CHAPTER VII: PATEHSINGRAO GAEXWAD I
Fatehsingrao came into prominence during the succession dispute. All those years when Sayajirao was the lawful successor Fatehsingrao acted as his Regent. During all those events of succession dispute Fatehsingrao looked after the administration of the Gaekwad dominions and consolidated his powers. Actually he was the person who took all the decisions and made policies in Sayajirao's name. As a Regent he had complete authority in his hand to administer the Gaekwad dominions. The dispute for the peshwaship at Poona forced Raghunath Rao to take shelter with Govindrao in Gujarat and ask assistance from the English. The English interfered in Raghunath Rao's affairs and came on terms with him keeping their territorial interests in mind. The subsequent interference of the Governor General forced the English to leave Raghunath Rao's interest and enter into an alliance with the Poona Government. Fatehsingrao had his own interests of the dominions and hence while the treaty of Purandhar was signed he made certain objections the details of which are discussed below.

**Treaty of Purandhar.**

With the interference of Warren Hastings, the Governor General of India, the hostilities between English and Poona Government ceased. The Bombay Government negotiated for peace.\(^1\)

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with the Poona Government. As a result, the treaty of Purandhar was signed on 1st March 1776. By one of the articles of this treaty, it was agreed that the English would return the territories they had conquered in Gujarat and would cease to interfere in the Gaekwad affairs. Gaekwad did not gain any thing/particular by this treaty, on the contrary, by the IVth and Vth article of the treaty, Poona Government agreed to give the English all the rights in the share of Broach pargana, which belonged to the Gaekwad. Over and above it, territory worth three lakhs of rupees near Broach was also granted to the English. The parganas of Chikli, Koral, Variav, three villages in the pargana of Chorasi and the village of Batta were to continue in the possession of the English as a security, till the 'Sanads' for the territory worth three lakhs were made over to the English. These places were ceded over to the English by the Gaekwad earlier for their mediation for settling a treaty between Raghunath Rao and Fatehsingrao.

After the conclusion of the treaty of Purandhar, Fatehsingrao argued that Broach revenues were surrendered to the English without his consent. Fatehsingrao objected that

2. B.P.D. File No.11, from the proceedings of the Govt.Yr.1777.
   Extract from a letter from the Govt. of Bombay to Col.Upton, dt.21.9.1776.
4. Ibid. File No.1, p.391, para 10 of the letter.
Poona Government was not vested with any power to alienate the Gaekwad possessions. The objection was sustained and by the VIIth article of the treaty, it was agreed that the country ceded by Fatehsingrao Gaekwad would be restored to the Gaekwad provided they could prove that they did not possess power or authority to make such cessions.¹

This VIIth article was well framed in the interest of both parties viz. the English and the Poona Durbar. In case Gaekwad could prove that they had no power to grant land without Peshwa's permission the precedence may prove dangerous and unfavourable to Fatehsingrao. On the other hand if he did not prove it, he would lose his ceded districts to the English. Thus Gaekwad pleaded his case from another angle that, he had given these districts on the condition that Raghunath Rao would help him to settle amicably against Govindrao. This settlement could not be achieved.¹ The grant of these districts to the English was for their mediation in arranging an alliance between Gaekwad and Raghunath Rao. But this mediation which Fatehsingrao purchased did not have the desired effect. Not only his districts were to be returned

1. Treaties Vol.VI, No.VI, p. 27
H.S.B.S.R. Letter No.57 dated 1.3.1776.
2. B.P.D. File No.1, p.341. from the letter to Upton from the Govt. of Bombay, dated 27th April 1776.
From Hornby to Upton, that Fatehsingrao represented for the restoration of his district as conditions of the treaty between him and Raghunath Rao were not fulfilled. He claims that ministers have no power to alienate his possessions.
to him but the money he was forced to pay at Baroda to Col. Keating should also be returned. Gaekwad could not recover either ceded districts or the money paid as a condition of the treaty made with Raghunath Rao in 1775, which was later annulled by the treaty of Purandhar. Though the treaty of Purandhar was finally signed and the peace was restored, yet Bombay Government was secretly giving assurances to Raghunath Rao\textsuperscript{1}. Poona Government made complaints to this effect to the Governor General\textsuperscript{2}.

