HISTORY OF BIHAR
1740-1772
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by
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MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL, NEW DELHI
MUNSHIRAM MANOHARLAL
Oriental Publishers
54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 55
Sales Counter : 4416 Nai Sarak, Delhi 6

First Published : April, 1970
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Printed by United Press Service Co. at Shahdara Printing
Press, Naveen Shahdara, Delhi-32 and Published by
Devendra Jain for Munshiram Manoharial, New Delhi-55
to
My Parents
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INTRODUCTION

I have collected material after a careful scrutiny of different kinds of Original sources in English and Persian for the preparation of this book. The Contemporary historical works written in Persian, such as the *Siyar-Ul-Mutakherin, The Muzaffarnamah* and the *Khulasat-Ut-Tawarikh* are highly valuable sources. The records of the English East India Company published as well as unpublished have proved to be a mine of information.

The period from 1740 to 1772 is very significant in the history of Bihar. Alivardi, who had been acting as the Governor of Bihar since 1733, became the Nawab of Bengal in April, 1740 as the result of the battle of Giria. The East India Company stood forth as the Dewan of Bengal in 1772. So these two dates are important in the history of Bihar, which was a part of Bengal at that time.

After Aurangzeb’s death in 1707, the mighty and magnificent empire quickly fell to pieces. The energy of the nobles had been sapped by luxury. No strong leadership existed at the Centre capable either of conciliating or of holding in check the Rajputs, Sikhs and Marathas. In a short space of time, provincial governors broke away. Thus these get in the same process of disintegration. That had previously broken up the empire of the Sultanate of Delhi and the still earlier of Ashoka.

The nobles of the Moghul Empire became increasingly strong, each in his own Jagir. In 1724, the Chief Wazir of the Empire declared himself virtually as an independent ruler in the Deccan
and Nizam-Ul-Mulk became the first Nazam of Hyderabad. The province of Oudh, likewise became independent under a line of Nawabs who were later recognized as kings. Still farther to the East was the Nawab of Bengal, who ruled Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He appointed Governors for Bihar between 1707 and 1733. Fakhr-Ud-dowlah was the last independent Governor of Bihar, because after his dismissal it was governed by the Nawab of Bengal. Bihar was then annexed to Bengal Suba. From 1733, for about 200 years Bihar remained as an appanage of Bengal.

The battle of Giria made Alivardi the undisputed ruler of Bengal and Bihar. He appointed his nephew Zairuddin Ahmad as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. He was a young man of great merit and equal in every sense to the honour and the high office he enjoyed. Within a short time he completely subjugated all the unruly Zamindars of the land.

The most troublesome problem that confronted Zairuddin was of the Marathas and the Afghans. During much of this century, the Marathas seemed likely to bring all of India under their control and to become the effective successors of the Mughal Empire. By 1742, Bengal faced the Maratha invasion. Zairuddin went to Bengal to fight against the Marathas, who were defeated and fled away. He returned to Bihar. But soon he had to face a new danger from the Afghans, and was assassinated by them on the 13th January, 1748. This assassination was a terrible blow to Alivardi, who soon defeated them at the battle of Rani Sarai and subsequently Patna came under his control. Between 1742 to 1748, he had to fight against the Marathas and they were also defeated.

The period between 1757 and 1765 was marked by the growth of the British influence in Bengal. Siraj-ud-dowlah, who was the Nawab of Bengal, was the grandson of Alivardi. He was a weak administrator and was soon ousted from the throne as a result of the battle of Plassey. Consequently, Mir Jafar ascended the masnad of Bengal. Bihar was not prepared to accept all at once the verdict of the battle of Plassey. The Bihar Zamindars were ready to challenge the British power. But as Jagat Seth did not help the Bihar Zamindars, so the latter could not successfully oppose the British power.

About Shah Alam’s invasions of Bihar, I have collected some
new materials from certain categories of unpublished records of the East India Company. There were three successive invasions but Shah Alam was defeated in all invasions. After sometime the English got the Diwani in 1765. The actual boundary of Bihar in 1765 has been indicated.

Thus the Company became the virtual master of Bengal, and introduced certain administrative changes in Bihar. The Company received a huge amount of money as the revenue of Bihar in this period. On the one hand, the East India Company was getting a regular supply of money from Bihar; on the other hand the condition of the people of this province was becoming miserable. Notwithstanding the East India Company tried to bring some improvement in the Diwani collection by the appointment of the English supervisors in Bihar, but the Company could not be successful in its aim. In fact, it was more concerned about revenue than promotion of the welfare of the people.

A terrible famine devastated Bihar in 1770. The prices of the grains shot up and the people were dying in large numbers. Patna, Purnea, Champaran and Bhagalpur were badly effected by the famine. The selfish and defective policy of the Company aggravated the woes of the people.

The last portion deals with the Trial and Acquittal of Raja Shitab Roy, The Naib Nazim of Bihar, who was arrested as a result of the proclamation of the 18th May, 1772. He was put in jail and after sometime his trial started. The trial continued for one year and at last Shitab Roy was acquitted.

I now express gratitude for help and co-operation given by Shri Devendra Jain for the publication of this work. Furthermore to friends I owe much and tender my thanks to those from whose books I have collected the material for my work.

Shree Govind Mishra

Kathmandu
The 18th century is a dark and dismal period in the annals of India marked by political disorder, administrative breakdown, economic decline and moral and cultural degradation. The order and the unity that had been preserved for about three centuries in India by the Mughal rule disappeared after the death of Aurangzeb. The 18th century also is a tragic period in the history of India. This tragedy was caused by a number of disintegrating influences which followed as a logical sequel to the decline of central political authority and lack of sound governance. The disappearance of the political unity and the administrative order which followed the rapid decline of the Mughal empire generated various separatist tendencies which accelerated India’s decay in all fields.

The process of the decline had started from the reign of Aurangzeb. Throughout his reign he was engaged in the territorial expansion. Ever since 1679,¹ when Aurangzeb started for the conquest of Marwar, his reign was that of a long warfare. As a result of this hazardous expedition, the emperor had to spend a huge sum of money. All the revenue of the empire, the yield from the Jaziya tax income and the treasures of Agra and Delhi were spent over this warfare. There was no

money in the treasury. The army of the empire could not be paid their salary in time. Aurangzeb spent 25 years of his reign in the Deccan and his main ambition was to extend the Mughal suzerainty. But fate had ordained otherwise and Aurangzeb, in spite of his great labour and perseverance, could not be successful in destroying the enemies of the Mughal empire. There was a general exodus of men and materials from the north India to south India. The administration of the northern India was paralysed and it became a hot-bed of rebellions. Thus even before Aurangzeb closed his eyes on the 3rd of March, 1707, the Mughal empire had become weak. The process was accelerated after the death of Aurangzeb.

The war of succession began in no time. Aurangzeb had visualised this possibility and so he left a death-will\(^1\) in which he divided his empire among his three sons, Muazzam, Azam and Kam Baksh. Kam Baksh was given Bijapur and Hyderabad. Of the two capitals, Agra and Delhi, one was given to each brother. With the city of Agra went the Deccan Subahs, Malwa, Ahmadabad and Gujrat and with city of Delhi, the country of Kabul and all the remaining provinces.\(^2\) It would have been better for the future growth of the empire, had the three brothers accepted the arrangement made by his father. But it was not to be and as usual the sword was brought to decide the issue. The death-will was not respected and was thrown to the winds and the war started between Azam and Muazzam. Muazzam was victorious. He was 64 years old. He ascended the throne in June 1707 with the title of Bahadur Shah, also known as Shah Alam I. But Kam Baksh was still in the field. He was also defeated by Muazzam in 1707. Now all the claimants for the throne had been eliminated and Bahadur Shah ruled from 1708 to 1712.\(^3\)

Bahadur Shah was succeeded by Jahandar Shah, his fourth son (1712 to 13). Jahandar Shah was thoroughly incapable of running the Administration. Jahandar Shah wanted to destroy Farrukh-siyar, his rival’s son in order to make his path smooth. He sent an order to Jafar Khan, the Viceroy of Bengal, to

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send the prince Farrukh-siyar to the court. This order annoyed the Viceroy and he asked him to leave Bengal. Farrukh-siyar started from Rajmahal with his family and arrived at Azimabad. He took his abode in a caravan Sarai near a spot close to the waterside called Jafar Khan’s garden. In despair Farrukh-siyar implored help from Husain Ali Khan, the Governor. But the Governor had received an order from the emperor to arrest Farrukh-siyar. However, out of respect for Azim-ush-shan the former Governor of Bihar, Orissa and Bengal, he did not implement it. At last appealed by Farrukh-siyar’s mother, Husain Ali, the Governor of Bihar agreed to help him. Hasan Ali, the Deputy Governor of Allahabad, took up his cause. The Rajputs of Bhojpur\(^1\) also joined Farrukh-siyar. Assured of the help of these two brothers, he declared himself as the emperor.

Farrukh-siyar ruled from 1713 to 1719. He also was a weak and incapable king. The decline of the Mughal empire took a greater stride in the reign of Farrukh-siyar. The decline was marked by slackening of control not only over the remote provinces, but also over the whole administrative machinery and by the substitution\(^2\) of plans of farming the revenue of the convenient tracks. Then it was that, besides the Rajas, chief and ancient grantees, who had a real hold over the country were already spoken of as the Zamindars, other classes of persons employed as farmers\(^3\) and the same name and the same designation came to be applied to them also. The administration was carried on by the two Sayyid brothers, Abdullah and Husain Ali. The ancestors of the Sayyid brothers had migrated from Wasit\(^4\) in Mesopotamia. Abul Farah and his twelve sons who had come to India, settled at Patiala. After the death of Aurangzeb, these two brothers behaved like a kingmaker and dominated the entire political life of the empire. They helped one king against another and in this way they had been carrying on the administration of the empire. These two brothers murdered Farrukh-siyar in 1719. Then followed three

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boy-emperors, of whom, the first two died within a few months after their accession, while the third, Muhammad Shah, reigned from 1719 to 1748.

The same process of decline and dissolution continued unabated in the reign of Muhammad Shah. Not a single emperor after the death of Aurangzeb had been successful in arresting the decay of the empire. From 1720, the break-up of the empire took a more open\textsuperscript{1} form. Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had acted as the Viceroy of the Deccan from 1713 to 1714 and from 1720 to 1722, was appointed the Chief Minister of the empire in 1722. He tried to reform the abuses prevalent in the Mughal empire. The court politics was of such a low kind that Nizam-ul-Mulk could not be successful in his plan of reforming the administration and in utter disgust he started for the Deccan. In a short time the entire Mughal Deccan was brought under his control. He began to collect the revenue of the Deccan independent of the Delhi Government. This was the foundation of the present state of Hyderabad. Now the Deccan was lost to the Mughal empire. The emperor recognised the changed situation, pardoned the Nizam and confirmed\textsuperscript{2} him in the Viceroyalty of the Deccan. He was honoured with the title of Asaf Shah (June 1725).

Now province after province began to assert its independence. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk had been appointed as the Governor of Oudh on the 9th Sep., 1722. He converted that province into an independent state and only nominally called himself emperor.

Thus the Delhi empire was gradually becoming weak. All kings, from Bahadur Shah to Muhammad Shah were weak and incapable of carrying on administration. It was an age of autocracy and in this form of Government the rise and the fall of the empire was linked up with the character of the sovereigns. After the death of Aurangzeb, the character of the sovereigns of Delhi was open to condemnation and the Mughal empire was slowly proceeding towards its downfall.

Internal disorders and insolvency of this country excited the greed of Asiatic invaders like Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah

\textsuperscript{1} Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, p. 313.

Abdali. The wealth of the country had gone up in the 16th and 17th centuries. 'The wealth of Ind\textsuperscript{1} was the wonder and envy of other nations.' The Mughal Government had not adopted a strong policy to keep the country safe from the external danger. Two new sets of dangers hovered over the political horizon of India. The Persian invader Nadir Shah invaded India in 1739. He stayed at Delhi for 58\textsuperscript{2} days and after a general massacre, went away with a booty estimated at 32 millions sterling. Six times the Afghans burst through the passes under Ahmad Shah Durrani, plundering, slaughtering and then scornfully retiring to their homes. In 1738, Kabul, the last Afghan province of the Mughals, had been severed from Delhi. This was followed by several expeditions of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The cruelties inflicted upon Delhi and northern India during these six invasions form an appalling tale of bloodshed and wanton cruelty.

The result of Nadir Shah's invasion was disastrous to the empire. The invasion of Nadir Shah (1739) dealt a shattering blow at the imperial\textsuperscript{3} Government of Delhi, which had been really rotten at the core for several years past, though its outward semblance of power and dignity had hitherto deceived the world. It is true that Nadir Shah before his departure from India restored the emperor Muhammad Shah to his throne, but he could not infuse life into a dead and worn-out political institution. After Nadir's return, the Marathas established themselves in the southern and western provinces of the empire in absolute security. The Mughal sovereigns had no force, no general, left to offer them the least resistance. Emboldened by the helplessness of the Central Government, the Marathas bands began to penetrate repeatedly in Orissa, South-eastern Bihar and Bengal. The local Governor was helpless against their hordes and the emperor was not in a position to meet the Marathas in battle. The emperor took help from the Peshwa Baji Rao to defeat Raghuji.

The history of India, immediately, after the death of the emperor Aurangzeb, was considerably influenced by the

\textsuperscript{2} Hunter, \textit{Imperial Gazetteer}, pp. 314-315.
\textsuperscript{3} Journal of Bihar & Orissa, 1931, p. 339.
activities in the province of a number of political adventurers. Peace and order were wanting throughout the continent. Its history was a "complex subject in which personalities and nationalities, diversities, tragic murders and rapid changes at the heart of the Government were the fate of the Bengal Subah".

After Aurangzeb's death the hold of the central Mughal Government at Delhi upon the provincial administration became very loose and the local Governors began to assert their independence.

This happened in Bihar and Bengal also. Bengal gradually ceased to be a part of the Mughal empire.

During the reign of Aurangzeb, Bihar had the status of an independent administrative unit of the empire. The Bihar governors were in no way subordinate to the governor of Bengal. During Aurangzeb's reign, Daud Khan Qureshi was the first Governor of Bihar (1659-1664). The policy of appointing separate governors for Bihar was followed till the 47th year of Aurangzeb's reign. Shaista Khan governed Bengal from 1664 to 1677 and again from 1680 to 1688. He was succeeded by Ibrahim Khan (1689-97). The emperor Aurangzeb dismissed Ibrahim Khan and appointed his own grandson, Azim-ush-shan in his place in 1697 as a Viceroy of the three united provinces Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. "Azim-ush-shan was lazy and covetous." In July 1698, the English were permitted by the prince to purchase for the sum of Rs. 1600 from the existing holders the right of renting the three villages of Calcutta, Sutanati and Gobindpur. Bihar was placed under the charge of Azim-ush-shan from 1703.

At the time of the appointment, Azim-ush-shan was in the Deccan. Till the arrival of Azim-ush-shan from the Deccan, an interim arrangement was made and Zabardast Khan (the son of Ibrahim) discharged his duty of this office temporarily. Azim-ush-shan after his arrival came to Dacca.

In 1701 Aurangzeb appointed Mahomed Kadi as Diwan or financial representative. Mahomed Kadi belonged to a very poor family. Before coming to Bengal as Diwan, he had acted as the

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2 J.B.O.R.S. 1945, p. 244.
Diwan of Orissa. "The prudent management of the new Diwan soon raised Bengal to the higher degree of prosperity."1 Azim-ush-shan was the Governor of Bengal, but Murshid Quli did not allow him to interfere in revenue matters. This led to the outbreak of personal jealousy between them. Azim-ush-shan attempted to murder him, whereupon the emperor ordered Azim-ush-shan to come to Bihar. For the next three years (1704-1707), Azim-ush-shan lived at Patna.2 Patna took on a new shape and a new name. The emperor sanctioned the proposal of his favourite grands on to name Patna as a ‘Azimabad’ after himself. The prince made extensive repairs to the fort and renovated it thoroughly. Towards the end of 1706, Azim-ush-shan was recalled to the imperial court, leaving his son Farrukh-siyar, who had been acting as his Deputy at Dacca since 1703, to perform the duties of Governor in Bengal and Orissa. Leaving Sarbuland Khan as the Deputy Governor in Bihar Azim-ush-shan left for the Deccan. He received the news of Aurangzeb’s death at Kora and at once turned towards Delhi and Agra. It was due to his help and resources that Muazzam came out victorious in the war of succession. He ascended the throne under the name Bahadur Shah I (1707-1712). On the accession of Bahadur Shah, the Governorship of Allahabad also was conferred upon Azim-ush-shan in addition to those of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa.

He appointed Syed Husain Ali Khan his Naib or Deputy in Bihar (1708), while his brother Husan Ali Khan was sent to Allahabad. During the last years of his life, Azim-ush-shan lived with his father at Delhi.3 Throughout the reign of Bahadur Shah (which ended on the 17th February 1712), Azim-ush-shan officially remained the Subahdar of Bengal and, when he was killed (7th March 1712) and Jahandar Shah gained the throne, no new Subahdar reached this province: but Farrukh-siyar continued as Deputy Governor.

At the time of the death of Bahadur Shah I, Azim had anticipated a struggle for the throne and hence he had summoned Farrukh-siyar to return to his court. Bengal was made over to Izz-ud-daulah, Khan Alam. Farrukh-siyar had

1 Burns, Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, p. 312.
not gone far from Azimabad (Patna) when, on the 15th March 1712, he heard of Bahadur Shah's death and, on 21st March, without waiting for further information he proclaimed his father's accession. There was a civil war between Azim-ush-shan and his three brothers. Zulfiqar helped the brothers. On the 17th March, 1712, the battle was fought and Azim-ush-shan was defeated. A shot from a gun wounded the elephant on which Azim-ush-shan was seated and the wounded elephant rushed into the river. The elephant and the prince both disappeared into the river. Thus Azim-ush-shan was drowned.

Now Farrukh-siyar proclaimed himself as the emperor on April 1712. Farrukh-siyar appointed Sayyid Husain Ali as the Viceroy of Bihar, with permission to govern by a Deputy. According to the Jangnama of Sridhar or Murlidhar, Ghairat Khan, a nephew of the Sayyid Brothers was appointed Governor of Bihar (1712-1714). Sarbuland Khan was appointed Deputy Governor of the province for a second time in 1715. A strong and vigorous administrator as he was, he decided to suppress the deprivations of Sudhist Narayan, son of Kunwar Dhir, the famous Ujjainia Chief of Dumraon. He gathered a large army and proceeded towards Shahabad and defeated Sudhist Narayan. Sarbuland Khan was succeeded by Khan Zaman, the Governor of Oudh. According to Siyar, Nizam-ul-Mulk was offered the Governorship of Bihar sometime in 1719 by the Sayyid brothers and he even accepted it. But the palace intrigues of Muhammad Shah and the leaders of the party opposing the Sayyid brothers, finally brought matters to a head. Qutub-ul-Mulk was defeated and captured at the battle of Hasanpur (1720). Sayyid Nusrat Yar Khan, a relative of the Sayyid brothers, who had fought against them, was appointed Governor of Bihar. He did not probably come to Bihar himself but governed it through his Deputy, Abdul Rahim Khan. Nusrat Yar Khan died 1721 and was succeeded, according to the author of Tarikh-i-Muzaffari (A.D. 1800) by Aqidat Khan. He could not stay for long at Azimabad, because of his bad health. Marhamat Khan, formerly the Governor of Burhanpur, also managed the affairs of Bihar for sometime. But he probably died soon after and his brothers, Hadi Khan and Baqir Khan, continued to govern Bihar for sometime after his death.

The Governorship of Bihar passed through several hands
between 1720 to 1727. Fakhr-ud-dowlah succeeded Nasrat Yar Khan as the Governor of Bihar in 1727. He remained on this post for five years. Maharaja Raghav Sinha, was the king of Mithila. Mithila was not an independent unit of the empire. The Maharaja\(^1\) was completely subordinate to the Governor of Bihar.

Fakhr-ud-dowlah wanted to subjugate parganah Sher\(^2\) and Shergauty. He marched to the foot of the hills by way of Kunda\(^3\) in about 1730 A.D. He settled the parganah Sher upon Moazum Khan, son of Azeez Khan, the Rohilla. Moazum Khan soon died of a wound. The news of his death frightened Fakhr-ud-dowlah, who sent Agoury Koonjee Singh, canungo and through his mediation compromised for Rs. 12000 ready money from the gautwall of Ramgarh on account of Nagpur\(^4\) Raja and Rs. 5000 from the gautwall of Palamau.

The new Governor Fakhr-ud-dowlah was tactless and devoid of insight into the administrative matters. He was uneducated,\(^5\) arrogant, proud, self-indulgent, and could not therefore discharge his duties properly. He was haughty\(^6\) and prone to anger and at the same time so imprudent that he quarrelled with Shaikh Abdullah. Shaikh Abdullah was a prominent man of Azimabad. He conducted every sort of public business. He had been very resourceful. He was in touch with all the Zamindars of the province.

Fakhr-ud-dowlah became jealous of Shaikh Abdullah and he was bent upon his destruction. He created conditions which compelled the Shaikh to leave Patna. He had built his mud fort at Sevan\(^7\) (A sub-division of the district of Saran). Shaikh Abdullah finding his life in danger at Patna, came to Sevan and began to live there. But the foolish Governor Fakhr-ud-dowlah was still not satisfied. He wanted to arrest Shaikh. So

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\(^1\) Proceedings, I.H.R C., 1942, p. 87.
\(^2\) Area of Palamau.
\(^3\) Kunda estate lies in Chatra P.S. & is situated at the head of Dhane-gain pass leading to Gaya.
\(^4\) Journal of Historical Research, 1960, p. 6.
\(^5\) Datta, K.K., *Alivardi and His Times*, p. 10.
\(^7\) These mud forts now-a-days can be identified with the Purani Kila, which is in the Sevan town.
he crossed the Ganges to arrest him. Getting tired of the hostile attitude of the Governor, the Shaikh fled to the court of Oudh, where he was received warmly. Fakhr-ud-dowla returned to Patna and he was again involved in a quarrel with Mutaasen. He had been living at Patna with all the pomp and splendour of a noble man. He was the brother of Khan Dauran, who was a Minister of the Mughal empire. Fakhr-ud-dowla made his life miserable at Patna. He was disgusted so much with the tyrannical behaviour of the Governor that he went to Delhi. He narrated his experience of Patna to his brother and the Governor was discharged.  

A sanad has been found in the Persian papers of the Divisional Commissioner’s office at Patna. It is dated 1733. It refers to a grant of rent-free land to Shah Kalil of Sasaram by Fakhr-ud-dowla who was the last independent Governor of Bihar, because after his dismissal it was governed by the Nawab of Bengal. Bihar was then annexed to Bengal Suba and automatically placed under Shujauddin. From 1733, for about 200 years (till 1912) Bihar remained as an appanage of Bengal.

In the year 1733 the emperor Muhammad Shah appointed Samsam-ud-daulah Amir-ul-umara as the Nazim of Subah Bihar vice Fakhr-ud-dowla. Samsam-ud-daulah was the agent of Shujauddin at the imperial court at Delhi. His function was to promote the interest of his master at the court. Therefore he appointed Shujauddin as his agent in the Government of Bihar. When Shujaudin Khan received the sanad for the Governorship of Bihar, he requested the emperor to allow Ghulam Ali Khan, the comrade of Fakhr-ud-dowla to look after the administration of the province for a short time pending the arrival of a permanent Deputy Subahdar. He appointed Ahsanullah as his Deputy in the Suba but he died soon. Upon this Shujauddin wanted to send one of his sons, either Sarfaraz Khan or Muhammad Naqi, as his Deputy in Bihar.

Shuja Khan considered Bihar as an area which required

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2 Ibid., 273.
3 Datta, K.K., Alivardi and His Times, p. 17.
4 Muzaffarnamah, f. 6.
considerable vigilance and superintendence. Bihar bordered on Oudh, Allahabad and Barar. The mother of Sarfaraz Khan did not like to part with her only son; nor was the Nawab ready to send Muhammad Naqi Khan, who was born of a different mother. Shuja Khan, finding no other alternative decided to appoint Alivardi\(^1\) as his Deputy in Bihar. Alivardi at first declined, but on being repeatedly pressed he agreed. Haji Ahmad had also advised Shujauddin to appoint Alivardi\(^2\) as a Governor of Bihar. A military force was appointed to serve under him. Now Alivardi was directed to go to Azimabad. All were happy at the appointment of Alivardi except Sarfaraz Khan, the son of the Nawab. He told his father in the public Durbar that “he was warming and cherishing two snakes, that would sting him and his family to death”.\(^3\) Sarfaraz was right in his thinking and really Alivardi exterminated the Nawab’s family by his cunning policy. A few days before Alivardi received this new assignment, his youngest daughter Amina Begum married to his youngest nephew Zainuddin Ahmad Khan had given birth to a son. Alivardi called this grandson as Siraj-ud-dowla.

Alivardi reached Azimabad in 1733. He appointed Chintaman\(^4\) Das as the Diwan for the management of the Imperial revenue and Janki Ram as the Nawab’s personal Diwan. Alivardi focussed his attention upon the refractory Zamindars of the Suba. An unruly nobility is a source of danger to a state. So Alivardi concentrated his whole attention from the commencement of his administration of Bihar to suppress the turbulent Zamindars on both sides of the river Ganges\(^5\). Alivardi attacked the rebels of Bhojpur. The Zamindars of Bhojpur were disloyal to the Bengal Nawab and they lived in full freedom. They used to delay in paying the Government revenue. Raja Sunder\(^6\) Singh of Tikari and Kamgar Khan of Mayi and Narhat could not fight against Alivardi. They fled

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\(^1\) Alivardi and Haji Ahmad were brothers. They had come from Khorasan. They came to Cuttak in the court of Shujauddin.

\(^2\) *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 6.

\(^3\) Holwell, *I.H.E.* p. 67.

\(^4\) *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 7.


\(^6\) Riyaz, p. 296.
away to Ghazipur\(^1\) and came to terms with Alivardi. They paid the large revenue dues to them and after signing bonds that in future they would never commit misdeeds, returned to their homes. Alivardi returned victorious to his headquarters.

Alivardi then carried his arms against the Chukwaars, a brave and warlike Gentoo\(^2\) race, who possessed a tract of land at Sambho in the Begusarai sub-division of the Monghyr\(^3\) district. The Raja of this place had never paid tribute or acknowledged any subjection to the Governor of Bengal or indeed to the Mughal himself. The Raja laid everything that passed on the river by Monghyr under contribution and put the European settlements to an annual heavy expense of a large armament to escort their trade to and from Patna. The old brave Raja died in 1730 and was succeeded by his son, a youth of 17. This young prince familiar with the example set by several of the Bihar Rajas, after a short resistance submitted, acknowledged allegiance to the emperor and subjection to the Suba. An annual tribute was fixed and regularly paid for a period of four years—a place was fixed, at a distance of five miles from the capital of Sambho and thirty miles from the capital of the Chukwaars, where the prince every year met the Nawab's officer on a certain day, the one to pay, the other to receive the tribute and it was agreed that they should have only thirty attendants on each side.\(^4\) Alivardi not satisfied with this submission, wanted to uproot the Chukwaars Raja. The 20th of October 1735 was the date fixed to receive dues from the Raja. The officer who was deputed to receive the annual tribute from the Raja of Chukwaars, had been directed by the Nawab Alivardi to place four hundred men in the ambush, under the high banks of the river, near the place of the meeting. The prince and the Nawab's officer met at 9 o'clock and after exchange of common greetings, the Raja deposited the tribute and when the Raja was taking leave, the troops in the ambush rushed out and surrounded the Raja and his few soldiers. All the soldiers including the Raja were assassinated. Only one

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\(^1\) Muzaffarnamah, f. 7.
\(^2\) Hindu.
\(^3\) Riyaz, p. 296. Ghulam Husain has not mentioned the name of the place.
\(^4\) Holwell, IHE., p. 68.
soldier remained alive and he escaped on a fleet horse. The troops of the Nawab now entered the city, plundered it and then set fire to the whole areas. Now the whole Sambho was subjugated. These were the exploits that rendered the name of Alivardi Khan a terror\(^1\) to the neighbouring districts.

Alivardi next fell upon Dhruv Singh, the Raja of Bettia\(^2\) (1715-1763). Alivardi Khan deputed Nawab Shahamat Jang against the Raja. Alivardi Khan ordered Nawab Shahamat Jang to support him. The Raja of Bettia did not fight and he fled away from his fort to the distant hills. Alivardi Khan sent another expedition against Bhunara—19 miles off Bettia town. This Raja had asserted his independence.\(^3\) In the battle the Raja was defeated and made his submission. According to Muzaffarnamah, the Raja implored through the Rani and at her request, Alivardi allowed the Raja to return to his place. Alivardi then sent an army against Banjaras of Mahal Bettia. The Banjaras tribe used to assemble to the number of about 8000 horse and foot, leading a lac of oxen with them on the pretext of buying and selling rice. On whichever side they went, they used to commit plunder. They had plundered parts of Oudh, Gorakhpur, Hajipur and Bhunara. Alivardi on hearing of the news of their advance, ordered Diwan Chintaman Das with Hidayat Ali Khan and 4,000 horsemen under the command of Abdul Karim Khan to chastise this tribe.

The forces advanced rapidly. The Banjaras\(^4\) on hearing the name of Abdul Karim Khan, fled in terror to the hill of Makwani. There a battle was fought and the Banjaras took to flight towards the passes of the hill of Makwani. As the hill of Makwani was outside the realm of the emperor of Hindusthan, Abdul Karim Khan wrote to the Raja of the place: ‘If my prey escapes by these hill passes, know that I shall arrive in your country.’ He on receiving the message, closed the passes, preventing the escape of the rebels. The Khan entering the passes, took nearly 20,000 horse and foot with their mounts and arms captive and seized much booty.

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\(^1\) Holwell, *I.H.E.*, pp. 70-71.
\(^2\) Riyaz, p. 296.
\(^3\) *Bengal: Past and Present*, 1946-47, p. 67; *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 8.
\(^4\) *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 9.
At the time of returning Abdul Karim Khan received a letter from the Faujdar of Ghazipur stating that those men were traders of the Suba of Oudh and it was not proper to treat them ill. Abdul Karim Khan halted and wrote in reply: 'I am present with my captives. Come and take them.' He halted for a week but nobody came and so he marched to Patna. In no book has it been written that 4,000 troopers took 20,000 men captive with their horses and arms. 5,000 Banjaras were killed on the way and many of the wives of the party killed themselves by poison or the dagger. When they reached Alivardi Khan, some men of the tribe were killed, some thrown into prison, and many released.

Within a short time Alivardi restored order throughout the province. All unruly Zamindars were suppressed. Alivardi's vigorous administration of Bihar marked a turning point in his career, because he won the goodwill of his master by his achievement and his position became strong. In the course of these years, at the request of Shuja, Alivardi received from the emperor the lofty title of Mahabat Jang and a fringed palki.
CHAPTER TWO

ALIVARDI SEIZES
OF THE BENGAL MASNAD

Shujauddin breathed his last on the 13th of March 1739 and his son Sarfaraz ascended the Masnad of Bengal. The new Subahdar was devoid of character and ability. Excessive addiction to the pleasures of the harem impaired his energies and he could not develop intelligence, strength of character and manly spirit without which no ruler can ever pilot the ship of the state¹.

Alivardi's success in Bihar increased his ambition and he planned to usurp the Masnad of Bengal. Sarfaraz was a weak and luxurious king. Alivardi wanted to remove Sarfaraz Khan diplomatically. He wrote a private letter to Mutaman-ud-daulah at the imperial court, who enjoyed the confidence of the emperor Muhammad Shah, with a view to obtain a sanad granting him the Government of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He assured in the letter to send one crore of rupees over and above the annual tribute, and as much of the wealth of Sarfaraz as he could confiscate. By the middle of March² 1740, he

¹ Datta, K.K., *Alivardi and his Time*, p. 17.
obtained the imperial commission, permitting him to wrest the Government of Bengal from Sarfaraz.

With the accession of Sarfaraz, the court of Bengal became a centre of intrigue. It was due to Alivardi and Haji Ahmad that the family of Shujauddin had made a remarkable progress. But Sarfaraz became involved in the conspiracy engineered by Mir Murtaza, Haji Latif Ali Khan and Madan Ali Khan against Haji Ahmad. Sarfaraz Khan who could not make a distinction between right and wrong took from Haji Ahmad the seal of Dewan\(^1\) which had been with him from the time of Shujauddin and made it over to Mir Murtaza. The Nawab wanted also to deprive Ata-ullah-Khan, Haji Ahmad’s son-in-law, of the Faujdar of Rajmahal, in order to give it to his son-in-law, Hussain Mahamed Khan. Haji Ahmad used to write everything in an exaggerated way to his brother Alivardi Khan.

Not only this the Nawab ordered an inquiry into the management of the public revenue of Azimabad (Patna), since Alivardi’s appointment as Deputy Governor of Bihar. He also recalled the troops that had been with him for many years. All these acts were reported to Alivardi by Haji Ahmad\(^2\). Sarfaraz Khan was turning all his friends into bitter enemies. Alivardi and Haji Ahmad who had been so loyal to his family, now became his enemy. The Nawab’s relation with Jagat Seth, the great banker of Murshidabad, also ceased to be cordial, so he joined the conspiracy against the Nawab with Alivardi. Haji Ahmad\(^3\) met Jagat Seth and Alam Chand. The triumvirate thought: ‘that none could be secure in their lives, honour or property, while Sarfaraz remained,’\(^4\) ‘and so conspired to place Alivardi Khan on the throne.

By the middle of March 1740, Alivardi had received an order from the imperial court for wrestling the Government of Bengal from Sarfaraz. He proceeded towards Bengal by the end of March 1740, leaving Zainuddin, his nephew in the charge of

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\(^1\) Siyar, Vol. I, p. 329; Muzaffarnamah, f . 11-12; J.B.O.R.S., 1919, p. 223.
\(^4\) Holwell, I.H.E. p. 79.
Bihar. The soldiers were given to understand that they were going to Bhojpur. Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, the father of the historian Ghulam Husain was sent to govern Seres and Cotomba; (two parganas of South Bihar). His soldiers took an oath of fidelity to him. Starting from Waris Khan’s tank, he came to Jafar Khan’s garden, to the east of the Patna city. From Jafar Khan’s garden, he started for Murshidabad with 7,000 or 8,000 cavalry. After a forced march he arrived close to the border of Bengal near Colgong. From Colgong he passed Taillagarhy. Taillagarhy had a strong fortress at that time, which was situated at a distance of seven miles from Sahebganj. From there he came to Rajmahal. Uptil now Sarfaraz Khan did not know that Alivardi was coming with an army to oust him from the throne. From Rajmahal Alivardi wrote a letter to Sarfaraz Khan. In the letter it was stated that since after many affronts received by his brother Haji Ahmad, attempts had been made upon the honour and chastity of his family, so he had come to save his family from disgrace and humiliation. He wrote in the letter that Haji Ahmad should be permitted ‘to come to him with his family and dependants.’ Alivardi’s letter bewilder the Nawab Sarfaraz Khan. He threw Haji Ahmad into prison, but the general assembly consisting of Ministers and general officers, after a heated debate advised the Nawab to permit Haji Ahmad to join Alivardi. Jagat Seth and Alam Chand persuaded the Nawab to allow Haji Ahmad to leave the place. Mahmed Ghouss Khan spoke in the general assembly in this way; ‘Haji Ahmad is but a single individual, and nothing more. By his being in brother’s camp, I do not say he can either add to or detract anything from, the enemy’s strength’. Mahmed Ghouss Khan’s suggestion was unanimously approved, and Haji Ahmad was released and he instantly set out for his brother’s camp. He joined his brother’s camp with his family and followers at Rajmahal. Sarfaraz marched from

1 An extent nearly of nine miles along the bank of the Ganges.
2 Dutta, Times, p. 23. Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 7.

According to Muzaffarnamah, Alivardi wrote a letter to the Nawab stating that he wanted to place certain grievances before him, so Haji Ahmad might be sent to meet him, so that he might acquaint the Nawab with his grievances through him.
Murshidabad on 6th April and two days later reached Giria, on the eastern bank of the Bhagirathi, about twenty-five miles north west of his capital.

Alivardi Khan encamped on the opposite bank of the river. Meanwhile messages and messengers were continually passing and repassing between the two camps. Sarfaraz Khan liked to take Alivardi into his favour but Alivardi was disgusted with the rude behaviour of the Nawab. Alivardi wrote a letter to the Nawab in an unfriendly tone. The letter ran in this way: "In grateful remembrance of the favours received from your father once, I will never form any designs against you, but it is under condition only that you dismiss from your service those enemies of our family who by their rancorous suggestions have brought matters to that state of diffidence and disunion that draws to a crisis. Else, deliver them over to me, and if you are reverse to this also, then stand off, pitch your tent upon that eminence yonder, and from thence look at our fighting against each other. If I am victorious, I will certainly come to pay you my duty and if I am vanquished, you shall do with me whatever you shall think proper." Jagat Seth throughout the whole episode played against Sarfaraz Khan. Nothing came out of this negotiation and hostilities started at Giria, (10th April, 1740). Sarfaraz Khan was defeated and killed.

Alivardi's victory at Giria marked a turning point in his career. There remained no longer any formidable opponent to oppose his advance to Murshidabad, the then capital city of the province of Bengal. His occupation of the Bengal Masnad was now only a question of time.

The battle of Giria made Alivardi the undisputed ruler of Bengal and Bihar. Starting his career as an ordinary servant of Shujauddin, Alivardi now became the Subahdar of Bengal. The Deputy Governorship of Bihar was given to his youngest nephew Zainuddin. Abdul Karim Khan, the maternal uncle of the historian Ghulam Husain and a cousin of Alivardi was placed in charge of the Government of Tirhut and in addition to

3 Datta, Times, p. 35.
his duties as the revenue collector of the Parganahs of Bihar and Biswak.

After the battle of Giria, Murad Khan had been sent by the emperor of Delhi to receive the property of the deceased Nawab. He came first to Patna. Alivardi requested him to stay at Sikrigali and Alivardi handed over to him personally the property of 70 lacs, besides 7 lacs cash. On account of this, he received the sanad of rulership of Bengal. Zainuddin Ahmad Khan also got the title of Haibat Jang and Governorship of Azimabad. According to Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Alivardi delivered some lacs of rupees in money, and seventy lacs in jewels, with much gold and silver furniture, a quantity of precious stuffs, and a number of elephants and horses; all which having passed for the whole of the confiscation, he put a written account of it in that nobleman's hands, made him a present every way suitable to his rank and to the occasion, and sent him with great honours and many civilities.

