

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY PHASES OF SIR SAYAJI RAO III

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Before I discuss the administrative aspects of Sir Sayaji Rao III, the Ruler of the Baroda State, it will be appropriate to discuss briefly the early phases of Sayaji Rao III between 27th May, 1875 and 27th December, 1881. The history of this period can be divided into the following heads:

- (A) Early Life and Adoption of Sayaji Rao III
- (B) His Education
- (C) His Family Life
- (D) Administration During His Minority Period : The Role of Sir Raja T. Madhavrao
- (E) Important Events during the Minority Period of Sayaji Rao III
- (F) Administrative Units and Territorial Boundary of the Baroda State.

(A) Early Life and Adoption of Sayaji Rao III:

A few days after the deportation of Malharrao to Madras, a serious event took place in Baroda connected with an

attempt to put Malharrao's son on the Gadi by Laxmibai. However, it was suppressed by Sir Richard Meade, who had succeeded Sir Lewis Pelly as Special Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General, without difficulty despite the force of artillery, infantry and cavalry. The Leharipura Gate was thrown open and the disturbance was quickly subdued without loss of life. In fact, the deposition of Malharrao created a new problem for the Baroda State. The most serious question was of the successor to the Gadi. Thus there was immediate confrontation for the same, because Malharrao had no legitimate heir. In fact in 1874, he secretly entered into a marriage with Laxmibai, who was living with him as his mistress, and later on gave birth to a son. But the British Government did not recognise the legitimacy of the marriage, nor the right of succession of Laxmibai's son.¹ Therefore, both the Government of India and the Government of Baroda faced the difficult problem of selecting a new ruler.

After the suppression of the disturbances of Baroda, the problem of selecting the new ruler became urgent. There were two alternatives left to the administration: (i) The first alternative was that they could accept one of the claimants of Baroda proper; and (ii) the second was to ask the widow of late Khanderao Gaekwad, Her Highness Rani Jarnabai, who had an adoption Sanad to adopt a son of her choice from the members of the Gaekwad house with the approval of the Government of India.

From Baroda proper there were three main claimants, who advanced their claims to the Gadi. They also claimed a direct descent in the line or order according to their age. They were:

(i) Sadashivrao Gaekwad (30 years old)

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He was the son of Govindrao. This Govindrao was adopted by Radhabai, the widow of Fatehsinhrao, the brother of Sayajirao II.

(ii) Ganpatrao Gaekwad (26 years old); and

(iii) Khanderao (22 years old).

Both were real brothers and were sons of Gopalrao, the brother of the said Govindrao. Govindrao and Gopalrao were the descendants of Maloji of Sankheda, the brother of Pilajirao, the real founder of the dynasty of Gaekwad of Baroda. Maloji was the brother of Pilajirao. Therefore his descendants were collateral and not in the line of succession. But as Govindrao was adopted by the widow of Fatehsinhrao, brother of Sayajirao II, the claimants had been brought into direct line making their claim to be regarded as the nearest relative to Malharrao. Out of these three, Sir Richard Meade considered Ganpatrao, being elder to

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Khanderao, undoubtedly the best.

Over and above these three claimants, there were 13 other claimants in all, claiming descent from Prataprao, the second son

of Pilajirao. They resided in Khandesh. But the legitimacy of Prataprao was questioned in Baroda.

With these two alternatives in front of it, the Government of India in deference to the wishes of Sir Richard Meade ordered an inquiry into the claim of Prataprao's family and their pretensions to a legitimate descent from Pilajirao. After the inquiry, the picture of the whole situation became clear. The fact was that Her Highness Rani Jamnabai was wholly opposed to adopting one of the local claimants. As was reported, she was desirous to adopt one of the boys of the Khandesh family. With this view, the Government of India finally decided that one of the boys from Khandesh family may be allowed to be adopted by Jamnabai.

Her Highness Rani Jamnabai, the widow of late Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad, was invited to Baroda from Poona. She arrived in Baroda on 2nd May, 1875, and entered the Moti Baug Palace next day, when also came the person who had been chosen to conduct the administration of the State. This was Madhavrao Tanjorkar, popularly known in the history of the Baroda State as Sir Raja. T. Madhavrao. He was appointed as the Dewan of the Baroda State. Previously, he was a Professor at Madras University. Then he had successively put in fourteen years of service as Dewan of Travancore. From Travancore, he went to Indore and served there for two years as Dewan. When the commission sat to consider the

charges against Malharrao, he was already invited by the Government of India to make an unofficial report on Baroda affairs. The suggestions in his report were considered too advanced to be safely adopted at that time, but the Government of India looked on him as a proper man to be the Dewan, and so recommended him to the Secretary of the State. The recommendation was accepted and he was appointed as Dewan of the Baroda State. Immediately, he was given the charge of administration of the State which was in bad shape, - "to deal with a chaos, amid darkness."

