In the seventeenth century, English East India Company had arrived in the Indian subcontinent as traders. Initially, it established its headquarters at three strategic parts of the India—Madras (Chennai), Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). In the second half of the eighteenth century, the British established their rule in Bengal. They now looked to expand their economic and political domination over other parts of the subcontinent. With their victory in the Battle of Plassey (1757), the British emerged as a major power competing to fill the power vacuum created after the disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

The major political forces in India at the time included the Marathas, the Sikhs, and the states of Hyderabad and Mysore. Through tact, diplomacy and conquests, the British were able to eliminate these powers and bring their areas under its control.

**Modes of British Expansion**

The British devised several strategic policies to bring India under its domination:
- Subsidiary Alliance
- Doctrine of Lapse
- Direct annexation on various pretexts

**SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE**

The Treaty of Subsidiary or Subsidiary Alliance was crafted by Lord Wellesley, Governor-General of India from 1798 to 1805. Through the Subsidiary Alliance treaty, any Indian ruler could seek British help against external or internal attacks. The British would protect the ruler in return of certain conditions.

- The British would permanently station troops in the territory of the subsidiary state.
- The Indian ruler had to pay for the maintenance of the troops.
- At times, in lieu of payment, a portion of the ruler’s territory was ceded to the British.
A British Resident was kept in the court of the Indian king and the ruler had to pay an annual amount towards the cost of the Resident.

The Indian ruler could not employ any European for his service without prior approval of the British.

The Indian ruler also could not negotiate or form an alliance with any other Indian ruler without consulting the Governor-General.

Thus, under the Subsidiary Alliance, the ruler of the princely state could remain independent in internal matters, but had to acknowledge British paramountcy in external matters.

Several states like Hyderabad (1798), Tanjore (1799), Awadh (1801), Bhonsle (1803), Gwalior (1804), Indore (1817), Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur (1818) came under British rule through the Subsidiary Alliance system. Finally, the Peshwas of the Maratha Empire signed the Subsidary Treaty in 1802 after a series of Anglo-Maratha wars.

Consequences of the Subsidiary Alliance
The Subsidiary Alliance system was disadvantageous for the Indian rulers.

- The signing of the Subsidiary Alliance meant giving up the independence of the Indian states. The Indian rulers virtually lost all sovereignty in external matters. They became increasingly subservient to the British Resident, who would interfere in the everyday affairs of state administration.
- The cost of maintaining the British troops and the payment of subsidies led to a heavy drain of the resources of the state.
- The Subsidiary Alliance system gave a false sense of security to the Indian rulers. Protected by the British, the Indian rulers neglected welfare of the people. They no longer feared rebellions by the people, who suffered under their rule.
- Since the Alliance put strain on the state treasury and resources, the administration of the states suffered. The British then used misgovernance as a pretext to annex their kingdoms.

The Subsidiary Alliance system, on the other hand, was extremely advantageous to the British.

- They could now maintain a large army at the cost of the Indian states.
- The system enabled them to fight wars far off from their territories.
- The presence of British Resident meant that the British could control both internal and external affairs of the subsidiary state.
- The Alliance also removed the threat of any European rivals, as they were excluded from courts of Indian rulers.
- The British could, at any time, overthrow the ruler and annex his territory declaring him inefficient.

Subjugation through Military Conquests
The British used diplomacy as their policy for expansion and tried to avoid a direct military confrontation with the regional powers as it would be costly and drain their economic resources.