**Haibat Jang becomes Deputy Governor of Bihar**

Zainuddin Ahmad, known as Haibat Jang was the son-in-law of Alivardi. He was the son of Haji Ahmad, the brother of Alivardi. Before the battle of Giria, Alivardi had declared him as his Deputy and now after the battle of Giria in 1740, he was appointed by Alivardi as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Alivardi now solicitated from the imperial Government for Zainuddin the title of Valiant, the Honour of the Empire, and the terrible in war together with the Mahi, the fringed palki, the kettle-drum and the standard.²

Zainuddin was a young man of great merit and equal in every sense to the honour and the high office he enjoyed. He, like his father-in-law Alivardi Khan, tried to establish peace throughout Bihar. He had some able officers with him like his Diwan Chintaman Das, Hidayat Ali Khan, father of the historian Ghulam Husain, Mahdi Nissar Khan, a brother of Hidayat Ali and Abdul Ali Khan a nephew of Hidayat Ali, Raja Sunder Singh of Tikari and the Zamindars of Narhat and

Samoy, Namdar Khan, Kamgar Khan, Rahmat Khan and Sardar Khan, who had been all recently converted to Islam, were in recognition of their past services to Alivardi, admitted into Zainuddin’s personal favour and friendship. He offered Hidayat Ali Khan the office of Paymaster of the province. He also conferred on Chintaman Das, the management of the finances of the whole province. He appointed Hassen Beg, the Governor of the castle of Monghyr.\(^1\) He suppressed the two tumultuous Zamindars of Shahabad, Bharat Singh and Udwant Singh Ujjainia\(^2\) (grandfather of Kunwar Singh). They were driven from their strongholds, their castles and habitations were destroyed, and the country was freed from their incursions and eternal violations.

Haibat Jang by his remarkable success established his reputation as a strong administrator. Within a short time he completely subjugated all the unruly Zamindars of the land. He got his able Afghan soldier Roshan Khan murdered\(^3\) on suspicion that he was in league with his enemy. At the same time, in another part of Bihar, Hidayat Ali Khan with the co-operation of Raja Sunder Singh and Raja Jaikisan\(^4\) Singh, both Zamindars of Palamau and the Zamindars of Seres and Cotomba brought under control the powerful Hindu Rajas of Ramgarh. Hidayat Ali Khan supported by such a confederacy besieged the fortress of Ramgarh and took it.

By 1742 Bengal faced the Maratha invasion. Raghunji Bhonsle, the independent chief of Nagpur and one of the most renowned commanders in the Maratha empire, had commissioned his Prime Minister Bhaskar Pandit to attack Bengal. By 1742, Bhaskar Pandit attacked Bengal. Alivardi, to save Bengal from this invasion, called on Zainuddin\(^5\) from Bihar. Alivardi wrote a letter to Zainuddin to come to Murshidabad. Zainuddin had just returned from Bhojpur and was in an embarrassing situation. Army arrears had mounted up and

\(^1\) Siyar, Vol. 1, p. 374.
\(^2\) Datta, *Times*, pp. 54-55.
\(^4\) Siyar, I, p. 375.
soldiers were not inclined to march anywhere. But Zainuddin wanted to: "repair by all means\(^1\) to the assistance of an uncle who was the author of the fortune of his family; that his character depended on his making haste to Bengal; but that he was at a loss how to satisfy the army for their arrears, and uneasy at his being obliged to leave behind a country lately conquered, and after all unsettled; he was also and was at a loss on whom to entrust the important task of governing the country in his absence, of collecting the revenues and of keeping the inhabitants quite." He told this fact to Hidayat Ali Khan and in the end he added: "I reckon upon your wisdom and abilities. Should you be able to open some expedient and extricate me out of my difficulties, you would lay me under the greatest obligations." Hidayat Ali Khan answered: "that he reckoned himself to be one of the men most attached to his family and person; and, that he would be ready to execute to the best of his abilities, such commands as he would lay upon him, as he felt the importance of the occasion, and would pride himself in his being able to lighten in that crisis, such part of his burthen, as would be allotted to him." The Governor pleased with this glimpse of hope answered: "That at present there were two articles that galled him exceedingly. The first was the discharging of such arrears as were due to the troops; a piece of justice, without which they would not suffer him to depart, and without which nothing could go forward. The second was the propriety of his leaving the Government in such able, trusty hands, as would put it in his power to appear before the Viceroy, his uncle, with such a number of troops and such a quantity of artillery, as would prove adequate to his station and rank." At last Hidayat Ali Khan became ready to clear off the dues\(^2\) of the soldiers. He also assured him that he would manage the affairs of the Government during his temporary absence. Now Zainuddin had no other difficulty. The problem of finance was solved and he with his army started for Murshidabad with Mahdi Nissar Khan and Abdul Ali Khan, paternal uncle and maternal grand-uncle respectively of Ghulam Husain. He was accompanied by 5,000 cavalry and 6,000 or 7,000

infantry. Haibat Jang was now proceeding to Bengal and the administration of Bihar was in the hands of Hidayat Ali Khan.¹ The Marathas were defeated on 27th September, 1742 and they fled away. Zainuddin returned to Bihar.

Now a new danger appeared. Mustafa Khan, the Afghan commander had helped Alivardi immensely at the time of the Maratha invasion. Alivardi had been successful in getting Bhaskar Pandit and his companions assassinated in 1744 and Mustafa Khan had been the chief instrument behind this assassination. Alivardi had assured Mustafa Khan at the time of murder of Bhaskar Pandit that he would declare him as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Mustafa Khan had taken part in this nefarious game under the temptation of this reward. The Maratha general with his companions was done away with, but Alivardi now shrank from fulfilling² his promise. Mustafa Khan in utter disgust resigned the service of Alivardi in 1745 and proceeded towards Patna. His plan was to assassinate Zainuddin Haibat Jang and then to declare himself as the Governor of Bihar. Mustafa Khan came near Patna.

Zainuddin Ahmad Khan, who was then in the district of Tirhut on the northern side of the Ganges, heard the news of the arrival of Mustafa Khan, the Afghan commander and he crossed river with his force and took up his residence in the garden of Jafar Khan. He wanted to sound the intention of Mustafa Khan, so he sent Haji Muhammad Khan alias Haji Alam, to Ghulam Mustafa Khan with this message: “If you want to take the city and province, show me the imperial sanad³ for it, if you want to go elsewhere I shall not obstruct you, follow your path by the outside of the city.” Ghulam Mustafa Khan retorted in a strong language: “By reason of their hostility to the faith, it is proper according to the Holy law, to destroy this party. According to the saying “the kingdom is to the victor, the suppression of this group does not demand a sanad. On the strength of what sanad your uncle authorised to seize Bengal and slay its Governor?”

Zainuddin had been warned by the Nawab Alivardi, when

³ Sarkar, J.N., Bengal Nawabs, p. 112.
Mustafa had started from Murshidabad in 1745, of the coming danger. At that time Haibat Jang was in Mahal Bhanwara of Tirhut. He had been asked by Alivardi to come to Murshidabad by the northern side of the Ganges, so as to avoid Mustafa's route. But contrary to Alivardi's advice, Zainuddin decided to fight against Mustafa Khan. He assembled about 14,000 soldiers. By March 14, 1745, Mustafa Khan had come near Patna and stayed in the mango-groves. Zainuddin's force was lying in Jafar Khan's garden, east of the Patna city. The battle between Zainuddin and the Afghans continued for eight days. On the last day of the fighting, Mustafa Khan received a bullet in his eyes and left the battlefield. He retreated through Mithapur, Naubatpur and Muhibalipur and came on the south-west wards to the Son river. Alivardi in the meanwhile had arrived from Murshidabad and joined the Governor in the pursuit of Mustafa Khan. He was pursued by the enemy as far as Ghazipur.

While starting from Bengal, Mustafa Khan had extended an invitation to Raghuji Bhonsle, the independent chief of Nagpur to attack Bengal. Now Raghuji Bhonsle had marched forward with his army. The news of the arrival of Raghuji encouraged Mustafa Khan to come out of Chunar with the intention of enriching himself with plunder. He arrived in the Shahabad district and entered the Zamindari of Udvant Singh Ujjainia, the chief of Jagdishpur. Zainuddin Haibat Jang received the news that Mustafa had come up to Jagdishpur. To enforce law and order, he started from Patna with 13,000 men, crossed the Son river at Koilwar, twelve miles south-west by south to Karhansi on the edge of the jungle of Jagdishpur. The armies of Mustafa Khan were lying near this place and the battle started on June 20, 1755. The number of Mustafa's forces had dwindled because he had no money to maintain such a large army. He was face to face with financial stringency. Notwithstanding this

1 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 34.
2 Sarkar, Bihar and Orissa, p. 64. According to Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, he had 5 to 6 thousand sawars with him.
3 Muzaffarnamah, f. 30. In Mahabat Jang, f. 34., It has not been mentioned that he received a bullet in his eyes. Mustafa Khan's defeat has been simply mentioned.
limitation, the battle started well for the Afghans; but fate was against them and Mustafa Khan was shot dead by a musket-ball. A soldier of Alivardi beheaded Mustafa, fixed the head on the point of a spear and exhibited it to the soldiers. Upon this the Afghans were seized with panic and they fled away from the battlefield to Magror under the leadership of Mustafa's son Murtaza. The Afghan menace to Bihar administration disappeared for the time being.

After the defection of Mustafa Khan, Alivardi felt that the remaining Afghan soldiers were not loyal to him. The Afghans had not co-operated with Alivardi in the struggle against Raghuji on the bank of the Son river in November, 1745. Besides, it was suspected that the Afghans had formed a secret alliance with Raghuji to oust Alivardi from the Masnad. Therefore Alivardi dismissed them in June 1746. The services of Shamshir Khan, Sardar Khan and six thousand of their followers were terminated. They were ordered to go to their homes in the Darbhanga district of north Bihar.

Zainuddin helped his uncle in his fight against the Marathas in 1742, and defeated Mustafa Khan in March 1745 and at last killed him in June 1745. These daring deeds created in him a sense of vanity. He began to overestimate his strength. He became over-ambitious and now he wanted to remove his old uncle from the Masnad. But it was essential for Zainuddin to recruit an additional force for the fulfilment of his desire. His eyes fell on Afghans. They had been dismissed by Alivardi and were passing their lives in their respective homes in Darbhanga. Zainuddin intended to take all the Afghans in his army. But that involved financial implications, so he sent a letter to Alivardi and wanted to know his views. He wrote in the letter that these Afghans were passing their times idly in Darbhanga. They had no source of livelihood. They constituted a formidable menace to the security of the province. He had

3 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 45.
4 Ibid.
not such force as to drive them out of his province. He suggested in the letter that the best solution of the problem would be to appoint 3,000 Afghans and their officers in the army; but that involved additional expenditure. If the Nawab could meet the additional expense\(^1\), then he might appoint the Afghans in his army.

Alivardi could not guess the real situation, and out of love for Zainuddin he agreed to defray the additional cost. Zainuddin was intimated accordingly. Now Zainuddin invited the Afghans to accept service under him. He sent his agent to Darbhanga\(^2\) to bring the Afghans to Patna. The Afghans did not trust Zainuddin; but for the time being they concealed their intentions and they wanted to know from Zainuddin the terms of service and pay. The Afghans were under the impression that Zainuddin wanted to murder them, and therefore he was in earnest to take them in his army. But Zainuddin was sincere in his proposal and in order to reassure them, he asked the Afghans to come to Hajipur. The Afghans were playing a double game and they were not sincere to Zainuddin. However they came to Hajipur on 16th December, 1747. They stayed for a fortnight at Hajipur and negotiations\(^3\) went on between the Afghans and Zainuddin. Zainuddin was so much engrossed with his future plan of assassinating his old uncle Alivardi that he came without any attendants to the Afghans camp at Hajipur\(^4\) in a boat. He was accompanied by his son Mirza Mehdy and two others. After sometime he returned to Patna. The Afghans came to Patna in January, 1748 and they halted at Jafar Khan’s garden. To placate the Afghans Zainuddin took an ill-advised step and ordered his own guards to be removed. From Jafar Khan’s garden to Chihil Satun the path was made clear. Zainuddin did all this only to convince the Afghans of his sincerity but he did not know that the Afghans were playing foul with him. The 13th January, 1748 was fixed the date for the interview between the Afghans and

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\(^3\) *Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang*, f. 47.
Zainuddin at Patna at Chihil Satun. Shamshir Khan, the Afghan commander had three or four thousand\(^1\) armed soldiers with him; Murad Sher Khan had 5,000 soldiers with him. The streets leading to the palace were filled up with the soldiers of Shamshir Khan, while the audience hall was filled with Murad's soldiers. Murad Sher Khan presented his soldiers first to Zainuddin. One by one, the soldiers took leave of the Governor. But they had planned beforehand to assassinate the Governor. Abdul Rashid Khan, at the time of parting from Zainuddin stabbed him. The hands of Abdur Rashid Khan began to shiver and Zainuddin could not be killed. But fate was against Zainuddin and soon Murad Sher struck a tragic blow and Zainuddin was cut into two. Thus Zainuddin,\(^2\) who intended to murder his old uncle, was paid back in his own coin. What happened to Patna, how the Afghan ruled there, will be narrated in the next Chapter.

**Afghan Usurpation of Patna**

During the mid-18th century, Darbhanga was a stronghold of the Afghans. The Afghans played a remarkable role in Bihar in this century. They had a glorious history in the past and they had once established their suzerainty over a greater part of Hindusthan, but after the death of Sher Shah, the period of disintegration had begun for the Afghans. In 1556 Akbar defeated them. This victory finally extinguished the different ruling houses of the Afghans throughout the whole Hindusthan. After that, they lost their independent status and were reduced to a servile position.

After 1556 the Afghans, under the authority of the Mughal empire, settled in different parts of India. The Afghan soldiers and captains were employed in the army of the Mughal and they fought in the time of Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb under the imperial banner. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Afghans went to Deccan to fight against the Marathas, Bijapur and Golkonda. They were like mercenary soldiers in the


Mughal’s army. The Afghans had no longer any home in India under a chief of their own race, so they did not possess a centre of political cohesion and a nucleus\(^1\) for their racial rally.

Taking advantage of the disintegration of the Mughal empire after Aurangzeb, the Afghans raised their head. They were seized with the idea of establishing their independent empire. Then they had already settled as peaceful landholders and captains of mercenary soldiers in Orissa, Sylhet, Darbhanga and Allahabad. The invasion of Nadir Shah, the Persian king, in 1739 clearly demonstrated to the people of Hindusthan the importance of the Mughal empire. This invasion tempted the Indian Afghans to carve out a principality for themselves. So they settled near Delhi.\(^2\)

Alivardi when he was the Deputy Governor of the province, had received valuable services from the Afghans of Bihar. He had also received help from the Afghans, when he became the Nawab of Bengal. Mustafa Khan, the most prominent Afghan general, had helped him considerably from the first invasion of the Maratha till the assassination\(^3\) of Bhaskar Pandit and his companions. Mustafa Khan had been the sole instrument behind the assassination of the Maratha general and his soldiers. He had executed this atrocious deed on the promise of Alivardi that he would confer upon him the post of the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Alivardi hesitated to fulfil his\(^4\) promise. He refused to abide by his own word. This enraged Mustafa Khan and he stopped attending the court.

Really Alivardi was not justified in his action. It would have been a proper thing for Alivardi, had he declared Mustafa Khan, the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Mustafa Khan’s relation with Alivardi deteriorated so much that an armed conflict between them seemed inevitable. Mustafa Khan had begun to think himself as powerful and as competent as Alivardi. He thought that if he continued to attend the court, he might share

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\(^2\) *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

\(^3\) Datta, *Times*, p. 120. Datta, K.K., *Fort William-India House Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 3.

the same fate as Bhaskar. Therefore he refused to attend the court and began to live in his own house surrounded by his retainers. Alivardi also took adequate measures for his own protection.

Tactful and cunning as Alivardi was, he followed the policy of divide and rule. He won over some Afghan generals to his side. Shamshir Khan, Rehem Khan and Sardar Khan now became the intimate friends of Alivardi. This new development perplexed Mustafa Khan and he resigned the service of Alivardi. The Nawab cleared off his dues of the army amounting to 17 crores. He left the capital in utter disgust in February, 1745 and started for Patna with the distinct purpose of wresting the Government from Zainuddin, the Deputy Governor of Bihar. He thought that if Alivardi could take the Subahdaree of Bengal by force, he could also wrest the Government of Bihar from Zainuddin. Thus he was prepared to fight against Haibat Jang. Mustafa Khan started from Murshidabad, reached Rajmahal, which was the boundary of Bihar at that time. He took some guns and elephants from the Faujdar of Rajmahal. From Rajmahal he came to Monghyr and occupied the fort. He then appeared near Patna (March 14th, 1745) in open rebellion, and put up his camp in the mango-grove lying south of the Patna city. Alivardi learnt the departure of Mustafa Khan for Patna and he was apprehensive that the battle might take place between Zainuddin and Mustafa Khan. Zainuddin was the most beloved of his relations and who in reality was: ‘the candle that enlightened the old age of his uncle and the taper that blazed out for the glory of his family and race.’

Alivardi sent him a secret letter and the letter contained an order to his nephew to come to him by the northern bank of the Ganga and to approach Bengal by the Purnea side and to consult with him about what was to be done. The order was: ‘calculated to prevent in the young man, a

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1 Sarkar, *Bihar and Orissa*, p. 62.
temptation to fight Mustafa Khan, for whose wide mouth, he apprehended, he might prove but one easy morsel. But Zainuddin did not accept the advice of Alivardi. He was prepared to defend the capital at all costs. He had just returned from Tirhut. He gathered an army. He called all his soldiers from the outposts of his dominion. All the local Zamindars and the rich men helped Zainuddin. Raja Sunder Singh, Namdar Khan of Narhat and Samoy, and Sardar Khan, as well as Kamgar Khan, Beshim Singh, Zamindar of Seres and Cotomba, Pahalwan Singh, and Surtur Singh, his brother, Zamindar of the country of Sasaram and Chainpur and Buhrut Singh, Zamindar of Arvul (Arwal), offered their services to Zainuddin. Orders were given to Ahmad Khan Coreishy, and Shah Amrul-lah, as well as Karim Khan, Ghulam Ali Khan and Khadim Hassen Khan to raise force for the occasion. In this way Zainuddin’s army swelled to 14,000 fighters in the short space of time. Zainuddin proceeded further. He had put his camp at Jafar Khan’s garden, east of the Patna city.

The army was divided into several sections, and each one of which was put under the orders of a commander. The first was Abdul Aaly Khan, the second was Ahmad Khan Coreishy, the third was Raja Kirat Chand, the fourth, Raja Ram Narayan, the fifth Khadim Hussein Khan and the sixth Nasir Ali Khan. All these were disposed with their brigades at the foot of the entrenchment or rampart, which they watched day and night. Mustafa Khan had divided his army in two brigades, one of which he gave in command to Buland Khan the Rohilla, whilst he kept the other to himself. The battle started and the Afghans were certain of their success but at that very moment a musket shot killed Mustafa Khan’s elephant driver. So Mustafa Khan came down from the elephant. But his action in dismounting produced exactly the effect that he wanted to avoid. The Afghan soldiers thought that their leader had been killed, and they fled away from the battlefield. From 21st March, the whole Afghan force began to retreat.

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1 Ibid., p. 446. Muzaffarnamah, f. 28.
3 Ibid., p. 449.
4 Sarkar, Bihar and Orissa, p. 65. Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 34.
Zainuddin, when informed of the retreat did not believe it to be true. He could not understand that such a danger could pass away so easily. They retreated through Naubatpur, Mithapur and Muhib\(^1\) Alipur and came southwards to the Son river. After the departure of Mustafa Khan from Murshidabad, Alivardi also started for Patna. He reached Patna, when Mustafa Khan had already retreated from the battlefield. He joined Haibat Jang in the pursuit against Mustafa Khan. Soon Mustafa Khan left Bihar. He was pursued as far as Ghazipur.\(^2\) Now he took shelter near the fort of Chunar in a countryside. Alivardi and Zainuddin returned to Patna in April 1745.

At the time of the flight from Murshidabad, Mustafa Khan had communicated his desire to Raghuji,\(^3\) the independent chief of Nagpur for an invasion on Bengal. So Raghuji Bhonsle attacked Bengal. This news emboldened Mustafa Khan to come out of Chunar. He wanted to give another battle to Zainuddin. Mustafa Khan came to Shahabad district, entered the Zamindary of Udwant Singh Ujjainia; the owner of Jagdishpur. Udwant Singh was hostile to the Governor of Bihar. Zainuddin Haibat Jang heard of this development but he was not the man to be daunted by this attack. It was a test of Zainuddin’s strength. He gathered an army of 13,000 men. He had two able officers with him, Sheh Din Mahmed and Rahim Khan. The whole army crossed the Son river by foot at Koilwar and came to Karhani on the edge of the jungle of Jagdishpur. The enemy was lying there and the battle started on June 20, 1745.

Mustafa’s force had dwindled. He had no money, so no new recruitment could be made. However the battle started. It appeared at the outset that the victory would go to the Afghans but just then the leader of the force, Mustafa Khan was shot\(^4\) by a musket ball. A soldier of the Nawab just then mounted on the elephant, cut\(^5\) off the head of Mustafa Khan, fixed it on the point of the spear and exposed it before the army. The whole

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\(^{2}\) Ibid., Sarkar, Bihar and Orissa, p. 65. Riyaz, p. 352. According to Riyaz, Mustafa Khan retreated to Jagdishpur.
\(^{3}\) Riyaz, p. 352.
\(^{5}\) Datta, K.K., Fort William-India House Correspondence., Vol. I, p. 6.
force fled to the village or Magror,\(^1\) 14 miles west of Chainpur on the bank of the river Karmanasa, under the leadership of Mustafa’s son Murtaza. Thus one great danger passed away from the province of Bihar.

Within a short time a second danger, more formidable than the first appeared. After the departure of Mustafa Khan, the rest of the Afghan soldiers were not sincere to their duties. They did not help Alivardi, when he was engaged in a battle with Raghuiji in November, 1745.\(^2\) They were said to have formed a secret alliance with Raghuiji for overthrowing Alivardi. The ultimate motive of the Afghans was to subjugate the province of Bihar in conjunction with the Marathas. Having no other alternative the Nawab dismissed\(^3\) two Afghan generals, Shamshir Khan and Sardar Khan with six thousand men in 1746. He further ordered them to retire to their homes in the Darbhanga\(^4\) district in Bihar. Then they went to Darbhanga.

Sometimes an individual begins to deem himself to be inevitable due to his power and ability. When one is seized with the idea of his own indispensability, he becomes proud of his achievements. This thought paves the way for his downfall. This happened with Zainuddin Haibat Jang. He had helped Alivardi during the first Maratha invasion. He had defeated Mustafa Khan in March 1745 and he had been able to kill Mustafa Khan in his second expedition. These daring deeds engendered in him a feeling of vanity. He began to consider himself as an equal to Alivardi. He began to think of usurping the Masnad of Bengal. He wanted to oust Alivardi\(^4\) from the position he held. To be successful in his ambition, he wanted to appoint three thousand Afghans in his army, Alivardi had discharged these Afghans on the ground of disloyalty to him. Zainuddin wrote a letter to Alivardi in which he suggested that he wanted to recruit three thousand Afghans in his army, provided he would meet the additional expense. Alivardi grudgingly\(^5\) consented and Zainuddin at his instruction sent his

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\(^1\) Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 45. Sarkar, Bihar and Orissa, p. 73.
\(^2\) Ibid., Riyaz, p. 355.
\(^3\) Ibid.


agents to Darbhanga to invite the Afghans to come to Patna. The Afghans viewed this proposal of Zainuddin with great suspicion. However, the Afghans came to Hajipur on 16th December, 1747 and the negotiations started between Zainuddin and the Afghans. Everything was settled and the Afghans came to Patna.

The 13th January, 1748\(^1\) was fixed for a ceremonial interview of the Afghan chief and their followers with Zainuddin in the Chihil Satun or Hall of audience (Hall of forty pillars) at Patna. The Afghans were not sincere to Zainuddin. All the Afghans, one by one were presented to Zainuddin. As everything was pre-arranged, Zainuddin was stabbed by Abdur Rashid Khan and cut into two by Murad Sher Khan. Thus Zainuddin perished at the hand of his faithless allies.\(^2\)

It was a terrible blow to Alivardi. The cruel fate had snatched away his able son-in-law in the closing years of his life. The Deputy Governor of Bihar had been paid back in his own coin by the Afghans. His wife Amina Begum was arrested and was put into prison. Her father Haji Ahmad was also arrested and they were put together. Thus Amina Begum was; for seventeen\(^3\) days forced to listen to the cries of her father-in-law, tortured by various horrible devices, to reveal the place where his treasure lay hidden. Then for well nigh a year she spent anxious days as a prisoner in the enemy’s camp\(^4\) ! Haji Ahmad\(^5\) met a very cruel end. The Afghans were under the impression that Haji Ahmad was responsible for the murder of their leader Mustafa Khan, so Shamshir Khan gave a hundred and one lashes from Khorah. He was placed on an ass,\(^6\) with his legs tied under the belly of the animal and his face painted half black and half white. He was led round the city. Then he was chained to the leg of an elephant, and met a cruel and lingering death.

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\(^1\) Datta, *Times*, p. 132.
\(^4\) Firminger, *Diaries of Three Surgeons of Patna*, p. 3.
\(^5\) *Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang*, f. 49. Riyaz, p. 357.
After the brutal murder of Zainuddin, the unfortunate city came under the Afghan rule. The city fell a prey to all the atrocities. The Afghan usurpation of Patna for full three months brought untold miseries on her people. The city was subjected to indiscriminate plundering and the people had to pass their days and nights in extreme agony and fear. The normal life of the citizens was disturbed. Mr. Firminger in his book “Diaries of Three Surgeons of Patna” draws a very pathetic picture of the place. He writes, “The pictures drawn of 1748 in that awful year of 1748 recall to remember that terrible description of our own motherland in the days of king Stephan when men said openly that Christ and his saints slept.” These “Rohilla Afghans sacked the city, and its suburbs, looted treasures, dishonoured women and children and desolated a whole world,” writes the author of Riyazu-us-Salatin.

The Afghans got immense wealth due to the murder of Zainuddin. Haji Ahmad had buried his treasure beneath the stone of the prophet’s footprint and the whole wealth was excavated by the Afghans. They got near about 70 lacs of rupees besides jewellery from the house of Haji Ahmad.

In addition to this huge amount, the Afghans got three lacs of rupees from Zainuddin's house. They plundered the city for three days and they committed every sort of ravage. They dishonoured the people of Patna to an unspeakable extent. They surrounded the houses of the great men of the city and robbed them. “Plunder and sack by the Ruhelas raged in the city and its environs, the life, property and family honour of multitudes were destroyed, and the sight of Doomsday appeared.”

As is natural, Alivardi was shocked to learn of the assassination of his son-in-law and the death of his brother. He also learnt about the arrest of his daughter Amina Begum with her children.

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2 Firminger, *Three Surgeons*, p. 3.
6 Bengal; Past and Present, 1921, p. 25. Siyar, Vol. II, p. 44.
The news of the murder of his son-in-law, widowhood of his daughter and the cruel end of Haji Ahmad, perplexed Alivardi. He lost all his joy in life. Life appeared to him barren; but Alivardi was made of a very strong metal. He was not daunted at the great misfortune of his life. The problem before him was to get his daughter Amina Begum released from the prison and to free Patna from the Afghan rule. Alivardi had just returned from the Maratha invasion. He was tired, but still he called a conference of the army and the whole army marched against the Afghans.

The Afghans had already visualised this possibility, and so they had made sufficient preparations for the fight. On 29th February, 1748 Alivardi marched towards Patna. In the course of the journey, Dost Baig Badakshi arrested a man, who was carrying letters from Ataullah Khan, Faujdar of Rajmahal and Bhagalpur to Shamshir Khan, the Afghan commander. These letters contained incitations and encouragement to continue the war against Alivardi and promise of support from Ataullah Khan. Alivardi reached Bhagalpur on the 17th of March. At Bhagalpur, the Maratha armies suddenly came out of the Jungles near Champanagar Nala and plundered a portion of the Nawab’s army and ran away to the jungles. He now advanced towards Monghyr. Saif Khan, the Governor of Purnea sent fifteen hundred men under Shaikh Din Muhammad. Shaikh Din Muhammad crossed the Ganges at Karagola (a station of N. E. Rly. near Katihar) and joined Alivardi at Sultanganj (a station of E. I. Rly. near Bhagalpur). Alivardi proceeded from Sultanganj to Monghyr. Alivardi had to face great difficulty due to Mir Habib’s activities, but he reached Monghyr. There he was met by Raja Sunder Singh, Zamindar of Tikari and Kamgar Khan, Zamindar of Narhat and Samoy.

1 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 50.
2 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 50. Datta, Times, p. 137.
3 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 51.
4 Datta, Times, p. 137.
5 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 51.
They joined the forces of Alivardi and started with him. The Afghans got the information that Alivardi was coming towards Bihar.

Now Shamshir Khan and Murad Sher Khan brought Amina Begum (the widow of the late Zainuddin) and her little daughter and son from the palace to their camp in an open bullock cart. The people of Azimabad condemned the Afghans at the maltreatment meted out to the family of Zainuddin. Murad Sher Khan had been acting as the head of the city of Patna and Shamshir Khan had encamped at Jafar Khan’s garden. Shamshir Khan was increasing the strength of his forces. Nearly 4,0000 horses and a smaller number of infantry were gathered. The Afghans marched towards Barh to oppose Alivardi, who was coming towards Patna. The strength of the Nawab’s army was 15,000 horse and 8,000 foot musketeers.

At Barh the Afghans received the information that Mir Habib and Janouji had reached Patna with the Maratha army. Shamshir Khan and Sardar Khan came to see the Maratha, in their camp near Patna. Mir Habib and Janouji bestowed rich Khilaut on Shamshir Khan and his colleague. Mir Habib thought that he had conferred on them thereby the Viceroyalty of Bihar. The next day Mir Habib returned the visit, upon an invitation from the Afghans who had prepared an entertainment. He was accompanied by Mirza Mahmood Saleh, Mohan Singh and some other persons of distinction. The Afghans requested them to take rest after the entertainment at the camp. They also sent a guard thither apparently to do him honour, but in reality for quite another purpose. The officers had orders to let Mir Habib repose leisurely, but on his desiring to return to his camp, they were to prevent him, and to represent their cases: “that the Afghans had engaged on that dangerous enterprise solely on his promises; that they had performed their own part, as men in his service, by killing Zain-uddin-Ahmad Khan; and were now to the number of fifty thousand horse and foot ready to fight the enemy, and all this, by his orders, and for his sake; but as the pay of the troops was in arrear by a vast balance, it was proper that he

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1 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 50 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 51.
should provide for their immediate relief by a sum of thirty 2
or forty lacs; after which he might return to his camp, to
find the remainder.” Mir Habib was perplexed but he was
extricated by his friend, Mirza Saleh. He engaged a number of
Maratha troopers to absent themselves from the Afghan camp
and then to return at full speed, crying that Alivardi Khan was
at hand, and that his vanguard was in pursuit of them. The
troopers did as they had been directed and filled the Afghan army
with tumult. Mir Habib intended to return to his camp, when
he was met by two Afghan generals who renewed their request
for money. At last Mir Habib agreed to pay down two lacs
of rupees for which a banker became his security. Now they
returned to their camp.

The battle of Rani Sarai 2 (on the south bank of the Ganges,
26 miles east of Patna) was fought on 28th April, 1748. The
strength of the Nawab’s army was insignificant in comparison
with that of the Afghans. The Maratha fell upon the left wing
of the Nawab’s army under Mir Habib. They made so
vigorous an attack that Siraj-ud-dowlah, whose elephant was
close to that of his uncle observed: “that some assistance
must be sent against those enemies immediately or it would
become too late to think of it.” Alivardi answered bluntly
with an inflamed face that he would deal with the Marathas
after the defeat of the Afghans. The battle had taken a serious
turn and Murad Sher Khan was killed. Soon Shamshir 3 Khan
was killed. The death of these two leaders decided the battle
in the favour of Alivardi. Sardar Khan was also killed. Alivardi
was victorious. He ordered the drums to be beaten. The
Maratha army, at this turn of events, fled away from the
battlefield. Alivardi stayed for a few days at Bankanthpur on
the bank of the Ganges. Then he proceeded to Patna and his
heart leapt with an ecstasy to find his daughter 4 and other
relatives alive.

1 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 52. Siyar, Vol. II, p. 51. Muzaffarnamah,
f. 53.
2 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 53. Riyaz, p. 358. Datta, K.K., Forz
Alivardi wanted to confiscate the property of the Afghans and he sent some of his men to Darbhanga. The family of Shamshir Khan had been at Bettia. Therefore Alivardi went personally to Bettia\(^1\) to bring over Shamshir Khan’s widow and his daughter. Contrary to the treatment of the Afghans meted out to the family of Zainuddin, Alivardi brought the two women in a decent way. He brought these ladies to rescue their honour from the consequences of a sudden\(^2\) revolution.

**Maratha Invasions**

The death of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb gave a golden opportunity to the Marathas for expansion in the Deccan as well as in the north. They proved a formidable foe to Aurangzeb and he could not suppress the Marathas during his lifetime. The successors of Aurangzeb were too weak to control the administration. They began to fight among themselves. So the Marathas planned to establish their supremacy throughout the whole Deccan.

After the death of Shivaji, the Maratha kings were not capable of running the administration. So the whole power was transferred in the hands of the Peshwa. The power of the Peshwa superseded that of the Maratha kings after 1707. Balaji Vishwanath was the first Peshwa. He was succeeded by Baji Rao\(^3\) in 1720. Baji Rao had formulated a plan of expansion of the Maratha power in the north. He had suggested his plan to his master Shahu in these significant words: “let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree (the Mughal empire); the branches will fall of themselves. Thus should Maratha flag fly from the Krishna to the Indus.”\(^4\) So the Maratha started on a career of expansion under Baji Rao. But after the death of Shivaji, the unity of Maharashtra had broken up and Maha-rastra had been divided into the different houses.

After the return of Nadir Shah in 1739, the Central Government of the country had become paralysed. It was the golden opportunity for the Marathas to turn their attention towards

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North India. Having an eye on the impotence of the Central Government, they fixed their attention towards Bengal. Even in Bengal there had been a political revolution, as the result of which Alivardi had become the Nawab. The Maratha king Shahu was weak. He had given a sanad to Raghují Bhonsle entrusting to him the eastern field of Bengal as his exclusive sphere for the levy of the Chauth. The actual words in the document are: “the Subahs of Lucknow, Maksudabad, Bundelkhand, Allahabad, Patna, Dacca and Bihar are made over as Raghují’s field of activity.” The action of the Maratha king led to the growth of the dispute between Raghují and the Peshwa, who also fixed his attention on the east.

Raghují Bhonsle was the independent chief of Nagpur. He wanted to dominate the affairs of Satara, but his attempt was foiled by Baji Rao. Raghují therefore sought an outlet for expansion towards the north-east of his dominion. Besides he had been persuaded to attack Bengal by the relatives of the dead Bengal Nawab Sarfaraz Khan. It might be as some contemporary Muslim writers have suggested that Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk persuaded Raghují to attack Bengal. They were making constant raids on the territory of Nizam-ul-Mulk. So Nizam-ul-Mulk instigated them to attack north India to divert their attention from his dominion in the south to the north-east, which at the same time would provide against any attempts on the part of Alivardi to extend his sphere of influence in the south. Raghují Bhonsle formed plans in consultations with Bhaskar Ram, his Prime Minister. A strong expedition was fitted out for marching into Orrisa and Bengal. It started on the Dassara day in 1741 with about forty thousand troops. Bhaskar Ram headed the party and left Nagpur in November. He marched through Ramgarh and plundered the

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district of Pachet (60 miles east of Ranchi). The Peshwa was opposed to Raghujī's expeditions and he left Poona at the end of 1741 with the object of checkmating Raghujī in Bengal. He proceeded towards Bengal, having secured the emperor's backing in his journey. Alivardi directed his Deputies of Purnea and Patna to march to his help. The Deputy of Purnea Saif Khan came with 5,000 soldiers and Zainuddin started for Murshidabad with Mahdi Nisar Khan and Abdul Ali Khan, paternal uncle and maternal grand-uncle of the historian Ghulam Husain, at the head of 5,000 cavalry and about 6,000 or 7,000 infantry. Bhaskar Ram was defeated and Alivardi succeeded in driving them beyond the Chilka lake, in December 1742.

The first Maratha incursion was beaten back by 1742 but a new calamity appeared over Bihar, which revealed the utter rottenness of the state of Delhi. At the time of Bhaskar's invasion, Alivardi had appealed to the Emperor Muhammad Shah for help. The Emperor had directed Safdar Jang, the Subahdar of Oudh to go and to protect the province of Bihar from the invasion and further to go to Bengal, if necessary. Safdar Jang was very ambitious. He wanted to lay hold on Bihar. He started from Faizabad with 6,000 Persian cavalry and 10,000 good Indian soldiers. A strong rumour was current in Patna that Safdar Jang was coming at the head of 40,000 men with a farman for the Subahdaree of Bengal. The English in Bengal believed it to be true and the Calcutta Council wrote a letter to the Court of Directors on the 8th January 1743; "From Patna we learn that Subah (Subahdar) of Oudh was advancing that way with 40,000 horse, reported that he had a Phirmaund (firman) for the Subahship of Bengal." Safdar Jang crossed the Ganges and came to Chunar. From there he proceeded to Patna.

The advance force of Safdar Jang created a panic at Patna.

6 Datta, Times, p. 80.
Zainuddin, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, was at that time in Bengal. His Deputy Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan was also seized with fear.

Murid Khan, who was an agent of the Delhi emperor was at that time, at Patna. He persuaded Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan to meet Safdar Jang. So he came to meet Safdar Jang at Maner a place of historic importance lying south-west of Patna. Safdar Jang received him politely. The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January 1743: "........ The King's Duan with the Naib of Patna in his camp. Chief and Council (of the English factory at Patna) obliged to furnish boats for Transporting his forces across Zoncuh river, his people commit outrages, are under no command, it is said he designs to give up the Nabob of Muxadavad's (Murshida-bad's) servant's Houses at Patna to plunder. Chief of Council obliged to increase peons to prevent insult."

Safdar Jang entered Patna city with Hidayat Ali Khan on the 7th December, 1742. He visited the Patna city and then encamped at Bankipur, five miles west of it. It appeared from his mode of administration that he was the virtual ruler of the place. Safdar Jang ordered Hidayat Ali Khan, the acting Governor of Patna to 'clear the castle of everything and person belonging to the Governor-General, Zin-uddin-ahmed Khan.' Hidayat Ali Khan carried out his order.

Now the fort was quite empty and Safdar Jang kept his Persian soldiers at the gate of the fort. The entrance and the exit of the fort were blocked.