Her Highness Maharani Jannabai was asked to choose, seeking the advice of Sir T. Madhavrao and the approval of the Government of India, a boy whom she would adopt as her son, and consequently, as heir to the throne.⁴ The Government of India also appointed a Commission under Colonel Etheridge and Mr. F.A.H. Elliot to decide the legitimacy of rival claimants to the throne in consultation with the Maharani Jannabai.

Maharani Jannabai had already decided to adopt a boy of the Kavhana branch of the Gaekwads of Khandesh family. Gopalrao on whom choice fell was the son of Kashirao Gaekwad. This decision was unanimously accepted by the British Government. He was born on 17th March, 1863, in the small village of Kavhana about eighteen miles away from Manmad, an important railway - junction

in the Nasik district of Bombay Presidency. He was the second of the three sons of Kashirao Gaekwad, one of the five brothers descended from Prataprao, the younger brother of the famous Damajirao Gaekwad, who in the middle of the 18th Century carried on a successful struggle against the Peshwa, the great Maratha Minister of Poona, and carved out for himself the kingdom which later got the name of Baroda. Prataprao is reported to have been introduced to Khandesh by his brother Damajirao on one of his periodical raids from his fortress of Songadh and to have been left in control of forty seven villages. After the death of Prataprao, the Peshwa made a forcible exchange of these villages for the district of Navsari, and though Prataprao's descendants remained in Khandesh, they sank to so poor an estate that their very existence seems to have been forgotten in Baroda.

On hearing of the selection of Gopalrao, the Baroda claimants were very much upset over the decision of the British Government. The senior Baroda Gaekwad, Sadashivrao, attempted to stir up a revolt in his own favour, and out of disappointment shot himself to death. It was, however, said that his mind had long been unsound.

All disputes being now at an end, Sir Richard Meade on 25th May, proclaimed the Maharani's choice of an heir, who would be adopted and formally installed two days later. Accordingly, on

27th May, 1875 Gopalrao was formally adopted by Her Highness Rani Jamnabai as her son and heir of the Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad. After all the necessary formalities of his coronation, he was installed on the Gadi of Baroda. At that time he was only 13 years old. He was named as the Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, popularly known as Sir Sayaji Rao III.

On 29th May, the young Maharaja paid a visit to all the temples of Baroda city and made his first official call at the Residency.

(B) His Education:

Sir Sayaji Rao III, in the strictest sense, was illiterate when he became the Maharaja. He could neither read nor write properly. Therefore, his education formally began on 7th June, 1875 and lasted till 28th December, 1881. His education began after the religious ceremony of initiation and of dedication to Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Two teachers had been assigned to him to provide education to him. Shri Keshavrao Pandit, who remained his responsible Indian tutor during the whole of his minority, and Shri Vyankatesh Joshi, popularly known as 'Bhau Master'. Both of them taught him Marathi. Later on

Shri Ratanram Master was appointed to teach him Gujarati. A room on the top floor of the Sarkarwada was used as classroom and there all the teachers taught him, in turn, for about five hours a day. He did not find the first steps in education easy. He began the task of reading and writing Marathi, which hitherto he had only spoken. On 26th August, 1875, Sir Richard Meade reported that his progress in two months' time was limited. He described him at this early period as "a quiet, self-possessed boy, with a thoughtful expression on face, of an extremely amiable disposition, a healthy boy, though not very robust, but anxious to practice native gymnastics, riding, etc."⁷ Sir Richard found that the method of teaching was not systematic and the environment in the Sarkarwada was not suitable. Therefore, he urged the Bombay Government for the establishment of a "Raja's School".⁸ After a careful consideration, Rajputra Shala (Raja's School) was set up outside Baroda city. This school was also opened to the sons of nobles and officials of the same age as Sayaji Rao. Secondly, Sir Richard urged that the school should have a qualified English gentleman as Principal. The most important point that came up was the selection of an Englishman. At the end, Mr.F.A.H. Elliot, son of a former Acting Governor of Madras, an Indian Civil Servant, then officiating Director of Public Instruction in Berar, was appointed as the Principal of the school and the tutor of Sayaji Rao III.⁹ Mr. Elliot came to Baroda on 10th December, 1875. Immediately, he started preparing a place for the school. Soon a small house, near the Moti Baug building in the present Laxmi Vilas grounds, was prepared for this purpose. Under Elliot's

direction, study began systematically. The Maharaja and his selected schoolmates, his brother, his cousin and a few sons of leading men attended daily from 10 a.m. to sunset.¹⁰

