**Opium Wars**

In the end of 19th century opium was very prevalent in China. That is when opium addiction started to spread with millions of victims.

Lin Zexu was put in charge to control the use of opium in China. Although the drug was illegal The British continued smuggling opium for their own benefits.

In a letter to queen Victoria Lin showed his concern about the use of this drug in China. He wrote that whoever sold or used opium should be punished by death, and everyone should hand their remaining opium.

The British made a big profit by smuggling opium in China.

The drug was grown in India, the British took and sold it in China in return for tea.

20,000 chests containing opium were handed to the government.

Britain's Superintendent of Trade, Charles Elliot, was the one who agreed to hand over the opium to the Chinese government.

Lord Palmerston accused Charles Elliot for the mistreatment and imprisonment of the British by the Chinese government.

China made the British sign an agreement which prohibited the trade of opium. Most of the traders backed out and stopped trading with China except some of the traders which affected UK trading system

In the first opium war China and the British East India Company participated.

The British took ships and men from India and created a taskforce.

The first Opium War began on 3 November 1839.

Despite China’s great efforts, the British won.

China had to sign a deal saying that they agreed to trade with British and they had to give a big amount of money to the British. They also had to give the island of Xianggang to the British.

In the second opium war France and Britain fought against China to legalize opium trade.

The war is also known as the *Arrow War.* Named after the ship Chinese owned.

Chinese signed an agreement saying that the French had the right to trade or do any other business openly in China.

One of the main reason China was defeated was because of the use of outdated weapons.

Despite Lin Zexu’s failure to stop the use of opium in China, even today he is known as a hero. He arrested 17000 opium dealers, and he destroyed 2.6 million pounds of opium.