However, at times, it seemed impossible to establish an all-India empire without military involvement. Several regional kingdoms, like the Marathas, Mysore and Punjab, all powerful and independent states, were brought within the British Empire of India through various military conquests.
CONQUEST OF MYSORE

Under the leadership of powerful rulers like Haider Ali (1761–1782) and later his son Tipu Sultan (1782–1799), the state of Mysore emerged as an independent and strong state which challenged the authority of the British. The British saw Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan as a threat to the Company’s attempt to establish its power over India. To establish their control over the state of Mysore, the Company fought four wars with Mysore:

- First Anglo-Mysore war (1767–1769)
- Second Anglo-Mysore war (1780–1784)
- Third Anglo-Mysore war (1790–1792)
- Fourth Anglo-Mysore war (1799)

During the Second Anglo-Mysore war, Haider Ali died in 1782. He was succeeded by Tipu Sultan, who continued with the war. In the Battle of Seringapatam (1799), Tipu Sultan was killed while defending his capital, Seringapatam. The British emerged victorious. The Mysore kingdom was given to the Wodeyar Dynasty, the former rulers of the region, and was eventually placed under the Subsidiary Alliance system.

SUBJUGATION OF MARATHAS

The disastrous defeat of the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 left the Maratha Empire in ruins. The Maratha ambition of establishing Delhi as the centre of Maratha power was completely shattered. The Maratha Empire broke into five centres of power, each ruled by chiefs (sardars).

They were:
- Peshwas of Poona
- Gaekwads of Baroda
- Sindhias of Gwalior
- Holkars of Indore
- Bhonsles of Nagpur

These groups were held together in a loose confederacy under the Peshwa (Principal Minister), who was its military and administrative head. Most of western and central India was under their control. The British saw them as formidable rivals who had to be subjugated for them to establish a British Empire in India.

Under the leadership of the fourth Peshwa, Madhav Rao I, the Maratha Empire was able to recover from the destruction of the Battle of Panipat. However, with his death in 1772, there emerged a war of succession.

The British, taking advantage of this internal conflict, began to interfere in the Maratha affairs in the hope of exploiting the situation and gaining territorial and monetary advantages.

First Anglo-Maratha War (1775–1782)

The English Company first clashed with the Maratha Empire in the Anglo-Maratha war, which began in 1775 and ended in 1782.

After the death of Peshwa Madhav Rao in 1772, there was a state of confusion in Poona. There was a struggle for power between Raghunath Rao, brother of Balaji Baji Rao, and Narayan Rao, younger brother of Madhav Rao. Narayan Rao became the Peshwa. However, Narayan Rao was assassinated in 1773 by Raghunath Rao. An intense struggle broke out between the supporters of Madhav Rao II, infant son of Narayan Rao, led by Nana Phadnavis, and those who considered his uncle Raghunath Rao the rightful contender of the throne.
Raghunath Rao sought British help to secure the Maratha throne. The British agreed in the hope of a territorial and monetary advantage. Raghunath Rao gave the British the territories of Salsette and Bassein in return of British military help.

Nana Phadnavis united all the Maratha chiefs to fight against the British for the infant Peshwa's throne.

**Consequences**

- The war lasted for seven years without any decisive victory for either side.
- The First Anglo-Maratha came to an end by the Treaty of Salbai in 1782.
  The British acknowledged Madhav Rao II as Peshwa of Marathas and Raghunath Rao was pensioned off.
- While the war did not bring much material gain for British, they did establish themselves as a strong rival who could challenge and win against a powerful empire like Marathas.

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

Peshwa Madhav Rao II died in 1795. He was succeeded by Peshwa Baji Rao II, a weak ruler. Nana Phadnavis died in 1800.

With the death of Nana Phadnavis, who kept the Maratha confederacy united, the Maratha chiefs embarked on their own ambitions, resulting in internal conflicts among the Marathas. This situation proved conducive to the British who resumed their aggression towards the Maratha Empire. The Maratha chiefs were engaged in their internal strife to control the seat of the Peshwa in Poona, and paid little attention to the real danger from the British.

In 1802, Peshwa Baji Rao II, supported by Daular Rao Sindhia, was defeated by Yashwant Rao Holkar, the ruler of Indore. To maintain his rule, Peshwa Baji Rao II signed the Subsidiary Alliance with Lord Wellesley. However, the other Maratha factions refused to accept the alliance.
chiefs made a last attempt to regain their power and independence in 1817. This unified front was led by **Peshwa Baji Rao II**, who resented the rigid control of the British Resident.

