

# **THE FIRST TWO NAWABS OF AWADH**

(A Thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
by the University of Lucknow in 1932)

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Foreword

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Revised and Corrected**

## **@ AUTHOR**

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To  
My Guru  
Professor Dr. K.R. Qanungo

## Foreword

The Nawabs of Oudh played a very important part in North Indian history throughout the 18th century, when they were often the pivot on which the affairs of the central Government of Delhi turned. Saadat Khan's bravery in defeating the Maratha raiders of Bajirao's army whom no other imperial general could face with success, his unrivalled gallantry on the field of Karnal, Safdar Jang's control of the empire as wazir for over five years, and finally Shuja-ud-daulah's intervention on the side of Ahmad Shah Durrani (which completely turned the scale against the Marathas in the Panipat Campaign) and his challenge to the nascent British Indian empire—all make the history of Oudh under the Nawabi an unforgettable part of the general history of India. Nor did its importance cease with the last-named ruler. Even in the nineteenth century, during the Gurkha War of 1814-15, Oudh formed the most useful base of the British operations in respect of food-supplies, transport and money (loan of two krores). During the Maratha War of 1803-4, it was the British grip over the sovereign and territory of Oudh that enabled Wellesley to put an irresistible pressure upon the French-drilled Purbia infantry that formed the backbone of Sindhia's army.

Dr. Ashirbadi Lal's work is the first attempt to write a critical history of the rise of this dynasty and it has attained to a high standard of excellence. All the available sources have been used, and he has gone to the fountain-head of original Persian annals and letters. The result is a scientific history to which scholars will have to turn for a long time to come as the standard authority. This patient and minute research (a part of which was done under my eyes) has enabled Dr. Ashirbadi Lal to correct many errors of previous writers and to establish the true facts on an unassailable basis. His intensive study of the internal affairs of Oudh is a highly valuable feature of this book, as it is a virgin field, very little known to students. The same

praise is due to Chapter 18 on the condition of the people. Benares was under the house of Oudh, and when in 1749 the Maratha Brahmans there were persecuting and boycotting the Prabhus (Deccani Kayasthas), the latter appealed for relief to Nawal Rai, a fellow-caste-man ! This story might well have found a place here.

What I admire most in this young writer is his impartial attitude : he is free from the biographers' common failing of blind hero-worship, and has many hard things to say about the Lucknow partisan writers who have attempted to falsify history. On the whole, this volume marks the high water-mark of scholarship in doctorate theses and reflects equal credit on the author who wrote it and the University of Lucknow which made him write it.

DARJILING : }  
15th June, 1933. }

JADUNATH SARKAR

## Preface to the Second Edition

The first edition of this book, though published in June 1933, was all written in 1930-31 and represented the first attempt, including even, it may be humbly added, the first edition of the Master-Historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *Fall of the Mughal Empire, Volume I* (which was planned and written later than this book but published six months earlier, i. e. December 1932), to explore the Indian history of the first half of the eighteenth century on the basis of all available contemporary sources in Persian, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, Rajasthani and English. During the last twenty three years a good deal of historical literature has become available to us. This consists of (i) a few documents (*farmans* and *sanads*) relating to the career of Nawal Rai and Yadgar-Bahaduri, a rare MS., in Persian; (ii) the later fifteen volumes (31-45) of the *Selections from the Peshwas' Daftar*, the *Purandare Daftar* (3 Vols.) and the *Holkar-Shahichya Itihasanchi Sadhanen* (2 Vols.) in Marathi, and (iii) *Bhagwant Singh ka Rasa* by Sadanand, a contemporary work in Hindi. All these have been utilised in preparing the second edition, and although these have not yielded much fresh information, the material in them has furnished substantial confirmatory evidence and strengthened quite a few of my conclusions of the first edition, which for want of absolutely contemporary evidence had to be based on secondary authorities. For example, my surmise that Saadat Khan was over sixty years of age at his death, based though it was on William Hoey's unavailable 'Anonymous Contemporary', which I had no means of checking, is now a settled fact in view of Sadanand's definite assertion on the point (*Bhagwant Singh ka Rasa, Vide, Nagari Pracharini Patrika, Vol. V, 1981 V. S., p. 128*). The same authority confirms that Saadat Khan was a stout and unscrupulous diplomat and annexationist. If he could for once establish his hold on a part or the whole of the territory of a vassal or a semi-independent chief, he would not allow it to slip out of his grip.

The only important additions made in this edition are an altercation between Safdar Jang and Mahadeva Bhatt Hingne, the Maratha agent at Delhi, which led to an affray and to the death of the latter, and a few fresh facts relating to the life and work of Nawal Rai. The entire book has been carefully revised. Correct modern spellings of some of the proper names, such as, Awadh for Oudh, Ganga for Ganges, Yamuna for Jamuna, etc, have been used, and the index has been amplified and made more helpful. The letters in Persian at the end of the volume in the first edition have been omitted here to save space.

Agra College Agra.  
May 18, 1954.

A. L. Srivastava

## Preface to the First Edition

About five years back Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji, M. A., P. R. S., Ph. D., Head of the Department of Indian History, University of Lucknow suggested that I should write a series of monographs on the Nawabs of Awadh from Saadat Khan, the founder to Wajid Ali Shah, the last ruler of the dynasty. The present volume is the first of the proposed series.

The History of Awadh of the 18th century is not merely of local interest. It is equally important for the student of the general history of India, for the Nawabs of Awadh in that century were amongst the makers of the history of Hindustan. This volume dealing with the First Two Nawabs is a critical study based on all the available sources in Persian, Marathi, Urdu, Hindi and English in search of which I had to visit almost all the important Mss. libraries in Northern India. The work was begun at Udaipur in July, 1929, and was ready faired out for the press in November, 1931, when, in the first week of January, 1932, the Lucknow University permitted me to submit it, as my thesis, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. This delayed its publication for over a year and a half.

In conclusion, I wish to express my feelings of gratitude to Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji for the ungrudging help he has always given me. My indebtedness to Dr. K. R. Qanungo, M. A., Ph. D., of Dacca University is great. He inspired me with the love of historical research, while I was yet an under-graduate at the University of Lucknow, and has, ever since been guiding and helping me like a true *guru* of ancient India. My best thanks are due to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the greatest authority on the history of India, who kindly accommodated me in his own house like a member of his family during my stay at Darjiling in April, 1930, placed the whole of his valuable library at my disposal and freely lent me his rare Persian Mss. He very kindly



went through about 60 pages of my *Safdar Jang*, which I had sent to him for his opinion in April 1931 and corrected a few dates on the chapter dealing with the Maratha invasion of Bangal. I am further thankful to him for his valuable suggestions and for going through the book and writing the foreword.

Udaipur,  
June 17, 1933.

ASHIRBADI LAL SRIVASTAVA

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## Abbreviations

1. Abul-karim—Bayan-Waqia by Abul-karim Kashmiri.
2. Ahwal—Ahwal-Salatin-Muta-khiren.
3. Anand Ram—Tazkira-Anand Ram Mukhlis.
4. Ashob—Tarikh Kharoj Nadir Shah ba Hindustan by Mubammad Bakhsh Ashob.
5. Azad—Umrai Haidrabad wa Awadh by Gulam Ali Azad.
6. Balwant—Balwant-nama alias Tohfa-i-taza by Khairud-din.
7. Chronicles—Chronicles of Oonao.
8. Delhi Chronicle—Waqqa-i-Shah Alam Sani.
9. Elliot—History of India by Elliot and Dowson.
10. Gul—Gul-i-Rahmat.
11. Gulistan—Gulistan-i- Rahmat.
12. Gulistane—Majm-ul-Tarikh bad az Nadirya.
13. Hadia—Hadi-qat-ul-aqalim.
14. Haricharan—Chabar Gulzar-i-Shujai.
15. Hikayat—Hikayat Fateh Nadir Shah.
16. Imad—Imad-us-Saadat.
17. Inshai—Insha-i-Roshan Kalam.
18. Jahan-kusha—Jahan-kusha-i-Nadiri.
19. Jauhar—Jauhar-i-Samsam.
20. J. A. S. B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangal.
21. K. K.—Muntakhab-ul-lubab by Khafi Khan.
22. Kamwar—Tazkirat-us-Salatin Chaghtai alias Tarikh-i-Chaghtai of Muhammad Hadi alias Kamwar Khan.
23. Khair-ud-din—Khair-ud-din's Ibratnama.
24. L. M.—Later Mughals.
25. Maadan—Maadan-us-Saadat.
26. Mansur or Maktubat—Mansur-ul-Maktubat.
27. M. U.—Masir-ul-Umra.
28. Mirat—Mirat-i-Ahmadi.
29. Mirza Muhammad—Mirza Muhammad's Tazkira or Ibrat-nama.

30. Patren Yadi etc—Itihāsik Patren Yadi Wagara Lekh.
31. Qasim—Muhammad Qasim Lahori's Ibratnama.
32. Rajwade—Marathachi Itibasachen Sadhanen, ed. by Rajwade and others.
33. Rustam Ali—Rustam Ali's Tarikh-i-Hindi.
34. Sardesai—Sardesai's Marathi Riyasat.
35. Sawanihat—Sawanihat-i-Salatin-i-Awadh.
36. Shiva-Shiva Das' Shahnama-i-Munawwar Kalam.
37. Siyar—Siyar-ul-Mutakherin.
38. Sujan Charit—Sujan Charitra of Sudan.
39. Tabsir—Tabsirat-ul-Nazirin.
40. T. Ahmad Shahi—Tarikh Ahmad Shahi.
41. T. Ali—Tarikh-i-Ali.
42. T. M.—Tarikh-i-Muzaffari.
43. Warid—Mirat-ul-Waridat of Md. Shafi Tehrani.
44. Walli-ullah—Md. Walli-ullah's Tarikh-i-Farrukhabad.



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# Book I

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk

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CHAPTER I  
BOYHOOD AND EARLY CAREER,  
1680-1720

1.—SAADAT KHAN'S ANCESTORS

More than four hundred years ago there lived in the holy city of Najaf, in Mesopotamia, a good old Sayyid of the name of Mir Shams-ud-din, distinguished for his learning and piety alike and held in universal esteem by his townsmen. His royal contemporary on the throne of Persia, Shah Ismail Safawi (1499-1523 A.D.), celebrated for his valour and generosity, invited the Sayyid from Najaf and appointed him *qazi* (judge) of Nishapur in the province of Khurasan. The *qazi* settled down at Nishapur, where his royal patron granted him a rich and handsome jagir.\*

Mir Shams-ud-din came of a noble and illustrious Sayyid family. He was, it is said, twenty-first in descent from Musa Kazim, the seventh *Imam* (spiritual preceptor) of the house of Ali.†

Of the Mir's several sons the eldest was Sayyid Muhammad Jafar. The latter had two sons, namely, Mir Muhammad Amin and Sayyid Muhammad, to whom, respectively, were born Mir Muhammad Naseer and Mir Muhammad Yusuf during the reign of Shah Abbas II (1641-1666 A. D.). The tradition runs that, one day, while the Shah was out a-hunting, the sudden appearance of a lion caused some confusion amongst the royal retinue and the king himself fell down the horse. Just then, Mir Muhammad Yusuf, who was standing by, boldly stepped forward and despatched the frowning beast with a single

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\* *Imad.* 5 and 30; *Sawanihat*, *ib.*

† *Imad* 30.

blow of his sword. The shah, pleased at the youngman's feat, resolved to honour the sayyid family and asked his *wazir*, Raza Quli Beg, a Qizilbash Turk, to give his daughter in marriage to Mir Muhammad Naseer.\* The nuptials of the young couple were, shortly after, celebrated with befitting splendour. Out of this wedlock were born two daughters and two sons—Mir Muhammad Baqar and Mir Muhammad Amin. The latter was the future Nawab Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, the founder of the ruling house of Awadh.

## 2—BOYHOOD AND EDUCATION, 1680-1707

No historian, whether contemporary or of a later date, cared to chronicle the exact date of Mir Muhammad Amin's birth or any incident of his early life. We, however, know that at his death which took place on 9th Zil Hijjah, 1151 A.H.,† corresponding to March 19, 1739, he was about sixty lunar years of age.‡ Hence he must have been born in or about the year 1680 A.D. It is also equally certain that he had spent the early years of his life profitably in the study of letters. The Almighty "had brought up that elect of the race of honour and dignity

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\* Imad. 5 says that Mir Muhammad Naseer and Mir Muhammad Yusuf were born of the same mother, but by different fathers, that is, by Mir Muhammad Amin and Sayyid Muhammad.

