

.Study Of Maratha Incursion In Rajasthan From 1761 To 1794 Ad

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ABSTRACT :

The defeat of the Marathas in the third battle of Panipat came as a severe setback to the Maratha power in north India and swept away the possibilities of Maratha predominance at least for the time being. The myth about their invisibility was broken. However, the Marathas under the leadership of Malharrao Holkar and Mahadji Shinde were able to restore their lost prestige within a decade. Holkar emerged as the most powerful Maratha sardar in central and north India. He led the process of the recovery of lost glory of the Marathas in the area beyond central India. This paper reflects Study of Maratha Incursion in Rajasthan from 1761 to 1794 AD.

Keywords : Marathas , Jaipur, Rajasthan , Deccan , Army

I INTRODUCTION

The defeat of the Marathas in the third battle of Panipat came as a severe setback to the Maratha power in north India and swept away the possibilities of Maratha predominance at least for the time being. The myth about their invisibility was broken. However, the Marathas under the leadership of Malharrao Holkar and Mahadji Shinde were able to restore their lost prestige within a decade. Holkar emerged as the most powerful Maratha sardar in central and north India. He led the process of the recovery of lost glory of the Marathas in the area beyond central India. By April 1761, 40,000 soldiers had assembled under the Marathas banner in and around Gwalier region. Holkar on his return from Panipat halted briefly at Gwalier to rally the surviving Maratha forces and then left for Indore. The return of Abdali opened the way for the Marathas to reassert their power in Rajasthan.

Seeing Marathas in weakened position Madho Singh not only stopped the payment of tribute to the Marathas but also made a serious attempt to dislodge the Marathas from Rajasthan. He began to make attempt to seek help from the Afghan chief Najib Khan and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam. He sent Barhat Karidan to Jodhpur to negotiate with Bijay Singh for the formation of anti-Maratha coalition. The rulers of Mewar, Kota, Bundi and Karauli were also approached to join the coalition¹. However, Madho Singh did not receive any positive response either from the Rahilla chief Najib Khan or the emperor. Madho Singh's attempt to rope in the other Rajput rulers also met with partial success. Mewar, by now had become a weak state and had a weak ruler. The ruler of Jodhpur was hostile to Marathas as they had supported the cause of Ram Singh in the succession dispute. However, the Jodhpur ruler Bijay Singh was not in favour of antagonizing Shinde with whom he had concluded a treaty in 1760 against Ram Singh. Bijay Singh was also unhappy with Madho Singh for the support that he had given to Ram Singh. The Hadas of Kota did not show any inclination to join the alliance against the Marathas as they were apprehensive about Madho Singh's intentions. They suspected that Madho Singh wants to establish his supremacy over Kota and Bundi. Madho Singh's activities in Kota territory also alarmed the Hadas. He besieged Newai held by

¹ Selection from the Peshwa Daftar. Vol. 29, L.19. 27.10.1761; Sarkar, JN, Fall of the Maghal Empire. Vol 2, P 362.

the Marathas and challenged the Maratha officer Keshav Pandit in Keshorai Patan near Kota city in 1761².

Encroachment upon the Kota territory by Madho Singh turned the Hadas against Jaipur. Moreover Kota could not afford to antagonize the Marathas because of its geographical proximity to Malwa that was under the Maratha control. Bundi and Karauli were not powerful states and any help from their side was not much in substance. Hence Madho Singh could not succeed in forming a united front against the Marathas.

Malharrao Holkar was aware of the moves initiated by Madho Singh to dislodge the Marathas from Rajasthan. The attack on his territory in Kota-Bundi region was provocative enough to invade Jaipur for which he sought the permission of the Peshwa. Holkar reached Madhukargarh from Indore via Mukundra pass along with the contingent of Shinde led by Khanji Jadav and Chinto Krishna. Nearly 15,000 Kota soldiers led by the Kota Diwan Akhay Ram and Zalim Singh Jhala joined Holkar. The Jaipur forces initially made the Marathas vacate some of their posts in Kota territory³. Both the forces met at a place between Mangrol and Bhatwara. The Jaipur forces were convincingly beaten by the combined forces of Holkar and Kota. The camp and property of Madho Singh were plundered by Holkar and Hadas.

The defeat of the Kachhawa forces created panic throughout Jaipur. Madho Singh, who had been watching the battle from Ranthambore, now quickly left for his capital. He sent his family to Amber as safety measure. Holkar chased Jaipur army upto Khapra. The Maratha army had begun plundering the Jaipur territory to enforce the demand of tribute.

Realizing that the Marathas were in total command of the situation, the Jaipur Diwan Kanhi Ram immediately opened negotiations with the Marathas to settle the dispute about the outstanding tribute. The Marathas were thus back in Rajasthan soon after their debacle in the battle of Panipat.

However, diplomatic ties between the two sides were resumed in 1764 when Madho Singh sent his representatives Diwan Guru Sahay and Raj Singh Hamirdeka to Holkar's court at Indore⁴.

The exchange of messages between the two rulers also took place through their trusted and loyal officers. Diplomatic ties went beyond political concerns to cover certain areas of mutual interest. This is evident from Holkar's request to Madho Singh to give protection to banker Kewal ram whose father was persuaded by Sawai Jai Singh to shift his trade from Ujjain to Jaipur. Malharrao Holkar also enquired about the business of another trader cum hanker Murar Seth Krishnaji who was running his business in Jaipur. It may be pointed out here that Sawai Jai Singh was keen to develop Jaipur city as a leading commercial centre.

The issue of pending tribute was raised by Holkar in his lengthy letter to Madho Singh in October 1764. This letter contains details of Holkar's demand for outstanding dues since 1761 which also included expenditure incurred on the upkeep of Ranthambhor fort⁵.

Failing to get any response from Madho Singh he proceeded to Jobner and begun to plunder. Madho Singh was advised by his nobles to save the state from devastation by agreeing to pay. Madho Singh deputed his representatives to settle the issue of dues. Holkar demanded Rs 35 lakhs, the demand also included expenditure incurred on the upkeep of Ranthambhar Fort. Out of this, Rs 10 lakhs were to be paid within the year in four installments. First installment of Rs 4 lakhs was to be paid in cash immediately and the rest of the amount was to be paid within six months. Rs 25 lakhs was to be paid between 1765 and 1771 in annual

² *ibid.*

³ Sarkar, JN, *Fall of the Maqhal Empire*. Vol 2, P 363.

⁴ *Indore Kharita* No.83, *Jeth Sudi* 10, VJL 1821/1764.

