



5. The Foundation of the *Swaraj*

In the first half of the seventeenth century, an epoch making personality emerged in Maharashtra – Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. He established *Swaraj* by challenging the unjust ruling powers here. Shivaji Maharaj was born at the Shivneri fort near Junnar in Pune district on the day of Phalgun Vadya Tritiya in the Shaka year 1551, that is on 19 February 1630. In this chapter, we will study how he founded *Swaraj*.

Shahajiraje : Shahajiraje, the father of Shivaji Maharaj was a pre-eminent *Sardar* in the Deccan. The Mughals had launched a campaign to conquer the Nizamshahi Kingdom. The Adilshah of Bijapur allied with the Mughals in this campaign. Shahaji Maharaj did not wish



Shahajiraje

the Mughals to get an entry into the South. So he tried to save Nizamshahi by offering stiff resistance to the Mughals. But he could not withstand the combined might of the Mughals and the Adilshah. The Nizamshahi was defeated and came to an end in 1636 CE.

After the Nizamshahi was wiped out, Shahajiraje became a *Sardar* of the Adilshah of Bijapur. The region comprising Pune, Supe, Indapur and Chakan *parganas* located between the Bheema and Neera rivers was vested in Shahajiraje as a *jagir*. This was continued by the Adilshah, and he also granted the *jagir* of Bengaluru

and the neighbouring areas in Karnataka to Shahajiraje.



Do you know?

Jahagir or *jagir* means the right to enjoy the revenue of a region. The *Sardars* in the service of rulers used to get the revenue of the region as income instead of getting salaries directly. The region was chosen in such a way that the revenue would be equal to the salary.

Shahajiraje was valiant, courageous, intelligent and a great political expert. He was an excellent archer. He was also an expert in using the sword, *patta* and spear. He loved his subjects. He had won many regions in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. South India was in awe of him. While Shivaji and Jijabai were at Bengaluru, he had arranged for providing excellent education to Shivaji so as to enable him to become a king. He himself aspired to establish *Swaraj* by ousting the powers of foreign people. That is why, he is known as *Swaraj* visionary. He sent Shivaji and Jijabai from Bengaluru to Pune with loyal and competent associates.

Veermata Jijabai : Jijabai was the daughter of the great *Sardar* Lakhujiraje Jadhav of Sindkhedraja in Buldhana district. At a young age, she had received military training as well as education in various subjects. She helped and encouraged Shahaji Maharaj to realise his dream of establishing *Swaraj*. She was a competent and visionary political expert. She constantly guided Shivaji in the mission of establishing *Swaraj*. At times,



Veermata Jijabai

she undertook the task of giving verdicts for resolving the problems of people. She was very particular about giving excellent education to Shivaji. She instilled in him values like modesty, truthfulness, oratory, vigilance, courage and fearlessness. She saw that he was trained in the usage of weapons and inspired in him, the will to win and the dream of *Swaraj*.

Shivaji's Companions and Associates: Shivaji Maharaj started the work of founding the *Swaraj* in the Maval region. The Maval terrain is full of hills and valleys and is not easily accessible. Shivajiraje made use of these geographical features of Maval very skilfully for the purpose of the foundation of the *Swaraj*. He created a feeling of trust and affection in the minds of the people. Many companions and associates joined him in his work of founding the *Swaraj*. Among them were Yesaji Kank, Baji Pasalkar,

Bapuji Mudgal, Narhekar Deshpande brothers, Kavji Kondhalkar, Jiva Mahala, Tanaji Malusare, Kanhoji Jedhe, Bajiprabhu Deshpande and Dadaji Narasprabhu Deshpande. On the strength of these associates, Shivaji Maharaj undertook the cause of the *Swaraj*.



Do this.

Find more information about these associates of Shivaji Maharaj : Jiva Mahala, Tanaji Malusare and Bajiprabhu Deshpande.



Royal seal (Rajmudra)

Royal seal (Rajmudra) : The objective of Shivaji Maharaj of establishing *Swaraj* is clearly expressed in his royal seal. The following Sanskrit lines are inscribed on this royal seal (Rajmudra).

