

## **“Shivaji is the last constructive genius and a nation builder that the Hindu races produced” discuss this view**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Shivaji was not only a brave soldier, but also a most capable organizer and ruler. The administrative modernization Shivaji introduced was aimed at the improvement of the existing administrative system and also for the all round progress of the Maratha People. To save the nation from outside attacks was also included in his administrative objectives. The Marathas were brave and desirous of freedom. They loved their mother land and religion. Because of this, they have not wasted any opportunities suitable for their growth. In fact the rise and growth of the Maratha power has not happened accidentally. They rose naturally by the mutual influence of certain decisive powers acted lively in the political social cultural life of India for centuries. The Marathas were having many concessions available from nature. The attackers were not easily allowed to conquer this region of land because of array of Sahyadri from north to south and from east to west by Satpura- Vindhya array of mountains. Not only that, people of this area were blessed with perfect climate, and were rich with qualities like simplicity, steady enthusiasm, perseverance, thrift, habit of self dependence, patriotism, courage etc. The reason for this was that this region filled with mountains was comparatively infertile.*

**Keywords: Confrontation with Bijapur, Administrative System & Regional rule, Tax System & Execution of Law & order**

### **Introduction**

Shivaji was born as the son of Gija Bai and Shajibonslay on February 29<sup>th</sup> 1630 at Shivner. His father Shajibonslay was a Jagirdhar under Bijapur Sultan. From childhood onwards through the adventurous stories of the brave heroes of the legends and epics his mother has transmitted braveness to Shivaji. The scholar Dadaji Kondadev was Shivaji's first guru (Preceptor). Though formal education was acquired, he has self learned the

substance and depth of ideas in the epics like Ramayan, Mahabharath etc. He has achieved skill in horse –riding and training in using weapons.



*Shivaji*

### **Confrontation with Bijapur**

After attaining majority Shivaji had the liability of finding out an own occupation .Taken a strong decision not to serve under the Mughals or Sultans as a first step towards protection of Hindu religion and its reformation, started trying to own a small region. The political environment existed in Bijapur became favorable for Shivaji. In 1646 when the sultan became bed ridden, Shivaji has seized Thorna Fort which was twenty *nazhika* faraway from Pune (one *nazhika* is equal to 24 minutes). With the attack of Kalyan Fort by Shivaji, as a procedure for defense, the sultan of that place has captured Shivaji's father as prisoner .Considering the safety of his father, Shivaji has stopped the military action temporarily. With tactic approach he freed his father.

### **Killing of Afzal Khan**

To capture Shivaji alive or dead, Bijapur Sultan has engaged Afzal Khan, a soldier. The cunning Afzal , to entrap. Shivaji through betrayal , invited him for a meeting. Knowing in advance his

secret intention, Shivaji attended the meeting with sufficient precaution. Pretending to embrace Shivaji, Afzal Khan tried to stab him with dagger, Shivaji has pierced the tiger nails which he was carrying on the chest of Afzal Khan and killed him. By Scattering Afzal Khan's army, he has entered south Konkan .The defeated Bijapur Sulthan entered into an agreement with Shivaji .

### **Wars with the Mughals**

The victory achieved from Bijapur Sultan made Shivaji ready for attacking the mughal region. He had conquered few forts of the Mughals. Aurangzeb engaged Shayista Khan to confront Shivaji. Defeated near Puna in the war, Shayista Khan ran away and escaped. Later in the leadership of Raja Jaisingh and Prince Muvazam the Mughal army attacked Shivaji. In between this, Shivaji attacked Surat and robbed it. By the effort of Jai Singh, Shivaji had made conciliation with the Mughal Emperor at Puranther. Accepting the invitation to meet Aurangzeb, when Shivaji reached Delhi, Aurangzeb misbehaved with Shivaji and imprisoned him. Within three months using cunningness, Shivaji escaped from imprisonment. After escaping from imprisonment, reaching Maharashtra Shivaji had given strong retaliation against the Mughals. Aurangzeb being afraid of defeat accepted Shivaji as the king of Maharastra. As protest against the temple destruction policy of Aurangzeb, Shivaji again prepared for battle. Bijapur and Golkonds accepting Shivaji's sovereignty had given tribute. Conquering Mughal Forts, Shivaji brought a big region of land under his domination. In 1674 he was coronated as Emperor (Chatrapathi). After coronation, spreading the battle to south Carnatic and north Konkan, he conquered these regions also. Karnataka wars are the superior achievements in Shivajis history. In south reaching up to Tanjavur he had conquered west Carnatic, North Mysore and Bellary.

### **Administrative System & Regional rule**

The central rule was based on the supreme power of the king. An eight member Ministry in the name of Ashtapradhan was there to help the king in the administrative matters. Peshwa, Amathya, Mantbri, Sumantha, Sachive, Dhanadhyaksh, Senapathi, Nyayadeesh all these eight Ministers were given responsibility of each division. For the service of the ministers , remuneration was given in cash. The ministerial position was not hereditary. One spy division was also organized under the central rule. They were the decisive power who worked behind for the splendid Military success of Shivaji.

