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CHAPTER 2

# Expansion of English East India Company in India

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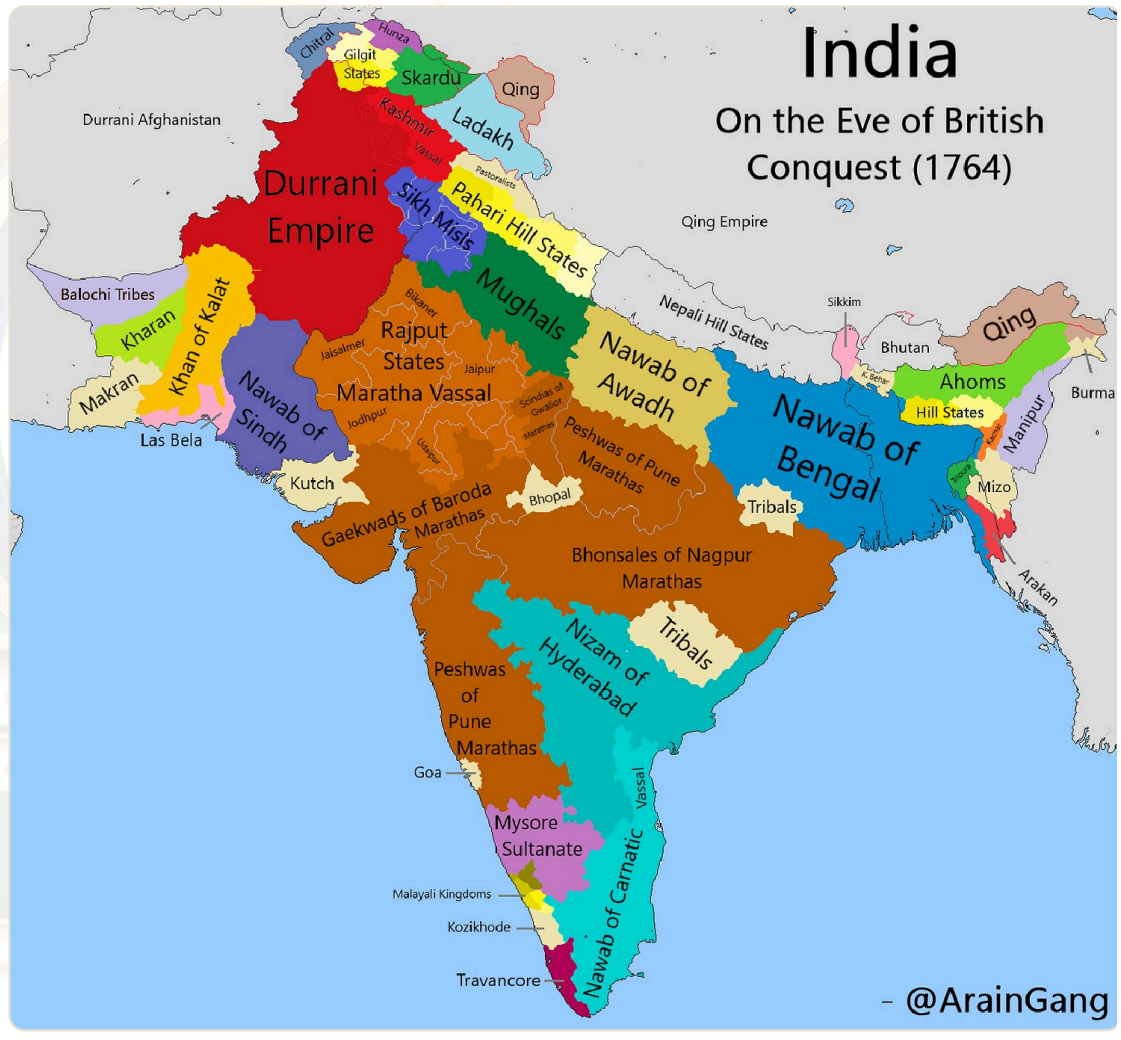
CHAPTER 2

# Expansion of English East India Company in India

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IN THIS CHAPTER


- Conquest of Bengal
- Conquest of Mysore
- Conquest of the Maratha Confederacy
- Conquest of Sindh
- Conquest of Punjab
- Anglo-Sikh Wars
- Timeline of British Expansion


**Map of India in 1764**, before the British conquests in India. At that time, different parts of Indian territory were controlled by various rulers.

