

P.R. GOVERNMENT COLLEGE (A), KAKINADA
NAAC Accredited “B++” Grade Institution (CGPA
2.82)

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Study Material for students



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TOPIC: Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)

Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)

Lord Wellesley (Lord Richard Colley Wellesley) was a prominent British statesman and colonial administrator who served as Governor-General from 1798 to 1805. During his tenure, he pursued aggressive expansionist policies through the Subsidiary Alliance, which increased British influence in India via military conquests and strategic alliances.

His ambition for expanding British influence in India became clear when he was appointed Governor-General in 1798.

His tenure was marked by massive victories over Indian kingdoms, as well as policies aimed at spreading British power throughout India.

Lord Wellesley Significant Events.

- Lord Wellesley's tenure was crucial for British India's growth, marked by strategic alliances and military victories. His policies, like the Subsidiary Alliance, helped strengthen British control through events like the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War and Awadh annexation.
- Fourth Anglo-Mysore War: In 1799, Wellesley led the British against Tipu Sultan in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War. Tipu was defeated and killed at the Siege of Seringapatam, ending French influence in the region and restoring the Hindu Wodeyar dynasty in Mysore.
- Second Anglo-Maratha War: Wellesley exploited Maratha conflicts in the Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1805) to extend British control in central and western India. Victories like the Battle of Assaye forced the Marathas to accept the Treaty of Bassein, cementing British dominance.
- Censorship of the Press Act (1799): To control public sentiment, Wellesley introduced the Censorship of the Press Act in 1799, requiring prior approval for publication, later extending to all forms of media.
- Fort William College: In 1800, Lord Wellesley established Fort William College in Kolkata to train British civil servants in Indian languages and culture. However, in 1806, the East India Company shifted training to Haileybury in England.

Lord Wellesley Legacy.

- Expansion of British Influence: Lord Wellesley's tenure is best remembered for expanding British control in India. Through the Subsidiary Alliance and military campaigns, he reduced Indian states' sovereignty and brought them under British authority.
- Subsidiary Alliance System: This diplomatic strategy allowed the British to control Indian states without direct annexation, laying the foundation for future dominance.
- Trade Restrictions: Wellesley removed trade barriers between Asia and Europe, strengthening commercial ties and boosting the British economy.

- **Financial Strain and Disputes:** His wars and policies strained British finances, leading to conflicts with the East India Company over the financial burden of his administration.
- **Foundation for British Supremacy:** Wellesley's policies, though costly, established the foundation for British dominance in India, shaping the empire's future.

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