Ghulam Husain had been directed by his father to remove the wealth of Zainuddin. So he had removed portions of his wealth and furniture from the fort during the night and Hidayat Ali Khan kept it in a safe place. When everything was ready, Safdar Jang made a "pompous entry" into Azimabad. There Safdar Jang visited the tomb of his maternal grand-father, that is, father of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk. That tomb was

2 Datta, Times, p. 81.
outside the city of Patna. When Safdar Jang had been to the tomb, the rich people of the place went to offer Nazrana to him. But they were not received by Safdar Jang in a befitting manner. He took possession of three or four elephants¹ and three or four pieces of cannon, belonging to Zainuddin. The English factory at Patna felt some troubles and the Calcutta Council wrote a letter to the Court of Directors on the 8th January 1743: "Safdar Jang is since arrived at Patna and forbid all intercourse with Bengal. They (the Patna factors) are in a manner confined to the factory at Patna, could not send any goods away.²"

Safdar Jang became unpopular at Patna. The people of the place did not like him. Alivardi learnt of this fact at Bengal. He had left Orissa for Murshidabad. He warned Safdar Jang not to enter Bengal. He also wrote a letter to Muhammad Shah, the Mughal-Emperor, to recall Safdar Jang. Muhammad Shah recalled Safdar Jang. Safdar Jang was also terrified at the coming of Alivardi and the reported arrival of Baji Rao to help Alivardi. He crossed the Ganges at Maner by a bridge of boats on the 15th January, 1743³, and retired to his dominion. In this way Bihar was freed from Safdar Jang's menace. Zainuddin now came to Patna⁴ and he, with the consent of the Nawab Alivardi Khan, dismissed Hidayat Ali Khan. Hidayat Ali Khan returned to Delhi.

The second Maratha invasion occurred in February 1743. After the disastrous failure of Bhaskar, Raghujir Bhonsle marched with a large army by way of Ramgarh towards Katwa. The intention of Raghujir Bhonsle was to exact chauth from the people. To counteract it, the Emperor Muhammad Shah appealed to the Peshwa Balaji⁵ Baji Rao, the rival of Raghujir Bhonsle and the Peshwa had agreed (as early as November, 1742) to lead an army into Bengal for the purpose of opposing Raghujir. It had been decided that the Nawab Alivardi would

¹ Ibid., p. 412.
² Datta, Times, p. 82.
⁴ Datta, K.K., Fort William-India House Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 2.
pay the Maratha king Shahu the chauth for Bengal province. He had also agreed to present him with 22 lacs of rupees and some costly presents. Now Balaji agreed to drive out Maratha. Balaji came to Bihar from the South with no less than forty or fifty thousand horse. All through the way his soldiers harassed the people and took taxes from them. Ghulam Husain writes that those who paid him money or some rich presents could save their lives and properties, while those who tried to defend themselves were killed and their houses were plundered. Balaji Rao came to Daudnagar in the town of Gaya. Ahmad Khan Qureshi, grand-son of Daud Khan Qureshi tried to defend the town, but he was defeated. He had to pay fifty thousand rupees to the Marathas, as the ransom of his life. The town was put to plunder. This news alarmed the people of Patna. People feared that the Marathas would tyrannise over them. The citizens of Patna felt that their lives, honour and properties were in danger. Some of the people sent their families to Hajipur on the northern bank of the Ganges. But fortunately for the people of Patna, Balaji Rao did not come to Patna due to Govindjee Naik.

Govind Jee Naik was a distant relation of Balaji Rao. He had his banking business at Benaras. He had extended his concerns to Azimabad and to the country adjoining. He had been closely associated with Hidayat Ali Khan. He came to Balaji’s camp from Benaras and told him in this way. “How much he had been benefited by Hedaiet-aaly-ghan’s patronage, and how much it was incumbent upon his gratitude to avail himself of the present opportunity to make some return. He ended his request by supplicating the Generalissimo to use that nobleman in such a manner, as that the load of gratitude that rested so heavily on his kinsman’s shoulder, might become lighter at least, if not taken away altogether. “Balaji agreed to his request and he sent a letter to Hidayat Ali Khan, in which he: “exhorted him to stay fearlessly in the city, and to tranquillise the minds of the inhabitants, as for his sake, he was

resolved to offer no injury to any one of them.\textsuperscript{1} Not content with that, he accompanied his letter with several articles of the richest and most curious manufactures of Deccan.

From Daudnagar he marched through Tikari, Gaya, Manpur and Bihar. From Bihar, the Peshwa came again on the highroad by Monghyr and Bhagalpur. Monghyr and Bhagalpur were at that time thickly populated areas. People of Bhagalpur had fled to the other side of the Ganges. But a lady\textsuperscript{2} of distinction, the widow of Sarfaraz's general Ghaus Khan, who had been slain at the battle of Giria, remained in her quarters. She could not leave her quarters for want of means to cross the river. She decided to defend her quarters at the cost of her life. Balaji Rao was pleased at her bravery and he deputed a detachment of his bodyguard to protect her house till the whole Maratha army had passed. As a token of her bravery, Balaji Rao sent some curious stuffs\textsuperscript{3} of Deccan to her. Now Raghujhi Bhonsle and the Peshwa were face to face. As the result of the Peshwa's help, Raghujhi was driven out of Bengal. Now Zainuddin returned to Patna. He constructed a defence wall round the city. The old defence walls were demolished.

But this state of warfare between Raghujhi and the Peshwa could not continue for a long time. The Maratha king Shahu brought a compromise between the Peshwa and Raghujhi Bhonsle on 31st August 1743. As a result of this compromise, the Peshwa got Malwa, Agra, Ajmere,\textsuperscript{4} Allahabad, Tikari parganah of Bhojpur inclusive of yield of a yearly revenue of 12 lacs of rupees, and the remaining portion of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa went to Raghujhi. Thus the zones were fixed, where they could levy chauth and do what they like.

The province of Bengal enjoyed complete peace from June 1743 to February 1744, when no Maratha invasion took place. At the beginning of March 1744, Bhaskar renewed the invasion of Bengal by way of Orissa and Med nipur. Alivardi was annoyed at the repeated Maratha invasions. He consulted his Afghan general Mustafa Khan and tried to assassinate Bhaskar and his

\textsuperscript{1} Siyar, Vol. I, p. 417. Hidayat Ali Khan was at that time at Delhi. But the Peshwa did not know this fact.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 418.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., p. 419.
\textsuperscript{4} Sarkar, Fall, Vol. I, p. 102.
friends. Alivardi assured Mustafa Khan that he would make him the Deputy Governor of Bihar, if the plan of the assassination\(^1\) of Bhaskar succeeded. The Nawab sent Janki Ram his diwan and Mustafa Khan to wait on Bhaskar Ram. They convinced Bhaskar Ram that Alivardi was anxious to end these disputes by paying an annual chauth that might be fixed by mutual agreement. The 31st March 1744 was fixed as the date for the interview between Alivardi and Bhaskar Ram and the place Mankara was selected as the site where the two leaders would meet. But Alivardi was not sincere in his proposal and Bhaskar\(^2\) Ram with his twenty-two companions was murdered.

By this act Alivardi received "such an addition to his character, as raised him both in the minds of his troops and of his subjects, who admired their being so suddenly delivered from these merciless ravagers, nor were the troops less pleased with their unexpected success." This was not all. He sent an account of the exploit to the emperor and "requested him to bestow honours, on every one of those who had exerted themselves so strenuously in the engagement of the tent." The emperor did so. To Alivardi Khan in particular he sent many gifts and bestowed on him the title of "the Valiant of the Kingdom."\(^3\) According to Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, Alivardi got several presents. Mustafa Khan was awarded the title of Babur Jang and also Naubat (drum) and Mansab of 5,000 horses.\(^4\) But really this was a blot on the character of Alivardi.

The assassination of Bhaskar Ram did not serve the purpose and within no time there was the fourth Maratha invasion of Bengal. Raghuji was perturbed at the assassination of Bhaskar and his companions. For various reasons however, no immediate steps could be taken to avenge the dreadful murder of the Maratha chief, Men, money and material were needed for a fresh expedition against Alivardi. In the meantime Raghuji got

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3 Bangladesh : Past and Present, p. 198.
4 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 31.
the opportunity. Mustafa Khan, the Afghan commander, had agreed to murder Bhaskar Ram and his companions on the distinct assurance from Alivardi that he would declare him as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. But after the murder of Bhaskar Ram, the Nawab shrank from fulfilling the promise. Relations between Mustafa Khan and Alivardi became strained. Mustafa Khan had become so powerful that Alivardi had to consult him in all important matters. Alivardi apparently showed every consideration to him, but really wanted to uproot him. Having studied the situation, and being convinced that Alivardi wanted to destroy him, he in anger resigned his service in 1745.

Mustafa Khan started from Murshidabad in open rebellion for Patna to oust Zainuddin from the Government of Bihar. When he had started for Patna on February 20, 1745, he had informed Raghuji of his intended invasion of Bihar. He also invited him to come and to help him in inflicting a defeat on Alivardi. Raghuji was smarting like an untrodden snake retired within its hole, and looking out for an opportunity to avenge the slaughter of Bhaskar and twenty-two of his Sardars. The letter of Ghulam Mustafa appeared to him as a heaven-sent opportunity, and he started for Bihar at the end of the rainy season in 1745. Murtaza Khan, Buland Khan and the other Afghan Officers had sent repeated letters from Magror to Raghuji for help. They had written in the humblest terms to Raghuji to supplicate “his taking the trouble of coming to their assistance; and they promised, in case of their being delivered from their loathsome habitations, to addict their whole lives to his service, without quitting his standards, unless dismissed.” They added: “that they would ever keep that favour of his as a ring hanging at their ears, and would carry all their lives on their shoulders the trappings of attachments and sincerity.” Raghuji started for Magror. He passed through the jungles of north Birbhum and hills of Kharagpur (South of Monghyr) and came to Futwah. Futwah was burnt and he proceeded towards Tikari. He plundered Shaikhpura and other

2 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 3.
villages in the estate of Tikari. Now he crossed the Son river and rescued the Afghans and proceeded towards Patna.¹

Alivardi started from Murshidabad for Patna in the month of October 1745. Having heard that Alivardi was coming to fight against the Marathas, the latter fled from Patna to the South. The Nawab stayed for a few days at Bankipur. He proceeded from Bankipur to attack the Marathas through Naubatpur (13 miles South-west of Mithapur, the site of the Patna Junction Railway Station.) The Marathas did not face the enemies but retreated and came to Rani’s tank near Muhib Alipur (on the south-bank of the Son, 19 miles south-west of Naubatpur), where Raghuji fixed his camp. There a battle was fought between Raghuji and the Nawab. The battle continued for 18 days but nothing was decided. Raghuji was wounded in the battle but he showed perseverance and he continued to fight. Alivardi suspected his two officers Mir Jafar Khan and Shamshir Khan as traitors. This thought made Alivardi confused. Now his Begum² advised her husband to make a treaty with the Marathas. Raghuji was advised by Mir Habib to refuse the terms of proposal. Raghuji now started for Murshidabad with a view to plundering that city before the Nawab could reach there. Alivardi crossed the river Son and marched towards Bengal through Maner and Patna. On the way near Bhagalpur on the stream of Champanala, a battle was fought between the Nawab and Raghuji. Raghuji was defeated.³ Now Raghuji marched from Bhagalpur through the hills and Jungles of Santhal Parganah and Birbhum. He arrived near Murshidabad on the 21st December, 1745.⁴

But this was not the last Maratha invasion for Bihar. After the brutal murder of Zainuddin by the Afghans in 1748, Alivardi was perplexed. But he proceeded towards Bihar at the end of February, 1748 to avenge the murderer of Zainuddin. Raghuji followed Alivardi from Bengal and he proceeded towards Bihar. The Maratha force under Mir Habib appeared near Bhagalpur

¹ *Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang*, f.37.
in 1748 and a battle was fought near Champanagar. But nothing was decided. Mir Habib and Janouji after this battle proceeded and joined the Afghans at a little distance to the east of the Patna city. In spite of heavy odds, Alivardi defeated the Afghans at Rani Sarai, eight miles west of Barh, on the 28th April, 1748. As a result of this defeat, the Marathas returned from Bihar. Alivardi left Patna and he appointed Siraj-ud-dowla as the Governor of Bihar with Raja Janki Ram as his Deputy.

Raja Janki Ram as the Deputy Governor of Bihar

After the brutal murder of Zainuddin Haibat Jang, Alivardi’s son-in-law and the Deputy Governor of Bihar by the Afghans in 1748 A.D., the post of the Deputy Governor of Bihar fell vacant. Alivardi was in search of a competent man for this post. Saulat Jang appeared a fit man in the eyes of Alivardi. So he wanted to appoint him in place of Janki Ram as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. The Begum of Alivardi did not agree to the proposals of her husband that Saulat Jang might be appointed to the Deputy Governorship of Bihar. Her view was that the appointment of Saulat Jang would jeopardize the future interest of Siraj-ud-dowla. She told him that Bihar was an important Suba and troops could pass to Bengal only through Bihar. The Begum advised him that Siraj-ud-dowla might be nominated to this post. Siraj-ud-dowla, instigated by his mother told Alivardi that: “he would make away with himself” if the Governorship of Bihar was not conferred upon him. He used to say that Bihar was “his father’s property.” At last Alivardi consented to the proposal of his Begum. Everything was arranged and Alivardi conferred the Khilaut for the Naib (Deputy) Subahdaree on Siraj-ud-dowla, his daughter’s son by Haibat Jang. Raja Janki Ram was declared to be Siraj-ud-dowla’s Deputy. After making all these appointments, the

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1 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 49.
3 Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 56.
Nawab left Patna on about 6th November, 1748 and arrived at Murshidabad on the last day of the month.

Raja Janki Ram had been associated with the family of Alivardi for a pretty long time. He had acted as the Diwan of the Household of the Nawab Alivardi in 1746.¹ He was a wise counsellor, a brave and loyal servant to the Nawab. Alivardi liked him much. The administrative experience of the past helped him greatly in his new office. Siraj-ud-dowlah was a rash and inconsiderate young man. He had no experience of running the administration. He had not developed strength of character and judgement. He was addicted to drinking and he had as his companions some evil men. Mahdi Nissar Khan, the paternal uncle of the Historian Ghulam Husain, was his principal advisor. He instigated Siraj-ud-dowlah to rise in rebellion and overthrow Janki Ram. He spoke to Siraj-ud-dowlah in these terms that he might: “quit the camp, and repair to Azimabad, it would not prove a difficult matter to pull down Djanki Ram, a poor Gentoo,” who was only his Deputy, and: “who will do as he shall be bid.”² Siraj-ud-dowlah had not the sense to distinguish between right and wrong and he easily accepted the suggestion of his counsellor. Now Siraj-ud-dowlah took leave of the Nawab at Mednipur in 1750 and started for Patna. Siraj-ud-dowlah had told Alivardi that he was going to Murshidabad to visit the palace and gardens. Then he proceeded³ to Patna from Murshidabad. Alivardi learnt this fact from Shahamat Jang and he started from his camp at Mednipur to overtake Siraj. Alivardi was in an alienated⁴ state of mind.

Ghulam Husain had written a letter to Raja Janki Ram. He had pointed out in the letter the causes of the flight of Siraj-ud-dowlah to Patna. He suggested to Raja Janki Ram that Mehdi Nissar Khan, the bad adviser of Siraj-ud-dowlah should be arrested. Raja Janki Ram received this letter two⁵ hours before the arrival of Siraj-ud-dowlah. Alivardi sent one of his messengers to Siraj, while he was on the way to Patna. Siraj replied to

³ *Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang*, ff. 69-70.
⁵ *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 38.
Alivardi: “If you continue to run after me, I will make away with myself.” Alivardi then sent another letter to Siraj, which he received at Bhagalpur. He wrote to Siraj-ud-dowla: “In the terms of an impassionate lover, who supplicated the favour of his shewing once more that beloved face of his to an alienated old man, whose sole delight in his old age centred in that enjoyment.” Siraj sent an answer to Alivardi from Bhagalpur. The letter ran in this way: “Your Highness, with all these demonstration of love, attention and condescension, is keeping my enemies about your person, and raising them to high dignities and eminent commands; for instance, Husain-culy-qhan, whilst I, whom you say to be your darling, am kept without either office or employment and am in fact in a state of depression and contempt, when compared to him……… I advise your Highness to beware of advancing farther; for the consequence of a step of that nature may be such, as that your head shall fall into my lap, or my own shall be made fast to your elephant’s foot.” Alivardi who loved Siraj intensely, was astonished at the tone of the letter and he sent a reply to Siraj that he was dearer to him than his life. All these unfounded desires and complaints that he had made are due to his lack of understanding and spirit. The letter concluded in this way: “I cherish the desire of leaving the Lordship of all this world to you, the light of my eyes.”

But Siraj was not satisfied and he marched further. From Bhagalpur, Siraj came to Ghiyaspur. From there he came to Jafar Khan’s garden. From that place he wrote a letter to Raja Janki Ram and he directed him to see him, failing which he would take strong measures against him. Raja Janki Ram was bewildered at this letter. He had been informed by Ghulam Husain about the rebellious attitude of Siraj. Janki Ram was in an embarrassing situation. He could not decide what to do. It was his duty to protect the city from the onslaught of Siraj. It was also his sacred duty not to hurt Siraj: “who was the

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1 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 95; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 69.
3 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 95-96; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 70.
4 Sarkar J. N, Bengal Nawabs, p. 145; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 70.
5 Ibid, f. 70.
darling of Alivardi and in whom he lived and moved and had his being as his successor.”

From Jafar Khan’s garden he proceeded further and attacked the city. Raja Janki Ram sent Jaswant Nagar to arrest Mahdi Nissar Khan. The battle ensued and Mahdi Nissar Khan had sixty men only with him. Jaswant Nagar killed Mahdi Nissar Khan and his companions. Siraj-ud-dowlah who was a coward at heart could not fight single-handed. He fled from the battlefield and concealed himself in the house of an artisan. Siraj-ud-dowlah sent information about his condition to Mirza Mustafa Quli Khan, the brother of Siraj’s father-in-law, who was at Patna. Mirza brought him from the house of the artisan and kept him at his own house. Raja Janki Ram took a sigh of relief at the safety of Siraj.

While the battle was going on between Mahdi Nissar Khan and Jaswant Nagar, Alivardi reached Ghiyaspur (Barh). Alivardi from Barh sent Abdullah Khan who had come from Murshidabad with him, to Patna. He had gone to Patna to conciliate Siraj. He informed Siraj that Alivardi had granted all his prayers and would treat him with love and favour and thus induce him to come and meet his grandfather. At last Siraj agreed and he came to Barh. Now Alivardi and Siraj came to Patna. Alivardi soothed the mind of Siraj. He stayed for sometime at Patna and then returned to Murshidabad with Siraj-ud-dowlah. Raja Janki Ram continued to act as the virtual Deputy to Siraj-ud-dowlah.

Raja Ram Narayan was the Diwan of the province at the time, when Raja Janki Ram was the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Janki Ram continued in his post for five years. Raja Janki Ram was an efficient administrator. He attempted to suppress the unruly Zamindars of the province. He collected the revenue regularly and remitted it to the Central Government. He had been appointed to this post in consideration of an annual

1 Datta, K. K., *Fort William-India House Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 27; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 70.
2 Muzaffaranamah, f. 38.
3 Sarkar, J. N., *Bengal Nawabs*, p. 146; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 70.
4 Sarkar J. N., *Bengal Nawabs*, p. 146; Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 71
payment\(^1\) of three lacs. Accordingly he remitted nine lacs in the space of three years and at the time of his death presented an additional nine lacs to Alivardi arising from his emoluments. Thus Raja Janki Ram gave rupees 18 lacs to the Bengal treasury in course of three\(^2\) years. The Jagirdars of the imperial court were pleased with Janki Ram and they recommended and secured for him the rank of 400 Zat and 3,000 horse and the title of Maharaja.\(^3\)

Raja Janki Ram was an able and meritorious ruler. He was impressed with the merits of his Diwan Ram Narayan. All the sons of Janki Ram were not capable of running the administration. In fact he had sent a petition to the Nawab to the effect that as he had found his sons unfit and unworthy for the responsible work, he had, therefore, entrusted that work into the hands of Ram Narayan. His excellency also approved of the arrangement. Raja Janki Ram died in 1752 and was succeeded by Raja Ram Narayan.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1769, p. 143.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Indian Historical Quarterly, 1938, pp. 93-94.
\(^4\) Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang, f. 78. Siyar, Vol. II, p. 117; Dastur-ul-Insha (MS, K.B.L. Patna), no page nor folio.
CHAPTER THREE

BIHAR FROM PLASSEY TO DIWANI

The period between 1757 and 1765 was marked by the growth of the British influence in Bengal. Alivardi, the Nawab of Bengal, had passed away on the 9th April, 1756 A.D.\(^1\) He was succeeded by Siraj-ud-dowla. Siraj was the son of the youngest daughter of Alivardi named Amina Begum. He had been spoilt by the softness of his doting grandfather.\(^2\) Conflicting opinions have been expressed about his character. Siraj-ud-dowla had no qualities of an administrator. Just after his accession he had to fight against Shaukat Jang. Shaukat Jang was the son of Saiyid Ahmad Khan, a nephew and son-in-law of Alivardi Khan. He held the post of Grandmaster of the artillery at Purnea under his father and afterwards at Murshidabad. He succeeded his father as Nawab of Purnea in January, 1756. Shaukat Jang obtained an imperial Farman from the Wazir appointing\(^3\) him the Nawab of Bengal. Siraj-ud-dowla proceeded against Shaukat Jang. He was defeated and killed in the battle

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1 Bengal: Past and Present, 1924, p. 29; Orme, Indostan, Vol. II, p. 52; Datta, K.K., Fort William-India House Correspondence, p. 1041.
2 Sarkar J.N., Bihar and Orissa, p. 84.
of Maniharî\(^1\) fought on the 16th October, 1756. Shaukat Jang had received a bullet injury on the left side of the forehead. Ali Naqi,\(^2\) the brother of Ghulam Husain, who was a supporter of Shaukat Jang, was arrested. Raja Mohan Lal was deputed to confiscate the property of the deceased Nawab.

For various reasons some leading members of the territorial and official aristocracy entered into conspiracy with the principal officers of Siraj-ud-dowla to dethrone him. The Conspiracy of 1757 which precipitated the battle of Plassey is an important event in the history of Bengal. It is beyond the scope of the present work to deal with the battle of Plassey. It is necessary for me however to discuss in detail the effect of this battle on Bihar.

As a result of the battle of Plassey, Mir Jafar ascended the Masnad of Bengal. The leading officers and Zamindars of Bihar were not prepared to accept the new change. The whole of Bihar was opposed against English supremacy. Raja Ram Narayan, the Deputy Governor of Patna, Kamgar Khan, the Muhammadan Zamindar of Narhat and Samoy, Sunder Singh, a Bhumihar Raja of Tikari, Pahalwan Singh of Bhojpur and Bishun Singh of Siris and Cotomba, manifested a spirit of opposition against him, and formed alliance among themselves. To cap the climax, Jean Law, the French adventurer came to their assistance. It is certain that these Zamindars of Bihar did not like the new regime. They might have rebelled against Mir Jafar, but Jagat Seth was opposed to any sort of rebellion against the Nawab. Jagat Seths Mahtab Rai and Swarup Chand\(^3\) were the originators of the Bengal revolution of 1757 and therefore they wanted to turn its consequences to their benefit. M. Law has explained the reasons, why the Bihar Rajas did not protest against Mir Jafar. “All these Raja’s,” he writes in his memoirs, “detest the Muhammadan Government and if it had not been for the Seths, the famous bankers, with whom they have close connections, it is probable that after the revolution in which Siraj-ud-dowla was the victim, they would all have risen together to establish a Hindu Government.”\(^4\)

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2 *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 56.
3 Bengal : Past and Present, 1921, p. 33.
4 Hill, S.C., *Three Frenchmen in Bengal*, p. 120.
M. Law further says that "Jagath Seth Mehtab Rai, Maharaja Swarup Chand and the English averted a combination of the Hindu Rajas of Bihar who would not have obtained all the advantages they did from the Musalmans." Mr. Law's observations are probably correct. The English East India Company was a trading organisation. The Company wanted to profit from the Indian trade. Siraj-ud-dowla, the late Nawab of Bengal, proved to be an obstacle in the way of the English trade and commerce, so the Company had conspired against the Nawab. Jagat Seth, a Marwari banker\(^2\) from Rajputana, settled in Bengal and established a good reputation as banker. Mahtab Rai and Swarup Chand used to advance money to the trading community of Bengal. So they desired peace throughout the whole province in the post-Plassey period for the furtherance of their aim.

Both the Company and Jagat Seth were interested in the trade and the making of money. The Bihar Zamindars were the landed aristocrats. They were the owners of a vast area of land and therefore trade had no importance for these Zamindars. They had sufficient wealth of their own. Therefore the interests of the Company and that of Jagat Seth clashed with the interest of the Bihar Zamindars. The Bihar Zamindars did not like the extension of the powers of the Company towards Bihar. They had the apprehension that after the battle of Plassey, the Company would subjugate the Bihar Zamindars. Therefore, they had a firm determination to rise against the Company and Mir Jafar. But Jagat Seth did not see eye to eye with this scheme of the Bihar Zamindars. He was not ready to co-operate with them in this task. He had his mercantile\(^3\) interest and therefore he wanted peace throughout whole Bengal. It was the question of the interest that brought a rupture between Jagat Seth and the Bihar Zamindars. Bengal was a manufacturing province, so Jagat Seth used to help the European merchants in Bengal with money. The Dutch had borrowed Rs. 400,000 at the ordinary interest of \(\frac{3}{4}\) percent a month or 9 percent a year.

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 120.
\(^2\) Bengal : Past and Present, 1920, p. 112.
\(^3\) Siyar, Vol. II, p. 228
The French were heavily in debt to the Seths before the capture of Chandranagar by Clive in 1757. Orme says that their debt amounted to a million and a half of rupees.¹ Jagat Seth earned a lot out of this monetary transaction. Jagat Seth also used to help the Royal family with money. But Bihar had an agricultural economy. The land was the main source of income to the Bihar Zamindars. If the British rule would have stabilised in Bengal and would have further pushed towards the west, the Seths would have earned a good dividend by giving loans to the Company. Hence the subjugation of Bihar might have helped the Seths financially. But the extension of the frontiers of the Company towards the west would have brought the final extinction of the authority of the Bihar Zamindars. So, after the battle of Plassey, Jagat Seth and the Bihar Zamindars fell apart. The interests of the manufacturing class of Bengal and of the East India Company were identical. Both wanted a stable Government for their occupations.

It was a herculean task for the Bihar Zamindars to fight single-handed against the English, but still the two powerful Zamindars of the province, Raja Sunder Singh and Raja Pahalwan Singh, revolted against Nawab Mir Jafar. Raja Ram Narayan, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, also did not like Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal. Ram Narayan was greatly attached to the house of Alivardi and so he was much perturbed at the battle of Plassey. Ram Narayan, who was, as Mr. Hill says, "no lover of Mir Jafar and was not yet acquainted with Clive," had not accepted Mir Jafar² as the Nawab of Bengal. Mir Jafar had written a letter to Ram Narayan and the letter contained an invitation to submit to the revolution that had taken place. Ram Narayan was at a loss how to act on so sudden an intimation, thought it best for his own interest to acquiesce for the present. Raja Sunder Singh and Raja Pahalwan Singh endeavoured in vain to secure the support of Raja Ram Narayan.

Mir Jafar wanted to replace Ram Narayan by his brother Mir Kazem Khan, as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Ram Narayan learnt this fact and he wanted to foil the scheme of Mir Jafar diplomatically. Clive wanted to have an alliance

¹ Bengal : Past and Present, 1921, p. 33.
with Ram Narayan. Ram Narayan also wanted to cultivate friendship with Clive. Clive at once assured him the English protection. Clive wrote to him to come down from Patna and to offer his respects to the Nawab. Mir Jafar had not yet confirmed Ram Narayan in his post and it was through the pressure of Clive, that Mir Jafar confirmed Ram Narayan in his post on the 23rd February, 1758.\(^1\) Raja Sunder Singh and Raja Pahalwan Singh had also decided before this not to wage war against the English and Mir Jafar, perhaps because they realised their weakness. They estimated their strength and decided that they were not powerful enough to challenge the authority of the English. So it can be said that Clive diplomatically won over Ram Narayan to his side in order to have control over the Nawab. When Ram Narayan joined the English side, it became impossible for the Bihar Zamindars to continue in rebellion against the English and the Nawab. Deserted by Jagat Seth and Ram Narayan, these Zamindars reconciled themselves to the changed situation and accepted Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal. So Bihar submitted peacefully to the English authority.

Mir Jafar was a weak ruler. His weakness was manifested more after the departure of Clive for London in February 1760. Mir Jafar was removed and Mir Qasim, his son-in-law was declared as the Nawab of Bengal on the 20th October, 1760.

Mir Qasim was an efficient administrator. After the departure of Shahzadah from Patna in 1761, Mir Qasim turned his attention to the Bhojpur area. The border-barons of Bhojpur had been a source of perpetual anxiety to the Nawab. These barons had also helped the Shahzadah in his invasions of Bihar. These ‘Bhojpuriah’ Zamindars had become a serious political menace which no Government could have tolerated. Pahalwan Singh had been very active in his support of the Shahzadah\(^2\) and Clive had to march in person against Pahalwan Singh. Pahalwan Singh was defeated by Clive. But these chiefs were not completely subdued by 1760. These Zamindars committed depredations in the neighbouring country.

Mir Qasim was convinced that these ‘Bhojpuriah’ barons

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\(^2\) Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1758-1759, p. 65.
must be suppressed at all costs. He made sufficient preparation for this expedition. The Governor, Mr. Vansittart approved of the policy of the Nawab in this respect. The Nawab started against these Bhojpur Zamindars, with a huge army. Ghulam Husain gives a graphic description of the army. “He (the Nawab) was at the head of an army as numerous as the multitude at the day of judgement.”

The Bhojpur expedition of the Nawab is an important event of his reign. He left Patna in November 1761. He dispatched Mir Raushan Ali Khan accompanied by some troops in advance. Pahalwan Singh and others were terrified at this huge force and they did not consider it proper to fight against the Nawab. All these Zamindars left their homes and fled away to Oudh. The Nawab’s force began to occupy the stronghold of these Zamindars. By December 1761, the Nawab captured the fort of Judgepur. Within a fortnight Bhekary, the fort of Pahalwan Singh, fell. The Nawab occupied all the forts of the Bhojpuria barons by the beginning of January 1762. The properties of these Zamindars were confiscated.

The Nawab next sent a force against the Zamindars of Bettia. The motive behind these expeditions was to capture the strong fortress of Bettia. He also wanted to establish peace throughout the frontier district of Bihar. A large force under Bahadur Ali Khan was sent to Bettia and the whole area was captured by March 1762.

The Nawab then turned his attention to the southern part of the province. He wanted to occupy Rohtasgarh. The building at Rohtasgarh had been built by Man Singh, a Mughal Governor of Bihar. The fort was under the authority of a Kelahdar. The Nawab went into the fort personally. He stayed there for one day. Naqi Ali Khan, who had been the officer-in-charge of the fort, was arrested and Nisar Ali Khan was given the command of Rohtasgarh.

After suppressing the hostile elements of Bhojpur, the Nawab was in a position to organise the administration of Shahabad.

2 Ibid.; Muzaffarnamah, f. 76.
3 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 437; Muzaffarnamah, f. 76.
Mir Raushan Ali Khan, the paymaster was posted there with his whole brigade of horse and foot. Mir Mahdi Khan was appointed Governor of Sasaram and Chainpur. He was to be assisted in his duty by another officer Shah Muhammad Akbar Khan. Samru, an European, was posted to Buxar with three or four regiments of infantry to safeguard that area. He massacred about six thousand Bhojpuriah robbers, who had disturbed the peace and order of the whole area.

While Mir Qasim was trying to strengthen the Government, some circumstances drove him into opposition to the East India Company. It had become almost inevitable in view of the conflicting interests of the two. Anxious to assert his de facto authority and to arrest the economic decline of the state, Mir Qasim could not reconcile himself to a position of complete subordination to the East India Company.

From the exchange of correspondence and negotiations, there was soon a resort to arms. The rash and overbearing conduct of Mr. Ellis, the then Chief of the English factory of Patna, precipitated the crisis. Mr. Ellis had been appointed as the Chief of the factory of Patna in November 1761. Mr. Ellis managed to arrest an officer of the Nawab Mr. Munseram on a complaint lodged by a gomastah of the factory. Munseram had stopped some opium of Mr. Hay in spite of there being a regular Dustak with it. Mr. Ellis was not justified in the arrest of Munseram without the permission of the Nawab. This event enraged the Nawab. Then the affair of Mr. Sher Ali, the Naib at Purnea and Khawajh Antoine brought rupture between the two. Mr. Ellis accused Sher Ali and the Zamindars of Purnea of gross insolence and misbehaviour. Khawajh Antoine was an officer of the Government employed as a collector at PunchMahl4 in the district of Monghyr.

A gomastah of the Company was taking some goods from

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2 An agent, a steward, a confidential factor, a representative; an officer appointed by Zamindars to collect their rents, by bankers to receive money, etc., by merchant to carry on their affairs in other places than where they reside and the like.
4 To-day Panchmalha does not exist in the Monghyr district. It seems probable that the name panchmalha has changed now-a-days.
the paraganah of Mulky with a dustak of Ellis. Antoine stopped the goods and said that the Dustak was insufficient. Antoine issued him another Dustak, under the seal of Syda Ram, Naib of the Khawajh Gregory, who held the lease of the ‘Ghats’ in that part of the country. Besides this accident, the salt-petre problem brought the matter to a head. Khawajh Gregory wanted five maunds of salt-petre for his use. He directed Khawajh Antoine to get this salt-petre from the ‘nunias’ of the Company. Antoine ordered all the ‘nunias’ to supply him salt-petre. One of the Company’s gomastas protested against this action and the gomasta reported this matter to Ellis. Ellis ordered for the arrest of Khawajh Antoine and he was sent to Calcutta in irons. Khawajh was also at fault for harassing the ‘nunias’ of the Company. But Ellis also was not justified in arresting Antoine and sending him to Calcutta as a prisoner to face his trial. Ellis had no right to arrest an officer of the Government without the direct permission of the Nawab. The Nawab strongly resented the arrest of his subordinates and complained to Ellis in these words: “it ill became you to seize an officer of my Government.” Antoine was examined by the Council. He was detained for one day only at Calcutta. He was sent back to the Nawab for proper punishment because the English Council felt that Antoine had ‘taken upon himself an authority which he had no right to.’ The Nawab discharged Antoine from his service.

The next important dispute between the Nawab’s officer and Ellis was in connection with the closure of the Burbunna gate. The city of Patna stretched from the east to the west and it had two principal gates at that time, one at the east and the other at the west end. There was the Burbunna gate between the western gate and the river side. English factory was situated by the side of the river. English people entered the city through the Burbunna gate. The Nawab ordered to close the Burbunna gate

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1 A maker of, or dealer in, salt.
2 Chatterjee, Nand Lal, Mir Qasim p. 106. Siyar, Vol. II, p 446. In Siyar, Vol. II, no name has been mentioned. It has been written simply that Ellis arrested a man.
3 Chatterjee, Nand Lal, Mir Qasim, p. 106.
permanently. Ellis complained against this closure. This gate had been kept open for the last nineteen years. This was a short cut\(^1\) for the entrance of the English into the city. Ellis asked the Nawab that there was no necessity at all for closing this gate at least in the day-time.

The Monghyr fort incident further added fuel to the fire of animosity between the Nawab and Mr. Ellis. By 1762 some soldiers from the English camp were deserting and they used to take shelter in the Nawab’s army. Ellis was making constant complaints to the Nawab for this. Mr. Ellis learnt that some English deserters had taken shelter in the Monghyr fort. Mr. Ellis requested Raj Ballav, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, to direct Shujan Singh, the Kelahdar, to deliver the two deserters. Raj Ballav assured him that he would look into the matter. Mr. Ellis sent a search party under a sergeant with a company of troops. But Sujan Singh did not allow them to enter the fort. So the soldiers retired to the gardens, which were near the fort and from there they went to the Sitakund.\(^2\) Sujan Singh communicated this information to them that there were no Europeans in the fort. Mr. Ellis was informed of this accident. He directed the soldiers to wait till the Nawab’s orders reached them. The Governor implored the Nawab to issue a perwannah to Sujan Singh permitting a search of the fort by the sergeant. But the Nawab declined the request of the Governor. At last a solution was found out. Mr. Hastings and Lt. Ironside were deputed to visit the fort. The Nawab agreed to this proposal.\(^3\) Mr. Hastings was instructed by the Council to remove the causes of the quarrel between the Nawab and Mr. Ellis.

Mr. Hastings left Calcutta on April 9, 1762. The Nawab was at Sasaram, so Mr. Hastings on the way went to Monghyr. He searched the Monghyr fort along with Ironside on April 27, 1762, but he did not find any deserters. Mr. Hastings then paid a visit to the Nawab on May 9. The Nawab had a talk with Mr. Hastings on many points. The question of the private inland trade was also discussed. But no concrete result could

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3 Chatterjee, Nand Lal, *Mir Qasim*, p. 112.
accrue out of this talk. There was no reconciliation between
the Nawab and Ellis.

After suppressing the Bhojpuriah Rajas, as already referred
to, the Nawab proceeded to Monghyr. He had decided to
make Monghyr the permanent capital of his kingdom. From
Bhojpur, he came to Patna and suspended Raja Raj Ballav,¹
who had been acting as the Deputy Governor of Bihar since
Ram Narayan had been ousted from the Government. Raja
Naubat Rai was appointed in his place. There is a description
in Muzaffarnamah about the treatment meted out to Raj
Ballav by the Nawab. Thorns were forcibly thrust into his nails
so that he might make a confession of the amount of his total
wealth.² His whole property was confiscated.

Now Mir Qasim’s attention was drawn to the Kharagpur Raj,
where anarchy had prevailed. The Kharagpur Raj was a part
of the Junglettery. The Junglettery was a part of the country
surrounded by the plains of modern Bhagalpur and Colgong
and the Ganges on the north, by the Kharagpur hills on the
north-west, by Gidhaur and the plains of Bihar on the west, by
the provinces of Ramgarh and Pachete on the south and south-
west, by the Birbhum on the south-east, by Rajmahal hills on
the east and on the north-east by the Ganges and part of the
Rajmahal hills. The area is now roughly comprised of the
portions of the district of Bhagalpur, Santhal-parganah, Monghyr
and Hazaribagh in the province of Bihar and Birbhum in
Bengal.

This vast area of Junglettery was “considered as an inaccessi-
ble and unknown and only served as receptacle to robbers.”³
The Mughal Government had not been successful in establishing
peace throughout this region. Anarchy was prevailing in this
area even when the English were associated with its administra-
tion. The unruly hilly tribes often attacked the people living in
the plain. The Muhammadan Government had devised certain
measures to protect the life and property of the people. These
hilly men entered into the plain through the Ghats or mountain
passes. So the Government had introduced a Ghatwally⁴ tenure.