⁵ *Indore Kharita* No.87, *Posh Vadi* 10, *V.S.* 1821/1764.

installments of Rs 4.25 lakhs in the first 4 years and 4 lakhs each in 1770 and 1771. Madho Singh also agreed to surrender parganas Tonk and Rampura to Holkar. A iaqir worth of Rs 1 lakh was bestowed upon Mala Rao, son of Malhar Rao Holkar by Madho Singh. After concluding this agreement Holkar left Jaipur⁶.

The persistent clan rivalries among the Rajput rulers were fully exploited by the Marathas to their advantage. The battle of Bhatwara led to increasing tension between the rulers of Kota and Bundi. Rao Chhatrasal of Kota was much annoyed with Rao Raja Umed Singh of Bundi for having sided with Madho Singh. The defeat of Madho Singh gave him the opportunity to settle score with his rival Umed Singh with the help of the Marathas. He solicited Mahadji Shinde's help and prompted him to take action against Bundi to put pressure for the payment of outstanding tribute. By now the Marathas had become too familiar with the game to play off one Rajput ruler against the other. Shinde promptly accepted the offer and combined forces of Kota and Shinde started ravaging the territory of Bundi. Attempts of Bundi ruler to conclude peace proved futile as the Marathas demanded a compensation of Rs 7 lakhs as military expenses and payment of tribute for the last three years. Limed Singh with the help of Jaipur prepared himself for the battle. However, he realized his weakness to face the strong Maratha army and sued for peace. He agreed to pay outstanding amount of tribute to Shinde who withdrew from the Bundi territory. The Kota- Bundi rivalry gave Mahadji Shinde a foothold in the Harauti region of Rajasthan⁷.

In the meantime the Jat ruler of Bhartpur, Jawahar Singh, took advantage of the Maratha involvement in the affairs of Jaipur, Kota and Bundi and prepared himself to settle score with Madho Singh of Jaipur who had espoused the cause of Najib-ud- dollah, the strong rival of Jawahar Singh. Keeping in mind the Maratha interest in North India both the Maratha leaders favorably responded to Madho Singh's appeal and sent their forces to Jaipur. The Maratha intervention in favour of Jaipur spoiled Jawahar Singh's plan as he could not afford to take on the Marathas.

The Maratha-Jat rivalry led to the emergence of a new anti-Maratha front in Rajasthan.

He marched to Pushkar where he met Bijay Singh of Jodhpur. They vowed to end the Maratha domination in Rajasthan by waging a war jointly against them and push them across the river Nabada. Bijay Singh also requested Madho Singh to join the front but he declined. Madho Singh made a plan to attack the Jat territory with the help of Bikaner and the Marathas in the absent of Jawahar Singh. Madho Singh's forces attacked the Jat territory⁸. Bijay Singh who came to know of these developments persuaded Madho Singh not to disturb the Jat Raja on his return journey.

Love and hate attitude of the Rajputs towards Marathas not only reveal the ambiguity of the Rajputs as to how to deal with the Marathas but also their inherent weakness to unite for a common cause. The conflicting interests of the Rajputs and their own internal problems prevented them to pursue a uniform policy towards the Marathas.

The rise of the Jat state Bharatpur also complicated the situation and forced both the Rajputs of Jaipur and Marathas to seek mutual help against the common foe. The Marathas were already facing difficulty in subduing the Jats of Gohod. The Bhartpur Jat too captured territory in northern Malwa where Marathas had their outposts. The Gohad Jats were in close proximity of the Bharatpur state and also enjoyed brotherly relations with the Bhartpur Jats.

⁶ Indore Kharita No.87, Magh Sudi 10, V.S. 1821/1764.

⁷ Saxena, R.K. Maratha Relations with Major States of Rajputana, PP 45-47

⁸ Indore Kharita, Magh Sudi 1, V.S. 1824/ January 1768, Arzdaah from Santaji Bhosle to Madh Singh, Magh Sudi 1, V.S 1824/January 1768; Kharita from Madho Singh to Tukoji Holkar, Magh Vadi 12, V.S 1824/Januarv 1768 (Draft Kharita Section)

The Gohad Jats were being supported by Bhartpur. The Marathas found it difficult to dislodge Gohad Jats so long as Bhartpur Jats were so powerful. Holkar and Jaipur rulers came closer on account of the growing power of Bhartpur under Jawahar Singh, their common enemy. Malharrao Holkar kept Jaipur ruler updated about his military campaigns in the Jat territory in the year 1765⁹.

After the death of Malharrao Holkar in May 1766, his grandson Mai Rao Holkar too sought Madho Singh's help against the Jats.

Malrao Holkar passed away only nine months after the death of Malharrao Holkar (1766). Madho Singh also died in 1768.

Tukoji Holkar's involvement in the external affairs of the house of Holkar continued till 1770. In his letter of 1769 to Prithvi Singh Tukoji wrote that since long time Najib, Jaipur state and the House of Holkar were united. In this letter he endorsed the solidarity shown by Jaipur state with Najib.

The Holkars support to Jaipur in its ongoing fight against the Jats continued which quite is evident from Tukoji Holkar's correspondence with Madho Singh. He wrote to the latter about the ongoing Maratha campaigns against the Jats in Malwa and Bundel Khand and asked for Jaipur's support too. In the past few days fight between the Jat and your forces have been reported so quickly get ready with a big contingent and field guns to counter the same, this also is the wish of Peshwa.

Expressions of solidarity came again from Tukoji Holkar when he heard the news of the defeat of the Jat forces at the hands of Madho Singh's army. He wrote, "Jats had misbehaved with Malharrao Holkar too and so now they are suffering". The Peshwa also wrote to the Jaipur ruler that "we have dispatched our forces towards your territory and our forces along with those of Mahadji Shinde's are marching quickly and on an auspicious day we are going to reach near Narmada"¹⁰. From one of the Kharitas issued from Indore in January 1768, it is evident that the Peshwa also ordered many other Maratha Commanders to march to the north to fight the Jats¹¹. This fact is corroborated by Dastur Komvar which contained the names of Maratha commanders who fought with the Jats

The Maratha advancement in Rajasthan in 1770s entered a new phase. The 1770s witnessed the revival of Maratha power in Rajasthan and north India under the leadership of Tukoji Holkar and Mahadji Shinde. Around this time the Peshwa had subdued his opponents in the south and considered himself strong enough to revive his northward ventures.

The objective was to re-establish the hold of the Marathas in north India.