It has been discussed in the earlier chapter that the differences arising from the Governor General's policy with the Bombay Governor on the issue of the treaty with Raghunath Rao in 1775, prompted the Bombay Government to approach to Court of Directors in England for their opinion. Bombay Government got the approval from the Court of Directors regarding their policy towards the Marathas. The Court of Directors supported the Bombay Government in their war against the Poona ministers\textsuperscript{3}. By that time treaty of Purandhar had already been signed in 1776 and English were bound to honour it. Still

\begin{enumerate}
\item Selections F.D. Vol.II, pp. 573 & 574.
Wallace, pp. 55-56.
\item Sardesai Vol.III, p.77.
\item G.B. Vol.II, p.337. Despatch of 1st April 1775.
\end{enumerate}
Raghunath Rao was given fresh assurances for the English assistance and a secret pact for it was made with him. Hastings also agreed to send a detachment of troops from Calcutta to Bombay which would be of great advantage in Raghunath Rao's affairs. Diplomatically Hastings requested Poona Government to grant the passage for his battalion through the Maratha territory pretending that these troops were sent to counteract French designs. This request was not granted on the basis of earlier precedence. The English were sending their forces earlier taking the sea route from Calcutta to Bombay. Inspite of the refusal, English troops forced their way through the Maratha territories. Dissensions among Poona ministers had already started by then.

Investiture of Sena Khas Khel to Fatehsingrao I.

The strategic importance of the parts of Gujarat held by Fatehsingrao, and Raghunath Rao's taking shelter in Gujarat with English made former's position very significant. Realising this importance Poona Government wanted the assistance of Fatehsingrao. The Poona Government came to an understanding with him, and recognised him as the lawful owner of the Gaekwad dominions in place of his brother Sayajirao, and bestowed upon him the title of Sena Khas Khel in 1778.²


From the extremely easy terms on which Fatehsingrao was recognised by the Peshwa, it became evident how greatly Gaekwad's alliance was sought by the Peshwa. A sum of only five lakhs of rupees was to be paid as Nazrana in lieu of the title of Sena Khas Khel, the smallest sum a Gaekwad ever paid for this investiture. Alongwith it a sum of rupees five and half lakhs was paid as arrears of tributes and another one lakh of rupees for the officials of the Poona durbar. Fatehsingrao again put his demand for the restoration of his share of Broach revenues, to which Peshwa agreed to negotiate with the English for its settlement. As long as the Peshwa's party feared that Fatehsingrao would join the English and till he actually did so, he was very lightly assessed. In return for Fatehsingrao's services against Raghunath Rao, his tributes and indemnity for service of troops was settled and it was decided that as long as the English were in Gujarat, no indemnity for service of troops would be demanded from him and four lakhs of rupees was fixed as his tribute. Govindrao's pretentions were finally set aside.

Convention of Vadgaon.

By 1778, the dissension amongst the Poona ministers became very evident. A party headed by Moroba made overtures to Raghunath Rao. Mostyn, the English agent at Poona encouraged

these dissension at the court of the Peshwa and made a common cause with Moroba, to restore Raghunath Rao on the 'gaddi'. But this plot was soon discovered and Moroba was taken to task.1 On 23rd November 1778 a force under the command of Col. Eagerton, started for Poona to conduct Raghunath Rao there. When it reached Talegaon, Poona forces resisted its advance and a battle was fought in which the English were defeated. On 16th January 1779 a convention was concluded at Vadgaon.3 The English agreed to surrender all their acquisitions of the Maratha territories made since 1772. Raghunath Rao surrendered himself unconditionally to Sindhia acknowledging Madhavrao II as the lawful heir of the Peshwa.4

After the setback of the English forces, Hastings tried to negotiate with the Marathas on fresh terms. Accordingly Col. Goddard was entrusted for negotiations on the basis of the treaty of Purandhar with an additional article by which French should not be allowed to form any establishment in the Maratha territory.5 If this alliance could not be made on the

2. Wallace, pp.56 & 57.
   Wallace, pp.56 & 57.
4. Ibid. p.79.
   Wallace, pp.57 & 59.
proposed terms, Bombay Government was authorised by the Governor General with the full powers to deal with the situation and was directed to increase its military resources. They could also promote the plan of the alliance with Fatehsingrao Gaekwad. This is to be noted that the alliance with the Gaekwad was to be made on the condition that the English would not give any assistance for the reconciliation of the domestic differences in the Gaekwad family and Fatehsingrao would be considered as the only acknowledged head of the state.