† Jauhar. 26 a.

‡ Towards the end of 1735 A. D. Saadat Khan was an old man with a long white beard (Siyar ii., 486). An anonymous contemporary tr. in William Hoey's *Memoir of Delhi*, Appendix, p. 2, says that "even at sixty years of age, when his (Saadat Khan's) beard had become quite grey there was not a wrinkle on his forehead." This shows that Saadat Khan died at or above the age of sixty. That he was not much above sixty is certain. Nizam-ul-mulk, the oldest noble at Muhammad Shah's court, was, in 1739, the year of Saadat Khan's death, only 69 lunar years or 67 solar years of age, having been born in 1082 A. H. [see L. M. I. 270 n]. Khan Dauran, the next oldest noble was 68 lunar years of age. Saadat Khan who was younger than both, and had his eye upon the office of Mir Bakhshi in the event of Khan Dauran's death, would not have been much older, if at all, than sixty. Hence the anonymous contemporary's statement does not only emphasise the fact that Saadat Khan retained unusually good health till the end, but it also appears to give his approximate, if not quite correct, age at his death.

(Mir Muhammad Amin)", writes the author of the *Imad-us-saadat*, "in the cradle of good breeding and education from his infancy to the time of his attaining the age of majority."\* Several years before he became a noble, Mir Muhammad Amin enjoyed the reputation of a well-bred and cultured gentleman of military talents†—attainments which could not possibly have been acquired within a brief period of a few years that had elapsed since his arrival in India. As verse-making under a *nom-de-plume* was a fashion in those days, he also wrote verses under the pen-name of 'Amin.'‡ Historians are unanimous in their testimony to his great military talents and acquirements.‡ Nature had endowed him with a robust constitution, great personal prowess and reckless bravery. Long privation in India as well as in his native land had called forth and developed in him the qualities of courage, self-reliance and perseverance. These natural gifts together with some sort of military training, about the nature of which we are completely in the dark, had made him an excellent soldier and prepared him for the role which he was destined to play in the history of India of the first half of the eighteenth century.

### 3—MIGRATION TO INDIA, 1708-9 A.D.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century the Safawi dynasty of Persia, which had, after nearly a century and a half's glorious rule (1499-1627 A.D.), begun to decline as the result of a progressive deterioration in the character of the later Shahs, was on the verge of its extinction. During the effete reign of the last king of this line, named Shah Husain (1694-1722 A.D.), who thoroughly alienated and disgraced the old nobility. †† Sayyid Shams-ud-din's descendants, who had hitherto been basking in the sun-shine of royal favour, were reduced to want and poverty. Mir Muhammad Amin's father, Mir Muhammad Naseer, therefore,

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\* *Imad*. 5.

† *Qasim*. 213; *Hadiq*. 385.

‡ *Imad* 5.

‡ *Siyar* II. 475; *Qasim*, *bid*.

†† *Malcolm's History of Persia* Vol. I. 400.

resolved to try his luck in Hindustan. The time seemed highly favourable for his enterprise. The aged Emperor Aurangzib, whose life was one constant attempt at the extermination of Shia heresy, no less than Hindu idolatry, had happily for a large majority of his subjects gone to rest in his grave (March 3, 1707). His son and successor, Bahadur Shah, mild and "generous to a fault" was known to possess strong leanings towards Shiaism.\* He even claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet and publicly bore the word "sayyid" along with his titles.† The knowledge of these facts was enough to encourage the influx into this country of Shia adventurers from Persia.‡

Accompanied by his eldest son, Mir Muhammad Baqar, Mir Muhammad Naseer, then in the evening of his life, left his ancestral home towards the end of the year 1707‡ A.D. and set out for India in search of employment. A long and toilsome journey overland brought them to the southern frontier of their country. Here, at one of the ports, probably Bandar Abbas, the father and the son embarked in a vessel bound for India and reached Bangal. From Bangal, they went to Bihar and finally settled down in the town of Patna.\*\* Here the venerable Sayyid was granted a subsistence allowance (*madad-i-maash*) by Murshid Quli Khan, the able diwan of Bangal and Bihar on the recommendation of his son-in-law, Shuja Khan *alias* Shuja ud-daulah†† who was universally known as a friend of helpless

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\* L. M. I. 130

† L. M. I. 135-36.

‡ Mirat II. 36a-37b-

‡ Imad, p. 5 rightly says that he came during the reign of Bahadur Shah; but it gives 1118 H. as the date of Muhammad Naseer's arrival, which is impossible. The date of Bahadur Shah's official coronation was indeed 18th Zill Hijj 1118 H. (when he had received the news of his father's death), but he crowned himself on Muharram 30, 1119 H. (2nd May 1707 A. D. and his public coronation took place in Rabi I, 1119 H. after his victory over Azam Shah. Muhammad Naseer must have started a few months later.

\*\* Imad. 5.

†† Imad. 5. wrongly says that Shuja Khan, governor of Bangal, granted Mir Muhammad Naseer a subsistence allowance. Shuja Khan did not become governor till 1725 A. D., when Saadat Khan himself was ruling over Awadh and his father had died long before this date.

foreigners, particularly those from Persia whence came also Shuja Khan's own ancestors.\*

Mir Muhammad Amin, the second but more promising son of Mir Muhammad Naseer, with whom mainly this history is concerned, had been left in his native town of Nishapur. He had been living with his uncle and father-in-law, Mir Muhammad Yusuf. That was perhaps why he had not accompanied his father and elder brother to India. One day, writes the historian Kamal-ud-din Haider, Mir Muhammad Amin's wife taunted him for being a hanger-on in her father's house. The Mir, who was a self-respecting man (*ghayyur*), took it to heart, left his wife's home in anger and started for Hindustan.† Perhaps this stock-legend of a woman's taunt proving a turning point in the Mir's career was an invention of the author of the *Sawanihat-i-Salatin-i-Awadh*‡ which was compiled more than one hundred and ten years after the death of Mir Muhammad Amin. Ghulam Ali, a more well-informed and critical historian, simply says that Mir Muhammad Amin came to Azimabad Patna to see his father and elder brother in the year 1120 H.‡ (1708-9 A.D.). But his aged father had passed away a few months before his arrival and had been buried some distance away from his new home.\*\* So both the brothers, Muhammad Baqar and

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\* Siyar. 11. 488.

Irwin, Garden of India, 77, says that Mir Muhammad Naseer was in Bahadur Shah's service. But this is not borne out by any Persian authority.

† Sawanihat 2a.

‡ In Indian folk-lore we find the same romantic story ascribed to every ambitious youth, in straitened circumstances, who leaves his home for employment abroad and ultimately rises to wealth, power and fame.

‡ Imad. 5; Sawani-hat. 5b. Of K. K. 11, 902; Azad 78a; Hadiq 384 and M. U. I. 463 some say that he came in Bahadur Shah's reign, while others say that he was in India before the beginning of Farrukhsiyar's accession. Sir Henry Lawrence, ( Calcutta Review of 1831, p. 536, ) wrongly says that he came in 1705 A. D. He also erroneously calls Mir Muhammad Amin 'a lad', who was at that time about 28 or 29 years of age.

\*\* Safdar Jang went to say his prayers at the tomb, when in 1741 A. D. he was sent to Patna to assist Alivardi Khan against the Maratha invaders.

Mir Muhammad Amin, started, after some days' stay at Patna, towards Delhi in search of employment, probably in the beginning of 1121 A.H. corresponding to 1709 A.D\*.

#### 4. MIR MUHAMMAD AMIN IN SARBULAND KHAN'S SERVICE, 1710-1712

At first for about a year Mir Muhammad Amin took service with an obscure *amil* and passed his time in hardship and penury. Shortly after, he and his brother entered the service of Sarbuland Khan, Faujdar of Kara Manikpur in the Allahabad *Suba*, who was a Persian and a Sayyid like themselves, about July† 1710. Mir Muhammad Amin's new master, who appointed him his *Mir Manzil* (camp superintendent), was a protege of Prince Azimushshan, the second son of Emperor Bahadur Shah, (22nd march, 1707– 27th Feb. 1712), and had been given Faujdarship of Kara by him. After the defeat and death of

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\* Imad. 5. Alexander Dow describes Muhammad Amin as "the infamous son of a yet more infamous Persian pedler". No Persian authority whatsoever anywhere makes such a startling statement. There is, indeed, no difference of opinion among the contemporary or later Persian historians about the Mir's ancestry. Khafi Khan and others say that he came of a respectable Sayyid family of Nishapur "*az Sadat-i-zul ihtiram Nishapur*", see K. K. 11, 902). None says that his father or he was a merchant, much less a pedler. Sir Henry Lawrence in his scholarly essay on Awadh (Calcutta Review, of 1881) sought to correct Dow and Elphinstone (History of India, 5th edition, P. 695 ) But evidently little notice was taken of him, for the historian H. Beveridge repeated the mistake, though in a mild tone, and called Mir Muhammad Amin 'a merchant'. [A comprehensive History of India vol. I. 392 ]. H. C. Irwin, [Garden of India, p. 77., ] had therefore, to explain the malicious motive of Dow's lying invention. But the exploded myth was made current by *Awadh-ka-Bayan* which taught the school-going population of Awadh for about one generation after the Mutiny of 1857 that Saadat Khan (Mir Muhammad Amin) was a pedler's son. In spite of the Persian authorities the present living older generation of Awadh still believes it to be an historical fact. Students of history and gazetteer compilers also have not cared to revise their knowledge in the light of Persian works. See Lucknow Gazetteer, (1904) by Naville, p. 146.

† Hadiq, 383, ; Imad. 5.

Imad wrongly thinks that Sarbuland Khan was at this time governor

Azim-ush-shan on 17th March, 1712, Sarbuland Khan, like a typical soldier of fortune, hurried towards the Panjab to join the victorious Jahandar Shah (the eldest son of Bahadur Shah) who was leisurely advancing for the capital of the Empire. Sarbuland Khan paid his respects to Jahandar Shah at Sarai Dauraha, between Lahore and Sarhind (May, 1712) and was rewarded with the deputy governorship† of Gujarat for having joined the new Emperor in preference to his ex-patron's son, Farrukh-siyar who was making preparations to risk his all in an armed contest with his victorious uncle. Having accompanied Jahandar Shah to Delhi and stayed there for a few months Sarbuland Khan set out for Gujarat to take over the charge of his new office and reached Ahmadabad in November‡ 1712. Mir Muhammad Amin, travelling with his master from Kara Manikpur to Dauraha and from Dauraha to Ahmadabad watched the vicissitudes of fortune and studied court politics and the conduct of the degenerate nobility at Delhi in order to chalk out his own path of ambition.

For over two years, after he had entered Sarbuland Khan's service, everything went on well; there being all cordiality between Mir Muhammad Amin and his master. Towards the end of 1712, however, there was a sudden rupture between them and Mir Muhammad Amin resigned his post in a huff. This rupture is said to have been due to an insignificant incident. One day,

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of Gujarat. He was appointed deputy governor of Gujarat in May 1712 A.D. Had Muhammad Amin taken service under him after his appointment to Gujarat, the Mir must have remained in poverty for at least three years, which is opposed to Imad's own version. In case the Mir had remained in straitened circumstances till the middle of 1712, he would have entered Farrukhsiyar's service who had carried out his enthronement at Patna on 6th March, 1712 and had been collecting an army to contest for the throne.

† Irvine, L. M. I. 192, says on the authority of K. K. I. 693 that Sarbuland Khan was appointed governor of Gujarat by Jahandar Shah. But Mirati-Ahamadi, the most important authority on Gujarat affairs says that he was appointed 'deputy-governor,' the governor being Asad Khan, father of Zulfiqar Khan (see Mirat. II 55a). The Mirat is supported by M. U. III. 802.

‡ Mirat. II. 55a.



while on tour in his province, Sarbuland Khan's tents were pitched on uneven ground at some distance from a village. During the night there came such a violent wind storm and a heavy down-pour of rains that the tents were torn asunder, all the luggage got totally wet and the Nawab himself had to spend the chilly night under a bullock-cart. Next morning, Sarbuland summoned Mir Muhammad Amin, his camp superintendent, and reproached him harshly for his neglect of duty. The Mir took it ill and resented his master's behaviour. Whereupon the Nawab angrily remarked, "You have the airs of a *haft hazari* (commander of seven thousands). How can you condescend to look after such a small thing?" This was too much for the proud and sensitive child of Iran. Mir Muhammad Amin in spite of his master's anxiety to appease him, took leave of Sarbuland Khan, retorting in anger, "I regard your Excellency's remark as an auspicious prophecy of my future (literally, as a piece of glad tidings from God). I am going (to Delhi) to obtain the rank of a *haft-hazari* and after that I shall be at your service again."\* This incident took place between November, 1712 and 14th March, 1713, the dates of Sarbuland Khan's arrival at and departure from Ahmadabad.†

Sarbuland Khan's words proved, indeed, an unconscious prophecy of the future career of Mir Muhammad Amin.

