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## Founder of the mighty Maratha Empire the Great Shivaji

*Dr. Satyendra Singh<sup>1</sup>, Shivam Tiwari<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>HOD, <sup>2</sup>Lecturer

Shri Rawatpura Sarkar College, Jhansi - India

### ABSTRACT –

Today we will talk about the great Hindu warrior who has left such an indelible mark in history .Whenever we hear or read about the Maratha Empire, Shivaji Maharaj's name comes first, Shivaji Bhonsle ( Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj ) was an Indian ruler and the founder of the Maratha Empire. Shivaji fought many battles with the Adilshahi Sultanate, not accepting their submission. Shivaji is also considered a hero of the Hindus. Shivaji Maharaj was a brave, intelligent and fearless ruler. He was very interested in religious work. He used to practice Ramayana and Mahabharata very carefully. He was a great king and strategist of India, he laid the foundation of the Maratha Empire in western India in 1674 AD. For this he fought with Aurangzeb, the ruler of the Mughal Empire. He was coronated in Raigarh in 1674 AD and he became "Chhatrapati". Chhatrapati Maharaj provided an able and progressive administration with the help of his army. He made many innovations in martial arts. Developed a new style of guerilla warfare "Shivsutra". He made Marathi and Sanskrit the official languages.

Let us discuss the heroic story Shivaji maharaj on the basis of sources.

### Shivaji Maharaj's Ancestors and their History

The Rawal branch of the Guhils of Mewar came to an end when Alauddin Khilji attacked the Chittor fort. At that time many Rajput families left Chittor and went to different parts of the country. Then a Kshatriya prince Sajjan Singh or Sujan Singh of Guhil dynasty came to South India and started living here. Some of his descendants earned their livelihood by farming and some by fighting for the rulers of the South. In the fifth generation of Sajjan Singh, two sons of a brave named Agrasen, Karan Singh and Shubhkrishna were born. Bhim Singh, the son of Karan Singh, was given the title of Raja Ghorpade by the Sultan of the Bahmani kingdom and the jagir of 84 villages in Mudhol. Because of this, the descendants of Bhim Singh were called Ghorpades and the descendants of Shubhkrishna were called Bhonsle, in which the grandson of Shubhkrishna was Bapuji Bhonsle. Bapuji Bhonsle's family used to work as tenant farmers and Pateli in Berul village. Bapuji Bhonsle had two sons Maloji and Bithoji. Maloji was married to Deepabai, sister of Jagpal Rao Nayak Nimbalkar or Deshmukh of Paltanpur. At Maloji's place, by the grace of a fakir, a child was born who was called Shahji. Once Maloji took his elder son Shahaji to Jadhavrao's palace. Jadhavrao's daughter Jijabai was sitting there. Everyone was playing Holi, then both of them put color on each other, seeing which it came out of Jadhavrao's mouth that what a good pair they are. He asked his daughter will you marry this boy? Maloji was filled with enthusiasm on hearing this and stood up and said, you all heard, Jadhavrao got his daughter married to my son. Jadhavrao was joking with the children. Seeing this audacity of Maloji, he was removed from service. Maloji along with his brother Bithuji started farming in the village. One day suddenly he got some treasure, from which he prepared a salaried army of one thousand soldiers and joined the service of Nizamshah, the ruler of Ahmednagar. When Maloji died in 1619 AD, Shahji got all his jagirs. Shahaji, along with his cousin, won several battles against the Mughals for the Nizam. After the victory in the battle of Bhatwadi, Shahji's stature increased a lot in the politics of India. He got the jagirs of Poona and Supa. Shah Jahan wanted to bring Shahji in his service at any cost, but Shahji refused. The Mughals used all their might to defeat Shahaji and surrounded him from all sides. In the end he was left with five forts. Bijapur ruler Adilshah was greatly impressed by the bravery of Shahaji. He sent a proposal to Shahaji to join the service of Bijapur, which was accepted. He was given the commander-in-chief of 92,000 horsemen and a large jagir towards Karnataka. Poona and Supa also remained with him. In those days the Mughals were torturing the Hindus by destroying the Hindu kingdoms. After some time, Shahaji took these areas of Bijapur under his control, so that the Hindu subjects could be saved.

