
**CHAPTER-IV: SOCIAL POLICIES OF THE RULERS OF SANGLI STATE,
SOCIAL LIFE HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS, HINDUS AND
THE CASTE SYSTEM, POSITION OF THE UNTOUCHABLES
AND POSITION OF WOMEN, PRIEST CRAFT, TEMPLES
AND TEMPLE INSTITUTIONS, FESTIVALS AND
ENTERTAINMENTS**

I. Social Policies of the Rulers of Sangli State

The social policies of the rulers of Sangli State can be studied under the following heads:-

1. Sympathy towards Brahmins¹

Among the Hindus, the Brahmins seemed to be in a better position in the Sangli State, chiefly because the Patwardhans, the rulers of Sangli,^{who} were also the Brahmins by caste. During their regime, the Brahmins had good opportunities in the administration as well as in other important walks of the public life.

From the contemporary records, it seems that there was a common practice of dinner parties to Brahmins on many occasions like Vasantpuja, Ganapati festival, marriage ceremonies etc. The Patwardhan rulers also gave dinner parties to Brahmins. Chintamanrao Appasaheb, the first ruler of the Sangli State, in his visit to Poona arranged for the dinner for Brahmins of Poona on the occasion of Vasantpuja.² Further Chintamanrao Appasaheb-I, the first ruler, wrote in his diary, dated 30.4.1847 A.D., that on the occasion of Vasantpuja, his son Dhundirao Tatyasaheb washed the feet of Brahmins. At that time about one thousand Brahmins took dinner, and dakshina, as one rupee, eight annas, and four annas respectively were distributed to them.

2. Discrimination between Brahmins and non-Brahmins

The rulers of Sangli State had sympathy towards the Brahmins and there was every possibility of discrimination between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins. The following examples were found in the records:

- i) When Chintamanrao Appasaheb-I went to Bombay in 1830 A.D., he pointed out to the British Governor that, there was no separate well for Brahmins.⁴
- ii) During the regime of Chintamanrao Appasaheb-II, by an ordinance dated 19.7.1926 A.D., the Mamlatdars in the State were permitted to sanction the following expenditure for the burial of destitute's dead bodies⁵ -

"For Brahmin destitute's dead body - 3 rupees, and for non-Brahmin destitute's dead body - 10 annas".

In this way the discrimination was not only limited to living persons but also to dead bodies.

3. Shri Ganpati Orphanage (1908 A.D.)

As the children of tender years left destitute and without protectors owing to the ravage of plague and famine had to rely almost entirely upon private charity for their rescue from starvation, want and crime. To remedy this defect

Capt. R.C. Burke, the Administrator of Sangli State proposed to open a central orphanage at Sangli in connection with Ganapati Sansthan, an institution peculiarly fitted to undertake a work of this kind. The institution was called Shri Ganapati orphanage and was opened on the 1st July 1908 A.D.⁷

4. Prohibition to cow slaughter (1919 A.D.)

As cow was sacred to the Hindus, Chintamanrao Appasaheb-II, the third ruler of Sangli State decided to stop a practice of killing cows and issued an ordinance - Huzur No. 112 dated 11th March 1919 A.D., to stop the killing of cows in and if otherwise to punish the offender according to law.⁸

5. Prohibition to early marriages (1932 A.D.)

In order to avoid the bad consequences of early marriages, by an order of the State-ruler, the Rayat Assembly passed the act to prohibit early marriages in 1932 A.D. By the provision of that act, the age limit for the marriage was fixed at 17 years for boys and 12 years for girls.⁹

6. Removal of Social disabilities of Harijans (1947 A.D.)

In order to eradicate the evil custom of untouchability,

an act called "the Sangli Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1947 A.D., was passed by State Legislative Assembly and extended it upto the whole of the Sangli State.

This bill which was a social measure and was designed to secure equal rights for Harijans, for it made them to have the use of public wells and tanks, institutions including places of public amusement and entertainments and conveyances licensed to ply for hire and to remove disabilities of Civil rights.

