
UNIT 1: INCORPORATION OF RAJPUT'S AND OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN MUGHAL NOBILITY

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The Ruling Class under Babur and Humayun
- 1.3 Development under Akbar
- 1.4 Composition of the Mughal Ruling Class
 - 1.4.1 Racial and Religious groups
 - 1.4.2 The Foreign Elements – Turanis and Iranis
 - 1.4.3 'The Afghans
 - 1.4.4 Indian Muslims
 - 1.4.5 Rajput's and Other Hindus
 - 1.4.6 Marathas and other Deccanis
- 1.5 Organisation of the Ruling Class
- 1.6 Distribution of Revenue Resources among the Ruling Class
- 1.7 Life Style of the Ruling Class
- 1.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will discuss important features of the structure and working of the Mughal ruling class down to Aurangzeb's period. After reading this unit you will

- know about the origins and development of the ruling class;
- understand the racial composition of the ruling class;
- learn about its organisation;
- have some idea about the share of the ruling class in the revenue resources of the empire; and
- be acquainted with the life style of the ruling class.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mughal ruling class was multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-regional. Theoretically it was the creation of the Emperor. The Mughal ruling class or the

nobility as it is commonly designated, comprised both civil bureaucrats as well as military commanders. They all held mansab and received their salary either in cash or through ' assignment of the revenues of various territories (jagir). Therefore. the numerical strength of the mansabdars (nobles) materially influenced not only politics and administration. But also the economy of the Empire.

1.2 THE RULING CLASS UNDER BABUR AND HUMAYUN

The ruling class which accompanied Babur to Hindustan largely comprised Turanis (Central Asian 'Begs') and a few Iranis. After the battle of Panipat (1526). Some Afghan and Indian nobles of Sikandar Lodi's camp were admitted in his higher bureaucracy. They were soon taken into confidence and given important assignments. Many local chieftains also accepted Babur's suzerainty and became his allies in subsequent battles. Thus; after the battle of Panipat, the ruling class under Babur no longer remained purely Turani. It appears from the Baburnama that out of a total of 116 nobles. 31 were Indians including Afghans and Shaikhzadas.

During the early years of Humayun's reign, there was a decline in the number of Indian nobles as many of the Afghan nobles deserted the Mughal service and joined Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. However, a great change occurred in Humayun's nobility between 1540 and 1555, when most of his Turani nobles deserted him and joined Mirza Kamran. Only twenty-six persons in all accompanied him to Iran, seven of whom were Iranis. But during his stay in Iran, many more Iranis joined him. They accompanied Humayun from Iran to take Qandahar and Kabul. The position of Iranis further improved as a number of Iranis came to Kabul and joined Humayun's service during his stay at Kabul between 1545-55.

At the same time when Iranis increased in the nobility. Humayun raised a new Turani nobility by promoting low ranking Turani nobles to counter the power of the old nobility. Thereby strengthening his position. There were 57 nobles who accompanied Humayun back to India, of whom 27 were Turanis and 21 Iranis. This new nobility served him loyally throughout his contest with Mirza Kamran between 1545 and 1555, and followed him in the conquest of India. In recognition of their services, important assignments were generally given to this section of nobility.

Although by raising Iranis and low ranking Turanis to higher ranks, Humayun could create a loyal ruling class which helped him in reconquering Hindustan, the dominant sections in his nobility were still confined to a limited number of class-cum-family groups with their roots in Central Asian traditions.

Thus, the Mughal ruling class in its formative stage under Babur and Humayun was not a disciplined and effective organisation to cope with the problems facing the newly established Empire in India. Babur and Humayun did not fully succeed in making it loyal and subservient to them even by bringing about a few changes in its composition.

1.3 DEVELOPMENT UNDER AKBAR

The position remained unchanged during the early years of Akbar's reign. The two foreign elements Turanis and Iranii enjoyed a predominant position. After the dismissal of Bairam Khan, a crisis developed at the court which ultimately led to the rebellion of the Turani nobles. To balance their pressure, Akbar introduced two new elements - Indian Muslims and Rajputs in his nobility. He also promoted Iranis to higher ranks as a reward for their loyalty during the crisis. Besides those Iranis who were already in the service of Humayun or under Bairam Khan, a large number came to India in search of employment during this period. Many factors were responsible for their migration from Iran. The important one was the unfavourable religious atmosphere for the Sunnis in the Safavi Iran during the sixteenth century. A good number of them proceeded to India in search of security as they were apprehensive of punishment by the Safavi rulers. Many of them were highly trained in administrative affairs and belonged to noted families of Iran. In India, they were welcomed and admitted by Akbar in his service and given suitable posts. Some of them were introduced to the Mughal Court by their relatives who were already in the Mughal service. Besides them, many others came as adventurers in search of better opportunities knowing that the Mughal court was open to talent. Thus, the position of Iranis in the Mughal ruling class not only became stable and strong but also self-perpetuating.

From 1561, that is, after the exit of Bairam Khan, Akbar started recruiting Rajputs and Shaikhzadas in his service. In order to win recruits' from these sections, he adopted certain measures of placating and befriending them. For instance, he established matrimonial relations with the Rajputs Chieftains, abolished pilgrimage tax (1562) and the jiziya (1564) which was imposed earlier on the Hindus. Akbar's attitude towards Rajputs changed radically after the suppression of the Uzbtk rebellion as he adopted a vigorous policy of reducing them to submission by force.

During the period 1575-80, Akbar, with 'a view of creating wider support for the Empire amongst the Muslim Communities in India, also adopted an attitude of promoting and befriending the Indian Muslims through several conciliatory measures,

1.4 COMPOSITION OF THE MUGHAL RULING CLASS

After its first phase of development during the reign of Babur and Humayun and the early years of Akbar, the Mughal ruling class came to consist of certain well-recognised racial groups. The important ones were Turanis, Iranis, Afghans, Shaikhzadas, Rajputs and also the Deccanis (Bijapuris, Haiderabadis and Marathas). Thus, it was an 'International' ruling class; for recruitment 'nationality' was no bar. However, mere fulfilment of certain criteria of merit and competence was not the sole requirement to gain entry into it: clan or family links were the most important

considerations for recruitment and ordinary people, with whatever merit to their credit, were normally not admitted to this aristocratic class of the society.

The khanazads (the house-born ones), who were the sons and descendants of those officers (mansabdars) who were already in the Mughal service, were the best and foremost claimants. They constituted almost half of the ruling class throughout the Mughal period and the remaining half of the ruling class comprised of variety of persons not belonging to the families already in service.

The zamindars or the chieftains were one of them. Though they had been in the state service ever since the time of Delhi Sultans, they attained great importance under Akbar who granted them high mansabs and jagirs in various parts of the Empire. These jagirs were in addition to their ancestral domains which were now treated as their watan jagir .

Nobles and high officers of other states were also taken into the Mughal ruling class on account of their experience, status and influence. Leading commanders of the enemy state, in particular, were offered tempting ranks to make them desert their masters. A very small portion of the Mughal ruling class consisted of persons belonging to the accountant castes, that is, Khattris, Kayasthas, etc. They were usually appointed in the financial departments on low ranks, but they could rise to higher ones. Todar Mal under Akbar and Raja Raghunath under Aurangzeb belonged to this category. They served as diwan and received high ranks.

Scholars, saints/Sufis and theologians, etc. also received ranks and offices in the Mughal service. Abul Fazl under Akbar, Sadullah Khan and Danishmand Khan during Shah Jahan's reign, and Hakim Abul Mulk Tuni Fazil Khan in Aurangzeb's period are some of the noteworthy examples of this class.

1.4.1 Racial and Religious Groups

As mentioned earlier, there were certain well-recognised racial groups - Turanis, Iranis, Afghans, Shaikhzadas, Rajputs and Marathas -who provided new recruits for the Mughal ruling class. These elements were taken into the Mughal service largely as a result of historical circumstances, but partly (as for example the Rajputs) as a result of planned imperial policy of integrating all these elements into a single imperial service. For that purpose, very often, officers of various groups were assigned to serve under one superior officer. Akbar's policy of sulh kul was also partly motivated by a desire to 'employ persons of diverse religious beliefs - Sunnis (Turanis and Shaikhzadas), Shia's (including many Iranis) and Hindus (Rajputs) - and to prevent sectarian differences among them from interfering with the loyalty to the throne.

1.4.2 The Foreign Elements - Turanis and Iranis

The foreign elements in the Mughal ruling class comprised largely the Turanis (or the Central Asians) and Iranis (also called Khurasanis and Iraqis). According to the

Ai'n-i Akbari, about 70 per cent of Akbar's nobles were foreigners by origin. This high proportion of foreigners continued under Akbar's successors and among them Iranis enjoyed the most dominant position. In the early years of Jahangir's reign, Mirza Aziz Koka had alleged that the Empire was giving undue favours to Iranis and Shaikhzadas while the Turanis and Rajputs were neglected. Though Shah Jahan tried hard to emphasize the Central Asian affiliations of the Mughal dynasty, it had no adverse effect on the position of Iranis under him. The greater part of Aurangzeb nobility, according to Bernier, consisted of Persians who, according to Tavernier, occupied the highest posts in the Mughal Empire. .

Athar Ali finds a declining trend in the number of nobles directly coming from foreign countries ever since the time of Akbar. This decline of foreigners, according to him, further sharpened during the long reign of Aurangzeb. The fall of the Uzbek and Safavi kingdoms and the concentration of Aurangzeb's attention in the Deccan affairs for a long period and, his not following a forward or militaristic policy in the North-West, have been suggested as some important reasons for the decline of direct foreign recruitments. The Iranis, however, could maintain their dominant position in the nobility because of the continuous influx of Iranis from the Deccan Sultanates. Muqarrab Khan, Qizilbash Khan and Mir Jumla (under Shah Jahan); Ali Mardan Khan Haiderabadi, Abdur Rezzaq Lari and Mahabat Khan Haiderabadi (uncle Aurangzeb) are some of the important examples of Irani nobles from the Deccan; The Sunni orthodoxy of the Emperor also did not affect the position of Iranis.

1.4.3 The Afghans

The Afghans had been distrusted by the Mughals, specially suspected after the Mughal restoration under Humayun. Most of them were kept at a distance by Akbar. They, however, improved their position under Jahangir who assigned a high position to Khan Jahan Lodi. During Shah Jahan's reign. The Afghans again lost the imperial trust and suffered a setback after Khan Jahan Lodi's rebellion. During the later years of Aurangzeb reign, however, the number of the Afghan nobles considerably increased this was mainly because of the influx from the Bijapur kingdom.

1.4.4 Indian Muslims

The Indian Muslims, better known as Shaikhzadas comprised mainly the Saiyids of Barha and the Kambus and certain other important clans.

The Saiyids of Barha and the Kambus who had enjoyed a leading position since Akbar's time, were no longer equally prominent during Aurangzeb's reign. More particularly, the Saiyids of Barha, who, on account of their martial qualities, once enjoyed the honour of constituting the vanguard of the Mughal armies, were distrusted by Aurangzeb. It was perhaps because they had been loyal supporters of Dam Shukoh in the war of succession.

Some of the Kashmiris also got prominence during the later years of Aurangzeb's reign: Inayatullah Kashmiri was one of the favourite nobles of the Emperor.