### The early life of Shivaji

Shivaji was born in the hill-fort of [Shivneri](#), near the city of [Junnar](#), which is now in [Pune district](#). Scholars disagree on his date of birth. There is a difference of opinion among the scholars regarding his birthday, but whenever most of the scholars consider his birth on 19 February 1630 . The [Government of Maharashtra](#) lists 19 February as a holiday commemorating Shivaji's birth ([Shivaji Jayanti](#)). Shivaji was named after a local deity, the goddess Shivai Devi. Shivaji's father [Shahaji Bhonsle](#) was a [Maratha](#) general who served the Deccan Sultanet. His mother was [Jijabai](#) the daughter of [Lakhuji Jadhavrao](#) of [Sindhkhed](#), a Mughal-aligned [sardar](#) claiming descent from the [Seuna](#) royal family of [Devagiri](#). Shivaji's elder brother's name was Sambhaji who lived with his father Shahaji Bhosale most of the time. Shahaji Raj's second wife was Tukabai Mohite. He had a son named Ekoji Raj. His mother Jijabai was an exceptionally talented woman born in the Jadhav clan and his father was a powerful noble. Parents had a great influence

on the character of Shivaji Maharaj. Right from his childhood, he started understanding the environment and events of that era very well. They used to fret over the misdeeds of the ruling class and used to get restless. The flame of independence was ignited in his child-heart. He gathered and united some faithful friends. As the situation progressed, his determination to break the shackles of foreign rule became stronger. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was married on 14 May 1640 with Saibai Nimbalkar at Lal Mahal, Pune.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1630-1680 AD) was a great king and strategist of India who laid the foundation of the Maratha Empire in western India in 1674 AD. He fought with the Mughal Empire of Aurangzeb for many years. He was coronated in Raigarh in 1674 and became "Chhatrapati". Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj provided an able and progressive administration with the help of his disciplined army and well organized administrative units. He made many innovations in warfare and developed a new style (Shivsutra) of guerrilla warfare. He revived the ancient Hindu political practices and court etiquette and replaced Persian with Marathi and Sanskrit as official languages.

- Shivaji Maharaj had 8 marriages which are as follows -
- Saibai Nimbalkar - (Children- Sambhaji, Sakhubai, Ranubai, Ambikabai)
- Soyrabai Mohite - (Children- Deepbai, Rajaram)
- Putalabai Palkar (1653-1680)
- Gunwantabai Ingale
- Sagunabai Shirke
- Kashibai Jadhav
- Lakshmibai Vichare
- Sakwarbai Gaekwad - (Children- Kamalabai) (1656-1680).

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### **Beginning of military supremacy:-**

At that time, the state of Bijapur was going through a period of mutual struggle and foreign invasion. Instead of serving the Sultan of such an empire, he started organizing the Mavals against Bijapur. The Maval region is connected to the Western Ghats and is about 150 km long and 30 km wide. They are considered skilled warriors because of their struggling life. Marathas and people of all castes live in this region. Shivaji Maharaj organized all these caste people by giving them the name of Mavlas (Mavla) and by contacting them, became familiar with their state. He had started the construction of the fort by bringing Maval youths. The cooperation of the Mavals later proved to be as important for Shivaji Maharaj as the support of the Afghans for Sher Shah Suri.

At that time Bijapur was troubled by mutual conflict and invasion of Mughals. Sultan Adilshah of Bijapur had removed his army from many forts and handed them over to the local rulers or feudatories. When Adilshah fell ill, anarchy spread in Bijapur and Shivaji Maharaj took advantage of the opportunity and decided to enter Bijapur. In the days that followed, Shivaji Maharaj adopted the policy of capturing the forts of Bijapur. The first fort was the fort of Rohideshwar.