¹ Muzaffarnamah, f. 78 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 431.
² Chatterjee, Nand Lal, Mir Qasim, p. 124.
⁴ Ibid., p. 220.
Certain persons, often of high rank received lands from the emperor at a low rent or without rent, on condition of their performing these duties, and protecting and preserving order in the neighbouring districts.

The road between Bengal and Bihar passed through the district of Jungleterry. These hilly tribes often fell out on the passer-by, so the English Government were annoyed at the chaos prevailing in this region. Colonel Clive (afterwards Lord Clive) had complained on the 25th January 1758 to Rai Durlabh Ram, the then Diwan that the chowkies of Sacrigully (now a station in E.I. Rly. Loopline) and Talligarhy had very insolently refused to pass two horses of Mr. Pearkes, the Chief of the English factory at Patna and had confined two or three pairs of his cossids (messengers).

The early British administrators had a difficult problem of establishing peace and order in this region. The districts of Rajmahal and Bogleapore (modern Bhagalpur) often suffered the depredations of the Banditti who inhabited the neighbouring mountains. As anarchy and chaos often raged in the Jungleterry districts, so Jagannath Deo, the adopted son of Mr. Lachman Deo took a leading part in it. He was the principal and the most powerful of the Ghatwals of Jungleterry under the Kharagpur Raj. He was a young man of 17 years old and he succeeded his father in 1755. At that time Muzaffar Ali, the Raja of Kharagpur had risen in rebellion against the Bengal Nawab. Mir Qasim rushed to Kharagpur and the Raja was defeated.¹ The Raja was then dismissed and he was put into prison (1761-62). Now Mir Qasim tried to subjugate Jagannath Deo but he could not achieve his aim. He later on granted a sanad to Jagannath Deo.

Another expedition was dispatched by the Nawab Mir Qasim against the Ramgarh Raja in 1762 on the report that he was giving shelter and encouragement to several rebellious local Rajas like Muzaffar Ali of Kharagpur, Raghunath Narayan of Patchet, Kamgar Khan of Narhat and Samoy, and Badekal Ram Khan of Birbhum and was also harassing the low countries by his robberies and incursions. Abdullah Khan and Markat Khan

led this expedition. He marched to Kharrukdish where he was joined by Sheonath Singh, Nirmal Singh Choudhuri and Darh Deeh Ruttan and after several engagements reached Ramgarh. Markat Khan made a breach in the stone walls of the fort which was abandoned and the whole country was reduced. Bishun Singh and Makund Singh being brought to despair sought for terms of peace and offered Rs. 30,000/-, if Abdullah Khan would withdraw from the hills and much below Palamau. Abdullah Khan was however informed by Surat Singh and other Zamindars that this was a ruse and “they were lulling him to security with intention to fall on him in the Passes as he was going down”. Abdullah, to test the truth of this information marched to the pass and found “what they had said to be true”. A battle ensued and Abdullah Khan became victorious. As a reprisal for this treachery he killed the Raja’s Vakeel (who had come to offer the terms for settlement) and 19 others of the Raja’s people. He then settled with Lall Khan and others their Zamindaries and took qabuliat deeds from them. The rest of the land he kept for the Government.

The Nawab reached Monghyr towards the end of June 1762 and entered the fort with great pomp. The Nawab had decided to make Monghyr as his permanent capital. He repaired the old fort. In the 17th century, Monghyr appears to have been a well fortified town with fine buildings. Nicholos Graaf, a Dutch Physician who visited it in the beginning of the century was struck with admiration at the sight of its white wall. Mir Qasim built for himself a palace with a breast work before it for thirty guns, and had the fortification strengthened. New buildings were raised and all the ugly buildings of the town were demolished. The town of Monghyr wore a grand splendour during his reign. However Mir Qasim added immensely to the beauty of the town.

At Monghyr, the Nawab followed a highly repressive policy to curb the dissidents. He imprisoned all those persons who were associated with the English cause. He imprisoned Ray

1 Kharagdiha lies 27 miles north of Giridih on the road leading to Nawadah.
2 Journal of Historical Research, p. 11.
Rayen,\(^1\) Ummid Ray, his son Nitya Nand, Kali Parshad, Ram Narayan, Munshi Jagat Ray, Muhammad Masum, Shahamat Jang, Muzaffar Ali Khan and Shah Abdullah. Relations between Mir Qasim and Ellis were not good, so Warren Hastings was sent up from Calcutta (April, 1762) to arrange term between the Nawab and Ellis and was favourably received by the former in his camp at Sasaram. But Ellis refused to meet Warren Hastings at Patna and stayed in his house at Singia, fifteen miles away, saying that he could not be expected to pay him the compliment of travelling such a distance in hot weather. But nothing came out of this effort. The relations between the Nawab Mir Qasim and the English East India Company were on the breaking point. So to remove the causes of the quarrel, the Calcutta Council sent Mr. Vansittart and Hastings\(^2\) to the Nawab. They arrived at Monghyr\(^3\) on the 30th November, 1762. The Nawab gave them a befitting reception. A picturesque account of Vansittart’s visit is given by Ghułam Husain, the author of Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, who held a Jagir in the district. The Nawab advanced six miles from Monghyr to meet Vansittart in the garden of Goddergatta and ‘assigned for his residence a house which Gurgin Khan had erected on the hill of Sihta-cond (Sita-Kund).\(^4\) The Nawab gave him a public reception in the hall of audience, where he seated him on his own Masnad, entertained him with a Nach, paraded troops in his honour and last but not least, complimented him with a variety of curious and costly presents suitable to the occasion.

It is said that Vansittart received five lacs of rupees, of which three lacs were paid to him at Monghyr and that he allowed two ladies who accompanied him to go into the Zanana of Mir Qasim and receive presents of jewellery. The Nawab had a conference with them on various matters. The Nawab then told Mr. Vansittart\(^5\) that much trade passed through the country

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\(^1\) Muzaffarnamah, f. 78. Riyaz, pp. 393-395.
\(^3\) Firminger, *Three Surgeons*, p. 18; Muzaffarnamah, f. 80. Siyar, Vol. II, p. 443; Riyaz, p. 387; Bengal: Past and Present, 1921, p. 82.
\(^5\) Riyaz, p. 387, F.N.
duty-free, as it was given out that it was on behalf of the English, that in consequence the state suffered a heavy loss and that it was proper that duty should be levied on all such goods, except those particularly belonging to the English East India Company. Mr. Vansittart told him not to do anything for the present and after his arrival at Calcutta, a communication would be sent to him. Mir Qasim under this impression, that the English Council at Calcutta would accept his proposals, directed his collectors to be vigilant in regard to permitting goods to pass duty-free and adding that full orders would be communicated to them subsequently. These amils at some place on their own initiative, stopped English goods. Mr. Ellis, the Chief of the Patna factory and Mr. Battleson, of Dacca factory arrested several amils of the Nawab. Having heard this, the Nawab was enraged and in desperation abolished the payment of all duties for the space of two years. He thus declared all trade duty-free to everyone.

This declaration ended the English monopoly and the Council, with the two usual dissentients, told him that he had broken the treaty. Hastings protested in this way: 'The Nawab has granted a boon to his subjects, and there are no grounds for demanding that a sovereign prince should withdraw such a boon, or for threatening him with war in the event of refusal.'

At this turn of events, the Calcutta Council decided to send Mr. Amyatt and Hay as their envoys to the Nawab and they started for Monghyr on 4th April, 1763. The Nawab was convinced with the hostility of Jagat Seth. So he wrote to the Faujdar of Birbhum, Muhammad Taqi Khan, to send Jagat Seth Mahtab Rai and his brother Maharaja Swarup Chand, grandson of Jagat Seth Fateh Chand, from Murshidabad to Monghyr under the proper escort. Muhammad Taqi Khan accordingly sent them to Monghyr. The two Seths were brought to Monghyr by Marcar, an Armenian officer.

2 Talboys, Wheeler J., Early Records of British India, p. 311. Bengal: Past and Present, 1921, p. 82. Riyaz, p. 388. In Riyaz, Ghulam Husain has not mentioned the time limit of two years.
3 Thompson and Garatt, British Rule in India, p. 93.
Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal, received the two Seths with honour, spoke to them with kindness, deplored the necessity of the occasion, soothed their minds, offered excuse for the rigour of his proceedings, and requested them to stay at Monghyr, where he hoped they would build lodgings for themselves, set up a Banking-House, as they had done at Murshidabad, attend his court, as they did formerly and, transact business in the affairs of Government and finance. Apparently he allowed them complete freedom, but secret agents were appointed to keep a watch on them and not allowed them to go out to any great distance.

When Mr. Amyatt and Hay arrived at Kasimbazar on their way to Monghyr, they learnt of the arrest of the two Seths. Mr. Amyatt at once conveyed the news to the Governor. Mr. Vansittart concluded that the Seths had been treated in this manner on account of their connection with the English and on the 24th April 1763, he sent the following letter of remonstrance to the Nawab:—“I am just informed by a letter from Mr. Amyatt that Mahomed Tuckee Khan having marched with his army from Beerbhum to Herageel went on the 21st instant at night to the house of Juggut Seth and Maharaja Siroop Chand, and carried them from their own house to Herageel, where he keeps them under a guard.

“This affair surprises me greatly: when your Excellency took the Government upon yourself, you and I and the Setts being assembled together, it was agreed that as they are men of high rank in the country, you shall make use of their assistance in managing your affairs and never consent that they should be injured: and when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Monghyr I then likewise spoke to you about them, and you set my heart at ease by assuring me that you would on no account do them any injury. The taking men of their rank in such an injurious manner out of their home is extremely improper and is disgracing them in the highest degree: it is moreover a violation of our agreement, and therefore reflects dishonour upon you and me, and will be a means of acquiring us an ill name from everybody. The above-mentioned gentlemen were never thus disgraced in the time of any former Nazims.”

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2 C.P.C., Vol I, p. 211.
The Governor further wrote to the Nawab with a demand for the Seth's release. The Nawab's reply is dated the 2nd May.\(^1\) After repeating practically the whole of Vansittart's letter the Nawab wrote in the end:—"Sir, though it is agreed by the treaty between us, that I should never say anything in behalf of the servants and dependents of the Company, nor you, gentlemen interfere in behalf of the servants and dependents of the Nizamut; yet you, gentlemen, have regarded all this as utterly obliterated, and in contradiction thereto persist in the violation of the treaty, and desire to raise your name, and establish your own customs, I remediless." He wrote further that he had left them entirely to carry their mercantile work and withheld the assistance they agreed to afford him.\(^2\)

Messrs Amyatt and Hay arrived at Monghyr in the middle of May, 1763\(^3\) and presented their demands to the Nawab. One of these demands was the release of the Seths but the Nawab hardened his heart and would not let them go. Practically this delegation bore no fruit.

Mr. Amyatt on his own responsibility had written a letter\(^4\) from Monghyr to Mr. Ellis, the Chief of the Patna factory to prepare for war, without waiting for any formal declaration of war by the Council. Ellis, the hot-tempered Chief had been entrusted with discretionary\(^5\) powers by the Calcutta Council not only to act upon the defensive if attacked by the Nawab, but even to anticipate any hostile attempt by the seizure of Patna. So he suddenly fell out on the Nawab's fort at Patna on the morning of June 25th, 1763,\(^6\) like a 'night-robber.'\(^7\)

Ellis seized the city. From Monghyr, the soldiers were already on the way and with these reinforcements, Mir Mehdi Khan, Nawab's Deputy Subahdar of Patna attacked the fort, defeated the English soldiers and re-captured the fort. The news of this success gave Mir Qasim the keenest delight.

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Though it was the middle of the night, he immediately ordered music to strike and awaken the whole town of Monghyr. He now proclaimed the outbreak of war between himself and the English. The English were in a dilemma. They could not remain at the factory, for they could not hold it against the enemy. They could not go down the river to Calcutta, for they would certainly be stopped by the Nawab at Monghyr. They had no alternative but to go up the river into Oudh. All the English soldiers including Dr. Fullerton and other English men and their troops started for Oudh but the attempt failed. The current of the river was against them and they came to Chapra\(^1\) and then to Sarju.

There the officers and gentlemen of the Patna factory and the whole of the English troops, were made prisoners at Manjhi on the river Gogra, some miles west of Chapra, on 1st July and carried to Patna,\(^2\) where they were cruelly massacred.

Only Dr. Fullerton and four serjeants escaped. Sir Evan Cotton is of the opinion that nearly 300 Europeans and upwards of 2500 natives must have been killed or surrendered on this occasion, and that 7 officers of artillery and 29 officers of infantry were slain on the field, died of their wounds or were made prisoners and subsequently perished. Broome states that 47 officers of artillery and 29 officers of infantry were slain on the field, died of their wounds or were made prisoners and subsequently perished. Ghulam Husain in his Siyar-ul-mutakherin has not mentioned anything about the murder of the English soldiers. He has mentioned that the English soldiers were arrested at Sarju and were sent to Monghyr\(^3\) to be kept as prisoner. But it is difficult to disbelieve Sir Evan Cotton and Broome. This much is certain that the English prisoners were murdered at Patna after the battle of Manjhi. Captain Peter Carstairs (mortally wounded and died on July 3), Ensign Cornelius Kraft and Lieut. Thomas Pickering were killed in this battle at Manjhi.

It was then that the Nawab sent dispatches to all his Fauj-dars and generals to put to death all Englishmen wherever

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found. In pursuance of this order, Mr. Amyatt and his party were killed near Murshidabad on July 3 and the Qasimbazar factory was looted. Mr. Amyatt and his party were travelling in a budgerows. Mr. Amyatt, Woolstone (his brother-in-law) and Ensign John Cooper were killed. Others were brought to Monghyr. After the fall of the factory at Kasimbazar, the President of the Council wrote a letter to Mir Qasim, on the 15th September, 1763. The letter had been written in this way: "Mr. Amyatt and Mr. Hay were sent to you as Ambassadors, a title sacred among all nations, yet in violations of that title, you caused Mr. Amyatt to be attacked and killed on his return, after having given him your passports and Mr. Hay you unjustly kept as a prisoner with you. You surrounded and attacked our factory at Kasimbazar and carried away gentlemen from thence prisoners, in a most disgraceful manner to Monghyr, although they had no concern in the war, nor resisted your people."

The English Council declared Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal and the English force marched from Murshidabad with Major Adams as commander. At the battle of Suti and Giria (on 2nd August, 1763), the Nawab's forces were defeated. After his defeat, Mir Qasim became anxious for the safety of his family and he sent his wife, with 1700 other women and the treasures to the fort of Rohtas under charge of Lala Nobut Rai, who soon died, then Shah Mal the Diwan took over charge. Now Mir Qasim proceeded further to re-enforce his army that was now concentrated on the banks of the Adhuanalla, a stream taking its rise from the hills north of Rajmahal and following to the Ganges. But as ill luck would have it, the Nawab's forces were defeated on September 5, 1763. The battle fought on the 5th September 1763 was according to Malleson "one of the most daring and most successful feats of arms ever achieved." Now the Nawab returned to Monghyr. These defeats roused the Nawab to exasperation and on September 9, he wrote to Major Adams: "If you are resolved to proceed.

in this business, know for a certainty that I will cut off the heads of Mr. Ellis and the rest of your Chiefs and send them to you.” Major Adams replied: “If a hair of their heads is hurt, you can have no title to mercy from the English and you may depend upon the utmost Fury of their resentment.”

This threat he carried out on the evening of October 6, with the help of a renegade named Walter Rein Hardt, who was known to the Muhammadans as Samru. After this the Nawab returned to Monghyr. After halting at Monghyr for two or three days, he left that place with Gurgin Khan and others, placing the fort in charge of an Arab Ali Khan and reached the Rohua Nalla. From Rohua Nalla the Nawab came to Barh, where Jagat Seth and his brother Swarup Chand were put to death.

The usual account of the death of the Seths is that they were thrown into the Ganges from a tower in the fort of Monghyr. Ghulam Husain has mentioned in Siyar-ul-Mutakherin that Mir Qasim carried them with him in his retreat to Patna and that they were hacked to pieces by his soldiers near the town of Barh. Riyaz-us-Salatin also mentions that the death of Jagat Seth occurred after that of the Gurgin Khan, while Major Adams, the commander of the English troops against Mir Qasim wrote to the Council at Calcutta on the 18th October 1763, “all accounts likewise agree......that the Seaths were put to death near Baur and their bodies not permitted to be burnt, but exposed under a guard of sepoys.”

From there the Nawab moved to Patna, where he received the news that Arab Ali Khan, commandant of the Monghyr fort treacherously made over the fort to the English on 1st October. The Nawab was nervous. He had lost his balance of mind. Defeat after defeat exasperated him and he ordered for the massacre of the English soldiers. All the English prisoners were kept in the house of Haji Ahmad, a brother of Alivardi Khan. Fifty-one Englishmen were slaughtered in cold blood at

2 Broome, Bengal Army, p. 388.
4 Firminger, Three Surgeons, 18th October, 1763.
Patna on 6th October, 1763 together with a hundred others of the inferior rank.

According to Sir Evan Cotton the first massacre took place on October 5. The other English prisoners were murdered on October 11 in the Chihil Satun or Hall of forty pillars behind the Madrasah mosque in the Patna city. The order for the murder was given by the Nawab Mir Qasim, but the massacre was directed by a deserter from the French army under Samru. This melancholy event is known as the Patna massacre.¹ On the receipt of the intelligence in Calcutta, the board ordered that the whole settlement should go into deep mourning for fourteen days. A manifesto was published offering a reward of a lac of rupees for the person of Mir Qasim² and rupees 40,000/- for the person of Samru.

After leaving Patna, Mir Qasim came on the banks of Karamnasa, where he received a letter from the Nawab of Oudh Shuja-ud-dowla. In that letter and in the fly leaves of the copy of the Koran which accompanied it, Shuja-ud-dowla promised him protection and support. So he came to Oudh.³ The terms of co-operation between Mir Qasim and the Nawab of Oudh were settled and Mir Qasim agreed to pay him 11 lacs of rupees per month, from the day his army should cross the

¹ Nearly opposite to the Roman Catholic church in the Patna city is the grave where the bodies of Mir Qasim’s victims were ultimately deposited. It is covered by a pillar, built partly of stone and partly of brick, with an inlaid tablet and inscription.

² The copy of the inscription relating to the Patna massacre of 1763 A.D. is as follows:—

In memory of Capt. John Viench, first lieutenants, Richard Perry and George Hockler, lieutenant Fireworkers John brown, Arden Dickens. John Reed and Benjamin Adamson of the Honourable East India Company, Artillery Captain Charles Earnest Jocher, Henery Sommers, James Tabby and George Alston and Sir William Hope Baronet, Ensigns John Green, Roberts, Duncan, Maclean, William Crawford, William Hughes, Issac Humphries, John Robert Roach, John Perry and William Machery of the Honourable East India Company, who with many other captives were on the night of the 5th and 6th and 11th of October 1763, brutally massacred near this spot by the troops of Mir Qasim Nawab and Subadar of Bengal under the command of Walter Reinhardst alias Somru a base renegade.

EDEDE CORE HOSTIUM NAT EST GLORIA EORUM.


³ Malleson, Decisive battles, p. 166.
Ganges. He received in return a promise that just after the successful completion of the battle, Mir Qasim would be declared as the Nawab of Bengal. Now the whole army moved from Oudh and came to Benares on the 7th March 1764. The troops crossed the Ganges through the bridge of boats and the whole force marched towards Bihar on 2nd April. The whole army came to Patna. The English were also marching to fight to Mir Qasim. The forces of Shah Alam, Mir Qasim and the Nawab of Oudh took their positions near Mir Jafar. The Nawab of Oudh had made Lohanipur (a mohalla of the Patna town) as his headquarters. Nothing was decided and the rainy season intervened. The forces of the Nawab returned to Buxar on the 30th May. Major Carnac was replaced by Major Munro.

Now the relation between Mir Qasim and the Nawab became strained. The Nawab had simply been exploiting him. The situation so turned that the unfortunate Nawab was confined as a prisoner. His wealth was now confiscated. The emperor Shah Alam and the Nawab of Oudh at last proceeded against the English and the famous battle of Buxar was fought on the 23rd October 1764. On the eve of the fateful battle of Buxar, the Wazir suddenly released Mir Qasim and allowed him to escape from the battlefield. The luckless prince somehow managed to escape on a lame elephant. He did not even wait to watch the results of the battle. He died on June 6, 1777 near Delhi.

The result of the battle of Buxar was disastrous to the Indian cause. The Emperor Shah Alam and the Nawab of Oudh were defeated. The importance of the battle of Buxar far surpassed than the battle of Plassey. In the words of Malleson: "Whether regarded as a duel between the foreigners and the native or as an event pregnant with vast permanent consequences, Buxar takes rank amongst the most decisive battles, ever fought. Not only did it advance the British frontier to Allahabad, but it bound the rulers of Oudh to the consequences

1 Malleson, *Decisive battles*, p. 170.
4 Proceedings, I.H.R.C., 1930, p. 28.
by ties of administration, of gratitude, of absolute reliance and trust, ties that made them for the ninety-four years that followed the friend of his friend and the enemies of his enemies.” The English victory at Buxar\(^1\) helped the Company to get the Diwani. The battle of Buxar placed Patna at the mercy of the English.\(^2\)

**Shah Alam’s Invasions of Bihar**

Thus in Bengal political changes were taking place at a rapid pace with the result that the foundation of the British empire had become stronger. Peace of Bihar had become disturbed in this period, due to the invasions of the Prince. The Prince Ali Gauhar laid three incursions into Bihar from 1759. The central Government was slowly proceeding towards its doom. The Prime Minister had usurped all the powers. The selfish Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk, in league with the Marathas, was creating havoc at Delhi. Prince Ali Gauhar, who was the eldest son of the emperor Alamgir II, was driven out of the environs of Delhi by the Wazir and had to ‘set his face towards the wilderness’. He came to Farukhabad. Next he took refuge with Najib-ud-dowla at Saharanpur. The latter entertained him for eight months and advised him to attempt the reconquest of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Prince, therefore, marched to Oudh and was hospitably received by Nawab Shuja-ud-dowla near Lucknow in January 1758. From Lucknow he proceeded to Allahabad and the Deputy Governor of that province Muhammad Quli Khan joined him in an invasion of Patna.\(^3\) As the Zamindars of Bihar were reluctant to accept the verdict of the battle of Plassey, so interested chiefs like Balwant Singh of Benares, Sunder Singh of Tikari and Pahalwan Singh of Bhojpur, were likely to assist him in the expedition. Munir-ud-dowla and Hidayat Ali Khan joined the prince at Benares.

In the beginning of the year 1759, report reached Bengal that the Shahzadah had arrived at Benares with 8,000\(^4\) men and that he was proceeding to Bihar. The Prince crossed the Karamnasa

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\(^1\) Malleson, *Decisive battles*, p. 207.


and he was on his way to Bihar. He wrote a letter to Clive from a place on the bank of Karamnasa. The purport of the letter was that the Prince was ready to throw himself upon the protection of the English. Clive did not deem it necessary to send any reply to the Prince. Pahalwan Singh was very active in the support of the Shahzadah. On the 8th March 1759, the Shahzadah reached Phulwari, seven miles west of Patna.

Raja Ram Narayan, then Deputy Governor of Bihar learnt of the intended expedition. He gave notice of it to Mr. Amyatt, the Chief of the English factory of Patna and forwarded it, at the same time to his two masters in Bengal.1 Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal, did not like him. Ram Narayan had not the sufficient forces to meet the Shahzadah in battle. The Shahzadah had asked Ram Narayan to meet him. M. Law joined the Shahzadah with 1,000 men. Out of 1,000 men three or four hundred were Europeans. The Shahzadah sent a letter to Ram Narayan requiring his submission.2 Prince Miran suspected the loyalty of Ram Narayan to Mir Jafar. The belief of the Shahzadah, being connected with the Wazir of Oudh, Shuja-ud-dowla, combined with the report of his being joined by the French under Law, created serious alarm to the Nawab, whose mind was agitated by other causes.3 In the midst of his difficulties and distress Mir Jafar looked exclusively to Clive.

Ram Narayan intended to fight with the Shahzadah, but he had not adequate forces to meet the situation. The Shahzadah came near to Jafar Khan’s garden on the March 21, 1759, east of Patna city. The Deputy Governor of Bihar, Raja Ram Narayan, could not decide what to do. He did not receive timely reinforcement from Bengal. The invasion of the Prince created a panic in Patna. Mr. Amyatt, the Chief of the English factory, vacated the city with his officers after advising Ram Narayan to play for time and finally act as he received reinforcement or not. Ram Narayan met the Prince in his Darbar at Phulwari in March 1759 and presented him 901 gold mohars and two elephants.4 The Prince demanded four crores of rupees and all

2 B.S.C.P., 1759, pp. 31-32.
4 B.S.C.P., 1759, p. 53.
the artillery in Patna. Ram Narayan had not even the hundredth part of it.

Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal, always doubted the sincerity of Raja Ram Narayan. Clive wrote to Mir Jafar to put his faith in Ram Narayan whom he thought to be an honest man.\(^1\) The forces of the Shahzadah were advancing towards Patna. Ram Narayan was waiting for the additional supply of forces from Bengal. Mir Jafar was so much terrified at this event that he wanted to purchase the retreat of Shahzadah. Mir Jafar was negotiating with the Seths for a huge sum of money to be paid to the Shahzadah to buy off his invasion. The Nawab's policy was prejudicial to the interest of the state. Had this materialised, it would have added to the covetous designs of the Shahzadah and his confederates. Having learnt all these things, Clive told him plainly that it was not proper for His Excellency to offer a sum of money to the Shahzadah. This would lead to various complications in the state, because this policy would encourage Shuja-ud-dowla, the Marathas and others to attack Bengal with a view to extracting more money from him. In this way Clive told him that he would spend every pie from the royal treasury. At last Clive advised him as follows: 'If your Excellency should pursue this method, it will be furnishing the king's son with the means to raise forces which indeed may endanger the loss of your country.'\(^2\)

At this suggestion of Clive, the Nawab abandoned his plan of buying off the Shahzadah. He then requested Clive to march immediately against the Shahzadah. He also assured him that he would follow him in ten or twelve days. On the 25th February, 1759 Clive started with the English army to meet the Nawab. In the morning of the 9th March, they met at Bumnia and then they came to Kasimbazar. Then in the afternoon, the Nawab brought Clive to Sadiqbagh,\(^3\) where Miran had been waiting for them. It was decided among them that a letter should be sent to Ram Narayan signed by Clive and the Nawab asking him to remain firm in his post, that Kasim Aly Khan should proceed to Patna via Shahabad and that Miran

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2 ibid., p. 399.
3 Roy, A.C., _Mir Jafar_, p. 144.
should proceed to Rajmahal and join his forces there. He should wait there till the arrival of Clive. These arrangements took a long time and in the meanwhile no army was sent to assist Ram Narayan.

Raja Ram Narayan in the meanwhile had met the Shahzadah and had outwardly acknowledged his loyalty to him. But it was not his true intention. He had been deceiving Shahzadah and was daily expecting the English forces from Bengal. At the approach of the Bengal army, Ram Narayan turned out the Shahzadah’s agent with this message, “I acknowledge no master but the Nazim\(^1\) of Bengal” and ordered his men to shut the city gates. Having heard the news that the English forces were approaching Patna, Raja Ram Narayan declared war against the Prince on the 23rd March. This attack continued for two days but the forces of the Shahzadah were being defeated. While the fighting was going on between the Shahzadah and Ram Narayan, Clive reached Shahabad. Advices reached Miran that Ram Narayan had actually gone over to the Shahzadah,\(^2\) but Clive did not believe this rumour to be true. From Shahabad Clive wrote a letter\(^3\) to Raja Ram Narayan to continue fighting against the Shahzadah. Clive, who was making very rapid marches to join him, directed Ensign Mathews,\(^4\) who was in advance in the command of a battalion of sepoys, to hasten to Patna and co-operate with Ram Narayan. Confident from the efforts which were made to support him, and the near approach of his friends, Ram Narayan made the most gallant exertions to save the city. Every assault was repulsed. The forces of the Shahzadah were much alarmed by the arrival of the detachment of sepoys under Ensign Mathews at Fultana bridge and by their apprehensions that the rest of the army was close after them, that they directly abandoned the siege and had retired so precipitately that they had already got near the banks of the Son.\(^5\) Now the English forces reached Patna on the 5th April.

\(^1\) Siyar, Vol. II, p. 300.
\(^3\) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 409.
\(^4\) B.S.C.P., 1758-59, p. 64.
\(^5\) Ibid.
The Prince decamped to the south. On the 20th April he learnt that Shuja had seized Allahabad fort by treachery four days earlier. At this news, Md. Quli immediately\(^1\) set out for this province, leaving the Prince who sought the help of Pahalwan Singh, Zamindar of Bhojpur. But Ram Narayan with the help of the Bengal army under Miran raided Pahalwan Singh’s country (10th May) and after a long fight defeated him and his patrons. After his defeat in the successive battles, the Prince wrote repeated letters to the English offering to throw himself upon their protection, but Clive did not send any reply to him, nor showed any anxiety to help him. After his successive defeats his difficulty mounted up, and he wrote to Clive for the financial help to enable him to make his retreat. Clive took pity on the unfortunate Prince and he sent him 500\(^2\) gold Mohars. Now the Shahzadah crossed the Karamnasa and was endeavouring to get over the Ganges into the Ghazipur country. The Nawab of Oudh had persuaded him first to attack Bihar but after his defeat, he did not grant him any asylum. So the Shahzadah proceeded further and took shelter at Rewa with the Raja of Bundelkhand. After the departure of the Shahzadah, Clive went to the bank of Karamnasa\(^3\) and expelled the hostile elements that had taken shelter there. Raja Pahalwan Singh of Bhojpur had been very active in the cause of the Shahzadah. Clive now turned his attention to him and completely subdued him. Other Bhojpur Rajas had agreed to pay ten years’ arrears of revenue to Ram Narayan. Thus this invasion of the Shahzadah ended in failure. Clive returned to Patna in the end of May 1759. The British authority remained unaffected there. The Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk now congratulated Clive in this way: “The faithful services which you have performed and the pains which you have taken in the late affairs have given me great joy; nor can I sufficiently express your praises for what have you done. Continue to behave with the same fidelity; seize the rebel and send him to court. By the will of God, this service performed, the king will show you the greatest favour, and your honours shall be increased.”\(^4\)

\(^2\) B.S.C.P., 1758-59, p. 74.
\(^4\) Thompson and Garatt, *British Rule in India*, p. 86.
But the Prince was determined to try his luck once again in Bihar. The Prince spent the rainy season at Rewa. He left Rewa towards the end of 1759 and reached Ghotauli (5 miles north of Son East Bank railway station) via Mirzapur and Sasaram. At Ghotauli he received the unhappy news of the assassination of his father Alamgir II by Imad-ul-mulk on the 29th November 1759. Now he proclaimed himself the Emperor under the title of Shah Alam II. He proceeded towards Bihar. This was the second invasion of Bihar by Shah Alam. In the beginning of 1760, the Emperor¹ invaded the province. At this time Shah Alam was joined by Kamgar Khan, Golan Shaw, and Rhein Khan. The Nawab of Narhat also joined Shah Alam with 500 or 600 horse. His two officers Diller Khan and Assalut Khan were with him. The Nawab at this time had become so universally hated that victory seemed sure to the Emperor. The Emperor had 4,000 force. Ram Narayan had raised his forces to the number of forty thousand men, with twenty pieces of cannon. He was reinforced with seventy Europeans, two field-pieces, and a battalion of sepoys, under the command of lieutenant Cockran, from the English factory. Ram Narayan fought against the imperialists at Masumpura² on the 9th February, 1760.

Ram Narayan, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, had divided the force into three³ parts, the first commanded by Rehim Khan, the Rohilla and Ahmad Khan Koreishy, the second by Raja Murlidhar⁴ and Pahalwan Singh, who had joined Ram Narayan with a large force, the third unit was commanded by Ram Narayan himself. The Emperor Shah Alam had also divided the whole army into two parts. One unit was commanded by Kamgar Khan and the other by Diller and Assalut Khan; the Emperor with his own immediate followers formed the reserve. The battle started. Pahalwan⁵ Singh betrayed the cause

³ J. B.O.R.S., 1917, p. 120.  
⁵ He was an illiterate Brahmin. He lived at Patna. He was the head spy of Raja Ram Narayan.  
⁶ Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 281.
of Ram Narayan, and joined the Emperor’s side. To the great indignation of Ram Narayan, Murad Khan, a Belooch chief, Ahmad Khan Kireishy and several other officers also fled from the battlefield at the commencement of the fight. The result of the battle was a foregone conclusion. He was defeated in the battle. He was wounded\(^1\) in several parts of his body by Kamgar Khan’s spear and he lost two fingers of his right hand. Captain Cockran and Mr. Barwell were slain one after another. The chief cause of his defeat was the posting of the English troops too far from his own person and the desertion of the three most powerful Rajas of his party.

After this defeat the forces of Miran and Caillaud joined the army of Ram Narayan. They had moved from Murshidabad on the 18th of January towards Patna and they arrived on the 19th\(^2\) of February, within twenty-eight miles of Patna. Major Caillaud defeated the imperialists at Sherpur. On the 22nd February 1760, Miran was slightly wounded\(^3\) in the face and neck by the arrows. The Emperor after this defeat retreated to Bihar town. The English army remained between Barh and Patna. Caillaud wanted\(^4\) to pursue the Emperor but Miran wanted to take rest. After enjoying pleasure, when Miran condescended to join Caillaud in pursuit of the Emperor on the 29th February, they found that Shah Alam had started for Bengal.

On the 29th February, Caillaud and Miran began to pursue the Emperor’s army. On the 2nd March they came to Bihar. Shah Alam was proceeding towards Bengal with a view to attacking Murshidabad. A batch of the Marathas had already appeared in Bengal and they had settled at Vishunpur in the Bankura district. The Governor of Purnea, Khadem Hussain Khan had also rebelled against the Nawab. It was a great test of Mir Jafar’s strength. But no man can rise above his character. The Emperor, in spite of the best opportunity could not dash against Murshidabad. He had also tried to effect a junction with the Marathas. Caillaud and Miran reached Bengal from

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\(^2\) *Vansittart, Narrative of Bengal*, 1760, p. 5.


Bihar. The Emperor now shrank back from the attack and came to Patna. At this time M. Law joined the Emperor and the siege of Patna was vigorously pushed on. Major Caillaud sent captain Knox to Patna. He had been sent to chastise the Emperor.

According to a contemporary Persian manuscript, Mir Jafar and Caillaud had been perturbed due to the first and second expeditions of Shah Alam II. Mir Jafar, Miran and Caillaud had tried for the assassination of the Emperor, when the Emperor had been making his retreat from Murshidabad to Patna. In this manuscript there is a letter written by the Nawab of Bengal, Miran and Caillaud to Khande Rai. The purport of the letter is as follows:—Shuja-ul-Mulk (Mir Jafar) Nasir-ul-Mulk (Miran) and Mubariz-ud-doulah Saif-Jang (Colonel Caillaud) had written a letter to Khande Rai Khande Rai had instructed Raja Chihkan Singh, harkarah of the Nawab Mir Jafar, to carry out an attempt on the life of the Shahzadah. Mir Jafar, Miran and Caillaud learnt the contents of the letter and they approved of the plan of Khande Rai. They communicated their decision to Khande Rai and they goaded him in this dark act. Khande Rai was the Mukhtar of Kamgar Khan and was also the private secretary of the Emperor Shah Alam. In the end they wrote, ‘we direct you either to arrest Shahzadah or assassinate him. For this work, we shall give you one Lakh rupees as award immediately. Rest assured for the money.’ They also assured him that after the execution of this business, he would get the Zamindari of Kamgar Khan. Really it was a great blot on the character of Caillaud. It was not a wise step on the part of Caillaud that he had planned for the assassination of the Emperor. Caillaud’s character, however exalted his achievement may be in the different fields, stands condemned. But he could not be successful in his nefarious game.

1 Muzaffarnamah, f. 70.
2 I came across a copy of the Persian manuscript at Khuda Baksha Library, Patna. This manuscript had been borrowed from India Office, London.
3 India Office Library Persian manuscript number 2371, f. 3A-3B. This manuscript had been written or collected by a gentleman named R. E. Roberts, who in 1784 and 85 held the office of Persian Interpreter either to the Governor of Bengal or the commander of the forces.
4 India Office Library Persian manuscript, f. 3A-3B.
That such a project\(^1\) should have been entertained is not inconsistent with the character either of Mir Jafar or Miran, especially of the latter who, according to the author of the Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, was capable of any atrocity. Clive was not a party to this conspiracy. The Emperor safely returned to Patna.

Before the arrival of Captain Knox to Patna, the Emperor had assaulted\(^2\) the city twice but with no effect. Part of the small army belonging to M. Law, who had joined him on his return with about four hundred of his own people, had forced into the town, but were driven out again by the bravery of Ram Narayan.\(^3\) With the arrival of captain Knox everything changed. Captain Knox followed him and the Emperor was driven out of Patna. He retired to the bank of the river Son,\(^4\) 50 (fifty) miles west of Patna. He again returned to Bihar\(^5\) where he established his headquarters. The area between Son and Fulgo also came under the influence of the Emperor who collected the revenue of this area.

After his defeat the Emperor began to live in Bihar and negotiation went on between him and the English Council. The Nawab had no knowledge of it. The Calcutta Council resolved to enter into an alliance with the Emperor thinking it to be 'a necessary\(^6\) and expedient measure'. Kasim Aly Khan and Mr. Holwell were desired to broach the matter with him and obtain his suggestion as to how to achieve it. Mr. Holwell authorised Rai Durlabh\(^7\) to talk with the Emperor with regard to the way the negotiations were to commence.

Kamgar Khan, the Emperor's principal advisor had been for long in correspondence with the English, and therefore, the Calcutta Council directed Colonel John Caillaud to seek his

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\(^1\) J.A.S.B., 1852, p. 117.
\(^3\) Vansittart, *Narrative of Bengal*, 1760, p. 23.
\(^4\) *Ibid.*, 1760, p. 26; Bengal : Past and Present, 1911, p. 188.
\(^5\) Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 322.
\(^6\) B.S.C.P., 1760, Vol. 6, pp. 70-71.
\(^7\) Maharaja Rai Durlabh or Durlabh Ram was the son of Raja Janki Ram. He acted as Diwan both under Alivardi Khan and Siraj-ud-dowla. He was an active participant in the overthrow of Siraj-ud-dowla. After the revolution he was appointed Diwan by Mir Jafar but was soon dismissed and replaced by Raj Ballabh.
help. Qasim Aly Khan, who had been the Nawab’s officer, also wanted to make a treaty with the Emperor and he addressed a petition to him. The President directed Caillaud to see that Law and his party were delivered up, and if he succeeded in his attempt, he was to send them to Calcutta. Further Caillaud was directed that in case his proposals were rejected by the Emperor, he should, in cooperation with the Nawab’s troops prevent him from penetrating further into the province. The Council advised him to so pursue the Emperor ‘as to force him to cross the river Caramnassa’ and season and circumstances permitting, he should even cross it himself so that a foreign country might bear the weight of the war. The English Council were anxious to come to an understanding with the Emperor and even ready to help him in asserting his pretensions to the empire. In the meanwhile the Select Committee received a letter from the Emperor and Kamgar Khan on the 12th November, 1760. It revealed the Emperor’s anxiety of making an alliance with the English with a view to obtain the assistance of the Company’s troops. The Emperor was even willing to confer Subahdaree on the Company.