However, the performance of worship by a Harijan in any temple or access to it which was not open to Harijans by the terms of the deed of trust or dedication was excluded from the purview of this bill.¹⁰

II. Social Life - Hindu-Muslim relations

According to the Census Report of 1881 A.D. Kolhapur and S.M.C. States, the total population of the Sangli State was 1,96,832, of which the Hindus were 1,72,257 or 87.51 per cent and Muslims were 13,082 or 6.64 per cent. The other Census Reports show the number of the Hindus and the Muslims as follows:-

Census Year	Total population of Sangli State	Hindus	Muslims
1901 A.D.	2,26,128	1,96,718	15,940
1911 A.D.	2,27,280	2,00,074	16,471
1921 A.D.	2,21,321	1,94,270	15,808
1931 A.D.	2,58,442	2,26,427	19,121

From the contemporary records of the Sangli State, it seems that the relation between the Hindus and the Muslims were not much cordial. On many occasions they treated themselves as hostile. Many incidents of the clash between the Hindus and the Muslims took place in the Sangli State and a few of them in recent past were as follows:-

1. Conflict due to the Hindu procession from Mosque at Shahapur (1934 A.D.)

On 24th June 1934 A.D., the members of Ginde family from Shahapur, Dist. Belgaum arranged a 'Dindi' (procession) in the evening on the occasion of death anniversary of a sage. The Muslims prevented them to play with musical instruments, and the clash took place between the Hindus and the Muslims and only after Government's interference, peace was established.¹¹

2. Muslim threat to Hindus for conversion (1934 A.D.)

When the Sangli authorities prohibited playing harsh as well as soft musical instruments without their permission, the Muslims became excited and then threatened the Hindus that "within 15 days they wanted Hindus to be converted to Muslims, otherwise they would be murdered".¹² This had also brought rift between the two sections of the society. Then there were frequent cases of some communal feuds, kidnapping of girls and women, on the issue of religious processions of both the religions, and on the problems of the religious places. This had many times disturbed the people in the respective places as well as in the whole of the State also on some occasions. However the rulers had to go very cautiously and with minimum support to the Hindus due to the fear of the British. This was due to the fact that the British Government was to warn the rulers even on the small scale disturbances.

III. The Hindus and the Caste System

The census Report of Kolhapur and S.M.C. States of 1881 A.D. indicated that 1,72,257 out of 1,96,832 i.e., 87.51 per cent of the population were the Hindus, which represented by different castes. The major castes which were mentioned in the Sangli State were grouped as a) Brahmins, b) non-Brahmins, and

c) Untouchables.

a) The Brahmins

Brahmin means one who recited prayers, the ritual formulae or incantations, and designates a group that was once wholly composed of individuals so engaged, though now it is the appellation of a group whose members are engaged not only in the priestly functions but also in the allied functions of clerks and writers, and even in pursuits absolutely foreign to the original ideals.¹³ They were at the top of the caste system and had among themselves their subcastes. The census Report of 1901 A.D., Kolhapur and S.M.C. States mentioned different subcastes among themselves as Goud Saraswat, Kanoji, Telgu, Chitpavan, Deshastha, Madhyandin, Goverdhan, Karhade, Savashe, Trigul and Unspecified and their total population was counted to 11,840 people only.

b) Non-Brahmins

1. Marathas - The Maratha caste people were classified into two divisions viz. i) The Marathas (Kulin) and ii) The Kunabi Marathas. Regarding the first division i.e. the Kulin Marathas or the highest class of Marathas which was to consist of ninety-six families professed to be of Rajput descent and represented the Kshatriyas of the traditional system.¹⁴

The Kunbi Marathas, was a group of poor land-holders. They had no traditions of fighting. They were extremely industrious group and their women followed the milk trade. They tended buffaloes and sold milk and milk products.¹⁵

According to Census Report of 1901 A.D., Kolhapur and S.M.C. State, the sub-castes with its strength among the Marathas were as follows:

Sr. No.	Name of Hindu-Maratha sub-caste	Number of male	Number of female
1	<u>Kshatriya</u> ...	185	168
2	<u>Maratha</u> ...	3,135	3,008
3	<u>Kokani</u> ...	136	107
4	<u>Kadva</u> ...	-	-
5	<u>Kunabi</u> ...	29,976	29,657
6	<u>Tilari</u> ...	1	2
7	<u>Raval</u> ...	51	25
<u>Total Maratha</u> ...		33,495	32,980

