

MARATHAS

Summary:

- **Marathas** were People who lived in Deccan in and around Maharashtra.
- **Marathas**, who knows "**Guerilla Warfare**".
- **Shivaji**, who wanted to establish an independent kingdom of his own.
- **Shivaji was a great Administrator.**
- **Shivaji** had a council of eight ministers called "**Ashtapradhan**".
- The Prime Minister of the Maratha Empire was called the "**Peshwas**".
- **Nadir Shah** was one of the greatest warriors of Persia.
- **Nadir Shah**, who borrowed **Peacock throne** and **Kohi-noor Diamond** from India.
- **Ahamad Shah Abdali** who wanted to plunder the abundant wealth of India like Nadir Shah.
- **Third Battle of Panipat** which battle decided the fate of **Marathas**.

The Marathas were people who lived in the hilly region of Deccan in and around Maharashtra. The hill forts and hillocks provided them excellent protection against their enemies. They developed a peculiar type of Warfare called "**Guerilla Warfare**".

Shivaji:

- Shivaji was born in A.D.1627 at Shivner hill fort near Poona. His father was Shaji Bhonsle who worked under the Sultan of Bijapur. His mother was Jila Bai.
- In A.D.1674, due to the financial crisis, he was compelled to invade the Carnatic region.

Shivaji's Conquests:

Shivaji wanted to establish an independent kingdom of his own. He conquered the forts of **Purandhar, Raigarh, Toma and Kalyan** from the Sultan of Bijapur in A.D.1646.

Shivaji's Administration:

Shivaji was a great administrator. He always had the welfare of his people in his mind. He had a council of eight ministers called "**Ashtapradhan**" to assist him in administration.

- **Peshwa(Prime Minister)**
- **Mantri(Chronicler)**
- **Sachiv(Home Secretary)**
- **Sumant(Foreign Secretary)**
- **Senapathi(Commander-in-chief)**
- **Amatya(Finance Minister)**

- Pandit Rao(Ecclesiastica Head)
- Nyayadhish(Chief Justice)

Taxes:

Shivaji collected custom duties and professional taxes. The two other important taxes collected during his time were **Chauth and Sardeshmuki**.

Military Administration:

Shivaji was a great warrior and a military genius. He maintained a standing army with great discipline. His army consisted **infantry, cavalry, artillery, elephantry, camel corps** and even **a navy**.

Shivaji's Successors:

After the death of Shivaji, his eldest son Sambhaji ascended the throne and he was not efficient as his father. Aurangzeb arrested Sambhaji and his son Sahu after capturing Bijapur and Golconda. Sambhaji was put to death. Rajaram, another son of Shivaji became the Chatrapathi. After Aurangzeb's death, Bahadur Shah I became the emperor. He released Sahu. A civil war broke out between Sahu and Tara Bai. Tara Bai was defeated and Sahu became the Maratha king in A.D.1708. His Success was mainly due to Balaji Viswanath, whom he appointed as **Peshwa (Prime Minister)**.

Peshwas:

Then Peshwas's Rule Started from A.D.1713.

Peshwa Balaji Viswanath:

He was called as the founder of the Peshwa Rule. He appointed the feudal chiefs to collect the taxes like Chauth and Sardeshmuki. He revived the greatness of the Marathas. He died in 1720A.D.

Peshwa Baji Rao:

After the death of Balaji Viswanath, his son Baji Rao became the Peshwa. He wanted to expand the Maratha power in the north and followed a "Forward Policy". He compelled the Nizam of Hyderabad to sign a peace treaty. He captured Bassin in from the Portuguese and captured Thana and Salsette. He died in 1740 A.D.

Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao:

He was the third Peshwa. The Maratha occupied Punjab and over the fort of **Attok**. In 1761 A.D. the Maratha power reached its climax but they received severe blow at the hands of Ahmad Shah Abdali.

Nadir Shah (A.D.1739):

Nadir Shah was one of the greatest warriors of Persia. He was a mere shepherd who rose into prominence because of his abilities. In A.D.1739, he invaded India for many reasons.

War Events:

Nadir Shah had sent an envoy to Muhammad Shah requesting him not to provide shelter to the Afghans fleeing from Khanadhar and Ghazni. As Muhammad Shah did not reply, Nadir Shah invaded India in A.D.1739. He faced the Mughal army **at Karnal**, After Capturing Peshwa. He stayed there 15 days at Delhi and plundered it. Thousands of residents of Delhi were killed. He did not spare the Mughal emperor and deprived him of the famous Kohi-noor Dimond and Peacock Throne. After two months, Nadir Shah returned to his country with huge booty. However he was killed by his own soldiers in A.D.1747.

Ahamad Shah Abdali (A.D.1761):

Like Nadirshah, Abdali too wanted to plunder the abundant wealth of India. He also wanted to earn a name and fame for himself through his invasions.

The Third Battle of Panipat :

The conquest and occupation of Punjab by the Marathas had brought them into conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdaki, the king of Afghanistan. He made huge preparations to invade India with the help of **Nazib-ud-daulah** of Oudh. He met the Maratha forces led by **Sadasiva Rao** at the historic plains of **Panipat** in 1761 A.D. It was called **Third Battle of Panipat**. Marathas, initially, the Marathas had an upper hand but ultimately they were for the rise of the British.

Result:

The invasion of **Ahamad Shah Abdali** gave a severe death blow to the Maratha Empire. The wealth of India was plundered and thousands of people were killed. Due to Abdali's invasion, confusion prevailed in Punjab, which provided a golden opportunity to the Sikhs to establish their power. Ahmad Shah Abdali gave a crushing blow both to the Maratha and the Mughal emperors. It cleared the way for the British to establish their sovereignty in India.