was temporary truce between the two. It was also evident that two powers in South India again start War against each other at any opportune time in the near future.

The Third Mysore War (1790-92):

With the advent of Cornwallis, as the Governor-General of the Company, the Third contest between the English and Mysore started.

In order to counter the English power in India, Tipu had sent his ambassadors to France and Turkey. Cornwallis therefore was convinced of the necessity of crippling the power of Tipu as a 'Cruel necessity'.

In order to counter the rising power of Tipu, Cornwallis also tried to find allies from among the native power. With the Nizam of Hyderabad, he made a settlement concerning the District of Guntur.

The necessary opportunity for the War with Tipu was offered when he attacked Travancore, a state which was in alliance with English. Cornwallis took all precautions before declaring War against Tipu.

He concluded an alliance with the Nizam and the Maratha and declared War on Tipu in January, 1790 though the Nizam and the Marathas did not take any active part in the War against Tipu. This alliance at least prevented them from joining hands with Tipu. It was also agreed that the conquered territory would be divided between the three allies.

As English forces could not achieve much success, Cornwallis himself assumed their command in 1791. He proceeded towards Bangalore via. Vellore and Ambur and captured it in March, 1791.

In May, the English reached Arikera which was nearly nine miles away from the Capital of Mysore, Seringapatam. Tipu, however fought bravely and the English retreated during the rainy season. In November, 1791, Tipu succeeded in Coimbatore.

But his power was exhausted. Cornwallis captured all the hill forts which obstructed his advance towards Seringapatam. Tipu felt desperate and concluded treaty of Seringapatam in March, 1792. The Third Mysore War was brought to an end by the Treaty of Seringapatam.

The Treaty Seringapatam signed in February, 1742. According to the treaty Tipu agreed to surrender half of his territory which was divided among the allies. The English got Baramahal, the Salem country, Dindigal and Malabar.

The Maratha got the territory extending from Krishna to Tungabhadra. The Nizam got the territories extending from Krishna to Panna River. The Raja of Coorg, who assisted the British during War, was placed under the British protection. Tipu also agreed to return the prisoners of War since the days of Hyder Ali and paid three crore and thirty lakh rupees as War indemnity.

Fourth Anglo-Mysore War:

When Wellesley assumed office as Governor-General, he decided to wean away Sultan from the French. He wrote letter to Tipu on 8 November, 1789 complaining of his growing friendship with the French despite the assistance of the Treaty of Seringapatam.

He offered to discuss the matter with Tipu through Major Doveton to clear mis-understandings between the two powers. However Tipu did not respond favourably to the letters of Wellesley and persisted in his insolence against the English. He also turned down Wellesley's offer of Subsidiary alliance.

In view of all this Wellesley determined to crush the power of Tipu. He also secured the help of the Marathas and the Nizam in this venture. A two pronged attack from the east and west made and Tipu suffered defeats at Sedaseer and Nalavali.

After these defeats he retired to his capital Seringapatam. His capital was besieged by the English forces on 7 April, 1799. A week later the Bombay army also joined there in the Siege.

When the position of Tipu became hopeless he offered to conclude Peace. But the terms of peace offered by the English proposed that, Tipu should surrender half of his territories, release all prisoners, dismiss all French employees in his army, and pay a war indemnity of 2 million sterling within six months and his two eldest sons and four top officers as hostages. As these terms were quite humiliating to Tipu, he sent no reply.

In the meanwhile the British succeeded in effecting a breach in the wall of the fort of Seringapatam. Tipu continued fighting till he was severely wounded and fell dead.

After the death of Tipu the whole of Mysore lay prostrate before the English. The English restored the old Hindu dynasty and considerably reduced the territories of the State of Mysore.

A minor Prince was placed on the throne and Purniya, a creature of the English was appointed as the regent of the minor Prince. The new ruler was forced to conclude a subsidiary alliance with Wellesley.

Under the treaty the Raja agreed to maintain an English force for the defence of kingdom. He was to pay seven lakh Pagodas per annum to the English for the maintenance of forces (One Pagoda was equal to about three rupees).

In case of war, the English could extract even more money for the maintenance of forces. The English also authorised to interfere in the internal affairs of the Kingdom in case of mis-management of administration. The Raja was neither to engage in his service nor carry on any direct correspondence with the foreign state.

Tipu's sons were taken prisoners and sent to Calcutta. Important nobles were honourably treated and given necessary protection of life and property.

Wellesley's feeling about his Settlement with Mysore was communicated to the Directors thus "The success of your arms in the short period of the late campaign has not merely exclude the French from Mysore, provided an ample indemnity to you and your ally for the charges of the War, destroyed the hostile power of Tipu Sultan and effectually precluded its revival, but has transferred the sword of your implacable enemy into your own hands, and turned to your use the main springs of his wealth and strength."

However, Wellesley's Mysore policy met with severe criticism at the hands of writers and historians. They accused of him being over-sensitive and hasty in precipitating the War for which no cause existed. The French danger was rather imaginary.

Further he did punish the other Indian Princes who had raised French troops like Tipu. Despite this criticism of Wellesley's policy, it cannot be denied that he "Secured for the Company substantial territorial, economic, commercial and military advantages.

It extended the Company's dominion from Sea to Sea across the base of Peninsula, encompassing the new kingdom of Mysore on all sides except in the north. When in 1800 the Nizam transferred his acquisitions from Mysore to the Company, this Kingdom was "entirely encircled by the Pox Britannica."

Estimate of Tipu:

Tipu has been regarded as the first Indian nationalist and a martyr for India's Freedom. It is wrong to estimate Sultan Tipu was a savage, barbarous and cruel fanatic. He was an industrious ruler who himself attended to every branch of Administration.

He was cruel towards his enemies and he hated the English from the very core of his heart. He could never reconcile himself to cooperate with the English Company. He fought against the British tooth and nail and died in fighting. But never think of coming to a compromise with them.

He was inclined towards the French and his preference for them continued all his life. According to Wills, Haidar was seldom wrong and Tipu seldom right. Unlimited persecution united in destination of his rule every Hindu in his dominion.

He was barbarous where severity was vice and indulgent where it was virtue. If he had qualities fitted for empire they were strangely equivocal. There is a Proverb that, "Haidar was born to create an Empire, Tipu to lose one."

References

- Kamath, Suryanath U. (2001) [1980]. *A concise history of Karnataka : from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter books. [LCCN 80905179](#). [OCLC 7796041](#).
- Narasimhacharya, R (1988) [1934]. *History of Kannada Literature*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. [ISBN 81-206-0303-6](#).
- Pranesh, Meera Rajaram (2003) [2003]. *Musical Composers during Wodeyar Dynasty (1638–1947 A.D.)*. Bangalore: Vee Emm.
- Rice, E. P. (1921). *Kannada Literature*. New Delhi: (Facsimile Reprint 1982) Asian Educational Services. [ISBN 81-206-0063-0](#).
- [Stein, Burton](#) (1987). *Vijayanagara (The New Cambridge History of India)*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 156. [ISBN 0-521-26693-9](#).
- Subrahmanyam, Sanjay (2001). "Warfare and State Finance in Wodeyar Mysore". In Subrahmanyam, Sanjay (ed.). *Penumbra Visions*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. pp. 161–193. [ISBN 978-0-472-11216-6](#).
- Aiyangar, Krishnaswami S. (1911). *Ancient India: Collected Essays on the Literary and Political History of Southern India*. New Delhi: (Facsimile Reprint 2004) Asian Educational Services. [ISBN 81-206-1850-5](#).