Ruling was conducted dividing the empire into two parts. From the beginning the countries which belonged to the Marathas were known as *Swarajya* and that part which were attacked and conquered was known as *Mogala*. He divided his kingdom in to fifteen *Jillas* or outskirts. To protect each *Jilla* there were forts and employees like Military chief, Accountant and storekeeper. These three officers who were having equal status were of different castes. The reason for dividing and giving the administrative responsibilities equally to these three was with the aim of eliminating corruption in the administrative field. The plains were divided in to subbathal and brought each one under the control of Subedars. *Subbas* were divided into *Mahals*. The *Mahalkari* was the authority of the *Mahals*. Autonomic ruling system was existed in these Villages.



*Darbar of Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaji*

## Military rule

From Shivaji's period onwards many divisions were formed in Maratha Army. He organized permanent military divisions. This was a quality to be specified. He was having forty thousand cavalry soldiers; ten thousand foot-soldiers, a small group of cannon soldiers and one Naval Force consisting of four hundred ships. Beside this, in his army three thousand camels and thousand two hundred elephants were there. Each division in the army was divided in to separate branches. For soldiers salary was given in cash. Gorilla war training which was suitable for the geographical nature of Deccan was also given. Hindu Muslim soldiers lived in mutual friendship. He considered both sections equally. He has specially respected those who have exhibited excellence in the battle field. He has taken care of the families of the soldiers who died in the battle. Special conduct rules were there to follow strict discipline. Given instructions to respect women, children, Holy Khuran, Brahmins, cows etc. There was no Permission for the soldiers to take women with them during the period of military assaults. Without differentiation of religion, soldiers were strictly prohibited from destroying the worshipping centers and holy texts. In brief, it can be said that Shivaji's military modernization was fruitful.



*Shivaji and his Military*

*Ashtapradhan* Ministry, stoppage of traditional employment and *Jagir* System, giving representation in the administrative field for various caste and religious people, strict military discipline, religious tolerance policy, tax structure in scientific ways etc. were very rare in contemporary ruling system. Because of the modernization of the military field thoroughly he

could reap excellent victories. Shivaji always succeeded in gaining complete co –operation of the soldiers. Shivaji’s diplomacy also became a nightmare for the Mughal rulers. Certain Historians pictures Shivaji as the Hindu copy of Timur and Muhammed gazani. This is unsuitable with the reality. Shivaji was not an architect of government machinery, achieved through robbery and plunder. Not only that, his liberal policy helped farmers.etc a lot. Shivaji expressed extreme respect towards women, children, other religious people, Brahmins and the Holy Khuran. He never organized attacks aiming religious conversions.

### **Tax System & Execution of Law & order**

Tax system was regulated on the basis of scientific and progressive ideas. Agricultural land was measured, estimated and classified on the basis of yield. The tax was 1/3 rd of the total produce. The farmers were allowed to give the tax as grains or cash. The middle men were avoided for tax collection. In famine affected regions tax concessions were allowed. Beside the land tax, from neighboring countries two types of compulsory taxes were collected. The countries which were giving *chouth* and *Sardeshmukhi* were not robbed by Maratha army. For the execution of law and order there were no courts organized in expansive measure. Civil disputes were handled by local panchayats and criminal offenses were handled by *jilla* officers and *subedars*. Appeals on the verdicts were heard by Judge and King. Shivaji gave more importance to education, private teachers taught children at home. Gift was offered as reward. In the list of distinguished persons in Indian History who were inflicted for character annihilation, Shivaji was also included. When the Muslim Historians picturise Shivaji as a robber, adventurer and betrayer, the historians in Maharashtra worshipping him considering him as an incarnation.

### **Conclusion**

Shivaji was a brave warrior from Hindu community having excellent working ability and practical intelligence. From a very young age itself he expressed unusual braveness and adventure. As a person he was an obedient son, an affectionate father and a loving husband. He showed kindness towards poor people and those who were undergoing hardships. Though he was not able to acquire higher education, he encouraged education. He loved his religion and also he was not a slave of liquor or woman. Even Khafi Khan told about

Shivaji that there were no rulers lived during that period who expressed such nobility, religious tolerance and broad outlook.

Shivaji was having all the qualities of a popular ruler. He grasped inspiration from the ideals of Hindu legends. Being a Hindu, the religious policy of Shivaji happens to form respect even in conservative Muslims. He was having an indefensible personality which was not questioned by any. He displayed surprising expertise in battle strategy of virtuousness etc. He proved his working capacity as an organizer, warrior, ruler and diplomat. The continuous wars with Bijapur Sultan and Mughals have displayed his battle efficiency. The modernizations that Shivaji brought in the public ruling field and military ruling field are the examples of his creative talent.

Shivaji's noble achievement was by co-ordinating the Maratha people scattered here and there without any awareness of unity and growing in them national awareness and thirst for freedom. Let it be recorded here what Jadhwant Sarkar had told about the majestic person of that period. "Shivaji was the last genius and architect of the nation which the Hindu community has given birth." Shivaji is having a place among the few famous persons who can be characterised as the great in Indian History. "If Akbar was great, Shivaji was the greatest."

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