

C H A P T E R - I I I

MYSORE-MARATHA RELATIONS BETWEEN 1761-1772

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The Mysore - Maratha relationship under Haidar Ali is quite interesting to note, and it could be studied in two parts : (1) From 1761 to 1772, when Peshwa Madhavrao controlled the affairs of the Marathas and (2) from 1772 to 1782, when there was disorder in Maratha affairs and Haidar Ali was on the rise. In this Chapter the first period, 1761-1772 has been taken for detailed analysis. During the period of Haidar Ali, Mysore faced a number of invasions by the Marathas, particularly from Peshwa Balaji Bajirao. It is not an exaggeration to say that, Haidar Ali tried his level best to protect the state from the Marathas and above all actually he had an ambition to destroy their power in south India. Marathas undertook number of expeditions on different grounds. Their main aim was to get the maximum amount of money by collecting the Chauth and Saradeshmuhi of the Northern part of the Tungabhadra. When Haidar got absolute power in 1761 and afterwards he wanted to resist the expeditions of the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad.

Under Haidar Ali's rule, Mysore state witnessed political fluctuation. But his contribution to the Mysore politics is a remarkable work. When we review his life sketch, it is clear that he was a struggling man. He possessed the best qualities that a leader should have. It

was because of his courage, bravery and diplomacy that he was able to carry on the affairs of the state without much trouble.

Mysore kingdom under Haidar Ali was divided into provinces governed by Fouzdars. They were both civil and military officers. They also looked after judicial administration in the provinces. There are evidences which show, that Haidar settled disputes between Hindus and Muslims. He had respect for Hindu, Muslim and other spiritual leaders. He had a good number of Hindu officers like Poornaiah, Khanderao, Krishnarao and others, who were able and loyal officers in his service. Thus, he was a champion of secularism.

Under Haidar Ali's reign Mysore kingdom extended its limits towards south upto Cochin, the entire coastal region of Karnataka in the west upto Bhatkal, and towards north the region between the river Tungabhadra and Krishna in which Bednur, Chitradurga, Basavapatna, Savanur, Kadapa were included in his kingdom.

In the light of his rising power in Mysore, it is necessary to analyse the significance of the Third battle of Panipat which throws light on Maratha state of nature.

To analyse the effects of the Third battle of Panipat

in brief, Marathas lost this battle, that took place on 14, January, 1761 against Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Marathas lost heavily in men, money, military power and political prestige by this defeat at Panipat, and lost the empire of India. It proved a great set-back to their political ambitious and they had to re-establish their position in the North. Hence onwards, they paid more attention towards South Indian regions than to the north. Because, morally, the defeat of Panipat was a disaster to the Marathas. They lost their support and prestige in the north, their help was more sought in quarrels by local potentates and rulers.

One more important effect of this battle was, shortly after hearing the result of the battle of Panipat, Balaji Bajirao died on 23rd June, 1761. It came a great shock to him, as all his life's work lay in ruins.

In the Nizam's state the political situation was unstable, as he himself was engaged in a defensive and unsuccessful campaign against the Peshwa Balajirao. It was going on between the rivers Krishna and Godavari. Somehow Basalat Jung could scarcely move in any direction beyond the limits of his personal Jagir without coming in contact with some Maratha territory. Marathas could not do much better as they had to prepare for the Panipat. But after Panipat battle (January, 1761) Maratha power became weak in the

North. Therefore, this made them more concerned about the Southern politics.

Haidar watching the situation carefully, moved towards South Eastern direction, where other objects demanded his attention. From Doddaballapur, the confederation army marched to Sira and here Haidar commanded operations to capture the latter place from Trimbak Krishna who was the killedar of the fort on behalf of the Peshwa¹. The killedar of the fort offered a spirited defence. Haidar on entering the fort found a very large quantity of military stores and provisions which Marathas wanted to use for attacks on Mysore. Haidar appointed Mir Ismail Hussain as killedar staying in the fort for nearly fifteen days and made the things proper. Now Haidar was free to proceed to Chikkaballapur in order to capture that place. When Haidar proceeded to capture Chikkaballapur and the nearby places, he was strongly opposed because, the palegars were supported by Murarrao of Gutti, whose troops were situated to the North-East of Haidar's new possessions and touched on the South the territory of the Chikkaballapur palegar².

