



Sword of Raghuji Bhonsle

Why in News?

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday inaugurated the seven-day exhibition where the newly obtained **sword of Maratha commander** [Shrimant Raje Raghuji Bhonsle](#) will be exhibited.



Key Points

- **Exhibition Details:** The exhibition will run from 18th-25th 2025 at the PL Deshpande Maharashtra Kala Academy and will include the sword and displays of **12 heritage forts listed as [UNESCO World Heritage sites](#)**.
- **Acquisition:** The Maharashtra government purchased the sword for Rs 45 crore at a London auction as part of a broader initiative to **reclaim historical artefacts** connected to the Maratha empire.

- The government has reclaimed important artifacts like the '**wagh nakh**' (used by **Shivaji Maharaj**) and is working on building memorials for Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj outside Maharashtra, with an initial project underway in **Agra, Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Significance of Sword: Raghuji Bhosale** was a **prominent Maratha commander** and the founder of the **Nagpur Bhosale dynasty**.
 - The 18th-century Maratha-style 'firangi' sword combines a European blade with an Indian hilt, showcasing intricate ornamentation, **including gold inlay koftgiri work**.
 - The spine of the blade features an inscription in **Devanagari script**, connecting it to Raghuji Bhosale's title given by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.
 - The sword was used during military campaigns in the 18th century, including **battles against the Nawab of Bengal (1745 and 1755)** and in regions like **Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and southern India**.

Raghuji Bhosale I (1695 - 1755)

- **Founder:** He was the **founder of the Nagpur Bhosale dynasty** and a prominent commander in the Maratha army during **Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj's** reign.
- **Title:** Impressed by his bravery and military strategy, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj conferred upon him the title '**Senasahib Subha**'.
- **Campaign:** He established control over **Chanda, Chhattisgarh, and Sambalpur** and defeated the **Nawabs of Cuddapah and Kurnool**, thereby asserting Maratha military and political dominance in southern India.
 - His kingdom was abundant in iron and copper, which were used for both **manufacturing goods and crafting weapons**.
 - **In 1817**, the Nagpur Bhosales battled the **British East India Company** at **Sitabuldi (3rd Anglo-Maratha War (1817-19))**, and after the Company's victory, their treasury, including valuables, jewelry, and weapons, was looted.
 - **After Nagpur was annexed, the British also received tribute and gifts from the Bhosales over time.**
 - Experts believe that Raghuji Bhosale's sword **may have left India either as part of the war loot or as a gift to the British.**