The curriculum was enlarged and included four languages namely Gujarati, Marathi, Urdu and English, but an emphasis was laid on the English language. The boy devoted special attention to English and Indian History. In this connection, Mr. Elliot wrote later that "the beginning was an absolute beginning". The very foundation was to be laid after the boy came to Baroda. Later on subjects like Chemistry, Geography and Elements of Political Economy were added. Sayaji Rao was weak in arithmetic. "He reads and understands both Marathi and Gujarati fairly, but neither speaks nor writes them fluently". He had daily translation work, and frequent essays to improve his English style. His daily routine at the school and outside was drawn up in details and was adhered to. It was tabulated as under.¹¹ -

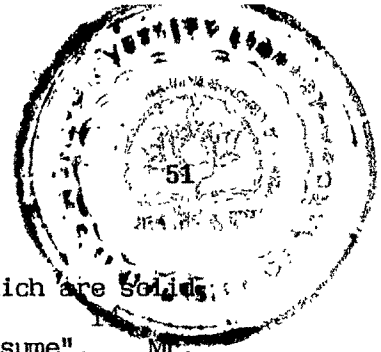
There are several accounts, but all are not entirely consistent.

- i. Rise at 6 a.m.
- ii. Riding (or other exercise) until 8 a.m.
- iii. An hour's study
- iv. Breakfast with the Maharani
- v. Drive from the Palace to the school, accompanied by a military escort.
- vi. Work from 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an hour's interval for lunch.

- vii. Exercise on the maidan adjoining the school.
- viii. Return to the Palace at nightfall.
- ix. Preparation for next day's lessons.
- x. Supper
- xi. To bed at 10 p.m.

From the above mentioned tabulation, it can be clearly seen that systematic, strenuous training both physical and mental lasted till he took the reins of the State in his hands.

During the course of his education, the remarks and impressions of those who taught him are worth-mentioning. Mr. Elliot, Sayaji Rao's tutor and Mr. Melville, an Agent to the Governor - General, remarked that, she (Maharani Jannabai) relaxed her control over the Maharaja's actions during the day and most properly surrendered her own pleasure for the good of the boy.¹² It indicates that Maharani Jannabai helped in building the character of Sayaji Rao. Shri G. S. Sardesai, in his "Account of the Education of His Highness", writes that the style of his life was essentially Indian, with plain Indian food, and a regular observance of fasts and ceremonies. Both at school and at the palace, he was under strict surveillance, owing to the tact¹³ of the Maharani and Mr. Elliot. Mr. Melville, in the 1879-80 Administrative Report, states that "by great good fortune the young Gaekwad has developed a thoroughly healthy moral nature,



and has proved that he possesses mental qualities which are solid and adequate to the position he will soon have to assume". Mr.

Elliot was still more enthusiastic. He says, just before his attainment of his seventeenth birthday, "though at the out-set His Highness was slow at acquiring information, he has refused to forget much of anything which he has once learnt". He also asserts, at the end of an association with him of four years and a half: "I have not had occasion once to find fault with him. A better or more affectionate pupil would not be found". In the Report of 1879-80, about Sayaji Rao it is said that he possessed a "fair knowledge of Indian History, and of the outlines of the History of England. He studies the Elements of Political Economy, Physical Geography, the Penal Code and the Law of Evidence".

In the year 1880, a very important change came in the life of the Maharaja. It was about his marriage, the particulars of which are discussed under the family life of the Maharaja in this very chapter.

Sir T. Madhavrao, the Dewan, thought of finishing the Maharaja's education by 1881. On 19th August, 1880, he drew a plan entitled "Special Education in the Duties of Rulership, its Objectives and Scope" which included the art of governance such as how the Maharaja should be taught that he was made for his people and how he should consider the welfare of his subjects as

of prime importance. The Dewan submitted this plan to Mr. Elliot, who thereupon proposed a change in curriculum. As a result, it was finally decided in March, 1881, that a nine months' course of lectures on "the Principles and Practice of Good Government" should be given to the Maharaja.¹⁷ It was indeed a very heavy task which the Maharaja was to face in the last nine months of his minority.

Accordingly, a series of lectures were arranged by inviting high-ranking officers of the State. Sir T. Madhavrao, the Dewan, had delivered forty nine lectures,¹⁸ while Shri Sergeant tells that he delivered twenty three lectures.¹⁹ In this he discussed the principles of general government, justice and on the behaviour and duties of a Prince. The text of these lectures was preserved in a privately printed book entitled "Minor Hints".²⁰ The Dewan, who had good experience of administration and statecraft, who had worked in different capacities - as Professor in Madras University, 14 years' service as the Dewan of Travancore, 3 years' service as the Dewan of Indore and 6 years' service as the Dewan of Baroda, had said that "Statesmanship is a series of compromise."²¹ Every Indian Native Prince should conciliate to the British Government which possesses irresistible power.²² He considered conciliation as an absolute and unavoidable necessity.²³ He also said that the best way to conciliate to the British Government was that an Indian Prince should govern his state well.²⁴ He also said that Treaties must

be scrupulously observed. Secret emissaries of foreign powers must be kept away, and all disputes with Native States must be referred to the British Government.²⁵ Sir T. Madhavrao also discussed many other points, while he was delivering his lectures, relating to how to govern the State well, what to do, what not to do, how to behave and how to get confidence from the people and officers, and advised the Maharaja. The main points of his advice to him were as under:

- (i) The young ruler should do good steadily, slowly, gradually, constantly and unostentatiously in order to qualify himself for fame;²⁶
- (ii) The ruler should patiently and constantly cultivate the habit of judgement and, while maintaining general peace and giving contentment to the people, he should take sufficient precautions, he should not interfere with the religion of the people;²⁷
- (iii) The RAJ is not the Maharaja's private property or estate. Therefore, the ruler should administer the State for the welfare of the people.²⁸

The other dignitaries, who had delivered the lectures, were also most impressive and formidable ones. Therefore, it is appropriate to give a list of the speakers and their topics:

- (i) Mr. Kazi Shahabuddin, Sar Subha (equivalent to Revenue Commissioner) of Baroda delivered twenty-five lectures on Revenue matters;

- (ii) Mr. Cursetji Rustonji, Chief Justice, delivered eighteen lectures on the Law of the Land;
- (iii) Mr. J. S. Gadgil, Judge of the High Court, delivered seven lectures on Hindu Law;
- (iv) Mr. V. J. Kirtane, Naib (Assistant) Dewan, delivered six lectures on Police matters;
- (v) Mr. Pestonji Jehangir, Revenue Settlement Officer and Military Secretary, delivered nine lectures on the affairs of his two departments; and
- (vi) Certain other lectures were delivered by Mr. A. H. Tahmane on Accounts and Mr. C. R. Thanawalla on Law. All these
29 lectures were delivered in English. The Maharaja listened carefully to the lectures, made notes as they proceeded, and asked questions. In the intervals between them, he was given
30 such books to read as were thought useful. .

The most important objective of the Dewan behind this was to acquaint the Maharaja with all matters relating to the administration of the State. Both Mr. Elliot and the Dewan believed that the Maharaja was devoted to their lectures. They were fully satisfied with the Maharaja's education and training. He was thus
31 properly trained to perform duties of the State as a ruler. In the opinion of his guardians now he might be permitted to exercise his powers. Accordingly on 28th December, 1881, Sir Sayaji Rao III, with full powers of Government, assumed responsibilities as a ruler of the State of Baroda.

(C) His Family Life:

The marriage of Sir Sayajirao III during his minority period (1875-1881) is considered to be a very important event in the history of the Baroda State. During this period his education was in progress, but his family members insisted that he should get married. On 6th January, 1880, he married Princess Laxmibai, her name was changed to Chinnabai I, of the House of Tanjore in the Madras Presidency. Three children - two daughters, Bajubai (died in 1881) and Putalabai (died in 1882) and one son Fatehsinhrao (born on 3rd August, 1883) were born to them. Fatehsinhrao who was the heir-apparent died on 14th September, 1908. He left behind him two daughters, Indunati (born in 1905) and Laxmidevi (born in 1907) and one infant son, Pratapsinhrao (born on 28th June, 1908). Pratapsinhrao succeeded Sayaji Rao III as heir-apparent on 7th February, 1939. He ruled the Baroda State till it was merged with the Indian Union in 1949.

In 1885, the Maharaja Sayaji Rao III suffered a great domestic problem, that of the health of Maharani Chinnabai. She was greatly disturbed at the death of her second daughter Putalabai. Since then she never recovered from her confinement. Many efforts were made to care for her, but unfortunately, on 7th March, 1885, soon after the Prince's birth (Fatehsinhrao), she died. The Maharaja had been deeply attached to her and felt her loss profoundly.

Not long afterwards, when laying the foundation stone of the Market in Baroda (on 28th May, 1885), he referred to her as "the mild, charitable, amiable woman, the devoted mother, and the loving wife"³³. The Market was to have been dedicated to her, but when completed it was found to be too large for the purpose, and was converted into the Nyaya Mandir, the Temple of Justice, which³⁴ is in the prosaic English phrase, the Law Courts.