1.4.5 Rajputs and Other Hindus

As has been discussed above, Rajputs and other Hindu nobles were inducted in the Mughal ruling class during the reign of Akbar who adopted a friendly and liberal attitude towards them. It is clear from the contemporary sources that the Hindu nobles in general and Rajputs in particular achieved a position of respect and honour in the reign of Akbar which they continued to enjoy down to Aurangzeb's reign. Shah Jahan was a devout Muslim, who adopted several measures to display his orthodoxy. Yet there was a great increase in the number of Rajput mansabdar during his reign. Aurangzeb was also a devout Muslim and he is generally blamed for adopting anti-Hindu policies. But the fact remains that during the early years of his reign, the position of the Rajput nobles actually improved over what it had been in Shah Jahan's time. There had been no Rajput officer throughout the reign of Shah Jahan holding the rank of 7000 zat. Now Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh were promoted to the rank of 7000 zatf/7000 sawar. Similarly, ever since Raja Man Singh's recall from Bengal in 1606, no Rajput noble had been entrusted with an important province. In 1665, Jai Singh was appointed the viceroy of the Deccan, the highest and most important charge which normally only princes were entrusted with. Jaswant Singh was also twice appointed governor of Gujatat in 1659-61 and 1670-72. It may be pointed out that with a slight fall (21.6- per cent) in the first phase of Aurangzeb's reign (1658-78), the number of Hindu mansabdars remained almost the same what it had been during Akbar (22.5 per cent) - and Shah Jahan's (22.4 per cent). This may be better appreciated from the following Table

Table 1

	Akbar	Shah Jahan	Aurangzeb	
A. Total Mansabdar	98	437	486	575
B. Hindus	22	98	105	182
C. As % of A	22.5	22.4	21.6	31.6

During the last phase of Aurangzeb's reign (1679-1707). However. The proportion of the Hindu nobles appreciated to 31.6 per cent In other words, during this time there were more Hindus in service than at any preceding period. The increase in the number of Hindus during this period was because of the influx of the Marathas who began to outnumber the Rajputs in the nobility.

1.4.6 Marathas and Other Deccanis

The recruitment-of Marathas began during the reign of Shah Jahan at the time of his Ahmednagar-campaign. Since Marathas played an important role in the Deccan affairs, they were steadily recruited to the Mughal ruling class. Aurangzeb, too, admitted the Marathas on a large scale by granting high ranks to some of them. The

Mughal attempt to win over the Maratha chieftains by granting them high mansabs, however Proved a failure. The allegiance of the Maratha nobles under Aurangzeb was always unstable and, therefore, they never attained any real position of influence within the Mughal ruling class.

" As regards the other Deccanis. They were the nobles who belonged to the Deccan kingdoms of Bijapur or Golkunda before joining Mughal service. .They could be of Indian origin such as Afghans, Shaikhzadas or Indian Muslims; or of foreign origin like Iranis and Turanis. It appears that the Deccanis did not form a very large section of Aurangzeb's nobility in the first period. (See Table 1) They were regarded as a subordinate class of nobles: one-fourth of their total pay-claim was deducted according to the regulations for pay in the Deccan.

In the second period, however, the Deccani nobles (Bijapuris, Haiderbadis and Marathas) were recruited on a large scale. The influx of the Deccanis in the later years of Aurangzeb's reign was so great that it caused much resentment among the older section of the nobility - the khanazadas.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Trace the evolution of Mughal ruling class spanning Babur, Humayun and Akbar's reigns

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- 2) Enumerate the various groups which comprised the Mughal ruling class. What was their position in the Mughal nobility?

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1.5 ORGANISATION OF THE RULING CLASS

The Mughal ruling class was organised within the framework of the mansab system, one of the two important institutions (the other being the Jagir system) which sustained the Mughal Empire for about 200 years. The mansab system was based on the principle of direct command, i.e., all mansabdars, whatever be their rank, were directly subordinate to the Mughal Emperor.

Mansab System: Technically, mansab means office, position or rank. Under the Mughals the functions of mansab were threefold:

- i. it determined the status of its holder (the mansabdar) in the official hierarchy;
- ii. it fixed the pay of the mansabdar accordingly. and.

- iii. it also laid upon him the obligation of maintaining a definite number of contingent with horses and equipment. Each officer was assigned a dual rank (a pair of numbers) designated zat and sawar. Zat was a personal Rank which determined the status of the mansabdar in the official hierarchy and also indicated his personal pay. The sawar rank was a military rank which determined the number of contingents the mansabdar was required to maintain and also fixed the payment for the maintenance of the required contingent.

The Mughal mansabdar received his pay as determined by their zat and sawar ranks either in cash (naqd) or in the form of territorial assignments (Jagirs).

For recruitment as mansabdar nationality was no bar. The Khanazads (or sons and descendants of mansabdars already in service) had the first claim to the appointment. The second source of recruitment were the immigrants from Iran and Central Asia. The third channel of recruitment was recommendation (tajwiz). Another category from which recruitment was made were the leading commanders of the enemy camp who were often tempted to desert their masters.

The Central ministers, princes of royal blood, provincial governors and important military commanders used to recommend persons for appointment and promotions.

1.6 DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE RESOURCES AMONG THE RULING CLASS

Shireen Moosvi have shown that 82% of the total revenue resources of the empire was appropriated by 1,671 mansabdars, While the top 12 mansabdars controlled as much as 18.52% of the total income of the Empire, the remaining 1,149 mansabdars controlled only 30% of the revenue. Thus, there was an immense concentration of revenue resources in the hands of a few persons during the time of Akbar. This concentration continued under his successors. A. Jan Qaisar has calculated that 445 mansabdars under Shah Jahan claimed 61.5% of the revenue. And the top 25 mansabdars controlled 24.5% of the revenue.

The nobles, by and large, drew their income from the land revenue. There was immense concentration of wealth in the hands of a very small number of persons comprising the core of the Mughal ruling class. They did not spend the whole amount on their troopers which they claimed against their Sawar Ranks. This led to further concentration of wealth in the hands of the nobles.

1.7 LIFE STYLE OF THE RULING CLASS

With huge amounts of money at their disposal the ruling class led a life of great' pomp and show. They maintained large establishment of wives, servants, camels and

horses. The household of which the harem was the main part must have absorbed a reasonably large sum. And, yet, they were left with substantial wealth that could be spent on the construction of stately houses and works of public utility. Here we would 'like to give you a brief idea about the nobles building activities.

From Shaikh Farid'Bhakkari's biographical work Zakhirat-ul Khawanin (1642). It appears that Mughal, officers and nobles were fond of constructing attractive and imposing houses for their residence. Murtaza Khan Shaikh Farid Bokhari was a great - builder of Akbar's time. In Ahmedabad he built a sarai, mosque and other buildings. During Jahangir's reign, Abdur rahim Khan Khanan, Azam Khan, Khwaja Jahan Kabuli, etc. were great builders.

So far as the works of public utility are concerned, our source mentions a large number of sarais, hammams (public baths), wells, step-wells (bablis), water tanks, markets, roads, and gardens built by the nobles throughout the Empire. During the reign of Akbar, Murtaza Khan Shaikh Farid Bukhari built mosques, sarais, khanqahs and the tanks at Lahore, Agra etc. The wives and staff of nobles also took equal interest in constructing works of public utility. We get several references about religious and educational buildings such as mosques, madrasas, khanqahs, tombs and temples (devrah) built by Mughal nobles. Some of the Hindu nobles and officers also built mosques. Construction of tombs during one's own life time and for the deceased persons of one's family was a popular trend in the Mughal period. Beautiful gardens were laid out around these imposing structures. In constructing these tombs, the nobles sometimes vied with each other. Tombs were also built for sufis by their disciples. Mughal nobles and officers constructed public welfare buildings outside India 'A number of Irani nobles at the Mughal court are reported to have funded the construction of mosques, sarais, etc. in Iran. Many nobles and officers also founded cities, towns and villages in their native places or in the territories under their jurisdiction. Sometimes the old existing towns were renovated and beautified with gardens, trees, roads and structures of public utility.

Whenever a new city or town was built was provided with all the necessities of civil life and amenities of an urban settlement with the purpose 'of encouraging the. , people to settle down there. Laying out of gardens was a part of the nobles' cultural activities.

A. Jan Qaisar has shown a linkage between social values and building activity of the Mughal elite. He says that these values were a continuation of the long established Indian traditions. Why the building activity was undertaken on such a scale? It seems that prestige factor was important. It nourished competitive spirit for cultural exercises with a view of scoring over their compatriot. The desire was to perpetuate one's name for indefinite period. The aspiration unfolded itself in both the forms of their activities, private and public. Religious sanction, too, spurred the elite to construct charitable works, particularly mosques. Role model expectation also,

motivated the elite to perform charitable acts. Masses looked to affluent sections to provide public utilities which were culturally identifiable, for example, hospitals, mosques, sarais, etc. Masses expected that materially prosperous persons should alienate a part of their wealth in their favour. This role was played pretty well by the Mughal nobles. It also resulted in the distribution of material resources of whatever magnitude --of the society among masses.

The nobles maintained their own karkhanas to manufacture luxury items for their own consumption. Carpets, gold embroidered silks and high quality jewellery were the main items produced. Besides, they imported large number of luxury articles from different countries. The British and Dutch records give innumerable references to the demands made by the ruling class for which they, used to pay handsomely.

Besides, hunting and other leisure and sports -activities, marriages in the family, festivals, etc. were other occasions where this wealth was squandered freely.

Check your Progress 2

1) Discuss the organisation of the Mughal ruling class.

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2) How did the Mughal ruling class utilize the immense revenue resources at its disposal?

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1.8 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit. We have seen the evolution and development of the Mughal ruling class through various stages. In the beginning it emerged as a Turani-dominated class but later as a result of political exigencies, others such as Iranis. Indian Muslims. Rajputs, Marathas, and Afghans were recruited. Thus, it became a heterogeneous ruling class. The Mughal ruling class was organised through mansabdari and jagirdari, the two important institutions whose efficient working sustained the Mughal Empire for about 200 years. The mansabdars constituted the ruling class which was not only a prosperous class but also the elite of the society. They enjoyed the security of wealth amassed during their tenure of service and left large legacies to their families.

1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Sections 1.2 and 1.3
- 2) See Section 1.4

Check Your progress 2

- 1) See Section 1.5
- 2) See Section 1.7

UNIT 2 : MUGHAL ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS: ZABTI, MANSAB AND JAGIR, MADAD-I-MAASH

Structure

- 2.1 Learning Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Central Administration
- 2.4 Provincial Administration
- 2.5 Jagirdari System
- 2.6 Mansabdari System
- 2.7 Madad-i-Maash
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Further Reading
- 2.10 Answers to Check your Progress
- 2.11 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- explain the Mughal administration and the principles behind it,
- discuss the administration at the central and provincial level,
- describe the land assignment system under the Mughals- the jagirdari and mansabdari system and the Madad-i-Maash.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The development of Mughal administration was primarily the work of Akbar. The ideas and principles on which it evolved were different from those of the Delhi Sultanate. Due to lack of time and opportunity in case of Babur and lack of inclination and ability in case of Humayun, an elaborate system of civil government was not possible. It was largely due to the establishment of an administrative apparatus by Sher Shah that Akbar could lay the edifice of a systematic structure in administration. The Mughal state was essentially military in nature where the word

of the Emperor was the law. The administrative structure was highly centralized as viewed by historians like Irfan Habib, Athar Ali, etc. This Unit will focus on the Mughal administration.

2.3 CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

The head of the Mughal administrative apparatus was the Emperor. Though the king enjoyed absolute power, he appointed a number of officers in different departments of the government for the transactions of the innumerable affairs.

From 1526 to 1560, i.e., from the time of Babur to the first four years of the reign of Akbar, the office of Wazir or Wakil enjoyed great power. At the time of Bairam Khan's regency (1556-60), the office of the Wazir enjoyed unlimited power. As Akbar took the financial power of the Wakil from Bairam Khan, the office lost its importance.

The main departments of the state were usually four. The head of exchequer was the Diwan who was usually the highest officer in the state, being in sole charge of revenue and finance. He personally inspected all financial transactions, payments in all departments, and maintained direct contact with the provincial Diwan.

The office of military pay and accounts was entrusted to Mir Bakshi, who discharged various duties. While he was the Paymaster-General of all the officers of the state, who "theoretically belonged to the military department", he was also responsible for recruiting soldiers of the army and for maintaining the list of Mansabdars and other high officials. When preparing for a battle, he presented a complete master-roll of the army before the Emperor. Khan-i-Saman was the officer of the Imperial Household department who looked into all matters "in reference to both great and small things".