Kota situated on the Malwa- Rajasthan border was being used by the Marathas as a strategic base for overseeing the Maratha affairs in Rajasthan and north India. Very often the Marathas used Kota as a halting point on the way to their destination from Malwa to north and way back. Kota regularly figured in the letters exchanged between the Marathas and Jaipur Raja. Ramchandra Ganesh and Visaji Krishna wrote to Prithvi Singh from their camp in Delhi in 1770 to escort Vaid Rajshri Ganga Bishanji from Jaipur to Kota, by providing troops as escorts.

Tukoji Holkar entered the Kota territory and his army started plundering villages. He was also joined by another Maratha commander Ramachandra Ganesh. They continue to raid Kota territory.

⁹ Indore Kharita No.89, Chaitra Vadi 10. V.S. 1821/1765; Indore Kharita No.93, Maahishri Vadi 12, V.S. 1822/1765.

¹⁰ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar (New Series), ed P.M. Joshi, Vol.3, L.145.

¹¹ Indore Kharita No. 106 B, Maqishri Sudi 1, V.S. 1824/1767.

It was through the diplomacy of Zalim Singh that Kota enjoyed respite from Maratha attacks with the sole exception of the raid of Ambaji, Mahadji Shinde's camander in 1776. Zalim Singh was thoroughly prepared to face the Marathas and Shinde realizing that Zalim Singh was determined to face the Marathas decided to withdraw from Kota territory¹².

Zalim Singh had earlier protested against Holkar's attack on Kota on the ground that Kota had been a tributary state.

The Marathas also found Rajasthan to be a major source of the supply of camels and horses from local markets and cattle fairs organized at various places such as Pushkar, Rajgarh and Patan. Holkars were acquiring horses and camel for the army from Rajasthan even before the battle of Panipat¹³.

II OPERATIONS OF SHINDE IN RAJASTHAN

The other Marathas chiefs who demonstrated the strength of his army in Rajasthan and vied for domination and control over the strategically important and revenue yielding areas in Rajasthan were the Shindes. They also made entry into Rajasthan by participating in the succession disputes between the contenders for the qaddi. Bundi and Kota chiefs were brought under the Maratha control much before. Peshwa Bajirao visited Kota in 1738. The Kota chief agreed to pay Rs 10 lakhs as tribute to the Peshwa⁵. The Hada states of Kota and Bundi were falling between Jaipur border and borders of Malwa which had come under the Maratha control. The Maratha interests in this part of Rajasthan were being looked after jointly by Ranoji Shinde and Malharao Holkar. After the death of Bajirao Peshwa in 1740, the Maratha incursions into Rajasthan became a routine affair. Initially the Marathas were more pre-occupied with strengthening their hold over the Kota-Bundi territory. Shinde appointed his revenue collectors at various places in Kota and Bundi as he was keen to manage areas near Kota which he received from the Peshwa as his iaqir.

His agent Gulgule's records contain instructions of Shinde to Balaji Yashwant Gulgule, his revenue collector in Kota. Gulgule records hardly contain any information regarding the settlement of revenue of the area assigned to him in iaqir and Ranoji Shinde's dealings with the other Rajput rulers as he departed quite early in 1745.

It was during the time of Jayappa Shinde, the eldest son of Ranoji that the Marathas made their formal entry into Rajasthan beyond Kota-Bundi region as they were invited to participate in the succession dispute between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh for the qaddi of Jaipur. Jayappa Shinde's relations with the Jaipur state can best be studied through the collection of Shinde's numerous dispatches to the Jaipur court.

The formal communication between Jaipur and Shinde opened up in 1751 after the massacre of the Maratha soldiers in Jaipur city in which Shinde's forces suffered maximum loss. Jayappa took up the issue of tribute payment with Jaipur regularly.

In order to receive payment at the earliest Shinde in his letter to Madho Singh instructed him to pay the amount of tribute to Naroshanker, the yakil of Shinde who was present in Jaipur darbar. The yakil in turn was directed to hand over the money to a sahukar who would arrange to remit this money by way of preparing hundis which were to be delivered at the Shinde's court. Similar instructions were given to Sada Shiv Bhatt in 1759 who was to arrange hundis as Shinde was in dire need of money to maintain his troops.

The Maratha debacle in the battle of Panipat put Mahadji Shinde in urgent need of money and he was compelled to turn to Jaipur ruler, demanding tribute which Madho Singh had

¹² Saxena, R.K, Maratha Relations with Major States of Rajasthan, P 55-56.

¹³ Indore Kharita No.80, Posh. V.S. 1818/1761.

stopped paying in the last few year taking advantage of Ahdali's presence in North India. The Maratha defeats at Panipat embolden the Rajputs to oppose the Maratha presence at various places in Jaipur territory. In one of his letters to

The family of Shinde faced tough time for two years after the battle of Panipat. The Rajputs were challenging their authority and stopped payment of tribute, the only possible source of income for the Marathas at this critical juncture.

In 1768 Mahadji's position further strengthened as he was now in total command of the House of Shinde. From Poona he dispatched Jaswantrao Bable with a contingent of troops towards Jaipur to collect arrears of tribute. He wrote to Madho Singh "Ask your officer to deposit the arrears with Jaswantrao Bable. I will also be reaching Jaipur side soon".

The growing strength of Mahadji Shinde's army is evident from his willingness to become a party to resolve the dispute for Udaipur qaddi on the invitation from Ratan Singh a Sisodia chief. Mahadji in his letter to Prithvi Singh confirmed Ratan Singh's personal visits to Ujjain to solicit Shinde's support against Maharana Ari Singh in 1768.

After the death of Madho Singh in 1768 Shinde renewed his demand for the transfer of control over territories promised to the Marathas.

Mahadji Shinde now entered into regular exchange of Kharitas with the Jaipur ruler which among other things also reveals that now he was paying greater attention to the Maratha interests in Jaipur going beyond the Maratha concerns for the realization of tribute and territorial possessions. There was growing exchange of information between the two rulers as we find Prithvi Singh being kept informed about all important events involving Shinde.

A perpetual source of tension between the Marathas and Jaipur right from the beginning of Madho Singh's rule was the issue of timely payment of tribute and clearance of the black log dues.

Holkar's agents Laxman Rao Anand and Rao Jagnannath Ram Bahadur gave stern warning to the Jaipur ruler when it was reported that his forces were marching towards Lakshmanagarh to support the local chief against the Marathas. Holkar's were dominating over Lakshmanagarh.

Tukoji took several measures to retain his hold over pargana Tonk. He removed Pandurang Shivaji, the Maratha mamlatdar of the pargana and replaced him by Kripal Singh Sikh who was entrusted with the responsibilities of handling the affairs of Tonk¹⁴.