The death of Maharani Chimnabai greatly affected the normal life of Sayaji Rao. He remained inconsolable for a long time. He went through a nervous crisis and suffered severely from insomnia. His ministers and the Palace doctors failed to understand his case. Although they found him not sleeping, they remarked that "Maharaja is vigilant", and remained busy to some extent in the day-to-day administration and other activities relating to the State. Under such great tension, the doctors thought that a few weeks' rest and a second marriage would be enough to cure him. He consented to take rest and before the end of the year (1885), he agreed to a second marriage. During the course of this tragic period, he remained busy in his work. In a letter of this period to his Khangri Karbhari or Comptroller of the Household, he reveals his own ideas about reforms. "Please remember well and follow it also that reforms cannot be done in a hurry, as reforms done in a hurry and haste will never take firm hold. Patience is a great virtue and it should be practised in

every mundane affair.... We have to take men as they are and deal with them in a prudent and safe manner. Never be afraid of being late in any understanding of life, so long as you have it in view".
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On 28th December, 1885, Sayaji Rao married Gajrabai, a Princess belonging to the Ghatge family³⁶ of the Dewas State near Indore in Central India. After her marriage, her name was changed to Maharani Chinnabai II. She was a girl of 14 years, and following the custom of the time and the tradition of her family, she observed the purdah system. Their union was blessed with three sons and one daughter. The eldest son Maharaj Kumar Jaisinh (1888-1923) was educated abroad; became a graduate in America but his promising career came to an end on account of his ill-health on 27th August, 1923.

The second son, Maharaj Kumar Shivajirao (1890-1919) distinguished himself at Oxford, especially as a Cricketer, but his young life was cut short prematurely by influenza in 1919.

His third son, Maharaj Kumar Dhairyashilrao (1893-1940), after completing his education in England, returned to India and worked for sometime, in the Commission in the Indian Army. Then he went to Germany and died there in 1940.

The pre-mature deaths of his sons greatly disturbed Sayaji Rao III. The only daughter, Princess Maharaj Kumari Indira Raje (1892-1968), was married in 1913 to His Highness Jitendra Narayan, the Maharaja of Cooch - Behar State.³⁷ Her love marriage with Jitendra Narayan, greatly shocked Sayaji Rao and his family.³⁸ Maharaj Kumari Indira Raje became a widow in 1922 and died on 12th September, 1968, in her State.

The above mentioned tragic events disturbed Sayaji Rao very much. Though he had a large family, he was afflicted by these bereavements. Even after the sad events, his personal as well as domestic life continued to be unhappy. On a number of occasions, he talked about his plight to his friends. To illustrate this, he said to one of his friends, "I never had any family life, no kissing - to mention a small point - no familiarity, or salaams.³⁹ This could be because he had to perform important duties and responsibilities as a ruler.

In spite of his painful and sorrowful family life, the progress of work in different fields remained of supreme interest with him. How he carried out reforms in the different fields of administration and how his wife Maharani Chinnabai II made contributions in the developmental work etc. are discussed in the relevant chapters.

(D) Administration During his Minority Period : Role of Sir Raja T. Madhavrao, the Dewan of the Baroda State

The position of the Dewan or the Minister in the Baroda State was second to that of the Maharaja Gaekwad. In the history of the Marathas, the ministership was started by Shivaji. He appointed the Peshwa or Prime Minister as one of the Ministers, in his Asthapradhan Mandal. In it, the Prime Minister's position was next to the King's. He acted in the absence of the king. Since then the importance of the Prime Minister started increasing. After the death of Aurangzeb and release of Shahu from the jail, the Peshwa virtually became the ruler of the Maratha State. Actually, Shahu appointed the Peshwa in the administration of the State.

In the Maratha houses, and particularly in the Baroda State, the ministers acted as Dewans from the last quarter of the 18th Century. Raoji Appaji became the first Dewan of the State. Prior to him, the persons who performed such work were called advisors or ⁴⁰ 'karbhari'.

Raoji Appaji, who came to Baroda in December 1793 with Govind Rao from Poona, became the first Dewan of the State. Since then many Dewans were appointed by the Gaekwads of Baroda. During the reign of the Maharaja Sayaji Rao III, the first Dewan who was

appointed was Sir Raja T. Madhavrao. He worked as Dewan from 10th May, 1875 to 28th September, 1882. After him, in all 13 Dewans of outstanding merit, irrespective of caste, colour, creed and nationality, were appointed by Sayaji Rao III. (See Appendix I.)

Prior to the appointment of Sir T. Madhavrao, many Dewans like Babaji Appaji, Gangadhar Shastri, Vithalrao Bhau, Dadabhai Naoroji, etc. played an important role in the enhancement of the glory of the Baroda State. But it was during the regency period of Sayaji Rao III, the status, powers, privileges and the functions of the Dewans were increased. From Sayaji Rao's time the Dewan was made directly responsible to the Maharaja for the entire machinery of administration of the State.

By Sayaji Rao III, the office of the Dewan was divided into two main branches:

(i) The Huzur:

It dealt with all the correspondence with the Residency; and

(ii) The Huzar Kutchery:

It dealt with all the matters connected with internal
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administration of the State. Sayaji Rao III also

constituted an Executive Council of four members with the Dewan as its President. His only objective behind it was of relieving his burden of the administration. This council was looking after the administration even in the absence of the ruler. The Dewan was also made the President of the Legislative Council or Dhara Sabha which was formed in 1908. He was also to give co-operation to the Agent of the Governor - General or Resident at Baroda. At the end, he was to protect the State against encroachments of other neighbouring A.G.G.S. and other British officers.