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### **Control of forts**

The fort of Rohideshwar was the first fort which was first occupied by Shivaji Maharaj. After that the fort of Torna was at a distance of 30 kilometers to the south west of Jopune. Shivaji sent his messenger to Sultan Adilshah and sent the news that he is ready to pay better amount than the first fort and this area should be handed over to him. He had already bribed Adilshah's courtiers in his favor and as per the advice of his courtiers, Adilshah made Shivaji Maharaj the ruler of that fort. With the wealth found in that fort, Shivaji Maharaj got the protective deficiencies of the fort repaired. Rajgarh fort was about 10 kilometers away from it and Shivaji Maharaj took control of this fort as well. When Adilshah came to know about this policy of expansion of Shivaji Maharaj's empire, he was upset. He asked Shahaji Raje to keep his son under control. Shivaji Maharaj took the management of his father's territory in his own hands without caring for his father and stopped the regular rent. After Rajgarh, he captured the fort of Chakan and after that he captured the fort of Kondana. Distressed, sending the most capable Mirzaraja Jaisingh captured 23 forts of Shivaji. He destroyed the fort of Purandar. Following the terms of this treaty, Shivaji had to hand over his son Sambhaji to Mirzaraja Jaisingh. Later Shivaji Maharaj's mawla Tanaji Malusare captured the Kondhana fort, but in the memory of the death he received in that war, after taking over Kondana, it was named Sinhagad. Shahaji Raje was given the jagirdari of Pune and Supa and the fort of Supa was in the hands of his relative Baji Mohite. Shivaji Maharaj attacked the fort of Supa at night and took control of the fort and sent Baji Mohite to Karnataka to Shahaji Raje. Some part of his army also came in the service of Shivaji Maharaj. At the same time the fort of Purandar died and a fight broke out between his three sons for the succession of the fort. On the invitation of two brothers, Shivaji Maharaj reached Purandar and resorting to diplomacy, he made all the brothers prisoners. In this way, his authority was also established on the fort of Purandar. By 1647 AD, he had also become the ruler of the territory from Chakan to Nira. With his increased military power, Shivaji Maharaj planned to enter the plains.

Forming a cavalry army, Shivaji Maharaj sent an army against Konkan under the leadership of Abaji Sonder. Abaji captured nine other forts including Konkan. Apart from this, the forts of Tala, Mosmala and Rayati also came under Shivaji Maharaj. All the looted property was kept safe in Raigarh. After freeing the governor of Kalyan, Shivaji Maharaj turned towards Kolaba and incited the chiefs here to fight against the foreigners.

### *Shahji's arrest and ceasefire*

The Sultan of Bijapur was already angry with the antics of Shivaji Maharaj. He ordered the arrest of Shivaji Maharaj's father. Shahaji Raje was in Karnataka at that time and was taken prisoner by a treacherous assistant Baji Ghorpade and brought to Bijapur. He was also accused of having tried to enlist the service of Qutb Shah who was the ruler of Golconda and therefore an enemy of Adilshah. After the mediation of two Sardars of Bijapur, Shahaji Maharaj was freed on the condition that he would restrain Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj did not attack Bijapur for the next four years. During this he organized his army.

### *Extent of dominion*

According to the conditions of Shahaji's liberation, Shivaji did not attack the territories of Bijapur, but he tried to increase his power in the south-west. But in this sequence, the state of Javali was acting as an obstacle. This kingdom was situated in the far north west of Satara, between the Vama and Krishna rivers. The king here was Chandrarao More who had received this jagir from Shivaji. Shivaji asked the More ruler Chandra Rao to join Swaraj but Chandra Rao joined the Sultan of Bijapur. In 1656, Shivaji attacked Javali with his army. Chandrarao More and his two sons fought with Shivaji but in the end they were taken prisoner but Chandrarao fled. The local people opposed this act of Shivaji but he was successful in crushing the rebellion. With this, Shivaji got the wealth of eight clans stored in that fort. Apart from this, many Maval soldiers Murarbaji Deshpande also joined Shivaji's army.