Mahadaji Shinde had to leave North Indian affairs to tackle Maratha problems in the Deccan arising out of the death of Peshwa Narainrao and the Anglo- Maratha war.

The first Anglo-Maratha war ended with the treaty of Salbye on May 17, 1782 which was signed by Anderson on behalf of East India Company.

In 1781 Shinde's commander Jaswantrao Bable took an armed contingent to take over the control of Rampura and Tonk¹⁵ Similarly dispute regarding control over taaluqa Borade also persisted. In one of his Kharitas we find Mahadji instructing Pratap Singh to give the revenue of Borade to Rahim Beg who was handling the affairs of mamlat of Ajmer on behalf of the Marathas¹⁶. That the Jaipur Raja did not take these reminders and warnings seriously is evident from Shinde's Kharita to Pratap Singh in 1782 in which Shinde reported about the loss of goods and arms of his men travelling within Jaipur territory.

¹⁴ Indore Kharita No. 299, Bhadon Sudi 12, V.S. 1853/1796. Indore Kharita No. 300, Kartik Sudi 1, NAS, 1853/1796.

¹⁵ Gwalier Kharita No.81, Asarh Vadi 14, V.S. 1838/1781.

¹⁶ Gwalier Kharita No.77, Maoh Vadi 1, VJT 1838/1781.

Maratha Domination over Jodhpur

The end of civil war provided Bijay Singh much needed space to consolidate his power and even aspired him to reoccupy Ajmer. However, he failed in his attempt and had to agree pay an amount of Rs 3 lakhs to the Marathas as compensation. Bijay Singh's attack on Ajmer prompted Shinde to strengthen the defense of Ajmer against any attack in future. Henceforth Bijay Singh tried not to antagonize the Marathas and complied with their demand of sending Jodhpur contingent. When Holkar visited Jaipur in 1764, Madho Singh requested Bijay Singh for help but Bijay Singh did not agree¹⁷.

He also turned down Holkar's request for help against the English as the Marathas were fighting them as an ally of Awadh nawab Shuja-ud-Daula¹⁸. Tension between Bijay Singh and the Marathas persisted on the matter of tribute payment because of his failure in paying the tribute regularly. The Marathas prepared themselves for an attack on Marwar to collect the tribute. However, both the sides concluded an agreement whereby Bijay Singh agreed to pay Rs 10 lakhs and gave bonds for the payment¹⁹. Thus he averted the Maratha attack. A part payment of tribute was made to Shinde by way of bonds. For the realization of the rest of the amount the Marathas had to send a force under Khanaiji Jadhav who entered Marwar and attacked Nawa. Bijay Singh deputed Diwan Surat Ram to take on the Maratha force.

The Maratha forces went back to Ajmer. The negotiations for the outstanding amount of tribute were initiated following which Bijay Singh agreed to pay rest of the amount to Shinde.

Bijay Singh was hard pressed to meet the Maratha demand for tribute payment. He was unable to raise any money to bear the expenses of a Rathor contingent which Shinde asked Bijay Singh to place at his disposal. Bijay Singh was forced to raise money by levying fresh taxes and also borrowed money from the sahuks at high rate of interest²⁰. The growing pressure from Shinde for the payment of tribute turned Bijay Singh to Jawahar Singh Jat for a joint alliance against the Marathas. The Jat-Rathor forces were defeated by the Maratha-Jaipur forces on December 14, 1767 at Maonda. The Marathas now made Bijay Singh also a party in resolving a dispute between Ratan Singh and Maharana Ari Singh of Udaipur. Bijay Singh not only joined the Marathas who supported the cause of Ratan Singh but also paid the pending amount of tribute²¹. However, the Maharana placated the Marathas by agreeing to pay rupees 64 lakhs as tribute²². The Rathor-Maratha forces also occupied Godwad. Bijay Singh along with Gobindrao was deputed by Shinde to look after the affairs of Udaipur. However, realizing that the Mewar affair is too hot he left Udaipur in June 1772 and returned to Jodhpur²³.

The Marathas were able to regain the control of Ajmer and this fact is confirmed by Krishnaji Jagannath in his letter dated 28th May 1791 to the Peshwa²⁴.

The suffering of Jodhpur during the war with the Marathas in terms of loss of men and material was considerable.

After spending a year in various parts of Rajasthan to consolidate his gains in that region Shinde made plans to move to Poona. He appointed Gopalrao Bhau as his deputy in

¹⁷ Arzi Bahi No. 4, letter Sawan Vadi 4. V.S. 1821/1764.

¹⁸ *ibid*, letter Asarh Vadi 6. V.S. 1821/1765

¹⁹ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar. Vol 21, No 101

²⁰ Marwar Khyat. Vol 3, P 41; Arzi Bahi No. 4, letter Posh Vadi , V.S. 1823/1766.

²¹ Hath Bahi No. 2, PP 122-123.

²² Selections from the Peshwa Daftar. Vol 29, L. 243.

²³ Arzi Bahi No. 4, letter Jeth Sudi 6, VJL 1828/1772.

²⁴ Marwar-Maratha Aitihasik Patravali, L.22. PP.102

Rajasthan and the other commanders of the Maratha forces were to follow his authority²⁵.

The Dynamics of the Maratha triumph in Rajasthan.

The Maratha presence in Rajasthan coincided with the expansion of the Maratha power in Malwa. The control over Malwa brought the Marathas on the border of Rajasthan as the principalities of Kota, Bundi, and Udaipur lying in south-east Rajasthan was adjacent to Malwa. The gradual advancement of the Marathas in Rajasthan reached its climax in 1790-91 when Mahadji Shinde decisively crushed the combined Rajput forces of Jaipur and Jodhpur first at Patan and thereafter at Merta. Shinde's final assault over the combined strength of Jaipur and Jodhpur marked the end of Rajput resistance to the Marathas from 1750 onward which found manifestation in refusal to pay tribute and consistent opposition to the Maratha presence in the territory of Rajput states.

Rajput Allies of the Marathas

The Marathas were the supreme power in entire Rajasthan to the exclusion of any local power. The Marathas owed their success partly due to the long period of their presence and also owing to their superior military power as compared to any other regional power. Their stature as formidable military power further grew with the organization of the Maratha army on the European pattern.