Haidar tried hard to capture Chikkaballapur, but the the palegars also strongly opposed Haidar's attempts. At this time Murarrao marched with his contingent for the help of palegars. While marching to Chikkaballapur the news,

reached Haidar and he planned to attack immediately on Murarrao's troops and it was executed with great speed and surprise that the troops of Murarrao were defeated and he thought it better to return to Gutti. Therefore, Haidar now had the way clear to negotiate with Chikkaballapur palegars as they were weak because, they did not get the help from Murarrao. They entered into negotiations with Haidar for peace, offering a sum of nine lakhs of rupees. Haidar decamped his troops to Devanahalli from Chikkaballapur on grounds of ill-health. Waiting for this, Murarrao's troops entered Chikkaballapur secretly and garrisoned the place, again when palegar retiring to hill fort of Nandidury situated at a distance of three miles, Haidar was enraged at this deception and renewed his attacks on the towns which fell into his hands in about ten days. When Haidar captured Chikkaballapur all the palegars were ready to offer submission and extending territories of Rayadurga and Harapanahalli, but the palegars of Chitradurga were not ready to do so. Haidar then renewed his attacks on Chitradurga with cavalry, and the palegar therefore thought it prudent to compromise for a fine of two lakhs of Pagodas, besides the regulated payments, after the ruin of a considerable portion of his country.

Thus, in 1761 Haidar and Basalat Jang (Nizam Ali's brother) captured Hosakote, Doddballapur and Sira. Haidar

gave nothing to Basalat Jung, his ally. In early 1762 he occupied Chikkaballapur, Kodikonda, Penukonda, Madakasira, Rayadura, Harpanhalli and Chitradurga. This aggression by Haidar on above said territories in Karnataka, ultimately deprived Poona of tribute amounting to about fifty lakhs of rupees³.

Again Aitihāsik Lekha Sangraha gives information that, Peshwa Mahdavrao after the conclusion of peace with Nizam Ali in January, 1762, he led an expedition to the Karnataka. He was accompanied by his uncle Raghunath and Trimbakrao Pethe. Tribute was raised from several districts, including Kittur and Badami. Haidar Ali instead of confronting against the Marathas he retreated to a forest. Scarcity of provisions, want of money and dissesions at home forced the Peshwa to return to Poona without achieving any definite result⁴. According to Sen, Haidar after his usurpation of power in 1761, he started a career of conquest and by 1763 considerably extended his dominions in the North, the most important acquisition being Sira and Bednore. The northern drive brought him inevitable conflict with the Marathas and for many years the territory lying between the Tungabhadra and Krishna remained the bone of contention between the two powers⁵.

After the settlement made in Chitradurga, Haidar Ali

turned his attention towards the Bednore chief. During this time Rani Veerammaji was not good and at this juncture she was facing family problem and there was jealousy on the part of the person known as Nimbaiah. Before he met his new visitor. Haidar had been apprised through his spies of political weakness of the Bednure kingdom under the rule of an unpopular women and it now suited his purpose to support the claim of Chanabasavaiah as the Raja of Bednore. At this juncture Haidar invaded the country and ultimately he appropriated it for himself. In 1763 he crossed the border of Bednore territory and issued a proclamation in the name of Chanabasavaiah inviting the inhabitants to return to their allegiance⁶. Haidar found lakh of pagoda without much resistance which fell at Shimoga then Haidar proceeded to the city and Rani wanted to buy him off with large sums of money. But Haidar's only answer was that, "if she surrendered the country, he would grant her a generous allowance and that she might fix her residence at Srirangapatnam". Rani proudly rejected these proposal's and resolved to defend her capital as best as she could.

When Haidar disturbed the political affairs of Chitradurga and Bednore, it was actually indirectly inviting the war offer from the Maratha side. The chieftains of Chitradurga and Bednore didn't keep quite, they sought the help of the Marathas against Haidar. The ambition of

Haidar Ali in subduing the pategars was at the basis of constained Mysore-Maratha relations.

On the other hand in the Maratha state the leadership changed when Madhavrao became the Peshwa, was also having aggressive attitude towards Mysore region and took number of expeditions. By this time Haidar gained the power of resistance to face any invasion of the Marathas, as his political and financial power increased due to the conquest of Bednore and Soonda. Haidar too wanted to possess the Savanur region, who formed the design of attacking to his interest not only the Pathan Nawab of that province but those of Karnool⁷ and Cudpah, with a view to establish a sort of defensive cord on along the whole extent of his Northern frontier and acquire three crops of hardly Pathan cavalry to serve him with his armies. Savanur actually was in the interest of the Marathas. The Marathas were actually using this (Savanur) region as one of their important military camps in Karnataka. Therefore, Haidar directed Fuzzul-Ul-Khan to invade Savanur. Soon Haidar also joined Fuzzal-Ul-Khan and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Nawab pursuing him to the very gates of Savanur. Nawab of Savanur entered into peace agreement in which he had to pay one crore rupees. As Nawab had no money, he offered in kinds.