The Council sent Sheikh Abdullah, a Vakeel of the Nawab and Raja Shitab Roy to the Emperor ‘to know his desire.’ They reported to the Council that the Emperor was not sincerely disposed in his profession, that he wanted sometime to think over this proposal. The negotiations broke down. On the expiry of the rainy season, the Emperor attacked Bihar for the third time in 1761 with the help of M. Law. But his army had become demoralised and he had no money. Carnac advanced to meet him and he completely defeated him at the battle of Suan on the 15th January, 1761, and he was driven from bank to bank ‘above three coss’ (about six miles). In course of the pursuit, English forces came to Kamgar Khan’s territory. M. Law was

1 B.S.C.P., 1760, p. 89.
2 Ibid., p. 184.
3 Ibid. p. 163.
4 B.S.C.P., 1761, p. 10.
5 J.B.O R.S., 1917, p. 130.
arrested and sent to Calcutta. Thus ended Law’s attempt to maintain the French party in Bengal.

As the Emperor having been defeated, the English Council advised Major Carnac that if he sought his protection, he should receive him provided ‘he entirely leaves it to our discretion what shall hereafter be done for him.’ Emperor Shah Alam was ready to open negotiations with the Council provided the Council were prepared to give him the maintenance, which he had been hitherto getting from Kamgar Khan. But Carnac was not authorised to accept the proposal. He wrote a letter to the Select Committee in which he mentioned that the Emperor wanted the English help to conduct him to Delhi, and that he wanted a residence with a suitable allowance provided “Khutba3 was read and Stica’s being struck in his name. The Calcutta Council was prepared to help him if he had sufficient men and money. The Council directed Mr. Johnstone4 that if the Emperor did not accept these conditions, he should be pursued. As the negotiations broke down, the Emperor was closely pursued and at last he threw himself into the hands of Major Carnac.

Major Carnac sent Shitab Roy to the Emperor to discuss the terms with him. But Kamgar Khan, was opposed to any kind of pacific arrangement5 with the English, so Raja Shitab Roy’s mission failed. The Raja at the time of his departure while expressing his regret told the Emperor that it was likely that in future he himself would beg for terms, which he had rejected. And thus what happened. The Emperor’s miseries were mounting up. His followers were deserting him. On the 29th January he sent his Bakshi Fyzoollah Khan to the Major to discuss the terms with him. Major Carnac replied that he was not authorised to enter into the details of any treaty, but as a preliminary step, the Emperor should dismiss Kamgar Khan,6 the prime mover in these troubles, and then he would refer the matter to the Council in Calcutta, and would suspend all hostilities and

1 B S C P., 1761, p. 28.
3 A public prayer or discourse pronounced in the mosques at the end of Friday service, in which the ruling prince is prayed for.
4 An officer of the East India Company in the time of Clive.
5 Broome, Bengal Army, p. 322.
6 Muzaffarnamah, f. 72.
would direct Raja Ram Narayan to afford the means of subsistence to him, whilst he remained on the other side of the Son. As desired the Emperor dismissed Kamgar Khan and even expressed his readiness to repair to the English camp in person if permitted to do so.

Major Carnac being convinced of the sincerity of the Emperor suspended hostility. On the 6th February 1761, a conference was held at a spot situated between the two camps near Gaya. Next morning the Emperor visited the English camp, where he was profusely welcomed. The Emperor was so much satisfied with the reception that on the 8th of February he shifted to the English Camp to take up his residence there. It was now decided that till the final instructions from Calcutta were received, all disputes should cease, that Shah Alam should be treated as the Emperor of Hindustan and that he should be allowed by Raja Ram Narayan one thousand daily for his subsistence. These objects having been thus happily fulfilled, the Major’s next thought was to bring the Emperor to Patna. The Emperor and Major Carnac soon left for Patna. The Emperor established his quarters at Bankipur. The English army was placed near the western gate. Major Carnac desired that the Emperor should take up his residence in the citadel. The Emperor was hesitating to enter the English fort. He was under some apprehension because he doubted the sincerity of the English. But Carnac assured him that the English were incapable of acting treacherously, that he had nothing to fear because he had much respect for his person and the illustrious race of Timur from which he was descended.

These words produced a magical effect on the Emperor and he made his entry into the city on the 22nd of February. He began to live in the fort. He requested the Major to conduct him to Delhi and to assist him to get the throne. He also requested him to increase his daily allowance to Rs. 1300, which was done by the Major. An arrangement was made in the

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1 *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 72.
2 Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 328.
4 B.S.C.P., 1761, p. 52.
5 Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 329.
meanwhile to bring about an interview between the Nawab Mir Qasim and the Emperor for the formal settlement of certain points agreed upon. On the 12th March 1761, the interview took place at Gulzarbagh\(^1\) English factory. Here a temporary throne was erected in the hall or principal room, the floor being covered with carpets and the wall, hung with rich stuffs, the room presented a very handsome appearance. Here the Emperor was received and they all made obeisance. The Emperor invested Mir Qasim with the Subahdaree\(^2\) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa for which he agreed to pay His Majesty a yearly sum of 24 lacs of rupees.

After the Durbar was over, the East India Company asked Mir Qasim\(^3\) to get Shah Alam’s Khutba read in the mosque. The English were not prepared to conduct him to Delhi, so the Emperor went to the Oudh court in June 1761. He was escorted beyond the boundaries of the province of Bihar by Major Carnac.\(^4\)

**Revolt Of Khadem Hussain Khan**

The period between 1757 and 1765 witnessed two dangers for Bihar. The first was the invasion of Shah Alam which was warded off. The second emanated from Khadem Hussain Khan, the Governor of Purnea. In the early days of the Mughal rule, Purnea was an outlying military province of the Empire and its revenue was almost consumed in protecting its frontiers, against the incursions of the wild tribes from the north and east. Early in the 18th century, a Faujdar was appointed. He was also vested with the fiscal duties of amil or superintendent of the revenue. In 1722 the post of Faujdar was held by Saif Khan. At the time of Siraj-ud-dowla, Mohan Lal was the head of the Government of Purnea. At the time of the battle of Plassey in 1757, general confusion prevailed throughout the whole province. Hazir\(^5\) Ali Khan with the help of his Diwan Okhul Singh seized the Government of Purnea by driving out Mohan

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\(^1\) *Ibid.*, p. 332. *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 74. The name of the factory has not been mentioned in *Muzaffarnamah*.

\(^2\) *Broome, Bengal Army*, p. 332.

\(^3\) *Muzaffarnamah*, f. 74.


\(^5\) *Siyar, Vol. II*, p. 249.
Lal. Hazir Ali Khan acknowledged his loyalty to Mir Jafar but the Nawab did not like him and wanted to expel him. He appointed his nephew Khadem Hussain Khan as the governor of Purnea. Khadem Hussain Khan’s father, Syed Khadem Ali Khan, was the husband of Mir Jafar’s sister. Khadem Hussain was not born of the sister, but of another wife of Khadem.¹

Khadem Hussain was ordered to march to Purnea with 6,000² horse and foot on 6th October, but actually his troops numbered only 3000. He halted at Rajmahal, waiting for the remainder of the detachment to come. Mir Jafar advised Clive to send some troops. He sent 5,000 troops to join the expedition. Now Khadem Hussain crossed the Ganges, opposite Rajmahal.³ He sent round a circular to all the principal men of the district. He then wrote a letter to the Governor in which he expressed his inability to march owing to the lack of troops. Mir Jafar grew suspicious of his conduct and he asked Miran to recall him. But at the suggestion of Miran he sent Mir Cazem to help Khadem Hussain Khan. Khadem Hussain was directed to wait till the arrival of Mir Cazem. But Khadem became suspicious of the intention of the Nawab towards him and he proceeded towards Purnea without waiting for Mir Cazem.

Clive had also reached Rajmahal on the 3rd December 1757 and encamped at a distance of one and a half mile from Khadem Hussain’s army. Khadem Hussain entered Purnea and Hazir Ali Khan fled away from the battlefield. Okhul Singh was arrested and by the middle of December 1757. Khadem Hussain Khan established his sway over Purnea.

From the very beginning of his rule, he did not like Miran. Miran had all the evil things in him. “He was a weak⁴ edition of Siraj-ud-dowla.” Khadem Hussain Khan did not understand his dreadful character. From 1757 to 1760 he accumulated huge riches. He did not remit the taxes of Purnea to the Royal treasury. Mir Jafar did not like this attitude of the Governor of Purnea.

⁴ Wilson, Lord Clive, p. 112.
Khadem Hussain was simply waiting for an opportune moment to rise in rebellion against the Nawab. When Shahzadah Shah Alam attacked Bihar in 1759, Khadem Hussain shook off his allegiance to Mir Jafar and started from his palace with 10,000 soldiers and came on the bank of the Ganges.

Clive and Miran had left Murshidabad to fight the Shahzadah. Miran had directed Khadem Hussain Khan to meet him. The latter led an army southwards to Karagola¹ (now N. E. Rly. station near Katihar) and obtained a guarantee of safety from Clive as he suspected treachery on the part of Miran. Then they had an interview in the Ganges, each being in a separate boat and were reconciled by the mediation of Clive. The truce was a hollow one, for Miran threatened to have Khadem Hussain Khan removed from his post, while the latter withheld all payment of revenue. Khadem Hussain was attaching himself to the faction of Shahzadah. He was making sufficient preparation to help the Shahzadah.

Miran was not disturbed at the rebellious attitude of Khadem Hussain, but he was pressed by Caillaud² to take measures against the Governor. At last the Nawab sent an army under Miran along with the English army, which reached Rajmahal on the 23rd January 1760. Khadem Hussain sent a message to Caillaud through the Faujdar of Rajmahal signifying his desire for peace provided the Major stands as his guarantor. Major Caillaud agreed and he informed him that his life would be protected and that he might remain safely in the English camp, provided he would submit to the Nawab’s authority and resign his post.

Now the negotiations were carried on between Major Caillaud and Khadem Hussain Khan. Miran was not at all happy to know that Caillaud was carrying on negotiations with Khadem. Miran told Caillaud that Khadem Hussain Khan should be punished. At length, being induced by Caillaud, Miran reluctantly consented to it.³ A communication was sent to Khadem Hussain “with offers of pardon upon his submission and with these further terms, that he should resign the Government and

discharge the arrears of his revenue and that he should be permitted afterwards to live in the same manner and in the same station which he held in the time of the Nawab Alivardi Khan".¹

Really these were very harsh terms, the acceptance of which would have brought about his complete destruction. But there was no way out. It was essential that Khadem should accept these conditions for the time being. He did so and promised to join the English army but soon after he returned and left for Patna, informing Shah Alam that 'he was attached to the imperial service and would soon come up with his forces to the Emperor's assistance.'² The Nawab was perturbed that Khadem Hussain had rebelled for the second time. He tried to win Khadem by any means. Khadem Hussain demanded an indemnity and a solemn engagement that in future no step would be taken which would prove harmful to his interests and honour. He also demanded an assurance from the Nawab that he would not dismiss him from the post. In fact these demands were very high. "You will perceive" wrote Hastings "how opposite to the Nawab's interests³ these demands are." The Nawab did not accept these terms and hence the negotiations broke down. Khadem Hussain now marched farther and was on his way to Patna. He had already crossed the Ganges. The Nawab rushed to Sacrigully to intercept Khadem. He also directed Hastings to send a detachment to attend on his person. Khadem had 6,000 cavalry and 30 guns.

Khadem Hussain reached Hajipur. "Had this arrival" writes Ghulam Husain, "happened sometime before when Azimabad (Patna) was besieged by the emperor.............these is no doubt but that he would have possessed himself of that city."⁴ The Nawab sent his brother Mir Cazem Khan to Talliagarh and directed his army to follow him. He himself stayed at Sacrigully, waiting for the information of the route that he would take. Now the Nawab had realised the gravity of the situation and so he ordered Major Caillaud and Miran to proceed further. They proceeded towards Bengal and Captain Knox

¹ Ibid., p. 163.
³ Roy, A. C., Mir Jafar, p. 164.
was ordered to cross the river from Patna and endeavour to intercept Khadem Hussain and harass him on his march.\textsuperscript{1} A battle was fought on the 16th June 1760 between Captain Knox and Khadem Hussain Khan. The total force of Khadem had swelled to 12 thousand men, with the thirty pieces of cannon, while captain Knox had only two hundred Europeans, one battalion of sepoys, five field-pieces and about three hundred\textsuperscript{2} horse.\textsuperscript{2}

Captain Knox demonstrated his strength and bravery and Khadem was defeated\textsuperscript{3} and he retreated leaving behind him 400 dead on the field, three elephants and eight pieces of cannon. Khadem fled towards Bettia.\textsuperscript{4} Colonel Caillaud and Miran crossed the Ganges on the 25th June, 1760 to pursue Khadem Hussain Khan. Captain Knox was ordered to return to Patna. Khadem Hussain had a heavy luggage with him, so he could not retreat speedily. After a few days pursuit, the rear of Khadem Hussain Khan’s forces appeared in sight.\textsuperscript{5} Colonel Caillaud persisted in following him. Had the Bengal army continued the pursuit for a few days more, the affairs would have been decided in their favour. But fate was against Caillaud, and due to unforeseen circumstances, all his attempts were foiled. Miran, Chota Nawab as he was called, was lying asleep in his tent in the town of Bettia.\textsuperscript{6} A violent storm was raging throughout the whole area. As the fury of the storm did not abate, Miran left his big\textsuperscript{7} tent at 11 P.M. and entered into a small one. He was accompanied by a story-teller and one servant. After sometime he fell asleep not knowing that this sleep would be everlasting. Suddenly a lightening fell at midnight and it pierced Miran’s body and he instantly died. He had five or six\textsuperscript{8} holes on the head with six or seven streaks

\textsuperscript{1} Vansittart, \textit{Narrative of Bengal}, 1760, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 30.
\textsuperscript{3} Siyar, Vol. II, p. 361 ; Broome, \textit{Bengal Army}, p. 301.
\textsuperscript{4} J.B.O.R.S., 1917, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{5} Vansittart, \textit{Narrative of Bengal}, 1760, p. 31 ; Bengal : Past and ; Present, 1911, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Ibid.}, 191\textsuperscript{1/2}, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{7} Siyar, Vol. II, p. 365.
\textsuperscript{8} Siyar, Vol. II, p. 366.
on the belly and back. This accident happened on the 1st of July 1760.1

After Miran's death,2 it was not possible for Caillaud to pursue Khadem Hussain. Caillaud apprehended a military revolt but he controlled the situation. Caillaud now returned to Patna halting only a few days at the town of Bettia. The Raja of the place gave arrears of revenue to him due to the Nawab. Khadem Hussain thus providentially escaped and marching with the speed of lightening went towards Gorakhpur3 (a district of the United Province).

Raja Ram Narayan—The Deputy Governor of Bihar

Ram Narayan played a very important role in the history of Bihar in the 18th century. He was the son of a Srivastav Kayastha named Ranglal, an inhabitant of a village, Kishunpur in Pargana Sasaram of the Shahabad district in Bihar.4 The date of his birth is controversial. He was born probably in 1714 or 1719.5 Ranglal, the father of Ram Narayan was a Diwan of Alivardi, when the latter was the Deputy Governor of Bihar. At that time Persian was the medium of instruction, so Ram Narayan received his education through this medium. This was the only way of getting a job. He began his career as a clerk in Bihar on Rs. 5 per month and was subsequently raised to the private secretaryship of Zainuddin, the Deputy Governor of Bihar. While Raja Janki Ram was the Deputy Governor of Bihar, he was appointed as the Diwan of the province. These administrative experiences helped him immensely in his later life. Zainuddin Haibat Jang got valuable help from Ram Narayan at the time of the Afghan expedition. When Mustafa Khan, the Afghan Commander had in anger resigned the Nawab's service in 1745 and attacked Patna, Ram Narayan acted as one of the six6 commanders. It was due to Kirat Chand and Raja Ram Narayan that Zainuddin could be protected in a

3 B.S.C.P., 1760, p. 65.
4 Datta, Times, p. 166.
5 Indian Historical Quarterly, 1938, p. 83.
hand to hand fight against Mustafa Khan. Zainuddin was assassinated by the Afghans at Chihil Satun at Patna in 1748. Raja Ram Narayan had a providential escape from this terrible calamity. At the time of the assassination of Haibat Jang, Raja Ram Narayan was in the account office. They were taken unawares and were without arms; they were stripped to the skin and allowed to depart, some wounded\(^1\) and some not.

During the time of Janki Ram (1748-52), the Deputy Governor of Bihar, Ram Narayan was the Diwan of the province. Sincerity, patience and perseverance were the striking features of his character. Ram Narayan was appointed as the Deputy Governor of Bihar on January 29, 1752. About six months later, on the 21st Ramzan, a fringed Palki, a special robe of honour, gilded head-dress and a sword with enamelled handle, sent by the Nawab Mansurul-Mulk, were respectfully received by the Raja in the garden of Jafar Khan.\(^2\)

Raja Ram Narayan was an efficient administrator. Just after taking over charge of the province of Bihar, he sent to the Nawab of Bengal four lacs of rupees, which he found surplus in the treasury of Raja Janki Ram. He had written a letter to the Nawab in August and November 1752 about the condition of the province. The letter ran in this way; "By the eternal good fortune of your Excellency, the Government of the country is well ordered and well regulated. The people are enjoying peace and order and are praying for the perpetuation of your Excellency’s protection."\(^3\)

When Ram Narayan took over the charge as the Deputy Governor of Bihar, his first attention was drawn to the frontier problem. Many political adventurers had made their headway in this part of the country. They wanted to carve some new estates for themselves. The Bhojpuriah Rajputs of Jagdishpur and Chainpur in Sasaram, Kamgar Khan of Narhat and Samoy, Sunder Singh of Tikari, Bishun Singh\(^4\) of Seres and Cotomba were prominent chiefs in the middle of the 18th century in Bihar. These turbulent Zamindars frequently disturbed the peace of the land. The Government suffered much loss of revenue due to

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\(^1\) Siyar, Vol. II, p. 38.
\(^2\) Indian Historical Quarterly, 1938, p. 758.
\(^3\) Ibid., 1938, p. 760.
their activities. Ram Narayan was fully alive to this problem. He left his capital after sometime for Bhojpur expedition. He wanted to subjugate Bishun Singh, who had refused to pay the revenue and wanted to become independent. Pahalwan Singh of Sasaram had paid him a visit and had paid down his dues. He also promised to bring Udwant Singh, the Zamindar of Bhojpur, on the bank of the river Son. Ram Narayan came at Janpadha, six miles away from Muhib Alipur. Bishun Singh made some resistance in his mud forts but after sometime he expressed his readiness to come to terms. He paid a visit to the Raja and promised to clear off all dues. He gave his son, Narayan Singh, a boy of twelve years of age in hostage for the arrears which he owed. Ram Narayan had some difficulty with Sunder Singh of Tikari in the beginning of his administration. The old Nawab Alivardi had to intervene in this matter. The Tikari Raja was not prepared to pay a visit to Raja Ram Narayan. At last the Nawab Alivardi intervened and the Tikari Raja had to pay in 1754 two lacs in cash, besides two lacs already realized and one lac accepted as a loan from the army.

Ram Narayan had a strong enemy in Kamgar Khan, the powerful Zamindar of Narhat and Samoy, who dominated the country between Birbhum and Bihar. Ram Narayan got active help from Sunder Singh of Tikari in exterminating Kamgar Khan. Kamgar Khan was defeated by 1754. The most marked feature of Raja Ram Narayan’s political career under Alivardi was the ability and the wisdom he showed in settling the affairs of the province, especially of the frontier districts. He was vigilant about the frontier problem. As the border of Bihar and Oudh touched each other, the soldiers of Safdar Jang often entered into the territory of Bihar. The flight of the soldiers often created a problem for the Nawab. The Nawab of Oudh requested Alivardi to take adequate steps at the frontier so that none of his soldiers could slip into the territory of Bihar. Alivardi informed this matter to Ram Narayan. Raja Ram Narayan directed Pahalwan Singh and Udwant Singh to keep guard over the forts of Karamnasa and Buxar river, so that not a single soldier of Oudh could make forcible entry into the

1 Ibid., p. 276.
2 Indian Historical Quarterly, 1938, p. 774.
province. He also directed the Naib of the Sarkar of Saran to guard the river of Deoha (a river flowing by the side of the Siwan town in the district of Saran) and Gogra. Lastly he established a police post opposite to Hajipur for the same purpose.

The battle of Plassey took place on the 23rd June 1757. It marked a decisive phase in the political history of India. Ram Narayan’s conduct during and immediately after the battle of Plassey deserves careful consideration. Ram Narayan cannot in any way be held responsible for the cruel fate that overtook Siraj-ud-dowla. He was loyal to the Nawab till the end of his life. We have the testimony of Orme: “Of all the gentoos (Hindus) whom Alivardi had raised to high appointments, Raja Ram Narayan seems to have been the only one whose gratitude had not been estranged by the despotic caprices of Siraj-ud-dowla.” Broome accounts for and explains this by referring to the “continual absence of the Raja from the Durbar owing to which he was comparatively little subject to the caprices and insolences of the Nawab.”

Ram Narayan was a loyal servant of the Bengal Nawab. He cannot be regarded a traitor to the salt he had eaten. The rebellion of Shaukat Jang testifies to the loyalty of Raja Ram Narayan to the Nawab. Shaukat Jang, the uncle of Siraj-ud-dowla and the Governor of Purnea, rebelled against the Nawab in 1756. It was even said that Shaukat Jang had obtained a Farman from the Imperial Wazir appointing him the Nawab of Bengal. Siraj collected a large force towards the beginning of October 1756. But we are told by Mr. Hill that the violence of the Nawab had driven Mir Jafar and Jagat Seth into a state of disaffection. The army was in a dangerous temper. Popular opinion was growing in favour of Shaukat Jang and a revolution which might have swept away Siraj’s authority was impending. To protect himself against a possible outbreak Siraj had summoned his Deputy Governor of Bihar to his assistance. Hill writes that the Malcontents hoped that Ram Narayan would not come but he obeyed the Nawab’s summons. According to Ghulam Husain: “He set out with Raja Sunder Singh, Pahalwan Singh and his brother Suther Singh, at the head of a force of Azimabad which alone could not be less than the double of the

1 Indian Historical Quarterly, 1939, p. 20.
forces of Shaukat Jang, but which at any rate, might have been a great deal than equal.” This powerful army had probably very little opportunity to exert itself though it had reached the field of the battle of Manihari, Shaukat Jang was defeated and killed in the battle of Manihari, fought on the 16th October, 1756.¹

As a result of his sincere devotion to his duty, Ram Narayan received special favours from the Nawab. He was secretly ordered to keep watch over Omar Khan, Mirza Gholam Ali Beg and others who had been suspected of criminal friendship with Mir Mohammad Jafar Khan and dismissed from his service by the Nawab. The Raja, on his return to Patna² carried out the orders of his master confining Mirza Gholam Beg, Mirza Hakim Beg, Ahmad Ali Khan, Husain Ali and Mir Moalla.

At this stage the question arises that if the Deputy Governor of Bihar was a faithful, sincere and honest servant of the Nawab of Bengal, why did he not try to avert the calamity that befell Siraj-ud-dowla after the battle of Plassey. In fact, Raja Ram Narayan appears to have been absent from the capital for the suppression of the refractory chief of Mai in the district of Gaya during the four months from April to June 1757. He received the news of the defeat of the Nawab as the result of the battle of Plassey at Mai. It would have been really an excellent thing, if Ram Narayan had rushed to help Siraj-ud-dowla, pending the suppression of the chief of Mai. It was a question of life and death for the Nawab. But it appears that probably Ram Narayan did not realise the gravity of the situation. He did not help M. Law timely to go for the assistance of the Nawab. Had M. Law reached Rajmahal a few hours earlier, the unfortunate Nawab might have been saved.

M. Law, the elder son of William Law, was the Chief of the French factory at Kasimbazar. M. Law had taken shelter in the court of Siraj after the fall of the Kasimbazar factory. He had taken service under Siraj. After the fall of Chandranagar on 23rd May 1757, the English were anxious to eliminate the French influence in Bengal. They demanded from the Nawab the

² Indian Historical Quarterly, 1939, p. 21.
surrender of all French factories and of all Frenchmen in Bengal with their effects. So the Nawab was compelled by the English to dismiss the French under M. Law from his dominion.\(^1\) He asked M. Law to quit Bengal on 16th April, 1756. The Nawab furnished him with money, arms, ammunitions and ordered him to march with all his men\(^2\) to Bihar. Siraj-ud-dowla told M. Law at the time of departure that if anything should happen he would send for him again. "Send for me again," answered M. Law, "Rest assured, my Lord Nawab, that this is the last time we shall see each other. Remember my words, we shall never meet again. It is nearly impossible."\(^3\) M. Law started on 16th of April with 100 Europeans, 60 Coromandal sepoys, 30 small carriages and four elephants.\(^4\) Nawab Siraj-ud-dowla liked M. Law but he had directed him to leave his dominion under the pressure of the circumstances. But he sent Rs. 10,000 to Law on his journey.\(^5\)

M. Law crossed the river and he reached Bhagalpur on the 2nd May, 1757. He reached Patna on the 3rd June and was well received by Raja Ram Narayan.\(^6\) On the eve of the battle of Plassey, Siraj ordered M. Law to come to his help. According to Ghulam Husain ‘on the first movement of the English (from Calcutta) and his own advance towards Plassey the Nawab had written a pressing letter to M. Law requiring him to come to him immediately, without losing a moment.’\(^7\) M. Law’s observations are significant: ‘The Nawab had the stupidity to confide in his most implacable enemies. At the time, he wrote me letters after letters to come down as quickly as possible, the bearers, he said were angels. But the angels were traitors who travelled as slowly as they could. The first who started on the 12th did not reach me till the 22nd and the other on the 24th, we were already on the way.’\(^8\) In fact on the 20th, upon certain rumours which

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\(^8\) Indian Historical Quarterly, 1939, p. 30.
were current in Patna that the English were preparing to march upon Murshidabad, M. Law had written to Mr. Sinfray his opinion as to what he should do. On the 22nd he replied to the Nawab and requested him to wait for him, as he feared he would engage the enemy at an unsuitable time. But M. Law could not get the necessary expenses from Ram Narayan timely. Ghulam Husain says that Law would have been in time, had the Nawab’s last remittance been a bill of exchange and not an order on the treasury, for as ‘slowness of motion, seems to be of etiquette, with the people of Hindustan.’¹ M. Law came to Taillagarhy (between Bhagalpur and Sahebganj) and heard some confused reports of the battle of Plassey on which he halted, waiting for more certain information. M. Law did not proceed farther from Rajmahal as appears from a letter written by Clive, dated Murshidabad, 26th July, 1757 to the Secret Committee. The letter ran in this way: ‘Mons, Laws and his party came down as far as Rajahmaul to Serajah Dowla’s assistance, and were within three hours march of him when he was taken. As soon as they heard of his misfortune they returned by forced marches, and by the last advice had passed by Patna on the other side of the river.’² Clive and Mir Jafar had written urgent letters to Ram Narayan at Patna to stop M. Law and his party, but Ram Narayan was no lover of Mir Jafar and he was not yet acquainted with Clive.³

Clive had written a letter to Ram Narayan on the 5th July, 1757, for the capture of M. Law and his party. Clive wrote in the letter that a party had been sent at Rajmahal to arrest Law and his party. He suggested to Ram Narayan in the letter to arrest M. Law if he escapes the pursuing party. Mr. Law reached Dinapore, eight miles away from Patna on the 16th July. M. Law himself admits that on the 18th, he received an order from the Raja to halt, no doubt, to wait for the English, whilst he received another letter from him advising him to hurry off. Raja Ram Narayan was not inclined to arrest M. Law. Major Coote had started from Murshidabad on the 6th July for the arrest of M. Law. The party reached Rajmahal on the 11th July.

They came to Bhagalpur on the 18th July. Here Major Coote received a letter from Colonel Clive, dated the 13th July which contained perwanahs from the Nawab Mir Jafar addressed to the several officers in his route. All these officers had been asked by the Nawab to help Major Coote either with provision, boats or men. The Faujdar of Bhagalpur helped him with 600 horsemen. Coote also sent a perwanah to the Raja of Kharagpur. He had requested the Raja to send two hundred horsemen whom he directed to be sent to meet him at Monghyr.\(^1\) He received intelligence at Bhagalpur that M. Law’s party had four days before passed the city of Patna. The party reached Monghyr on the 21st July. Major Coote started from Monghyr on the 22nd and arrived at Burhia,\(^2\) 30 miles farther from Monghyr on 23rd. Then the party reached Dariapur, 11 miles further from Panarack (near Patna). On the 25th they came to Futwah (near Patna). While Coote was making all possible efforts to reach Patna earlier, he received two letters, one being written by Raja Ram Narayan. Ram Narayan in the letter had apologised to Coote for the escape of the French party and he pointed out in the letter that he did not get timely information from the English for the arrest of M. Law and his party. Soon after a deputation sent by Raja Ram Narayan waited upon Major Coote. The deputationist explained that Ram Narayan had returned two days before from an expedition against two disobedient chiefs of Mai and Sadar, whose districts lay about thirty miles south-east of Patna. He proclaimed Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal after his return from Mai. They also explained to him that Ram Narayan had sent forward 2,000 of his troops in pursuit of M. Law. Coote started from Futwah and he reached the English factory at Patna\(^3\) on the 26th July.

Clive began to doubt the sincerity of Ram Narayan towards the Nawab. The escape of M. Law was an eye-opener to Clive. Clive also received a letter from Coote in which he had written that ‘he met with obstruction instead of aid from Ram Narayan’.\(^4\) Clive had written a letter to Rai Durlabh on July 21st, 1757

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1 Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 169.
3 Ibid., p. 191.
in which he expressed a sense of dissatisfaction with the conduct of Ram Narayan on the escape of M. Law and his party. To prove his innocence in the matter, Ram Narayan wrote a letter to Clive dated 28th July, 1757, in which he drew the attention of Clive that Law passed through Patna and had gone out of this province. He did not receive timely communication from Clive about their arrest. Had it been done Law and his party would have been arrested. But Clive was not satisfied with this explanation.

Just after his arrival at Patna, Coote wanted to talk with Ram Narayan but the latter fixed the next day for an interview. Even then he could not be available to Coote at the fixed time. Next day Coote held a conference with Mahmud Ahmu, the brother and Mir Qasim, the brother-in-law of Mir Jafar. They told him that Ram Narayan had deliberately permitted M. Law to pass through Bihar and that Ram Narayan in league with Shuja-ud-Dowlah wanted to declare himself independent of the help of the English. They told him further that Law was taking shelter at Oudh and he was waiting for his recall to Patna. They likewise asserted that Ram Narayan had consulted his confidents on the means of destroying the English detachment. Now Coote advanced further and his whole force moved to Dinapore, and on the 1st of August, joined the troops which Ram Narayan pretended to have sent forward in pursuit of M. Law. The combined forces halted at Moneah, a town fifteen miles from Dinapore. Here Haibut Jang, the commander of Ram Narayan's forces refused to proceed any further. The troops of Coote crossed the Ganges and they came opposite to Chapra, on the 3rd August 1757. Here the English had a rest in a salt-petre factory. Major Coote received intelligence that some prominent chiefs of Bihar had cooperated with Ram Narayan and spies reported to him that these chiefs had left M. Law and his party at Benaras and Balwant Singh, the Raja of Benaras had given shelter to M. Law and his party. Having studied the situation Coote thought that further pursuit of Law was fruitless.

On the receipt of Coote's letter from Patna, Clive had come to this conclusion that Ram Narayan was not faithful to

the Nawab. He also thought that the Raja was not attached to the English cause. Hence his continuance as the Deputy Governor of Bihar was harmful to the Nawab and the English. So he wrote a letter to the Nawab Mir Jafar on the 12th August advising him as follows: “Ram Narain’s conduct must nevertheless deserve your resentment and I can only repeat what I have so often represented to you, that unless you chastise some of these treacherous and turbulent dispositions, every petty Raja will dare disobedience.” On the same day Major Coote received a letter at Chapra from Clive “instructing him as a scheme of Meer Jaffer’s to return to Patna and endeavour, in concert with Mahmud Ahmu Khan to wrest the Government from Ram Narain.” So Coote started from Chapra on the morning of the 13th August and reached Patna in the afternoon. Thus ended an expedition, which according to Broome ‘must always be regarded as an extraordinary instance of military hardihood and perseverance, a more handful of troops pursuing an enemy, little inferior in numbers and equipment, for nearly 4,00 miles through a country almost unknown and either secretly or openly hostile with continued obstacle and difficulties occurring at every step and this too at the most unhealthy and trying season of the year.”

Major Coote consulted Mahmud Ahmu Khan and Mir Qasim Khan. He wanted to attack the citadel of Ram Narayan which contained two thousand soldiers, but Mahmud Ahmu Khan and Mir Qasim Khan advised him to wait till adequate preparation had been made. All these details were communicated to the Raja by his agent at Murshidabad. Tactful as he was, he now as a result of the circumstances thought to change his policy towards the Nawab’s officers. He behaved with much courtesy towards Coote who was so impressed with his conduct that he visited him in his camp. The Raja

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1 Bengal and Madras Papers, Vol. II, p. 69.
3 Ibid., p. 193.
4 Broome, Bengal Army, p. 180.
5 Ibid., p. 178.
presented him a handsome ‘Khilaut’\(^1\) consisting of a dress, horse and jewels.

Ram Narayan employed his agent at the Nawab’s court to influence him in his favour and he succeeded in his efforts. Coote now received counter instructions from the Nawab in which he was directed to suspend any hostile action against the Raja and to settle the matter amicably. The Nawab began to suspect his own brother Mahmud Ahmu Khan. Major Coote was asked to leave Ram Narayan in the Government of Azimabad. Now letters were exchanged between Ram Narayan and Coote and on the 21st,\(^2\) Coote paid a visit to the Raja and settled all points of dispute. Ram Narayan agreed to take an oath of loyalty to Mir Jafar provided the English would stand as his guarantor for his safety and honour. Coote pledged himself to this.

Everything was settled and a public Durbar was held for the adjustment of all differences. It was attended by Mahmud Ahmu Khan, Mir Qasim Khan, Pearkes, Chief of the Patna factory and by all the civil and military\(^3\) officers of the Company. Raja Ram Narayan and Mahmud Ahmu Khan embraced each other and they all embraced Major Coote as the general mediator.\(^4\) But neither party was sincere to the promises they had made. They were determined to abide by their present resolution as long as it suited their interests. The reconciliation having been made, the Nawab recalled the troops, and Coote left Patna on the 7th of September and arrived in seven days at Murshidabad.

For the time being the differences between the Nawab and the Raja had been patched up but it was not a permanent arrangement. Mir Jafar under the pressure of the circumstances, had recalled Coote’s forces from Patna, but soon he changed his mind. On receipt of Clive’s letter of the 12th August, Mir Jafar decided to remove Ram Narayan from the Deputy Governorship of Bihar and appoint Mir Cazem Khan\(^5\) in his place. The Nawab left his capital on the 17th October with a view to

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\(^1\) Any article of costume presented by the ruling or superior authority to an inferior as a mark of distinction.

\(^2\) Broome, *Bengal Army*, p. 179.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 179.


expelling Hazir Ali Khan from Purnea and had come to Giria, 22 miles from Murshidabad, from whence he sent an express message to Clive to come down with his army and meet him at his camp.

Mir Jafar doubted the sincerity of Ram Narayan, who on his side was perturbed at the movement of the Nawab's troops. Getting anxious about his security he invited the Zamindars of the province, especially Raja Sunder Singh and Pahalwan Singh to join him with their troops in a common effort against the Nawab. But the Zamindars did not support the Raja, hence out of sheer necessity, he turned to Clive. Ghulam Husain writes: 'Ram Narain being by this time certain that the Nawab's expedition was solely intended against him, he concluded with himself that his own power and dominion could never subsist upon a solid foundation unless he made an alliance with the English.' Clive could hardly let slip this opportunity to have an alliance with Ram Narayan, the most powerful and popular Governor of Bihar, in order to have control over the Nawab.

Hence on receiving the appeal from Ram Narayan, Clive wrote a letter to him on November 9th, 1757, in which he assured the Raja of his help. He wrote: "Be assured I shall look on your welfare as my own and I will interest myself in your affairs and do all the service in my power." Ram Narayan wrote a letter to Clive on 20th November 1757 in which he expressed joy at his attitude. He expressed the view that he considered him as his friend and was desirous of his favour. Mir Jafar as yet had not confirmed Ram Narayan in his post. So Clive asked the Nawab to confirm him and to regard him as his honest servant. Clive wrote a letter to Ram Narayan in which he asked him to come and pay his respect to the Nawab. He wrote in the letter, dated November 25, 1757 "I will be security for your coming to him." In the meanwhile Clive, accompanied by his troops from Murshidabad on 30th November, reached Rajmahal on 3rd December. The Nawab's soldiers were marching forward and Ram Narayan did not receive Clive's letter dated November 9, 1757 in time. So he was anxious for his safety.

2 Bengal and Madras Papers, Vol. II, p. 84.
3 ibid, p. 88.
4 Ibid., p. 91.
hand, Clive held a conference with the Nawab at Rajmahal and there Clive impressed upon him the necessity of confirming Ram Narayan\(^1\) in his post. Mir Jafar was made to believe that unless a mutual settlement was effected with Ram Narayan, there was the possibility of Ram Narayan’s being joined by Shuja-ud-Dowlah of Oudh, which, in consequence would endanger the Nawab’s *Masnad*.\(^2\) Realising the gravity of the situation, the Nawab requested the Colonel to intervene in the matter and to bring it to a peaceful conclusion.