#### 5.—MIR MUHAMMAD AMIN IN FARRUKHSIYAR'S SERVICE, 1713-1719

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\* Imad 5. Murtaza Husain Khan describes it with some difference in details. He says that Sarbuland Khan, desirous of spending an evening on the bank of the river *Karezi* (perhaps it is a misprint of *Khari*), then beautiful flowers growing on its bank, directed Mir Muhammad Amin to pitch his tents there. The Mir, being informed by a zamindar of a neighbouring village that the river was infested by snakes and scorpions, set up the tents away. When Sarbuland came in the evening and saw the tents far away he was displeased with the Mir and rebuked him by saying that he could be out-witted by a villager, and yet he was vain enough to have the ambition to reach a position of command. The Mir took it ill and resigned his post. See Hadiq. 383. I prefer Imad's version which is more likely.

† Mirat. II 55a and b.

During the period which followed Bahadur Shah's death great political changes, amounting to a mighty revolution, had taken place at Delhi. The brief and inglorious reign of Jahandar Shah (29th March, 1712-10th January, 1713), "a profligate fool," had revealed personal incapacity of the descendants of Aurangzib to rule an empire. Unable to govern himself, he had become a plaything of his sweet tongued mistress, Lal Kunwari, and her low-born relations. Within less than a year of his accession, he was, therefore, defeated and strangled to death by his own nephew, Farrukh-siyar who now ascended the throne (12th January, 1713) with the help of the Sayyid brothers, Abdulla Khan and Husain Ali Khan, known to history as "king-makers." Hardly had a month passed since his accession when the new Emperor formed a party of his own to supplant the Sayyids. Base intrigue and inexcusable treachery consequently pervaded the atmosphere of the imperial court.

At this time Mir Muhammad Amin arrived at Delhi and succeeded in obtaining a *mansab* of a *hazari* (commander of 1,000 horse) with the command of a section of the *Wala-shahi* (Guards) Regiment.\* It was through the patronage of Muhammad Jafar, since long a friend of Farrukhsiyar, that he was able to obtain a footing at Court.† This Muhammad Jafar, entitled Taqarrub Khan *Wala-shahi*, was the cunning Persian who had beguiled Zulfiqar Khan and his old father to their doom. He was nick-named Ganj Ali Khan probably from the fact that during the early part of Farrukhsiyar's reign he was a *Karori* of Ganj or Superintendent of the markets of the capital.‡ Mir Muhammad Amin was then known as one of Ganj Ali Khan's relations (*aqraba*) † The same kind patron procured for

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\* K. K., II. 902; M. U. I. 463; Siyar. II. 483.

† Hadiq 384, says through Husain Ali Khan which seems unlikely at this early date. Imad P. 6, says through Ratan Chand diwan of Abdulla Khan. I prefer M. U.'s version which says through Muhammad Jafar.

‡ M. U. 463. Dr. P. Saran (vide Provincial Govt. of the Mughals p. 297, contends that Ganj meant treasure or revenue and not market. In 17th and 18th centuries it did mean market.

† Qasim 223.

him, sometime after, the lucrative post of *Naib Karori*,†† he himself being the head of that office. His death on the 1st April, 1716\* A. D. deprived Mir Muhammad Amin of a powerful supporter at Court and, therefore, he got no further lift till after three years and a half.

6.— MIR MUHAMMAD AMIN, FAUJDAR OF HINDUAN AND BAYANA, 6TH OCTOBER 1719—14TH OCTOBER 1720

Meanwhile the quarrel between the mighty Sayyids and the cowardly Emperor had reached a climax. Farrukhsiyar was deposed, blinded, and finally put to a brutal and ignominious death (27th April, 1719). The "King makers," without a rival in Hindustan, placed on the throne, one after the other, two diseased youths, Rafi-ud-darjat and Rafi-ud-daula who enjoyed nominal sovereignty of three months and nine days and four months and sixteen days respectively. The throne was, after this, given by the Sayyids to Prince Roshan Akhtar, son of Jahandar Shah and grandson of Bahadur Shah I., whose enthronement, under the title of Muhammad Shah, took place near Agra on 28th September, 1719. The Sayyids had now reached the zenith of their power. There was no organized opposition against them. The calmness of the time may be likened to that in England on Richard Cromwell's accession to power, when an Englishman had written, "There is not a dog that wags his tongue, so great a calm we live in."

Mir Muhammad Amin had not been idle during the time. After the death of Taqarrub Khan, he (troubled little by delicate qualms of conscience when he had to get his personal interest served) had gone over to the party of his late patron's opponents—the Sayyids. Being a Sayyid and a Shia like themselves, he found little difficulty in getting access to their private circle. He was in the Sayyids' retinue when Abdulla Khan had marched to Agra with Rafi-ud-daula to take the field against Raja Sawai Jai Singh Kachhwaha of Amber. His cultured disposition,

\* Mirza Muhammad. 109; L. M. I. 250n.

†† M. U. I. Ibid.

elegance of manners (*husn-i-akhlaq*) and in-born military talents soon won for him the patronage of Sayyid Husain Ali Khan. The imperial Bakhshi, always a friend of loyal and brave soldiers, procured for Mir Muhammad Amin the post of *Faujdar* of Hinduan and Bayana, a district in the province of Agra. The formal appointment was made on 6th October, 1719\* A. D., only a few days after the accession of Emperor Muhammad Shah.

Hardly had a fortnight elapsed since the new appointment when the Sayyids bestowed a further honour on Mir Muhammad Amin. Husain Ali Khan nominated him the commander of the imperial advance guard that was ready for taking the field against Raja Girdhar Bahadur, the rebel governor of Allahabad. But Mir Muhammad Amin committed an indiscretion in complaining to Sayyid Husain Ali Khan, against Ratan Chand, the *wazir's diwan*, who was causing delay in the issue of the patent of appointment of Mir Jumla who had just been appointed *Sadar-us-Sadar* (Superintendent of Religious Endowments) on October 21st, 1719. Being displeased Ratan Chand so successfully worked on the mind of Abdulla Khan that he cancelled Mir Muhammad Amin's appointment and conferred the charge of vanguard on Haider Quli Khan.†

From the imperial camp, then near Agra, Mir Muhammad Amin now repaired to his new charge in the beginning of November, 1719. Hinduan and Bayana, situated in the Jaipur and Bharatpur divisions of Rajasthan and at a distance of fifty to sixty miles south-west of Agra, then formed one of the most important districts of the *suba* of Akbarabad (Agra).‡ Lying as they did in the close vicinity of the territories of the rising Jat power of Bharatpur and the ambitious and intriguing Raja of Jaipur, these *mahals* were, by no means, an easy charge. The presence in them of the fiery Rajput and turbulent Jat zamindars had further complicated the problem. To meet the situation Mir

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\* Kamwar, II. 313a. Imad 6., gives wrong date i. e. 1128 H.

† Kamwar. II. 313b.

‡ Both the towns are now railway stations on the B. B. & C. I. Rly. running from Agra to Kota.

Muhammad Amin began augmenting his small force by enlisting fresh troops. He also applied to the *wazir* for a loan of some troops from the imperial army. The appeal found a ready response. Helped by the imperial auxiliaries, Mir Muhammad Amin suppressed lawlessness in the district. He attacked the rebel zamindars one by one, reduced them to submission and restored order in Hinduan and Bayana within a brief period of six months.† This success established the Mir's reputation as a capable soldier and a man of affairs, and he was given a lift to 15 *sad-izat* (rank of one thousand and five hundred)‡ in the imperial service.

#### 7.—MIR MUHAMMAD AMIN AND THE SAYYID BROTHERS

The Sayyids had reached the apogee of their fortune in 1719. But within a year terminated their meteor-like careers across the political horizon of Hindustan. Provoked by their open hostility against him, Nizam-ul-mulk retired south of the river Narmada to make his hold secure there. He bought over the impregnable fortress of Asirgarh, defeated and killed Dilawar Ali Khan, Sayyid Husain Ali Khan's *Bakhshi*, near Burhanpur on 19th June, 1720 and utterly crushed Sayyid Alam Ali Khan, the "king-maker's" nephew near the town of Balapur on 10th August, 1720. The news of these disasters, (one following the other within a short period of two months) plunged the Sayyids into great grief and consternation. After much vacillation and prolonged discussion they decided that Husain Ali Khan should proceed against Nizam-ul-mulk in the Deccan, while Abdulla Khan should return to Delhi to look after the capital and the northern half of the Empire. Accordingly the Sayyids and the Emperor left the vicinity of Agra on the 11th September and reached Kiraoli (Kuraoli), 14 miles S. W. of Agra, on the 12th where, on the next day, Abdulla Khan was given formal leave to proceed back to Delhi.

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† Kamwar. II. 315 b.

‡ K. K. II. 902, Siyar. II. 434.

After the journey of several stages Muhammad Shah reached the town of Bahadurpur, about four miles north of Hinduan, on the 29th of Zi Qada 1132 H.\* (1st October, 1720). It was only some days before this date that Mir Muhammad Amin† had come to the camp and paid his respects to the Emperor and his patron Sayyid Husain Ali Khan. As the Emperor was now passing through his district of Hinduan and Bayana, rules of etiquette required his attendance till he had conducted the royal retinue a few stages beyond his territory. Unaware of his secret ambitions, Husain Ali Khan, who had much faith in his loyalty, directed him to remain in the camp and go along with him to the Deccan. Whether on march or in encampment the Mir, every day, paraded his small but well equipped and well disciplined (*musallah wa mukammal*) force at some distance from Husain Ali Khan's retinue and so managed the show as to attract the notice of the *Mir Bakhshi*. By such clever tactics he inspired confidence in his patron about the bravery and loyalty of his troops and about his own zeal in the Sayyids' cause. Pleased with him, the *Mir Bakhshi* readily granted all his requests for more money, equipment and jagirs for himself and his soldiers.‡

Since the date of Muhammad Shah's start from the vicinity of Agra, an active conspiracy aiming at the life of Sayyid Husain Ali Khan had been going on in the imperial camp. The chief conspirator was the Mughal leader Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah,†† an uncle of Nizam-ul-mulk, upon whose life the Sayyids had recently made more attempts than one. He

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\* Kamwar. II. 323b.

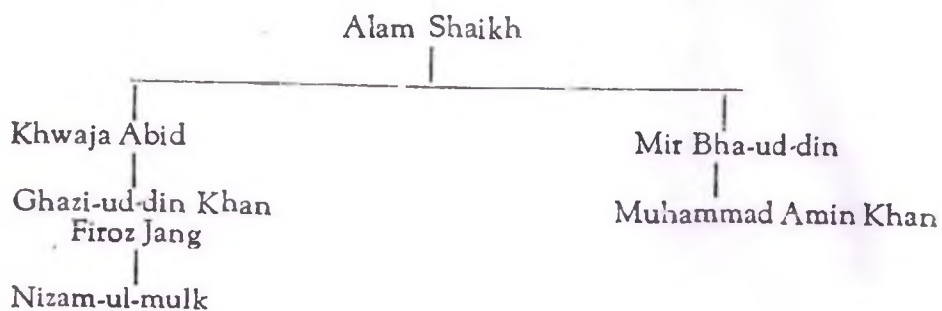
† Irvine, L. M. II 55, referring to this time, says that Mir Muhammad Amin "had been appointed, a few weeks before, to be *Faujdar* of Hinduan and Bayana." He was appointed to that post on 6th October, 1719, (23rd Zi Qada, 1131 H.) about one year, not a few weeks' before this date.

‡ Qasim. 213.

