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**Contribution of Chhatrapati
Shahu Maharaj ,
Mahatma Jyotirao Phule &
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at National
& International Levels**

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Dedicated to
Shahu Maharaj, Mahatma Phule
and Dr. Ambedkar
whose contribution made
Maharashtra
Progressive and Modern in all Spheres...

Dr. Snehal Tawre
Dr. Shobha Ingwale

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A Study on Contribution of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj with Respect to Strategic Decisions for the Overall Development of the Society

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Economic Conditions of the Kolhapur State before Rajarshi's Reging -

A review of Kolhapur State at the beginning of Rajarshi's reign was taken. Agricultural development of the state was far less even though several rivers were flowing through the state. There were very less irrigation facilities and dry rivers during summer. During the era, of the 1449.9 thousand acres of cultivable area, only 1294.2 thousand acres land (89%) was actually under cultivation. The land was mostly used for the low price crops like jwari, bajri, vari and rice, etc., while a small portion was used for crops like groundnut, sugarcane, tobacco, etc. out of the total cultivated land, only 2.7% was provided with irrigation with the help of rivers and wells and that too for few months only. In 1891, of the total population of the state (i.e. 913.1 thousand), 801.0 thousand (i.e. 88%) people were living in rural areas and were dependent on agriculture and other traditional industries. 26.6 thousand (2.8%) people were literate, of which 1 thousand were women. It means the literacy rate in the state was extremely low. People didn't even have access to primary education. Most of the people used to take the help of kulkarni and savkar in the village. However, Kulkarni and savkar both were interested in becoming rich by exploiting the people in the village. Kolhapur State, during that period, had three main institutions viz., Rajaram Mahavidyalaya, Rajaram Vidyalaya and Mission High school ran on subsidy, providing higher and secondary education in the state.

Administration of the Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj -

Before Rajarshi assumed power, the administration of Kolhapur state was looked after by an administrative council consisting of Deewan, Revenue officer and Chief Judge. The said council was terminated by Rajarshi in 1895 and took power in his hand. He formed Huzur Officer (Huzur Karyalaya) and Huzur Chitnis was appointed as a chief official. All the orders of Rajarshi were signed by Huzur chitins before they were sent. Rajarshi's administration was divided into three main departments. 1) General Department, 2) Revenue Department and 3) Judicial Department. Three departments were headed by diwan, revenue officer (Sarsubhe) and chief judge respectively. A special officer called 'Inspector of Orders' was appointed to see the implementation of the orders issued by Rajarshi. Rajarshi also paid attention to the punctuality of the servants. Fines were charged for those failing to do their assigned work.

Objective of the Study -

The objective of this study is to evaluate Rajarshi Shahu's greatness as he worked for society, lived for society and thought of Society for up-liftmen of downtrodden masses. The main objectives of the research are-

1. To study various literature of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj.
2. To find out and evaluate the contribution of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj in the form of strategic decisions and work performed by him relating to socio economic development of the region.

Research Methodology -

The researcher has attempted to study the contribution of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj in the development of Kolhapur State. While studying, it was also an aim of the researcher to throw light on the contribution of Rajarshi on various socio economic development aspects. This will prove to be a guidance and ideal for the upcoming generations. While writing researcher Paper, secondary source of data collection is used. Thus researcher collected information from various available books and articles from magazines and also used on-line information.

Contribution of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj for the overall Development of Society -

1. Infrastructure -

Rajarshi during his supremacy of 28 years, developed region's basic infrastructural facilities under his public works department. It includes road development, railway development, irrigation facilities etc. He constructed Kaccha and Pakka roads, spread across the rural sector and connecting to the urban sector for helping the transportation of raw and finished goods in the state. During the famine period, Rajarshi undertook construction work of roads and provided employment to many people. As supplement to road development, Rajarshi undertook the work of railway in the year 1891, even before he became the ruler of the state because he knew that doors of development will be opened with the help of railways. Railways facilitated development of trade in the state as it became possible to import and export raw material and finished faster.

Recognizing the agricultural dependence of the state economy and to solve the problem of water supply in the state, Rajarshi developed several irrigation facilities in the state. Rajarshi constructed new dams at several places. Existing dams were repaired. The most important one was that of Radhanagari dam. He undertook this Radhanagari dam project even though state did not have that much economic strength.

2. Agriculture -

Rajarshi was aware that the entire state, either directly or indirectly, was dependent on agriculture. Hence he created "Victoria Memorial Fund" and helped farmers to provide loans in the state for agricultural development. Keeping in mind the importance of water, He first came out with an irrigation survey of the state and constructed several dams and wells in the state. He opposed the traditional way of doing agriculture and carried out several experiments of modernization of agriculture. For agriculture education, he started "The King Edward Agricultural Institute in the year 1912. During his Europe visit, he brought agricultural technology from there to India. He strongly opposed the fragmentation of land and made all the Inami lands individual. He tripled state expenditure on agriculture to develop

agricultural economy in the state.

3. Co-operation -

It is found the Rajarshi Sowed the seed of Co-operation for helping agriculture and industry in the state. In 1912, he made the co-operative legislation applicable to the entire state and cooperative societies act was made applicable to Kolhapur from 1st June 1913. He exempted registration fee and stamp duty for cooperative societies. Thus, the evaluation of co-operative movement spread in Maharashtra today dates back to Rajarshi's era.

4. Industry -

Rajarshi knew that the development of agriculture would not speed up without the development of industries. Hence, he paid attention to the industrial development. He inspired and helped small and big industries in all parts of the state and while doing this he followed policy of industrial decentralization. He started Shahapuri Market to provide fair market to the industrial products. An arrangement for industrial education was made by running "Jaysingrao Ghatage Technical institute" and also setting up Rajaram industrial School. He promoted joint industrial sector, public and private sector industries in the state for decentralization of profit and for industrialization of the state. He facilitated industrial decentralization so as to avoid the harmful effects of centralization. He helped in establishing Shahu Mill, Shri Shahu Weavers Association, Shri Rajaram Weavers Association etc. he also provided land and protection to Shri. Korgaonkar in setting up ginning factory at Gadhinglaj.

5. Education -

It is found that Rajarshi was more interested in the spread of education than any other work. He knew that development of any country cannot take place without education. Hence, he made primary education free and compulsory in the state in July 1917 and also spent most part of total education expenditure on primary education. For education, he passed Education Cess Act in August 1918. He was also aware that providing only bookish education to students will not serve any purpose and therefore, with a view to provide practical education, he opened school like "Jaysingrao Ghatage

Technical Institute and Rajaram Industrial School" in the state. He also opened other school like Patil School, Purohit School, military School etc. in the state. For the education of poor and untouchable students, he opened nearly 25 hostels for different castes and made the provision of residence of untouchable students. He also started scholarships for poor and educational institutes. He gave huge amount of donations to land given by him as donation free of cost.

Conclusion -

It is observed from the review that economic decisions taken by Rajarshi were based on scientific approach. Rajarshi Shahu firmly believed that only with the help of education casteless society will be created. To achieve this goal he was engaged in the work of spreading education throughout his life. For this purpose he started many schools and colleges, hostels, scholarships especially for poor and untouchables etc. He knew that the development of agriculture would not speed up without the development of industries. Hence, he paid attention to the industrial development. He inspired and helped small and big industries in all parts of the state and while doing this he followed policy of industrial decentralization. He sowed the seed of Co-operation for helping agriculture and industry in the state. Thus, considering the overall work of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj, his strategic decisions, he contributed in the form of variety of different socio economic aspects for the development of common man. We can say that Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj worked for society, lived for society and thought of Society for up-liftmen of downtrodden masses.

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