The whole army began to move from Rajmahal on the 3rd January 1758. At the Nawab’s request, the English led the van, Rai Durlabh with his troops and the artillery of the Government following next and the Nawab with the main body, numbering about 40,000, bringing up the rear. The Nawab’s army could not cover a long distance owing to the large baggage with him. The Nawab always asked the Colonel not to march ahead with his army but to go with him. “I desire”, wrote the Nawab “You will likewise halt and then march.”\(^3\) In the meantime, reports were received from Patha that Raja Ram Narayan had been taking measures for his defence and that he had demolished the bridge on the road within thirty miles of Patna and had posted guards on the bridge between Futwah and Patna, so that none could pass to Patna,\(^4\) Raja Ram Narayan was perfectly justified in taking strong measures for his defence. Uptil now he had not received any communication from Clive about his security, nor had the Nawab assured him of his life and honour. It might be admitted that he had no treasonable intentions and that he only required security for his life and continuance in his employment.\(^5\) Ram Narayan was still sincere to the cause of his master and as soon as he had received a letter from Clive in which the latter had asked him to come and pay his respects. Ram Narayan changed his attitude and informed him about his arrival. Ram Narayan wrote a letter to Clive in which he mentioned that he was arriving within two days.

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\(^1\) Roy, A.C., p. 113.
\(^2\) *Ibid*, p. 113.
\(^3\) Roy, A.C., p. 115.
The Nawab then sent Govind Mal at the request of Clive to Ram Narayan with the instruction to persuade the Raja to come down to him. Ram Narayan had no faith in the words of the Nawab, so he won over Govind Mal to his side and sent him as his agent to the Nawab’s camp with a view to procuring a letter from him, wherein he would agree to invite the Raja with a promise of confirming him in his Government of Patna.\textsuperscript{1} Thus commissioned, Govind Mal waited upon the Nawab and informed him that Ram Narayan would meet him only on condition of Clive’s standing as his guarantor. The Nawab agreed to this suggestion and Govind Mal asked the Persian Secretary\textsuperscript{2} to prepare a draft of this. Govind Mal and the Persian Secretary were in league with Ram Narayan. A draft was prepared and it was placed before the Nawab when, ‘once only seasoned with his dose of Bhang, he was incapable of attending to the business.’\textsuperscript{3} The Nawab in such a state of intoxication asked the Secretary to read out the letter. The Secretary, as instructed by Govind Mal, took this opportunity of mentioning to him such purport as differed widely from the original letter, which suited to his plans. The Nawab then ordered a letter to be drawn up accordingly to be sent to Clive. Govind Mal\textsuperscript{4} took the letter and went to see the Colonel who took a copy of it, signed and sealed the original, and sent it back to the Nawab. This letter contained, as Ghulam Husain quotes, “an invitation to come over to the English camp, with assurance of his taking it upon himself to have him confirmed in his Government and to see him secured as far as his life, property and honour, were concerned without his being liable to be called to any account whatever, for either the management of the revenue\textsuperscript{5} or any other matter.” Govind Mal, now took his departure and without returning to the Nawab’s camp hastened to Ram Narayan’s place and conveyed to him the pleasing news. Ram Narayan was ready to wait upon the Nawab. Clive, in his letter dated January 16th, 1758, conveyed to the Nawab the happy news that Ram Narayan was

\textsuperscript{1} Siyar, Vol. II, p. 258.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 258.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., p. 258.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid, p. 258.
coming to the Nawab to pay visit. Clive was also marching to Patna and the English force reached Sultanganj (a station of the E.I. Rly. near Bhagalpur). Accordingly, Ram Narayan started from Patna to meet the Nawab. He started on a boat on the 22nd January, 1758, whilst his escort marched along the bank of the Ganges. He reached the English camp on 25th and waited upon Clive.

Here it should be noted that a few days before Ram Narayan’s arrival in the English camp, Mir Jafar wrote a letter to Colonel Clive, dated the 12th January, 1758, mentioning therein that the Nawab had received some intelligence. The letter ran thus: “Ram Narayan would not accommodate matters or trust his person in his hands without the following conditions viz—that he shall recall his brothers from Patna, send him 3,000 horse to assist in collecting the revenue, allow him to appoint a Faujdar of Shahabad and that the Nawab himself shall return with his army to Muxcadavad.” But the Colonel could not give any credit to that intelligence because two days ago he had received a letter from Ram Narayan expressing his earnest desire to obtain the Nawab’s favour through ‘our means’. Ram Narayan completely depended on the support of the English for his confirmation. He had written a letter to Clive which he received on the 17th February, in which he had mentioned that he entirely depended ‘on the English faith for his security and for his continuing in his Government.”

When Ram Narayan visited Clive on the 25th January, 1758, he deputed Watts to introduce Ram Narayan to the Nawab. Watts introduced Raja Ram Narayan on 29th January. The Nawab, temporarily concealing his real motive, received him ‘with great civility’. The Nawab was proceeding to Patna, so he asked him to follow in the rear, in order to facilitate their


communications on business; but in reality to mark his inferiority to the province and to do him injury later on.

Mir Jafar’s attitude of keeping Ram Narayan in the rear created suspicion in the English camp. The English people doubted the intention of Mir Jafar to Ram Narayan and they thought that the Nawab had placed him in the rear with a distinct intention of inflicting harm on the Raja. Clive himself, not receiving any intelligence from the Nawab for several days, had the same suspicion and he wrote a letter to Rai Durlabh on February 3, 1758. “According to the Nabob’s orders I gave encouragement to Ram Narain to come here, and I delivered him to the Nabob and further I agreed that he should be continued in his post, that he should enjoy his life, his credit and goods, but to this day I know of nothing that has been done for him. I hear that he is behind the army which surprises me very much. I therefore desire that when you are alone with the Nabob that you will inform yourself how his heart is inclined towards Ram Narain, where he stands to the treaty and write me of it that I may write accordingly to the Nabob.”

He further wrote a letter to Amir Beg Cawn Bahadur, dated February 3, 1758, mentioning that Ram Narayan agreed to pay the Nawab a visit on his responsibility. He wrote: “I hear that Ram Narayan is now behind all the army. It is proper that he should be in the van, how comes it that he is in the rear. This surprises me much. I, therefore, desire when you are alone with the Nabob that you will inform yourself concerning this and advise me of it that I may write accordingly to the Nabob.”

Clive’s anxiety was removed on the receipt of a letter from Ram Narayan, dated 4th February, 1758, in which the Raja had written that the Nawab was showing him favour daily. The letter ran in this way: “The Nabob had ordered perwannahs to be written to all the Zaminars that he continues in my Government and that by me they must come and pay their respects to him. Whatever is done for me I look on it entirely owing to your favour.”

Amir Beg Cawn Bahadur also wrote a letter to Colonel Clive on February 6, 1758, in which he mentioned: “Ram Narayan’s

affairs are now begun, but there is nothing to fear. There is no occasion for your writing to the Nabob on this subject.” Clive was satisfied at this turn of events and he wrote a letter to Ram Narayan, dated February 12th, 1758: “The reason why I interested myself in your affairs was the great character I heard of you from all the people of the country. You may always depend upon my friendship and readiness to serve you.”

Under pressure of circumstances, Mir Jafar had agreed to confirm Ram Narayan in his post, but during the course of his expedition to Patna he had been waiting for an opportunity to destroy Ram Narayan and the English influence altogether, so that he might settle Ram Narayan’s affair independently without reference to the English. Now Clive entered the city of Patna starting from Jafar Khan’s garden. While the army was proceeding to Patna, the Nawab intended to separate Ram Narayan from Clive, so that Ram Narayan might not get any help from the English in the time of emergency. The Nawab posted guards at the camp of Ram Narayan, lest any news should pass between him and Clive. The Nawab advised Clive to march to Bankipur, which he did. The Nawab again instructed Clive to move to Dinapore on the 7th February, five miles farther on, because he desired to enter the city on the 9th February, and encamp at Bankipur.

This changed attitude of Mir Jafar again created a misgiving in the mind of Clive. The English troops were now at a great distance and the Nawab’s whole army was near the city. Clive again suspected the intention of Mir Jafar towards Ram Narayan. He sent Watts to the Nawab to ascertain his real sentiments towards Ram Narayan. Watts complained to the Nawab about Ram Narayan and asked the Nawab to remember his promise which he has made to Colonel Clive. But the Nawab did not show any willingness to settle this problem, before his talk with Clive.

The Nawab entered the city of Patna on the 12th February accompanied by Ram Narayan. He encamped on the eastern.

1 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 103.
3 Broome, Bengal Army, p. 196
4 Roy, A.C., Mir Jafar, p. 122.
side of the city. He wanted to fulfil his long cherished ambition by conferring the Governorship of Bihar on his brother, Mir Cazem Khan. The Nawab summoned Ram Narayan and directed him to render a full account of the management\(^1\) of the revenue of the province. Raja Ram Narayan was amazed at the Nawab’s bent of mind. He had paid his respect to the Nawab on Clive’s standing as his security. Therefore, he at once complained to Clive.\(^2\) Clive had also apprehension of the Nawab’s attitude towards Ram Narayan and his apprehension came true. Clive sent a message to Mir Jafar at once requesting him not to follow such an unwise policy. Clive’s letter caused annoyance to the Nawab and he was reported to have told the Colonel’s agent in these words: “What does mean, my Lord? Shall I leave such a government in the hands of Ram Narain and behold my own brother without employment? What for, Pray? And for whom?”\(^3\)

In the meantime Clive waited upon the Nawab on the 14th February and he represented Ram Narayan’s case to him. He told him that he had held out a promise to Ram Narayan and had assured him about his confirmation. Clive also told him that it was better to keep the Government in the hands of persons of moderate and peaceful dispositions rather than to place it in imprudent and dangerous hands. Clive further showed him the letter of assurance which he had given to Ram Narayan through Govind Mal. The Nawab was much perturbed at this assurance. He at once called his Persian Secretary and Govind Mal. These two men, being linked together in this business, gave replies in such a manner that it totally confounded the Nawab. They observed “that they had brought that minute to him, and offered for his perusal; that he had ordered the contents to be read out to him, had given his consent, and had requested that of the Colonel’s. They added, that it was not strange at all, that those contents should have slipped out of his memory, in the variety of businesses and avocations that crowded upon his Princely mind.”\(^4\) The Nawab, believing himself to be in the wrong, had no other alternative but to agree to confirm his appointment in the Governorship of Patna.

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1 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 263.
2 Ibid., p. 263.
After the accession of Mir Jafar on the *Masnad* of Bengal, Clive was interested in Ram Narayan's confirmation. Clive himself admits this fact as it appears from a letter which he wrote to Ram Narayan, dated February 12, 1758, vide reference number 66 and page number 137: "The reason why I interested myself in your affairs was the great character I heard of you from all the people of the country. You may always depend upon my friendship and readiness to serve you." Clive also sent another letter, dated February 15, 1758, to Ram Narayan in which he wrote that he had a talk with the Nawab about him. The Nawab agreed to confirm him on a lucky day. Clive wrote as follows: "You may now look on your affairs as Finished. Rest assured that I am your Friend and always ready to serve you." Mir Jafar wrote a letter to Clive dated and received 22nd February, 1758, in which he observed that he would give the Khilaut for the Subahdaree of Azimabad on a lucky day to him "who is the light of his eyes and dear to him as his life, his son Meer Najam Addin Cawn Bahadur and the Naib's 'Khilaut' he would give to the great Rajah Ram Narayan Bahadur."

On the 23rd February, 1758, a full Durbar was held which was attended by all his courtiers and the principal men of the province. Now the Nawab intended to settle the province in favour of Raja Ram Narayan. Orme writes: "A suit of dress with Jewels on a golden plate was laid before him, which he ordered to be carried away immediately, with an escort to his son Meerum at Muxadavod, whom he called the Nabob of Patna. Then another suit of the same presents, which he gave with his own hand to Ramnarain, pronouncing him deputy to Meerum in the Nabobship." The appointment of Miran was not derogatory to Ram Narayan because Raja Ram Narayan was responsible to the Nawab alone. Ram Narayan had to give seven lacs of rupees to the Nawab said to have been in arrears from the revenue of Bihar.

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3 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 2 (Clive's correspondence with the country powers.)
Though the Nawab had confirmed Ram Narayan, yet he did not take the arrangement to be final. He wanted Mir Cazem Khan in the place of Ram Narayan as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Clive was still there at Patna and it was beyond the capacity of the Nawab to dislodge Ram Narayan in the presence of Clive, who had acted as the guarantor of Ram Narayan throughout this whole episode. The Nawab went away to Barh, forty miles to the south-east of Patna, to offer prayers at the famous tomb of a saint. He was under the impression that during his absence Clive would leave Patna for Murshidabad and then he would get the opportunity of removing Ram Narayan. But Clive was too clever for him, and he decided not to separate himself from the Raja until Raja Ram Narayan was out of all danger. Mir Jafar returned from Barh after performing his religious rites only to find that Clive was still there. The attempt of the Nawab was foiled for the last time. The Nawab had no other alternative but to reconcile to his lot. The Nawab expressed his confidence in Ram Narayan’s integrity and fidelity and sent him to take charge of the Government and assured him of his support in the presence of Clive. Mir Jafar returned to Murshidabad on the 30th May, 1758.

Mir Jafar was a man of little capacity and not at all gifted with the talent of gaining the confidence of his principal officers. He was compelled to abdicate by the East India Company. He retired to Fort William with as much treasure as he could carry. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Mir Qasim in 1760.

Suspension And Death Of Raja Ram Narayan

Mir Qasim did not like Raja Ram Narayan, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, even before he ascended on the Masnad of Bengal. He had been endeavouring to remove him for the last four years. Now, when he was raised to the Masnad of Bengal, he wanted to fulfil his long-cherished ambition. The Nawab’s main grievances against Raja Ram Narayan were:

1. Ibid., p. 284.
4. Thompson and Garatt, British Rule in India, p. 91.
(1) The Nawab felt that Ram Narayan had defalcated a huge amount of money;
(2) Ram Narayan was not ready to submit a statement of the income and expenditure of the revenue of the period of which he held the charge.
(3) The Nawab was also annoyed at his cold behaviour towards him;
(4) The Nawab also doubted his sincerity towards him;
(5) The Nawab felt that Ram Narayan had not fully destroyed the power of Bihar Zamindars. Had it been so, the total dues would have been collected. The Nawab also felt that Ram Narayan’s men created difficulties for the administration by fomenting disturbances.
(6) Ram Narayan was supposed to have inflamed the mind of Coote against the Nawab;
(7) The Nawab suspected Ram Narayan and he vaguely felt that he was in league with the Shahzadah;
(8) Ram Narayan had sufficient wealth and so the Nawab believed that he must have misappropriated Government revenue.
(9) Ram Narayan was alleged to have spread the report\(^1\) that the Nawab was preparing to attack the English force at Patna;
(10) He had declared the Shahzadah as the Emperor of Hindusthan without the permission of the Nawab.

On scrutiny, all these complaints appear to be false. It is a fact that Ram Narayan delayed in submitting his accounts to the Nawab. It is also certain that he depended for his help on the support of the English. There is much truth in the statement that the Nawab intended to destroy all those people who had any connection with the English. But it was not an easy task to dislodge him, from the position, because he had been enjoying the confidence of the English since the time of Mir Jafar. At the time of Mir Jafar, Clive had given definite instructions to Colonel Caillaud to protect Ram Narayan in the case of the Nawab’s making any attempt on his person or honour.\(^2\) The same instruction had also been given to Major Carnac by the Governor of the Council. Major Carnac had

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\(^2\) Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1761, p. 34.
been directed ‘in case of necessity to protect Ram Narain against all violence and injustice that may be offered to his person, honor\(^1\) or fortune.’ Major Carnac, on the receipt of this instruction, became watchful of Ram Narayan’s safety. Mir Qasim made a complaint to him about Ram Narayan that there was a considerable balance due on the revenue of the province. Mir Qasim felt that the Raja had embezzled a considerable portion\(^2\) of the revenue, so he was not submitting any account to him. On arriving at Patna, Major Carnac, had a talk with the Raja on this point.

At the intervention of Major Carnac Raja Ram Narayan became ready to place the accounts before him. Carnac wrote to the Council that the cause of difference between the Nawab and the Raja was the question of arrears of revenue. To solve this he suggested to the Nawab that both parties ‘should each\(^3\) make out the accounts and refer them’ to the English board ‘who would fairly decide\(^4\) between them.’ But the Nawab did not agree to this proposal of Carnac. Carnac wrote a letter to the Council in which he mentioned that the Nawab had told him plainly about the removal of Ram Narayan from the province of Bihar. So he wanted a further clarification from the Council as to what he should do in case the Nawab desired to remove Raja Ram Narayan from the Deputy Governorship of Bihar. He wrote in the letter that he had been directed by the Council in its letter dated 9th February, 1761, ‘to protect Ram Narain against all violence and injustice that may be offered to his person, honor or fortune.’\(^5\) But he had not been directed to keep Ram Narayan in his position of Deputy Subahdaree, so Carnac requested the Council to send him a fresh instruction. Raja Ram Narayan had been remarkably steady in his alliance with the Company and had received from Colonel Clive particular assurance of protection with respect to his person, fortune and Government, so Major Carnac received the following instructions from the Council. “We recommend to you to secure him against all attempts of oppression or injustice and further

\(^1\) Ibid., 1761, p. 34.
\(^2\) Broome, Bengal Army, p. 338.
\(^3\) B.S.C.P., 1761, pp. 152-153.
\(^4\) Ibid., 1761, pp. 152-153.
\(^5\) Ibid., 1761, pp. 152-153.
that the government of Patna be preserved to him, if it be his inclination to continue in it.”

Mir Qasim had been making numerous complaints to the Council about Ram Narayan. He told the Council that Ram Narayan was not settling his accounts with him. The East India Company had a commercial outlook. The Company used to get regular supply of money from the Bengal Nawab. It was a great source of income to the Company. Now the Company was not receiving money from the Nawab, so there was the likelihood that the Bengal troops might feel difficulties in receiving payment. Hence the Council sent a revised instruction to Colonel Coote: “We are inclined to support Ram Narain in the Government of Patna, with all its just advantages, so on the other, we would protect the Nawab in the respect and authority due to him and afford him every assistance for the collection of his revenues, without which it is impossible he can pay the arrears of his troops, or support the other charges of his Government. The nature of their differences seems to be such as can only be adjusted by arbitration. And for this determination we can pitch upon no other person so well qualified as yourself. We, therefore, request that you will make this business one of the first article of your attention and when you are yourself acquainted with the merits of the cause.”

Raja Ram Narayan had not submitted his accounts to the Nawab for many years. He had been acting as the Deputy Governor of Bihar since Siraj-ud-dowla’s time. Mir Qasim insisted on the submission of the accounts of income and expenditure, but the Raja had been always evading it on some pretext or other and the English East India Company had been constantly supporting him. Now the Council devised some method to settle the account and accordingly Coote was informed. The Council wrote in 1761 that Ram Narayan must be debited for everything that he has collected in the course of three years and for all remittances sent to him from Bengal and credited for all that he has paid to his own troops and to those sent to his assistance and for all other expenses of his

2 Ibid., p. 159.
Government, and for all the money he may have remitted to Bengal or paid upon Drafts. The Nawab was then to allow him a gratuity as before mentioned and Ram Narayan was to give the Nawab a faithful account of all the outstanding balances of the zamindars which the Nawab must send people to collect. Coote was directed to settle the account in this light and he was ordered to send to the Council a computed account.¹

Ram Narayan's computed account of three years Government of the Bihar province conformable to his agreement was as follows:

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To profit and loss
which Ram Narayan
would have gained 10,50,000

120,00,000

Accordingly Colonel Coote had a talk with the Nawab on the 25th May and he placed the suggestion of the Company but the Nawab turned down the proposal of Coote. Throughout the conference the Nawab insisted on the removal of Ram Narayan and the appointment of Raja Naubat Roy as the Deputy Governor of Bihar, Colonel Coote informed the Committee the approach of the Nawab to this problem. He also mentioned in the letter dated Patna 26th of May, that

¹ B.S.C.P., 1761, p. 175.
Raja Ram Narayan was ready to adjust every matter with the Nawab. At last, being pressed by the English Council, the Nawab became ready to settle the matter with the Raja. It was somewhat strange that when the Nawab agreed to settle the issue between himself and Ram Narayan, Ram Narayan declined to place any account before the Nawab. So Coote wrote a letter to the Calcutta Council in May 1761 in which he mentioned that Ram Narayan was not prepared to settle this matter and he wrote: "I have assured him of our protection provided he acted the just part with the Nawab."¹ In May, probably moved by the Nawab's ceaseless complaints, the Committee receded somewhat from the unconditional support they had hitherto promised to Ram Narayan and Mr. Vansittart wrote that if he did not come with sincere heart, the Nawab should act as the interests of the Circar might demand.²

As usual, the Nawab made a long complaint to the Council about Ram Narayan's dubious character. The Nawab wrote in his letter in May 1761 that on repeated requests made by the Calcutta Council he appointed Raja Raj Ballav to examine the accounts of Ram Narayan in the presence of Colonel Coote. The Calcutta Council had already passed a resolution in this connection. It had been resolved that the accounts of Maharaja Ram Narayan should be examined. The Nawab Mir Qasim accordingly intimated Ram Narayan the resolution of the Council. Raja Ram Narayan did not like to submit the papers and the Nawab sent the following answer to the Colonel: "I have no reliance³ on anyone but you, and none else can conduct my affairs. There is a just demand on Maharajah Ram Narain of large sums on account of the last four years. If I make an enquiry into his accounts I shall receive a large sum of money. Notwithstanding this I remain here wearied out and involved in vexations. The army murmer on account of the dearness of grain and the subjects are reduced by their disorders to the most extremities. This wretch sits here fomenting dissensions and going my life and fortune a prey to my seapoies and placing his last resource, for his own establishment in my falling into the

¹ B.S.C.P., 1761, p. 227.
³ B.S.C.P.; 1761, p. 228.
hands of my seapoies. For God’s sake let not go my hand in the middle of this sea, but assist me as you have always done and write in the most pressing terms to the Colonel and send an order of the Council that He oppose not the removal of the Naib of this place and leave the country now in my hands. After this I will finish all the accounts.”

The Calcutta Council was at last convinced that Raja Ram Narayan was endeavouring to evade delivery of his accounts, to preserve his own authority over the Subahship and prevent the Nawab from collecting any money. To settle the problem, the Calcutta Council wrote a letter in May 1761 to Colonel Eyre Coote: “Let Ram Narain’s power be suspended until his accounts are settled and a computation of the rents transmitted us with the Nabobs proposals for our determination as desired in our before mentioned letter. The speedy execution of this is the more necessary as our only dependence for supplying the army with money is from the Nabob’s balance of about 8 lacks, which we have desired him to pay to the Chief and Council at Patna; but which in his letter to the president received last night, he says it is impossible for him to do nor indeed to pay his own troops, until his amuldas are put in possession of the growing revenues, and he be supported fully in calling Ram Narayan to account of his administration, as well as collecting the Balances due from the administration. He adds in the same letter I have not now the power of collecting a single rupee.”

Mr. Ellis and Mr. Amyatt dissented from the proposal of the suspension of Ram Narayan. Mr. Ellis in his dissenting note expressed the opinion that the dismissing of Ram Narayan at this time was totally unnecessary. The English Council had already authorised Colonel Coote to take proper action in the case between Ram Narayan and the Nawab. The note further said: “If Colonel Coote had found Ram Narayan culpable he himself would have suspended him till he had further orders from the Committee.”

Mr. Amyatt gave a long dissenting note. He wrote that Ram Narayan had been confirmed in the Patna Government by the Nawab Mir

1 B.S.C.P., 1761, p. 228.
2 Ibid., 1761, p. 231.
3 Ibid, p. 234.
Jafar. The Nawab after his confirmation wanted to drive him out, but it was due to the support of Colonel Clive that the Nawab could not adopt any evil design against him. The note of dissent went on: "So Ram Narayan from our protection, over-esteeming himself more a servant to the English, than of the Nabob's."¹ Mr. Amyatt further said that Nawab Mir Qasim was bent upon removing him because the Nawab felt that Ram Narayan was a staunch supporter of the English cause. He suggested in his dissenting note that Colonel Coote was the proper authority to take any action against Ram Narayan. The Council on the advice of Coote, ought to have taken steps. The Proceedings of the Committee went on, Mr. Amyatt thinks, "dismissing a man who had always behaved with firmness to our cause which made him obnoxious to all the Nabobs and one, he is convinced, who has never got thing by his employ and faith to us but trouble and wounds, but he will have this satisfaction to himself that he has abided by his faith to the English longer than they have to him."²

Raja Ram Narayan certainly deserved this punishment, because for the last four years he had not submitted any account. It was also a fact that he had embezzled a heavy amount, therefore he could not dare place any statement of income and expenditure before the Nawab. But it must be admitted that the Nawab Mir Qasim was prejudiced against those men who were the supporters of the English. Raja Ram Narayan was a strong supporter of the English, therefore the Nawab was bent upon his destruction. Raja Raj Ballav was adopting all possible means for the suspension of Ram Narayan by the English. He was moving in this affair with a view to gaining Subahdaree of Bihar for himself. It appeared from the letter written by Major John Carnac to the Council dated the 16th June, 1761, in which he wrote that he received a letter from Raj Ballav, enclosed under cover to Mr. Lushington. The purport of this letter was that Raj Ballav wanted help from Carnac in ousting Raja Ram Narayan from the post of the Deputy Governor. Carnac further wrote: "with the letters were two promissory notes under his seal, one for fifty thousand rupees to myself, the other for

¹ B. S. C. P. 1761, p. 235.
² Ibid., p. 235.
twenty-two thousand rupees to Mr. Lushington.\textsuperscript{3} Coote and Lushington both sent a harsh reply to Raj Ballav for his insolence.

Now Coote wrote a letter to the Council from Sasaram dated the 16th June, 1761, that it was not proper to remove Ram Narayan at this stage whom they were 'bound to maintain by Engagements prior to and consequently more obligatory than any.'\textsuperscript{2} But the Calcutta Council did not appreciate the suggestion of Coote. The Council had already decided upon his suspension.

It appears from the whole episode that the Nawab and Raja Ballav were determined to oust the Raja from the Subadaree by fair means or foul means. At last the Calcutta Council was convinced about Ram Narayan's guilt and informed Major Coote at Patna that the Council had decided about the Raja's suspension. Coote received this letter on the 27th June and immediately resolved to quit Patna "being heartily tired of being employed on a service where there is so much corruption and villainy".\textsuperscript{3} He set out on July 5, leaving the troops at Patna under the command of Carnac. In the meanwhile, the Select Committee had recalled both Carnac and Coote\textsuperscript{4} from Patna. Leaving Ram Narayan\textsuperscript{5} at the mercy of the Nawab was the fatal mistake of Mr. Vansittart's administration, because it extinguished among the natives of rank all confidence in the English protection.

Mir Qasim was now free to take revenge on Ram Narayan who was without any supporter after the departure of Carnac\textsuperscript{6} and Coote. The Calcutta Council now abandoned the cause of Raja Ram Narayan, whom Clive had defended strongly. The Calcutta Council was not justified in its action of leaving Ram Narayan in the lurch. It was the firm conviction of Ram Narayan that the English would defend him at all costs against the Nawab. Raja Ram Narayan had therefore been defying the Nawab's authority. The English had been constantly supporting

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} B. S. C. P., 1761, p. 245.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ibid}, p. 245.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Dodwell, \textit{Dupleix and Clive}, p. 211.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Mill, James, \textit{History of British India} Vol. III, p. 283; \textit{Muzaffarnamah}, f. 75.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} Mill, James, \textit{History of British India}, Vol. III, p. 283.
  \item \textsuperscript{6} Chatterji, Nand Lal, \textit{Mir Qasim}, p. 79.
\end{itemize}
him from the time of Clive and Ram Narayan was completely
dependent on the support of the English. But that was not to
be and the Nawab was given full freedom to deal with the
unfortunate Raja. The Nawab first suspended him from his
rank and authority as Naib of the Province. He was formally
dismissed from the office in June by the Nawab with the
concurrence of the Select Committee. Ram Narayan had been
ordered in May to submit all his papers but he failed to do so
even by the end of August. He was cross-examined in the Central
Revenue Office in regard to his account. His clerks,¹ who had
fled away with their records, were all arrested. A number of
discrepancies were found in his account-book. When the
Calcutta Council abandoned the cause of Ram Narayan, he
became apprehensive that the Nawab might put him to prison
and confiscate his entire wealth. What he thought, actually
happened. To keep his property safe and intact, Ram Narayan
distributed it among his kith and kin under various names, but
the Nawab Mir Qasim was too clever and he succeeded in
tracing out a considerable portion of it and those persons who
endeavoured to conceal the wealth of Ram Narayan were
punished or were compelled to surrender a portion of it to
the English. Raja Murlidhar was put into prison and then sent
to Murshidabad. Mahomed Abak, the Kotwal of the city of
Patna and agent of Murlidhar, was also arrested. Raja
Murlidhar and Mahomed Abak were not liked by the people²
of this place. Raja Sunder Singh of Tikari had been Raja’s
close associate, so the Nawab’s evil eyes fell on him. He was
seized and confined. Ganga Bishun, the cash-keeper of Sunder
Singh and Munseram Sahu, the principal banker in the city were
both arrested. Ram Narayan, to save it from being acquired
by the Nawab, had put a portion of his treasure with him.³

Raja Ram Narayan sought the protection of the English even
at the last moment. When Major Coote and Carnac were ready
to start for Murshidabad, Ram Narayan met them and prayed
to be permitted to leave the country instead of being delivered
over to the Nawab. But it was not to be and Fate had ordained

¹ Chatterji, Nand Lal, Mir Qasim, p. 80.
² Broome, Bengal Army, p. 341.
³ Ibid., p. 341.
him otherwise. He had already been suspended by the Nawab and Raja Raj Ballav was appointed\(^1\) as the Deputy Governor of Bihar. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor of the Calcutta Council, approved the appointment of Raj Ballav. The Calcutta Council, decided in its meeting held on the 12th September, 1761, that Ram Narayan should be delivered to His Excellency.\(^2\) So Mr. Hay delivered Raja Ram Narayan into the hands of Mir Qasim. He was put into prison and the Nawab ordered for the confiscation of his entire property.

The turn of events soon led to a war between the English and the Nawab. The Nawab’s forces were defeated at the battle of Suti in 1763. On hearing of the defeat of Suti, the Nawab set out with his army general, the Armenian Gurghin Khan, to reinforce his army that was now concentrated on the banks of the Adhuanalla. The forces of the Nawab were again defeated at Adhuanalla. Now the Nawab decided to leave his capital Monghyr. Before leaving Monghyr the Nawab ordered (1763) for the execution of the Hindu prisoners in his power. So Raja Raj Ballav, Rai Raian Umid Ray, Raja Fateh Singh, Raja Buniad Singh (Zamindar of Tikari), Shaikh Abdullah and some others were put to death. The Nawab caused Ram Narayan to be thrown into the river below Monghyr fort with a pitcher\(^3\) filled with sand and tied to his neck.

There is difference among the historians as to the end of Ram Narayan. According to Firminger, Ram Narayan was put in a boat and it is believed that he was drowned.\(^4\) In whichever way Ram Narayan’s end came, it is certain that he died in 1763 and thus ended the career of Raja Ram Narayan, who had played a remarkable role in Bihar in the 18th century.

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3 Riyaz, p. 390. Thompson, and Garrat, *British Rule in India*, p. 94. They have not mentioned the name of Monghyr; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 403.
CHAPTER FOUR

DIWANI GRANT OF 1765 AND BIHAR

The Diwani forms an important land-mark in the rise of the British power in Bengal. A natural question arises, what did Diwani mean at the time? The Diwan of the Mughal empire held portfolio of the finance, and was responsible for the revenue administration of the province, and also occasionally administered civil justice. Several contemporary British officers in India have given their own interpretations. Mr. Vansittart, the Company’s Governor in Bengal from 1760 to 1764 writes: “The Dewanee is the office of the second officer of the province, called Dewan; whose business it is to superintend the lands and collections; that he is appointed from the court of Dehly and is in every respect independent of the Nazim or Nabob; who according to the original institution of the empire, has no right to interfere in the management of the revenues.”¹ “Dewanee differs from Subahdaree; the latter being the command of the troops, and the charge of the jurisdiction in the provinces, the expences whereof are paid out of the revenues by the Dewan. It was formerly a separate office; but the Nabobs of Bengal, taking advantage of the late

¹ Bolt’s, Considerations on Indian Affairs, 1772, p. 34.
commotions in the empire, have assumed it to themselves." Mr. Holwell, also formerly contemporary Governor of Bengal writes about the Dewani that: "the rents of the lands are the property of the Emperor. In consequence of which he has a royal Dewan in every Nabobship, who ought to be accountable to the royal treasury for the whole amount of the rents, as rated upon the King's books". On another occasion the Dewani is explained to be "the collecting of all the revenues, and after defraying the expenses of the army, and allowing a sufficient fund for the support of the Nizamut, to remit the remainder to Dehly, or wherever the King shall reside or direct."

Though the English got the Diwani in 1765, yet its genesis could be traced much earlier. After eighteen months of the battle of Plassey, the Central Government at Delhi offered the East India Company some terms for the acceptance of the Diwani. The imperial Government were of the opinion that the East India Company would regularly send the revenue from Bengal and in this way the financial condition of the Mughal Government would improve. Clive was of the view that the acceptance of the Diwani would transform the Company into a sovereign power. But he declined the offer "for the present" as he felt that the Company could not provide the forces needed to uphold such a position.

The momentous transfer of the office of Diwan from the Nawab to the Company was no original idea of Lord Clive. The President and Council in Calcutta had written in their letter to the Court of Directors, dated December 31, 1758:

"The success in Bengal has acquired us so great a reputation at the Court of Delhi, that the Vazier has several times addressed himself to the President to use his interest with the Subah to comply with the Royal mandate in paying the revenue due to the Moghul from his Subahship; and you will observe in the book of correspondence by letters from Setaub Roy, the Vazier's agent, that the Court is extremely desirous of appointing the President the Collector of this revenue, amounting to 50 laack of rupees annually. The person invested

1 Bolt's, Considerations on Indian Affairs, 1772, p. 34.
2 Ibid., p. 34.
with this employ, who is styled the king's Duan, is the second man of rank in the kingdom; such a dignity annexed to your Presidency would give extraordinary weight to the Company in the Empire, which nothing could be able to remove; however, though repeated proposals have been made to the President, yet, at this critical conjunction, he has been under the necessity of evading them, and managing his answers in such a manner as to protract time in the expectation of a more favourable opportunity. The accepting this employ might occasion jealousy on the part of the Subah, and we are unwilling to cause him any dissatisfaction at a time when our small force is engaged another way, especially as you, Gentlemen, give us so little hopes for reinforcement from home."

Clive had proposed to William Pitt, the Prime Minister of England, in a letter dated 7th January, 1759, that the Diwani should be accepted in the name, not of the Company, but of the English nation. He had written to Pitt: "So small a body as two thousand Europeans will secure us against any apprehensions from either one or the other (Mir Jafar or Miran): and that in case of their daring to be troublesome, enable the Company to take the sovereignty upon themselves. There will be the less difficulty in bringing about such an event, as the natives themselves have no attachment whatever to particular princes, and as, under the present Government, they have no security for their lives or properties, they would rejoice in so happy an exchange as that of a mild for a despotic Government; and there is little room to doubt our easily obtaining the Moghul's Sunnud in confirmation thereof, provided we agreed to pay him the stipulated allotment out of the revenues, viz, fifty lacs annually. This has of late years been very ill-paid, owing to the distractions in the heart of the Moghul Empire, which have disabled that court from attending to their concerns in the distant provinces; and the vizier had actually wrote to me, desiring I would engage the Nabob to make the payments agreeable to the former usage; nay, further application has been made to me from the court of Delhi, to take charge of collecting this payment the person entrusted with which is styled the king's Dewan, and is the next person both in dignity

1 Firminger, Fifth Report, Vol. I, pp. CLIV to CLV.
and power to the Soubah. But this high office I have been obliged to decline for the present, as I am unwilling to occasion any jealousy on the part of the Soubah; especially as I see no likelihood of the Company's providing us with a sufficient force to support properly so considerable an employ, and which would open a way for securing the Soubahship to ourselves. That this would be agreeable to the Moghul can hardly be questioned, as it would be so much to his interest to have these countries under the dominion of a nation famed for their good faith, rather than in the hands of people who, a long experience has convinced him, never will pay him his proportion of the revenues, unless awed into it by the fear of the Imperial army marching to force them into it.

But so large a sovereignty may possibly be an object too extensive for a mercantile Company; and it is to be feared they are not of themselves able, without the nation's assistance to maintain so wide a dominion; I have therefore presumed, Sir, to represent this matter to you, and submit it to your consideration, whether the execution of a design, that may hereafter be still carried to greater lengths, be worthy of the Government's taking it into hand, I flatter myself I have made it pretty clear to you, that there will be little or no difficulty in obtaining absolute possession of these rich kingdoms and that with the Moghul's own consent, on condition of paying him less than a fifth of the revenue thereof. Now I leave you to judge whether an income of upwards of two millions stirling, with the possession of these provinces abounding in the most valuable productions of nature and art, be an object deserving of public attention; and whether it be worth the nation's while to take the proper measures to secure such an acquisition which, under the management of so able and disinterested a minister, would prove a source of immense wealth to the kingdom, and might in time be appropriated in part as a fund towards diminishing the present heavy load of debt under which we at present labour."

Clive's letter was submitted to Pitt by Walsh, a relation of Clive, Walsh gave an account of his interview with Pitt, in a letter dated 26th November, 1759. Pitt regarded the proposals

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as “very practicable” but “of a very nice nature.” “He mentioned the Company’s charter not expiring these twenty years; that upon none of the late transactions it had been enquired into whether the Company’s conquests and acquisitions belonged to them or the Crown, and the judges seemed to think to the Company: he said the Company were not proper to have it, nor the Crown, for such a revenue would endanger our liberties, and that you have shown your good sense by the application of it to the public. He said the difficulty of effecting the affair was not great under such a genius as Colonel Clive; but the sustaining it was the point, it was not probable he would be succeeded by persons equal to the task”.¹ So Pitt did not accede to the offer made by Clive.

In 1761, the Emperor Shah Alam on his way to Delhi offered to Major Carnac “a confirmation of all the existing privileges enjoyed by the Company and the grant of the Diwani provided that the Company would guarantee the remission to Delhi of the Emperor’s share of the revenue.” Major Carnac then wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 21st June, 1761: “His Majesty crossed the Caramnasa, this morning. He made such marches from Sasaram hither that it was impossible for me to keep pace with him and I was forced to leave the army a march behind, in order to get up to him. Yesterday evening on parting, he made me the most public declaration of his particular regard for me. The accompanying is a copy of two Arzees. In the last letter, he has made you an offer of the Dewanhee of Bengal, on condition of you being answerable for the royal revenues, of which he declares he expects, which Cossim Aly Cawn has the management thereof......... .. you may be enabled to answer his Majesty, which answer he desires may be transmitted to him as soon as possible.”² But the Governor, Mr. Vansittart, instead of appreciating the good services rendered by Carnac, characterised his conduct “as unbecoming and arrogant,” and he refused to accept the Diwani offer. The Court of Directors thus approved of the policy held by Mr. Vansittart on 9th March, 1763: “Your refusal of the Dewanee offered by the King” wrote the Court of Directors, “was certainly very

¹ Ibid., Vol. I, p. CLVI. F.N.
right, and we are well satisfied, with the just and prudent reasons you give for declining that office.'