The State of Kishangarh

Pratap Singh Naruka wanted to fulfill his ambition to acquire more territory with the help of the Marathas. His attempt to take possession of Patan after the battle there in June 1790 was thwarted by Shinde's commander Ambaji Ingle. Macheri Rao kept on trying for Patan but Ambaji Ingle did not allow him to capture it. On earlier occasions also Pratap Singh tried to exploit his friendship with Shinde to play his politics with Jaipur. He had proposed to Shinde that the qiledars-of Ramthanbore were under his control and if Shinde helped Prithvi Singh's Son Man Singh to acquire the throne of Jaipur then the fort could be given to him. However, Shinde did not take it seriously and instead asked Pratap Singh to prove his loyalty first by surrendering the fort of Alwar. Pratap Singh Naruka continued allegiance to Shinde as we find Shinde and his officials seeking his cooperation in 1791²⁶.

The Karauli Raja

The Marathas also sought cooperation from the ruler of Karauli state because of its favorable location between Jaipur and Gwalier. The Kharitas from the Karauli rulers to their counterparts in Jaipur reveal that both the states were maintaining harmonious relations and cooperating with each other. Minor issues cropped up in between but these were amicably resolved. The concern of Karauli about the Maratha advancement in Rajasthan particularly in the neighboring territories of Bharatpur and Jaipur is evident from the Kharitas of the Karauli rulers. In 1753 Madho Singh was informed about the movement of Maratha forces from the side of Kumher and the evacuation of people all around. Again in 1754 Gopal Singh Jadam, the Karauli ruler requested Madho Singh to acquaint him with the affairs of Delhi, Marathas and Marwar. In 1759 Tulsipal Jadam reminded Madho Singh of the traditional ties between the two houses and expressed regret over recent disruption in relations with Jaipur and assured him that all efforts would be made to clear misunderstanding. In 1793, when negotiations between Shinde and Jaipur representative Daulat Ram

Haldia were being held at Bhusawal, the karauli chief requested Pratap Singh to ensure his

²⁵ Sarkar, J.N. Sindhia as Regent of Delhi, PP. 51-55.

²⁶ Gwalier Kharita, No. 36/2 Baisakh Vadi 9, V.S. 1848/1791, No. 36/9, Sawan Vadi 8, V.S. 1848/1791, No. 36/4 Kartik Sudi 1, VJ3. 1848/1791.

uninterrupted possession over Karauli territory²⁷. In his Kharitas the Karauli Raja was stressing his friendship with Jaipur and showing sympathy over the Maratha affairs. However, at the same time he was loyal to Shinde and followed his instructions. Shinde promised to restore Bijaigarh to Karauli in 1787²⁸. During Shinde's Lalsot campaign the Karauli chief was supplying provisions to the Maratha camp and the Jaipur Raja requested him to stop the supply. However, the Karauli chief could not afford to annoy the powerful Maratha. Karauli's geographical location gave direct access to Shinde to enter Jaipur territory from Gwalier side by travelling through Karauli. The supply coming to the Maratha camp from Gwalier was routed through Karauli. On 11th July 1787 Sawai Pratap Singh ordered five to six thousand Jaipur troops to cut off supply of grain to Shinde. On 30th July, 1787 the Rajputs cut off a caravan of 6000 oxen and 700 camels loaded with grain and the other provision badly needed by the starving Maratha army. Willingly or unwillingly Karauli chiefs were made to subserve the Maratha interest.

Shinde won over friendship of the Rathor state of Kishangarh sharing border with Jodhpur. Kishangarh ruler's territorial dispute with Jodhpur turned him to Shinde for support against his powerful neighbor. According to Krishnji Jagannath Viridi Singh, the ruler of Kishangarh was unhappy with Bijay Singh as he turned down his demand for the grant of pargana Parbatsar in lieu of serving in Mewar on behalf of Jodhpur. Kishangarh and Jodhpur were also involved in a longstanding dispute over the possession of some villages on the frontier of the two states. These villages were occupied by the bhomias of Kishangarh. Temper flaired up on both sides when Rajputs from Jodhpur plundered and destroyed some villages belonging to Kishangarh. The Kishangarh ruler on receiving the news of this encroachment upon Kishangarh territory sent his representative to

Shinde²⁹. Kishangarh was also involved in Jaipur succession dispute following the death of Prithvi Singh. The Kishangarh ruler did not approve of Pratap Singh's occupation of the throne of Jaipur instead he supported the claim of Man Singh, the son of Prithvi Singh who was born to the daughter of Kishangarh ruler married to Prithvi Singh. He appealed to Shinde against the succession of Pratap Singh. When Jodhpur forces attacked and surrounded Kishangarh from all sides thereby cutting off supplies, the Kishangarh Diwan Surat Singh paid Rs 5 lakhs to Tukoji Holkar and invited both Holkar and Shinde to come with their troops and rescue Kishangarh. Kishangarh also contested Jodhpur's claim over Rupanagar. After the defeat of the Jodhpur Rathors at the hands of Shinde's army in the battle of Merta, Rupanagar was restored to Kishangarh. However, it could not be retained by Kishangarh for much longer period. Kishangarh also served to the Marathas as a safe base when they were fighting with Jodhpur for regaining the possession of Ajmer. The Marathas in their attack on Ajmer were supported by Kishangarh forces.

In Mewar region Shinde found a willing ally in Rawat Bhim Singh, the Chandrawat chief of Salumbar who was opposed to the Rana of Udayapur. He became a handy tool in the hands of Shinde and acted as per his dictates vis-avis the Maharana. Zalim Singh, the regent of Kota was also an ally of Shinde. Through his effort the settlement between Shinde and the Maharana was concluded regarding Mewar's obligation to pay tribute.

Mahadji Shinde also succeeded in creating a powerful and influential group of supporters in the courts of Jaipur and Jodhpur. The Diwan of Jaipur Kushaliram Bohra who later on fell out with the Jaipur ruler was regarded as pro- Maratha. According to Krishnaji Jagannath's report Shinde asked Kushaliram Bohra to visit Jodhpur and gather military information. He was also required by Shinde to meet Govardhan Khichi of Khichiwada' in Malwa to collect

²⁷ Karauli-Jaipur Kharita, No. 51. Chaitra Sudi 12, V.S. 1850/ 1793

²⁸ Sarkar, JN (ed), Sindhia as Regent of Delhi. P.55

²⁹ Marwar- Maratha Aithihasik Patravali, L.2, P. 24

similar information. Govardhan Khichi was against Shinde and advising Jodhpur ruler on matters concerning the Maraths. Kushaliram Bohra was entrusted with the task of assessing the strength of Jodhpur army, their terms for settlement with the Marathas and other relevant information.

Economic implications of the Maratha Presence.