The last but not the least important office was held by Sadr-us Sudur who was the head of religious endowments and charity and also the minister of education. Before Shah Jahan, the office of Chief Qazi and Sadr-us Sudur were combined into one-Sadr who acted as the Chief Qazi. Aurangzeb separated these two offices and appointed two different persons to hold these posts.

Secondary in importance were the heads of departments like Mustaufi (Auditor General), Chief Mufti (Legal Adviser), Chief Muhtasib (Censor of Public Morals) and Daroga-i-Dak Choki (Officer of Intelligence and Postal Department). The other officials, somewhat inferior in status to those mentioned above, were the Mir Atish or Daroga-i-Topkhana (Superintendent of Artillery), Nazir-i-Buyutat (Superintendent of Imperial Workshop), Mir Barak (Superintendent of Forests), Mir Arz (Officer who presented petitions to the Emperor) and Mir Tazak (Master of Ceremonies).

2.4 PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

For the purpose of smooth administration and revenue collection, the empire was divided into several provinces known as Subas. Akbar divided his empire into twelve Subas. Later, when he conquered new provinces in the Deccan, the number rose to fifteen towards the close of his reign. Subsequently they rose to seventeen at the time of Jahangir's reign, to nineteen in the time of Shah Jahan and to twenty-one at the time of Aurangzeb.

The administrative structure of the province during the Mughal rule was exactly the miniature of the central government. The head of a Suba was Subedar who was appointed directly by the Emperor. He was the head of the civil as well as military administration of each Suba. The provincial Diwan was the head of the revenue department of the province and was appointed by the Emperor. He was an independent officer who answered all questions relating to provincial finance.

The provincial Bakshi looked after the military establishment. He also kept an account of the salaries and emoluments of all Mansabdars. Provincial Sadr, Qazi, Buyutat, Muhtasib, etc had to discharge the same duties like their counterparts at the centre. Besides, in every Suba, Daroga-i-Dag Choki was established for conducting intelligence and postal system, Waqai Navis and Waqai Nigars were appointed for supply of reports directly to the king and some Sawanih Nigars were also recruited for maintaining confidential reports supplied to the king.

- **LOCAL ADMINISTRATION**

The administration below the Subas, were divided into Sarkars and the Sarkars were subdivided into Parganas: Faujdar was the chief executive head of a Sarkar whose main duty was to maintain the law and order under his jurisdiction and the execution of royal decrees and regulations. In addition, he had to keep the powerful Zamindars under check. The next important officer of a Sarkar was the revenue collector known as Amalguzar. Some Thanas were established in disturbed areas and in and around the cities for preservation of law and order. These were headed by Thanedars.

A Shiqdar was in the charge of the general administration of a Pargana and maintain law and order. He was assisted by an Amil (Revenue Collector), an Amin (Revenue Assessor), a Potadar (Treasurer), Qanungo (Record Keeper of Land) and few Bitikchis (Writers or Clerks).

A village was the lowest administrative unit in the Mughal system of administration. The village head was known as Muqaddam. He was assisted by the Patwari, who took care of the village revenue records. At this level, the Mughals followed almost the same pattern of administration as it was under Sher Shah. The administration of the urban areas was entrusted to Kotwal who was appointed by the Centre. His duty was prevention of crime, prevention of social abuses, control of the market, care and disposal of heirless properties, etc.

The forts of the Mughals, which were known as Qilas, were located at strategically important places where small towns grew up due to erection of huge garrisons. To administer the Qilas, some high ranked Mansabdars were usually appointed as Qiladars for its administration. One Mutasaddi was appointed to administer the ports. This office was auctioned in some cases and given to the highest bidder.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions:

1. Who separated the office of Chief Qazi and Sadr-us Sudur?

2. What was the duty of the Subedar?

3. Who was Mutasaddi?

- **Mughal Judicial System**

The Mughal rulers possessed a great sense of justice and tried to establish an efficient system of judicial administration. Initially, they followed the judicial system based on Islamic law of the Sultanate period under which the subjects were divided into two classes- Believers and Zimmis, the latter being not recognized as citizens of the country. It was Akbar who did not strictly adhere to the Islamic theory of kingship and made some changes in the judicial system.

At the apex of the judicial administration stood the king, who was considered to be the fountain of justice. He held his court on fixed days of the week and personally decided all the important cases. The king alone enjoyed the right to award death sentences. Next to the king's court stood the courts of Sadr-us-Sadur which decide the religious cases and the Qaziul- Qzat which decide all other cases.

There was separate judicial machinery at the provincial level. The chief responsibility of judicial administration rested with the Subedar, the Diwan and the Qazi. The Subedar decided all the criminal cases and punished thieves, robbers, rebels, etc. The civil cases were decided by the Diwan. The court of the Qazi also enjoyed wide judicial powers. The Qazi with the help of officials like Mufti and Miradi discharged both civil and criminal justice on the Hindus and the Muslims.

At the Sarkar and Pargana level, the Siqdar acted as the chief judicial officer and tried all criminal cases. The civil cases were tried by the Amil. The Qazi and the Kotwal too enjoyed the right to try certain types of civil and criminal cases. The lowest unit of judicial administration was the Panchayat.

No codified laws existed in the Mughal judicial system. The cases of the Muslims were decided on the basis of Quranic injunctions, hadiths or sayings of the prophet, fatwas or decrees of the eminent judges, etc. In case of the Hindus the cases were decided in accordance with their customary and traditional laws. However, in criminal cases some identical laws existed for the members of the two communities. The political cases were tried by special courts consisting of civil and military officials.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions:

4. Name the lowest unit of judicial administration.

5. Define Hadith?

6. Who acted as the chief judicial officer at the Sarkar and Pargana level?

2.5 JAGIRDARI SYSTEM

Jagirdari system during the time of the Mughals was a continuation of the earlier iqta system that formed a part of the feudal structure prior to the Mughal period. It was an administrative mechanism which involved revenue assignments that was transferrable during the Sultanate days. By this system, the ruling class of a particular region was responsible for the management of revenue appropriation under the direct supervision of the central authority without having any hereditary rights over the regions falling under their control.

Earlier permanent and hereditary rights controlled the revenue assignments as the son succeeded to the official posts. However, under the Lodis, the Afghan nobles were given such revenue assignments and derived only partly from the king's favour. This Mughal system of revenue assignment is identified as Jagirs and the assignee is known as Jagirdar. Unlike the iqta system which was administrative cum fiscal arrangement, jagirdari system under the Mughals was purely revenue based assignment.

Akbar divided the land into two categories- Khalisa and Jagir. Land revenue of Khalisa land went directly to the royal treasury whereas Jagirs were assigned to the Jagirdars according to their rank. Those Mansabdars who received cash payment were known as Naqdi. Jagirs were usually granted to the Mansabdars and the governing class of the empire.

The Jagirs under the Mughals were transferable after three or four years and no Jagirdar was allowed to retain the same Jagir for a long time. This feature of the system not only kept a check on the Jagirdars but also helped taking long-term measures for the development of the areas by the Jagirdars.

Generally there were four types of Jagirs - (a) those which were given in lieu of pay known as Jagir Tankha, (b) those which were given to a person on certain conditions called Mashrut Jagirs, (c) those which were independent and involved no obligation in service termed Inam Jagir and (d) those which were assigned to Zamindars in their own homeland known as Watan Jagir. The last named was the only exception to the general system of transfer of Jagir system.

The increase in the number of Mansabdars and the limited availability of land as well as the administrative and financial disorder of the country caused a crisis in the Jagirdari system in the later part of the reign of Aurangzeb. Many of those who were appointed as Mansabdars found it hard to get their Jagirs. The Jagirdari system was one of the important causes of the agrarian crisis in the Mughal Empire.

Though the term jagir does not occur in the official paper before Akbar, it began to be used gradually after Akbar. The term jagir has been used in varying frequencies - more frequently since 1561 but by 1575, it had declined. This may be due to the changing administrative jargon for different assignment in the original documents. During the time of Babur, wajah was used and during the first four years of Akbar's reign vague expressions like hukumat, sardari, dawari, hirasat etc were used.

The marking of difference between the revenue assignment and holding administrative posts may have been the outcome of Sher Shah's policy of appointing sarkar-level military commanders. This policy was carried forward by Islam Shah who made an attempt to put all soldiers serving under him on cash salaries.

The jagirs of the leading nobles were located strictly within the territory controlled by him. However, the territory extended much beyond the revenue assignment.

At times there were disputes regarding the control of revenue as to whether the senior commander would control the revenue of his territory or only his personal jagir. This growing tension led to conflict between central authority and the regional commanders.

Towards 1575 the jagir system assumed certain features. One jagir of a noble was conceived as fixed income against specific methods and not a portion of the revenue collected from the territories under his charge. Secondly, the central diwan had the supreme authority to decide the value of the jagirs (locale and nominal) of the nobles or those serving under the superior hakims.

LET US KNOW

Ali Quli Khan (hakim) of Jaunpur assigned sarkar Banaras to his brother Bahadur Khan and made it formally on behalf of the king. This is a single exceptional case where an actual decision on assignment was taken without any prior authorization from the central authority, as mentioned by Bayazid Bayat in the Tazkira-i-Humayunwa- Akbar.

Jagirs began to be distributed among the high nobles at the presence of a central diwan. Abul Fazl reports this in connection with the assignment of the Malwa in 1562. And the value of the jagir and locale was defined through sanads issued by the central diwan. And failure to abide by the procedure was considered an offence and not acceptable.

Until 1560, the jagir of a noble was never assigned in parts against the partial assessed income (Jama) of two or more parganas. The jagirs were settled in terms of the assessed income (Jama) of the parganas against which it was assigned. In the initial years of Akbar's rule, the central share in the revenue of the different regions was fixed but while discharging the responsibility of collecting and transmitting to the treasury the nobles misappropriated it. This was perhaps the reason behind the depletion of treasury towards the beginning of 1561.

The jagirs of the nobles belonging to powerful clans were concentrated in particular regions. Most of the jagirs were distributed among the members of the same clan like the Uzbeks in Jaunpur, Mirzas in Sambhal, Jalairs in Lucknow and Awadh, Qaqshals in Kara, Manikpur and the Atka clan in Panjab. This led to the slowing down of the process of the transfer of jagirs.

From around 1561 certain changes were introduced in the way jagirs were assigned. The jagirs were assigned in fragments over a number of parganas and Ain-i-dahsala testifies to the fragmentation of the jagirs.

2.6 MANSABDARI SYSTEM

The basis of civil and military administration under the Mughals was the Mansabdari system which was introduced by Akbar who himself borrowed it from Persia.

The term Mansab literally means the rank of its holder (Mansabdars) in the official ladder in the Mughal system of administration. From that angle, the Mansabdars were the paid-service officers of the Mughals. On the basis of merit or service to the state, Mansabs were given to both civil and military officers and hence they formed an integral part of the Mughal bureaucracy.

Thus the Mansabdars belonged to the civil and the military department. The Mansabdars could be transferred from the civil to the military department and vice versa. The Mansabdars had to supply certain number of soldiers to the state according to their rank. In the time of Akbar the Mansabdars were classified into 33

grades, from commanders of 10 to 10,000 soldiers. Generally Mansab in the rank of 7,000 and above was reserved for person like princes or other members of royal family.

The title of Mansabdar was assigned to the high officials while the less superior officers were given the title of Rouzinder.

There were two important characteristic features. Firstly, in broader sense all the Mansabdars were subordinate to the king. That means, in an expedition, a Mansabdar of lower rank had to obey the Mansabdar of higher rank in matters of war. Secondly, the Mughal Mansabdars were known by the number of ranks identified as - Zat and Sawar. Zat indicated the number of horses, carts, elephants etc to be maintained by a Mansabdar. Sawar determined the number of horsemen the Mansabdar had to furnish or maintain. Sawar rank was either equal or lower than that of the Zat. Hence, the position of the Mansabdar was determined by the Zat number, not that of Sawar. For example, Mansabdar with 4000 Zat and 2000 Sawar was higher in rank than a Mansabdar of 3000 Zat and 3000 Sawar.

