

## UNIT 79 – UPSC -Rajaram

### India's History : Medieval India : Death of Rajaram - 1700

## Rajaram

During the years that followed the death of Sambhaji, the Marathas continued at intervals to plunder Ahmadnagar territories. If it was the emperor's idea that Maratha resistance could be stifled after the death of Sambhaji, he was entirely wrong. Under the leadership of Rajaram who was proclaimed king, Ramchandrapant Amatya, Pralhad Niraji, Sahtaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav and other Maratha noblemen carried on the struggle against the Moghal invaders inspite of the fall of Rayagad and capture of Yesubai and Shahu, the son of Sambhaji. The Marathas carried the war into the very heart of Moghal territory, the theatre of war stretching from Burhanpur in the north to Jinji in the south, which Rajaram had put up as his headquarters. The Maratha commanders destroyed the Moghal field armies and crippled the material resources of the Moghal generals. It was difficult for the emperor to cope with the Maratha system of warfare.

In 1699 under Rajaram the combined Maratha troops entered Gangthadi claiming the chauth or one-fourth and the sardeshmukhi or extra tenth as their established right. All who submitted to these demands were protected, such of the Moghal garrisons who remained passive were not molested, and those who opposed were put to the sword. On this occasion the Maratha exactions were unusually systematic. Where they could not secure ready money they took promissory notes from the heads of villages according to the practice introduced by Shivaji. When he had nearly completed his tour Rajaram left Haibatrav Nimbalkar in Gangthadi to collect what they termed the outstanding balances. Haibatrav, when appointed to this duty, was styled Sar Lashkar, and received the Jari Patka or golden streamer. At this moment of triumph, the Maratha nation suffered a tragic loss in the death of Rajaram who found the strain of camp-life unbearable. He died at Sinhgad on 2nd March 1700. After the death of Rajaram, Dhanaji Jadhav spread his horse in every quarter and performed many signal exploits.

Rajaram's reign was an eventful one paving the way for the future greatness of the Marathas. Credit goes to his wise councilors and brave generals. A significant change in military administration by him was the system of granting lands to the military commanders in lieu of cash as followed by Shivaji. This single change was greatly responsible for the expansion and the fall of the Maratha Empire. Rajaram died in 1700 to be succeeded by his 4 yr old son Shivaji III whose mother was Tarabai. A capable administrator, she inspired valor amongst her followers, guided military operations moving to different forts.

And so ended the reign of Shivaji and Rajaram. Shivaji laid the foundations for the Maratha Empire and the Peshwas capitalized on his efforts.