†† Irvine, (L. M. I. 264, 268, 271, and vo l. II. 19, 37), has confounded the relationship between the Nizam and Muhammad Amin Khan, sometimes calling them nephews and at other times nephew and uncle. The Nizam was a nephew of Muhammad Amin Khan as the following table will show:--

succeeded in securing a few faithful partners like Haider Quli Khan, an ambitious and active Persian recently appointed Superintendent of the imperial artillery (*Mir Atish*) and Shah Abdul Ghaffur, a perfect scoundrel in the garb of a mendicant who successfully negotiated the queen-mother's sympathy and countenance to his heinous plot. Forgetting all his obligations, Mir Muhammad Amin, too, who owed much to the Sayyids, went over to the side of their enemies. Lulling Husain Ali Khan's suspicion to sleep by outward display of zeal, he secretly took a leading part in the plot against his patron's life from start to finish.‡

Some historians, ostensibly Mir Muhammad Amin's apologists, have made an attempt to defend his traitorous conduct by inventing a plausible excuse for it, while a few others, like faithful partisans that they were, have totally denied his participation in the plot. Khafi Khan, the author of the *Muntakhab-al-lubab* says that the Mir was incited to take part in the conspiracy, for he had deep-rooted resentment against the disloyal Sayyid brothers who had spilled the blood of the martyred Emperor, Farrukh siyar† (*Shahid-i-Mazlum*). Hari Charan Das, the author of the *Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai*, named after his patron Shuja-ud-daulah has found it convenient to maintain perfect silence on the point. ‡ Ghulam Ali of Lucknow goes one step further. He would have us believe that Mir Muhammad Amin was not even present in the camp at that time and that he joined Muhammad Shah a few days after Husain Ali Khan's



\*Qasim. 213; Warid, 195a.

† K. K. II 902. He has been copied by T. M. (P. 17a); Madan. (vol. IV. 74a) Ahwal, (p. 155a) and others.

‡ Har Charan, 351b-352a.

assassination.\* Even a most elementary knowledge of the Mughal history and of Mir Muhammad Amin's character is enough to demolish the cobwebs of the above theories spun out of partisan jealousy and bias. However cultured, the Mir was a regular turn-coat in politics. He had no reason to be more loyal to Farrukhsiyar than to Sayyid Husain Ali Khan to whom he owed his advancement in the world. Muhammad Qasim,† an honest historian, who gives the details of Mir Muhammad Amin's active part in the plot and is supported by most of the contemporary writers, was present in the imperial camp at the time. He is more reliable than Ghulam Ali, who wrote his account three generations later in the court of Mir Muhammad Amin's great-grandson, Saadat Ali Khan.

We are not enlightened by any contemporary authority as to the real motive of Mir Muhammad Amin's treacherous conduct towards his great patron. There is, however, little doubt that his inordinate ambition for worldly riches and power was responsible for his participation in the plot. Shrewd and enterprising as he was, he must have clearly realised the possibilities of personal gain in a change of regime. Rustam Ali Khan of Shahabad and author of the *Tarikh-i-Hindi* describes a small incident which must also have provoked him to join Muhammad Amin Khan and his partners. One day, writes he, while the imperial army was on the march, a report was brought to Sayyid Husain Ali Khan that Mir Muhammad Amin had forcibly taken a buffalo from an extremely poor peasant. The *Mir Bakhshi*, who was sympathetic to cultivators, directed the Mir's agent to produce an acquittance from the said cultivator, otherwise his master would be called to account. Alarmed at this Mir Muhammad Amin restored the man's buffalo; but the

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\*Imad 7. Perhaps Ghulam Ali borrowed a part of his account from the *Jauhar*, p. 61. The author of the *Jauhar*, a protege of Mir Muhammad Amin's rival, Khan Dauran, certainly derived his information from mere bazar gossip. This shows that long before Ghulam Ali, interested people had invented this lying nonsense to shield the Mir from condemnation by the public.

† Qasim, 213.



latter refused to sign any acquittance until the Mir had paid him the price of fifty buffaloes.

The conspirators often met together and discussed in perfect secrecy the details of their plan and of how to carry them into execution. In one of the stages after the imperialists had left Fatehpur Sikri Mir Muhammad Amin went, in a dark night, to the tent of Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah. As the result of consultations between him, Itimad-ud-daulah and Qamr-ud-din Khan it was decided that they should execute their plot the next morning when the army was on march, by suddenly surrounding the *Mir Bahkshi's* horse by their contingents and slaying him in the confusion. But, unluckily for them, Husain Ali Khan on that day took his seat on an elephant instead of a horse, making a sudden and successful attack on him impossible. The execution of the plot had therefore to be postponed to another day.\*

In the night between the 7th and 8th of October, 1720, the conspirators met and finally decided that their plot should be executed the next day. Early in the morning of 8th October (6th Zil Hijjah) the Emperor left the villages of Mahua and Mahkampur, and, at about 11 a. m., reached a place between those of Juind and Biund, (now in Jaipur State and situated about four miles east of Toda Bhon † and about 75 miles south west of Agra) where his advance tents had already been pitched. As usual, Husain Ali Khan and other nobles conducted the Emperor to the entrance of the royal tents and then took leave to go to their respective tents. Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah, Mir Muhammad Amin and some other conspirators (*jalladan*) were also present. ‡ Having taken his seat in his palanquin, Husain Ali Khan was about to start when Itimad-ud-daulah, who had before-hand filled his mouth with raw blood, simulated vomiting and lay himself down on the

\* L. M II 57.

† Kamwar. II, 323b For Toda Bhon and other places see sheet 54B

‡ Qasim, 216, He indignantly calls Itimad-ud-daulah and his partners 'executioners.'

ground.\* After rose-water and *bed-mushk* had been administered to him, the patient was, in response to his own signs, carried to Haider Quli Khan's tents near the imperial camp by a few of Husain Ali Khan's men. This reduced the number of the Mir Bakhshi's attendants. †

Husain Ali Khan's palanquin now emerged from the royal entrance, attended by only two or three men. Just at this time, Haider Beg Daughlat, who had volunteered himself to assassinate the Mir Bakhshi, appeared in the company of one or two soldiers, with a petition in his hand, complaining against Itimad-ud daulah. Allowed to come near, he handed over the petition to the Sayyid who began to read it. Seeing his attention absorbed in reading, Haider Beg inflicted a grievous wound with his dagger, in Husain Ali Khan's side. Recovering himself, the wounded Sayyid gave a kick to the chest of his murderer who dragged him down the palanquin and severed his head from the body. A combat now took place between the assassin and Husain Ali Khan's chief attendant, Sayyid Nur-ul-lah Khan in which both were killed. After a slight affray with the rest of the Sayyid's followers, the Mughals triumphantly carried Husain Ali Khan's head to Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah who was anxiously awaiting the result of their ignoble and risky venture in the tent of Haider Quli Khan. ‡

Seeing the successful execution of their plot, Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah, Haider Quli Khan, Qamar-ud-din Khan and Mir Muhammad Amin hurried to the imperial quarters and sent urgent messages to the Emperor, informing him of Husain Ali Khan's death and requesting him to come out and take command of the army. The queen-mother, afraid of the Emperor's safety, held him back in the *ha em*. Muhammad Amin Khan and other conspirators were anxiously waiting outside. Every minute's delay was fraught with dangerous consequences. In his attempt to obtain possession of the

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\* Shakir, 16.

† Qasim, 216-17.

‡ L. M. II. 59-60.

Emperor's person, Sayyid Ghulam Ali Khan, a cousin of the late Mir Bakhshi, accompanied by some of his men, had already entered into the private enclosure and cut his way through some of the canvas walls. The Mughals, however, over-powered them and Mir Muhammad Amin captured them and confined them in one of the imperial tents.\* And a tougher struggle was yet at hand. The conspirators rightly believed that that party was likely to win which could have the show of the Emperor's person on its side. But there was no other way to bring him out except by forcibly entering the *harem* in defiance of etiquette. Throwing a shawl over his head, Mir Muhammad Amin, the boldest of them all, therefore, forced his way into the ladies' apartment with Husain Ali Khan's head in his hand. With the words of humblest supplication and apology on his lips, he snatched the Emperor away from the lap of the queen-mother, took him in his arms and brought him forcibly out to the imperial gate-way.†

Itimad-ud-daulah seated the Emperor on an elephant, himself taking his seat behind him. In spite of pressing urgent appeals, no man of note or rank appeared to join the imperialists. The conspirators, Muhammad Amin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah, Qamar-ud-din Khan and Mir Muhammad Amin with about two hundred men, all told, were present.‡

The Emperor was brought out none too soon. For, his retinue was yet within the enclosure when Ghairat Khan, a nephew of the murdered Sayyid was seen hurriedly advancing like a hungry lion, attended by a slender escort of forty to fifty troopers. Unaware, like most men in the Sayyid camp of what had happened outside, he had just sat down to break-fast when the mournful news of his uncle's assassination was brought to him. Without eating the morsel he had just taken, or even washing his hands, he mounted his elephant and hurried towards Muhammad Shah's camp. The imperial artillery, which

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\* Qasim, 222; Warid. 195a.

† Qasim, *ibid*; Warid. *ibid*; K. K. II. 906; Siyar II. 435; T. M. 72b.

‡ Qasim, 222; Warid. 195; K. K. II. 906; Siyar II. 435; T. M. 72b.

had begun to play on the Sayyid's approach, thinned Ghairat Khan's ranks as soon as he had reached within the gun-range. Nevertheless the brave youth went on advancing and pressed Haider Quli Khan hard by showering arrows on him. Just at this time, Mir Muhammad Amin, with his characteristic bravery and disregard of personal danger, forced his way to Haider Quli Khan and blocked the passage of the advancing enemy. He made a bold stand and fought valiantly.\* At this stage of the battle Khan Dauran with his men came to the support of the imperialists. Meanwhile, Haji Bashir, an Abyssinian slave, who was seated behind Haider Quli Khan, fired his match-lock with such deadly aim that Ghairat Khan instantaneously dropped down lifeless on the ground.†

A few other desultory onsets headed by Husain Ali Khan's faithful servants and relations were easily repelled. A noteworthy feature of one of these attacks was the display of ideal loyalty by a water-carrier and a sweeper of the late Mir Bakhshi, who cut their way to the Emperor's chaplet room (*tasbih-khana*) and cheerfully gave up their lives to avenge the murder of their deceased master.‡

The Emperor had already given orders for the plunder of the tents and treasures of Husain Ali Khan and his followers. So thoroughly was this work done that in a few hours no trace of the huge Sayyid encampment could be seen. Poor men suddenly became rich; menial servants (*gadayan*) even obtained two to three thousand gold coins each. †

#### 8.—MIR MUHAMMAD AMIN ENNOBLED AS SAADAT KHAN, 9TH OCTOBER, 1720

The victorious Emperor held a grand darbar in the Privy Audience Chamber on 9th October, 1720 and proceeded with the business of rewarding Muhammad Amin Khan and his com-

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\* Qasim, 224; K. K. II. 908; Siyar. II. 435.

† Warid. 195b; Kamwar. II. 324a; Qasim, 224; K.K. II. 908.

‡ Ibid.

† Warid 195b.

panions. Itimad-ud-daulah was raised to the exalted office of wazir with the rank of 8,000 *zat* and *sawar*. Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daulah was promoted to the same rank and appointed chief Bakhshi. Qamar-ud-din Khan, the new wazir's son, obtained the post of Second Bakhshi with the rank of 7,000 *zat* and *sawar*. Haider Quli Khan was promoted to 6,000 *zat* and 3,000 *sawar*. Mir Muhammad Amin, in recognition of his zeal and services, was given the title of Saadat Khan Bahadur (Lord of Good Fortune), and was promoted to the rank of 5,000 *zat* and 3,000 *sawar*.\*

Within a brief period of one year (since his appointment as Faujdar of Hinduan and Bayana) Saadat Khan became a *panj-hazari* (commander of five thousands) by a bold stroke of treachery. We are told by a Persian historian of standard authority that he had also had his share of the plunder of the Sayyids' camp. He obtained possession of Sayyid Ghairat Khan's tents, furniture and valuables which the Emperor allowed him to retain.†

Further honours awaited Saadat Khan whose star was now on the ascent.




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\* Kamwar. II. 325a; K. K. II. 911. Khafi Khan wrongly gives Saadat Khan's promotion as 5,000 *zat* and 5,000 *sawar*. He commits a similar mistake about Haidar Quli Khan's grade.

† Hadiq 134.

## CHAPTER II

### SAADAT KHAN, GOVERNOR OF AGRA, 1720-1722

#### SAADAT KHAN'S APPOINTMENT TO AGRA, 15TH OCTOBER, 1720

After the murder of Sayyid Husain Ali Khan the Deccan expedition being no longer necessary, Emperor Muhammad Shah and his court began their return march towards the capital on 11th October, 1720. On the way, there were several important adhesions and many promotions; Saadat Khan, particularly became recipient of many an imperial favour. On the 13th of Zil Hijjah, 1132 A. H. ( 15th October, 1720 ) after the court had reached and encamped at the village of Gopalpur, he was further promoted to the rank of 6,000 *zat* and 5,000 *sawar*, and was appointed governor of the province of Akbarabad ( Agra ) with the Faujdar-ship of *gird* or parganas dependant upon it.\* A special robe of honour, a horse, an elephant, a standard and a kettle-drum were also bestowed upon him. The new governor nominated Nil-kanth Nagar as his deputy and sent him to Agra to look after the administration of his province, while he himself accompanied the Emperor to fight Sayyid Abdulla Khan.