### *First encounter with Mughals*

Both Bijapur and Mughal were enemies of Shivaji. At that time Prince Aurangzeb was the governor of the Deccan. At the same time Sultan Adilshah of Bijapur died on 1 November 1656, after which an atmosphere of anarchy was created in Bijapur. Taking advantage of this situation, Aurangzeb attacked Bijapur and instead of supporting Aurangzeb, Shivaji attacked him. His army attacked the city of Junnar and looted 200 horses along with a lot of property. Apart from 700 horses, four elephants from Ahmednagar, they also looted the fort of Gunda and Resin. As a result, Aurangzeb became angry with Shivaji and friendship talks ended. On the orders of Shahjahan, Aurangzeb made a treaty with Bijapur and at this time Shahjahan fell ill. As soon as he fell ill, Aurangzeb went to North India and became the emperor of the Mughal Empire after imprisoning Shah Jahan there.

### *Right on Konkan*

Knowing the absence of Aurangzeb in South India and the political situation in Bijapur, Shivaji asked Samarji to attack Janjira. But his fight with the Siddis of Janjira lasted for several days. Shivaji himself then attacked Janjira and captured South Konkan and collected annual taxes from the Portuguese of Daman. After taking control of Kalyan and Bhiwandi, a naval base was built there. By this time Shivaji had become the master of 40 forts.

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## **Struggle with Bijapur**

Here, after Aurangzeb returned to Agra (to the north), the Sultan of Bijapur also heaved a sigh of relief. Now only Shivaji remained the most powerful enemy of Bijapur. Shahaji had already been asked to keep his son under control but Shahaji expressed his inability to do so. To deal with Shivaji, the Sultan of Bijapur sent Abdullah Bhatari (Afzal Khan) against Shivaji. Afzal marched in 1659 with 120000 soldiers. Destroying the temples of Tuljapur, he reached near Shirwal, 30 kilometers north of Satara. But Shivaji remained at the fort of Pratapgargh. Afzal Khan sent his messenger Krishnaji Bhaskar to negotiate a treaty. He sent a message through him that if Shivaji accepts the subordination of Bijapur, then the Sultan will give him the rights of all those areas which are under the control of Shivaji. Also Shivaji will get a respectable position in the court of Bijapur. Although Shivaji's ministers and advisors were in favor of this treaty, but Shivaji did not like this talk. He kept Krishnaji Bhaskar in his court with due respect and sent his messenger Gopinath to Afzal Khan to take stock of the situation. Shivaji felt from Gopinath and Krishnaji Bhaskar that Afzal Khan wanted to arrest Shivaji by plotting a treaty. So he sent a valuable gift to Afzal Khan instead of war and thus persuaded Afzal Khan to negotiate a treaty. At the place of treaty, both had ambushed their soldiers. When both met, Afzal Khan attacked Shivaji with his sword. In defense, Shivaji killed Afzal Khan with his clothes (10 November 1659).

After the death of Afzal Khan, Shivaji captured the fort of Panhala. After this, along with taking control of the forts of Pawangargh and Vasantgargh, he also failed the attack of Rustam Khan. Due to this, Rajapur and Davul were also captured by them. Now an atmosphere of terror arose in Bijapur and the feudatories there decided to attack Shivaji, forgetting their mutual differences. On 2 October 1665, the Bijapuri army captured the Panhala fort. Shivaji was trapped in trouble but he managed to escape by taking advantage of the darkness of the night. The Sultan of Bijapur, taking command himself, took back his authority over Panhala, Pawangargh, looted Rajapur and killed the chief of Shringargargh. At the same time, due to the rebellion of Siddijauhar in Karnataka, the Sultan of Bijapur entered into an agreement with Shivaji. In this treaty Shivaji's father Shahaji acted as mediator. According to this treaty in 1662, Shivaji was recognized as an independent ruler by the Sultan of Bijapur. According to this treaty, the territory from Kalyan in the north to Ponda in the south (250 km) and from Indapur in the east to Davul in the west (150 km) came under the control of Shivaji. By this time Shivaji's army had grown to 30,000 foot and 1,000 horsemen.

