

C H A P T E R - I V

MYSORE-MARATHA RELATIONS FROM 1772-1782

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Haidar Ali was observing the affairs of the Maratha state carefully, meanwhile Marathas under Trimbak Pethe waged war against Haidar in 1769-72, and were successful in their attempts to acquire the Northern Tungabhadra territories. This was done with the help of Patwardhans. On 5th March, 1771 he went as far as Srirangapatnam and inflicted upon Haidar a crushing defeat in the battle of Moti Talao¹ or (Chinakurli). As per the instructions of the Peshwa he concluded peace treaty with Haidar Ali. The affairs of the Poona Government changed with the death of Madhavarao Peshwa (18 November, 1772) and succession of his brother Narayanrao, an incompetent, fickle-minded young man, emboldened Haidar Ali to take full advantage of embarrassing situation at Poona². He sent his troops to Chitradurga and Savanur and threatened to attack Sira, Muddagiri and Gurramkonda.

But what proved most ruinous to the interests of the Maratha state was the offensive assumed by Haidar Ali of Mysore by seizing the Maratha possessions of the Karnataka in defiant scorn of the English and other powers in that region. When Raghunathrao moved towards Karnataka at the end of 1773, he gave out as his ostensible object the curbing of the aggression of Haidar Ali, but as Raghunathrao's position became precarious on account of the Barbhai's preparation to overcome him, he at once made a secret pact with Haidar Ali known as the treaty of

Kalyandurga in February, 1774, by which Haidar Ali acknowledged Raghunathrao as the rightful Peshwa and continued to support him during the next six years by rendering services as he could afford without injuring his own interest or incurring any special cost³. Haidar Ali discovered that the position of Raghunathrao was insecure, as he sought the protection of Tulaji Pawar, Bajirao Barve, Manoji Phadke and others and he had not the capacity to maintain his position at Poona. Knowing this well, Haidar Ali was preparing to attack the Maratha provinces.

During April, 1774 Haidar reduced Sira by defeating Bapuji Shinde, further he reduced Balapur and Mudgiri and then planned to attack on Gutti, Savanur, though they were the vassals of the Peshwas, they could get no support from Poona⁴.

On the otherhand the birth of Savai Madhav Narayan, the posthumous son of Narayanrao threw Raghunathrao into political limbo. Savai Madhav Narayanrao concluded a treaty with English, viz, Surat treaty on 6th March, 1775⁵. He also importuned Haidar to assist him with military and financial help and to take possession of the Maratha territory upto the right bank of the Krishna. Haidar Ali watching the situation that was going on, in Poona he made up his mind to wage war on Gutti and other places.

According to N.K.Sinha, "The death of Madhavrao, the murder of Narayanrao and quarrel between Barbhais and Raghoba, gave Haidar a welcome respite from Maratha invasions and an opportunity to regain what he had lost to the Marathas but also to conquer Coorg and reconquer Malbar"⁶.

Early in 1776, Haidar Ali turned his attention to Murarrao, who had alone preserved Maratha power in that region. Haidar fell upon Gutti with an enormous force and called upon the veteran Chief to surrender. Haidar Ali pressed him to disclose his valuable stores, but Murarrao declined the same, so, Haidar inflicted upon him - unspeakable torture. He was imprisoned in Kabuldurga. Here Murarrao ended his days in prison⁷.

The tragic end of Murarrao roused the whole nation to a pitch of anger and retribution. Nana Phadnis planned to take the help of Nizam to subdue Haidar Ali.

While the alliance were chalking out the strategy, Haidar Ali advanced for to the North and captured Hubli and Dharwad, thus enormously strengthening his position, Haripant Phadke along with Pandurangarao and Konherrao Patwardhan moved against Haidar Ali towards the end of 1776. On 8th January, 1777 a stiff and sanguinary action took place at Sanshi in which the Patwardhans were defeated with heavy loss⁸. This battle seems to be a set back to the Marathas

as they lost two important leaders viz, Konherraao and Pandurangrao. The timely arrival of Bajirao Barve did his best to relive the miseries of the Maratha prisoners.

Thus, the Mysore-Maratha relations were worsened due to the death of important leaders like Murarrao, and later Koneherraao and Pandurangrao.

During the years 1777 and 1778 Haripant and Parshuram Bhau exerted themselves in regaining the lost position in their regions but were compelled to leave the task incomplete the out break of the domestic crises in Poona in the first half of 1778 obliged the objective. With his well trained force of cavelery and infantry Haidar conquered important places in the Krishna, Tungabhadra Doab. The chiefs of Nargund, Shrirahatti and Dambal tendered submission and were confirmed in their respective territories on promising to pay usual tribute to Haidar⁹. thus, Haidar annexed the territories upto Tungabhadra as well as between Krishna and Tungabhadra at the time when the Marathas were passing through a domestic ordeal. Thus, in the middle of 1778 Maratha forces in the Karnataka returned to Poona.

The out break of the First Anglo-Maratha war effected a radical change in the policy of the Marathas. By the time Haidar was expecting the military help from French, when Marathas came to know this fact, they decided to close their

war with Haidar and win him over to fight British aggression. Nana's diplomatic genius brought about a coalition of Indian powers consisting of the Peshwa, Bhonsle, the Nizam and Haidar Ali. This was arranged in February, 1780¹⁰.

Haidar was pleased with this alliance but a series of incidents shook the complacency when he entered into an alliance with the Marathas and others. Britishers put forth or reminded the treaty of 1769. The Marathas attacked Haidar for not reciprocating, Britishers betrayed him by not sending any succour. The treaty concluded between Haidar and the Marathas on 20th February, 1780. Haidar offered to pay the later fifteen lakhs of rupees in settlement of their former accounts, while he also promised them an annual tribute, of twelve lakhs. The Poona Darbar recognised Haidar's sovereignty. On this side of Tungabhadra as also on the other side, his right to the Maratha territories south of the Krishna was also admitted. Both parties agreed not to make separate peace with the English¹¹.

The treaty of Salbai which put an end to the First Anglo Maratha war, was a favour to the Peshwa in relinquishing the Karnataka territories. Haidar refused the execution of the Salbai treaty which would be harmful to him. Britishers succeeded in separating or destroying the alliance group which planned to destroy themselves. The treaty of Salbai

made Haidar keep away from the Marathas. In the subsequent year Haidar died on 7th December, 1782 with this, the relationship of the Marathas with Mysore move on the path of enmity rather than peace.

NOTES

1. Sen S.N. : Haidar Ali and Tipu Slutan, The Maratha Supremacy, Vol.VIII, Majumdar R.C.(edited) (Bombay,1977); p.422.
2. Ibid
3. Sardesai G.S. : New History of the Marathas, Vol.III, (Bombay,1948); p.129.
4. Ibid
5. Sen S.N. : Op.cit, p.424.
6. Sinha N.K. : Haidar Ali (Calcutta,1949); p.47.
7. Sardesai : Op.cit, p.130.
8. Ibid : p.131, Sen Op.cit, p.425.
9. Sen S.N. : Op.cit, p.425, Sardesai, Op.cit, p.131, Sampatgirirao (edited) Karnataka Parampare, (Bangalore,1970); p.246.
10. Ibid : Op.cit, p.425, Sardesai, Op.cit; p.195.
11. Sardesai G.S. : Marathi Riyasat, (Uttar Vibhag) I, (Pune, 1929); pp.216-217.