#### 1.—THE BATTLE OF HASANPUR, 13TH AND 14TH NOVEMBER, 1720

Passing through Qasba Kama, Nandgaon and Barsana, Muhammad Shah reached and encamped near the village of Hasanpur, situated on the right bank of the Yamuna and at the distance of 9-1/2 miles north-west of Hodal, and began making

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\* Kamwar. II. 325b; Qasim. 229. Saiyar. II. 451 wrongly thinks that he was appointed on 22nd Rabi, 11. 1133 H. ( 19th February 1721). On that date he was given leave to go to Agra. Imad. 7, is also wrong. It says that Saadat Khan was appointed to Agra after the defeat of Abdulla Khan.

Kamwar. Ibid.

preparations for the coming contest with his ex-wazir. Sayyid Abdulla Khan, too, who had, on the receipt of the sorrowful news of his younger brother's assassination at Sarai Chath in the midnight of 9th October, hurriedly marched to Delhi, returned at the head of a motley crowd estimated over one lakh of men, with a pretender Sultan Ibrahim, the eldest son of Rafi-ush-shan (crowned at the Sayyid's order on 15th November) and advanced as far as the village of Bilochpur, six miles north of Hasanpur and entrenched himself not very far from the river.

The battle began in the morning of 13th November, 1720. Haider Quli Khan, chief of artillery and leader of the imperial advance guard, placing his guns in front, turned upon Najm-ud-din Ali Khan, the commander of the Sayyid van and poured continuous fire with such effect that the ex-wazir's guns were partially silenced. Haider Quli Khan was powerfully supported by Khan Dauran whose men were posted immediately behind him. Saadat Khan and Muhammad Khan Bangash moved from their places, created a diversion on the left and made fierce charges on the enemy.\* The Sayyid plan of a general onset having completely failed, his troops now stood on the defensive behind their guns mounted on a high mound sheltered by trees and ruined houses of a deserted village. Towards the evening most of Abdulla Khan's raw mercenaries deserted their master and at night-fall not more than two or three thousand men were left with him.

The fighting was resumed the next morning. All night long the imperial artillery had kept on doing its destructive work so well that most of the ex-wazir's men had melted away in darkness; and when he took the field in the morning he had only about one thousand troops round his person. With the heroic courage that characterised his race, he made a fierce attempt to reach the Emperor's person. But he had to pay dearly for his rashness. The troops of Khan Dauran, Saadat Khan and Muhammad Khan Bangash pressed closely on from all sides,

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\*Kamwar II. 328b.

surrounded him and made attempts to capture him alive. In the crisis of the battle, Abdulla Khan dismounted from his elephant and began to fight on foot. At this, his men, who had been only waiting for a decent pretext, left the field in the utmost disorder. Abdulla Khan stood almost alone in the midst of a huge crowd of his enemies. In spite of two wounds that he had received, he went on fighting valiantly till Haider Quli Khan advanced up to him and politely asked him to surrender. Abdulla Khan and Najm-ud-din Ali Khan, (who had come to the help of his brother) were seated on an elephant and brought before the Emperor. Muhammad Shah entrusted them to the custody of their captor. Prince Muhammad Ibrahim, who had enjoyed a few days' mock sovereignty, was also captured and sent back a prisoner to Salimgarh\* in the Red fort at Delhi.

The victorious Emperor now resumed his journey towards Delhi on 16th November, 1720. A few days' leisurely march brought the royal camp to the shrine of Nizam-ud-din Aulia, where on the 20th November (20th Muharram, 1133-H.), Saadat Khan was honoured with the title of Bahadur Jang (brave in battle) and was granted the highest insignia of honour, called the *Mahi* and *Maratib*. † On the 22nd, the Emperor, mounting his favourite elephant, Ranjeet, made his triumphal entry in a grand procession into the city of Delhi through the Ajmeri gate. Two months after, on the 14th Rabi. I. 1133 H. (12th January, 1721) Muhammad Shah appointed Saadat Khan Captain of the Imperial body guards (*Darogha-i-Khawasan*), and bestowed upon him a robe of honour and a jewelled *serpech* (aigrette). ‡ Towards the end of February, he was given leave to depart to his province of Agra and take charge, in person, of its administration. †† Leaving at court Ahmad Quli Khan to act as his deputy in his new office (captain of the imperial body-

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\* Kamwar. II. 328b-329a; Warid. 196a-197a; L. M. II. 89-91.

† Siyar. II. 443; T. M. 82 b.

‡ Kamwar. II. 332a.

†† Siyar II. 451.



guards) Saddat Khan left for Agra, probably in the beginning of March, 1721.

## 2.— OPERATIONS AGAINST THE JATS OF AGRA

Saadat Khan's first governorship proved a most strenuous and difficult charge. Besides most of the districts of the modern division of that name, the province of Agra, in his time, also comprised the districts of Farrukhabad, Etawa and Jalaun and the territories of the defunct States of Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karauli and a part of Gwalior and Jaipur.\* Although nominally within the Mughal Empire the Emperor and his agent had ceased to exercise any effective control over the greater part of this province. The formidable Jats of Bharatpur and Sinsani ( 16 miles north-west of Bharatpur) had steadily extended their power to the close vicinity of Agra. The Jats of the districts of Agra and Mathura also, in league with their powerful clansmen of Bharatpur, were in open revolt against the government. The latter were the first to feel the weight of Saadat Khan's arm. Soon after his arrival at Agra, the new governor launched a vigorous campaign against them. He succeeded in driving some of the rebel chiefs and their tribal levies into their small mud-forts situated in the vicinity of Mathura on the highway to Delhi. After a short siege in which he lost four hundred of his men, Saadat Khan captured four of these forts. He wrote an account of his success to the Emperor who replied by sending him a congratulatory *farman*, a dress of honour, and a jewelled dagger.‡ Before Saadat Khan could follow up his success further, he was recalled to court to conduct an expedition against Maharaja Ajit Singh of Marwar, those days popularly nicknamed at Delhi as "*Damad-kush*".

## 3.— SAADAT KHAN SUMMONED TO GO AGAINST AJIT SINGH, SEPTEMBER, 1721

Besides being hereditary ruler of his paternal State of Marwar, Ajit Singh had also, for some time, been governor of

\* Chahar Gulshan, 30

‡ Siyar. ii. 453; I. M. 85b

the Mughal provinces of Ajmer (appointed on 5th November, 1719) and Gujarat. On the fall of the Sayyid brothers, his court patrons, the Maharaja showed open hostility to the Mughal government. In both the provinces, he ignored the traditional Islamic ordinances and forbade the slaughter of cows. Besides being the most important centre of Muslim pilgrimage in India, Ajmer lay in the centre of the powerful states of Rajputana. The Mughal policy imitated by its successor, the Anglo-Indian Government, was to concentrate therein a sufficient number of troops and materials of war against an emergency. It was entrusted to loyal and powerful hands, usually Muslim, with as much armed strength as possible, to keep the Rajputs in terror of the Mughal might. Gujarat was "the gate of India in Mughal times" both for commerce and friendly relations with the outer Muslim world. Hence none of the two provinces could be allowed to remain in such hostile hands as those of Ajit Singh. But when the question of his suppression was openly mooted in the court, none of the three great nobles (Nizam-ul-mulk being then in the Deccan) Khan Dauran, Qamr-ud-din Khan and Haider Quli Khan, was found willing to risk his reputation where the mighty Aurangzib had failed. Khan Dauran proposed to leave Gujarat in the hands of the Maharaja, if he relinquished his claim to Ajmer. But Haider Quli Khan was opposed to such a proposal. On his suggestion, Saadat Khan who had established his reputation as a brave and tactful soldier, was summoned from Agra.

Immediately after receiving the imperial summons Saadat Khan, anxious to earn a name for himself, set out for Delhi, giving instructions to his officers and army to follow him without delay. On the way, Churaman Jat made an unsuccessful attempt to hinder him from proceeding further. But Saadat Khan, continuing his journey by forced marches, reached the capital towards the end of *Zi Qada*. 1133 H. (about the middle of September, 1721 A. D.). But he discovered to his great disappointment and chagrin that most of the jealous nobles

still looked upon him as an upstart. They were unwilling to enlist themselves and fight under his command. The vacillating Emperor, too, did not furnish him with as much money and materials of war as he had requested for. Hence in sheer disgust Saadat Khan refused to undertake the expedition.\*

#### 4.—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF NILKANTH NAGAR, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1721

During Saadat Khan's absence at Delhi the Jats issued from their jungle fastnesses, again encroached upon the imperial territory and undid the results of his previous campaigns against them. At the time of his departure for the imperial capital, he had left positive instructions to his deputy, Nilkanth Nagar, to follow up his victory against the Jats and recover as much of the country from their clutches as possible. Accordingly, the deputy governor proceeded to Fatehpur Sikri with a view to reduce that district to some sort of order. He succeeded in wresting several villages in the neighbourhood from the hands of the sons of Churaman Jat and seizing many inhabitants and cattle from them. When he was returning to his head-quarters on the 26th of September, 1721 (5th Zil Hijah, 1133 H.) Mukham Singh, the eldest son of Churaman appeared suddenly with 5,000 to 6,000 horse and foot, and launched a severe attack on the deputy governor. Although the numerical strength of Nilkanth Nagar's force was double that of his enemy—10,000 horse and foot—his troops could not successfully withstand the fierce onset of the valiant Jats and suffered defeat. The deputy governor himself was struck by a bullet and fell lifeless on his elephant. His army, now without a master fled from the field in the utmost disorder. The victorious Jats made numerous prisoners and, laden with a rich booty which consisted of all the elephants, horses and other property of Nilkanth Nagar and arms and horses of his men, went back in exultation to their home, † probably the fort of Sinsani. Within a few days of this

\* K. K. II. 936-37; Siyar. II. 454.

† Shiva 93a; Siyar. II. 456; L. M. II. 121.

notable success, Muhkam Singh forcibly obtained possession of many villages, both of *Khalsa* (imperial domains) and Jagir lands, and drove the imperial revenue officers out of them. †

### 5.—LAST CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE JATS, 1721-22

Saadat Khan, on hearing the news of the disaster of Nilkanth Nagar's defeat and death returned immediately to Agra in October, ‡ 1721, and was joined by an unexpected ally, Badan Singh Jat, son of Churaman's brother and father of Surajmal who was to become a most notable figure in Indian history in the second and third quarters of the 18th century. On Churaman's death in *Zil Hijjah* 1133 H. (22nd September–20th October 1721) a quarrel had sprung up between his sons and nephew, Badan Singh, who now sought the assistance of the enemy of his house. Anxious to use him as a pawn, Saadat Khan patronised the Jat fugitive and promised him aid against his cousins. Under Badan Singh's guidance he began his second campaign against the Jats the details of which have not, unfortunately, been noticed by any historian. Circumstances, however, warrant the inference that the struggle was at once tough and prolonged. Not-with-standing his clever diplomacy and aggressive warfare which lasted for about six months, Saadat Khan failed to achieve any success against the enemy. Unlike the Rajputs who risk their all in open pitched battles, the Jats were found of irregular guerilla fighting. They would issue from their places of refuge, fall upon the enemy and then disappear in the woods. Being unaccustomed to this mode

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† Shiva 95a.

‡ Irvine's paragraph in the L. M. II. p. 121 produces the impression ( and it is so designed by him ) that Saadat Khan had not taken the charge of the province in person before the death of Nilkanth Nagar. But this is erroneous.

Siyar II. 456, erroneously believes that Saadat Khan was at this time also governor of Awadh in addition to Agra. Its account of Nilkanth's death is also wrong.

of warfare. Saadat Khan was worn out and found himself powerless to continue the struggle.\*

Saadat Khan having failed to subdue the Jats, the command of the expedition was given to Raja Jai Singh Kachhwaha of Amber on the 19th April, 1722. But he would not proceed till he was formally appointed governor of Agra. Saadat Khan was, therefore, deprived of the province which was conferred upon Jai Singh on the 1st September, 1722 A. D. (21st Zi Qada 1134, H). †




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\* Shiva 93b-95a; K. K. II. 944-45 M. U. 1464 65; L. M. II, 121.