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## Struggle with Mughals

After the end of the race to become the emperor in North India, Aurangzeb's attention turned towards the south. He was aware of Shivaji's increasing dominance and with the aim of controlling Shivaji, he appointed his maternal uncle Shaista Khan as the subedar of the south. Shaista Khan reached Poona with his 1,50,000 troops after capturing the forts of Soupan and Chakan. He looted in Maval for 3 years. One night Shivaji attacked him with his 350 men. Shaista managed to escape through the window but had to wash his hands with four of his fingers in the same sequence. Shaista Khan's son Abul Fateh and forty guards and countless soldiers were killed. Here Marathas killed many women of Khan's Janan Khan due to not being able to differentiate between men and women in the dark. After this incident, Aurangzeb made Shaista the Subedar of Bengal instead of Deccan and Prince Muazzam was sent to replace Shaista.

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## Loot in Surat

Shivaji's prestige increased with this victory. For 6 years, Shaista Khan took his 1,50,000 army and destroyed the entire country of King Shivaji by burning it. That's why Shivaji started looting in Mughal areas to recover his damages. Surat was then a stronghold of western traders and a gateway for Indian Muslims to go on Hajj. It was a prosperous city and its port was very important. Shivaji looted the rich merchants of Surat for six days in 1664 with an army of four thousand. They did not loot the common man and then returned. This incident has been mentioned by the Dutch and the British in their writings. By that time European traders had settled in India and other Asian countries. No European power thought of invading the Indian Mughal Empire until Nadir Shah invaded India (1739). Annoyed by Shivaji's loot in Surat, Aurangzeb appointed Ghiyasuddin Khan as Faujdar of Surat in place of Inayat Khan. And Diler Khan and Raja Jaisingh were appointed in place of Shahzada Muazzam and deputy commander Raja Jaswant Singh. Raja Jaisingh attacked Shivaji with the help of Sultan of Bijapur, European powers and small feudatories. Shivaji started suffering losses in this war and seeing the possibility of defeat, Shivaji sent a proposal for a treaty. According to this treaty in June 1665, Shivaji would give 23 forts to the Mughals and in this way only 12 forts would be left with him. The income from these 23 forts was 4 lakh huns annually. Shivaji will get the areas of Balaghat and Konkan but he will have to pay 40 lakh hun in 13 installments in return. Apart from this, they will also give a revenue of 5 lakh huns every year. Shivaji himself would be free from being in Aurangzeb's court but his son Shambhaji would have to serve in the Mughal court. Shivaji will support the Mughals against Bijapur.

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## Invitation and Escape in Agra

Shivaji was called to Agra where he felt that he was not getting due respect. In protest against this, he showed himself in a furious court and accused Aurangzeb of treachery. Aurangzeb was upset with this and he put Shivaji under house arrest and put 5000 soldiers on him. A few days later (on 18 August 1666) Aurangzeb intended to kill King Shivaji. But with their indomitable courage and strategy, both Shivaji and Sambhaji were able to escape from it [17 August 1666. Shivaji Maharaj left Sambhaji at Mathura with a believing Brahmin, went to Banaras, reached Rajgarh safely via Puri [2 September 1666]. Marathas got a new life from this. Suspecting Jai Singh, Aurangzeb got him murdered by poisoning him. After taking the initiative by Jaswant Singh, in 1668, Shivaji made a treaty with the Mughals for the second time. Aurangzeb recognized Shivaji as the king. Shivaji's son Shambhaji got a mansabdari of 5000 and the districts of Poona, Chakan and Supa were returned to Shivaji. But, Sinhagad and Purandar remained under the suzerainty of the Mughals. In 1670, Shivaji looted the city of Surat for the second time. Property worth 132 lakhs from the city fell into the hands of Shivaji and while returning, he again defeated the Mughal army near Surat.