Peshwa Baji Rao II formed a union with Bhonsle and Holkar, and waged a full-scale war against the British. The Maratha assault on the British began with attack on the British Residency in Kirkee near Poona in 1817. However, the British fought back with vengeance and defeated the united forces of Peshwa, Bhosle and Holkar.

**Consequences**
- Peshwa Baji Rao II was dethroned and pensioned off to Bithur, near Kanpur. His territories were annexed to the British Empire.
- Bhonsle and Holkar had to cede large parts of their territories.
- Holkar had to enter Subsidiary Alliance.
- A small kingdom of **Satara** was created out of Peshwa lands and given to the descendants of Chhatrapati Shivaji under the complete control of the British.
- With this defeat, the Marathas were finally subjugated and the British became the biggest political force of India.

**CONQUEST OF PUNJAB**

Under the leadership of **Ranjit Singh**, the Sikh Kingdom emerged as an independent and powerful force in north India. Ranjit Singh had signed the **Treaty of Amritsar** with the British in 1809, which stated non-interference by the British in the affairs of Sikh kingdom.

After Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, a power struggle broke out in the Sikh kingdom, leading to political instability in the region. The British saw this as an opportunity to attack the Sikhs and expand their empire.
The First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–1846) resulted in signing of the humiliating Treaty of Lahore in 1846. By the treaty, the Sikhs lost two-thirds of their kingdom, including the prized territory of Jallandhar Doab, extending from the Beas River to Sutlej River, to the British.

Further, the Punjab army was reduced to 20,000 cavalry and 12,000 infantry. A British Resident and force was stationed in Lahore.

Later, another treaty was signed in 1846 which made the British Resident the real ruler of Punjab. Thus, Punjab ceased to be an independent state.

In the Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–1849), Punjab was defeated and completely annexed by the British. Thus, the last independent state of India was absorbed into the British Empire.

British Expansion Under Dalhousie

The first phase of British expansion in India was full of military conquests.

The next wave of British expansion occurred under Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India from 1848 to 1856. He devised some diplomatic methods to achieve territorial annexation peacefully.

DOCTRINE OF LAPSE

Lord Dalhousie devised the Doctrine of Lapse to annex subordinate states (territories that were already under the control of British). Dalhousie wanted them under direct command of the British.

As per the Doctrine of Lapse, if the ruler of a subordinate state died without a natural male heir, his kingdom would automatically ‘lapse’, or pass into the hands of the British. The Indian rulers could not adopt sons or pass the kingdom to the next relatives. Dalhousie even refused to recognise the titles of the ex-rulers or pay them pensions.

Several states like Satara (1848), Jaitpur and Sambalpur (1849), Udaipur (1852), Nagpur and Jhansi (1854) were annexed under the Doctrine of Lapse.

This unjust annexation of Indian states created resentment and anger among native Indians. It later became one of the chief factors for the outbreak of the Revolt of 1857, threatening to destroy the solid foundations of the British rule in India.
of having misgoverned his state and refusing to introduce reforms. His state was annexed in 1856 on ground of maladministration. The annexation of Awadh created a great discontent in the British army, as most of the sepoys in the army were from Awadh. Awadh became an important centre of the Revolt of 1857.
**Timeline**

1761: Third Battle of Panipat

1803-1805: Second Anglo-Maratha War

1817-1818: Third Anglo-Maratha War

1849: Annexation of Punjab

1775-1782: First Anglo-Maratha War

1724: Defeat of Tipu Sultan in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore war; Annexation of Mysore