By the terms of the convention of Vadgaon, Raghunath Rao surrendered to Sindhia, and Poona Durbar decided to send him to his jagir at Jhansi, thus finishing a long time dispute. On his way to his jagir, he could manage his escape and reach Surat. The return of Raghunath Rao to Surat provided the English another opportunity to open hostilities against the Poona Government with the object of retrieving the disaster of Vadgaon. The Poona Government demanded the surrender of

Raghunath Rao and surrender of Salsette as the preliminaries of the new alliance, to which the English did not yield. Thus again started a war between the English and the Peshwa, Raghunath Rao being puppet in the hands of the English.

Fatehsingrao Gaekwad had earlier entered into an alliance with the Peshwa, by which he was recognised as Sena Khas Khel in 1778. The Poona Government considered this an added advantage in their position considering that the hostilities would be renewed with the English and the country under Gaekwad would be the theatre of war. At that time Fatehsingrao would be of great help. The English also thought it wise to detach Fatehsingrao from the Peshwa's side. And they were trying to persuade Fatehsingrao for an accommodation. Poona Government was also in know of it. Fatehsingrao on the other hand knew the importance of his position and tried to take advantage of it. Knowing fully well that inspite of all the advantages he enjoyed with the Poona court, he was still considered under the Poona Government. The English offered in release him from this dependence from the Poona Government, to help him to take possession of the Peshwa's territories in Gujarat and to bring


Shankeraji Narain informs Peshwa that English were endeavouring to win over Fatehsingrao Gaekwad.

H.S.B.S.R.

2. VolI, Letter Nos.76 & 84 & 129.
about a reconciliation with Govindrao provided he entered into an alliance with the English. Though at that moment the alliance did not materialise, but Fatehsingrao was tempted to join the English. As a result of the promise of these offers by the English, his defiant attitude towards Poona Government was obvious. Even with that attitude Fatehsingrao was in alliance with the Poona Durbar, simultaneously entertaining the overtures of an alliance with the English. In view of Gaekwads strong position in Gujarat and the strategic importance of the country he was holding, Peshwa was pretending confidence in him knowing fully well that Fatehsingrao was

Fatehsingrao informed Peshwa that Raghunath Rao with English and in league with Nawab of Khambhat (Cambay) was trying to create disturbances, so it is better if Peshwa should also send some troops to assist Fatehsingrao to subdue Raghunath Rao.

From Peshwa Govt. to Fatehsingrao acknowledging receipt of information given by him regarding the movements of the English and Raghunath Rao. The letter ends with an assertion of confidence in the Gaekwad.

From Visaji Appaji to Fatehsingrao informing forces being sent for his assistance and that he should also communicate his future plans and policy adopted to meet the nuisance of the English.

Ibid, letter No.97, dt.25.1.1780.
From Visaji Appaji to Fatehsingrao it appears that by this time Peshwa was trying to show his fullest confidence in Fatehsingrao and depending upon him wholly in this company where English were operating in Gujarat.

Wallace p.60.
entertaining overtures of an alliance with the English and might change side any moment. Still just to hold him to his side the Peshwa was trying all possible measures. The Peshwa thought that it would not be difficult for them to check the English advance with the assistance of Fatehsingrao.

Treaty of Kundila.

As the negotiations of peace could not be settled between the English and the Poona Government, English opened a correspondence with Fatehsingrao in quite earnest. Fatehsingrao too was willing to negotiate a treaty offensive and defensive with the English.

A treaty was signed on 26th January 1780 at Kundila, near Dabhoi. The terms of the treaty were that the province north to river Mahi, including the Peshwa's share was to be given to Fatehsingrao and in return he would cede his share of the districts south of Broach city along with the pargana of Sinor to the English. The tributes due to the Peshwa were to be withheld and he would send 5000 horses to join General Gaddard's army. The treaty was defensive against all the foreign enemies and offensive against the Peshwa. The contracting parties were to hold sole authority over their own share

B.P.D. File No.11, pp.162-294.
of the province, independent of each other. The treaty was signed by Goddard on behalf of English and Fatehsingrao. Though it was approved by the Governor General but was never formally ratified by him.