## Conquest of Bengal

### Why Bengal Mattered

- Bengal was the **richest province of the Mughal Empire**. It included present-day Bihar, Odisha and Bangladesh.
- Bengal exported raw products to Europe, such as saltpetre, rice, indigo, pepper, sugar, silk, cotton textiles and handicrafts.
- Nearly **60 per cent** of British imports from Asia came from Bengal, so the East India Company had vital trade interests there.
- Almost all the governors of Bengal strongly resented the special privileges enjoyed by the English company.

- In **1741**, **Alivardi Khan**, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, killed the Nawab of Bengal, Sarfaraz Khan, in battle and made himself the new subahdar (governor) of Bengal.
- Alivardi Khan died in **April 1756** and was succeeded by his grandson, **Siraj-ud-daula**.

### The Battle of Plassey (1757)

- The English fortified Calcutta without the Nawab's permission. So Siraj-ud-daula attacked and seized the English fort at Calcutta.
- **Black Hole Tragedy:** Siraj-ud-daula is believed to have imprisoned **146 English persons** in a very small room, where **123 died** of suffocation. This angered the English, and they fought the Nawab under the leadership of **Robert Clive**.
- Clive made a secret alliance with the Nawab's traitors:
  - **Mir Jafar** – general of the Nawab's army
  - **Rai Durlabh**
  - **Jagat Seth** – a banker of Bengal
  - **Manikchand** – an officer
  - **Amichand (Omichand)** – a rich Sikh merchant
  - **Khadim Khan** – a commander of the Nawab's army
- Because of this conspiracy, the English won the **Battle of Plassey on June 23, 1757**.
- The British made **Mir Jafar** the Nawab of Bengal.
- Plassey is rightly regarded as the **starting point of British rule in India**.
- Later, Mir Jafar resigned in favour of his son-in-law, **Mir Kasim**.

### The Battle of Buxar (1764)

- Mir Kasim was unhappy because the British were misusing the rights given to them. He planned an attack on them with the Nawab of Awadh and the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II.
- The combined armies of **Mir Kasim**, the Nawab of Awadh **Shuja-ud-daula** and Mughal emperor **Shah Alam II** were defeated by the English under **Major Hector Munro** at Buxar on **October 22, 1764**.
- After Mir Kasim's defeat, Mir Jafar again became Nawab of Bengal. After Mir Jafar's death, his minor son **Najm-ud-daula** was made Nawab.
- In **August 1765**, Robert Clive signed two important **Treaties of Allahabad** — one with the Nawab of Awadh and the other with Mughal emperor Shah Alam II.

> **EXAM TIP**
>
> **Plassey (1757)** made the British powerful in Bengal, but **Buxar (1764)** made them the real masters of Bengal. Plassey was won by conspiracy; Buxar was a real military victory.

### Dual Government in Bengal (1765–72)

- After Buxar, the East India Company became the real master of Bengal.
- Robert Clive introduced the **dual system of government** — rule by two: the Company and the Nawab of Bengal.
- Both the **diwani** (collecting revenue) and the **nizamat** (police and judicial functions) came under the Company's control.

- For diwani functions, the Company appointed two deputy diwans: **Mohammad Reza Khan** for Bengal (who also acted as deputy nazim or deputy subahdar) and **Raja Sitab Roy** for Bihar.
- The Nawab of Bengal (Najm-ud-daula) had only administrative power.
- In **1772**, **Warren Hastings** (then Governor of Bengal) abolished the dual government and took full control of Bengal.




BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1789

## Conquest of Mysore

### Rise of Haidar Ali

- Haidar Ali began as a soldier of the Mysore state and later became the **faujdar of Dindigul**.
- He set up a modern arsenal at Dindigul with French help.
- In **1761**, he overthrew **Nanjaraja** (the powerful Prime Minister of the Wodeyar king Krishnaraja) and took power, though he still recognised Krishnaraja Wodeyar II as the lawful ruler.

### Anglo-Mysore Wars (1767–1799)

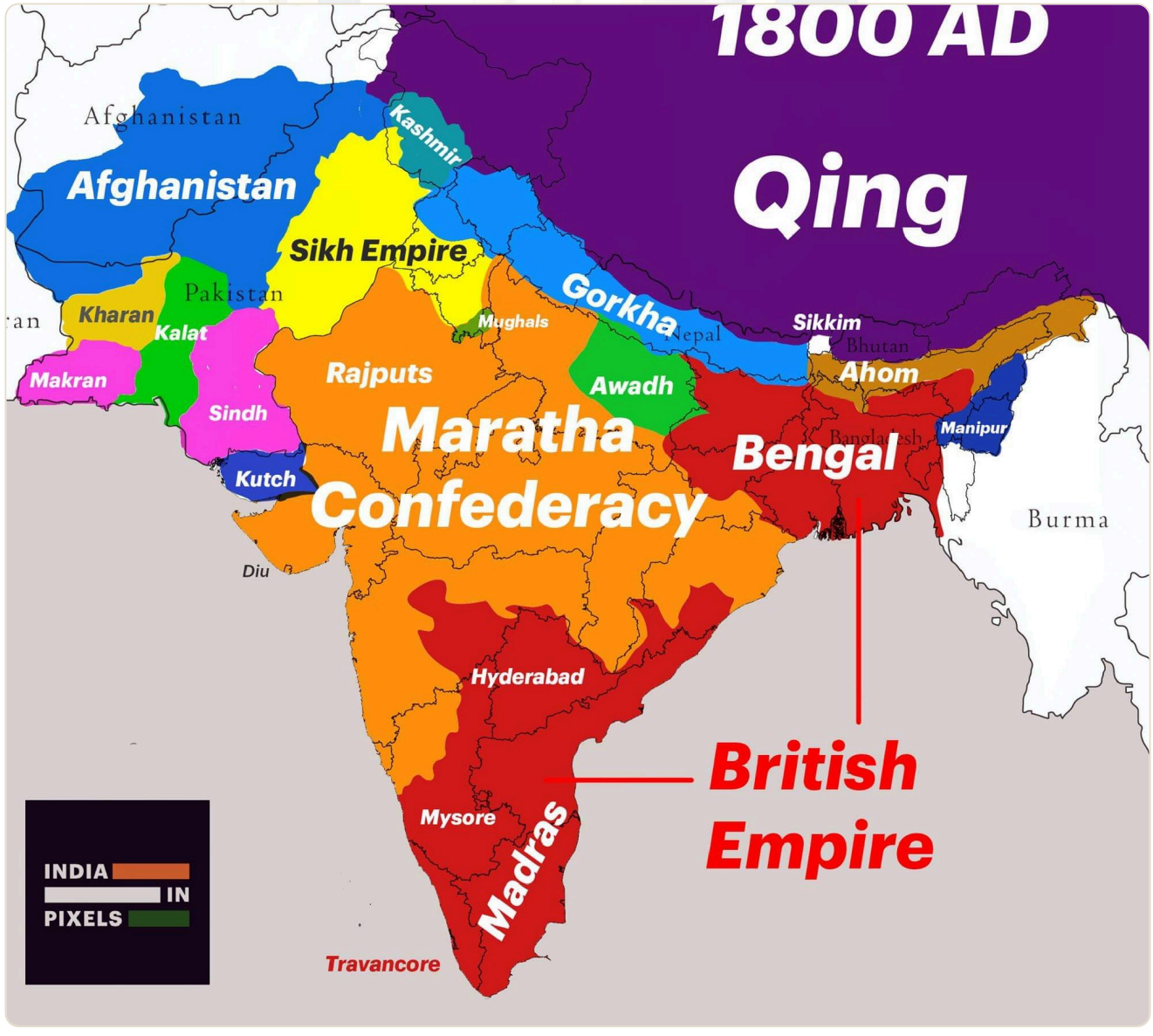
The Anglo-Mysore Wars were fought between the East India Company and Mysore.