One of Saadat Khan's letters written to the Emperor most probably at the time when rumours of his removal from Agra were current throws some light upon the nature of his difficulties and the extent of success he had achieved against the Jats. He says that when the governor-ship of Agra was offered to him, nobody else was found willing to accept the office. Now, after his work there, every noble is willing to accept it. As for the strength of the Jats, it has increased much more than what it was in the past. He has been forced to keep 30,000 horse in his pay which has been causing heavy expenditure and he has run into a huge debt of about ten lakhs of rupees. This misery has been caused by faithful service in the Emperor's cause. Other nobles having double and treble jagirs, don't keep even half the number of troops as he. See Mansur-ul-Maktubat, 38-9.

† Kamwar. II 376a and b.

Siyar. II. 456, wrongly says that Saadat Khan was removed from Agra owing to Khan Dauran's intrigues

Agra District Gazetteer p. 160. by H. R. Neville, erroneously writes that Jai Singh was engaged by Saadat Khan and that he failed against the Jats of Bharatpur. The Raja was appointed by Muhammad Shah and he inflicted a crushing blow to the Jats under Churaman's sons.

## CHAPTER III

### GOVERNORSHIP OF AWADH, SEPTEMBER 1722- MARCH, 1739

#### 1.—SAADAT KHAN APPOINTED TO AWADH, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 1722

Saadat Khan now started for Delhi where he arrived on the 1st September, 1722, the date on which Raja Jai Singh, his successor was formally installed in the office of governor of Agra. The Emperor being displeased with him for his failure against the Jats did not condescend to grant Saadat Khan an audience, but directed him to proceed to Awadh immediately, which province including the Faujdari of Gorakhpur was bestowed upon him. A robe of honour as investiture for both these offices was despatched to him by a messenger,\* Raja Girdhar Bahadur Nagar, the then governor of Awadh being transferred to Malwa on 9th September, 1722 (29th Zi Qada, 1134 H.). September 9, 1722 A. D. should, therefore, be regarded as the virtual date of Saadat Khan's appointment to Awadh. †

#### 2.—AWADH IN 1722 A. D.

The Province of Awadh had formed an integral part of the Mughal Empire since the days of Babar. Its geographical

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\* Kanwar II. 336, Imad. p. 7, gives, among others, a very fantastic cause of Saadat Khan's transfer from Agra to Awadh. He says that the revenues of Agra being only 14 lakhs of Rs---a very small sum---the Emperor, who was extremely kind to Saadat Khan, conferred on him the richer province of Awadh. There cannot be a more flat lie. The revenues of Agra were more than double those of Awadh. See *Chahar-i-Gulshan*, 30-34

† Different wrong dates of Saadat Khan's appointment to Awadh are given. Haricharan's memory hopelessly failed him. He gives 1141 H. and says that the Nawab's predecessor in Awadh was Harde Ram, see p. 356a; V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, (1919) p. 406 gives 1724 A. D. P. Carnegi, *Historical Sketch of Faizabad Tehsil*, P. 29 has 1732;

situation, equable climate and fertility of soil gave it an unique place among the provinces of Mughal India. While its multifarious products filled the coffers of the Emperors, its hardy and martial population swelled the ranks of the imperial forces.\* It continued virtually to be a province of the decaying Empire till 1722 when Saadat Khan, the new governor, laid the foundation, in fact, if not in name, of an independent Muslim dynasty under whose rule Lucknow,† its Capital, prospered to rival Delhi in wealth, magnificence and culture.

Awadh of today, comprising as it does the twelve out of forty-nine districts of the modern Uttar Pradesh, differs considerably from what it was in 1722, A.D. From the time of Akbar to that of Muhammad Shah, however, there had been little change in the boundaries and area of this province. Rai Chhartarman, a contemporary of both Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang records the same boundaries, the same number and names of *sarkars* (districts) of Awadh and even of its chief towns in his *Chahar Gulshan*, completed in 1759, as were given about two centuries before by Abulfazl in his monumental work, the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Besides the present twelve districts, it then also included in it the *sarkar* of Gorakhpur which was roughly equivalent to the modern districts of Gorakhpur and Basti. Some portion of modern Awadh, on the other hand, did not form part of its medieval namesake. The eastern half of the present district of Faizabad, eastern and southern portions of Sultanpur and southern part of the Rai Bareilly district were then included in the Allahabad Province.

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Irvin, *Garden of India* p. 78, gives 1720, perhaps uncritical acceptance of Imad, which has 1132 H. (1720 A. D.); Neville, *Distt Gazetteer of Basti* (1907) p. 152 and *Gorakhpur Gazetteer* (1909) p. 182, gives 1721. Other Gazetteers give similar wrong dates. *Imp. Gaz.* vol. VIII. 505, by Hunter has 1732.

\* Speaking of the people of Awadh in 1845 Sir Henry Lawrence says that "They furnish the best disciplined infantry in India. Three-fourths of the Bangal native infantry came from Awadh." (*Calcutta Review*, of 1881 p. 626).

† The original capital Faizabad was forsaken by Saadat Khan's great grandson, Asaf-ud-daulah. In 1819 Ghaziuddin Haider, the 7th ruler of Awadh assumed the title of King at the instigation of Lord Hastings, declaring his independence of the Empire in name, too.

During the time of Muhammad Shah as well as in that of Akbar the province was bounded by the mountains (the Himalayas) in the north, Bihar in the east, Manikpur *sarkar* in the Allahabad *suba* in the south and the Kanauj *sarkar* in the west. The length from the eastern extremity of Gorakhpur *sarkar* to Kanauj was 135 *kos* (about 270 miles) and the breadth from the northern mountains to the northern end of the Manikpur *sarkar* was 115 *kos* (about 230 miles). The province was unevenly divided into five districts or *sarkar*—Haveli Awadh (Faizabad), Gorakhpur, Bahraich, Lucknow and Khairabad, and comprised an area of 1,01,71,080 bighas.\*

Saadat Khan found Awadh a land of semi-independent feudal barons of varying degrees of strength and political importance. The most notable among these chiefs were Mohan Singh, Raja of Tiloi, in the present Rai Bareilly district, Rajas of Bansi and Rasulpur and Binayakpur in Basti, Chhatradhari Singh Sombansi, Raja of Partapgarh, Chet Rai Bais of Baiswara, Raja Dutta Singh of Gonda and Raja Narain Singh of Balrampur in the Gonda district. Besides these, there were numerous chieftains of lesser importance and a considerable number of petty zamindars who, too, like their more powerful brethren, had acquired virtual independence during the weak rule of Aurangzib's successors. Each of these chiefs possessed a strongly built brick or mud fortress (*garhi*) usually in an almost inaccessible village surrounded by a belt of thick forest.† Each had his own army, limited only by his financial resources, and his own civil establishment. The judicial and executive functions were concentrated in the hands of the chief, though petty disputes continued to be decided by caste or village panchayats. His despotic, though benevolent, authority over his subjects was limited by the presence of many rivals around him (sometimes one chief obtained a sanad from the provincial government for villages belonging to another chief and so there were interminable quarrels between them) and by the fact that owing to his limited resources he had to seek armed assistance of his

\* Ain-i-Akbari tr. by H. S. Jarret and Sir J. Sarkar Vol. II. (2nd ed.) pp 181-185.

† Mansur., Letters No. 9 and 24; Tabsirat-ul-Nazirin, 218b-219a.



people, in times of emergency, against the encroachment of the government.\*

### 3.—CAPTURE OF LUCKNOW, 1722

The city of Lucknow, which then disputed the claims of Faizabad (at that time called the city of Awadh) for being the capital of Awadh as it now does that of Allahabad for being the capital of the modern state of Uttar Pradesh was in the hands of the celebrated Shaikhzadas. Their ancestors are said to have been the earliest Muslim conquerors† of the province. But, after centuries of political importance, they had sunk into poverty and insignificance. During the reign of Akbar, one of them named Shaikh Abdul Rahim, a poor resident of Bijnor, obtained Lucknow and the neighbouring villages in Jagir, settled down at the town and built there five palaces known as Panch-mahala for his five wives and one for himself on the bank of the Gomti.‡ Since then, his descendants, the Shaikhzadas, had remained in possession of Lucknow and the outlying country till Saadat Khan was appointed to the governorship of the province. Important provincial officers used to be selected from amongst their rank and they always defied the authority of a new governor, if he happened to be an outsider, obstructed his administration, and made every attempt to create difficulties around him.

A tradition, preserved in Kamal-ud-din Haider's *Sawanihat-Salatin-i-Awadh*, when purged of its absurdities, gives us a fairly accurate idea of Saadat Khan's movements for sometime after his appointment. He assembled his Mughal troops, enlisted fresh ones and purchased oxen to draw his field artillery. He then set out for Awadh and, passing through Bareilly, reached Farrukhabad where he became a guest of Muhammad Khan Bangash. The Afghan chief, gave him an idea of the strength, resources and pride of the Shaikhzadas of Lucknow,

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\* Butcher's Topography and Statistics of Southern Awadh, 1839; Awadh Gazetteers Vols. I and II; Chronicles of Oonao

† Imperial Gazetteer by Hunter, Vol. VIII P 505

‡ Sawanihat (Urdu). P. 34

and advised him to befriend the Shaikhs of Kakori, their enemies, before entering Lucknow. Saadat Khan left Farrukhabad and crossed the Ganga in the rainy season. It is said that when his boat reached the middle of the river, a fish leapt into the Nawab's lap. Considering it to be a good omen, he treasured the fish carefully, its skeleton remaining with his descendants till the fall of his dynasty. Marching to Kakori, a few miles west of Lucknow, Saadat Khan entered into an alliance with the Shaikhs of that town who offered him their co-operation and acquainted him with the strength and weakness of Lucknow, its defences and the nature of the country. He, now, resumed his march towards Lucknow and encamped at a small distance from it. Finding the Shaikhzadas off their guard, he crossed the Gomti during the night at *Gau Ghat*, half a mile north-west of the town and silently marched into the city with a part of his army and artillery. The Shaikhzadas had suspended a naked sword from their main gate, the Shaikhan Darwaza, to which all new comers were required to bow in acknowledgement of the proud supremacy of its owners. Saadat Khan pulled down the sword and delivered a sudden attack upon the confounded Shaikhzadas who put up a feeble resistance at the Akbari Gate. But they were beaten and forced to submit and to vacate their palace, Panchmahala, for the governor. The town and the district of Lucknow were thus easily occupied without much fighting. \*

The news of this success rang through the length and breadth of Awadh and brought in numerous submissions of chieftains. With the wisdom and tact of a statesman, Saadat Khan accepted these submissions and confirmed even indifferent chiefs in their respective estates and entrusted to them the collection of revenue, provided they paid their dues regularly. Many more chiefs now tendered their allegiance and the new governor's authority was quietly recognized in most parts of the province.

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\* Sawanihat. 7a-8a,

## 4.—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF MOHAN SINGH OF TILOI

There were, however, many bold spirits who would not easily stoop to submit. The most redoubtable among such princes was Raja Mohan Singh Kanhpuria of Tiloi,\* about 18 miles north-east of Rai Bareli. Unlike most of the Rajput clans in Awadh, the Kanhpurias do not claim descent from any chief of Rajputana. Their principal ancestor was one Kanh who is said to have been a petty zamindar of Kanhpur, situated some miles south-east of Solon in the Rai Bareli district. Kanh's sons, Sahas and Rahas attacked and drove away the Bhar leaders, Tiloki and Biloki who held sway over the neighbouring country and founded the ruling houses of Kaithaula in Pratapgarh and Tiloi in Rai Bareli respectively. Mohan Singh was a direct descendant of Rahas. A most energetic and talented prince, he contrived the murder of his father, Gopal Singh, who favoured the succession of his younger son Nihal Singh, and forcibly seized for himself the *gadi* of Tiloi. To fire the imagination of his troops and to win their support, he plundered the Sayyids of Mustafabad, about 12 miles north-west of Manikpur. "He ( Raja Mohan Singh ) then turned against the Bais under Rana Amar Singh ( head of Saibasi Clan and ruler of Khajurgaon estate ), but the two forces were so equally matched that a compromise was effected and a boundary fixed between the two clans. His next performance was to establish his authority in Jagdishpur† over the Bhale Sultans, and then he marched through Inhauna and Subeha‡..... A fresh expedition led him against the Naihasta Bais of Bachhrawan,‡ but, here, he met his match in the person of Chet Rai, the famous bastard of

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\* Tiloi is a village and seat of residence of the local Raja in Maharaj Ganj Tehsil in the Rai Bareli district. It is about 18 miles north-east of Rai Bareli. Sheet. 63 F.

† Jagdishpur is 11 miles north-west of Tiloi. It is in Sultanpur district. Sheet 63 F.