A question arises when friendly relations were existing between the Peshwa and Fatehsingrao, why the latter chose to sign a treaty at Kundila with the English. It may be attributed firstly to the geographical setting of the Gaekwad dominions, whose territories were easily accessible to the English troops both by sea and by land. Secondly, Fatehsingrao inspite of the cordial relations with the Peshwa's Government\(^1\) was compelled by the pressure of events, to enter into an alliance with the English, as the eminent war was to take place in the territories of Gujarat. Thirdly Fatehsingrao's position with the Peshwa was of a dependent nature. He had to pay an annual subsidy as tribute, which he did not want to furnish. As a result of it huge arrears had accumulated\(^2\). Entering into this alliance with the English, Fatehsingrao would have become independent of the Peshwa. In doing so he as well as his successors would have been released of not paying any tribute to the Peshwa. This was a long aspiration of his ancestors too. English on the other hand too secured their position\(^3\)

in Gujarat by entering into this alliance with the ruler of the place.

**English and Fatehsingrao I—joint campaign in Gujarat:**

A fresh campaign was started as the alliance between Poona Government and the English could not be made. Fatehsingrao Gaekwad was won over by the English. After the peace treaty being finalised at Kundila between the English and Fatehsingrao in 1780, both planned a joint venture to capture possessions of the Peshwa in Gujarat. Ahmedabad was planned to be attacked jointly first to release it from the Peshwa's agent Apajirao Ganesh. General Goddard had already captured Dabhoi on 20th Jan. 1780. At Dabhoi, Fatehsingrao's forces joined the forces of Gen. Goddard. The conjoint army advanced towards Ahmedabad, which was taken by them on 15th Feb. 1780, and was handed over to the Gaekwad.

2. Wallace, pp.60 & 61.
   Letter from Goddard to President and Council at Bombay regarding capture of Ahmedabad.
   Both from Gajrabai, the daughter of Fatehsingrao expressing delight over his success in securing Ahmedabad.
   Ibid. Letter No.106.
   From Khanderao Gaekwad of Kadi to Fatehsingrao expressing the joy over his securing Ahmedabad.
   Wallace, p.62.
Mahadji Sindhia earlier proposed to mediate the affairs between the English and the Poona ministers. But after the escape of Raghunath Rao Sindhia consented to oppose Gen. Goddard in Gujarat. The Maratha army under Sindhia and Holkar reached the neighbourhood of Baroda and encamped near Dabhoi round about March 1780. When Fatehsingrao and Gen. Goddard came to know about the army encamping near Baroda they sent their heavy baggage and artillery for safety to Khambhat (Cambay) and they themselves started from Ahmedabad to Baroda with light equipment to face the Poona army.

Genl. Goddard crossed the river Mahi at Vasad at the same time when Sindhia was camping there. Gen. Goddard tried twice to enter Sindhia's camp by surprise but could get partial success. The campaign ended without any decisive result. Sindhia too retreated back towards Pavagarh. The position of the English was strong in the province because of Fatehsingrao's support. The Poona Government was finding it difficult to pursue the war in the province whose chief was with the opposite party. Sindhia started negotiations with Gen. Goddard who also reciprocated Sindhia's friendly proposition and declared that English too wanted permanent peace and honourable

settlement. It seemed Sindhia wanted to gain sometime, so that he may be able to distract Fatehsingrao. But Sindhia could not induce him to leave the English and join the Peshwa. Fatehsingrao proved himself an effective and willing ally of the English in the defence of Gujarat. Though Sindhia's measures created some misunderstanding between Fatehsingrao and the English but later those were removed.

Failing in his efforts to get Fatehsingrao's cooperation, Mahadji Sindhia tried his overtures on Govindrao. Since Govindrao was not reconciled with his brother, he accepted Sindhia's proposals. Sindhia supplied him with money and troops and despatched him to Gujarat for taking possession of Baroda. This was a diversion which made Goddard's plans upset. Fatehsingrao remained at Baroda to guard his own capital and could not send any help to the English initially. But at the

   Ibid., p.108. In his note of 16th Aug. 1781, Governor General strongly recommended that the fortress of Ahmedabad should be surrendered to the entire charge and possession of Fatehsingrao. Till then the place was guarded by an English battalion as Goddard was taking precautions in regard to the rumours afloat that Fatehsingrao intended joining the ministerial party. The object was clarified when Goddard and Fatehsingrao met at the banks of the river Dhahdar. In that conference Fatehsingrao cleared his position.


end of the campaign Fatehsingrao was able to place a force under the command of his brother, Manajirao at the disposal of his ally.