The Maratha incursion into Rajasthan and the stay of the Maratha forces in various parts of Rajasthan was not a happy experience for the local people. The economic strain caused by the Marathas affected almost all sections of the society. The economic strain which each of these incursions brought to the economy of the Rajput states is well documented. Maratha sardars were not so vigilant about plunder and atrocities committed by the invading Maratha army. Damages were done not only to the standing crops but to property in the towns and villages and there were forceful collection of money from the local people when the Maratha army was in desperate need of money due to the non payment or delayed payment of salaries to the troopers. The Rajput rulers wrote letters of protest to Peshwa objecting to the loot and plunder by the Maratha army in their territories which is evident from the Peshwa's reply to Madho Singh's letter in 1758. Madho Singh took exception to loot and plunder by the Maratha army in Jaipur territory.

In order to assess fully the implications of the Maratha presence in Rajasthan it would be pertinent to point out the economic strain brought to the state exchequer by way of the Maratha demand for payment of the amount promised to them in return for their support to the contenders for the throne along with tribute. The mutual dissensions among the Rajput rulers and succession disputes brought the Maratha involvement in the internal affairs of the Rajput. It was sought for by the Rajputs themselves, for the first time in 1734 to settle the contest for the gaddi of Bundi and thereafter in the succession disputes in Jaipur and Jodhpur. The support of the Marathas was obtained by promising to pay huge sum of money. The Rajput rulers were also coaxed into paying annual tribute to the Marathas.

Inability of the Rajputs to make these payments gave the Marathas a pretext of further military intervention to enforce collection of tribute and other dues which often resulted in the devastation of the countryside and ruination of the raiyat. This further compounded the financial difficulties of the Rajput rulers who were now faced with diminishing revenue collection due to decline in agricultural production. The growing financial crisis compelled the rulers to turn to the bankers for loans and resort to the practice of ijara of the khalisa parganas as a mode of repayment of loan to the bankers.

It is difficult to calculate the total burden of Maratha demand in terms of actual payments made to the Marathas by the Rajputs as there was always a gap between what the Marathas had demanded and the actual payment that the Marathas were able to collect. An attempt has been made here in the light of the information available in the sources to make an estimate of the financial obligations that the rulers of Jaipur and Jodhpur owed to the Marathas.

The Marathas decided to support the cause of Madho Singh after he promised to pay a nazar of Rs 10 lakhs to the Peshwa. In 1750 the Marathas demanded an additional sum of Rs 2 lakhs as compensation for the slaughter of the Marathas in Jaipur city. In October 1753 the amount of outstanding dues stood at Rs 15.25 lakhs and Rs 1.25 lakh was to be paid to Raghunathrao, raising the amount to 16.50 lakhs. Out of this amount Rs 7.35 lakh was paid in cash, Rs 3 lakhs in hundis issued by the sahuks, leaving Rs 5.15 lakhs still due².

In 1755 Madho Singh agreed to pay Rs 5 lakhs in addition to the outstanding dues, but again failed to pay. In 1757 the Marathas raised their demand up to 40 to 50 lakhs but settled for Rs 11 lakhs out of which Rs 6 lakhs were paid down³.

In 1758 Madho Singh was coerced into promising Rs 36 lakhs payable in four years. The

current year's installment was enhanced by the addition of a nazar of Rs 3 lakhs. In 1759 the arrears from Jaipur were to the tune of Rs 12 lakhs for 1758 and Rs 9 lakhs for 1759. In 1765 Madho Singh paid the current installment of Rs 5 lakhs to Holkar and promised to issue hundis of the sahuks for the payment of the balance. In 1779 the Jaipur ruler Pratap Singh paid Rs 2 lakhs and promised a further sum of Rs 20 lakhs in installments, out of which only 7.5 lakh was paid in 1781. In 1784 the Jaipur ruler promised to pay Rs 21 lakhs but paid only Rs 3 lakhs in 1785. In 1786 the outstanding amount of tribute and other dues was calculated at Rs 63 lakhs. Pratap Singh agreed to pay Rs 11 lakhs immediately, Rs 10 lakhs were to be paid in six months time and Rs 20 lakhs were to be adjusted by transfer of some territory of Jaipur to the Marathas. The remaining 22 lakhs were to be covered by assignments on the revenues of the thikanas of the Jaipur nobles and jagirs. The first installment of Rs 11 lakhs was paid and the Maratha officers were^{30 31 32 33} depute to collect the second installment of Rs 10 lakhs and assigned revenue of Rs 22 lakhs on thikanas and jagirs. However, no further payment was made to the Marathas. In 1790 Mahadji defeated the combined forces of Jaipur and Jodhpur. The Jaipur ruler agreed to pay Rs 17 lakhs but was unable to pay the entire amount. After victory at Patan and Merta over Jaipur and Jodhpur, Mahadji Shinde halted at several places collecting money from local chieftains and villagers¹.

The Maratha expeditions in Jaipur continued in 1790s to realize the promised amount. In 1800 Pratap Singh purchased peace with the Marathas by agreeing to pay Rs 6 lakhs within one month and Rs 3 lakhs after six months. Thus throughout the second half of the 18th century the Jaipur rulers were made to face the Maratha menace and claims for huge monetary payment.

The Maratha incursions not only strained the state exchequers but also had a devastating impact on the raiyat, jagirdars and the bhomias of the Jaipur state. The chithis and Amber records furnish valuable information which enable us to list the Maratha incursions in a sequence and point out their significance in terms of the economic strain which each of these incursions caused to the rural economy of the region.

The visitation of the Maratha army in Jaipur territory proved disastrous to the raiyat of parganas Gaji ka Thana, Chatsu, Nainwa and many other unspecified parganas due to the rackless plunder by the Maratha army. The amils of the affected parganas reported ruination of standing crop and flight of the raiyat from the villages². In 1751 the raiyat of pargana Chatsu bore the brunt of the plunder³. In 1753 the amils of pargana sawai Jaipur, Chatsu^{34 35} reported plundering of the villages by the Marathas which severely damaged cultivation. The ruler was further informed that the raiyat are unable to resume cultivation for want of resources³⁷.

In 1754 the amils of parganas Sambhar, Naraina, Fagi, Narnaul, Pargpura, Bairath, Khatu, Malarna and Lalsot reported plunder of the villages by the Marathas. The amils were

³⁰ Sarkar, JN; A History of Jaipur. Delhi, 1984, PP 236-38

³¹ Chithi. Asoj Vadi 3, V.S. 1811/1754, Statements from Maratha Papers

³² Kharita from Madho Singh to Malharao Holkar, Falgun Vadi 7, V.S. 1813/1756

³³ Sarkar, JN, A History of Jaipur. Delhi, 1984, PP 236-38.