‡ Inhauna is 9 miles north of Tiloi and Subeha is 9 miles north-west of Inhauna. Sheet 63 F.

‡ Bachharawan is 19 miles north-west of Rai Bareli. It is a railway station on E. I. Ry between Lucknow and Rai Bareli.

Kurri Sidauli, and returning thence he made fresh conquests in the south-west of the Faizabad district.”\*

Saadat Khan would not tolerate such private wars in the immediate vicinity of his capital, Faizabad. On Mohan Singh's refusal to surrender the parganas of the Faizabad sarkar that he had seized, Saadat Khan, with his characteristic energy proceeded to crush the power of the Kanhpuria clan. The Raja also brought into the field a powerful army whose number has been exaggerated by the author of the *Imad-us-Saadat* to the incredible figure of “about fifty thousand Rajputs.” In the contest which proved to be as fierce as it was well-matched, the brave chief of Tiloi died fighting to his last breath. His army left without a leader, fled from the field in confusion and panic. This took place probably in the beginning† of 1723 A. D.

Saadat Khan obtained possession of Inhauna and other parganas which had been forcibly seized by Mohan Singh. But as the largest part of the Tiloi estate then lay in the Allahabad province, it could not be annexed and Mohan Singh's immediate successor quickly recovered his power and possessions. This success over the most valient and resourceful chief in Awadh, however, enhanced Saadat Khan's prestige and struck terror into the heart of rebellious zamindars, many of whom speedily tendered their allegiance to the Nawab. The governor, now, carried out a fresh revenue settlement which greatly increased the resources of the province. For these services Emperor Muhammad Shah rewarded him with the title of Burhan-ul-mulk.‡

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\* District Gazetteer of Rai Bareilly by Neville, ( 1905 ) pp 82-83.

† Imad 8. Imad says that Saadat Khan had 10,000 men, while Mohan Singh brought into the field 50,000 Rajputs. We know that, when in Agra, Saadat Khan possessed 30,000 troops, ( see Mansur. Letter No. 35 ) and he had enlisted some more before entering Awadh. He could not, therefore, have less than 30,000 men in the field. The Raja's numbers are clearly exaggerated. for his resources could not maintain such a huge army.

‡ Imad 8.

5.—SAADAT KHAN QURARRELS WITH MUZAFFAR KHAN,  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1723

Anxious to play a leading part in court politics, Saadat Khan now returned to Delhi, leaving his deputy to administer the province. At court, he soon picked a quarrel with Muzaffar Khan, the brother of Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daula, the imperial paymaster general and a close associate of the frivolous and youthful Emperor known, to this day, among the citizens of Delhi as Muhammad Sbah "Rangile". A Persian of the town of Nishapur in the service of Muzaffar Khan, having been charged with misappropriation of his master's money, was convicted and thrown into prison. Being the criminal's fellow townsman, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk requested Muzaffar Khan to release the man, himself offering to stand his surety. Instead of acceding to the request, Muzaffar gave him an insulting rebuff. To conceal his discomfiture, Saadat Khan repeated the offer. Muzaffar Khan grew still more violent and hot words were exchanged between the two nobles. They were about to come to blows when they were separated by the officials standing by. Both now prepared to fight out the quarrel in the open field. Muzaffar Khan and his brother won the support of Muhammad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, while Saadat Khan was furnished assistance by his friend, Roshan-ud daulah.

Qamr-ud-din Khan, however, intervened at this stage and brought the dispute to an end. The Emperor was highly displeased with both and ordered Saadat Khan back to Awadh and sent Muzaffar Khan away to his province of Ajmer (September-October).\*

6.—SAFDAR JANG APPOINTED DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF  
AWADH, 1724

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk was yet at Delhi when there arrived at Faizabad his young nephew, Mirza Muhammad Muqim whom he had invited from his native town of Nishapur. Mirza Muqim was the second son of Jafar Beg Khan and was

\* L. M. II. 134-135

born of the eldest sister of Saadat Khan. His mother having died, while he was yet a baby of six months, he was brought up by Saadat Khan's second sister. Soon after his appointment to Awadh, Burhan-ul-mulk sent a letter to Nishapur, inviting his nephew to India. We have it on the unassailable testimony of the author of the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* that Mirza Muqim, accompanied by Mir Muhammad Baqar, Saadat Khan's elder brother, landed at the port of Surat in the month of April, 1723 A. D. The historian adds that it was Mirza Muqim's first visit to India. They stayed for a few days at Ahemadabad to make preparations for the long journey overland they were about to undertake.\* Sometime after their arrival at Faizabad, Saadat Khan gave his eldest daughter, Sadar-i-Jahan *alias* Sadrunnisa Begam in marriage to the young Mirza, celebrating the occasion with usual festivities (sometime in 1724 A. D.). The bride had completed her twelfth year† and the bride-groom was a little over fifteen or sixteen. Not long after the marriage, Saadat Khan nominated his nephew and son-in-law as his deputy in Awadh and sometime later procured for him the title of Abulmansur Khan‡ from Emperor Muhammad Shah. Of this wedlock was born in 1144 H.‡ (July, 1731-June, 1732 A. D.) the only child of his parents, Jalal-ud-din Haider, known to history by his more famous title of Shuja-ud-daulah.

### 7.—SUPPRESSION OF THE BARONS OF AWADH

Persian histories write in general terms that Saadat Khan thoroughly uprooted all the refractory chiefs of Awadh and

\* *Mirat*. II 88b

† *Sawanihat* gives 12 years. Imad p. 61 says that she was five years of age or more at the time of Saadat Khan's appointment to Hinduan and Bayana. The date of this appointment according to Imad being 1128 H., it would make her, in 1135 H. (1724 A. D.), a little over twelve. Hence Mirza Muqim could not have been at that time more than 15 or 16.

‡ Imad pp. 8 and 9. It wrongly says that the title of Safdar Jang was procured at this time. It was given after Saadat Khan's death.

↓ The last line of the following verse gives the date :---

ز دولت خاندۀ نواب منصور بر آمد آفتاب از مطلع نور

In the house of Nawab ( Abul ) Mansur ( Khan ), rose the sun from the horizon of light.

required complete peace and order in the province. A close study of the history of the *Sudu*, however, reveals a different state of things. Some of the Rajput chiefs, specially the head of the Kanhpuria clan of Tiloi and the Bais of Baiswara inhabiting the Unao and the Rai Bareilly districts, could not be properly subdued. They continued to give trouble to the soldier-governor and even to his successor Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang. We are in possession of a large number of letters, happily preserved in the *Jalsa-i-Tahzib Library* (housed in the *Rishi-Am Club*) at Lucknow written by Nawab-Wazir Safdar Jang to the Emperor, officials of the Empire, his own subordinates and other notable personages of the time, which throw considerable light on the history of Awadh. In most of these letters Safdar Jang complains of the refractory nature of the Awadh chiefs who were capable of creating disturbance in the twinkling of an eye and were more dangerous than the Marathas of the Deccan, the hereditary enemies of the Mughal Empire.\*

Saadat Khan's credit lies in thoroughly keeping the big landlords in check and in maintaining order in Awadh. How difficult this task was can be imagined from a perusal of the letters of Rad-andaz Khan, *aujdar* of Baiswara during the later years of Aurangzib's reign, collected together in book-form and entitled '*Insha-i-Roshan Kalam*' by his Munshi, named, Bhupat Rai. These letters give a graphic picture of lawlessness in Awadh during the later years of Aurangzib's rule, of the presence in all the districts of turbulent zamindars, who did not pay revenues except at the point of sword, of open robbery in the parganas of Lucknow, Bijnoor, Kursi and elsewhere, and of the unsafety of roads even in the close proximity of the city of Lucknow.† Instead of an appreciable improvement, the condition must have been worsened during the weak rule of Aurangzib's unworthy successors. Saadat Khan was, therefore, required to be up in arms against the Awadh chiefs to the end of his life.

\* *Maktubat-i-Mansuria* Letter No. 7. p. 12.

† *Inshai*. pp. 2-21

Towards the beginning of 1725, Saadat Khan was forced to turn his attention to the northern parganas of the modern districts of Basti and Gorakhpur where great lawlessness, to the extent of anarchy, had been reigning for several years. With the help of Banjara mercenaries—a community of merchant robbers—Tilak Sen of Tilkapur, then in Gorakhpur but now in the Tarai belonging to Nepal, had been laying waste the northern tracts of the districts by plunder and rapine. So thoroughly had the Banjaras done their work that much of the country had become desolate. To chastise Tilak Sen and his allies Saadat Khan sent a strong force to reinforce the garrison at Gorakhpur. Several irregular engagements were fought with the free-booters; but little impression could be made upon them. They would disappear in the woods and, on the withdrawal of the Nawab's army, issue out of their jungle fastnesses and resume the work of destruction. This state of affairs continued till the time of Safdar Jang who, after a prolonged warfare, restored some sort of order in the districts.\*

The most important Rajput clan in Awadh during the 17th and 18th centuries was the great Bais clan of Baiswara. Baiswara, which then comprised the seven parganas of Pauhan, Patan, Bihar, Bhagwant-nagar, Magrayar, Ghatampur and Daundiakhera, now included in the Purwa Tahsil of the Unao district, was the cradle-land of the most famous branch of the Bais clan, known as Tilok-Chandi Bais from their chief ancestor the great Raja Tilok Chand of Daundiakhera, situated on the Ganga, about 25 miles south-east of Kanpur. Tilok Chand had two sons, namely Prathi Singh and Harihar Deo. From the first descended the houses of Daundiakhera, Maurawan, and Purwa-Ranbhirpur, and from the second sprang the Saibasi and Naibasti houses, all quarrelling among themselves and with their neighbours. Baiswara was not only famous for the strength and prosperity of its chiefs, but was also regarded as an important seat of Hindu orthodoxy and culture in Awadh. To our own day, village folk in this province believe that to

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\* Gorakhpur and Basti Distt. Gazetteers (1907) pp. 182 and 153 respectively.



be a resident of Baiswara means to be of good breeding. At the head of a formidable force well-equipped with artillery, Saadat started from Faizabad to subdue the Bais chiefs. Almost all tendered their allegiance and agreed to pay tribute to the governor. But Chait Rai, a brother of Sadiq Singh of Kurri Sudauli, 6 miles north-west of Bachhrawan, scornfully rejected the proposal of an abject surrender and offered a stubborn resistance in his stronghold of Pacchim-gaon,\* situated about 15 miles north-west of Rai Bareli. So successfully did he carry on the defence of his fort that the Nawab was highly impressed by his valour and tenacity and abated half his demands. Chait Rai submitted and was treated by Saadat Khan with great consideration. The Nawab agreed to accept only half the revenue he had originally imposed on his gallant foe.†

The Janwar State of Balrampur, in the modern district of Gonda, was fast rising to importance during the first quarter of the 18th century. The original ancestors of the Janwar chief belonged to Gujarat. Sometime in the 14th century A. D., they migrated to Awadh and founded the great Ikauna State. One of their descendants, in the seventh generation from the original immigrants, separated from the main branch and occupied the country between the Rapti and the Kuwana rivers after having expelled a tribe of carpenters who held sway over that tract. His son Balram Das founded the town of Balrampur and made it his residence. From that time Balrampur began gradually acquiring valuable accession of territory, chiefly by conquest, and in the time of Saadat Khan it was a large and powerful State. The Nawab's contemporary on the *gadi* of the State was Raja Narain Singh who came into conflict with the provincial government. The Raja submitted and agreed to pay revenue only after he had been defeated in two pitched battles. His successors chafed under the yoke and paid state dues only under the heels of the military‡ force.

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\* For Kurri Sudauli and Pachhim-gaon. See sheet 63 F.

† Elliot's *Chronicles of Oonao*, 9-74.

‡ Gonda Distr. Gazetteer (1905), pp 78-79.