Due to earlier setbacks, Sindhia wanted peaceful solution of the problem. The English were also eager for a lasting peace. Hence Sindhia made proposals on 16th March 1780 to the English that all the conquests made by English since 1st Jan. 1779 alongwith Ahmedabad, Gwalior and Bassein, should be returned to the Poona Government. Further more it was proposed to repudiate the pretensions of Raghunath Rao on being assured of a pension. If this was not agreed upon then a simple peace was to be made, each party retaining their acquisitions.

But the greatest obstacle to this arrangement was the necessity of restoring to the Peshwa his share of Ahmedabad which had already been made over to Fatehsingrao Gaekwad by the English as per terms of the Treaty of Kundila. Secondly the terms of proposal of peace suggested by Sindhia were also not acceptable to the English. They resolved to make strong efforts to have a hold on Bassein, the most coveted Maratha possession on the main land north of Bombay. Thus the talks failed for want of specific reply from either side.

Round about the same period a force under Col. Carnac threatened Sindhia's own dominions at Sirong in Malva which forced Sindhia to return back for the security of his own territories.
This left the Gujarat campaign in the hands of Gen. Goddard. Mahadji Sindhia, on his return, opened a front again against the English to make up his losses. But by then the English thought it prudent to conclude a peace treaty with the Marathas. Again the terms were offered. But this time these proposals were not acceptable to the Poona ministers. This paved the way for further hostilities. Emboldened by their success in Bassein campaign, the English decided again to march on to Poona to reinstate Raghunath Rao there. Goddard and Hartley occupied the Bhorghat on 9th February 1781. Maratha generals resolved to guerilla warfare, cutting the supply line of the English. Goddard found himself isolated at Khandala and when he found no hope for any success to gain access in Poona retreated to Bombay. This venture met the same fate as the preceding one of 1779. This failure of Goddard discouraged the English beyond measure.

**Treaty of Salbai.**

English came to know that a confederacy has been formed between the Peshwa, Haider Ali and Nizam. English thought it necessary to detach the Marathas from this confederacy to safeguard their position. While these plans were being made, Sindhia got defeated in a battle in Malwa which gave a big blow to Sindhia's ambitions. This made Sindhia to agree to mediate between the English and Poona durbar. It was a

favourable move for the English. Thus a treaty was concluded between the English and the Poona ministers at Salbai by the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia on 17th May 1782\(^1\). This was ratified by the Governor General on 6th June 1782 but signed by Poona, Government much later on 24th February 1783. The portions affecting Gaekwad were communicated to Fatehsingrao in a resolution dated 27th March 1783. The great difficulty in making this treaty was that it would entail Fatehsingrao to hand over Ahmedabad. The territories of Gaekwads which were in the hands of the English were to be returned to Fatehsingrao.

As per terms of the treaty of Kundila in 1780, it was settled that Fatehsingrao, would be free from the Peshwa's authority and the territories belonging to Peshwa in Gujarat would be divided between the English and the Gaekwad. The boundaries were settled. The territories north of Mahi would go to Fatehsingrao and that of south of Tapti to the English. It was also settled that the Gaekwad possessions in south of

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Tapti would also be replaced by an equivalent share from the Peshwa's territories situated in the north of Mahi. With reference to this adjustment, Ahmedabad was to be secured to the Gaekwad in lieu of their territories south of Tapti ceded to the English.

By the subsequent treaty of Salbhai, in 1782, English were to return back all the places belonging to Peshwa, which had been shared by the English and the Gaekwad. The main problem arose in the execution of this treaty regarding returning of Ahmedabad, which Fatehsingrao was not ready to leave\(^1\). However by July 1783, Gaekwad returned back Ahmedabad\(^2\) to the Peshwa and in exchange English returned to Gaekwad Sinor and Dabhoi. The district of Broach, which was earlier given to the English, Gaekwad claimed that it should be returned back to him. In addition to it, Koral, Chikli, Variav and Batta should also be returned back to him\(^3\). But the English did not yield to this claim and Gaekwad could not get back those territories.