Then there were some other minor castes among the Hindus and their social status was below the Marathas. They were sometimes grouped as Balutedars also. The details of them were as follows:-

2. The Sutar or Carpenter

The Sutar means who makes or repairs the agricultural implements like plough, hoes, harrows, bullock carts, etc. The sub-castes among them were - Deshi, Kokani, Panchal, Aryakshatri and Vidur. The Vidur sub-caste consisted of Kadu (bitter) or Akarmashe (bastards) sutars.¹⁶

3. The Lohar or Blacksmith

This was occupational caste of blacksmiths. There are five sub-castes among them, namely - i. Maratha, ii. Panchal, iii. Kannada, iv. Kokani, v. Gujarathi.¹⁷

4. Sonar or Goldsmith

The Sonar who prepared gold and silver ornaments had 12 sub-castes among them, viz. Ahir, Azara, Daivadnya, Vidur, Kanade, Lad, Malavi, Maratha, Paradeshi, Sada, Shilawant and Jain.¹⁸

5. The Barbar (Nhavi)

The parental occupation of Nhavis was to make hajam or to cut hair and nails. They did not make hajam of untouchables.¹⁹ Nhavis or the barbers of the Maratha country had among themselves sub-castes as Vajantri and Mashalji. The former were so called because they played music and the latter

carried torches (mashal) before procession.²⁰

6. The Kumbhar (Potters)

Kumbhar, the name of the potter-caste, means one who made earthen pots. The Kumbhar or Potters of the Maratha country distinguished those who make pots by hand without the wheel as Hatghades (handpotters), and those who used a big wheel as Thorchake, and those who used a small wheel as Lahanchake.²¹

7. The Parit (Washerman)

Parit were the professional caste of washerman.

8. The Kolis (Water carriers)

The Kolis were divided into the sub-castes of Agri, Ahir and Bhil.²²

9. The Gurav

The Gurav looked after the village temples as priests.

10. Teli (Oil presser)

The Telis were divided into sub-castes as Pancham, Lad, Gujar, Ayar, Kadu (bitter) or Akarnashe (Bastards), Kandi, Shanavar, Shukravari, Rathod, Paradeshi, Tilvan, Somavar or Maratha and Gandhi etc.²³

11. Mali - Phul Mali, Kacha Mali, Jire Mali and Halade Mali, that these subcastes formed the bulk of the Mali caste, and had their sub-castes from their occupational specialization.²⁴

12. Shimpi - Among the Shimpis or Maratha tailors, there were Ahir and Maratha as two of their sub-castes, known as the Ahir and the Maratha Shimpis.²⁵

13. Dhangars - Dhanagar was a shephard caste. The Dhanagars had Mendhes and Mhaskes as two of their sub-divisions named because they kept sheep (mendhi) and buffaloes (mhashi) respectively.²⁶

14. Gondhali - Gondhali, a composite caste of religious ministrels and had sub-castes bearing the names of other well-known castes of the Maratha country like the Brahmin, Dhanagar, and Kumbhar.²⁷

15. Gaulis - Gaulis, or the cowherds of the Maratha country, were to be found having sub-caste bearing the name of Ahir, Kunbi, Kuraba and Maratha.²⁸

16. Other non-Brahmin castes - According to the Census Report of 1901 A.D., Kolhapur and S.M.C. States, the other non-Brahmin castes in the Sangli State were known as Ambi, Bagudi, Bairaji, Beldar, Berad, Bhandari, Bhat, Bhoi, Burud, Chhatri, Dasari, Davari, Dombari, Ghadashi, Ghisadi, Gosavi, Gujar,

Jingar, Joshi-Chudbude, Kaikadi, Kasar, Khatik, Kolati, Komati,
Koshti, Krishnagol, Korvi, Lad, Lonari, Marvadi, Narvekar,
Otari, Panari, Patharvat, Patvekar, Rajput, Raddi, Ramoshi,
Rangari, Sali, Sangar, Tambat, Uppar, Vaddar, Vaishya, Vani
and unspecified Vasudev.²⁹

c) Untouchables - The untouchables had a good number of their population in the Sangli State and the following castes were mentioned among themselves.