The Mansab rank under the Mughals was not hereditary. The son of a Mansabdar did not inherit the rank from his father. Such grant depended on the will of the Emperor. Another important feature of the system was the law of escheat (zabti), according to which when a Mansabdar died, all his property was confiscated by the king. This measure was introduced so that the Mansabdars could not exploit the people at will. Regarding the payment of the Mansabdars, the system of payment in cash or in assignment of a Jagir existed. Generally, a Mansabdar preferred a Jagir to cash payment due to social status associated with it.

The Mansabdari system, introduced by Akbar, was a unique feature of the administrative system of the Mughal Empire. But it was, no doubt, a complex system.

There were gradations of the Mansab holders. Mansabdars holding the rank of one Hazari or above were termed as "Omrah" and those below a Hazari were termed Mansabdars. They performed the same type of duties. There were three classes of Mansabdars. (a) If the Zat and Sawar ranks were equal the Mansabdar belonged to the first class. (b) If the Sawar rank was half of his Zat rank, the Mansabdar belonged to the second class. (c) If the sawar rank was less than half the Zat rank or there was no Sawar rank at all, then the Mansabdar would belong to the third class.

The Mughals stressed on the central authority of the ruler in maintaining order within the Empire. The Mansabdari system became the means through which chieftains, clan leaders and aristocrats who commanded considerable status and power were inducted into the nobility. The mansabdar was to report only to the Emperor rather than to another official of a higher mansab or rank. The Emperor wielded much control over the officials through the frequent attendance of the nobles. This enabled the nobles to maintain their elite status. The nobles could not assert their power through hereditary claims unlike the times of Tughlaqs and the

Lodhis. Akbar did away with this practice and the rank of an officer ended with the death of the officer. Moreover, the mansabdars, were transferred to prevent any territorial consolidation of power. The Mughal princes were given ranks subordinate to the Emperor. The system managed to draw into the fold of the Mughal army the maximum number of military recruits.

It allowed optimal absorption of warlords and recruits. Rewards and high maintenance grants were offered as incentives to warlords who enlisted superior horse-breeds.

Due to the indirect recruitment process the Mughal grasp or hold over Indian military power remained tenuous throughout. There were no strict regulations and control. Instead, the number of mansabdar increased leading to the expansion of the empire to newer frontiers.

The Mansabdars posted in the Deccan, received jagirs for only 3 or 4 months. The increase in the mansab was far greater than the growth in the jama. It was to cope with this situation that the zat and sawar salaries were reduced to a large scale and it posed a military and financial problem. Akbar aimed to broaden the base of his rule by establishing a personalized and semi-bureaucratic relationship with the Hindu chieftains and Muslim nobles. The mansabdars under Akbar were mostly Persians, Turanis, Muslims born in India and the Rajput chieftains.

The lowest ranking mansabdar was a commander of 10 cavalry and the highest ranking mansabdars was a commander of 10,000 cavalry. In Akbar's time most of the mansabdars above the rank of 5000 were his sons.

2.7 MADAD-I-MAASH

The benevolence and the concept of their kinship which aimed at the socio-economic and cultural development of the empire had prompted the mughal emperors of india to issue madad –I mash grants to their subjects .throughout the history of Mughals we come across numerous such documents assignning grants to individuals for their own livelihood, or for the maintenance of religious institutions like madarasas, khankahs, temples etc. Such grants were also given for the maintenance of faqirs ,sadhus, conduting urs,or helping the needy and poors .grants were also given as inams or milkiyat to the officials as also in lieu of their loyalty and services .the beneficiaries of these grants were both hindus and muslims and they represented different sects and strata of society .Both the hindus and muslim grantees can be divided into four categories each .muslim male,muslim women,faqirs and officials among the muslims and sadhus ,hindu astrologers ,Brahmans officials among the hindus .

Though the gtants to muslims is not so important ,the grants to hindus is definitely significant .These grants must have brought a social transformation by creating a new class of land owners who not only enjoyed the fruits of the soil but also attained a superior position in the society .Even during the days when the empire was facing

great financial hardship and the economy of the empire was on the verge of collapse this tradition was kept alive .The continuance of the practice of granting madad-I mash bears ample testimony of the benevolence of the later mughal emperor proves that they were alive towards the socio-cultural activities of the society .It also testifies the continuance of state assistance for cultural community of the country .

LET US KNOW

Abdul Kadir Badauni (a chronicler in Akbar's time) had written that the contingent of a mansabdar consisted of Khas Khailan (his personal dependents) as well as bargirs, who were mercenaries.

On the basis of their performance mansabdars were either promoted to higher ranks or demoted to lower ranks. Akbar introduced descriptive roll system and pay was dependent on the inspection of these rolls by imperial inspectors. Branding horse system was made compulsory to prevent borrowing of horses between the mansabdars. Most high ranking mansabdars were governors of subas. The sons inherited a lower mansab than his father.

Sir Thomas Roe mentions that the children of the mansabdar inherited a small fortune like, 'horses, staff and some stock'. Thus, the law of escheat worked well as it kept the mansabdars away from indulging in corruption and other acts of high handedness. However, this also led to an increasing tendency among the mansabdars to indulge in reckless expenditure.

According to J.N. Sarkar, the law of escheat made the nobles a selfish band quick to join a winning side in every war of succession in order to keep safe their material possessions as their entitlements were subject to the pleasure of the king.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions:

7. What does the term "Zat" indicate in the mansabdari system?

8. _____ testifies to the fragmentation of the jagirs.

9. Name the only non-transferable type of Jagir?

2.8 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, you have learnt that–

- The king enjoyed absolute power, but a decentralized form of government existed during the Mughal period.
- The empire was divided and sub-divided into several levels functioning under capable administrators and officers.

- The jagirdari and mansabdari system were an integral part of the Mughal administration and it formed the base of civil and military administration.

2.9 FURTHER READING

- Roy, Kaushik. (2013). *Military manpower, Armies and Warfare in South Asia*. New York, USA: Taylor and Francis.
- Chandra, Satish. (Reprint 2008). *Medieval India: From Sultanate to the Mughals, Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)Part one*. New Delhi, India: Har-Anand Publications Pvt. Ltd
- Prasad, Ishwari. (1965). *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*. Allahabad, India: The Indian Press Ltd. (2nd Edition)
- Richards, John F. (1996). *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Habib, Irfan (2000). *Agrarian system of Mughal India, 1556-1707*. (3rd edition). Bombay, India: Oxford University Press.

2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answers to Q No. 1: Aurangzeb

Answers to Q No. 2: He was in charge of the civil as well as military administration of a Suba.

Answers to Q No. 3: He was in charge of the administration of the ports.

Answers to Q No. 4: Panchayat

Answers to Q No. 5: Sayings of the Prophet

Answers to Q No. 6: Siqdar

Answers to Q No. 7: Zat indicated the number of horses, carts, elephants etc. to be maintained by a Mansabdar.

Answers to Q No. 8: Ain-i-dahsala

Answers to Q No. 9: Watan jagir

2.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

(A) Very Short Questions (answer each within 50 words):

- Q.1. what was the function of the Diwan?
- Q.2. what kinds of cases were decided by Qazi-ul-Qazat?
- Q.3. Who was the main architect of Mughal administrative system?
- Q.4. How many Subas were there in Deccan under Aurangzeb?

(B) Short Questions (answer each within 150 words):

- Q.1. How was justice delivered in the absence of any codified law?
- Q.2. How was the state share of revenue determined?

(C) Long Questions (answer each within 300-500 words):

- Q.1. Show how the provincial administration of the Mughals resembles the central administration.
- Q.2. Discuss the salient features of the Mughal administration.
- Q.3. Discuss the Jagirdari system.

UNIT 3: EMERGENCE OF THE MARATHAS; SHIVAJI; EXPANSION UNDER THE PESHWAS

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Sources and Geography
- 3.3 Rise of the Maratha Power: Theoretical Framework
- 3.4 Rise of the Maratha Power: Polity
 - 3.4.1 Shahji
 - 3.4.2 Shivaji: Early Life
- 3.5 Mughal-Maratha Relations: An Analysis
 - 3.5.1 First Phase; 1615-1664
 - 3.5.2 Second Phase; 1664-1667
 - 3.5.3 Third Phase; 1667-1680
 - 3.5.4 Fourth Phase; 1680-1707
- 3.6 The Marathas and the Siddis of Janjira
- 3.7 The Marathas, the English and the Portuguese
- 3.8 Administrative Structure of the Marathas
 - 3.8.1 Central Administration
 - 3.8.2 Provincial Administration
 - 3.8.3 Military Organisation
 - 3.8.4 Navy
 - 3.8.5 Judiciary
- 3.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.10 Key Words
- 3.11 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit you will know about the:

- factors responsible for the rise of the Marathas,
- political framework of the rise of the Maratha power,
- Mughal-Maratha conflict,
- Maratha's relations with European powers,
- Shivaji's administrative structure, and how far it was influenced by the Deccani set up, and
- Deterioration that gradually crept in under the Peshwas.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

With the rise of the Maratha power a new dimension was added in the Deccan politics. This not only changed the complexion of the Deccani states but also influenced the Mughal-Deccani relations. In the present Unit we will discuss the factors that ultimately contributed to the rise of the Maratha power. You will read how the Marathas were able to rise to the prominence of a 'kingly position major element in the Unit. It mentions how the Marathas kept challenging the Mughals till the turn of the century and the latter could never succeed in crushing them completely. The characteristic features of Maratha administration are also discussed. The Unit also takes into account Maratha relations with the new emerging European powers in the Arabian Sea.

3.2 SOURCES AND GEOGRAPHY

Before proceeding to the rise of Maratha power, let us first familiarise you with the sources of Maratha history as well as the geographical layout of the areas they ruled over.

Sources

The most important Marathi work is Shivaji's biography (bakhar) written by Sabhasad in 1694. This was further elaborated by Chitragupta. Sambhaji's Adnapatra or Marathshahitil Rajniti of Ramchandra Panta Amatya (1716) is another Marathi work of importance which traces the events from Shivaji to Sambhaji. Jayarama Pindye's Radhamadhav Vilas Champu (in Sanskrit) is another work that primarily deals with the life of Shivaji. Bhimsen's Nuskha-i Dilkusha (Persian) also throws important light on Mughal-Maratha relations.

Geography

Maharashtra includes the Konkan between the Sahyadri ranges (also known as the Western Ghats) and the western sea-coast; Ghatmatha, at the top of the Sahyadri ranges; and the Des, the lower valley. On its north towards the west runs the Sahyadri mountain ranges while from east to west lies the Satpura and Vindhya hill terrain. Its hill-forts provided natural defences. Strategically, it was one of the best fortified regions in India. Its hilly terrain and impregnable forts practically remained

impregnable to the invaders. But the soil in the hilly tract is generally of poor quality unfit for cultivation. However, these natural surroundings made the inhabitants tough and hardworking. In the Deccan plateau the soil is black and fertile, though the rainfall here is scanty and the region produces good crops.

3.3 RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various views and opinions have been expressed by scholars regarding the rise of the Maratha power. Grant Duff describes it as the result of 'conflagration' in the forests of Sahyadri. But according to M.G. Ranade, it was much more than the mere fortuitous circumstances. He calls it a national struggle of independence against foreign domination. This opinion is disputed on the ground that if the Mughals were foreigners then Bijapur and Ahmednagar rulers were also equally alien. If the Marathas could accept the domination of one power then why not of the Mughals?

Jadunath Sarkar and G.S. Sardesai emphasised the emergence of Maratha power as a 'Hindu' reaction against the communal policies of Aurangzeb. Yet, one finds Shivaji applauding Akbar's ideas of **sulh kul**. In fact, this argument also does not seem to have any sound base. Their earliest patrons were Muslims, i.e., the rulers of Bijapur and Ahmednagar. Besides, one does not find Shivaji fighting for the cause of Hindus and their welfare outside Maharashtra. Even within Maharashtra one does not find him undertaking social reforms. It is said that his assumption of the title *haindava dharmoddharak* at the time of his coronation was not much new in that period.