| War | Period | Key Facts | Ended By |
|---|---|---|---|
| First | 1767–69 | Haidar Ali defeated the British. | Treaty of Madras (1769) |
| Second | 1780–84 | Warren Hastings attacked the French port of Mahe in Haidar Ali's territory. Haidar Ali formed a joint front with the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas. Haidar was defeated at **Porto Novo (1781)** by Eyre Coote and died in 1782. His son **Tipu Sultan** succeeded him. | Treaty of Mangalore (1784) |
| Third | 1790–92 | The Marathas and the Nizam allied with the British against Tipu. **Lord Cornwallis** captured Bangalore and defeated Tipu. Tipu had to give up **half his territory**. | Treaty of Seringapatam (1792) |
| Fourth | 1799 | **Lord Wellesley** attacked Seringapatam (capital of Mysore); Tipu Sultan died. The British placed a Hindu Wodeyar maharaja on the throne under a **subsidiary alliance**. | — |

- In **1831**, Governor-General **William Bentinck** took control of Mysore on grounds of misgovernance.

**REMEMBER**

- The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas helped the British against Mysore in all Anglo-Mysore Wars except the second.
- Tipu Sultan set up embassies in France, Turkey, Iran and Pegu to develop foreign trade.
- Tipu planted a **"Tree of Liberty"** at his capital and became a member of the **Jacobin Club** in France.



# Conquest of the Maratha Confederacy

## First Anglo-Maratha War (1775–82)

- In **1777**, **Nana Phadnavis** (the Maratha minister) broke his treaty with the Calcutta Council by giving the French a port on the west coast.
- The English sent a force towards Pune in retaliation, but surrendered by mid-January 1779 and signed the **Treaty of Wadgaon**.
- **Warren Hastings**, the Governor-General in Bengal, rejected the Treaty of Wadgaon. He sent a large force under **Colonel Goddard**, who captured **Ahmedabad** in February 1779 and **Bassein** in December 1780.
- The Sindhia (a state of the Maratha Confederacy) proposed a new treaty between the Peshwa (king of the Maratha empire) and the English. The **Treaty of Salbai** was signed in **May 1782**, guaranteeing peace for **twenty years**.

Note: A Governor heads the administration and a General heads the army; a Governor-General performs both functions.

## Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803–1805)

- On **April 1, 1801**, the Peshwa brutally murdered the brother of **Jaswantrao Holkar**. Jaswantrao then decisively defeated the armies of the Peshwa and the Sindhia.
- Peshwa **Bajirao II** fled to Bassein and, on **December 31, 1802**, signed the **Treaty of Bassein** with the English to get their help.
- After the Peshwa accepted the subsidiary alliance, the Sindhia, Bhonsle and Holkar tried to save Maratha independence.
- The well-organised English army under **Arthur Wellesley** defeated the combined armies of the Sindhia and the Bhonsle and forced them to sign separate subsidiary treaties.

| Defeated | Date | Treaty |
|---|---|---|
| Bhonsle | December 17, 1803 | Treaty of Devgaon |
| Sindhia | December 30, 1803 | Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon |
| Holkar | 1806 | Treaty of Rajpurghat |

## Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817–19)

- Lord Hastings' actions against the **Pindaris** (a community in the Maratha empire) were seen as an attack on Maratha sovereignty.
- This united the Maratha Confederacy again. (A confederacy is a group of small states that come together to form a bigger power.) A repentant Bajirao II rallied the Maratha chiefs against the English.
- The Peshwa attacked the British Residency at Poona. As a result, the **Peshwa was defeated at Khirki**, the **Bhonsle at Sitabuldi** and the **Holkar at Mahidpur**.
- Treaties signed: **Treaty of Poona** (Peshwa), **Treaty of Gwalior** (Sindhia) and **Treaty of Mandasor** (Holkar).
- In **June 1818**, the Peshwa finally surrendered. The Maratha Confederacy was dissolved, the post of Peshwa was abolished, and the British added a large part of Maratha territory to their empire.