1. Mahar - The Mahar was village watchman and gate-keeper. Among the Mahar of the Maratha Country there were two subdivisions among themselves and were named as Panya and Bele. The name Panya was derived from the profession of making umbrellas from leaves and the latter from their making mats from chips of bamboo.³⁰

The Mahars, who were previously enlisted as traditional guards of village in the village administration and worked in armies of Muslim rulers and Marathas were given a piece of land in lieu of their services known as Mahar Vatan.

The Mahars in the Sangli State were bound to perform the following services to the ryots.³¹

i) Assist the ryot to gather the crops and carry them to his house.

- ii) Carry fodder from the field to the owner's house.
- iii) Put fuel in the furnace for making jagree.
- iv) Carry the news of man's death to his relations living in an adjacent village.
- v) Carry fuel or dig a pit for the cremation or burial of a dead body.
- vi) Taking away the carcasses of animals.
- vii) Similar miscellaneous duties.

In lieu of services rendered to the ryots as well as to the State, they had a right to collect 'Baluta' from ryots at the rate of 8 pailis per Khandi.³²

2. Mang - The Mang provided the villagers with ropes and prepared the hides for Chambhar to work. There were 24 sub-castes among them such as - Bale, Burud, Chapalsande, Dabkar, Dusur, Vajantri Mang, Dhor, Ghadshi, Holar, Jingar, Jirait, Kakar, Kokalvar, Manbhava, Mang-Garudi, Mochi, Nade, Parit, Ped, Shivate, Telingi, Tokarphode, Zare etc.³³

3. Chambhar - The Chambhars, leather workers of the Maratha country, had Ahir as one of their sub-castes.³⁴

4. Dhor - Tanning was the hereditary occupation of the Dhors. There were seven sub-divisions among them as Budhalekari or

Budligar, Bundelkhandi, Hindusthani, Karnataki, Khetarfeddi,
and Maratha.³⁵

5. Bhangis - Bhangis were lowest caste people among the Hindus. They were scavengers and carried filth. The subdivisions among them were as Bhasod, Chanagadi, Hela, Makhiyar etc.³⁶

The total population of Hindus and their main castes

In 1931 A.D., the total population of the Hindus and their main castes were shown as follows.³⁷

HINDUS					Total Hindus
Brahmins	Maratha	Lingayat	Untouchables	Others	
14,580	72,586	51,049	25,562	71,650	2,26,427

Total population of the Sangli State thus came to 2,58,442 people.

IV. Position of the untouchables

Since very ancient times untouchables (Antyajias) were shorn of political power; they were socially out-caste, economically impoverished and culturally degraded.³⁸

In the Sangli State, untouchables consisted of mainly Chambhars, Mahars, Mangs, Dhors, and Bhangis. Though the

untouchables were included in Hindu society as Hindus, they were treated as ex-communicated. Untouchability was practised not only by the caste-Hindus towards them, but also by untouchables themselves towards one another in hierarchical order. Even among each of them there were separate sub-castes within which marriages and inter-dinings were prohibited.³⁹

Social difference between caste-Hindus and untouchables

- 1 The untouchables were required to live outside the village or town and they formed caste-wise colonies separate from one another.⁴⁰
- 2 All of them were deprived of the civic amenities enjoyed by the caste-Hindus.⁴¹
- 3 They were prohibited from participating in public gatherings, drawing water from public wells, or using good clothing or metal wares.⁴²
- 4 Their children were not allowed to enter the school room but were accommodated outside the room on the Verandahs.⁴³
- 5 They were required to stop outside the temple proper in the compound and satisfy themselves that they had had a glimpse of the idol of God.⁴⁴
- 6 They got their livelihood from collecting Baluta from the village-peasantry and had a privilege of collecting

their clothing from the shrouds of dead bodies, and carrying away dead animals whose skins, bones and flesh were to be their proud possessions.⁴⁵