Andre Wink has seen their rise in the growing Mughal pressure on the Deccan Sultans. Even Grant Duff acknowledges the Mughal factor in their rise. But it was perhaps more than that. Satish Chandra finds socio-economic content in the rise of the Marathas. Shivaji's success lay in his ability to mobilize the peasants in his area. It is generally argued that he discontinued jagirdari and zamindari and established direct contact with the peasants thus freeing them from exploitation. But according to Satish Chandra, he did not do away with the system at all. Instead, he curtailed the powers of big *deshmukhs*, reformed the abuses and established necessary supervisory authority. Hence, he made the old system work better. Besides, their power was also restricted by curtailing their armed retainers. This is the main reason that Shivaji's military strength did not consist of 'feudal levies' of the bigger *deshmukhs*. Petty landholders, who were often at the mercy of bigger *deshmukhs*, benefitted by this policy. In fact, it was in these petty landlords that his strength lay. For example, the *deshmukhs* of Mavle, who were the first to rally to Shivaji's side, were petty landholders. Similar was the case with Morays of Javli, Khopdes of Utroli and Nimbalkars of Phaltan. Besides, his emphasis on extension and improvement of cultivation benefitted not only the peasants in general but also these petty landholders in particular.

There was struggle for control over land among bigger, middle and smaller deshmukhs, mirasis (resident owner cultivator) and the uparis(outsiders). To expand one's watan was an "all absorbing passion." Political authority at that time also depended on the control over land.

Irfan Habib points out the connection between the rise of the Maratha power and the rebellious mood of the oppressed peasantry.

There also lies the social content of the Maharashtra movement. Shivaji tried to raise the status of his family by entering into matrimonial alliances with the leading deshmukh families-Shirkes, Morays, Nimbalkars. Thus he followed a dual policy, i.e, curtailing the political power of the bigger deshmukhs on the one hand, and entering into matrimonial alliances with them for claiming equal status on the other hand. His coronation (1674) not only put him higher in status among other Maratha clans, but also put him at par with other Deccani rulers. His assumption of superior status of suryavamsi kshatriya with the help of the leading brahmans of Benaras, Gagabhat, was a definite move in this direction. Shivaji not only got prepared suryavamsi kshatriya geneology of his family linking it with Indra, but also claimed the high sounding title of kshatriya kulavatamsa (the ornament of kshatriya families). Thus, by confirming higher status among the Maratha families he claimed exclusive right to collect sardeshmukhi which was earlier enjoyed by other Maratha families under the patronage of Shrikes, Ghorpades etc .

This clearly emphasises the social tensions prevalent in the Maratha society. They were mainly agriculturists and also formed a fighting class. Yet, they were not kshatriyas in status. Thus the social movement launched by Shivaji served a powerful means to weld together the Marathas and the kunbis (cultivating class). Kunbi peasants, holis and other tribals of Maval area who rallied round Shivaji in large numbers were also motivated by the desire to raise their status in the social hierarchy. Thus, the Maratha rise was not just a result of a desire to overthrow the yoke of foreign rule: it had deep-rooted socio-economic reasons.

The intellectual and ideological framework for their rise was provided by the bhakti movement which got "crystallised into "Maharashtra dharma". This helped in providing the Marathas a cultural identity as well. Emphasis of the bhakti saints on egalitarianism provided ideal background vis-a-vis justification for the mobility in the varna scale by individuals and groups.

Rise of Marathas of such humble origins as the Sindhias exemplifies the success of the movement. During this time, a sizeable number of groups improved their status in the varna hierarchy and legitimised their right to political power. M.G. Ranade (later supported by V.K. Rajwade) has formulated the idea that it was 'Maharashtra dharma' that resulted in the political independence of the Marathas. He described it as jayshnu (aggressive) Hinduism as against the sahisnu (tolerant) Hinduism. The earliest trace of the term Maharashtra dharma occurs in a 15th century work Gurucharita, but in the context of "an ethical policy of a great enlightened state". To

give it a political overtone, credit goes to a 17th century saint-poet Ramdas who expressed unfavourable opinion about the Turko-Afghan-Mughal rule. Shivaji used it in his advantage. He used this popular ideological chant of Maharashtra dharma against the Deccanis and the Mughals. Marathas' religious feelings were centred around the goddess Tulaja Bhavani, Vithoba and Mahadeva. The battle-cry of the Marathas "Har Har Mahadevr" touched the sentiments of Maratha peasantry. But, as rightly pointed out by P.V. Ranade, "Hindu hostility to Muslim hegemony was not the primary motivating factor nor the dynamic element of medieval Indian political scene". The hollowness of the ideology is well evident when Shivaji and other Maratha sardars collected chhauth and sardeshmulirbi (a legalised plunder) across their boundaries. In fact, it was a "psychological tonic" to mobilize the peasantry in its early phase of Maratha expansion.

It is also difficult to accept that Shivaji wanted to carve out a 'Hindu Swarajya'. Rather it should be seen more as a regional reaction against the centralising tendencies of the Mughal Empire. The Marathas wanted to form a large principality for themselves, for which an ideal background was provided by the disintegration of the Nizam Shahi power of Ahmednagar and the introduction of a new factor. The Mughals,Its inherent socio-economic contradiction also helped in mobilizing the local landed elements in general.

Check Your Progress 1

1) Recall any two Marathi sources for constructing the history of the Marathas.
.....
.....
.....
.....

2) Tick mark the correct/wrong (✓ / ×) statements :

- 1) Sahyadri ranges and the Western Ghats are two different geographical units.
- 2) Soil on the hilly tracts was fit for cultivation.
- 3) Soil of the Deccan plateau is black and fertile.
- 4) Climate of the Deccan made its inhabitants tough and hard working.

3) Can the emergence of the Maratha movement be termed as 'Hindu reaction'??
.....
.....
.....
.....

3.4 RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER: POLITY

In the present section, we will confine our study to the emergence of Maratha chieftains under the Deccani states in general, and, the process of the rise of the Bhonsle family in particular.

The Marathas in the Deccan began emerging since the early 17th century under the Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Golkonda states. They served in the army of Bijapur and Ahmednagar rulers, but some served the Golkonda state as well. The hill-forts in the Deccani states were controlled by the Marathas though the forts of more importance were manned by Muslim qiladars. They were often honoured by the titles of raja, naik and rao. The Bijapur ruler Ibrahim Adil Shah employed the natives of Maharashtra as bargirs and frequently used them against the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmednagar. He even recruited Brahmin and the Marathas in the accounts department. The Maratha sardars who served the Bijapur rulers were son Yashwant Rao distinguished himself against Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmednagar and was confirmed as the Raja of Javli and Rao Naik Nimbalkar or Phultun Rao who joined the Bijapur rulers in the mid-17th century. Jujhar Rao Ghatage, the deshmukh of Mullori, joined the Bijapur ruler Ibrahim Adil Shah. Similarly, the Manays were distinguished silahdars under Bijapur. The Ghorpades, Duflays of Jhutt and Sawants of Waree also served Bijapur in the first half of the 17th century. Under the Nizam Shahi rulers, Jadav Rao, the deshmukh of Sindkher, was most powerful. Lokhjee Jadav Rao possessed 10,000 horses under the Nizam Shahi rulers.

3.4.1 Shahji

Some members of house of Bhonsle, to which Shivaji belonged, were patels under the Ahmednagar rulers. Shivaji's grandfather Maloji was connected with Jagpal Rao Naik Nimbalkar, the deshmukh of Phultun, by matrimonial alliance (his sister Deepa Bai was married to Maloji). In 1577, Maloji joined the service of Murtaza Nizam Shah as bargir at the instigation of Lokhjee Jadav Rao of Sindkher. But in 1599 Misunderstanding between the two over the question of marriage between Shahji and Jija Bai forced Maloji to leave. But soon (beginning of the 17th century), Maloji asserted his position and again joined the Nizam Shahis with the help of the Nimbalkars and got the title of Maloji Raja Bhonsle. He was given the charge of the forts of Shivneri and chakun and got the jagirs of Poona and Sopa in return. His prestige enhanced when in 1604 he got connected with Jadav Rao Sindkher. The latter married his daughter Jija Bai to his son Shahji. Meanwhile, Mughal Encroachments in Ahmednagar completely shattered its stability. Internal strifes also started. This led to total chaos and confusion. Jahangir took advantage of the situation and in 1621 succeeded in winning over the favour of many Maratha sardars to his side. The most important one was Lokhjee Jadav Rao, the deshmukh of Sindkher, and the father-in-law of Shahji. After the accession of Murtaza Nizam Shah II(1629), Lokhjee Jadav Rao shifted his allegiance to the Nizam Shahi ruler,

but was treacherously murdered (1630). At this time, Jagdeo Rao also joined Mughal forces with a mansab of 5000 zat.

Shahji Bhonsle, though earlier a supporter of Khan Jahan Lodi before his rebellion, offered his services to the Mughals through Azam Khan and received the rank of 6000 zat and 5000 sawar in 1630. Shahji's cousin Kheloji, the son of Maloji's younger brother Vetoji, also joined the Mughal service. But, in 1632, Shahji defected to Bijapur and joined the service of Adil Shah. By 1634, Shahji succeeded in controlling almost 1/4th of the Nizam Shahi dominion. But the Mughal onslaught in 1636 forced Shahji to surrender all his grains and he was shifted towards Konkan as a Bijapur noble. It was at this time that Shahji got an opportunity to impress Morar Punt (Morari Pandit). He joined Randaulah Khan in his Kamatak campaign and rendered excellent performance for which Muhammad Adil Shah granted him 24 villages as jagir in Kurar (Satara district).

(To avoid repetition and for the purpose of putting the things in sequence we are leaving out our narration on Shahji's life here and switching over to Shivaji and his early life. The left over portion on Shahji will be dealt along with the rise of Shivaji's power.)

3.4.2 Shivaji : Early Life

Born at Shivneri (10 April, 1627), Shivaji was the youngest son of Shahji and Jija Bai. In his early childhood there was hardly any interaction between Shahji and Shivaji for the former was busy most of the time in his Kamatak campaign as Bijapur noble (1630-36). In 1636, with Shahji's surrender of Shivner, one of the seven forts surrendered by Shahji, Shivaji along with his mother had to shift to Poona under the guardianship of Dadaji Kondadev. In 1640-41, Shivaji got married to Sai Bai Nimbalkar and Shahji entrusted the charge of his Poona jagir to him but under Dadaji Konddev's guardianship. After Dadaji Konddev's death (1647), Shivaji became the sole incharge of his Poona jagir as Shahji's agent. Shivaji at first befriended the Maval chiefs on the west of Poona district and it were they who formed the backbone of Shivaji's army in the years to come. The Mavle chieftains Jedhe nayak of Kari and Bandal nayak were the first to join Shivaji.

Shivaji wanted to occupy all the possessions of Shahji, (which the latter held in 1634 but had to surrender in 1636) as a matter of legitimate right. After Dadaji Kondadev's death, Shivaji with definite plans, decided to recover them. However he had to restrict himself (as early as 1648) owing to Shahji's arrest by Mustafa Khan, the Bijapuri commander. Shivaji unsuccessfully tried to pressurise Adil Shahi ruler for the release of his father through an alliance with the Mughals (1649). Shahji was ultimately released (16 May, 1649) after surrendering Bangalore and Kondana to Bijapur.

In the meantime (1648), Shivaji occupied the fort of Purander This provided an impregnable defence to the Marathas in the years to come. The next in line to fall was the fort of Javli (1656). It was the stronghold of the famous Mavle chieftain

Chandra Rao More. With its occupation, he got another stronghold Rain (later renamed Raigarh) which was to assume the status of the Maratha capital shortly after. The conquest of Javli not only opened the gate for further expansion towards south and west Konkan but it also increased Shivaji's military strength with Mavle chieftains of More territory joining him.