³⁴ See, Sindhia as Regent of Delhi, PP 45-58 Several Instances of Mahadji collecting money from local Rajput chiefs are mentioned in the Persian Newsletters. One of the letter on P. 45 reads "In every march of Mahadji Sindhia, Ambaji and Deshmukh with the fauj and guns used to go ahead and collect 2 or 3 lakhs from villages and garhis of Shekhawati and bring away grain and cattle and hostages for contributions".

³⁵ Chithi to the Amil pargana Gaji ka Thana, V.S. 1807/1750, Amber Records, letter dated, Chaitra Vadi 8. V.S. 1807/1750.

³⁶ Chithi to the Amil pargana Chatsu Vaisakh Sudi, V.S. 1808/1751, Jeth Vadi 4, V.S. 1808/1751.

³⁷ Chithi to the Amil pargana Chatsu Falgun Vadi, V.S. 1810/1753, pargana Sawai Jaipur, Magh Sudi 6. Chaitra Vadi 8. V.S. 1810/1753.

instructed to enforce surrender of one month's salary by all the jagirdars and the other state officials. The chaudharis and qanungos were required to pay their customary perquisites for one year in order to raise money to be paid to the Marathas. The state realized malba from the raiyat of all the Khalisa villages. Pargana Lalsot was the worst affected as the raiyat of the pargana had to give up cultivation for want of material support³⁸.

Sawai Madho Singh in his letter of 1756 to Malharrao Holkar protested against the loot and burning of the villages of parganas Rampura, Malarna, Niwai, Lalsot, Chatsu, Fagi etc. He informed Holkar that as a result of the damage done to the cultivation his state suffered the loss of Rs 11 lakhs which was the expected revenue yield from these parganas. The jagirdars of these parganas were also badly affected³⁹. In 1757 it was reported that the raiyat of parganas chatsu, Niwai, Fagi etc are indigent and villages are depopulated on account of the ruination of these parganas by the Marathas⁴⁰.

By 1758 the situation became alarming due to persistent famine conditions. Widespread damage to cultivation caused by the Marathas ruined the villages which had become depopulated. The raiyat were forced to migrate to Malwa to escape plunder by the Marathas. Famine conditions had already diminished the resources of the raiyat and they were overburdened by the additional taxes levied by the state to enhance revenue, in order to escape from all these hardships the raiyat left their villages. All attempts by the revenue officials to console the raiyat and encourage them to resettle in the villages which had been abandoned proved in vain. The raiyat were reluctant to return to their villages for fear of the Marathas⁴¹.

The parganas Chatsu, Tonk, Fagi, Toda Rai singh, Pragpura, Lalsot, Niwai, Mauzabad, Naraina and Sawai Jaipur were affected by the Maratha inroads in 1759. Villages were plundered; standing crops were burnt and badly damaged by the Marathas who even did not spare cattle and agricultural implements. The Jaipur administration strictly prohibited the purchase of looted property from the Marathas and declared it a punishable offence⁴².

The situation remained the same in the following year as cultivation declined in almost all the parganas and depopulation of villages was reported from all over the Jaipur territory. The trading activities also suffered due to the Maratha menace⁴³. Even the moderate Maratha presence in Jaipur territory from 1762 to 1765 affected the raiyat of parganas Mauzabad, Dausa, Gijgarh, Bahatri and Chatsu. Plunder and ruination of villages and capturing of the cattle by the Marathas were reported to the authorities of the Jaipur state⁴⁴. Depopulation of villages and decline in agriculture continued to be the marked features in the 1760s and 70s. In 1777 the Marathas plundered the villages of pargana Niwai and ruined the crops. The extent of the damage done to the economy of the pargana can be gauged from the drastic decline in the revenue of the pargana from Rs 2.66 lakhs to 19 thousands. Situation remained more or less the same in the proceeding decades, details of which are given by Sarkar in his

³⁸ Amber Records, Letter Sawan Sudi, V.S. 1811/1754, Chithi, Asoi Vadi 3, V.S. 1811/1754; Chithi to the Amil pargana Lalsot, Sawan Vadi 14, V.S. 1811/1754.

³⁹ Kharita from Madho Singh to Malharrao Holkar, Falgun vadi 7, V.S. 1813/1756.

⁴⁰ Chithi, Asoj Sudi, V.S. 1814/1757, Chithi to the Amil pargana chatsu, Asoi Vadi 2, V.S. 1814/1757.

⁴¹ Chithi to the Amils of all the Jaipur parganas, Asoi Sudi 12, VJ3 1815/1758; Asoi Sudi 13, \AS 1815/1758 Chithi to the Amil pargana Mauzabad, Bhadon Vadi 6,

Vis. 1815/1758, Chithi to the Amil pargana Lalsot, Asarh Vadi 14, V.S 1815/1758 and Magh Sudi 12, V.S 1815/1758, Chithi to the Amil of pargana Narnaul Posh Sudi 11, V.S 1815/1758.

⁴² Chithi, Chaitra Sudi 12, \LS. 1816/1759, Chithi, to the Amil pargana Chatsu, Chaitra Sudi 7, V.S 1816/1759 and Jeth vadi 5, V.S 1816/1759.

⁴³ Chithi to the Amils of all the Jaipur parganas, Asarh Vadi, V^S. 1817/1760; Chithi to the Amil pargana Bahatri, Asarh Sudi 15, V.S.1817/1760, Chithi to the Amil pargana Mauzabad, Kati Vadi 6, V.S 1817/1760.

⁴⁴ Chithi to the Amil pargana Mauzabad, Sawan Sudi 9, V.S. 1819/1762; Amber Records, letter Vaisakh Sudi 12, V.S. 1819/1762.

history of Jaipur. In 1791 in many unspecified parganas cultivation suffered as the villages were plundered by the Maratha army sent by Holkar. Starvation of the raiyat was reported to the higher state authorities by the local revenue officials⁴⁵.