From 1875 to 1881, Sir T. Madhavrao carried out a number of reforms to end the chaotic condition of the State. He was well acquainted with the State of affairs, because, during Malharrao's trial, he had an opportunity to visit the Baroda State and make a report to the Government of India.

The most important and immediate problem faced by the Dewan was about the Maratha Sardars in the State. They formed the military class and were the descendants of the military chiefs. These chiefs were styled as siledars and were allowed to have their own retainers called Pagas. During the time of Malharrao, the interests of this class were considerably affected. Under the new administration of Sir T. Madhavrao, they apprehended their special privileges and pensions were curtailed as they were

subjected to ordinary laws of the State. They raised their voice but the Dewan stood firm and held the view that the administration cannot be allowed to suffer because of the attitude of the Sardars. He tackled this problem by creating a Sardar's Court. As a result of this court, the Sardars reconciled themselves with the new order and by 1881 their problem was settled.

Sir T. Madhavrao's administration was comprehensive, which concerned main pillars of good government, law and order, judicial system, the development of public work, education, medical help, finance and the machinery of government. Here it is in extenso:

- (i) To maintain public order and tranquillity with firmness and moderation.
- (ii) To redress the accumulated complaints arising out of the past mal-administration, whether of the Sardars, bankers, ryots or others.
- (iii) To establish a proper and sufficient machinery for the dispensation of justice in both its branches.
- (iv) To provide a police commensurate with the extent of the country and with the density and character of the population.
- (v) To provide for the execution of necessary or useful public works.
- (vi) To promote popular education.

- (vii) To provide suitable medical agencies for the benefit of the people.
- (viii) To reduce the burden of taxation where it is excessive, to readjust taxes where they require to be readjusted, and to abolish such taxes as are totally objectionable.
- (ix) To enforce economy in expenditure, to restrain waste, to reduce extravagance, and to prevent losses arising from corruption and mal-administration. And pre-eminently to keep the expenditure fairly below the receipts, so that a surplus may become available as a provision for adverse seasons and available also for further administrative improvements.
- (x) To greatly strengthen the executive establishments, so that Government may pervade and be coextensive with the country and population and may make itself felt throughout these dominions".⁴³

He aimed at raising the Government of Baroda to the level of the British India and introduced reforms to achieve that level. The first and foremost was the reorganisation of finances. For this, he abolished the Old State Banks, and established the Huzur Treasury and a separate Audit Office for the first time. The Potedari system was done away with. A Reserve Fund was created. The Budget and Pension rules were framed. The Dewan took particular interest in establishing a new and efficient Judicial

Department. "From 1875 to 1880, he made efforts to put it on a firm basis, though the real reforms came in after 1881 A.D. The regular courts were established with proper gradation of powers. The police were organised and placed under suitable authority. The administration of Justice in the State was not totally set aside, only because it was not without some fiscal value. It was a source of power, useful as an auxiliary in the working of the general money-exacting machinery of the State".⁴⁴ The detection and prevention of crime was placed upon a sounder footing. A regular Survey and Settlement Department for the whole State was organised in the year 1883-84. Its first job was to introduce a uniform land measure. In the Baroda district, the standard of land measure was Kumbha, while elsewhere in the State it was Bigha. The Kumbha was more than the latter and was not again of the same nature elsewhere. So the Bigha of 4/7 of an acre was introduced as the standard measure all over the State. The settlement on the Raiyatwari (Ryotwari) assessment was generally made for the period of 15 years and at the expiry of this period for 30 years. Before the Raiyatwari system, there was the Halbandhi or Plough - assessment system prevailing in certain backward parts of the district, which was crude. Similarly, at the time of the Ijara system there grew up Ankadabandhi or Ekankadi tenures or land mortgage tenures. Finally Sayaji Rao III scrapped it.

The administration was streamlined to achieve maximum public welfare. The Old Public Works Department was so thoroughly rotten

that no part of it was worth keeping. So the Dewan established schools, hospitals and dispensaries, extended railways, laid public gardens and commenced the construction of the Laxmi Vilas Palace. Between 1875 and 1881, a little less than Rs.50 lakhs were spent after buildings, communications and public Park with such other miscellaneous items. In this way the Dewan overhauled all the branches of the State Administration. The details of these reforms are discussed in the relevant chapters.