(After this summary assessment of Shivaji's rise, we are switching over to the Mughal-Maratha conflict. We will deal with the expansion of Maratha power under Shivaji and Sambhaji along with Mughal-Maratha relations.)

3.5 MUGHAL-MARATHA RELATIONS: AN ANALYSIS

The Mughal-Maratha relations can be divided into four phases: (i) 1615-1664; (ii) 1664-1667 ; (iii) 1667-1680 and (iv) 1680- 1707.

3.5.1 First Phase : 1615-1664

The Mughals, as early as Jahangir's reign, realised the importance of Maratha Chieftains in the Deccan politics. Jahangir succeeded in persuading some of the Maratha chieftains to defect his side in 1615. As a result, the Mughals succeeded in defeating the combined Deccani armies (1616). Shah Jahan, too as early as 1629, attempted to win over the Maratha sardars. Shahji, the father of Shivaji, joined the Mughals this time but later defected and conspired against the Mughals with Murari Pandit and the other anti-Mughal faction of the Bijapur court. Shah Jahan, realizing the emerging threat of the Marathas, opted for a Mughal-Bijapur alliance against the Marathas. He asked the Bijapur ruler to employ Shahji, but to keep him at a distance from the Mughal territory in Karnataka (Treaty of 1636). Even Aurangzeb seems to have adopted his father's policy when just before leaving for the North on the eve of the war of succession he in his nishan to Adil Shah advised him to do the same. But Aurangzeb's desire for Bijapur-Mughal alliance against Shivaji turned out to be a nightmare for, unlike in 1636 when Shah Jahan offered 2/3 of the Nizam Shahi territory in bargain, Aurangzeb had nothing to offer. According to Satish Chandra, this contradiction dragged throughout till Aurangzeb occupied Bijapur in 1687.

Aurangzeb's attempts to align with Shivaji as early as 1657 failed because Shivaji demanded Dabhol and the Adil Shahi Konkan, a region fertile and rich as well as important for foreign trade. Soon Shivaji switched over to Bijapur and raided the Mughal Deccan (Ahmednagar and Junnar sub-divisions). Aurangzeb's exit and the war of succession left the stage free for Shivaj to act at will. Soon he occupied Kalyan and Bhivandi (Oct. 1657) and Mahuli (Jan. 1658). Thus the entire eastern half of the Kolaba district was captured by Shivaji from the Abyssinians (Siddis) of Janjira.

With Aurangzeb's departure, Bijapur turned towards Marathas. Adil Shahi ruler entrusted this task to Abdullah Bhatari Afzal Khan. But Afzal Khan's forces were no match to Shivaji's. In such a situation only diplomacy and tact could have worked. A

meeting was arranged for a compromise but Shivaji got him murdered (10 Nov. 1659). After Afzal Khan's murder it took hardly any time for the Marathas to overpower the Bijapuri army. Soon Panhala and south Konkan fell to the Marathas. But the Marathas could not hold Panhala for long and it again fell to Bijapur (2 March, 1660).

It was this situation that forced Aurangzeb to replace Prince Muazzam by Shaista Khan (July, 1659) in the Deccan as viceroy. Shaista Khan succeeded in occupying Chakan (15 August, 1660) and north Konkan (1661). He also kept the Marathas on their heels throughout 1662-63 but failed to wrest south Konkan (Ratnagiri) from them. The final blow to Mughal prestige came on 5th April 1663 at Poona, when Shivaji attacked Shaista Khan in the night in the very heart of the Mughal camp, surprised everyone and seriously wounded the Mughal viceroy. This was followed by the first sack of Surat (6-10 January 1664) by the Marathas.

3.5.2 Second Phase : 1664-1667

The rising menace of Shivaji, murder of Afzal Khan, occupation of Panhala and south Konkan, reluctance of Bijapur army to tackle, Shivaji and finally the failure of Shaista Khan (1600-1664) forced the Mughals to reassess the whole situation. Now Aurangzeb appointed Mirza Raja Jai Singh as the viceroy of Deccan. Jai Singh conceived a masterplan for the outright conquest of Deccan as against the Mughal policy of cautious advance. According to this masterplan, first of all Bijapur was to be threatened by allying with Shivaji after giving him concessions at the cost of Bijapur and shifting Shivaji's jagir to less sensitive areas, away from the Mughal deccan. After the defeat of Bijapur, as Jai Singh felt, the task of suppression of Shivaji would not have been a difficult one.

Initially Jai Singh exerted constant pressure on Shivaji's inception of his charge in the Deccan. He succeeded in defeating Shivaji at Purandar (1665). Jai Singh was proposed for Mughal-Maratha alliance. By the resultant treaty of Purandar (1665), Shivaji surrendered 23 out of 35 forts, worth annual income of 4 lakhs, in the Nizam Shahi territory and 12 other forts including Rajgarh. The loss was to be compensated in Bijapuri Talkonkan and Balaghat. Besides, Shivaji's son was enrolled as a mansabdar of 5000 zat in the Mughal army, This perfectly fitted into Jai Singh's scheme to keep away Shivaji, on sensitive Mughal frontier. At the same time seeds of confrontation between Shivaji and Bijapur rulers were also sown (for Shivaji had to directly confront Bijapur for Talkonkan and Balaghat).

Aurangzeb, however, was a little hesitant to such a proposal. For him, both Bijapur and the Marathas were separate problems and each had to be tackled separately. Aurangzeb, therefore, accepted in principle the attack on Bijapur but without further military reinforcements. Besides, he conferred on Shivaji only the Bijapur, Balaghat depended on the success of the projected Bijapur campaigns. So, in a situation of Bijapur-Golkonda alliance with no fresh reinforcement from Aurangzeb, and the

presence of anti-Shivaji faction under Diler Khan within the Mughal camp at Deccan, Jai Singh could hardly aspire for success.

At this moment, following the Bijapur-Golkonda alliance (1666) Jai Singh, in a bid to win over the Marathas, proposed for Shivaji's visit to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb at Agra. But at the Mughal court, the so called insult to Shivaji (for treating him at par with the nobles of 5000 zat and his welcome by a lower rank official) followed by the enraged behaviour of Shivaji: at the Mughal court, resulted in Shivaji's imprisonment at Agra.

Aurangzeb's unwillingness and later Shivaji's imprisonment at Agra gave a big jolt to Jai Singh's plan. At this juncture Jai Singh asked for the Emperor's presence in the Deccan as the only way to end up factions among the Mughal nobles there. But Aurangzeb's involvement in the north-west and with Persia and the Yusufzais hardly provided him time to react. Finally, Shivaji's escape from Agra (1666) sealed all hopes of success of Jai Singh's plan. Jai Singh was asked to proceed to Kabul, being replaced by Prince Muazzam (May, 1667) as the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan.

The failure of Jai Singh's plan was unfortunate, for Mughals could neither succeed in destroying Shivaji with the help of Bijapur (1672-76) nor conquer Deccani states with Maratha help (1676-79).

3.5.3 Third Phase: 1667-1680

After his escape from Agra, Shivaji did not desire to confront the Mughals immediately. Instead, he sought friendly relations (April and November 1667). Prince Muazzam pleasingly conferred a mansab of 5160 zat upon Shivaji's son Sambhaji and gave a jagir in Berar (1 August, 1668). Aurangzeb got alarmed over his son's rise of the Marathas' friendship with Shivaji and feared a rebellion. Aurangzeb asked Prince Muazzam to arrest Pratap Rao and Niraji Pant, the Maratha agents at Aurangabad. In the meantime, the Mughals attacked a part of Shivaji's jagir at Berar to recover one lakh of rupees advanced to Shivaji for his Agra visit. These developments alarmed Shivaji and he asked his agents Niraji Pant and Pratap Rao to leave Aurangabad. Shivaji attacked many forts ceded to the Mughals by the treaty of Purandar (1665). He occupied Kandana, Purandar, Mahuli and Nander (all in 1670). In the meantime, clashes developed between Prince Muazzam and Diler Khan. Diler Khan accused the Prince of alleged alliance with Shivaji, while the Prince blamed Diler Khan for disobedience. This internal strife weakened the Mughal army. Aurangzeb withdrew Jaswant Singh, the right hand man of Prince Muazzam and posted him at Burhanpur. Taking advantage of the situation, Shivaji sacked Surat for the second time (30 October, 1670). This was followed by Maratha successes in Berar and Baglana (1670-71). The forts of Ahivant, Markanda, Ravla and Javla in Baglana and Karinja, Ausa, Nandurbar, Saihir, Mulhir, Chauragarh and Hulgargh fell to the Marathas.

Maratha successes raised alarm in the Mughal court. Mahabat Khan was sent to the Deccan as the sole incharge of the affairs (November, 1670). But he, too, could not

gain much success; consequently he was removed from the scene along with Prince Muazzam in 1672. The Deccan was now placed under Bahadur Khan (1673).

Marathas continued their victorious march. They occupied Koil (June 1672). But their raids in Khandesh and Berar (December, 1672) were frustrated by the Mughals. In 1673, Bahadur Khan succeeded in occupying Shivner. Yet these Mughal successes - could hardly hold Shivaji. He took full advantage of the chaos that prevailed in Bijapur following Ali Adil Shah's death (24 November, 1672). His son was too young (just four years) to provide stability. Shivaji wrested the forts of Panhala (6 March 1673), Parli (1 April 1673) and Satara (27 July 1673) from Bijapur. There were factions in the Bijapur court. The anti-Khawwas Khan faction under Bahlol Khan put the entire blame of Bijapur reverses on Khawwas Khan. In 1674, Bahlol Khan succeeded in pushing back the Marathas at Kanara.

Meanwhile, Afghan disturbances in the north-west forced Aurangzeb to withdraw from Deccan and Bahadur Khan was left alone with a weakened contingent. Shivaji took full advantage of the situation. He crowned himself as king on 6 June, 1674 which was soon followed by the loot of Bahadur Khan's camp in May 1674. The proposal for Mughal-Maratha peace in early 1675, too, could not work.

Bahadur Khan now planned to join hands with Bijapur (October, 1675) against Shivaji, but he failed following Khawwas Khan's overthrow by Bahlol Khan (11 Nov. 1675). In the meantime, Bahadur Khan was severely censored by Aurangzeb. On the other side, the Maratha menace continued unabated. Diler Khan wanted to have a Mughal-Bijapur alliance against Golkonda and Shivaji. But the plan was made imperative by Madanna, the wazir of the Golkonda ruler, and by Akanna's great diplomacy (1677). Instead, Madanna entered into an alliance with Shivaji and agreed to pay one lakh huns annually for protection against the Mughals. He acknowledged Shivaji's possessions east of the Krishna river including the Kolhapur district. Golkonda also supported Shivaji in his Karnataka campaigns (1677-8).

But later Shivaji broke his promise to hand over Jinji and other regions to the Golkonda ruler. Thus arose a rift between the two and the Golkonda ruler stopped the annual payment to Shivaji. Shivaji's attempt to capture Bijapur fort through bribe also antagonised the Bijapur ruler.

Meanwhile, some rift developed over the question of succession issue in the Maratha court. Shivaji offered the Des and Konkan to his younger son Rajaram. While the newly annexed Karnataka was given to Sambhaji, the elder son. This was done by Shivaji keeping in view of the territory of Rajaram who was hardly in a position to administer the Karnataka-newly conquered territory. But Sambhaji was not ready to leave the more advantageous Des. Diler Khan (1678) tried to take advantage of the situation and offered Sambhaji his help in recovering Des and Konkan in return for his friendship. Sambhaji accepted the offer and a mansab of 7000 was awarded by the Mughals (December 1678).

At this time (1678) an idea of all out concerted effort of Golkonda, Bijapur and the Mughals against the Marathas was also floated but Siddi Masaud's (leader of the Deccani party in Bijapur court) alliance with Shivaji (1679) washed out that probability completely: Diler Khan now decided to go for an outright conquest of Bijapur but timely Maratha intervention averted that too (August 1679).