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## Coronation

By the year 1674, Shivaji had captured all those territories which he had to give to the Mughals under the treaty of Purandar. After the establishment of an independent Hindu nation in western Maharashtra, Shivaji wanted to have his coronation, but Muslim soldiers threatened the Brahmins that whoever coronates Shivaji will be killed. When this thing reached Shivaji that the Mughal Sardar is giving such threats, then Shivaji took it as a challenge and said that now he will get the Brahmin of that state which is under the authority of the Mughals.

Shivaji's personal secretary Balaji ji sent three messengers to Kashi, because Kashi was under the Mughal Empire. When the messengers gave the message, the Brahmins of Kashi were very happy. But when the Mughal soldiers came to know about this, they caught those Brahmins. But tactfully those Brahmins told those messengers in front of the Mughal soldiers that we do not know who Shivaji is. Which clan are they from? The messengers didn't know that's why they said we don't know. Then those Brahmins said in front of the chieftain of Mughal soldiers that we have to go somewhere else, you did not tell from which dynasty Shivaji belongs, so how can we coronate him in such a situation. We are going on a pilgrimage and no other Brahmin from Kashika will perform the coronation until the king is fully introduced, so you can go back. The Mughal Sardar left the Brahmins happy and thought of sending the messengers to Delhi to Aurangzeb, but they also ran away silently. After returning, he told this to Balaji Aav and Shivaji. But surprisingly after two days the same Brahmin reached Raigarh with his disciples and performed the coronation of Shivaji. After this the Mughals tried to create division and even after the coronation of Shivaji threatened the Brahmins of Pune to refuse to accept Shivaji as the king. so that even the people do not believe it. But they did not work. Shivaji established the Ashtapradhan Mandal. Apart from ambassadors, representatives of different states, foreign businessmen were also invited to this function. But his mother died only 12 days after his coronation, for this reason Shivaji assumed the title of Chhatrapati for the second time on 4 October 1674. About 50 lakh rupees were spent in this ceremony held twice. The establishment of Hindavi Swaraj was announced in this

ceremony. It was the first Hindu kingdom in the south after the fall of Vijayanagara. Like an independent ruler, he got his name coined. After this, the Sultan of Bijapur sent two of his generals against Shivaji to conquer Konkan, but they failed.

### **Victory in the South**

In 1677-78, Shivaji's attention turned towards Karnataka. Shivaji died on April 3, 1680, after taking control of Konkan south of Bombay, Belgaum and Dharwad area west of Tungabhadra river, Mysore, Velari, Trichur and Gingee.

### **Death and Successor**

Shivaji died around 3–5 April 1680 at the age of 50 on the eve of [Hanuman Jayanti](#). The cause of Shivaji's death is disputed. British records states that Shivaji died of bloody flux being sick for 12 days. In a contemporary work in Portuguese, the Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, the recorded cause of death of Shivaji is anthrax. However, Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad, author of [Sabhasad Bakhar](#), the biography of Shivaji has mentioned fever as the cause of death of Shivaji. [Putalabai](#), the childless eldest of the surviving wives of Shivaji committed [sati](#) by jumping into his funeral pyre. Another surviving spouse, Sakwarbai, was not allowed to follow suit because she had a young daughter. There were also allegations, though doubted by later scholars, that his second wife [Soyarabai](#) had poisoned him in order to put her 10-year-old son [Rajaram](#) on the throne.