The relations between the State and the Government of India, for the first time, were based on mutual confidence and goodwill; the finances became so healthy that, six years after the appointment of Sir T. Madhavrao, a large sum of one and a half crores of rupees was placed in reserve and that, in spite of the fact that, in 1875, none knew whether the State would escape
⁴⁵
 bankruptcy.

The Maharaja's minority period was over and his real rule now started. In many respects, he ushered in an era of peace, prosperity and progress, which had been largely unknown to Baroda before.

In 1881, at the end of his stewardship of Baroda, there was a cash accumulation of eight million rupees in the treasury and

another thirteen millions in invested funds. At about this time, Madhavrao himself summed up his achievements in his annual report of 1881: "Perfect tranquillity prevails. Justice is fairly administered. The finances are in a highly flourishing condition, Public works have been liberally provided. Medical agencies are well at work. Sanitation has not been neglected. Education has been considerably developed, both vertically and laterally.... administration has been properly organised. Our relations with.... the Imperial Government are all that could be wished for. It is with these many and substantial advantages that the well-educated Maharaja will enter shortly upon the exercise of his power". This "little song of triumph" as Sir Stanley Rice, Sayaji Rao's biographer calls it, is altogether pardonable, for it was, to quote Stanley Rice again, a record of which the minister might well be proud". By the yardstick of the Raj, of course, the performance was quite dazzling, Madhavrao had made the Baroda State administration as good as that of the British. That there could be no higher test of a man's administrative ability.

The investiture of full powers of Sayaji Rao III took place on the 28th December, 1881. Sir T. Madhavrao continued as Dewan till 27th March, 1883. In the political life of the State also the 28th December, 1881, will be remembered as a turning point and a red letter day as after six years' of minority administration, during which many decisions and steps were taken

regarding the Baroda State, the State of normalcy was restored on handing over the rule of the State to the lawful ruler, Sayaji Rao III. The actual ceremony was performed on the morning of the 28th in a durbar tent on the grounds of the Nazar Baug Palace. The Viceroy of India being unable to come to Baroda himself, was represented by Sir James Fergusson, Governor of Bombay, who, on his behalf, presented the Maharaja with the robes of the State, placed him on the Gadi, and made a speech declaring him a ruler in his own right. Sir James declared everything and promised His Highness a prosperous and happy life. The actual rule of Sayaji Rao began from 1882. At the time of Sayaji Rao's accession to power, he claimed that he had fulfilled the primary obligations of a civilized Government.

One of the most important and earliest acts after his assumption of control was the visitation of the whole of his kingdom. His first district tour was of Kadi, in November 1882 and then of Navsari in 1883-84, of Baroda in 1884-85 and of Amreli, the Kathiawad section of his State in 1886-87. By visiting these places, he acquired first-hand knowledge of his realm. He saw every taluka (sub-district) of every Prant, examined the local records, etc. After that, he organised his administration there. The details of which are discussed in the relevant chapters.

(E) Important Events During the Minority Period of Sayaji Rao III

The minority period between 1875 and 1881 is marked by two important events:

- (i) Sayaji Rao III visited Bombay in November 1875 to receive the Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII of England, and entertained him. On the morning of the 19th November, 1875, the Prince arrived in Baroda, and was escorted by the Maharaja; Sir T. Madhavrao, and the newly-appointed Agent, Mr. P.S. Melville, to the Residency, the Prince riding with his little host in the golden ambari upon the best of the royal elephants. At the Residency the customary offerings of flowers and pan-supari were made to the Prince. In the afternoon, the Prince paid an official visit to the Maharaja and Maharani Jannabai at the Moti Baug and then went to see the wrestling, the elephants, rhinoceros buffalos, etc. At night the city was illuminated. On the 20th evening, he visited the Moti Baug again, and was shown the Crown jewels. A dinner was served in a pavilion and the evening closed with music and fire-works. This was the first entertainment of its kind in which the Highness had taken part. Thus the visit of the Prince of Wales was certainly an important event of his period.

- (ii) The second important event of Sayaji Rao's III early reign was his visit to historical places and his presence in the

Imperial Darbar at Delhi. Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, invited him to Delhi to attend the Imperial Darbar, which he attended in 1877. In the Darbar many dignitaries were present. Among them the Maharaja of Baroda was invested with the title of "Farzand-i-Khas-i-Daulat-i-Englishia", generally translated "own favoured son of the British
49 Empire". He was also bestowed upon a banner and the Imperial Gold Medal in the name of the Queen Empress.

The customary visits were paid; the customary festivities were patiently borne, and the Maharaja left Delhi with the experience behind him of having participated for the first time as an honoured and prominent guest. Sir Madhavrao also received the honourable title of Raja. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, said on similar occasion, 'the Darbar meant not a panorama or a procession. It was a landmark in the history of the people and a
50 chapter in the ritual of the State. His title clearly indicates his good relations with the Paramount power.