Advent of industrial revolution

The untouchable classes were doing their age-old traditional professions. The Chambhars had somewhat profitable craft of leatherwork and the Mangs were the masters of rope-making. However, with the advent of industrial revolution, leather industry was appropriated by some other businessmen and Chambhars were reduced to mere labourers in leather industry.⁴⁶ The Mangs too lost their monopoly of rope-making to the European manufacturers. Mangs thus deprived not only of their livelihood but even of their social standing, and were stamped as "Criminal tribes".⁴⁷ Thus in the Sangli State, the Mang-Garudi from Balagavade and Bastvade in Kuchi taluka and Mang and Ramoshi from different villages of Kuchi and Mangalwedha taluka, were declared as Criminal tribes by section 3 of the Criminal Tribes Act of 1911 A.D.⁴⁸

The Dhors working at the lowest ladder of the leather-industry, viz., that of working on raw-hide, became mere labourers bound down to the work due to the lack of freedom of changing their profession.

The practice of untouchability in the Sangli State continued upto 1947 A.D. In that year State Legislative Assembly passed an act called Sangli Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act 1947 A.D.⁴⁹ in order to eradicate the evil custom of untouchability. According to this Act, the untouchables secured equal rights of the enjoyment of public amenities such as use of public wells and tanks, institutions including places of public amusement and entertainments etc.

V. Position of women

The status of women in the Sangli State was very low as in other parts of Maratha country. She was a victim of numerous evil customs, superstitions and prejudices such as early marriage, dowry system, polygamy, selling of daughter, practice of Sati, practice of Devadasi, widowhood, illiteracy, slavery etc. The following were some of the evils:

1. Early marriage - There was a practice of early marriages of girls as well as boys. The girls were married before they could attain the age of 8 to 9 years. In the royal house of the Patwardhans the below cited example had taken place and it is enough to explain the situation.

"Waman Govind Patwardhan, son of Govind Hari, died in

1775 A.D. He had a daughter named Mani. When she attained the age of 9, it was proposed that she will be given to the son of Govindpant Abhyankar in marriage. To one side the marriage was settled but unfortunately to the other side Wamanrao left for heavenly abode. Abhyankar could not accept Mani as her father's death was a bad omen. Parashuram Bhau became dejected with the thought of Mani's marriage and the abrupt misfortune. ^aParashuram Bhau states "it seems Govindpant Abhyankar will negativate, God's will be done, child is grown up, if we think to marry her after one year, she will be ten year old. If all think so, it will be better to marry her this year any how, otherwise the child will be too big next year."⁵⁰

This practice of child marriage or early marriage created a number of problems like increasing strength of widows, early pregnancy and its bad consequences on society etc. In order to avoid this, Sangli State Rayat Assembly passed the Act to prohibit early marriages in 1932 A.D.⁵¹

2. Practice of Sati - It was a custom prevalent among the Hindus of higher castes that the widow used to burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. In the territories of Patwardhan Saranjam Jagir, many wives of Kulin Brahmins offered themselves as sati on the funeral pyre of their husbands.

The list of Satis in the Patwardhan family⁵²

Family of Govind Hari

In the family of Govind Hari it was true that his own wife, the wife of his son Gangadharrao, and the wife of his grandson Vittal Babu died as Satis.

Almost all the ladies in the various families of the Patwardhans went Sati and the act was regarded as pious and worthy. But the males had no such rules after the death of their wives.

Women from Kulin Maratha family also offered to go to Sati. A Maratha, "Madhavrao Ghatage from Mouje Kumthe was murdered by Bajirao Ghatage. Therefore the wife of Madhavrao Ghatage wanted to commit Sati as she had no issue. In order to prevent her from going Sati, she was persuaded to adopt a son".⁵³

During the regime of Governor General Lord William Bentinck, in 1829 A.D., the law was passed which made Sati system illegal and punishable. In the beginning some orthodox followers, the Hindus took it as an interference in their religious matters and opposed it. But slowly and gradually the opposition subsided. Thus the women were freed from the greatest social evil.