**EXAM TIP**

Treaty pairs are often asked: **Salbai** – 1st war, **Bassein** – led to the 2nd war, **Poona / Gwalior / Mandasor** – 3rd war.

## Conquest of Sindh

- In June 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte and Alexander I of Russia formed the alliance of **Tilsit**, which planned an invasion of India by land.
- The British wanted a barrier between Russia and British India. **Lord Minto** sent three missions to form alliances:
  - **Metcalfe** to Lahore (Sikh empire)
  - **Elphinstone** to Kabul
  - **Malcolm** to Tehran
- **Nicholas Smith** visited Sindh and met the Amirs (rulers of Sindh) for a defensive arrangement.
- The Amirs signed their **first-ever treaty with the English** — the Treaty of **"Eternal Friendship"**.
- The **First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42)** was fought on Sindh's soil. The Amirs disliked this, and also the presence of British troops in their region.
- During a succession dispute among the Amirs, the English intervened and started a war when the Amirs revolted. Sindh surrendered quickly, and the Amirs were taken captive and banished.
- In **1843**, under Governor-General **Ellenborough**, Sindh was merged into the British Empire. **Charles Napier** became its first governor.

## Conquest of Punjab

- The possibility of a joint Franco-Russian invasion of India by land alarmed the English. In **1807**, Lord Minto sent **Charles Metcalfe** to Lahore.
- **Treaty of Amritsar (1809):** Signed between **Ranjit Singh** and the East India Company. Ranjit Singh accepted the **river Sutlej** as the boundary between Punjab and the Company's empire.
- **Tripartite Treaty (June 1838):** Signed by Ranjit Singh with the English and Shah Shuja.
- After Ranjit Singh died in **1839**, his son **Kharak Singh** became ruler. Kharak Singh's sudden death in 1840 and the accidental death of his son, Prince **Nau Nihal Singh** (while returning from his father's funeral), led to anarchy in Punjab.
- **Sher Singh**, another son of Ranjit Singh, succeeded but was murdered in late **1843**.
- **Daleep Singh**, a minor son of Ranjit Singh, was then made Maharaja, with **Rani Jindan** as regent (one who rules on behalf of the king) and **Hira Singh Dogra** as wazir.
- Hira Singh was killed in a court conspiracy in **1844**. The next wazir, **Jawahar Singh** (brother of Rani Jindan), angered the army and was deposed and killed in **1845**.
- **Lal Singh**, a lover of Rani Jindan, won over the army and became wazir in the same year. **Teja Singh** was made commander of the forces.

## Anglo-Sikh Wars

### First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–46)

- The war is said to have started when the Sikh army crossed the **river Sutlej on December 11, 1845**.
- The British had 20,000 to 30,000 troops; the Sikhs had about 50,000 men under the overall command of Lal Singh.
- Due to the **treachery of Lal Singh and Teja Singh**, the Sikhs suffered five defeats in a row:

| Battle | Date |
|---|---|
| Mudki | December 18, 1845 |
| Ferozeshah | December 21–22, 1845 |
| Buddelwal | — |
| Aliwal | January 28, 1846 |
| Sabraon | February 10, 1846 |

### Treaty of Lahore (March 8, 1846)

Lahore fell to the British on **February 20, 1846**, and the Sikhs were forced to sign the humiliating Treaty of Lahore. Its main terms:

- A war indemnity of **more than 1 crore rupees** was to be paid to the English.
- The **Jalandhar Doab** (area between the Beas and the Sutlej) was annexed to the Company's territory.
- A British Resident was placed at Lahore under **Henry Lawrence**.
- Daleep Singh was recognised as ruler, with Rani Jindan as regent and Lal Singh as wazir.
- As the Sikhs could not pay the full indemnity, **Kashmir including Jammu was sold to Gulab Singh**.