Fatehsingrao gained practically nothing by the treaty of Salbhai. Rather the two wars between the Peshwa and the English which took place on the territory of Gaekwad made the affairs

of Gujarat more disturbed. It left Gaekwad into his old position. Although Gaekwad was released from the authority of Peshwa yet he had to submit to the terms of treaty. After much perturbations and conciliations the affairs of Gujarat settled down once again into the former position. The treaty of Salbai only helped in establishing tranquility in the province thus enabling Fatehsingrao to establish peace in his territory. He also got time to enforce administrative reforms and could settle the revenues.

Fatehsingrao in later years: Consolidation of Gujarat affairs.

It has been described earlier that in accordance to the article V & VI of the treaty of 1775, signed between Fatehsingrao and Raghunath Rao mediated by the English, Fatehsingrao ceded to the English his share of revenues of Broach together with parganas of Chikli, Variav and Koral. The settlement regarding Broach was confirmed by successive treaty of Purandhar in 1776 between English and the Poona Government. Regarding parganas of Chikli Variav and Koral it was left to the decided at a later date. After the settlement of the treaty of Kundila in 1780, the English got further territorial and financial advantages from Fatehsingrao. Special reference was made regarding Dabhoi and Sinor which were exchanged by Fatehsingrao

2. Ibid. Letter Nos.139, 140, 142, 145, 147 & 148.
in lieu of the Peshwa territories north of Mahi. Peshwa's contention was that Fatehsingrao had no independent right to cede any part of the territory to any party without the former's consent. Hence he demanded from the English the restoration of the territories ceded by Fatehsingrao together with restoration of Dabhoi and Sinor to the respective authorities. Earlier too, before the treaty of Kundila was signed, Fatehsingrao, himself had demanded from the English the restoration of the districts on the condition that the terms on which these were granted to English by the earlier treaty of 1775 were not fulfilled.

All the territories which the English secured by these successive treaties in these years, were of great importance to them. They were not inclined to relinquish them at any cost. They justified their possession by giving arguments that Fatehsingrao had equal independent right to grant his territories. The English argued that if the Gaekwads had no independent rights over their territories and if the whole of the Gaekwad possessions were at the will of Peshwa and needed his approval, then there was no need for Peshwa Balaji Bajirao into to have entered a treaty with Damajirao II as early as 1752. According to this treaty the Gaekwad possessions in Gujarat were divided equally half and half between the Peshwa and the Gaekwad. Still further the English gave another argument that the Peshwa did not make any objection when an alliance was made
between English and Fatehsingrao in 1775.

On the contrary Peshwa was asserting that earlier Gaekwads, Damajirao II and Sayajirao I had declared themselves subordinates to Poona Court. Fatehsingrao I had himself accepted the overlordship of Peshwa in 1778 when he was granted the title of Sena Khas Khel.

Thus after the ratification of the treaty of Kundila Fatehsingrao devoted his earlier period of his independent rule to restore back the territories ceded to the English. He tried to consolidate his administration and restore the revenues of the territories in a proper form. After the treaty of Salbai in 1782 between English and the Poona Government in which Fatehsingrao was a party, Fatehsingrao returned back to his original old position. He had restored all his territories which he possessed before the commencement of the conflict between the English, Peshwa and the Gaekwads. There was only one exceptions to this settlement and that was Broach. It was given to Sindhia by the English as a goodwill, and Fatehsingrao was to pay the tribute to the Poona Government as before, though the arrears were condoned.

During the last part of his rule he was undisturbed and managed his territories peacefully till his death in 1789. He spent lot of his time in dealing with Nawab of Surat and Khambhat (Cambay). He had already made good relations with
English who extended their full cooperation to him in dealing with his affairs of Surat and Khambhat (Cambay) with their Nawabs. The influence of the English on Fatehsingrao had been quite tremendous. This is evident from one of the letters, at one time Peshwa had to write to English in July 1785 in which former had requested the latter to mediate in settling a few pending affairs with Gaekwads.¹

The rule of Fatehsingrao after the treaty of Salbai till his death in Dec. 1789 had been without any major conflict. It was peaceful. Fatehsingrao as a man was always considered as wise and of moderate views. Circumstances did not allow him to extend the possessions of his family further, but he consolidated whatever he had already acquired.

