

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

Topic: Carnatic Wars - First Carnatic War [Modern Indian History for UPSC]

First Carnatic War Notes

Facts about the First Carnatic War

- Fought between: English and French forces.
- People involved: Joseph François Dupleix (French Governor-General), Major Stringer Lawrence (British), Anwaruddin Khan (Nawab of the Carnatic).
- When: 1746 – 1748
- Where: Carnatic region, Southern India
- Result: Inconclusive.

Course of the First Carnatic War

- France and Britain were on opposite sides of the camp at the War of Austrian Succession that had broken out in Europe in 1740.
- This Anglo-French rivalry led to their trading companies in India vying with each other for supremacy.
- The French Governor of Pondicherry Dupleix had raised an army of Indian sepoys under French officers in India.
- The French East India Company was nationalized in 1720 and France had imperialistic designs on India.
- In 1745, there was a naval attack on a French fleet by Britain in which even Pondicherry in danger.
- Dupleix, along with additional French troops from Mauritius defended against this attack and captured Madras, which had been controlled by the English.
- The English made another attack on Pondicherry but instead faced a heavy loss. The English sought help from the Nawab of Carnatic (Arcot) Anwaruddin Khan.
- The Nawab asked the French to return Madras to the British.
- Dupleix tried convincing the Nawab unsuccessfully that Madras would be handed over to him at a later stage.
- Then, the Nawab sent a huge army to fight the French forces. This army was defeated by the relatively small number of French forces in Mylapore (in modern-day Chennai) in 1746.
- This exposed the weakness of the armies of the Indian rulers vis-à-vis the efficiently trained armies of the European powers.

- The war ended in 1748 with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle also called Treaty of Aachen.

Effects of the First Carnatic War

- Madras was given back to the English in exchange for Louisburg in North America to France.
- Dupleix understood the superiority of the European armies who used this advantage to influence Indian princes and establish French hegemony in South India.