### Treaty of Bhairowal (December 1846)

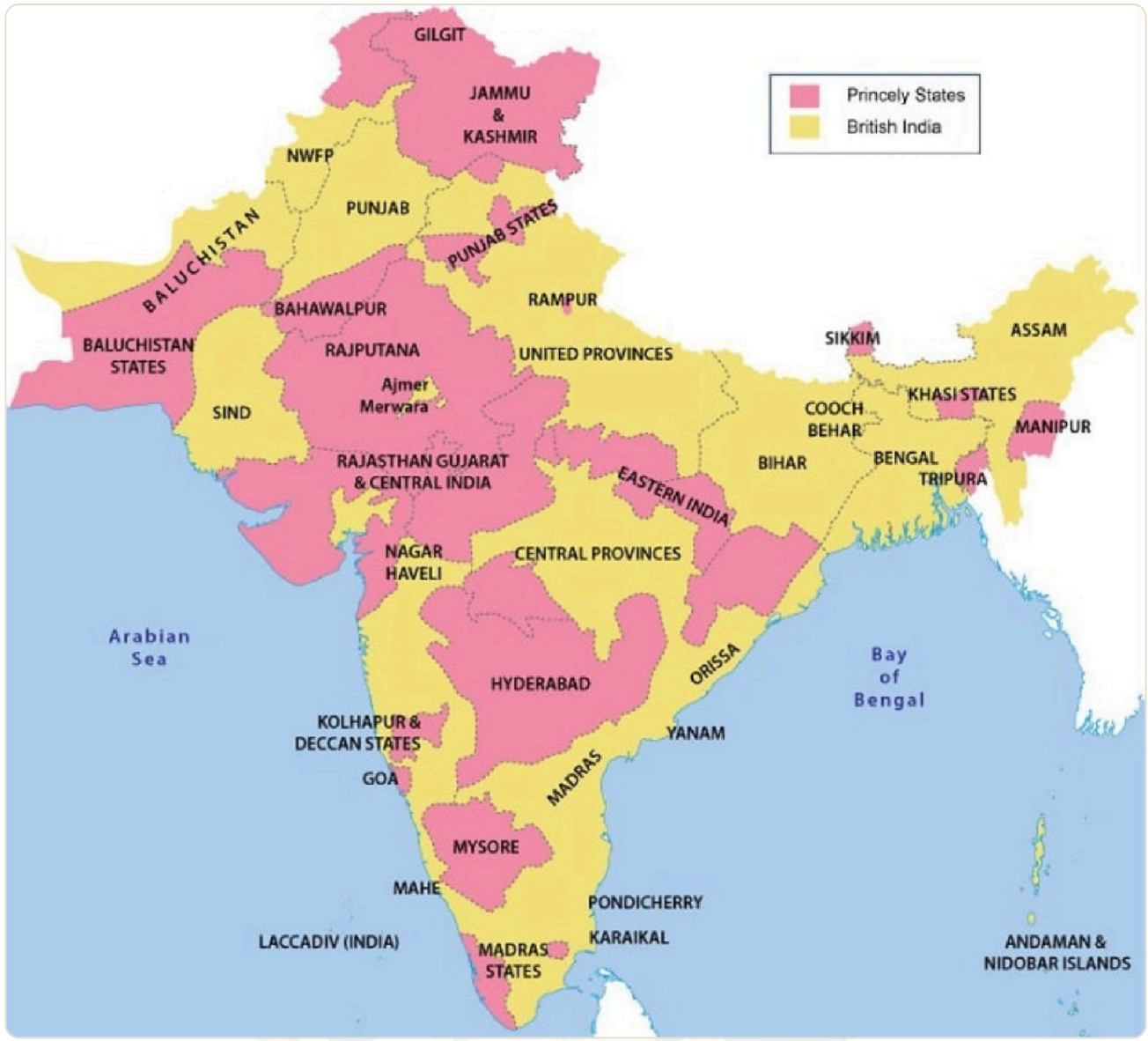
- The Sikhs were unhappy with the Treaty of Lahore over the issue of Kashmir and rebelled.
- Under the Treaty of Bhairowal, **Rani Jindan was removed as regent**.
- A **Council of Regency** of Sikh sardars was set up for Punjab, presided over by the English Resident, Henry Lawrence.

### Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–49)

- **Mulraj**, the governor of Multan, was replaced by a new Sikh governor over an increase in annual revenue. Mulraj revolted and killed two English officers who came with the new governor.
- **Sher Singh** was sent to crush the revolt but joined Mulraj instead, leading to a mass uprising in Multan. This is considered the immediate cause of the war.
- **Lord Dalhousie** himself went to Punjab. Three important battles were fought:
  - **Battle of Ramnagar** – led by Sir Hugh Gough, the Company's commander-in-chief
  - **Battle of Chillianwala** – January 1849
  - **Battle of Gujarat** – February 21, 1849. The Sikh army then surrendered at Rawalpindi. (Gujarat is a small town near the river Chenab.)

### Result

- Punjab was **annexed by the British in March 1849**.
- A three-member board was set up to govern Punjab: the Lawrence brothers (**Henry and John**) and **Charles Mansel**.
- In **1853**, the board was abolished and Punjab was placed under a Chief Commissioner. **John Lawrence** became the first Chief Commissioner.




BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA (1857)

## Timeline of British Expansion

| | |
|---|---|
| **1757** | Battle of Plassey (June 23) |
| **1764** | Battle of Buxar (October 22) |
| **1765** | Treaties of Allahabad; Dual Government begins |
| **1772** | Dual Government abolished by Warren Hastings |
| **1767–69** | First Anglo-Mysore War |
| **1775–82** | First Anglo-Maratha War; Treaty of Salbai (1782) |
| **1780–84** | Second Anglo-Mysore War; Treaty of Mangalore (1784) |
| **1790–92** | Third Anglo-Mysore War; Treaty of Seringapatam (1792) |
| **1799** | Fourth Anglo-Mysore War; Tipu Sultan dies |
| **1802** | Treaty of Bassein (December 31) |
| **1803–05** | Second Anglo-Maratha War |
| **1809** | Treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh |
| **1817–19** | Third Anglo-Maratha War; Peshwa surrenders (June 1818) |
| **1843** | Sindh annexed |

**1845–46** First Anglo-Sikh War; Treaty of Lahore

**1848–49** Second Anglo-Sikh War; Punjab annexed (March 1849)

QUICK REVISION

## Chapter 2 at a Glance

1. Bengal supplied nearly 60% of British imports from Asia; Siraj-ud-daula became Nawab in 1756.
2. Plassey (23 June 1757) was won through Mir Jafar's treachery and is the starting point of British rule.
3. At Buxar (22 Oct 1764), Hector Munro defeated Mir Kasim, Shuja-ud-daula and Shah Alam II.
4. Clive's Dual Government (1765–72) was ended by Warren Hastings in 1772.
5. Four Anglo-Mysore Wars: Madras (1769), Mangalore (1784), Seringapatam (1792); Tipu died in 1799.
6. Anglo-Maratha Wars: Salbai (1782), Bassein (1802); the Peshwa surrendered in 1818 and the post was abolished.
7. Sindh signed its first treaty ("Eternal Friendship") with the English and was annexed in 1843; Charles Napier was its first governor.
8. Treaty of Amritsar (1809): the Sutlej became the boundary between Ranjit Singh's Punjab and the Company.
9. First Anglo-Sikh War ended with the Treaty of Lahore (1846); Kashmir was sold to Gulab Singh.
10. After the Second Anglo-Sikh War, Punjab was annexed in March 1849; John Lawrence became the first Chief Commissioner (1853).