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Thus from the time of Jai Singh's withdrawal (1666) till 1680 when Aurangzeb finally embarked upon a forward policy of outright conquest this period i.e. the third phase seems to be a period of complete chaos and confusion. The Mughals could hardly plan to have a single track and instead they acted without direction and aim. They could neither succeed in befriending Marathas nor the Deccanis nor in toppling them altogether.

3.5.4 Fourth Phase : 1680-1707

The year 1680 is very important as far as Deccan history is concerned. Shivaji died in this very year (23 March), and Aurangzeb also decided to go in person to tackle the Deccan affairs. Now the Mughals embarked upon a policy of total conquest.

The period that followed immediately was not a smooth one for the Marathas. The issue of succession over the division of Shivaji's kingdom between his sons provided enough opportunity to the Maratha nobles to assert themselves. The mutual jealousies between Moro Trimbak, the Peshwa, and Annaji Datto, the sachiv and viceroy of the western provinces, worsened the situation. The Maratha nobles instead of confirming Sambhaji proclaimed Rajaram as the king. Sambhaji reacted fast and put Rajaram and Annaji Datto behind the bars (July, 1680). Annaji Datto attempted to reassert with the help of the rebel Mughal Prince Akbar. As soon as things came to be known to Sambhaji he stated a policy of suppression. All the loyalists of Shivaji's reign had to face his wrath. Such strong was the suppression that many of the Shirkey family took asylum under the Mughals. This put the Maratha territory " into complete chaos and lawlessness. Sambhaji, instead of setting the things right, indulged more and more in drunkenness and leisure. Soon the discipline of Shivaji's army was gone. Women frequented Maratha army camps while earlier they were strictly forbidden. All this had definite impact. It weakened the infant Maratha kingdom which could hardly sustain itself before the mighty Mughals.

On the other side, during his first four years of stay in the Deccan, Aurangzeb attempted to suppress the Maratha power with the help of the Deccani states who had given asylum to the rebel Prince Akbar. In spite of maintaining constant pressure (from 1680-1684), the Mughals could not achieve much. By 1684, Aurangzeb realized that he had to tackle Bijapur and Golkonda first. This resulted in the

occupation of Bijapur (1686) and Golkonda (1687). But the decision (a plan which Jai Singh laid out as early as 1665 in coordination with the Marathas) came perhaps too late., By this time the Marathas had not only become more powerful but also succeeded in establishing a second line of defence in Karnataka. They were no longer the segmentary chieftains, but a formidable power with a king who was equal in status with other Deccani rulers.

While Aurangzeb was busy in tackling Bijapur and Golkonda rulers (1686-87), the Marathas devastated Mughal territories from Aurangabad to Burhanpur. Meanwhile, Mughal successes in Bijapur and Golkonda greatly enhanced the prestige of the Mughal army as well as their resources. Prince Akbar fled to Iran (1688). Sambhaji's behaviour also caused large scale defections in the Maratha camp who rallied around the Mughals. Under these circumstances. Sambhaji was imprisoned (February 1689) by the Mughals which finally resulted in his execution (11 March 1689).

The execution of Sambhaji (1689) introduced new dimensions into the Maratha politics. The Mughals, after defeating Bijapur and Golkonda, had to face severe resistance from the local elements-the nayaks, valemans, deshrukhs etc. The imposition of Mughal administrative set up brought new agrarian tensions in the Deccan. The local landed aristocracy got almost displaced by the new one (the Mughal jagirdars and revenue farmers-the former failing to get the return preferred farming out against lump sum payment). Those who were deprived of their landed fiscal rights turned rebellious. The peasants had to face constant wrath from both the sides . Further, more and more mansabdars were drawn from the South; the number of the Marathas alone (mansab holders of above 1000 zat) increased from 13 (Shah Jahan) to 96 (Aurangzeb), while the number of Deccani .mansabdars reached 575 under Aurangzeb. This put pressure on jagirs as well ,and the crisis in the jagir system crept in. Factional fights started between the Deccani and the Khanazad nobles. Besides, constant warfare put a pressure on the Mughal treasury. Extended Mughal frontier also brought more problems as it became more vulnerable to ,the Maratha attacks. To add to this, the speedy recovery of the Marathas after Sambhaji's execution resulted in a series of Mughal reverses after 1693.

The Marathas rallied fast under Rajaram who fled to Pratapgarh (5 April 1689). But Mughal pressure forced him to withdraw to Panhala where the Marathas defended themselves against the Mughals. But the Mughals soon occupied Raigarh (November, 1689) and Panhala, too, became accessible to them (September, 1689). Rajaram had to withdraw to Jinji. Satara fell to the Mughals in 1708 followed by Sinhaged. But, in spite of these successes, the Mughals were not able to capture Rajaram nor could they crush Maratha power. The Marathas continued their struggle unabated. They quickly recovered the lost territories. Not only ail the gains were lost but also the hardships and miseries through which the Mughal forces had to pass were - tremendous. This completely broke the morale of the Mughal army which looked totally shattered and weary. Aurangzeb by now had realized the futility of

such a prolonged struggle and withdrew himself towards Ahmedabad. But, before he could adopt a conciliatory policy, he died in 1707.

To sum up, Satish Chandra has rightly pointed out that Aurangzeb's failure was his "inability to comprehend the nature of Maratha movement". To consider Shivaji a mere bhumiya was his mistake. The Marathas had a popular base and the support of the local landed elements (watandars). His attempt to impose Mughal administrative practices created chaos among the local elements and brought suppression of the peasantry. The Mughal mansabdar found it almost impossible to collect their due from their Deccani jagirs. Sambhaji's execution was even a greater folly. Aurangzeb's idea of creating terror among the Marathas proved futile. He could neither suppress Marathas nor could he dictate terms to Shahu in his confinement.

(We are confining our discussion on Marathas only upto 1707. Shahu and the process of the emergence of the Peshwas in the early 18th century would be dealt)

Check Your Progress 2

1) Write a short note on the rise of Maratha power under Bijapur rulers.

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2) Match the following :

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|------------------|----------|
| i) Shivaji | Sindkher |
| ii) Yashwant Rao | Moray |
| iii) Chunder Rao | Bhonsle |
| iv) Jadav Rao | Maval |
| v) Jedhe Nayak | Javli |

3) Critically examine Jai Singh's Deccan policy.

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3.6 THE MARATHAS, AND THE SIDDIS OF JANJJRA

Immediately after the conquest of Kalyan and Bhivandi (1658). Shivaji built up his naval bases there. His conquest of the south Konkan coast (1661) further expanded his naval might. This expansion brought the Marathas directly into contact with the naval power of the Siddis of Janjira, a rocky island 45 miles south of Bombay.

The Siddis were Abyssinians who had settled at Janjira in the 15th century. They got Danda-Rajpuri from Ahmednagar rulers. But the disruption of the Nizam Shahi state provided them the opportunity to act independently. When after the 1636 treaty the western coast fell under Bijapuri influence, there followed long-drawn clashes between the Siddis and the Bijapur rulers. Finally, they surrendered and accepted Bijapur's subjugation, and since then served as their 'wazir' with an added territory of Nagothna to Bankot. They promised the Bijapur rulers to protect the Mecca pilgrims at sea. The Siddis possessed an efficient naval fleet.

The Marathas came into direct contact with the Siddis during their operations in Konkan in pursuit of Afzal Khan (1659). The Siddis, as Bijapur vassals, supported Afzal Khan. Shivaji sent a strong force under Raghunath Ballal to suppress the Siddis. The Marathas wrested Tala, Ghonsala and the vast sea-coast up to Danda from the Siddis. But, the Siddis continued their struggle. By the treaty of Purandar (1665), the Mughals had agreed to leave Janjira to the Marathas, provided they conquer that. Marathas renewed their attacks in 1669-70 but failed in their designs in the wake of a combined attack of Bijapur-Mughal armies. Since then (1671) the entire naval force of the Siddis was transferred to the Mughals and the Siddi admirals (Siddi Qasim and Siddi Khairiyat) were enrolled as Mughal mansabdars and the Siddi fleet was taken over by the Mughals on the same terms as those of Bijapur. The title of Yaqut Khan was conferred on the Siddi generals by the Mughals. Soon the Siddis recovered Danda from the Marathas (1671). Shivaji tried to get English help but failed. This was followed by long struggle with fluctuating fortunes between the two (1672-80). These hostilities became more vigorous after Sambhaji. As early as 1681, the Siddis raid Maratha territory as far as Raigarh. However, Raghunath Prabhu was able to stall their conquests in 1682.

3.7 THE MARATHAS THE ENGLISH AND THE PORTUGUESE

The Marathas first came into contact with the English after the occupation of the port of Dabhol (January 1660). Their relations remained somewhat strained from the very beginning. In February 1660, the Marathas demanded that Afzal Khan's junks be handed over to them. In March 1661, the Marathas attacked English factory of Rajapur for supplying grenades to Bijapur rulers for use against the Panhala fort of the Marathas. In October 1670, Shivaji again harassed the English for not supplying arms to the Marathas. In May 1672, the English attempts at conciliation failed on account of the English failure to pay the required indemnity of 100,000 rupees. In 1673, the English sent another embassy led by Thomas Niccolls, but that too hardly bore fruits. However, in 1674 the embassy of Henry Oxinden was welcomed by Shivaji and he showed his willingness to buy 50 ordnances and guns. This was followed by the reopening of the English factory at Rajapur (1675). In 1675, the English asked Shivaji to pay for the damage done to the Company's factory at Dharangaon in Khandesh. In spite of long correspondences, Shivaji did not agree to it. Finally, the Rajapur factory was closed by Sambhaji in December 1682.

The Maratha-Portuguese relations were also far from cordial from the very beginning. The Portuguese supported the Siddis of Janjira against Shivaji. They gave refuge to the desals of south Ratnagiri who were dispossessed by Shivaji in Goa. Shivaji also claimed chauth from Daman. The presence of Shivaji's forces on the western coast also hindered Portuguese trade. But in spite of these differences, the Portuguese avoided a direct clash with the Marathas and treated them friendly. The Portuguese governor also avoided any open support to Shivaji's rivals. In June 1659 when Shivaji asked the Portuguese not to help the Abyssinians and Siddis of Danda, the Portuguese governor of Goa strictly warned his officers not to openly support the former. In December 1667, both entered into an alliance and Shivaji promised not to obstruct the Portuguese trade. The Portuguese also expelled the desals of south Ratnagiri. This treaty got renewed on 10 February 1670. Shivaji at that time also agreed not to build any fort in his dominion along the Portuguese frontier. But, during the closing years of Shivaji's reign (1676-77), relations between the two got strained over the payment of chauth to Shivaji. However, his untimely death averted any direct clash. In 1683; Shivaji's son Sambhaji personally attacked Chaul and Goa but he had to withdraw on account of the Mughal pressure.

Check Your Progress 3

1) Who were Siddis?

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2) Discuss Maratha-Portuguese relations.

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3.8 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MARATHAS

In the present section we are confining ourselves to central and provincial administrative set up and the military organisation of the Marathas.

The Maratha administration is essentially derived from the Deccani structure though some of its institutions are Mughal derivatives.

3.8.1 Central Administration

The Maratha polity was essentially a centralised autocratic monarchy but an enlightened one. The king was at the helm of affairs. The king's chief objective was the happiness and prosperity of his subjects (raja kalsya karmaam).

To assist the king, there was a council of state ministers known as ashtapradhan:

- i. Peshwa(Prime Minister) : He was the head of both civil and military affairs.
- ii. Mazumdar (auditor) : He looked into the income and expenditure of the state.
- iii. wakins : He was the incharge of king's private affairs.
- iv. Dabir : Foreign secretary
- v. Surnis (superintendent) : He used to take care of all the official correspondences.
- vi. Pandit Rao : Ecclesiastical head
- vii. Senapati : Commander in chief
- viii. Nyayadhish : Chief Justice

The ashtapradhan was neither the creation of Shivaji nor was at first organised at, the time of his coronation. The peshwa, mazumdar, wakins, dabir, surnis (and the sarnobat) existed under the Deccani rulers also.