.At that time Sambhaji was succeeded by Shivaji. Shivaji's eldest son was Sambhaji and he had another son named Rajaram from his second wife. At that time Rajaram was only 10 years old, so the Marathas accepted Shambhaji as the king. At that time, seeing the death of King Shivaji, Aurangzeb went out to win South India with his 5,00,000 army with the desire to rule over the whole of India. Aurangzeb finished Adilshahi in 2 days and Qutubshahi in 1 day as soon as he came to the south. But under the leadership of King Sambhaji, the Marathas maintained their independence while fighting for 9 years. Aurangzeb's son Prince Akbar rebelled against Aurangzeb. Sambhaji gave him shelter at his place. Aurangzeb now again started aggressively attacking Sambhaji. Finally, in 1689 Sambhaji was imprisoned by Mukarv Khan with the help of Sambhaji's wife's real brother i.e. Ganoji Shirke. Aurangzeb misbehaved with Raja Sambhaji and killed him badly. The entire Maratha kingdom was enraged to see its king killed by Aurangzeb's ill-treatment and brutality. He continued the struggle with the Mughals under the leadership of Rajaram with all his might. Rajaram died in 1700 AD. After that Rajaram's wife Tarabai continued to rule as the guardian of 4-year-old son Shivaji II.

### **Shivaji's administration**

Shivaji's administration was largely influenced by Deccan administrative practices. He appointed eight ministers who were called 'Astapradhan' who assists him in the administrative helm of affairs.

1. **Peshwa** was the most important minister who looked after the finance and general administration.
2. **Senapati (sari-i-naubat)** was one of the leading Marathas chiefs who were basically posted of honour.
3. **The Majumdar** was an accountant.
4. **The Wakenavis** is one who looks after the intelligence, post and household affairs.
5. **The Surnavis or chitnis** assist the king with his correspondence.
6. **The Dabir** was the master of ceremonies and helps the king in his dealing with foreign affairs.
7. **The Nayayadish and Punditrao** were in charge of justice and charitable grants.
8. He levies the tax on the land which was one-fourth of the land revenue i.e. **Chauth or Chauthai**.
9. He was not only proved to be an able general, a skilful tactician, and a shrewd diplomat, he also laid the foundation of a strong state by curbing the power of the Deshmukh.

Hence, the rise of Marathas was due to economic, social, political and institutional factors. To that extent, Shivaji was a popular king who represented the assertion of popular will in the area against Mughal encroachment. Although, Marathas were ancient tribes but 17th century gave them space to declare themselves as ruler.

### **Rajmudra of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**

Shivaji's royal seal was an octagonal seal written in Sanskrit which he used on his letters and military materials. Thousands of his letters have been received on which the royal seal is affixed. It is believed that Shivaji's father Shahjiraje Bhosle had given this royal seal to him when Shahji sent Jijabai and Tarun Shivaji to handle the Jagir of Pune. The oldest letter on which this royal seal is affixed is of the year 1639. The sentence written on the currency is as follows-

प्रतिपच्चंद्रलेखे वर्धिष्णुर्विश्वंदिता शाहसुनोः शिवस्यैषा मुद्रा भद्राय राजते।

(Meaning: As the child moon Pratipada (slowly) increases and is worshiped by the whole world, in the same way this posture of Shiva, the son of Shahaji will also increase.)

### **Religious policy**

Shivaji was a pious Hindu ruler and he was also religiously tolerant. Muslims had religious freedom in his empire. Shivaji gave grants for the construction of many mosques. Muslim saints and fakirs were also respected like Hindu pundits. There were also Muslim soldiers in his army. Shivaji used to promote Hindu culture. Emphasis was laid on traditional Hindu values and education. He usually started his campaigns on the occasion of Dussehra.