1850: Annexation of Awadh

1856: Annexation of Punjab after two Anglo-Sikh wars

**CONCEPT MAP**

**Expansion of British Power in India**

**Subsidiary Alliance**
- Devised by Lord Wellesley
- Indian ruler entering into a Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to accept British forces in his territory and also agree to pay for their maintenance in return for British protection.
- E.g.: Hyderabad, Tanjore, Awadh, Bhonsle, Gwalior

**Military Conquests**
- Conquest of Mysore through four Anglo-Mysore wars
- Subjugation of Marathas after three Anglo-Maratha wars
- Annexation of Punjab after two Anglo-Sikh wars

**Doctrine of Lapse**
- Devised by Lord Dalhousie
- If the ruler of a subordinate state died without a natural male heir, his kingdom would automatically 'lapse', or pass into the hands of the British.
- E.g.: Satara, Jaitpur and Sambalpur, Udaipur, Nagpur and Jhansi

**Exercise**

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. The first state to accept Subsidiary Alliance was ____________.

2. The British fought ____________ wars with Mysore.

3. An Indian ruler who entered into a ______________ with British could not enter into any alliance with any other power.

4. Dalhousie formulated ______________ to annex subordinate states.

5. The First Anglo-Maratha came to a peaceful end with the ____________ in 1782.
B. Name the following.
1. Battle in which Tipu Sultan was killed.
2. Treaty that ended First Anglo-Sikh War.
3. Person who drafted the Subsidiary Alliance system
4. Maratha chief of Gwalior.
5. Annexation of this state was an important cause of Revolt of 1857.

C. Choose the correct answer.
1. During the First Anglo-Maratha War, the British supported the claims of __________.
   a. Madhav Rao I  
   b. Raghunath Rao  
   c. Madhav Rao II  
   d. Narayan Rao
2. __________ signed the Subsidiary Alliance to secure his position as Peshwa.
   a. Baji Rao II  
   b. Narayan Rao  
   c. Raghunath Rao  
   d. Madhav Rao II
3. The Fourth Anglo-Mysore War was fought in __________.
   a. 1760  
   b. 1780  
   c. 1790  
   d. 1799
4. __________ was the Governor-General of India from 1848 to 1856.
   a. Lord Wellesley  
   b. Lord Dalhousie  
   c. Lord Mountbatten  
   d. Lord Bentinck
5. The First Anglo-Maratha War lasted for __________ years.
   a. five  
   b. ten  
   c. seven  
   d. twelve

D. Answer the following questions in brief.
1. What were the strategies used by the British to expand their dominance over India?
2. List some states which entered the Subsidiary Alliance system.
3. On what grounds did the British annex Awadh?
4. What was the Doctrine of Lapse?
5. Name some states annexed under Doctrine of Lapse.

E. Answer the following questions in detail.
1. Explain the provisions of the Subsidiary Alliance system. What were its effects on the Indian rulers?
2. Explain the conquest of Mysore in brief.
3. Describe the Anglo-Maratha wars. What were their consequences?
4. What were the policies devised by Lord Dalhousie to annex Indian states?
5. Write a note on the Anglo-Sikh Wars.

F. Snap Shot!
Observe the given picture and answer the questions:
1. Identify the person?
2. Name the policy of expansion crafted by him.
3. What did the policy achieve for British?
G. Map Work

On an outline map of India, mark any two states annexed under Doctrine of Lapse and two states that signed the Subsidiary Alliance.

Life Skills

Imagine yourself being a ruler of a subsidiary state. Debate the provisions of the Subsidiary Alliance with your class teacher and classmates, assuming them as your Royal Council. Formulate your own condition in Subsidiary Alliance that you would present to Lord Wellesley.

Integration

The British Empire in India was often called the 'jewel in the British crown'. Prepare a digital timeline showing how the British expanded their rule first over Bengal and then over almost all of India.

Project

Write an imaginary dialogue between Peshwa Baji Rao II and the rulers of Bhonsle and Holkar, in which the Peshwa is trying to convince the other two rulers to join his fight against the British.