On the 9th January, 1877, he started his return journey to Baroda. Before he reached Baroda, he visited historical places like Agra, Lucknow, and Allahabad. The Maharaja's return was marked by a round of festivities in Baroda to celebrate the new title bestowed upon him. Writing of the Maharaja's progress, Melville reports that he is, "rapidly developing into a strong,

wiry young man", "most industrious", and at the same time,
⁵¹
 "addicted to mainly sports and excercises".

(F) Territorial Boundary and Administrative Units of the Baroda State

Territorial Boundary:

The territories of His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwad Sayaji Rao III lie between 20-45', and 24-9' North Latitude, and between 70-42' and 73-59' East Latitude. Okhamandal lie between 22-5' and 22-35' North Latitude, and between 69-5' and 69-20' East Longitude.

These territories are interspersed with others - From the northern extremity of the Thana District of the Bombay Presidency in the south to Palanpur in the north and from the western limit of the Nasik District in the south-east to the extreme north-east
⁵²
 of Kathiawad. The Gaekwad territories were never in a single stretch, but were lying in distant areas; while some were making scattered pockets. The Maharaja's sovereignty prevailed on five major geographical territories. The total area of the State was 8127 square miles. It was not very large as compared to some native States of India like Jodhpur and Bikaner in Rajputana and
⁵³
 Gwalior in Central India. But the prosperity of the Baroda State was much as compared to the other States of India.

Main Divisions:

The main divisions of the Gaekwad regime were:

- (i) Baroda, the administrative headquarters with the capital city - area 1,922 square miles;
- (ii) Kadi - area 3,046 square miles;
- (iii) Navsari - area 1,807 square miles;
- (iv) Amreli with Kodinar - area 1,077 square miles; and
- (v) Okhamandal - area 275 square miles.

The first three divisions lie in the mainland of Gujarat, while the remaining two divisions lie in the Peninsular Gujarat, popularly known as Kathiawad or Saurashtra. The Okhamandal Taluka, which was inhabited by the turbulent Vaghers was formerly a part of the Amreli District.

(i) The Baroda District:

The Baroda District including the city of Baroda and Cantonment was the second largest in area with 1,922 square miles. It was also the State headquarters or capital lying between the Mahi river in the North and the Narmada in the South.

(ii) The Kadi District:

The Kadi District was the first largest in area with 3,046 square miles. It lies to the West of Mahi Kantha and Prantij Taluka of Ahmedabad District which was on its East. While on the South, there was Daskroi and on the West was Pethapur. Within the boundaries of Palanpur, there were several Gaekwadi villages.

(iii) The Navsari District:

The Navsari District, the third largest in area with 1,807 square miles was the southern most province of Gaekwad which lies to the South of the river Tapti or Tapi. It was divided into two main blocks: (i) littoral; & (ii) hinterland regions.

The first block comprised the talukas of Navsari and Gandevi. Of these Navsari was on the Arabian sea coast and the others were for the most part connected with the Arabian sea by rivers and creeks. This block was divided into the talukas of Gandevi, Navsari and Kamrej. The second block on the South of the Tapti, divided into the talukas of Palsana, Mahuva, Vyara and Songadh, lay in the hinterland which was a dense forest region. It was bounded on the West by the Surat District and on the East by Khandesh. To the North of the

Tapti comprised the Kamrej and Mangrol Talukas and Vajpur block of the Songadh Taluka was bounded by the parts of the Broach District and by the Rajpipla State on the North and by parts of Khandesh on the East.

(iv) The Amreli District:

The territories of Amreli, Dhari and Damnagar were associated regions and were fairly compact; while Kodinar, Ratanpur and Bhimkantha in the South and along the coast were detached or dissociated from the Amreli District. Damnagar lay into the North-East of Amreli and Ratanpur was still farther in the North-East. The taluka's boundaries then were delimited by princely States such as Jetpur (Jetalpur), Junagadh and Gohelvad.

(v) The Okhamandal District:

The extreme Western strip of the Peninsula of Kathiawad which was bounded by the Gulf of Kutch in the North and the Arabian sea on the West was known as Okhamandal division. A patch of Ran lay into the East and in the South a salt-marsh stands. This low area was often liable to high tides.

For administrative purposes, the districts were sub-divided into Talukas (Mahals) and Peta Talukas (Peta Mahals). Each Taluka and Peta Taluka consisted of a convenient number of villages according to area, population and natural boundaries. The officer of Peta-Taluka was called Mahalkari and the officer of a Taluka was called Vahivatdar (Tahsildar). Three or four talukas formed a sub-division and the officer-in-charge was Naeb Suba (Deputy Collector) while the whole district was in charge of a Suba (Collector and District Magistrate). The detailed information of the administration is discussed in the relevant chapter.

CHAPTER II

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33. Sergeant, p. 75, Footnote.

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