### **Character**

Shivaji Maharaj got the education of self-rule from his mother and teacher. When the Sultan of Bijapur made Shahji Raje a prisoner, then like an ideal son, he made a treaty with the Shah of Bijapur and got Shahji Raje released. This shows a liberal element in his character. After that he did not get his father killed as other emperors used to do. He got his coronation done only after the death of Shahji Raje, although by that time he had become independent from his father and became the ruler of a large empire. Everyone accepted his leadership, that is why there was no major incident like internal rebellion during his reign.

He was a good military leader as well as a good diplomat. In many places, instead of fighting a direct war, he used diplomacy. But it was his diplomacy, which kept supporting him every time in defeating the biggest enemy. Shivaji Maharaj's diplomacy called "Ganimi Kava", in which the enemy is defeated by a sudden attack, is remembered fondly and with respect.

These lines are famous in the glory of Shivaji Maharaj-

शिवरायांचे आठवावे स्वरूप। शिवरायांचा आठवावा साक्षेप।

शिवरायांचा आठवावा प्रताप। भूमंडळी ॥

### **Commemorations**

Commemorations of Shivaji are found throughout India, most notably in Maharashtra. Shivaji's statues and monuments are found almost in every town and city in Maharashtra as well as in different places across India. Other commemorations include the Indian Navy's station [INS Shivaji](#), numerous [postage stamps](#), and the [main airport](#) and [railway headquarters](#) in Mumbai. In Maharashtra, there has been a long tradition of children building a replica fort with toy soldiers and other figures during the festival of [Diwali](#) in memory of Shivaji.

A proposal to build a giant memorial called [Shiv Smarak](#) was approved in 2016 which is to be located near Mumbai on a small island in the Arabian Sea. It will be 210 meters tall, making it the [world's largest statue](#) when completed in possibly 2021. In August 2021, the project was stalled since January 2019 due to the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), only the [bathymetry](#) survey complete while the [geotechnical survey](#) was underway. Consequently, state PWD proposed extending project completion date by a year from 18 October 2021 to 18 October 2022.

### **Conclusion**

The life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj gives us inspiration to fight the struggles. Shivaji's contribution in the glorious history of India is an inspiration for today's youth. The example of Raj ideal that Shivaji presented is relevant even today. It is said that Shivaji Maharaj made the welfare of the common people the basis of his rule. There is a lot to learn from the life of Shivaji Maharaj because Shivaji was the protector of Hindu religion. He did a great job in protecting religion. Served the public, ended the fear of the Mughals in the public, before that he shook the Sultanates of Deccan. Helped the religiously afflicted. His honor was saved. Saved the temples of deities from being destroyed. Gave trouble to the terrorists. That's why the public considered him as the incarnation of Shiva and called him the protector of the flag of religion. That's why not only Marathas, the entire Hindu society in the whole of India, people of every caste respect them, will continue to respect them.

Just as Shankaracharya protected Sanatan from the propagation of Buddhism by making a spiritual revolution, and in the same way, by establishing Sadhu Sangat and Dashnami Sampraday on the lines of Bodh Vihar, he made a strong and strong system so that the religious place and religion remain safe. In the same way, Shivaji Maharaj gave relief to the Hindu suffering people and saved the religion from the suppression cycle of Malechh. Shakti replied cleverly and kept changing the strategy and run method. Whereas Rajput Raje Jaisingh Jaswant Singh was engaged in the service of Mlechhas. Other Rajasthani Rajput kings were also not able to help the Hindu people of India by becoming subedar of Mughals. But among them, the Rajput family of Mewar was never with the Mughals and was independent, neither did they work for the Mughals, rather they worked against them.

There is a lot of power in the words of poet Bhushan, he has described Shivaji Maharaj very beautifully in his verses like –

*Kashi ki kala jati, Mathura Masjid hoti*

*Shivaji na hote to, Sunnat hoti sabki*

While describing Shivaji Maharaj, many people lost their lives. Babasaheb Purandare, Gajanan Mehendale, Ranjit Desai, such people write entire texts, yet many writers continue to write on the fame of Shivaji Maharaj. Words fall short.

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