For the third time the English got the prospect of Diwani in 1764. Immediately after the battle of Buxar, Shah Alam II had proceeded to Benares and he and his Mir Saman Nawab Muniruddaulah, communicated from Benaras the following proposal to Major Munro through Suchit Ram; Raja Shitab Roy's vakil at Benares: "If it is your intention to take to the royal revenue agreed to by the Nabob Shuja-ul-Moolk according to the custom in Meer Cossim's (Mir Kasim's) time, and let it be paid monthly for the expenses of my troops, and whatever other territories you may possess yourself of taking a part of the Revenue for yours, and assign a part for the royal Sircar, and attend in my service and regulate the whole Empire. If on the other hand it is not your intention to take possession of the country give me my dismissal to the capital (Delhi), and pay me month by month the stipulated revenue of Bengal. I am ready to act in whatever manner may be most agreeable to the English Chiefs. Write me word whether I shall come to you, or remain here. I will do as you may desire." Munro replied: "I will write to the Gentlemen of Council, and will act agreeably to their Directions. By the blessing of God we will put your Majesty in possession of the throne of Hindusthan. For the present remain without fear at Benares. We shall come there and pay our Respects to you."

Thus thrice before in 1758, 1761 and 1764, the Court of Delhi had offered to confer on the Company the Diwani of Bengal on condition of being answerable for the royal revenue, but the English had declined that office in order to avoid any jealousy or ill-feeling between the Company and the Nawab of Bengal. But the circumstances had changed in 1765. A young and inefficient Nawab had been "seated" on the Masnad of Bengal. Delhi was in the Afghan hands and Oudh prostrate before the English. The Mughal emperor was only a homeless wanderer, a dependent on the Company's favour. Now was the opportune time for negotiating with the emperor for the Diwan of Bengal. The Select Committee in Calcutta wrote to

Lord Clive, its President and Governor on the 21st June, 1765: "And this my Lord would appear to us the most favourable occasion that may ever occur for obtaining Sunnuds from the King for the Dewanny of Bengal a point of great consequence to the Company much desired and strongly solicited by General Carnac, but without effect, a price being expected and demanded that was thought by the Governor and Council more than equivalent to the advantage. Times are since altered, the King is now dependent on our Bounty, his whole hopes of protection and even subsistence rest upon us. It cannot therefore be supposed he will prove obstinate in denying Request of little consequence to him in his present circumstances, but advantageous to us his greatest benefactors, we may say his only friends. We therefore beg leave to recommend this as one of the most important points to be negotiated." \(^1\) Clive too felt that the Company should act as the Diwan of the Emperor and the revenue of Bengal might be spent in maintaining the army, meeting other necessary expenses and paying the Emperor's tributes and an annuity of Rs. 50 lacs to the Nawab for all his expenses.

So the table had now turned, Shah Alam, after his defeat at the battle of Buxar, wanted to make peace with the English. Ten years earlier, the idea of "regulating the country Government" would have seemed to the Company's servants the dream of a mad man."\(^2\) Lord Clive was now to regulate the affairs of the Mughal Government. Clive had come to Bengal as the Company's Governor for the second time in May 1765. He also wanted to make peace with Shah Alam. Both parties needed the help of each other. On August 12, 1765 Shah Alam II, the unfortunate and shadowy Emperor of Delhi, took his seat not on the famous Mughal throne, made of gold and inlaid with some drapery, standing on an English dining table in Clive's tent. The imperial farman was read, executed and handed over to Clive by His Majesty. It conferred upon the Company in perpetuity the Diwani authority over Bengal, Bihar and Orisa. The Company had to be the security for the regular payment by the Nawab of the sum of 26 lacs of rupees a year


as the royal tribute from Bengal. As the Company had to maintain a large army for the protection of these provinces, the farman granted to it whatever surplus might remain out of their revenue after remitting 26 lacs to the Emperor and providing for the expenses of the Nizamat. This farman was followed by an agreement, dated August 19, between the Nawab of Bengal and the Emperor in which the same provisions were agreed upon. On September 30, the Nawab Nazim-ud-dawlah agreed to accept the annual sum of sicca rupees 55,386,131-9-0 as "an adequate allowance for the support of the Nizamut." Of this sum, Rupees 3,607,277-8-0 was to be spent on the maintenance of troops for "the support of his dignity and this expenditure was to be controlled, not by the Nawab himself, but by an official named in the treaty."¹ Thus a momentous transaction was concluded, as Ghulam Husain puts it "in less time than would have been taken up for sale of a jack-ass or of a beast of burden or of a head of a cattle."² The supreme control over the administration in Bengal had long before passed virtually into the hands of the Company. What was wanting was a constitutional form—a legal title.³ This was now furnished by the Imperial Farman,⁴ "Pompous absurdity" as it was, it counted for much.

By the grant of the Diwani the Company had acquired the right to defend by military force the three Mughal provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orisa. The Company held Calcutta in free tenure. The Nawab of Bengal was a minor, so they had appointed a Naib Subah. The Company as Diwan not only administered the land revenue, but controlled and collected customs, its commercial supremacy was now beyond all question.⁵ The unfortunate Emperor Shah Alam, who had been moving throughout the whole northern India for a shelter, now got a fixed place to live in. He got also 26 lacs a year,— a windfall for him, because until now he had received nothing from the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orisa. The

³ Bengal : Past and Present, 1956, pp. 116-117.
⁴ Ibid., 1956, pp. 116-117.
⁵ Firminger, Fifth Report, Vol. I, pp. CLXIV to CLXV.
Company thus had at last, a definite status in the system of the Mughal Empire and occupied the extraordinarily anomalous position of being a Company under a Charter granted by the Queen of England and also an office-bearer under the Mughal Emperor. To add to the anomaly, the Mughal empire existed only in name and Orissa, of which the Company was now formerly made the Diwan, was under the rule of the Marathas.

Many reasons have been advanced for the acceptance of the Diwani by the East India Company in 1765. The reasons as advanced by Lord Clive and the Select Committee of the 30th September, 1765: "The perpetual struggles for superiority between the Nabobs and your agents, together with the recent proofs before us of notorious and avowed corruption, have rendered us unanimously of opinion, after the most mature deliberation, that no other method could be suggested of laying the axe to the root of all those evils, than that of obtaining the Dewanee of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa for the Company. By this acquisition of the Dewanee, your possessions and influence are rendered permanent and secure; since no future Nabob will either have power or riches sufficient to attempt your overthrow by means either of force or corruption. The experience of years has convinced us that a division of power is impossible, without generating discontent and hazarding the whole. All must belong either to the Company or to the Nabob; and we leave you to judge which alternative is the most desirable, and the most expedient in the present circumstances."

In a separate letter from Lord Clive to the Court of Directors dated 30th September, 1765, the motives for this scheme of assuming the Diwani are further explained in the following words: "though the revenues belong to the Company, yet were the Company's officers to be the collectors, foreign nations would immediately take umbrage; and complaints preferred to the British Court might be attended with very embarrassed consequences. Nor can it be supposed that either the French, Dutch or Danes will acknowledge the English Company Nabob of Bengal, and pay into the hands of their servants the duties upon trade, or the quit-rent of those districts which they have for many years possessed by virtue of the royal firmauns or

1 Bolt's, Consideration, p. 35.
by grants from former Nabobs."\(^1\) And again "in considering the subject of the Dewanee, and the consequences of your large increase of revenues, I have already observed, that our acquisition will give no umbrage to foreign nations with respect to our territorial jurisdiction, so long as the present Appearance of the Nabob's power is preserved."\(^2\)

The last general letter to the Court sent by Lord Clive dated 24th January, 1767, contains an elaborate justification of the acceptance of the Diwani from the standpoint of his master. It removed all causes of contention with the Government, secured funds for investment and if necessary for purposes of war. It ensured, according to Clive, respect for the power of the East India Company. Clive wanted that the East India Company should be regarded as the "spring which concealed under the shadow of the Nabob's name secretly gives motion to this vast machine of Government, without offering violence to the original constitution. Clive's statement that the present arrangements ensured "security to property, freedom to trade, and protection to the persons of the natural inhabitants" was intended to satisfy, the conscience of the Directors and had no relation to facts.\(^3\)

But much more important than this was Clive's anxiety to secure the immediate interest of the Company. "We were" wrote Clive, under the necessity of drawing the earliest advantages from our acquisition of the Duanee. Our army was to be paid, our investment to be made, and the China market to be supplied. To trust these collections therefore, upon which our credit and security depended, to the management of the Company's servants totally unacquainted with the business, would have been a dangerous, and at this time would have been termed a criminal, experiment."\(^4\) The Select Committee in Bengal wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th September, 1766: "It was in the prosecution of our plan, of giving permanency to your influence, that we obtained from the King a

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\(^1\) Bolt's, *Consideration*, p. 36.


grant of the Dewanny; and with the same view we entered into
an agreement with the Nabob, the consequences of which are
that the revenues of the three provinces being now entirely
under our direction, we no longer depend, for the support of
our military establishment, on the bounty of the Subah."\(^1\)

As the Diwani implied, the Company was naturally more
interested in revenue than in the welfare of their subjects. The
prospects of the increase of investment were always welcome
and the President and Council at Calcutta were fully aware of
their employer’s sentiments in this respect. The Company was
eager to receive as large a proportion of the Bengal revenues
as possible through investment. They wanted the surplus revenue
to be sent to England in the shape of commodities. This surplus
was to be as large as possible so that the investment might be
proportionately profitable.\(^2\)

In 1765, when the East India Company became the Diwan
or administrators of Bengal under the imperial grant, the
Company’s servants did not immediately take upon themselves
either the direct management of the revenues or the administra-
tion of justice. Muhammad Reza Khan, Naib Nazim at
Murshidabad, continued to make revenue collections in Bengal
under the superintendence of the Company’s resident at the
Nawab’s court and Shitab Roy, Naib Nazim in Bihar, continued
to make revenue collections in Bihar, under the superintendence
of the Company’s agent\(^3\) at Patna. Shitab Roy was a Saxsena
Kayastha. He was born at Shah-Jahanabad\(^4\) (Delhi). He was
bred in the family of Semsam-ed-Dowla, better known under
the name of Khan Duran (a Minister of the Mughal Empire
in the time of Muhammad Shah). He started his career under
Aga Sobiman, a slave steward to Semsam-ed-Dowla. His salary
was meagre. After the death of Aga-Sobiman, Shitab Roy was
appointed as the Imperial Diwan of Azimabad. He was a man
of great sense, a minister\(^5\) knowing in business and a clerk of

\(^1\) Datta, K.K., Genesis of the Diwani Grant of 1765, p. 4. Reprinted
from the journal of the Bihar Research Society, Vol. XXXVIII, parts
3-4, 1952.


\(^3\) Dutt, R.C., Economic History of British India, p. 56.


\(^5\) Ibid., p. 49.
a quick dispatch. He came to Patna in 1758 as Imperial Diwan of Bihar and Governor of the fortress of Rohtas. He was appointed as the Naib Nazim of Bihar under the Diwani grant of 1765.

Under the terms of Diwani, the English simply superintended the ‘collections’ and disposal of the revenues’. The English were legally entitled to all the revenues of these three subahs after paying twenty six lacs of rupees to the Emperor, the expenses for Bengal’s administration and 53 lacs of rupees for the Nawab’s maintenance. Both the Emperor and the Nawab of Bengal became virtually pensioners of the English Company, who became the de facto masters of these subahs. What sword and intrigue had secured for the English was legalised by a grant from the helpless emperor.

The Court of Directors approved of the Diwani arrangement made by the Bengal Council. The Court of Directors by its letter, dated May 17, 1766, approved of the acquisition as terminating a state of things in which the Company was gradually sinking to decline, while their servants in Bengal were “laying hands upon everything they did not deem the Company’s property” but they admitted that they were alarmed by the contemplation of added responsibilities.  

The Court of Directors imagined that all it: ‘behoved their servants, to do was to lie beneath the tree and let the ripe fruit tumble into their open mouths. They would take the produce of the people’s labour and in return, offer the people no protection against justice and oppression.’ It has been observed by James Mill that the dual system of Government which the accession of the English to the Diwani for a time established was the “favorite policy of Clive, to whose mind a certain degree of crooked artifice seems to have presented itself pretty congenially in the light of profound and skilful politics.”

Clive and Verelst understood Diwani in two different ways. While Verelst believed that the ancient institutions could be revived and made to do good work, Clive regarded the Nawab’s

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., Vol. I, p. CLVIII.
authority as a "name and a shadow" and when Clive spoke of "throwing off the mask" he admitted that his system was one of artifice.

The Select Committee, in their Consultations of 10th September, 1766, described the Company as "having come into the place of the country Government by His Majesty's grant of the Dewanee." In a letter, dated 16th January, 1767, the Governor and the Select Committee wrote: "we are sensible that since the acquisition of the Dewanny, the power belonging to the Soubah of these provinces is totally and in fact vested in the East India Company. Nothing remains to him but the name and shadow of authority."

The Company, having thus acquired possession of the whole revenue of the three provinces, were at last transformed from "irresponsible chiefs of an armed trading association into responsible administrators of the territorial revenues; and thus acquired a direct interest in abolishing the peculation, scandalous frauds and embezzlement that were rife in the country."

The measure also put an end to the incessant disputes between the nominal Government of the titular Nawab of Bengal and the actual authority of the Company. "The time now approaches" wrote Clive, "when we may be able to determine whether our remaining as merchants, subjected to the jurisdiction, encroachments and insult of the Country Government or the supporting your privileges and possessions by the sword, are likely to prove more beneficial to the Company,—in another words, whether the Company should openly take up an attitude of independent authority. And he decided, rightly, that nothing else would give them a stable or legitimate position. They could not continue to maintain themselves by pulling the strings of native government or by revolutionary methods whenever the machinery broke down; and as they could not abdicate power, they were bound to take charge of its directions."

It is therefore, not possible to agree with Lord Macaulay even in regard to the Diwani portion, that "the police, the adminis-
tration of justice, the maintenance of order” were left to “the Naib Subahdar.” It would, however, be too much to say with James Mill that “the Phirmaun (farman) of the Dewannie, which marks one of the most conspicuous eras in the history of the Company” constituted “them masters of so great an empire, in name and in responsibility,¹ as well as in power.”

Some administrative changes were made after the Diwani. The actual state of affairs can be determined from the proceedings of the English Council, dated 24th January, 1767, which give illuminating details about the powers of the various authorities under the new regime—the Nawab, the Naib Dewans and the Resident at the Nawab’s court. The functions of the Diwani were exercised by the Resident at the Durbar under the inspection and control of the Select Committee. In conjunction with Muhammad Reza Khan the Resident superintended the collections. The Chief at Patna who superintended the collections in Bihar jointly with Shitab Roy was subordinate to the Resident at the Durbar. The Resident at the Durbar was directed to forward all correspondence with the natives to the President and Council to be transmitted to the Court of Directors in their general packet. The Diwani business was regarded as purely political and kept separate from that of the former possessions. The Resident at the Durbar between 1767-69 was Sykes. After his resignation, Becher took his place. A Deputy Resident was appointed to relieve him of the duties of his onerous employment.²

The Resident acted as the collector of the King’s revenues under the inspections and control of the Select Committee at Calcutta. In regard to the Resident at the Durbar the Court observed that being constantly on the spot, he could not long be a stranger to any abuses in the Government, and was always armed with power to remedy them. It would be his duty to stand between the Administrations and the “Encroachments always to be apprehended from the Agents of the Company’s Servants, which must first be known to him.”³ He was to

check all such encroachments and to prevent the oppression of
the people of this country.

What was the boundary of Bihar in 1765? The Sarkar of
Monghyr, with the 31 Mahals, as described in the Ain-i-Akbari,
from the details, given in Todar Mal’s Rent roll of circa 1582,
practically covered the ancient Kingdom of Anga, that is to
say it extended from the Kiul river on the western boundary of
Mahal Surajgarha to the strong walls extending from the Ganges
to the hills, the boundary of Bengal, to the pass of Garhi, the
modern Talliagarhi. It was still Sarkar\textsuperscript{1} Monghyr when the
East India Company assumed the Diwani in 1765. When the
East India Company took over the Diwani, Monghyr extended
over 8270 square miles, assessed to a net revenue of Rs. 8,08,000.
The Sarkar Monghyr, at that time covered areas not included
in the present district. When the East India Company assumed
the Diwani of Bengal (1765), Bhagalpur district formed the
eastern part of the Muhammadan Sarkar of Monghyr and lay,
with the exception of one pargana, to the south of the Ganges.
At that time the country to the south and west was so unsettled,
owing to the inroads of the hill-tribes, that the exact boundaries
of the district in those directions cannot be determined. At the
end of 1769, an English Supervisor was appointed, who lived
at Rajmahal.

As regards the district of Shahabad, on the acquisition of
the Diwani by the East India Company in 1765, an alteration
in the assessment was made by Muhammad Reza Khan and the
net rental of the Khalsa and Jagir lands of Sarkar Shahabad
was declared to be Rs. 6,09,286. The area of the district
covered 1869 square miles. The area of Rohtas covered 3680
square miles and its revenue was fixed at Rs. 6,75,781. With
the grant of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orisa, the East
India Company got the right to receive the tribute of Ramgarh,
the land revenue of Kharagdiha and Kendi and the services of
Kunda. Chota Nagpur also passed to the British. Champaran
and Saran formed together one part. The Sarkar of Saran was
created an independent district in 1866. The Mussalman Sarkar
of Champaran was considerably smaller than the present
district. When the East India Company obtained possession of

\textsuperscript{1} Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society, December 1929, p. 12.
the Diwani of Bengal in 1765, the area was estimated at 2546 square miles, and the revenue £ 34,000. The whole area of Champaran was settled with the sons of Jugal Kishore Singh, the owner of the Bettia Raja. It is difficult to ascertain, what the actually assessed revenue of the district was when the British took it over in 1765, but it appears to have stood at about 2 crores. Both Patna and Gaya, which formed part of Muhammadan Suba of Bihar, passed into the hands of the English in 1765, being at first administered from Patna.

Thus Bihar consisted of the following units:—

Patna Division—Gaya, Shahabad, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Saran, and Champaran.

Muzaffarpur¹ and Darbhanga together formed the old Tirhut district.

Bhagalpur division—Monghyr, (Munger) Bhagalpur, Purnea, Malda, Santhal Parganas.

Chota Nagpur² division—Hazaribagh, Lohardagga, Manbhum and Singhbhum.

Orisa granted in Diwani as far as the Subarnrekha river i.e., part of the Midnapur district.

After the grant of Diwani, the Chief of the English factory at Patna was appointed Supervisor for the collection of the revenue in Bihar, and he was assisted in this work by Shitab Roy, Naib Nazim and Dhiraj Narayan as his assistant. He acted jointly³ with Shitab Roy and was subordinate to the Resident at the Durbar, to whom he made his assignments of treasure and transmitted monthly account of his officer which the Resident forwarded to the English Council at Calcutta.

In continuing the established Indian system Clive was guided by a number of considerations. It is sufficient to say here that expediency and policy dictated the adoption of such a course. ‘In the infancy of the acquisition (of the diwani), wrote Clive,’ we were under the necessity of confiding in the old officers of the government from whom we were to derive our knowledge,

³ Sinha, N.K., _Fort William—India House Correspondence_, Vol. V, p. 22.
and whom we therefore endeavoured to attract to our service by the ties of interest, until experience should render their assistance less necessary. Policy required we should pursue any step likely to conciliate the natives to our government.\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1} Quoted by B.B. Mishra in his book, \textit{The Central Administration of the East India Company}, p. 109.
CHAPTER FIVE

BIHAR UNDER DUAL GOVERNMENT,
1765-1772

After the murder of Raja Ram Narayan, the Deputy Governor of Bihar, by Mir Qasim in 1763, there had occurred a change in the personnel in the Government of Bihar, Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal had appointed his brother, Mir Muhammed Kazim Khan as the Deputy Governor of Bihar in 1763 and left Raja Dhiraj Narayan (brother of Raja Ram Narayan) with him as his Diwan. Dhiraj Narayan remained Diwan for two years, from November 1763 to September 1765. The grant of the Diwani was followed by certain administrative changes in the province. During his stay at Patna in September 1765, Clive dismissed Mir Muhammad Kazim granting him a pension of rupees one lac yearly and put Dhiraj Narayan in his place. Raja Shitab Roy was associated with him as Diwan. Early in 1766 a Council of three was appointed consisting of Dhiraj Narayan, Shitab Roy and Samuel Middleton, who had succeeded Billers as the Chief of the English factory at Patna. Mr. Middleton exercised enormous power of general superintendence over administration. Shitab Roy introduced an innovation in administration. Uptil now administrative matters were not discussed at a fixed place. Raja Shitab Roy proposed
that conference for business of Government now be called at the royal castle at Patna and not in any other place, that the English Chief should preside over the meetings. He should take his seat on a chair of State and on a long masnad\textsuperscript{1} spread on the ground for the occasion, Dhiraj Narayan should be seated on one side and Shitab Roy on the other, with each a cushion of State on their back. Dhiraj Narayan did not like the change.

Dhiraj Narayan was not an efficient administrator. He could not cope with the difficulties of the disturbed situation and was embarrassed by the clamour of troops over the non-payment of their arrears. His troubles were enhanced by the conflicting instructions from the English, and also by the machinations engineered chiefly by Shitab Roy, who cunningly secured the good-will of Clive. Murlidhar was sent from Calcutta to take charge of certain departments including the intelligence department and to assist Raja Dhiraj Narayan, but he was not a man of integrity. He disclosed secret matters to Shitab Roy, who formed a rival party in the Government against Dhiraj Narayan. When Clive was at Patna in 1766, Shitab Roy suggested to him that Muhammad Reza Khan, the Naib Nazim of Bengal be brought to Patna to enquire into the revenue affairs of Bihar. So in 1766 Muhammad Reza Khan came to Patna to carry out the settlement of Bihar. Muhammad Reza Khan took stern measures against those persons who had not paid Government dues. Dhiraj Narayan was arrested on a charge of embezzlement, and put into prison. The Jagirs of Dhiraj Narayan were confiscated.\textsuperscript{2} The staff of Dhiraj Narayan were also arrested. The staff were compelled to reveal the dishonest transactions of his master. Officials like Sahumel, Mohammad Naqi Khan and Mohammad Ashraf were punished, while others who had been suspended for no fault of their own, were restored to their post: Raja Dhiraj Narayan was dismissed from office (September 1766) and Raja Shitab Roy was made Naib Nazim of Bihar. His place as the agent of the Emperor was taken by Munir-ud-Dowla, founder of the Bhiknapahari Nawab family. Rumbold carried on the administration jointly with Shitab Roy until he went to England in 1769, when he

\textsuperscript{1} Siyar, Vol. III, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{2} Bengal Secret and Separate Proceedings, 1773, p. 8.
was succeeded by James Alexander as Chief of the Patna Factory.

The actual administration of the Diwani provinces was thus carried on through subordinate Indian agencies. The Nawab remained a nominal figure in the administration and the Company had not yet assumed any responsibility. To quote Lord Macaulay "The only branch of politics about which the English functionaries busied themselves (up to 1772) was negotiation with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collections of the revenue, were almost entirely neglected".\(^1\) Such an arrangement was bound to fail as it did. The Nawab's officers, who were immediately in charge of the administration, possessed neither character nor means to enforce decisions. They were corrupt and dishonest. The Company did not take any interest in the matter. It was concerned with money, and so long the Company got money, it did not bother for the administration. The Company did not take trouble to think over the methods of the collections. The result was that the "Nazim exacted what they could from the zamindars, and great farmers of the revenue; whom they left at liberty to plunder all below; reserving to themselves the prerogative of plundering them in their turn, when they were supposed to have enriched themselves with the spoils of the country."\(^2\)

The Company's authority did not go unchallenged in Bihar. Some of the aristocratic houses here rebelled against the Company. The Zamindars of Seres\(^3\) and Cotomba revolted against the English authority and plundered the treasure of the Sarkar but Captain Goddard defeated\(^4\) them and brought them under subjugation. The next trouble arose from Maharaja Fatah Sahi. The revenue collector of Sircar Saran demanded rent on behalf of the Company at the end of the year 1767. Maharaja\(^5\) Fatah Sahi, of Husainpur, not only refused to pay

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3 Seres and Cotomba Parganas in Aurangabad sub-division in the Gaya District—O'Malley, L.S.S., Bengal District Gazetteer, Gaya. This part of Bihar to west of Gaya is on the Son.
5 J.A.S.B., 1912, p. 185.
the Government taxes but gave fight to the Company’s troops who were sent against him, and it was with much difficulty that these troops succeeded in expelling him from Husainpur. The revenue of the district of Husainpur was then farmed to one Govind Ram. Fatah Sahi had retired into the jungles bordering on the then independent dominions of the Wazir of Oudh and the province of Bihar. He was in search for opportunity for making raids into the districts of Saran. In one of the raids Govind Ram was killed. On the recommendation of Warren Hastings, Maharaja Fatah Shahi, was allowed to come to Patna on an allowance and the Husainpur Raj estates were let out in farm to Babu Basant Sahi, cousin of Maharaja Fatah Sahi, on the security of the unfortunate Raja, Chait Singh of Benares. The Company lost a huge amount owing to this rebellion. Shitab Roy had written to his vakil on March 13th, 1768, that owing to the rebellion of Fatah Singh, 9 lacs of revenue were lost to the English and confusion prevailed throughout Saran.\(^2\)

The Bettia Raj did not also pay the Government taxes. The Raja of Bettia was Jugal Kishore Singh in 1765. He did not pay the revenue to the English Company. The Governor had written a letter to Raja Jugal Kishore in 1765. The Governor wrote that during the time of Mir Qasim the Raja paid into the treasury 6 or 7\(^2\) lacs of rupees as the Government revenue. But when the English took over Diwani, he had sent nothing except some timber. In the Governor’s letter he was directed to clear off the revenue or the English army would march against him. The Raja did not clear the revenue and on the contrary he rebelled and fought with the forces of the British Government. The British forces were commanded by Robert Barkar.\(^3\) The Raja was defeated and fled to Bundelkhand. His state was brought under the direct management of the Company.

By 1766 the Marathas had healed up their wounds of the third battle of Panipat and they were making fresh attempts for revival in the north. The news of Abdali’s march was also causing fear among the people of North India. At Monghyr the European troops had rebelled, and so Lord Clive rushed to

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\(^3\) Verelst, View of Bengal, Appendix, p. 27.
Monghyr on 15th May, 1766, to suppress the army disturbances. After their suppression Lord Clive went to Chapra, the headquarters of the district of Saran in Bihar. Lord Clive was accompanied by General Carnac. There he held a Congress in July, 1766.¹ This Congress was attended by Shuja-ud-dowla, the Nawab of Oudh, and the envoys of the Emperor Shah Alam, the Jat Raja and the Rohilla chiefs. The people present there signed a treaty for mutual defence against any aggressions of the Marathas. Colonel Smith was directed in September, 1766, to take up a position and canton the troops at Daudnagar and Sasaram and to observe and report on the movements of the Marathas and to keep watch over the roads and passes in Bihar. Colonel Barkar was set to Karamnasa for additional protection of Bihar. He was instructed to cross the Karamnasa, if the safety of Bihar was endangered. Bihar thus formed the watch tower of the English, during the period of confusion in northern India. There was a garrison at Monghyr, brigade at Patna and a battalion on the Karamnasa.

The British troops sometimes oppressed the common people. Mr. Harwood, Supervisor of Bhagalpur and Rajmahal complained against the bad treatment meted out to the people of his area by the British army. The attempts of the Council in Calcutta to restrain the army were not successful.²

While the Company’s Government were thus taking necessary steps for defence against external dangers, internal administration of Bihar did not improve. As a matter of fact, within the province of Bihar as in Bengal, the dyarchy of Clive, because of its inherent drawbacks, made confusion worse confounded. Lack of governance, administrative disorder, social insecurity, general economic decline, abuses of private trade by the Company’s servants and oppressive revenue collections reduced the country to a pathetic condition, the seriousness of which was enhanced under Clive’s two weak successors as Governors of Bengal, Mr. Verelst and Mr. Cartier. With misrule, disorder corruption and

oppression rampant throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, Bihar and Orisa, the miseries of the local people, as it is evident from copious reference in the accounts of contemporary writers and records of the English and other European trading Companies, knew no bounds. Referring to the condition of Bengal in 1765, the Select Committee in Bengal observed in their letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 19th February, 1767:—"We beheld a presidency¹ divided, headstrong and and licentious, a Government without nerves, a treasury without money and a service without subordination, discipline or public spirit. We may add, that amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted Prince and his helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty and oppression." Richard Becher, an experienced servant of the English Company, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on 24th May, 1769, "It must give pain to an English man to have reason to think that since the accession of the Company to the Diwani the condition of the people of this country has been worse than it was before and yet I am afraid the fact is undoubtedly . . . this fine country which flourished under the most despotic and arbitrary Government is verging towards its ruin."³

Verelst, the Governor of Bengal from 1767-69, conscious of the grave evils produced by the Double Government, wrote on December 16, 1769, "Our circumstances impelled us forward, and the grant of the Dewanny became as much an object of necessity as it was of advantage. Thus we insensibly broke down the barrier betwixt us and government, and the native grew uncertain where his obedience was due. Such a divided and complicated authority gave rise to oppressions and intrigues unknown at any other period; the officers of government caught the infection, and being removed from any immediate control, proceeded with still greater audacity. In the meantime we were repeatedly and peremptorily forbid to avow any public authority over the officers of government in our own names, and enjoined to retain

our primitive characters of merchants with the most scrupulous delicacy. The consequences are but too evidently exemplified in the decline of commerce and cultivation, the diminution of specie, and the general distresses of the poor; a train of evils which could only have sprung from the above causes, since every advantage of a long and uninterrupted tranquility has been on our side."

As for the Company, it had no doubt immense financial gains out of the Diwani of 1765. This is clear from a study of the Company's income and expenditure in the years following the grant. From 1765 and 1766, the figures are as follows:—

Huccecut Bandobast Suba Bihar or statement of Revenue to be received from the Bihar province in Bengal year 1172, or English 1765 the collection to conclude in Assin year 1173 or English September 1766 vizt.

Bumujib Afrad Bandobast or the amounts agreeable to the amounts particulars settled by Muhamad Reza Khan, Raja Durlabh and Jagat Seth ... ... ... 47,45,501-15-10²

Goon-Jayse Mahalat or profit on Mahal ... ... ... 51,000-0-0

Joyguiers to be received particulars of these shall be wrote as soon as procured vizt ...

Nabob Najib-ul-Doulah 9,02,960-8-15

Joyguier Daran or Joyguiers allowed to different persons ... 1,95,870-11-15 67,908-12-10

None of whom are now existing and which sums

² B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 300.
have been appropriated to an improper use. ... 26,928-7-5) 11,93,668-7-15

2,90,707-15-0 59,90,170-7-5
Carried over

Brought over ... 59,90,170-7-5

5,00,000-0-0

Deduct allowed Rai Durlabh and M.R. Cawn as Dusture or custom ... ... 1,71,000-0-0 3,29,000-0-0

63,19,170-7-5

Deduct crutch Bemujib Afrad Allaheddah or charges allowed to the Nawab for collecting in the revenues, even other contingent charges attending the same is now settled vizt.

Asswars (Horsemen) 2,10,000-0-0

Burgundasses (Match-lockmen) 80,000-0-0

Nawab's own servants, as chubdars, Sutaburdar and cassburdars or Musqueteers 1,20,000-0-0 12,000-0-0

4,22,000-0-0

Serestah Dewanny or wages of Nawab Ahatramul Dowlah and his family at 15,000 per Mensem ... ... 1,80,000-0-0
Maharaja Dhiraj Narayan (a) 7,500 per Mensem 90,000-0-0
Muddul crutch or wages allowed to yearly to people of distinction that have been serviceable in the Government Vizt.
Nawab Abdul Ally Cawn 12,000-0-
Nawab Eaky Dutmund Cawn 2,400-0-
Alla Cooby Cawn 12,600-0
Share Ally Cawn 2,400-0-
Himmut Cawn 2,400-0-
Fyz Ally Cawn children 13,800-0-
Murlidhar excepting the Hircarras 7,800-0-
Golam Gaddur Cawn 360-0-
Meer Cullen Perfumemher 360-0-
Ismael Ally Cawn 1,800-0-
Saikh Abdul Hussen 600-0-
Mosoyle Sing 2,400-0- 7,50,920-0-0

58,920 55,68,250-7-5

(This statement\textsuperscript{1} has been inserted after proceedings the 5th November)

Purnea yielded a huge amount of money to the East India Company in the years 1761-1765.

The following are the particulars of revenue collected in Purnea with the different charges attending them:

\textbf{Amount of Revenues collected in Bengal year 1168 or English 1761} 2,50,419-13-19

Sabundy Muffusul or to peons, pikes, choheys and other contingent disbursements for an account of collections

\textsuperscript{1} B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 301.
only in the above year amounting to ... ... 56,071-10-10
Nuncar or customary allowance allowed by the Padshaw to the zamindars of that province annually ... ... 74,308-2-2
Rozinnah Darran or daily allowance for charity allowed to the poor ... ... 31,866-4-15 1,62,246-1-15

Year after deductions ... 20,88,173-11-15
Thus the Company had a total of Rs. 20,88,173-11-15 from Purnea for the year 1761.

When the Company got the Diwani of 1765, the same amount of Rs. i.e. Rs. 20,88,173-11-15 was fixed as the annual Bandobast or settlement of the province of Purnea—The detailed account of the Diwani settlement is as follows:—

Bandobast for the year 1765 ... ... 20,88,173-11-15
Najoy or deductions being made on account of different places overflowed and villages carried away and others made untenanted by the different troubles which have happened but to be taken of as the country will admit of it in Bengal year 1172 or English year 1765 ... 3,00,000-0-0 17,88,173-11-15

Allowance of Roohudaj Hussen Cawn Subah of that province for his expense at 5,000 Rs. per mensem he is to remain in the city but the busi-

1 B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 323.
ness to be transacted in
his name amounting per
annum to ... ... 60,000-0-0
Wages for Soochit Roy
the naib at 1,000 per
mensem amounting p.
annum to ... 12,000-0-0
Wages for Moorears and
other writers at 2,000
Rs. per mensem amoun-
ting p. annum to ... 24,000-0-0
Wages paid to peons,
Burgundass, Asswars
and other contingent
charges for proper and
necessary servants which
are to be confined to the
collection of the revenue
only ... 2,67,400-5-15 3,63,400-5-15

Thus the Company had a total income of Rs. 14,24,773-6-0
from Purnea for the year 1765.
The Company had also to incur huge expenses for the
collection of the year 1765.
The following is a statement of charges which were allowed
for the collection of the Bihar Province in the year 1765.

WAGES

Amlah Sapan or wages to Asswars, Burgundass and others
from first of Jamadai-Awwal to the end of Rabi-us-Sani is:—
Twelve months ... 8,74,169-3-10
Asswars (Horsemen) ... 1,98,799-11-15
Burgundasses (Match-
lockmen) ... 2,36,648-10-0
Chubdars (Macebears),
Kismatgars, (Servants),
Sutaburdars (Mace-
bears), and servants ... 49,000-0-0

1 B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 323.
2 Ibid., 1765, p. 327.
Khassburdars (soldiers) 
Fuzoilburdars or Musqueteers Tellingah Sepoys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24,510-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirrista Dewanny ba Esn Nawab Ackramut Dowla Bahadur and others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamujib Jussil Allahydhah, or wages of the aforesaid Nawab and his people particulars of this shall be hereafter wrote as soon as they can be procured</td>
<td>1,63,443-11-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutfurcaut or wages to people of distinction that have been serviceable in Government Vizt Nawab Ackeydut nund Cawn @ 200 Rs. P.m. for 12 months</td>
<td>2,400-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaik Mohmud Punnah Fuyz Ally cawn</td>
<td>1,745-12-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirza Majmud Kassum Himut cawn, son to Mussal cawn</td>
<td>11,550-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawab Abdul Ally cawn Share Ally Cawn</td>
<td>1,634-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdur Gader cawn Murlidhar and Hircarrahs Meer culler perfume maker</td>
<td>275-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47,231-11-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/o 16,01,168-0-15²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 327. The figure is wrong and it should be 13,90,491-10-5.
2 B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 327.
Brought over 16,01,168-0-15

Meer Mahmud Jammaul and Iynut Hazoor johab Ally or Meer Mahmud Jamal and others who in the presence of Nawab Nazim-ud-dowlah in Murshidabad receives his and his people wages from Subah Bihar Vizt.
Meer Mahmud Jamal ... 3,66,697-12-10
Mirza Mahmud Ruffy ... 44,100-0-0
Connack Singh Chowdry and Beldars ... 31,594-3-0 4,42,392-15-10

Crutch Khonsummanny or Charges of Nawab’s Elephants Camels, Horses and Bullocks ... 65,000-0-0
Ze-af-fut Ingrez Sauhabon Husbul Crutch or Invitations and Entertainments of English Gentlemen (charges already made) ... 45,373-2-5

Thus the Company had a total income of Rs. 77,43,943-13-5 and total expenditure of Rs. 29,04,854,2-10.

The net income (including the collection of Revenue of Purnea) which the Company got for the year was Rs. 48,39,089-12-7.

But these collections from the province of Bihar in 1765 did not satisfy the East India Company. The Council in Calcutta wrote a letter to Francis Sykes, Resident at the Durbar, dated the 5th November, 1765:—"It is with surprise and concern we observe the collections of the Revenue of Behar fall so greatly short of our expectations. We must, therefore, insist that the

1 *Ibid.*, 1765, p. 327. The figure seems to be wrong. It should be 21,53,933-2-10.
Ministers inspect accurately the several articles charged on the statement of the Revenue for the ensuing year.”¹ This shows that the company wanted to extract as much money as possible from this province.

In fact as the following figures would show, the Company collected a huge amount of money in 7 years from 1765 to 1772.

