# Author Introduction

THE SWORD OF TIPU SULTAN

# Bhagwan.S.Gidwani

**Bhagwan S. Gidwani** was born in 1923 in Karachi (Sindh), and remained there until Partition merged his province with Pakistan. He specialised in technical, economic, and legal fields of civil aviation; was counsel for India at the International Court of Justice (World Court) at The Hague; and negotiated India's air transport agreements with foreign governments; He has variously served as India's Additional Director General of Tourism; Director General of Civil Aviatin; Representative of India on ICAO Council, Montreal, (1979-81), and Director of Legal Bureau of ICAO (United Nations), Montreal (1981-84).

Gidwani's The Sword of Tipu Sultan, has been reprinted in forty-four editions and has sold more than 2,50,000 copies. He also assisted in writing script, screenplay and dialogues for the television serial based on the book which continues to run in India frequently every year and has also been telecast repeatedly in Europe, U.K., U.S.A. and West Asian countries.

**This historical novel** tells the story of Tipu Sultan---the man, the lover, the soldier, the prince, the king. It speaks of those who loved and betrayed him; of his interactions with charming ladies and brilliant men; of his greatness and of the craftiness of his contemporaries; of the wit and folly of his times; and of the struggle of men and ideas in the march of history. Based on extensive research, The Sword of Tipu Sultan is an original contribution to historical literature which gives insights into the character of its hero, and the period in which he lived.

Tipu, maligned by historians as a cruel and bigoted ruler, emerges here as a humane, enlightened ruler who believed that God is not confined to any one religion and that all religions therefore deserve equal respect. He was opposed to colonialism, welcomed the American Declaration of Independence and applauded the spirit of the French Revolution. The author establishes him as the first among modern Indian nationalists who knew that India was weakened not by outside powers but the decadence and disunity within.

A vivid portrayal of the drama of Tipu's times, The Sword of Tipu Sultan captures the amazing spirit of the man who, in the midst of disaster, lost neither his dignity nor his faith. He chose to court death when he could have saved himself, for he firmly believed that his sacrifice would serve as an example for the future generations of India.

# Tipu Sultan

Tipu Sultan was born on 20th November in 1750. The birthplace of Tipu Sultan is Devanahalli in the rural district of Bengaluru which is located 33 km to the north of the city of Bengaluru. **The real name of Tipu Sultan was Sultan Fateh Ali Sahab** and he was named after the saint called **Tipu Mastan Aulia in Arcot**. Hyder Ali was the father of Tipu Sultan and he was the military officer who served the kingdom of Mysore and then became the de facto ruler of the province in 1761.

Fatima Fakhr-un-Nisa was the mother of Tipu Sultan. Though Hyder Ali was illiterate, he made it a point to ensure that his eldest son got the prince’s education plus early exposure to the military as well as political affairs. Tipu Sultan got an early education in various subjects including Arabic, Urdu, Persian, and Kannada. Besides this, Tipu Sultan also learned Quran, Islamic Jurisprudence, shooting, fencing, and riding from capable teachers who were appointed by Hyder Ali.

Tipu Sultan was handed over the command to important military and diplomatic missions when he was just 17 years of age. Tipu Sultan was the right-hand man of his father in the wars and this helped Hyder Ali capture the thrones of southern India.

**Tipu Sultan is also popularly known as the Tiger of Mysore**. Historians have differing views on why the sultan of Mysore was called so. Some say that Tipu Sultan had come face-to- face with a tiger and killed it when he was on a hunting trip with a friend. According to the legend, the tiger pounced on his friend and killed him. When Tipu Sultan tried to kill the animal, his gun did not work and his dagger fell on the ground. The tiger jumped on him and was about to maul him when Tipu picked up his dagger, killed the tiger with it and earned the name of "Tiger of Mysore".

According to other theories, Tipu Sultan's insignia bore a picture of a tiger and the uniform of his soldiers looked like tiger stripes. And, this fascination with the animal was the reason for him being called as the "Tiger of Mysore". However, some historians say that his bravery earned him the name. It is said that after hearing about his bravery, valour and skills, French commander-in-chief Napolean Bonaparte once sought an alliance with him.

# The features of the sword are:

* The sword is made up of Wootz steel
* The design of the sword includes the **head of the tiger** made up of gold and the hilt contained tiger stripes.
* The blade contains **no signs of blader's mark** but has certain inscriptions.
* The inscriptions present in the rosette indicate the names of four Caliphs, ‘God is great’ and ‘Muhammad’ in Arabic.
* The cartouche present below the rosette identifies as 'Tipu Sultan' as the owner of the sword.

# Tipu Sultan – Wars and Battles:

* Tipu Sultan fought many battles and wars against the British East India Company, Marathas, rulers of Travancore, Carnatic, Malabar, Bednore, Kodagu.
* Tipu fought against the **Marathas between** 1775 and 1779.
* Tipu had **signed a Peace treaty with the British** in 1784.
* The British attacked Tipu Sultan, when the ruler of Travancore was attacked by the army of Tipu Sultan. The ruler of Travancore was the ally of the British.
* In 1792, **Tipu signed the Treaty of Seringapatam (now known as Srirangapatna)** and he lost half of his dominion to the British.
* Battle of Pollilur or Battle of Perambakam, took place on 10 September 1780 at Pollilur near Conjeevaram, the city of Kanchipuram in present-day Tamil Nadu state, India, as part of the Second Anglo-Mysore War.
* Tipu **defeated Lt. Colonel William Baillie of the British East India Company i**n the Battle of Pollilur.

In 1799, three armies marched into Mysore: one from Bombay and two from the United Kingdom, one of which included Arthur Wellesley. During the Fourth Mysore War, they besieged Srirangapatna, the capital.The British East India Company had over 26,000 troops, while Tipu Sultan's forces numbered 30,000. Tipu Sultan's brother-in-law's betrayal in collaborating with the British and undermining the walls to make the British's journey easier. When the British broke through the city walls, Tipu Sultan was advised to flee through hidden

passages by French military advisors, but he declined. Tipu **Sultan was killed at the Srirangapatna Fort**. He was buried at the Gumbaz, next to his father's grave.

**After Tipu Sultan was defeated** by the British, the Mysore Kingdom was handed over to the Wodeyar Dynasty, but they were forced to get into the Subsidiary Alliance with the British.

Lord Wellesley devised the Subsidiary Alliance in 1798.

As per the Subsidiary Alliance, the ally would be protected from the internal and external threats by the British.

The Kingdom, which gets into the Subsidiary Alliance with the British, has to station the British Army within their Kingdom.

The Indian rulers had to pay for the British Army. If there was a failure in making payments, then part of their territory will be taken over by the British.

The ruler of Hyderabad, Nawab of Awadh also lost their territories to the British due to their failure to make payments, as per Subsidiary Alliance.

The Indian ally could not enter into any sort of warfare or agreement without the permission of the British.

# Conclusion:

Tipu Sultan was a well-educated guy as well as a capable soldier. He was said to be a talented poet. His purpose was to free his country from the burden of colonial authority, and his vision was to make his people intelligent and rich. His brief but the turbulent reign was notable because he believed that the only life worth living was one of freedom, including not just political but also social, economic, and cultural liberty, as well as freedom from want, hunger, indifference, ignorance, and superstition.