

INTRODUCTION

The history of India in general and Gujarat, in particular, can not be discussed without mentioning about the Rule of the Gaekwads. Like other rulers of the Princely States, they ruled, but their work and achievements in shaping the State of Baroda were indeed remarkable.

The eighteenth century saw a steady decline in the Mughal authority which provided an opportunity to the Gaekwads, who were working as the Sardars of the Peshwa of Poona, to become independent of the Peshwa authority. After that, they, slowly and gradually, began to interfere directly in the affairs of the politics of Gujarat by following various policies like treaties, negotiations, wars and battles, and carved out their own State comprising the regions of Gujarat and Kathiawad.

The year 1721 is important in the history of Gujarat, because in this year the battle of Balapur, fought between Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-mulk and Alam Ali Khan, proved profitable to Damajirao Gaekwad. As a result of his victory in the battle, Damajirao Gaekwad was honoured as 'Shamsher Bahadur' (the illustrious swordsman). This title has

remained a proud title of the Head of the Gaekwad House till today. Immediately after this war, Pilajirao Gaekwad, the nephew of Damajirao Gaekwad, laid the foundation of the dynasty of Gaekwads of Baroda. After him, his successors, varying in temperament and fortunes, carried on their rule more or less according to the Hindu philosophy and ideas and bequeathed a heritage to their successors. The intervention of English through Colonel Walker, who had cordial relations with the Gaekwad rulers, had a profound influence on the fortunes of Baroda. Malharrao Gaekwad was the last ruler before Sir Sayaji Rao III.

After the deposition of Malharrao, Sir T. Madhavrao, the Dewan of the State during the minority period of Sir Sayaji Rao III, consolidated the rule of the Gaekwads. Then, the Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao III, a village boy adopted by Her Highness Maharani Jamnabai, the widow of Khanderao Gaekwad, as the heir to the Baroda Gadi, raised a superstructure.

Sir Sayaji Rao III came to the throne on 28th December, 1881 and ruled the State till his death on 6th February, 1939. He inherited the State consisting of five different districts, namely, the Baroda District and the City of Baroda as the headquarters of the State; the Navsari District in the South, the Kadi District in the North, the Amreli District in the Peninsula of Kathiawad and Okhamandal in the North-West corner of Kathiawad. The total area of the State was 8176 square miles.

After going through the various source materials - original (primary) and secondary - and thinking about the various aspects of the Baroda State, I decided to take up the problem of administration of the Baroda State during the reign of Sir Sayaji Rao III, a ruler of the Baroda State. Prior to this, some work has been done in the social and economic aspects of the State during the reign of Sir Sayaji Rao III. Though the administration of the Baroda State, under Sayaji Rao III, has been dealt with by earlier writers, it is part of a general study of the Baroda State.

In this work, I have tried to keep the administration of Sayaji Rao III at the centre and have evaluated it from a different angle. I feel that there is a scope to reevaluate the administration of the Baroda State from 1881 A.D. to 1939 A.D. from this angle.

Before the merger of the Baroda State (on 1st May, 1949) with the Bombay State, the Baroda State was considered to be one of the most important States in India owing to its growth and development in almost all the fields.

The history of the rise and growth of the Gaekwads of the Baroda State is very interesting to study. Among all the rulers, since its very foundation, the period of Sir Sayaji Rao III was the most

important period in the history of the State, because of his measures and achievements. Through his success in his policies, he was able to put the State, as one of the most progressive and prosperous states, on the map of India, in particular, and on the world map in general. I have taken his administrative policy for my research work.

This thesis is an attempt to understand broadly the growth, prosperity and glory of the Baroda State. Here, an attempt has been made to evaluate his work in this particular field by his original ideas which he got from his several foreign tours and by inviting experts from various parts of India and, in some cases, even from abroad.

When he came to the throne, the State was passing through a period of anarchy and confusion. In some places, a chaotic condition was also found. Before he assumed his full powers, some attempts had already been made by his REGENT, Sir T. Madhavrao, the Dewan of the State, to improve the conditions of the State. Therein, he became partly successful. He set up a good example for the ruler by introducing the urgently - required changes in the administration. In short, the Dewan had been successful in clearing out the bad atmosphere of the State.

After assuming full powers, Sir Sayaji Rao III made an attempt not only to clear out the critical condition of the State but also to

make the administration of the State efficient and sound. Immediately, he visited some places of the State and gathered first-hand information and started his work for an improvement by introducing drastic changes in almost all fields. Whatever knowledge and information he got from his travels in India and abroad (in all he made 27 foreign tours), he tried to utilise them in improving and reshaping the administration and in carrying out welfare activities for the people of his State.

Till this date, no attempt was made to study the administration of the State from this angle. Therefore, this thesis is submitted here in order to understand the work of Sir Sayaji Rao III in the administration of the Baroda State. An attempt has been made here to know what and how he introduced changes in the economic, agricultural, revenue, industrial, judicial and educational aspects of the State. The sources of information relating to the area of this thesis have been examined carefully.