Administrative and political abilities of Fatehsingrao:

Fatehsingrao is considered to be as one of the very shrewd and clever ruler of his time. From the political activities of Fatehsingrao discussed above, there is no doubt about his achievements. His prudence in getting the succession in his own name during the dispute is quite evident. Just after the death of his father, he being younger to Sayajirao had no chance of inheritance to the 'gaddi'. But he had an ambitious nature. He thought of siding his elder brother Sayajirao who

was considered to be a man of a weak nature. Fatehsingrao foresighted advantage in acting as a regent to look after the administration of the state. He could prove his administrative abilities in his time of regency. Virtually he had the control of the whole state in the name of his brother.

As an administrator Fatehsingrao managed the state very well concurrently consolidating his powers. He apprehended that Govindrao may create problems in the state any time. So he wanted to remain in his territory for the most of the period to protect against any subversive activity of Govindrao. Since Govindrao had a backing of the Maratha chiefs like Mahadji Sindhia, Malharrao Holkar and Raghunath Rao, Fatehsingrao had to be cautious in his moves. While he was at Poona to secure recognition of succession for his brother Sayajirao, he diplomatically took measure to strengthen himself against any possible onslaught of other interested parties in Gujarat. At this juncture Fatehsingrao's political shrewdness is worth commenting. He could convince the Poona court to withdraw his military contingent from Poona on a plea that it was needed in Gujarat for the protection of Gaekwad territories against any subversive designs of Govindrao. In lieu of that he agreed to pay an annual subsidy every year in cash and thus could avoid sending the army at Poona.

Fatehsingrao had foresightedness in anticipating the events to come. Due to the conflict between Raghunath Rao and
Peshwa for power? there was a shifting politics at Poona court. Fatehsingrao anticipated that Govindrao may assume succession in place of his brother any time due to these disturbances of the Poona court. This might change his fortune any moment. To safeguard his position he diplomatically entered into an alliance with the English.

The later developments in the succession conflicts of Gaekwad show the abilities of Fatehsingrao as a capable statesman. When English were trying to help Raghunath Rao in securing the Peshwaship at Poona, Fatehsingrao very well knew the staunch leaning of Govindrao towards Raghunath Rao. With his clever statesmanship Fatehsingrao kept the English as well as Raghunath Rao in an ambiguous position by not indicating his alliance to any of them. Thus Fatehsingrao avoided conflict from the ministerialists who were supporting him. As he was not certain which party viz. Raghunath Rao or the ministerialists was going to succeed in getting power at Poona, it was a political wise step of Fatehsingrao not to have antagonised any of the parties.

Fatehsingrao's political ability became further evident when he changed his alliance to the English, Govindrao and Raghunath Rao during the reverses the ministerialists suffered from the former's attacks. Earlier he was reluctant to have an alliance with Raghunath Rao and his party on easy terms. But
at this juncture he agreed to make an alliance with English on terms which were a little more favourable to English. This alliance was done in the interest to protect his territories in Gujarat.

In 1778 Poona ministers allured him with a title of Sena Khas Khel and made him successor to Sayajirao. This time the change of his alliance was to meet his own personal interests. Fatehsingrao had another change in his alliance and sided the English in 1780 in his interest of territorial gains and in obtaining independence from Peshwa's interferences. In this alliance even though he had to return to Peshwa all the territories which he had gained through the alliance with the English, he maintained good relations with English as well as with Peshwa.