प्रतिपच्चंद्रलेखेव वर्धिष्णुर्विश्ववंदिता ॥

शाहसूनोः शिवस्यैषा मुद्रा भद्राय राजते ॥

Meaning : 'This seal will grow in splendour like the new moon. This seal of Shivaji, the son of Shahaji, receiving homage from the whole world denotes the welfare of the people.'

The meaning of this inscription on the seal is important from many angles. Through this inscription, Maharaj has expressed his gratitude towards his father,



Always remember –

Bara Maval : (1) Pavan Maval (2) Hirdas Maval (3) Gunjan Maval (4) Paud Valley (5) Muthe Valley (6) Mose Valley (7) Kanand Valley (8) Welwand Valley (9) Rohid Valley (10) Andar Maval (11) Nane Maval (12) Korbarse Maval

Maval valley in the Sahyadris was a region in the Pune *jagir* of Shivaji Maharaj. It is also known as 'Bara Maval'.

his confidence that *Swaraj* would expand continuously, his own experience of the respect that the Seal, that is, *Swaraj* commanded from all, his commitment to the welfare of his subjects, and the certainty of ruling over his land independently. This short inscription covers the entire concept of *Swaraj*.



Let's learn.

- Observe the official seal of our country.
- What features do you observe?
- In which places is the official seal used?

Towards the establishment of *Swaraj* : The forts situated within the *jagir* of Shivaji Maharaj were not under his control, but were under the control of Adilshahi. In those days, forts were of special significance. With a firm hold over a fort, it was possible to control the surrounding area. If one had forts, one ruled the land. Therefore, Shivaji Maharaj decided to acquire the forts that were within his own *jagir*. Such an attempt to capture the forts amounted to challenging the Adilshahi power. He captured the forts of Torana, Murumbdev, Kondhana and Purandar, and laid the foundation of *Swaraj*. He repaired the fort Murumbdev and renamed it Rajgad. Rajgad was the first capital of the *Swaraj*.



Fort Rajgad – Pali Gate

There were the Mores of Javali, the Ghorpades of Mudhol, the Sawants of Sawantwadi, and other *Sardars* in the Adilshahi. They were opposed to the cause of the founding of *Swaraj*. It was necessary to bring them and other likeminded *Sardars* under control for the purpose of founding the *Swaraj*.

The capture of Javali : Chandrarao More of Javali in Satara district was a powerful *Sardar* in the Adilshahi. He opposed the founding of the *Swaraj*. Shivaji Maharaj attacked Javali and captured that region in 1656 CE. He established his post there. Then he also captured Raigad. He attained a huge amount of wealth from Javali. After this victory, his activities in Konkan increased. He built the Pratapgad fort in the Javali valley. In this way, the conquest of Javali increased his strength in all respects. After this, Shivaji Maharaj captured Kalyan and Bhiwandi on the Konkan Coast. There he came into contact with the Siddi, Portuguese and British powers on the Western Coast. Shivaji Maharaj realised that in order to fight these powers, it was necessary to have a strong naval force. Therefore, he concentrated on building a navy.

Defeat of Afzalkhan : Shivaji Maharaj had started capturing the forts in his *jagir* and the surrounding area in the Adilshahi territory. He had crushed the opposition of the Mores of Javali. The work of founding the *Swaraj* had gathered momentum on the Konkan coast. All these matters were a challenge to the Adilshahi. At that time, the Badi Sahiba was looking after the administration of the Adilshahi. She sent Afzalkhan, a powerful and experienced Adilshahi General, to curb Shivaji Maharaj.

Afzalkhan came from Bijapur to Wai. He knew the Wai region well. A meeting of Shivaji Maharaj and Afzalkhan took place on 10 November 1659 at the foot of Pratapgad near Wai. At the meeting, Afzalkhan attempted treachery. In retaliation, Shivaji Maharaj killed Afzalkhan. He routed the Adilshahi army.

Shivaji Maharaj paid compensation to the soldiers who were wounded in the battle. He rewarded those who had fought well. Those soldiers and officers of Afzalkhan's army who fell into the hands of Shivaji Maharaj's army were given a good treatment.