The economic implications of the Maratha inroads and their cumulative effect on almost all sections of the rural society are vividly depicted in a chithi document. In a letter addressed to the amils of parganas Sawai Jaipur, Khohri, Gaji ka Thana, Naraina, Niwai, Narnaul, Qasba Sawai Jaipur, Gaori, Chatsu, Tonk, Toda Rai singh, Toda Bhim, Dausa, Paonta, Pinayan, Pahari, Pargpur, Fagi, Bairath, Bahatri, Malarna, Mauzabad, Malpura, Ram Garh, Lalsot, Serpur, Udehi and Wazirpur the state lamented the depopulation of villages belonging to Khalisa and Jagir and miserable condition of the raiyat, bohras and other inhabitants due to the Maratha depredations. Progressive decline in the jama as well as the increasing inability of the state to realize revenue were acknowledged officially. The letter further laments the miserable condition of the iaqirdars on account of their inability to receive any hasil and hence their failure to render any kind of service to the state. The amils were instructed to make efforts to rehabilitate as many jagir villages as possible through the initiatives of the iaqirdars. The raiya and the bohars were to be induced to make endeavors for the rehabilitation of the remaining villages and resumption of cultivation with the financial support of the bohars wherever it could be made available. The state also proposed the advancement of tagai (agricultural loan) to the raiyat in cases where the bohars were not available to make such investments in agricultural production.

Like Jaipur, the Maratha intervention in Jodhpur was also sought to resolve internal disputes. In 1748, Abhay Singh solicited Holkar's help against his brother, Bakhat Singh by paying rupees 11 thousand per day as fauj kharch⁴⁶. Ram Singh deputed his representative Pandit Jagannath to negotiate the price of securing Maratha help either from Holkar or Shinde in 1751. He offered to pay expenses for a contingent of 10 to 12 thousand and agreed to pay two months expense in advance.

Bakhat Singh made a counter offer of rupees two lakhs to Holkar to neutralize him. The Maratha involvement in Jodhpur affairs proved costly as they imposed upon Jodhpur the obligation to pay regular tribute and other dues. In 1756, Bijay Singh accepted the Maratha demand for the regular payment of tribute at the rate of Rs 1.50 lakh per annum. Later on when Bijay Singh took over Godwad, he agreed to pay Rs 30 thousand per annum as its tribute which was to be paid only to Shinde. Bijay Singh tried his best to be regular in the payment of tribute Gwalier Kharita of 1769 from Mahadji Shinde to Bijay Singh confirmed the receipt of mamlat from Jodhpur up to 1768 and henceforth the same amount i.e. rupees 1.50 lakhs was to be paid to Shinde as tribute. In 1770 again Shinde acknowledged the receipt of mamlat amount for Jodhpur and Godwad. It seems that there was some delay in the payment of mamlat which is evident from Pandit Balarao's letter of 1774. Similarly only half the amount of mamlat for the period 1772 to 1776 for Jodhpur and 1773 to 1777 for Godwad could be paid. The balance amount was to be paid later on⁴⁷. The amount paid to Shinde for the period 1778-1782 in regular installments was as follows:

The amount fixed for these five years was rupees 9 lakhs at the rate of rupees 1.80 lakhs per year. The remission given out of this amount was rupees 2 lakhs. The rest of the amount was paid partly in cash and partly in kind. Rupees 6 lakhs was paid in cash and one lakh in kind. The first installment was broken into two and paid in July, 1784 and February, 1785. One hundred and ninety seven camels were sent in lieu of one lakh. The entire payment could be made by 1786. Out of the mamlat dues for the next three years amounting to rupees 5.40

⁴⁵ Amber Records, letters Asarh Sudi 6, V.S. 1848/1791.

⁴⁶ Marwar Khyat, Vol.2 P, 160.

⁴⁷ Gwalier-Jodhpur Kharita. Maqh Vadi 5, V.S. 1838/1781.

lakhs only rupees 1.50 lakh could be paid⁴⁸. In 1790, the total outstanding amount which included mamlat, fauj Kharch, nazrana, darbar kharch etc stood at rupees 6 lakh.

However, the payment remained pending due to persistent famine conditions. Bijay Singh was allowed to make part payment in the form of bullocks and camels which were to be supplied in the Deccan. Out of the lot, the supply of three hundred best quality camels was demanded in Poona for the exclusive use of the Peshwa. The payment of amount due upto 1790 was made in the form of the supply of elephants, oxen and camels, the supply of which was arranged by the Jodhpur official Bhandari Manroop.

The monetary obligation imposed upon Bijay Singh by Mahadji Shinde after the battle of Patan was too burdensome. He was coerced into agreeing to pay rupees 60 lakhs as war expenses in addition to the usual payment of annual tribute out of which only rupees 11.63 lakhs were remitted to Shinde during 1790-91 in the forms of cash, hundis and kind. In 1792, Bijay Singh handed over parganas Merta, Didwana and Nawa to Shinde to adjust the payment of rupees 1.64 lakhs due to him. Thus the actual payments made in installments never matched the amount claimed by the Marathas. But whatever amount was paid, it was an unbearable burden on the financial resources of the state. The financial loss caused to the state by way of plunder, forced collection, devastation of land and destruction of crops and fodder cannot be estimated for want of detailed information. Bijay Singh, in order to meet the Maratha demands, levied extra taxes on the raiyat and the jagirdars which caused discontentment among the jagirdars and the raiyat. Financial crisis of the Jodhpur state in certain periods of time such as between 1755 to 1759 was so acute that it became difficult to arrange money even to take care of routine expenditure. The situation was so alarming that Bijay Singh could not afford oil for lightning lamps in the evening for holding his darbar. His personal attendants Narsingh Das Bhandari was instructed to make his appearance before the ruler and salute him to indicate that the supply of oil has been arranged and the court could be held.

The secret understanding between the two was that he would not show up in the event of non availability of oil for the lighting. The financial strain forced the ruler to leave his fort palace residence and shift to a smaller palace in the valley.

III CONCLUSION:

Damages done to the standing crops by the invading Maratha army, plunder of property in towns and villages and forceful collection of money from the local people whenever the Maratha army was in desperate need of money created widespread hardships to the people. Widespread desolation of the countryside, acute poverty of the raiyat due to the Maratha presence and growing inability of the Rajput rulers to provide relief or arrange resources for agrarian restoration, all these facts are testified to by contemporary sources. The unprecedented growth of revenue farming in Rajasthan during the second half of the eighteenth century is also attributed to the growing pressure of the Marathas for the tribute payment. The undercurrent of resentment against the Marathas are evident from measures adopted by the Rajput states prohibiting the raiyat all around not to buy any property movable or immovable acquired by the Marathas by way of plunder. The economic hardship caused to the Rajput rulers by exorbitant Maratha demands for tribute and war indemnity made them desperate. The anguish of a section among the Rajput elites, their growing antipathy towards the Maratha power and dominance is quite evident.

⁴⁸ Gwalier-Jodhpur Kharita. Aqhan Sudi 1, V.S. 1843/1786.

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