3. A ban on widow marriage

A Hindu widow could take another husband or divorce among the lower castes of Hindus by usages but the Hindu law in theory, put a ban on widow marriage so far the higher communities like Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were concerned. For instance -

"Parashuram Bhau's eldest daughter Bayabai was married when she was 7 or 8 years old to a man of the Joshi family from Baramati. But her husband died within 15 days after her marriage and Bayabai spent whole life as widowed life."⁵⁴

4. Selling the daughter

Selling the daughter was a evil practice among the poor as well as low caste families. Example of this episode is as follows -

"Mr. Babaji from Sangli sold a daughter named Bhimi about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old for Rs. 10 to Mathura Nayakin Mirajkar".⁵⁵

5. Practice of Devadasi (Murali)

One of the ~~evil~~ evil customs of the Hindus was that of the Devadasi or Murali, practised mostly by the lower castes as Kunbi, Dhanagar, Koli, Mahar, Mang etc. The boys and girls who

were thus dedicated to the service of a certain deity were prohibited from marriage and family life. This practice resulted in debauchery, prostitution and general degeneration of the society.⁵⁶

VI. Priest Craft

In the Sangli State the priest of different castes were such as⁵⁷ .

The Joshis of Brahmin's priests, the Guravs of non-Brahmin's Priests, Jangams of Lingayat's Priests, Upadhyas of Jain's Priests and Mulanis of Mahommedan's Priests and all of them controlled and regulated the religious life in villages of their respective religions and sects and enjoyed position, prestige, rights and prequisites as Balutedars in the village communities. These priests were invited to officiate the ceremonies on many occasions such as birth, marriage, death etc.

VII. Temples and temple institutions

The important temples in the Sangli State can be narrated as follows -

Temples in Sangli (Capital town)

Ganapati temple - This temple was built by Chintamanrao

Appasaheb-I, which was actually completed in about 1844 A.D. Besides the main temple of Ganesh, there were four more but smaller ones, known as Suryanarayan, Chintamaneshwari, Laxmi-Narayan and Samba, which together with the chief deity formed the Ganapati Panchayatan.⁵⁸

Shri Ganapati Panchayatan Sansthan

Chintamanrao Appasaheb-I, provided for the worship of Shri Ganapati and the maintenance of the Ganapati temple by creating a trust called Shri Ganapati Panchayatan Sansthan and assigned to the trust the revenue of Sangli and Sangliwadi. Besides, lands in several villages of his Jagir were granted in Inam to Shri Ganapati. The former was a grant not merely of revenue but of the soil as well. Chintamanrao acted as Mukhtyar of Shri Ganapati, which office had been held by successors to the Sangli Gadi after him.⁵⁹

Besides the main temple of Shri Ganapati, there were in Sangli other temples known as - Gomata Mandir, Parashvanath Svetambar Jain Mandir, Parshvanath Digambar Jain Mandir, Vishnu Mandir, Dwarakanath Mandir, Jumma Masjid, Macca Masjid, Balaji Mandir, Maruti Mandir, Rameshwar temple, Dattatraya temple, Mahadev temple etc.⁶⁰

As in the capital town - the Sangli town of the Sangli

State, there were numerous gods and temples at every village and taluka place of the same and different gods. And every god and village also had its annual festivals, fairs, yatras, and urus respectively at different times and occasions and according to fixed dates in the year. They had most religious way of life and village deities played very important role in the life of the individuals as well as in the life of the villages and the State too.

VIII. Festivals

The Hindu festivals dominated the life in the Sangli State as the rulers of the State were from the Brahmin caste and were very much interested in the religious life. Among the 25 small and big festivals celebrated in the whole of every year, the following were of great significance.⁶¹

1. Gudhipadva - The first day of the month of chaitra was called Gudhipadava which was celebrated by setting up in front of one's house a gudhi i.e., a bamboo pole capped with a small silver or brass jar and new piece of silk cloth and a string of flowers having to it like a flag.
2. Vatapurnima - The full moon day of Jyestha, was remembered in the name of Savitri. Women went to a banyan tree to worship it and distribute presents among themselves.

3. Mondays in the month of Sravana

All Mondays in the month of Sravana were devoted to prayer to Shiva, a half day fast and a feast in the evening.

4. Mangalagauri - Every Tuesday in the month of Sravana was devoted by newly wed girls to the worship of Mangalagauri.

5. Nagapanchami - The bright fifth day in the month of Sravana was dedicated to the cobra. Clay cobra or its representation by sandal paste on a Pat was worshipped.

6. Narali Pournima - The full moon day in Sravana was called Narali Purnima. After a hearty meal in the noon, people went to the river side and propitiate the god of water, Varuna, by offering coconuts in the stream and this practice is still in vogue among the Hindus.