All, except pandit rao and nyayadhish were asked to lead military campaigns. Under Shivaji these offices were neither hereditary nor permanent: they held office till the king's pleasure and they were frequently transferred. They were directly paid by the exchequer and no jagir was granted to any civil or military officer. Later, under the peshwas, they assumed hereditary and permanent character. The council could advise the king but it was not binding on him to accept its advice.

Each of the ashtapradhana 'was assisted by eight assistants: diwan, mazumdar, fadnis, sabnis, karkhanis, chitnis, jamadar and potnis.

Next to ashtapradhan was chitnis (secretary) who dealt with all diplomatic correspondences and wrote all royal letters. Letters to provincial and district officers were also written by him. But responding to the letters of commanders of forts was the job of fadnis. The latter was a subordinate secretariat officer under Shivaji. This office rose to prominence under the peshwas. The potnis looked after the income and expenditure of the royal treasury, while the potdar was an assay officer.

3.8.2 Provincial Administration

The country was divided into mauzas, tarfs and prants. All these units were already existing under the Deccani rulers and were not the innovation of Shivaji. But he: reorganised and renamed them.-Mauza was the lowest unit. Then were the tarfs headed by a havaldar, karkun or paripatyagar. The provinces were known as prants under subedar, karkun (or mukhya desbadhikari). Over a number of prants there was the sarsubedar to control and supervise the work of subedars. Each subedar had eight

subordinate officers: diwan, mazumdar, fadnis, sabnis, karkhanis, chitnis, jamadar and potnis. Later, under the peshwas tarf, pargana, sarkar and suba were indiscriminately used.

Under Shivaji none of the officers was permanent and hereditary. All officers were liable to frequent transfers. But under the peshwas, the office of kamavisdar and mamlatdars became permanent. To check the mamlatdars, there were darkhdars (feemen) who were hereditary provincial officers. They served as a check on mamlatdars and other naval and military officers. Neither the mamlatdars could dismiss them nor compel them to perform any particular job if not specified. None of the eight provincial level officers derived their power from mamlatdar. Instead, they served as a check on his power.

3.8.3 Military Organisation

Forts found the prime place in Shivaji's scheme of military organisation. Shivaji built such a long chain of forts that not a single taluka or pargana left without a fort. During his life, Shivaji constructed around 250 forts. No single officer was entrusted sole charge of a fort. Instead, in every fort there a havaldar, a sabnis and a sarnobat. Big forts had five to ten tat-sarnobats. All these officers were of equal status and rank and were frequently transferred. This system acted as check and balance on each others' authority. The havaldar was the incharge of the keys of the fort. The sabnis controlled the muster-roll and dealt with all government correspondences. He also looked after the revenue-estimates of the province (under the jurisdiction of the fort). The sarnobat was the incharge of the garrison. Besides, there was karkhanas who used to take care of grain stores and other material requirements. All daily accounts of income and expenditure were to be entered by the karkhanis. None held absolute power. Though the sabnis, was the incharge of accounts, all orders had to bear the seal of the havaldar and the karkhanis. Similar was the case with other offices. Besides, no single officer could surrender the fort to the enemy. Thus, a good system of checks and balances was applied by Shivaji to keep them under control.

None of the officers was allowed to form caste groups. It was clearly specified that the havaldar and sarnobat should be a Maratha, while the sabnis a brahman and the karkhanis a prabhu (kayastha).

The army organisation of Shivaji was not a royal experiment. Under Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur also we hear three officers as incharge of the fort. They were also frequently transferrable. The army organisation of Shivaji continued on the same lines under the peshwas as well.

Shivaji maintained light cavalry and light infantry trained in guerilla and hilly warfare. The Mevalis and the Hetkaris were his most excellent troopers.

The smallest unit in Shivaji's infantry consisted of 9 men headed by a naik. Five such units were under one havaldar. Over two or three havaldars was a jumledar. Ten jumledars were put under a bazari and seven such hazaris were under a sarnobat.

Shivaji's cavalry consisted of bargirs and the siledars. The bargir troopers were supplied horses and arms by the state while the siledars had to bring their own horses and arms. Over each group of 25 bargirs was a Maratha havaldar; five such havaldars formed a jumla and 10 jumlas a hazari and five such hazari were placed under panch hazari. They were, in turn, under the command of sarnobat. The siledars were also placed under sarnobat. For every group of 25 horses there was a water-carrier and a farrier. Later, under the peshwas, the pindhari who were robbers and plunderers were also allowed to accompany the army. In lieu of their services, they used to get the right to collect palpatti (which was 25 per cent of the war booty). They hardly spared any one-friend or foe; general public or temples (they plundered at will). Shivaji's army was well served by an efficient intelligence department whose chief was Bahirji Naik Jadav.

Shivaji also maintained body-guards, organised in regiments of 20,30,40,60 and 100. In time of need, the watandars were also asked to supply forces. But Shivaji hardly depended on such feudal levies of watandars or on siledars. Shivaji paid his soldiers in cash. Wounded soldiers used to get special allowance while the widows got state pensions. Under the peshwas, the entire country was divided into military tenures. They relied more on feudal levies. These feudal chieftains generally managed to make more than their legitimate share.

The peshwas established separate artillery department. Even they had their own factories for manufacturing cannon and cannon balls.

Later, under the peshwas, the strength of the cavalry increased. They maintained their own troops- khasgi paga. The peshwas tried to maintain disciplined battalions on European lines called kampus, but corruption crept among them also and they also did not lag behind in plundering the territories like their counterparts.

Shivaji's military strength lay in swift mobilisation, but peshwa's camps spread 'for miles in different direction'. Shivaji emphasized on strict discipline. Under the peshwas that discipline was gone. The Maratha armies were now full of luxuries and comforts. They possessed costly tents and splendid equipments. Wine and women became the very life of the contingent-a feature unthinkable in Shivaji's time. Shivaji never allowed any woman-female slaves or dancing girls-to accompany the army. Under the peshwas even ordinary horsemen were accompanied by their womenfolk, dancing girls, jugglers and fakirs. The peshwa's army was invariably paid in the form of jagirs (saranjams). All this shows distinct decline in the military strength of the Marathas under the peshwas.

Shivaji preferred to recruit men of his own race in the army but in the navy there were many Muslims. But the peshwas recruited men from all religions and ethnic group: Rajputs, Sikhs, Rohillas; Sindhis, Gosains, Karnatakis, Arabs, Telirgas, Bidars, and Christians (Europeans).

3.8.4 Navy

After the conquest of Konkan Shivaji built a strong navy as well. His fleet was equipped with ghurabs (gunboats) and gallivats (row boats with 2 masts and 40-50 oars). His fleet was mainly manned by the Koli sea-fearing tribe of Malabar coast. He established two squadrons of 200 vessels each. But in all probability the number of vessels stated is exaggerated. Robert Orme mentions just 57 fleets of Shivaji under the command of Admiral Dariya Sarang and Mai Naik Bhandari. Daulat Khan was another admiral of Shivaji's navy.

Shivaji used his naval power to harass both the indigenous and European Trade powers. But Shivaji could hardly succeed, in checking the Siddi menace. The peshwas also realized fully the importance of a strong navy: they maintained a strong fleet to defend the western coast. But the Maratha naval power reached distinction under the Angiras, practically independent from the peshwas.

3.8.5 Judiciary

The Marathas failed to develop any organised judicial department. At the village level, civil cases were heard by the village elders (panchayat) in patil's office or in the village temple. Criminal cases were decided by the patil. Hazi majalis was the highest court for civil and criminal cases. The sabbanaik (judge president) and mahprashnika (chief interrogator) gradually faded away under the peshwas whose duty was to examine and cross-examine the plaintiffs.

Check Your Progress 4

1) Who were ashtapradhans?

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2) Analyse the nature of Shivaji's administration.

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3) Discuss the changes brought about in the administrative structure under the peshwas.

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3.9 LET US SUM UP

The Maratha movement was neither a 'Hindu reaction' nor a national war of independence; its strength lay in the socio-economic formations of that period. Control of land, reaction against the exploitation of the superior landholders and the desire for upward social mobility—all these gave rise to the movement. An ideological background was provided by the bhakti saints. The Marathas, though 'served Ahmadnagar and Bijapur rulers as early as 17th century, the decline of Ahmednagar rulers as well as constant Mughal pressure provided opportunity to them to acquire power. The decline of the Deccani kingdoms also helped in destroying the territorial integrity. The Mughals hardly saw them more than 'bhumins'. It was perhaps this folly that made it difficult for the Mughals to understand the real nature of the Maratha movement. Their assessment of them as mere robbers was a blunder. They had definite popular base which the Mughals failed to grasp. This perception prevented Aurangzeb from not agreeing to Jai Singh's plan to align with the Marathas. The Mughal Emperor always looked at the Maratha and Deccan problem independently but both were very much interrelated. Aurangzeb's realisation of the situation came too late. Murder of Sambhaji forstriking terror was one more misjudgment of the situation. With the introduction of Mughal administration in the Deccan a new conflict started. The local landed elements were resentful since they were being deprived of their position; even the Mughal jagirdars found the situation too difficult to extract their due share. All this created such chaos and confusion that Aurangzeb found it almost impossible to handle. You would find that the Deccan problem played its own role in the downfall of the Mughals.

shivaji's administrative set up was not a new one, but he gave it a fresh colour by introducing more and more centralization.. He avoided every possible configuration of various groups to assume political power. But such a set up could work efficiently Only when an able person was there to administer. Soon, with the departure of Shivaji, a definite decline set in. Under the peshwas, corruption and slackness infected not only the central and provincial government but also the army. You will read in how under the peshwas, the king's power gradually diminished and it virtually passed into the peshwas' hands during the 18th century.

3.10 KEY WORDS

Bakhar	: a Marathi term for biographical accounts
Bhumia	: a land holding caste
Bargir	: troopers who were supplied horses and arms by the state
Chitnis	: correspondence clerk
Deshmukh	: they were equivalent to chaudhris (village headmen) of North India and desais of Gujarat
Des	: Deccan plateau stretching eastwards from the Western Ghats
Fadnis	: deputy auditor
Ghatmatha	: high level tract or the table land of the Western Ghats
Jamadar ,	: treasurer
Karkhanis	: commissary; incharge of Karkhans
Konkan	: western coast line; the low-land tract below the Western Ghats
Kamavisdar	: under the peshwas he was the subedar of small provinces
Khanazad	: sons of Khan
Mamlatdar:	under the peshwas he was the satedar (governor) of bigger provinces. They were directly under the central government with the exception of Khandesh. Gujarat and Karnatak where they were placed under sarsubedars.
Mazumdar	: auditor and accountant
Potnis	: cash keeper
Qiladar	: incharge of a fort
Sabnis	: daftadar
Sikhdar'	: hired troopers; they were to bring their own arms and horses
Watan	: hereditary land holdings

3.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) See Sec. 3.2

2) i) \times ii) \times iii) $\sqrt{\quad}$ iv) $\sqrt{\quad}$

3) Discuss how some historians believe that Maratha movement was a Hindu reaction. Then argue how we cannot call it 'Hindu' reaction rather other factors were instrumental in their rise. See Sec. 3.3

Check Your Progress 2

1) See Sec. 3.4

2) i) Bhonsle ii) Javli iii) Moray iv) Sindkher v) Maval

3) See Sub-sec. 3.5.2. Discuss how he proposed a master plan of Mughal-Maratha alliance against Bijapur and Golkonda. But it grossly failed on account of half-hearted cooperation of Aurangzeb.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) See Sec. 3.6
- 2) See Sec. 3.7

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Discuss their names and functions. See Sub-sec. 3.8.1
- 2) See Sec: 3.8 and its sub-secs Analyse whether Shivaji brought altogether new Features in his administrative set up or it was continuation of the old system with Certain modifications and better vigilance.
- 3) See Sec. 3.8 and its sub-secs. Discuss how under the Peshwas deterioration crept in every part of the administration that ultimately led to their decline.