The net revenue of the Diwani portion in these early years are given in the fourth report of the Committee of Secrecy, 1773.²

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<tr>
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<th>1765-66</th>
<th>1766-67</th>
<th>1767-68</th>
<th>1768-69</th>
<th>1769-70</th>
<th>1770-71</th>
<th>1771-72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murshidabad</td>
<td>937864</td>
<td>1149469</td>
<td>1091823</td>
<td>1138629</td>
<td>962730</td>
<td>820438</td>
<td>1227345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>150854</td>
<td>668180</td>
<td>551110</td>
<td>623084</td>
<td>459246</td>
<td>446175</td>
<td>461461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The East India Company was getting a regular supply of money from Bihar, but the conditions of the people of this province was becoming more and more miserable. The root of the anomaly was in the system of dyarchy. Before leaving India, Clive mentioned his motives in introducing it. “The first period in politics which I offer to your consideration is the form of Government. We are sensible that since the acquisition of the Dewanny the power formerly belonging to the Soubah (i.e. Nawab) of these provinces is totally, in fact, vested in the East India Company. Nothing remains to him but the name and shadow of authority. This name, however this shadow, it is indispensably necessary, we seem to venerate, every mark of distinction and respect must be shown to him and he himself encouraged to show his resentment upon the least want of respect from other nations.”³ The so-called native administration of Bengal was extremely bad. It was not native in the proper sense of the word. It was an administration of foreigners. The officers were mostly adventurers from Persia, ignorant of the ways of the people and the first principles of Government, without sympathies for Hindus, brought up amidst the tyranny, corruption and anarchy which for centuries had characterised Persian rule.⁴

¹ B.S.C.P., 1765, p. 325.
³ Talboys, Wheeler J., Early Records of British India, p. 343.
⁴ Ibid., p. 357.
When Verelst succeeded Lord Clive as Governor of Bengal in 1767, he was already alive to the evils of the existing system. He had been supervisor in turn of the three districts ceded by Mir Qasim. He had seen with his own eyes the revenue collectors oppressing the people. He had been aware of the economic decline of the people. He reported all these things to the Court of Directors. It was on the report of Verelst that the Court of Directors remarked: "that an English man was unfit to conduct the collections of revenue and follow the subtle native through all his arts."\(^1\)

Verelst wrote in 1769: "Experience must convince, the most prejudiced, that to hold vast possessions, and yet to act on the level of mere merchants, making immediate gain our first principle; to receive an immense revenue, without possessing an adequate protective power over the people who pay it, to be really interested in the grand and generous object, the good of the whole, and yet to pursue a narrow and partial end; are paradoxes not to be reconciled, highly injurious to our national character, dangerous to the best defended establishment, and absolutely bordering on inhumanity. The people give us the labour of their hands, and in return, we owe them our protection; common prudence, as well as the laws of society, require that those obligations should be reciprocal, or the tie must soon be dissolved; for the firmest security for every government is the affections of the people; and for obtaining them, there never, perhaps, presented a more favourable opportunity or more noble field, than what the English possess in Bengal. The mildness of our government, properly diffused over these provinces, will form so conspicuous a contrast to Mahomedan despotism, that it must bind them to us and our cause for ever."\(^2\)

Soon the Company realised that the exactions of the revenue from farmers were producing evils causing great hardships to the common people, so a new plan of reform was tried by them in 1769. British supervisors were accordingly appointed to the various districts. They were required to inquire into the history of the provinces not earlier than the time of Shuja Khan, to prepare a rent roll, and to inquire into titles to lands and other matters connected with these.

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The supervisors were also instructed to safeguard the interests of the raiyats. It was mentioned in the Instructions issued to them: "An equally important object of your attention is to fix the amount of what the zamindar receives from the raiyat as his income or emoluments............. Among the chief effects which are to be hoped from your residence in the province........... is to convince the raiyat that you will stand between him and the hands of oppression............. That, after supplying the legal due of Government, he may be secure in the enjoyment of the remainder............ For the raiyat being eased and secured from all burdens and demands but what are imposed by the legal authority of Government itself, and future pattas being granted him specifying the demand, he should be taught that he is to regard the same as a sacred and invariable pledge to him that he is liable to no demands beyond their amount." The instructions further required the "Supervisors to examine and check the 'hast-o-bud' (rent-roll) and to see that the Pattas\(^1\) are given accordingly, and then the raiyat is to be impressed in the most forcible and convincing manner that the tendency of your measures is to his ease and relief........... that our object is not increase of rents or accumulation of demands, but solely by fixing such as are legal........... and abolishing such as are fraudulent and unauthorised, not only to redress his present grievances, but to secure him from all further invasions of his property."\(^2\) The supervisors acted under the control of two Councils of Revenue, one established at Patna and the other at Murshidabad in the year 1770. The inquiries of supervisors clearly revealed the corruption and depravity of the revenue-collecting agency.\(^3\)

European supervisors were appointed to the Bengal districts in 1769. In Bihar, this plan of supervision by European officers was introduced in June, 1770,\(^4\) when a supervisor was appointed for each of the districts of Saran and Champaran, Shahabad, Tirhut, Rohtas, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. Patna district conti-

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\(^1\) Patta is the written lease or note of the terms of holding rent payment and other particulars, drawn up of course, in the vernacular.


\(^3\) Ascoli, F.D. *Early Revenue History of Bengal and the Report 1812*, p. 31.

\(^4\) Banerjee, D.N., *Land Revenue System in Bengal and Bihar*, p. 87.
nued to be under the immediate charge of the Chief of Patna. The names of the Supervisors and their districts, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhagalpur</td>
<td>William Harwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saran and Champaran</td>
<td>Edward Golding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahabad</td>
<td>Charles Lloyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirhut</td>
<td>James Inglish Keightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohtas</td>
<td>Henery Palmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monghyr</td>
<td>Nathaniel Bateman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purnea</td>
<td>Gerarel Gustavus Ducarel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each supervisor was given an allowance of 1,000 sicca rupees per month from the dates of their first appointment till the 31st of March, 1771; and from 1st April, 1771, only an allowance of sicca rupees 1,8003 per annum.

The action of Verelst in appointing the supervisors met with the approval of the Court of Directors, who wrote on 10th April, 1771: "It is with pleasure we observe that the appointment of Supervisors to examine into the state of the provinces (under the instructions which our late President has with so much judgement and fullness laid down for their guidance) may be productive of so general a reformation of the abuses, which are the immediate object of our concern, that we have little to add to our preceding orders and regulations; we therefore, wait with impatience for the issue of the Supervisors' researches, in full hope that our President and Council will have adopted such measures as shall unite with our views, not only for the Company's interest, but for the good of the country from which we receive so great an advantage".4

But this hope was not fulfilled. The scheme of supervisor was introduced, to remove the defect of the Diwani system. The supervisors were only to collect and supply information about the state of things in their districts, the state and capacity of the lands, the revenue demands and exactions, the condition of commerce, and the administration of justice. They were to report cases of irregularity and oppression and not to punish the oppressor.

2 Banerjee, D.N., Land Revenue System in Bengal and Bihar, p. 70.
3 Ibid., p. 93.
But the supervisors were not so competent as to be able to discharge their functions in a proper manner. Those supervisors, who were honest, were not allowed to punish the offender, "Whatever may have been the conduct of individuals," wrote Warren Hastings, "the blame is not so much attributable to them as to the want of a principle of Government, adequate to its substance and a coercive power to enforce it." So the system could not work smoothly and the troubles of the people increased. As Miss Monckton Jones has rightly observed, the system made "these Englishmen (i.e., the Supervisors) the supreme lords each in his own district, for their complete control of trade was now reinforced by the powers of a judge and those of a tax-collector. Armed in this triple brass, they could exploit the country unhindered." Mr. J.T. Wheeler has further said, "the measure of appointing Supervisors was a move in the right direction, but it proved a failure. An Englishman placed alone in a large district, surrounded by native influences of the worst character, was helpless to contend against the general corruption, and was often tempted to share in the spoil. Such appears to have been the fate of Verelst's Supervisors."

One reason for the failure of the experiment of the supervisors was that they encountered opposition from the Zamindars, who successfully frustrated their attempts to get any knowledge of the actual revenue paid by the cultivators from coming to the knowledge of the Company's officers. It was not without reason that the Court of Directors wrote in 1773 (speaking of the failure of the system of supervisors before 1772): "Every attempt for the reforming of abuses has rather increased them, and added to the miseries of the country we are anxious to protect and cherish."

From the Company's point of view, it was highly necessary to bring some improvement in the Diwani collection. The Court of Directors, in their letter of 30th June, 1769, sent instructions to the President and Council at Fort William, for the establishment of two Councils for the management of the

1 Banerjee, D.N., *Land Revenue System in Bengal and Bihar*, p. 92.
Diwani revenues, one at Murshidabad and the other at Patna.\(^1\) The members of the Council would be called as comptrollers for the management of the Diwani revenue under the direction of the Council at Fort William. The Council would have a number of junior covenanted servants as assistants. Sometimes these assistants would be sent into the several Provinces to correct abuses and carry on the intended reformation.\(^2\) The object of this Council was to know the real state of the collections in every part, that is to say, what rents are at this time actually paid by the tenants, and what was paid formerly, what was the nature of the cultivation and what the chief of produce of each district and whether in that respect there seems a prospect of improvement.\(^3\)

The Court's dissatisfaction with the existing system was further expressed in the Instructions issued to their Commissioners appointed in 1769, *viz.*, Messrs. Henery Vansittart, Luke S Craighton and Colonel Forde. The Court sent the following instructions to the Commissioners, dated 15 September, 1769; “You are fully empowered by the Company’s commission, to superintend and regulate the collection of their Revenues; to put them on a just and honourable footing deserves your peculiar care and attention; whatever abuses, Extortions and Oppressions the Inhabitants and Tenants have been exposed to, from the exaction of extraordinary Contributions, which always tend to impoverish the Country, or from any other specious Causes or pretences,\(^4\) we strictly enjoin you to reform, and for the future effectually to prevent; to this end, it seems to us a prudent and desirable measure, that instead of only one person at the Durbar, to superintend the Important Business of managing and adjusting the Revenues, there should be Resident with a Council or proper Assistants at the Chief Places of Collection, who should have power to conduct and regulate the mode and Charges of Collection, and reform all Abuses therein, and to whom the Complaints of the Inhabitants at all times find full

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2 Ibid., p. 212.
3 Ibid., pp. 212-213.
access."\textsuperscript{1} The Court of Directors instructed the Council in Calcutta; "for effectuating the above purposes you will take proper measures for regulating and restraining, and if found necessary to prohibit the trading by any Servant employed in the Collection of the Revenues, within the province where he shall be stationed, and that no Person so employed in any Character or Station whatsoever, be permitted to receive any Presents or Gratuity, under any Colour or Pretence, or derive any Advantage directly or indirectly from the Collection of Revenues, but they must depend solely on appointment you think fit to make for them, which will be suitable to their Rank in the Service.\textsuperscript{2}"

The three Commissioners embarked from Spithead on 30th September, 1769, on board "His Majesty's Frigate Aurora". They did not reach India within the usual time and as no intelligence was received about them although six months had elapsed since they had left the Cape of Good Hope, it was naturally apprehended that they must have met with some 'fatal accident' on their way. They had been sent to carry out in Bengal itself a full inquiry, and the Governor and Council in Calcutta were directed to obey them "as if we, the Court of Directors ourselves, were present."\textsuperscript{3} But with the drowning of these Commissioners on the way, this experiment was never tried.

At the Secret consultations held at Fort William on 6th July, 1770, the Council resolved, by a majority of votes that a Council of Revenue be appointed at Murshidabad and Patna. It was also decided that the Council of Revenue at Patna should consist of three members. Thus these three members of the Council of Revenue at Patna were:

Mr. James Alexander\textsuperscript{4} 1st
Mr. George Vansittart 2nd
Mr. Palk 3rd

At a Secret Consultations held at Fort William on 16th August, 1770, the Council finally approved of the instructions

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 245.
\textsuperscript{2} Sinha, N.K., Fort William-India House Correspondence, Vol. V, p. 245.
\textsuperscript{3} Ramsbotham, R.B., Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal, 1767-1787, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{4} Banerjee, D.N., Land Revenue System in Bengal and Bihar, p. 102.
to be issued to the two Councils of Revenue. The Council of Patna received an additional instruction from the Secretary to the Council at Fort William. The Council of Revenue at Patna received the following additional instruction, "You are regularly to transmit to our controlling Council at Muradabad for the Dewanny Revenues the Account at the Close of every Month as usual in order to be entered on their Books to present to us at one view the collection of the Dewanny, and at the close of the year your General Books are to be transmitted thro' our comptrolling Council at Muxadabad, that they may be compared with the books of the Dewanny and every necessary adjustment made on the close of those Books."\(^1\)

The additional instruction indicates the inferiority of the position of the Council at Patna in relation to that of Murshidabad. This Council of Revenue had authority over the Naibdiwan in revenue matters, though Shitab Roy remained in general charge of the Nizamat administration. On November 5th, 1770, the Council fixed the maximum rent at nine-sixteenth of the produce. The farmers were compelled to accept this new agreement and they were forbidden not to collect at a higher rate. But this did not serve the purpose and the people's condition was worsening.

**Famine of 1770**

A terrible famine broke out in Bengal in 1769-70. Mr. Rumbold, the Company's supervisor of Bihar wrote a letter on 29th November, 1768, to Harry Verelst, Governor in Calcutta informing him about the great drought that was prevailing over Bihar. He wrote that there had not been a drop of rains in this part since the latter end of August. "The Grain has been entirely parched" he observed, "on the ground before it was ripened and the harvest nearly destroyed. The land has been so hardened for want of water that the Ryots have found a difficulty in ploughing and preparing it for the next crop."\(^2\) People began to complain at this time that they had not the capacity to pay the revenue to the Government due to the famine and soaring prices of grains. On the 24th December, 1769,\(^3\) after the last harvest of the year

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had been gathered in, Mr. Verelst laid down his office, "without having conveyed to his masters, a single intimation of the true nature of the impending famine," so writes Sir William Hunter.

The Council in Calcutta had on September 30th, 1769, communicated to the Court of Directors that "the revenues of the province of Bengal and Behar were expected to fall short, owing to the very unusual scarcity of rain" and on the 23rd of November referred to "the melancholy prospect before our eyes of universal distress for want of grain." Before the commencement of the famine, there had been unusual drought in Bengal and Bihar. The Calcutta Council was already aware of the miserable condition of the affected areas and had remitted 6 lacs of rupees to the province of Bihar. Mr. Verelst was succeeded by Mr. Cartier in the beginning of 1770. The East India Company had financial difficulties at that time. The impact of the famine added to these. Small-pox had raised its head with its awful nature. Thus famine and disease were rampant throughout the whole province.

The English East India Company which had virtual mastery over Bengal since the Diwani of 1765, did not take sufficient measures to arrest the dreadful effects of the famine. On the other hand, the land tax was more rigorously collected than ever. "The Revenues were never so closely collected before." The East India Company did not discharge its duty as a Government ought to do in such a condition. The result was that the famine created a havoc in the province of Bihar. The people began to perish from starvation and due to lack of adequate relief measures on the part of the Government.

The people were dying in large numbers. Mr. James Alexander, supervisor of Bihar reported about the deplorable condition of Patna on the 28th January, 1770: "fifty to sixty people have died of absolute hunger on the streets every day for these ten days past. About 8000 beggars were still in the place." The famine was making its headway with all its fury and the people were dying at the rate of 150 per day at Patna.

Raja Shitab Roy was moved at this terrible famine. He learnt that grains were selling cheaper at Benares. So to help the afflicted people, he set apart thirty thousand rupees and directed that the boats and rowers belonging to his household should bring regularly to Azimabad, three times a month, the grains provided with that sum at Benares. The grains being landed at Azimabad were sold at the Benares-price, whilst the boats were dispatched for another trip. But it was essential to make provision for those destitute people who could not afford to purchase grains so dear (30 to 40 pounds, per rupee). So Raja Shitab Roy ordered that the inhabitants of Azimabad might be divided into four classes, and be kept in three or four gardens, surrounded by walls. They were taken care of by the guards and were daily attended by a number of clerks, who kept an account of them and were assisted by a number of servants, who at stated times used to come with food and with a variety of grains and pulse and earthen vessels and firewood. But in spite of these attempts, the famine was not arrested.

All through the summer of 1770, people died in large numbers. W.W. Hunter has drawn a very pathetic picture of the famine that was ravaging the land. He says: "the husbandmen sold their cattle, they sold their implements of agriculture, they devoured their seed-grain, they sold their sons and daughters, till at length no buyer of children could be found, they ate the leaves of trees, and the grass of the field and in June, 1770, the Resident at the Durbar affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead. Day and night a torrent of famished and disease-stricken wretches poured into the great cities..............The streets were blocked up with promiscuous heaps of the dying and dead. Internment could not do its work quick enough, even the dogs and jackals, the public scavengers of the East, became unable to accomplish their revolting work, and the multitude of mangled and Festerling corpses at length threatened the existence of the citizens."

As a measure for ameliorating the condition of the people Raja Shitab Roy proposed to allot 2 lacs of rupees for relief of the poor. But Mr. Alexander could not sanction this amount

without the permission of John Cartier, the Governor of the Council. John Cartier did not approve of the policy of Shitab Roy. The condition of the people was worsening day by day. It appears from the Consultations of the 28th April, 1770, that "the depopulation in the interior part of the country was more rapid than would be imagined by any person who had not witnessed it." Bhagalpur, previously a rich area, was reduced to a miserable condition. The condition of Champaran was as bad as any other part of the province. The Naib of Champaran had written a letter to Raja Shitab Roy on August 5, 1769, that hundreds of people were daily found dead under the trees and reports of similar tragedies were being received daily from every Teppah. Purnea was the worst sufferer in Bihar. Mohamed Ali Khan, Faujdar of Purnea, had reported on the 28th April, 1770: "Hardly a day passes without thirty or forty persons dying. Multitudes already have and continue to perish of hunger." Seed grain has been sold for food, and cattle and agricultural utensils. Children offered for sale and no buyers. Mohamed Ali expresses an official, but not very creditable, "blindness to distress and deafness to lamentation" in the interests of the Sircar i.e. the Government."

Mr. Ducrael reported that the miseries of the town of Purnea are not less shocking than those of the rural parts. "Pestilence must be guarded against by the removal of the dead bodies. Upwards of 1000 were buried in three days after his arrival. One-half of the cultivators and payers of revenue will perish with hunger, while those able to purchase a subsistence will pay at least 500 percent advance in the price of food. He considers that on the high and sandy soils, more than half the ryots are dead." In Purnea it was estimated as early as May 1770 that one-third of the people had died—the figure of two lacs was quoted in December and in June 1771 the Resident reported that six-sixteenth of the people had died in those districts where the famine was worst. The scenes of misery were almost too tragic.

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for description. The Resident at the Durbar reported on 9th June, 1770 "the scene of the misery that intervened, and still continues, shocks humanity too much to bear description. Certain it is, that in several parts the living had fed on the dead, and the number that has perished in those provinces that have most suffered to have been, within these few months, as six to sixteen of the whole inhabitants."  

The effects of the famine in Bihar were that a large part of the population of the province perished. Warren Hastings estimated in 1772 that at least one-third of the inhabitants of Bengal and Bihar had died as a result of it. The economy of the people was upset and there were no people to carry on the agriculture. The fields remained barren. As late as 1789, Lord Cornwallis declared that one-third of the Company's territory in Hindustan is now a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts. In Purnea it was reported in 1788 that one-fourth of one of the largest parganas had been depopulated during the famine and most of the land was still uncultivated.

So dreadful were the effects of the famine that "Tender and delicate women whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from those inner chambers in which Eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, and threw themselves before the passer-by, imploring a handful of rice for their children."  

The East India Company was not at all interested in the welfare of the subjects. While the people were dying, the Company was engaged in the collection of the revenues. On the 12th February, 1771, the Council wrote "notwithstanding the great severity of the late famine and the great reduction of the people thereby, some increase has been made in the settlements both of the Bengal and the Bihar provinces for the present year." On the 10th January, 1772, the Council wrote, "the collections in each department of revenue are as successfully carried on for the present year as we could have wished."

What was the result of the famine on the administrative machinery of the East India Company? The famine of 1770 has been described as the "Key to the history of Bengal during

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2 Dutt, R.C., *Economic History of British India*, p. 52.
the succeeding forty years.”¹ The intention to supervise and control the native revenue administration was no doubt excellent, but it entirely failed to produce good effects. The Court of Directors realised the necessity of bringing basic changes in the administration of the country. On the 28th August, 1771, they announced their intention “to stand forth as Diwan by the agency of the Company’s servants.” The Directors decided to take upon themselves the entire care and the management of the revenue. In India a proclamation to this effect was issued on the 18th May 1772. In accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors, the President and Council at Fort William directed the Murshidabad Council “to take over the charge of the Diwani and perform its duties in place of Muhamad Reza Khan, who was divested of his office and brought down to Calcutta to take his trial there.”

Trial, Acquittal and Death of Raja Shitab Roy

As a result of the proclamation of the 18th May, 1772, the post of the Naib Diwan was abolished. Opinions differ as to what happened to Shitab Roy, when he was removed from the post of the Naib Diwan. A detailed, interesting but somewhat prejudiced account about Shitab Roy has been given in Kalyan Singh’s Khulasat-Ut-Tawari Kh. Kalyan Singh was the son of Raja Shitab Roy. Kalyan Singh was of the opinion that the Court of Directors did not instruct the Calcutta Council to arrest Raja Shitab Roy. There were definite instructions from the Court of Directors for the arrest of Muhamad Reza Khan. When Muhamad Reza Khan was brought to Calcutta to face his trial, the Calcutta Council asked Warren Hastings to call Shitab Roy from Patna for a proper inquiry of his conduct. Hastings told them that the Court of Directors had not directed him to arrest Raja Shitab Roy, but he was ready to summon Raja Shitab Roy at the request of the Councillors. Now Hastings directed Hoshyar Jang (Mr. Vansittart) to send Shitab Roy to Calcutta. Hoshyar Jang showed Warren Hasting’s letter to this effect to Raja Shitab Roy. Raja Shitab Roy at once got ready and started for Calcutta on a boat.² He was accompanied by Basant

² Singh, Kalyan, *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, F. 171 B.
Rai, Diwan Subadar and Sardar Singh, Peshkar. He reached Calcutta and began to live there in a rented house. Khawaja Ahsan, son of Khawaja Hasraf Kashmiri, was the pleader of Raja Shitab Roy. The pleader called on the Raja.

Raja Shitab Roy informed Warren Hastings about his arrival through his vakil. Shitab Roy was called before the Councillors after a month.¹ Raja Shitab Roy was in the dress of a Naib Nazim, and was received at the gate of the Council by one of the Councillors. In the Council house he took his seat on a chair. Raja Shitab Roy asked the Councillors after sometime to point out to him the charges levelled against him. The Councillors placed a document in his hand. This document dealt with the accounts of the Bihar province. Shitab Roy was asked to submit his answers in writing. Shitab Roy suggested to the Councillors that the inquiry of this case be held at Patna, that the case be referred to the Patna Council, and that it be opened before Kalyan Singh. Aumils and Mulguzars should be examined regarding the charges.² The Calcutta Council did not object to this suggestion put forth by Raja Shitab Roy, and the case was transferred to the Patna Council. Shitab Roy sent a copy of the charges to Kalyan Singh. Hoshyar Jang was the senior officer of the Patna Council. He informed Kalyan Singh about all these things.

Aumils and Mulguzars were called and the inquiry of the case started. Mr. Brunt, the Secretary to the Council, was called to record the proceedings.³ Two witnesses were present and so Muhammad Ashraf Khan Kashmiri, Sarkara-Champaran (In-charge officer of the Sarkar Champaran) was called. Kalyan Singh told him that he had been called to give evidence as to the amount of money he had given to Raja Shitab Roy as Nazrana or bribe, beside the revenues. He informed the Council that he had not given any pie to Raja Shitab Roy either as bribe or Nazrana. His statement was recorded. He put his signature on the paper and fixed his seal. He then went away. The next witness was Ghulam Husain, son of Mir Hidayat Ali Khan⁴

¹ Singh, Kalyan, Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, F. 172 B.
² Ibid., F. 173 A.
³ Ibid., F. 173 B.
⁴ Singh, Kalyan, Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, F. 173 B.
Bahadur, who was Amil of Seres and Cotomba. Similar questions were also put to him. He also said before the Council that he had not paid any pie to Raja Shitab Roy either as Nazrana or bribe. His statement was also recorded. He put his signature, and fixed his seal, before leaving the hall. The Councillors, apart from examining these witnesses, made an independent inquiry, and came to the conclusion that Raja Shitab Roy had not embezzled even a rupee. They sent their report to the Calcutta Council accordingly and on the basis of the report of the Patna Council, the charges against Shitab Roy were withdrawn. Raja Shitab Roy was given a certificate of the good services and he started for Azimabad. He was given a Khilaut and he returned to Azimabad via Bhagalpur.

Nowhere in this detailed account Kalyan Singh has mentioned the arrest of his father, though we know from other contemporary records that Raja Shitab Roy had been arrested.

According to Ghulam Husain, the author of Siyar-ul-mutakherin, Raja Shitab Roy was arrested and his trial was held at Calcutta. The charges against Raja Shitab Roy were not proved and he was acquitted after one year. Kalyan Singh has mentioned in Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh that Ghulam Husain was one of the witnesses called by the Patna Council for deposition, but Ghulam Husain does not mention it anywhere in his book. It becomes difficult to accept in toto the view of Kalyan Singh. Both the historians however agree after that the trial of Shitab Roy was held, and his guilt was not proved. On his acquittal, the Governor and all the members of the Committee, after many excuses and much apology, showed him every kindness and they sent him back to his office, with a letter concluded in these terms. "They confessed, that the suspicions on Shitab Rai's fidelity, which for certain reasons had found their way into the minds of the Committee of Calcutta and of the supreme rulers in Europe, had proved, after a very long and a very exact examination, destitute of any foundation and that nothing had happened from that excellent man, but proofs of fidelity, fair attachment and zeal. That is followed therefore that the hard treatment he had experienced, had been unmerited and far from what

1 These are in Aurangabad Sub-division of the Gaya district.
2 Singh, Kalyan, Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, F. 175 B.
his valuable services had deserved.\textsuperscript{1} Along with this letter, the Council sent a dress of honour, suitable to his rank and merits, with an elephant and a number of jewels and he was sent to Azimabad. Ghulam Husain’s account seems to be more reliable than that of Kalyan Singh.

An authoritative account of the case of Raja Shitab Roy is available in the proceedings of the Bengal Committee.\textsuperscript{2} According to it, the charges of neglect or embezzlement of the revenue were levelled by the Court of Directors against Raja Shitab Roy. The Court of Directors ordered a minute inquiry in the cases of both Muhamad Reza Khan and Raja Shitab Roy. They did not issue a specific order to the Calcutta Council for the arrest of Raja Shitab Roy. The Calcutta Council were asked simply to inquire into his general conduct. But the Council felt that the inquiry into the conduct of Shitab Roy was not possible, until he was dislodged from his present position. It was certain, as the Company felt, that, “although Rajah Shitab Roy was not expressly named in those orders yet the general charge of Misconduct and Negligence in the collection of the revenue of province of Bahar could only respect him who had the immediate charge of it to the end of the year 1177.”\textsuperscript{3} (1771).

It was agreed in the meeting of the Bengal Secret Committee, held on the 28th April, 1772, that the “President be requested to write to the Chief of Patna to lay an immediate restraint\textsuperscript{4} upon his person (Shitab Roy) and that of his Duan also.” On the receipt of this letter, Mr. Vansittart, the Chief of the English factory at Patna, got Shitab Roy arrested, and informed the President of the Calcutta Council about it. He also wrote to them that Shitab Roy would be sent to Calcutta under the escort of a Subahdar and forty sepoys together with the Diwan Bassant Rai and his Peshkar Sardar Singh. The Council felt that the Chief of Patna had not mentioned in his letter any steps taken for the security of Raja Shitab Roy’s effects either “from the Embezzlement of his servants or a removal out of

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., pp. 47-48.
\textsuperscript{2} National Archives of India.
\textsuperscript{3} Bengal Secret Committee Proceedings, 1772, p. 552.
\textsuperscript{4} Bengal Secret and Separate Proceedings, 1773, p. 2.
the provinces.”"¹ So the following directions were issued to Mr. Vansittart from Fort William on the 1st May, 1772: “It is necessary to direct that you immediately place a guard over his house to prove their being embezzled by his dependants or converse out of the provinces.”² On receipt of the letter, Mr. Vansittart placed a guard over the house of Raja Shitab Roy.

The Calcutta Council had not taken any decision as to whether Shitab Roy would be kept in confinement or not. The President of the Calcutta Council had been informed by Mr. Vansittart that “he possesses Jagires to a considerable amount in the province of Allahabad which the opinion of his having fallen under the resentment of the Company may risk his losing and these being his whole dependance after the loss of the Service.”³ The President sought Council’s opinion in what manner Raja Shitab Roy “shall be received and in what degree of confinement he shall be kept.”⁴ The Council agreed that “guards shall be stationed about him in such a manner as to prevent his escape, at the same time to preserve his credit and that the president do inform him by letter of the cause of his being brought to Calcutta and of his being called upon to account for the large ballances in the Revenues of Bahar and the Secretary and Persian Translator to be deputed to meet him.”⁵

The trial started after a few days. Shitab Roy was called before the Council. The Council informed him that he was called upon to give an account of his work in connection with his office of Naib Diwan of the Province of Bihar. The President told him that the Company had observed with concern and astonishment that since he had been employed in the province of Bihar, the revenue had gradually decreased to an extraordinary degree.⁶ The President further observed that he should satisfy the Council on the several heads of the charges, receipts and arrears of the collections of each year not only of his time but also of Dhiraj Narayan.

¹ Bengal Secret and Separate Committee Proceedings, 1773, p. 5.
² Ibid., 1773, p. 5.
³ Bengal Secret Committee Proceedings, 1772, p. 119.
⁴ Ibid., 1772, p. 119.
⁵ Ibid., 1772, pp. 119-120.
⁶ Bengal Secret Committee Proceedings, 1772, p. 555.
Soon the Calcutta Council removed the guard from the person of Raja Shitab Roy and Mr. Vansittart, the Chief of the Council of Patna, was asked on the 19th November, 1772, to withdraw the guard that he had placed over the house of Shitab Roy. Mr. Vansittart was required to transmit to the Calcutta Council the following papers. He acted accordingly.

(a) Abstract Accounts of the Jumma Wassul Bakee\(^1\) of Bihar for the period in which the Company have held the Dewanee.

(b) Jumma Khurch or Naib Diwan's receipts and payments for the same period.

(c) Account of the annual abatement on the Jumma with the articles of which it is composed and the amount of each.

(d) the annual Arrears of the collections and the reasons assigned for them.

(e) Account Jumma receipts and collections\(^2\) during the management of Raja Dhiraj Narayan and of the Ballances left by him at his dismissal and how it was collected.

As it has been already noted, Raja Shitab Roy was appointed to the office of Naib Diwan after the dismissal of Raja Dhiraj Narayan, and continued to hold his post till the end of the year 1771.

The President submitted to the Council an abstract account of the collections of the revenue during the period of his administration to the following effect:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jumma</th>
<th>Decrease from</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Ballances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1173</td>
<td>5819756.10.10</td>
<td>1174</td>
<td>4685920.09.15</td>
<td>1134036.02.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1174</td>
<td>5881843.10.10</td>
<td>This year highest</td>
<td>5359363.05.15</td>
<td>522480.04.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1175</td>
<td>5604511.14. -</td>
<td>277331.12.10</td>
<td>5209997.12.10</td>
<td>395414.01.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1176</td>
<td>5742677.10.10</td>
<td>139166.00.00</td>
<td>4923711.03.10</td>
<td>818966.07.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1177</td>
<td>4338917.08.05</td>
<td>1542926 02.05</td>
<td>3935903.07.05</td>
<td>403014.01.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27387707.05.15</td>
<td>1959423.14.15</td>
<td>2413796 04.15</td>
<td>3273911.01.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1959423.14.15\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jumma</th>
<th>Decrease from</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>Ballances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1173</td>
<td>Bakia and Tukary</td>
<td>913711.02.00</td>
<td>91.3711.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29347131.04.10</td>
<td>25027507-6-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1175</td>
<td>4319623.13.15</td>
<td>25027507.06.15</td>
<td>2360199.15</td>
<td>1959623.13.15(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4319623.13.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 555.

\(^2\) Bengal Secret Proceedings, 1772, p. 554.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 555. The account seems to be wrong. It should be 1959423.14.15.
N.B. 1,07,614.13.15 said to be allowed as a Deduction in the 5 years for charges.”

The President further mentioned that in the Jumma, fixed account, of the revenue during the period from 1173 to 1177 (1767 to 1771) and allowed decrease was made by him of 19,59,423 rupees and that a balance was accumulated of 23,60,199, so that the whole loss on the revenues was more than 43 lacs of rupees. The President in the end wrote that he would not vouch for the accuracy of the accounts.

The President of the Calcutta Council and the Chief of the English factory of Patna gave contradictory statements about the amount of defalcation of the state fund by Raja Shitab Roy. The President of the Calcutta Council had suggested rupees 43 lacs as the amount of embezzlement on the part of Raja Shitab Roy and the Chief of the Patna factory as rupees 7,82,200. Mr. Hastings asked Mr. Nand Kumar to prepare a statement of the respective account of Shitab Roy. Accordingly Nand Kumar prepared an account of the embezzlement of Shitab Roy. He stated to Hastings that a sum of more than 90 lacs1 of rupees has been defalcated by Shitab Roy. When Raja Shitab Roy heard of it, he agreed to give Rs. four lacs to the Governor Mr. Hastings and one lac to Mr. Francis. But nothing came out of this effort. Thus Mr. Hastings could not get a definite idea of the amount of money embezzled by Shitab Roy.

At last Raja Shitab Roy was called before the Council to give an account of his management of the office of Naib Diwan of the province of Bihar.

Raja Shitab Roy offered the following statements of the settlements and receipts of the revenues of the Bihar Province.

Collected.

In the year 1173 the Jumma was Rs. 58,52,1142 Rs. 48,88,061
1174 60,68,800 Rs. 54,76,813
1175 55,81,467 Rs. 54,70,143
1176 51,91,851 Rs. 50,60,817
1177 43,12,769 Rs. 41,12,133

Besides Raja Shitab Roy submitted to the Council many papers dealing with the finances of the provinces for many years. These

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1 Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1775, p. 45.
accounts are not strictly accurate, but they throw some light on the revenue collections of Bihar. These accounts are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1765 to February 1766 during the administration of Raja Dhiraj Narayan</td>
<td>Sonaut Rupees¹</td>
<td>Sonaut Rupees 15,47,774.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Statement of receipts and disbursements of the Bihar Province for the last 7 months.</td>
<td>2,36,47,609-4-3²</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From February 1766 to September 1770 comprehending the period of Raja Shitab Roy’s administration.</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
<td>2,06,39,957³-12-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Statement of receipts and disbursement of the Bihar Province of the last 7 months of the</td>
<td>2.42,94,157-15-3⁴</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From February 1766 to September 1770 comprehending the</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
<td>2,32,75,276-6⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sonaut or sonauts or Sanwats were rupees after the third year of their currency; when a definite allowance was made for their deterioration (a statistical account of Bengal by W.W. Hunter, B.A. LLD. Vol. 14, Bhagalpur and Santhal Parganas, London 1877). Sicca rupiya became the name specially given to the rupee coined by the East India Company from the year 1773 bearing inscription denoting that it has been struck by Emperor Shah Alum at Murshidabad.

² Bengal Secret and Separate Proceedings, 1773, p. 36.
period of Raja Shitab Roy’s administration.

Not mentioned 2,35,33,881-6-3
1,09,737-5-2

After submission of these accounts by Raja Shitab Roy to the Council, the Council appointed Mr. Charles William Boughton Prows to examine and prepare a digest of the accounts. The Mutasaddis (writers) of Raja Shitab Roy also attended Mr. Charles to help him in scrutinising the accounts. There had been the largest collection in Bihar from 1173 to 1175 (1767-69) and the members of the Council had been impressed with the “eminent abilities and zealous services” of Mr. Rumbold and Maharaja Shitab Roy in the administration of the province. The trial protracted for a year but the Council could not substantiate the charges of embezzlement which they had levelled against Shitab Roy. The perusal of the different papers submitted by Shitab Roy convinced them that he was innocent. Shitab Roy’s conduct was at last proved to be free from the blemishes of which he had been suspected and accused. He was now acquitted. He was appointed as Royroyan of the province of Bihar. But he could not live long. His health had been shattered by worries and the unwholesome climate of Calcutta. He started from Murshidabad for Patna. He was met at Bhagalpur by a number of the principal inhabitants of Patna, by some from real regard and by others from the influence of his authority.

Within about a month after his return to Patna, Shitab Roy expired. In consideration of services of the deceased Maharaja Shitab Roy and of his recent troubles, Warren Hastings recommended to the Council at Fort William that the office of Royroyan of the province of Bihar which was vacant on the death of Shitab Roy, be conferred on his son Raja Kalyan Singh. The Council at Fort William by its letter, dated 27th September, 1773 accepted the recommendation of Warren Hastings and

1 Ibid., 1773, p. 45.
2 Bengal Secret Proceedings, 1772, p. 556.
3 Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1769, p. 144.
5 Bengal Secret Proceedings, 1773, pp. 524-525.
Raja Kalyan Singh was appointed as Roy Royan of the province. He was given an annual salary of Rs. 50 thousand.

In April 1772, Warren Hastings received charge of the office of the Governor of the Fort William in Bengal. The Controlling Councils of revenue at Patna and Murshidabad were abolished and the Khalsa (chief revenue office) brought down to Calcutta under the immediate supervision of the Company's Government.

Realising the defects of the Dual Government the Company declared on the 28th August, 1771 to accept direct responsibility for the administration of the province. The effect of this decision cannot be expressed better than in the words of James Mill. "The change," he writes, "was enormous, which it was the nature of this degree to produce. It was a revolution, much greater, probably, than any previous conjuncture, than even the change from Hindu to Mahomedan masters, had been able to create. The transition from Hindu to Mahomedan masters had only changed the hands by which the sword was wielded, and favours were dispensed; the machine of government, still more the texture of society, underwent feeble alterations; and the civil part of the administration was, from conveniency, left almost wholly in the hands of Hindus. A total change in the management of the revenues more deeply affected the condition, individually and collectively, of the people of India, than it is easy for the European reader to conceive: It was an innovation by which the whole property of the country, and along with it the administration of justice, were placed upon a new foundation."2

1 Bengal Secret Committee Proceedings, 1773, p. 526.
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he has described in this book. This book was first translated by M. Raymond, a French man, who had assumed the Mahomedan name of Hajee Mustapha. In the year 1789, he published the result of his labours in three large volumes and he dedicated his work to Hastings. The edition was dispatched to England, but vessel in which these books were consigned was unfortunately lost and with it was lost the world the whole edition of the work, with the exception of the few copies that had been circulated in Calcutta. In view of these circumstances, a subsequent edition was undertaken some years later by the Oriental Translation Committee and entrusted to Colonel John Briggs of the Madras army. In 1832 John Murray of London issued the first volume, which however was never followed by a second.

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