7. Krishna Janmashtami - Janmashtami, the 8th day in the dark half of Sravan was the day on which Lord Krishna was born. It was observed as a fasting day by devotees. The next day observed was known as Dahikala.

8. Pola or Bendur - This day was observed in some villages as pola or Bendur which is a peculiarly agricultural festival. It was a day dedicated to bullocks who were fed on sweet dishes and allowed full rest.

9. Ganesh Chaturthi - It is a festival celebrated on the fourth day of Bhadrapada when clay figures of Ganapati were purchased and worshipped.

10. The Navaratra Festival - As it is now the Navaratra festival was to begin from the first day of Asvina and last for ten days, the first nine being known as Navaratra (nine nights) and the last as Dasara.

11. Vijaya-dashami - It was another name of Dasara. It was the custom in olden times in this State for Maratha soldiers and Siledars to start on their expeditions and, therefore, they crossed the borders of their respective villages. The day came to be known as Simollanghana day.

12. Diwali or Dipavali - Dipavali festival signifying "a feast of lights" starts every year from the 13th of the second half of Asvina and lasts for six days. This was the greatest festival in which all the people join and even holidays were declared for its celebration.

13. Makara Sankranta - It comes in the month of Paus which coincides with January 14th when the Sun enters the Makara Rasi (the zodiac sign of capricorns). Men and women in their gay dresses go about and exchange til-gul (sesamum sweet) and halva as greeting of the season.

14. Mahashivaratra - It was observed on the 14th day of the dark half of Magha and was observed as a fasting day by devotees of Shiva.

15. Shimaga or Holi - The full-moon day of Phalguna was known as Shimaga or Holi. The next day, called Dhulavad and the dark fifth of Phalguna was called Ranga Panchami when coloured water was sprinkled with or without syringe by young and old against all and sundry and no one was expected to take offence.

In addition to all these festivals in the capital city that is at Sangli proper various festivals were practised on behalf of the Shri Ganpati Panchayatan Sansthan. All these festivals included⁶² the festival known as the Ganpati festival, Shri Laxmi-Narayan festival and festivals of Shri Surya-Narayan, Samba (Shri Chintamaneshwari) and the Krishnabai festival. The members of the royal family were to attend the festivals and the festivals were very much celebrated in pomp and glory.

IX. Entertainments

Chintamanrao Appasaheb-I, the first ruler of Sangli State, referred to in his diary the different types of entertainment as follows⁶³ -

1. Tamasha - The most common entertainment was tamasha or

dancing troupes usually composed of local artists.

2. Dance - The persons from high and rich family arranged the dances of women. The dancing women were called as Kalavantins.
3. Lavani - Lavani was a form of songs expressing romantic and heroic feelings, arranged on ceremonial occasions. Lavanis written by Ram Joshi were famous in those days.
4. Kirtan - Kirtan was a religious programme in which there were stories and songs of God. The ten incarnations and the birth days of Shri Datta and Maruti were also celebrated by Kirtans in the temple.
5. Bhajan - While tamasha allured the young and romantic blood, bhajan lifted the senses to spiritual heights. The bhajan was done generally on an auspicious or religious day. It provided entertainment to the masses through devotional songs sung in harmony with mridang and tal.
6. Waghya-Murali - Waghya and Murali were devotees of Khandoba God. They sang songs along with dance. They were specially invited on the functions like marriage, Jagar etc.
7. Ballads - Ballads were songs of heroic acts. They were generally sung on the religious festivals.

8. Wrestling - At certain fairs wrestling bouts were arranged.
9. Puppet Show - A show man arranges a play of puppet and made the puppet dance with the help of strings in his hands.
10. Ramavatari Play - The drama or play on the life of "Rama" was arranged on many occasions.

Other kinds of entertainments - In addition to all the above there were singing of Gondhalis, singing of a dancing girl, Duf songs, Tipari dances, classical music and Rudraveena vadan, Lalit, Dashavatari dramas, Bahurupi parts, Dandapatta, Halagi Kardhol Fad, Elephant play, Daraveshi - who makes the bears dance, snake and monkey play etc.

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