The Scheme of Chapterisation is as under:

Chapter I: The Establishment and Consolidation of the Baroda State:
 A Historical Perspective

This chapter gives an idea of the history of the Baroda State since its very foundation. Under this a brief history of the early

Maratha rulers is given. It is also discussed how the Marathas became independent and established their rule in the Baroda State. Then, briefly, the work and achievements of the early Gaekwads of the Baroda State upto the deposition of Malharrao Gaekwad in 1875 are presented.

Chapter II : The Early Phases of Sir Sayaji Rao III

This chapter is divided into six parts. In the first part, brief information is given about Sir Sayaji Rao III - who he was, how he came to the throne (including the history of the claimants for the Gadi) and how he was connected with the ruling House of the Gaekwad.

In the second part, a history of his education and the steps taken for it is given. The role of his teacher, Mr. F.A.H. Elliot, is discussed in detail.

In the third part, a brief sketch of his family background and information about his domestic life are mentioned.

The fourth part of the chapter deals with the role of Raja sir T. Madhavrao, the Dewan of the Baroda State, during the minority period

of Sir Sayaji Rao III. It gives an idea of the administration of the Baroda State before the commencement of his actual reign as the ruler of the Baroda State.

In the fifth part, important events which had taken place during the minority period of Sir Sayaji Rao III are given.

In the sixth and the last part of this chapter, the territorial boundary and the administrative units of the Baroda State are elaborated upon.

Chapter III : Economic Administration : Agriculture, Irrigation, Land Revenue, Taxation and Economic Legislation

In this chapter, the economic administration of Sir Sayaji Rao III has been examined. It includes agriculture, irrigation, land revenue organisation, taxation and economic legislation.

The early part of the chapter refers to the developments in agriculture including the early history of agriculture. Tables given, therein, show the district-wise ratio of the people depending on

agriculture. With the help of the tables, detailed information about the total land area - cultivable and cultivated is given year-wise. It is also mentioned here about the steps taken by Sir Sayaji Rao III for agricultural education, re-organisation of the agricultural department, the establishment of an agricultural research institute, agricultural engineering, agricultural co-operative societies, agricultural banks, animal husbandry, land classification, crop pattern, distribution of land holdings etc.

Further, how he developed irrigation facilities for agriculture is mentioned. In this particular aspect, his various projects are discussed. How he solved the problems of the farmers for the cultivation of land, the problem of drinking water, etc. through the irrigation facilities have been mentioned.

The entire land revenue administration of Sir Sayaji Rao III is described in this chapter. In the beginning, just to give an idea, the land revenue pattern and management of the pre-Sayaji Rao III period, including the share of his Dewan in it, have been examined. Then, the land revenue administration of Sir Sayaji Rao III is discussed. In it, various systems adopted by him for reducing the burden of taxes on the cultivators for the improvement of the conditions of the agriculturists etc. have been examined. The objectives of the introduction of 'Ayapat Vero' (income-tax) - fixation of Income Tax slab on other sources of income have been discussed.

Lastly this chapter discusses the work of Sir Sayaji Rao III for giving economic justice by passing economic legislations regarding tenancy and debt.

Chapter IV : Industrial Administration

In this chapter the administration relating to industry and its development in the Baroda State has been discussed. Sir Sayaji Rao III made pioneering efforts for industrial progress by laying the foundation of industrial development in the State. For this, he established the Kalabhavan institute for giving training to the trainees in the various aspects of industry. The Industrial Museum established by him was specifically meant to give upto-date information about scientific and technological growth to the people of the State. He took distinct measures for the growth of industries between 1905 and 1939.

Chapter V : Judicial Administration

This chapter narrates the history of the judicial administration of the pre-Sayaji Rao III and Sir Sayaji Rao III periods. In it, the police, the jail, the extradition, the judicial and the local self-Government administration have been discussed at length. Sir Sayaji

Rao III favoured the progress of the State in all the fields by maintaining law, order and security. Therefore, he made good judicial administration by introducing remarkable changes.

For better police administration, he passed an Act, provided uniforms, opened police schools, established a bank, introduced Finger Impression System etc. He also introduced changes in the administration of the jails. The system of extradition was also improved. He introduced changes in the judicial department on the most modern lines. He codified the laws, separated judicial and executive functions and revised the powers and functions of the various courts. Another noteworthy work of Sir Sayaji Rao III was the development of local self-Government. All these important works of Sir Sayaji Rao III are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter VI : Educational Administration and Library Movement

In this chapter a brief note on education during the pre-Sir Sayaji Rao III period is given to know its progress. Then the progress of education under Sir Sayaji Rao III is assessed through the education and library movement.

The education which Maharaja Sayaji Rao III received during his minority period (1875-1881) impressed him greatly. After coming to the throne, he made up his mind to give proper education to the people for the progress of the people and the progress of the State as well. During his early career, he observed that education was the basis of all reforms and was the effective instrument of salvation from our present condition. He wanted to develop it very carefully for all the people of the State. For that, he introduced remarkable changes, and in almost all, he became successful. By providing primary, secondary, higher and technical education, he put the Baroda State on the map of India. Closely connected with education, is the library movement. He promoted library facilities and made them available even in the remotest parts of the State. In this way, he made a significant contribution in the field of education in his State.
