

## UNIT 46 – UPSC - The Gwalior War

### India's History : Modern India : The Gwalior War - 1843

## The Gwalior War

Years of turbulence and intrigue in Gwalior culminated in 1843 in the adoption of the child-heir Jayavi Rao Sinhia to the vacant throne. With the country's geographical position so strategically significant to British interests, especially regarding the Punjab and Sind, and the fact that Gwalior possessed significant military forces, the British naturally wanted certain re-assurances from the Gwalior council of regency. The council refused even to discuss the situation with Lord Ellenborough and, in 1843, war was declared.

The British formed two armies: one at Agra under Sir Hugh Gough; and one at Jansi under Major-General John Grey. Opposing them was an army, which included European-trained "regulars" and a formidable force of artillery.

On 29th December 1843, Gough's force of two cavalry and three infantry brigades encountered about 17,000 Marathas in a strong position at Maharajpore. Naturally Gough attacked immediately and, despite strong resistance, the Marathas were routed and 56 guns captured. Gough suffered almost 800 casualties.

On the same day, Grey's column encountered a second Maratha force some 12,000 strong at Punnari, about 20 miles away from Gough. Again the British attacked, and again the Marathas were routed and their artillery captured.

Under these twin blows, the Gwalior regency capitulated and on 31st December 1843 a treaty was signed that effectively gave control of the country to the British.