The expedition of Siddi Jauhar :

After the annihilation of Afzalkhan, Shivaji Maharaj captured the Adilshahi forts of Panhala, Vasantgad and Khelna. He renamed Khelna as 'Vishalgad'.

Shivaji Maharaj had posed a big challenge before the Adilshahi. Therefore, the Adilshah sent Siddi Jauhar, the *Sardar* of the Karnul region, against Shivaji Maharaj in 1660 CE. The Adilshah gave Siddi the title 'Salabatkhani'. Rustum-e-Jaman, Baji Ghorpade and Afzalkhan's son Fazalkhan were also there to help Siddi Jauhar. In these circumstances, Shivaji Maharaj took shelter in the Panhala fort. Siddi's soldiers laid siege to the fort for about five months. Shivaji Maharaj found himself trapped inside the fort. Netaji Palkar tried to raise the siege by attacking Siddi's army from outside, but he couldn't succeed in it as his forces were meagre. Siddi showed no signs of relenting. So, Shivaji Maharaj opened talks with him. This led to slackness in the siege round Panhalgad.

Shivaji Maharaj took advantage of this situation.

On this occasion Shiva Kashid, a brave youth came forward. He resembled Shivaji Maharaj in looks. He dressed up like Shivaji Maharaj and sat in a palanquin. The palanquin left by the 'Rajdindi' gate. It was captured by the Siddi's army. It was a difficult situation. Shiva Kashid sacrificed himself on this occasion for *Swaraj*. In the meanwhile, Shivaji Maharaj left the fort using another difficult route. He was accompanied by Baji Prabhu Deshpande, Bandal Deshmukh and some chosen soldiers. The Siddi came to know that Shivaji Maharaj has escaped the siege round Panhalgad and proceeded to Vishalgad. His army pursued Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj entrusted the responsibility of stopping Siddi's army at the foot of Vishalgad to Bajiprabhu Deshpande. Bajiprabhu Deshpande checked Siddi's army at the Ghod pass near Gajapur. He fought with the greatest valour. Bajiprabhu died a hero's death in this battle. Because Bajiprabhu's army held Siddi's army at bay, Shivaji Maharaj could proceed to Vishalgad. While going to Vishalgad, Maharaj also crushed the opposition of the Adilshahi *Sardars* Dalvi of Palwan and Surve of Shringarpur. Maharaj reached Vishalgad safely.

While Shivaji Maharaj was trapped at Panhala, Aurangzeb, who had ascended the throne of Delhi, had sent Shaistakhan, a Mughal *Sardar* to the Deccan. He had invaded the Pune province. The conflict with Adilshahi continued even as the Mughal army invaded the *Swaraj*. Maharaj realised that it would not be prudent to fight two enemies at one and the same time. Therefore, after reaching Vishalgad safely, he entered into a treaty with the Adilshah. As per the treaty, he returned the fort of Panhala to the Adilshah.



Exercise

1. Find the odd man out.

- (1) Pune, Supe, Chakan, Bengaluru
- (2) Jadhavs of Phaltan, Mores of Javali, Ghorpades of Mudhol, Sawants of Sawantwadi
- (3) Torana, Murumbdev, Sinhgad, Sindhudurg

2. Write about in your words:

- (1) The efforts Veermata Jijabai took for Shivaji Maharaj's education.
- (2) Shivaji Maharaj started his work of founding *Swaraj* in the Maval region.

3. List the companions and associates of Shivaji Maharaj.

4. Find out and write.

- (1) Why Shahaji Maharaj is termed a *Swaraj* visionary.
- (2) Shivaji Maharaj paid attention to building a Navy.
- (3) Shivaji Maharaj entered into a treaty with the Adilshah.
- (4) How Shivaji Maharaj escaped from Panhalgad.

Activities

- (1) Describe a fort you have seen. Suggest measures for conserving a historical site.
- (2) Find out what a 7/12 extract means and relate it to the words in the chapter.



Fort Panhala – Teen Darwaja