Duplicity in his behaviour by changing sides very frequently is evident from the events occurring in those times. He may be blamed for inconsistency in his decisions in making alliances. But viewing from the angle of the changing events, it might have been logical for him to do so for his territorial interests. He cannot be outright condemned for all these frequent changes in his alliances. Had he remained faithful to only one party from the beginning to the end of the dispute, his fate would have been similar to Govindrao who had religiously sided Raghunath Rao. Looking to the final outcome of the
dispute, Govindrao could achieve nothing. On the other hand Fatehsingrao by his shrewd strategy could establish an independent rule. It has been reported by Forbes that Fatehsingrao's rule had been quite oppressive. These views of the English writer cannot be shared if one examines critically the political situation of that period. There was a constant disturbed state of affairs in Fatehsingrao's dominion due to Govindrao claiming the patrimony of the state. Besides, a second factor which created troubles in Fatehsingrao's state was the internal conflict between Raghunath Rao and Peshwa forcing the later to take shelter in Gujarat. Intermittent skirmishes took place in the land neighbouring Fatehsingrao territories. The worst sufferers of all these wars were the local inhabitants of the neighbouring areas. Forbes's opinion about Fatehsingrao's rule might have been based on interrogations and observations made from the local inhabitants whose verdict can be ignored in the light of the disturbed conditions in the area.

Reports of good administration of Fatehsingrao are also available. Much later after the period of Fatehsingrao's rule, the financial position of Anandrao deteriorated. In 1803 it has been reported that the state expenditure of Anandrao exceeded

"The migration from the Brodera purgunna, occasioned by Fatty Sihng's oppressive Government, added so much to the prosperity of the Dhubhoy district......". 
Ibid; p. 277.
"It was dreadful to think that the inhabitants of this earthly paradise groaned under the most oppressive disposition. Compared with the Government of the Brodera chieftain, a Mogul prince appears a noble character. Fatty Sihng completely reversed this benevolent portrait of the ancient hindu Rajas".
the revenue returns. When an scrutiny was made by the English, they have reported that during Fatehsingrao's rule the financial position of the state was very sound. The states expenditure at that time was within the return of the revenues thus indicating an efficient administration of Fatehsingrao.

In another report Forbes has criticised the personal behaviour of Fatehsingrao. He has been reported as "sordid, avarice, ambitions and discourteous" in comparison to Mughal rulers. This seems to be a very harsh remarks against his


"....requesting the honour of a visit at the Durbar. We accepted his invitation the same evening and were amused as usual with dancing girls, music, betal and Sherbat, and received the customary presents, but all in a very unprincely style compared with the Persian and Mughal entertainments at Cambay. Generally the Hindu princes are mean and sordid ......(in comparison with a Mughal prince) ...... avarice and ambition unite in both, but the courteous behaviour and dignified politeness of the Mughals are more engaging than the unpolished manners, united with the disagreeable pride of the Maratha Sardars. Futty Sihng was a remarkable instance of the blended characteristics of pride, avarice and a sordid disposition. As a prince he had many names and titles; the principal were Futty Sihag Row Guicawar, Shamsheer Bahadur. As head of the Guicawar family ...... the last appellation alludes to the powers of a military chieftain. Futty or Putteh Sihng, implies the 'Horn of Victory. The horn has always been a figurative expression in Asia for power and dignity .... How far this visible horn might have added to a princely appearance of Futty Sihng I cannot determine, without it, he certainly had no dignity, being short of stature of a dark complexion and mean appearance. He was then 40 years of age, had been married to several wives but had only one child....."
personal qualities. Available reports indicate that Fatehsingrao was a wise peace-loving person of moderate views and was very courteous in his behaviour. This is evident from one of the reports furnished by the Malet who came in contact with Fatehsingrao in 1785. He had a great appreciation for Fatehsingrao and has reported that Fatehsingrao had shown great courtesy to him during his visit and had praised his behaviour. Forbes contention regarding Fatehsingrao's behaviour may be attributed to Fatehsingrao's changing policies in alliances. Actually the circumstances forces Fatehsingrao to change sides in the interest of the state. During his alliance with the other party the English might not have appreciated his change. Forbes at that time might have made an adverse opinion regarding Fatehsingrao. Pride in any ruler is natural especially if one has power. Fatehsingrao's pride was natural as he had acquired sufficient power during his regime.

1. Selections, M.S., Vol. I, p. 492. C.W. Malet, who was a chief of the English factory at Cambay and later became the Resident in the Poona court, has reported in his diary, that he had received a very cordial message from Fatehsingrao on his arrival at Baroda and on 23rd March 1785. Fatehsingrao and his brother Manaji came to meet him. Gaekwad showed a great respect and sincerity towards the English company and particularly insisted on his personal regards for the Governor. Contents of the letter written by Malet to Governor and company sent on 26.3.1785.