Madhavrao thought that the direct affront of Haidar

into Sira was a challenge to the Maratha prestige. So Madhavrao started his Karnataka expedition to curb the power of Haidar and entered into Karnataka in 1765 upto the river Tungabhadra and captured some areas which were earlier captured by Haidar Ali. In course of negotiations Madhavrao demanded that, Bednore and Basavapatna should be included in the list of territories ceded by Haidar⁸. Haidar had no way without going into the peace agreement. In March, 1765 Madhavrao agreed to negotiate a treaty with and conclude his first campaign⁹. On some grounds, in which Haidar had to give up the captured territory from Murarrao and of Savanur, Rayadurga and Harapanahalli. The actual contents of the treaty were as follows.

Firstly, he engaged to restore all the districts and places which he had wrested from Murarrao.

Secondly, he agreed to relinquish all claims on Abdul-Hakim-Khan and the country of Savanur.

Thirdly, he was to pay thirty two lakhs of rupees on receipt of which Madhavrao engaged to retire and did actually commence his march on the day after the payment was made, about the end of February, 1765¹⁰.

Further disturbances were broken out in the west of Mysore, where Haidar had to give his attention for this, he



sent Mir-Reza, his brother-in-law to put down the rebellion. Haidar then directed Mir-sahib to Sira and after the establishment of Haidar's authority, he was directed to proceed against the palegar of Chikkaballapur who had taken refuge in the hill fort of Nandidurga. Mir-sahib cut off all the supply lines to the hill fort and to the palegar thereby palegars were put to trouble and were forced to surrender.

On the otherhand Marathas with the help of Nizam and English planned to invade Mysore in 1767. At this movement Haidar went to Cannanore to help Ali-Raja, the Mapillai chief of Cannanore and lastly to restore peace in this region with much difficulty. While he returned to Srirangapatna, he heard that the alliance force was marching towards Mysore and he thought it prudent to return to Srirangapatnam. The Marathas were so much angry with Haidar that, when they heard of the annexation of Sira into Mysore, they thought that, it was their prestigious question and invaded Mysore. In the same year Madhavrao's army crossed the Krishna and went ahead towards Karnataka, and atlast he conquered Sira and fought against Haidar Ali's brother-in-law Mir-Raza and defeated him¹¹. In this connection negotiations were held and according to this Mir-sahib was given Gurum-konda, his old paternal possession on condition that he should keep 2,000 men for Maratha service¹².

In the same process of war Madhavrao claimed much territories by defeating Haidar's troops and took Madhugiri, a mountain fort which was very difficult to assault¹³. Although Haidar was confident that he would hold out on the second day of the attack, the attack made by the Peshwa was so powerful that the wall was demolished and men in the fort came down for negotiations. Now, it is clear that Madhavrao had obtained the possession of all the districts of Mysore to the south-east ward of sira and the treaty provided for the immediate restoration of the whole with the single exception of the fort and district of Kolar which was to remain in pledge for the payment of the remaining sum of seventeen and half lakhs of rupees. Finally, Madhavrao left for Poona on the 11th May, 1768¹⁴. Madhavrao was determined to take strong measures for the complete subjugation of Karnataka. In this connection Madhavrao sent Gopalrao and Anandrao to watch Haidar's movements in October, 1769. The Peshwa left Poona and marched directly towards Srirangapatnam. The Maratha proceeding to the Karnataka consisted 75,000 troops and had 50 guns. In this march he plundered the important Karnataka posts.¹⁵

Before trying to know the further Mysore-Maratha relations under Haidar Ali, it is desirable to understand the first war waged by Haidar against the English. Nizam Ali also had grievances of his own against the English in

in the political turmoil that prevailed in this period in India. The Hindus, the Mahammadans, the French and the English, all attempted to wrest their several claims, according to Wilks, "on the shadow of a patent from the powerless Mughal at Delhi instead of resting them on grounds of their own superior strength¹⁶."

NOTES

1. Shamrao M. : Modern Mysore Beginning to 1868, (Bangalore,1936);
p.46.
2. Ibid : p.47.
3. Khare V.V. : Aitihasic Lekha Sangraha, Vol.II,(Kurundawad,
1899); p.690.
4. Ibid : p.67.
5. Sen : French in India 1763-1816, (Calcutta,1958);
p.20.
6. Shamrao Op.cit, p.49.
7. Wilks : History of Mysore, Vol.I; p.515.
8. Sinha N.K. : Haidar Ali (Calcutta,1949); p.53, Aitihasic
Lekha Sangraha, Vol.II; pp.420-565,
Saradesai G.S.Selections from the Peshwa
Daftar, Vol.XXXVII; pp.122-135.
9. Ibid, : p.53.
10. Wilks : Op.cit; p.517.
11. Singh : Op.cit; p.56, Khare,A.L.S., Vol.III; pp.680-690.
12. Ibid
13. Sardesai G.S. : Selection from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol.XXXVII;
(); pp.148-152,
A.L.S., Vol.III; pp.680-691.
14. Shamrao : Op.cit, p.60.
15. Khare : Op.cit, Vol.III; (Kolhapur,1900); p.1383.
16. Wilks : Op.cit, p.520.