The most powerful chief of the district, however, was Raja Dutta Singh, the Bisen ruler of Gonda whose territories lay within the jurisdiction of Alwal Khan, the Nazim of Bahraich on behalf of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk. The town of Gonda was founded by his chief ancestor, Man Singh Bisen, in the time of Jahangir, ( 1605-1627 A. D. ), and since that time the city and the estate of that name had continued to be the possession of the Bisen family. Dutta Singh having refused to pay the allotted tribute, Saadat Khan sent Alwal Khan with a considerable force against the Raja. Alwal Khan crossed the Ghaghra at Paska, 28 miles north-west of Faizabad, and stormed the local fort with the assistance of the Kalhan Rajputs who were inimical to their neighbours, the Bisens. He then advanced upon Gonda and Dutta Singh, whose troops were at this time away, was compelled to sue for peace. But, in the meanwhile, the Raja succeeded in collecting an army and a fiercely contested battle was fought at Sarbangpur,\* 9 miles west of Gonda, in which Alwal Khan was slain by Bhairon Rai, a vassal of the Raja. Saadat Khan now sent a bigger force to avenge his Nazim and besiege Gonda. Meanwhile, news reached of the near approach of re-inforcements to the Bisen lord from his clansmen in the north of his state. Fearing to be caught between the two forces, the Nawab's army raised the siege. Both the parties had, by now, grown tired of the prolonged warfare. Dutta Singh agreed to pay a tribute, while Saadat Khan acceded to his request of constituting his estate under an altogether separate jurisdiction. But, "This arrangement does not seem to have curtailed Dutta Singh's power, but rather to have increased it.....So great was his influence (after this peace) that all the chieftains north of the Ghaghra, Nanpara alone excepted, acknowledged him as suzerain and brought their forces into the field at his command.†

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\* For Paska see sheet No. 63 F. and for Sarbangpur Sheet No. 63E

† Distt. Gazetteer of Gonda (1905), p. 147.

## CHAPTER IV

### EXPANSION OF THE VICEROYALTY OF AWADH

#### 1.—SAADAT KHAN ACQUIRES BANARAS, GHAZIPUR, JAUNPUR AND CHUNAR

In the early years of Muhammad Shah's reign a noble-man named Murtaza Khan, was given in Jagir the four sarkars of Banaras, Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Chunargarh which now roughly represent the modern district of Banaras with the territory of the Maharaja of Banaras and the districts of Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Azamgarh and Ballia and the eastern portion of Mirzapur. Nawab Murtaza Khan entrusted the management of these districts to a relation of his, named, Rustam Ali Khan who bound himself to pay him an annual sum of five lakhs of Rupees with the right to retain the surplus for himself.\* It seems that this sum was not regularly remitted to the Jagirdar. Being a simple-minded and indolent man, Rustam Ali Khan was little fitted to discharge the difficult duties of his office. He could neither keep the big zamindars in his districts in check nor make them pay the annual revenues in time. Accordingly when Saadat Khan brought peace, order and security to the distracted country of Awadh, Murtaza Khan was glad to lease his districts to him on an annual sum of seven lakhs of rupees (about 1728 A. D.). As these districts lay on the eastern boundary of Awadh, Saadat Khan found his eastern frontier automatically pushed to the limit of the modern Uttar Pradesh in that direction. He allowed Rustam Ali Khan to remain in charge of the districts on the condition of his agreeing to pay him eight lakhs of Rupees† annually instead of five lakh that he used to remit to Murtaza Khan.

The reputation of Saadat Khan's success in Awadh overawed almost all the big zamindars in his newly acquired territories into submission. But Mahabat Khan, a hereditary chief of

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\* Balwant 3a and b.

† Balwant 9a.

Azamgarh, who had evaded payment to Murtaza Khan, on one pretext or another tried to play the same trick with Burhan-ul-mulk. Unwilling to put up with such recusancy, Saadat Khan marched in person on Azamgarh. Afraid of the Nawab's formidable force, the rebel chief now sent messages of submission with an offer of suitable presents in addition. But the governor, who was determined to make an example of Mahabat Khan, refused to relent. The latter, therefore, left the town secretly, crossed the Ghaghra and fled to the Gorakhpur district. Even there he felt himself unsafe and returning to Azamgarh threw himself on the mercy of Saadat Khan, who sent him into confinement in the town of Gorakhpur, where he died sometime after. His son Iradat-Khan was installed in the Taluqa, and so successful was Saadat Khan's rule there that Azamgarh remained quiet till 1750, when Safdar Jang's defeat at the hands of Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad encouraged the local ruler to join a confederacy of the rebel chiefs of Awadh against the Nawab Wazir.\*

## 2.—THE CAPTURE OF THE FORT OF SACHENDI, 1729

In the year 1729, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, accompanied by Raja Gopal Singh Bhadwariya, led an expedition against Hindu Singh, a Chandel chief of considerable importance on the western frontier of Awadh. This Hindu Singh, son of Hari Singh Deo and grandson of Kharagjit Deo, was originally a vassal of Raja Inderjit Singh of Shivarajpur, 20 miles north-west of Kanpur. Having quarrelled with his liege-lord, he left his home, Bihari, on the Ganga near Kanpur, took service under the ruler of Sapihi, a minor branch of the Shivarajpur house and afterwards set himself up as an independent Raja.† He built two strong forts, one at Chachendi (also called Sachendi\*) and the other at Bihnaur, (the former 12 miles south-west of Kanpur and the latter 3 miles south of the former), recruited a powerful army and encroached upon a large territory on the debatable frontier of the three provinces of Allahabad, Agra

\* Dist. Gazetteer of Azamgarh (1911), p. 171.

† J. A. S. B., vol. XLVII, p. 377n.

and Awadh. With a formidable army, sixty thousand strong, Saadat Khan appeared near Chachendi. Unable to face the Nawab in the open field, Hindu Singh took shelter in the strong fortress, and Saadat Khan proceeded to besiege him there. But in spite of his best efforts he could make little progress in the operations, and, had recourse to a stratagem to achieve his object. He sent his friend Raja Gopal Singh to persuade the Chandel Chief to vacate the fort promising to restore it to the latter in a day or two. Being a man of sweet plausible tongue, Gopal Singh found little difficulty in impressing upon his host the inadvisability of incurring the imperial displeasure by fighting with an important noble of the Empire, and gave him the unsolicited advice of vacating the fort for a few days only to satisfy Saadat Khan's prestige and honour. He pledged his word on a solemn oath that no treachery was intended. Persuaded by these arguments, the unsuspecting Hindu Singh left the fort with his family and belongings and encamped at some distance from it. He was literally deceived. In violation of his plighted word, the Raja of Bhadawar, at the instigation of Saadat Khan, took possession of the Chanchendi fort on the third day of the truce. Hindu Singh made a frantic but vain attempt to recover it; his small army could not stand against the hosts of his enemy. He, therefore, sought refuge with Chhatrasal Bundela and his whole estate passed into the hands of the governor of Awadh whose western frontier was thus extended to the close vicinity of the city of Kanauj.†

### 3—CAMPAIGN AGAINST BHAGWANT SINGH UDARU, NOVEMBER 1735.

In the beginning of 1732 A.D. when Sarbuland Khan was governor of Allahabad, a self-respecting Khichi Rajput named Bhagwant Singh (son of Udaru) who was the zamindar of Ghazipur and Asothar\* in the *sarkar* of Kora Jahanabad in the

† Rustam Ali in Elliot, vol. VIII p. 46-47.

\* Ghazipur is 8 miles north of the Yamuna and 9 miles south-west of Fatehpur and Asothar is 3 miles north of the river and 11 miles south-east of

Allahabad *suba*, now in the modern district of Fatehpur in the Uttar Pradesh was insulted by the local Faujdar, Jan-nisar Khan and driven into rebellion. Confident of the support of his brother-in-law, Wazir Qamruddin Khan who had married his sister, Jan-nisar Khan† neglected his duties and tyrannised over the people. The cultivators and zamindars alike had grown sick of his extortions and tyranny. He picked a quarrel with Bhagwant Singh on some religious matter (*mamilat-i-dini*) probably making offensive remarks about Hinduism. The Khichi chief retaliated, broke out into an open rebellion and gave much trouble to the Faujdar. In the month of March, 1732, Jan-nisar Khan therefore, leaving Kora to chastise the rebel, marched upon Ghazipur. When the Faujdar encamped at a distance of four miles from him, Bhagwant Singh, who was a man of considerable personal prowess and courage, suddenly appeared before Jan-nisar Khan's tents, with his troops and his drums beating aloud, at the time of *asar* prayer (about 4 p. m.) The Khan, then drunk and asleep, was awakened by the noise of Bhagwant Singh's drums. He mounted his elephant and directed, in vain, his ill-equipped and discontented troops to get ready for battle. Bhagwant Singh pounced upon Jan-nisar Khan and made short work of him and his few faithful followers who had gathered round his person. The victor besides taking possession of the Khan's camp and baggage established his authority over a considerable portion of the district of Kora Jahanabad.\*

Ghazipur sheet 63 c. Marathi letters some-times call him Bhagwat Singh sometimes Bhagat Singh and sometimes even Jaswan Singh.

† Elliot Vol VIII p. 341 has that "Jan-nisar Khan had married the sister of Qamruddin Khan, the minister" It is evidently a wrong

translation of *برادر زن قمرالدین خان* The translator of the *Siyar*, vol. I 269, also gives wrong translation and calls Jan nisar Qamruddin Khan's brother. Neville, *Dist. Gazetteer of Fatehpur* (1906), p. 156, copies Mustafa's mistake. Neville's view that Kora Jahanabad was then in Awadh is also erroneous. It was in the Allahabad *suba*

\* Warid, 221b-222a Shakir p. 22 and *Siyar* J 467 give a brief account. Other historians like, Hadiq p. 68<sup>1</sup> says that into Bhagwant's hands fell the ladies of Jan-nisar Khan's harem. One of them became his son, Rup Singh's mistress *Muntikha-hud-Tawarikh*. Elliot,

When the news of this disaster reached Delhi, Wazir Qamruddin Khan sent his nephew Azimullah Khan with a strong force to punish Bhagwant Singh and rescue Jan-nisar Khan's family. On Azim-ullah's near approach, the clever Rajput finding himself greatly out-numbered took refuge in the jungle. Azim-ullah Khan obtained possession of Kora and returned to Delhi only after some days' stay, leaving the district in the charge of Khawajim Beg Khan. But hardly had his back been turned when Bhagwant Singh issued out of his hiding place, fell on Khawajim Beg Khan and put him to death. He then turned his men out of the district † and set himself up as its ruler.

Urged by his wife, Qamruddin Khan, wedded to wine and women, at last crossed into the Doab at the head of 40,000 horse and 30,000 musketeers in June, 1733 and besieged Bhagwant Singh in the fort of Ghazipur. His troops being tired and lethargic failed to surround the fort completely and postponed attack to the next day. But the bird flew away before day-break by a clever ruse. To lull his enemy's suspicion Bhagwant Singh kept on firing on the Mughals and when it was mid-night he escaped from the side of the fort that was left unguarded, crossed the Yamuna 8 miles south of Ghazipur, before day-break and took refuge in the country of Chhatrasal Bundela's sons. Qamruddin Khan occupied the fort and ordered the construction of a bridge to cross the river in pursuit of the rebel.\* But, before he could do so, he had to hurry back to Delhi to thwart a plot formed by Khan Dauran, Sarbuland Khan and Saadat Khan to deprive him of his office. This was Bhagwant Singh's opportunity. He entered into an alliance with the Marathas at Banda and, with their help, drove out the wazir's men and became bolder than ever. Though a petty zemindar, he could not be reduced by all the armed strength of the Empire. †

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VIII 341n. says that she was the Faujdar's daughter and that she committed suicide to save her honour.

† Shakir : 22. Siyar II. 468.

\* Wariid 222b. Hadiq. 82; Elliot; VIII 342; Selections from the Ferheva Daftar vol. 14 Letters No. 9.

† Ibid.

The aggressions of Bhagwant Singh remained unpunished till Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk was formally appointed Faujdar of Kora Jahanabad in addition to his former office of Governor of Awadh towards the end of 1735 A. D. Saadat Khan received, on his way to Delhi, under the imperial summons, a letter from Qamr-ud-din Khan, requesting him to chastise Bhagwant Singh and probably also a *farman* from Muhammad Shah appointing him to the government of Kora Jahanabad. He immediately retraced his steps, turned to his left, crossed the Ganga and by forced marches reached Kora on the 6th of November, 1735. Bhagwant Singh, whose spies had brought him the timely news of the Nawab's arrival, sallied out of Ghazipur with his force numbering ten to twelve thousand men,\* and suddenly came upon Burhan-ul-Mulk near Kora. Saadat Khan, who had hardly recovered from the fatigue of the day's march, hastily arrayed his huge army of 40,000 troops besides a large park of artillery and directed his gunners to open fire on the advancing enemy. Undeterred by the havoc caused by the enemy's artillery, Bhagwant Singh wisely avoided the deadly fire and delivered such a fierce charge on Abu Turab Khan's† division, who was leading the Nawab's van, that his ranks were thoroughly shattered. Immediately galloping his horse to Abu Turab's elephant, the brave Rajput gave such a violent spear-thrust in the breast of his adversary that it pierced through his back and lodged itself into the board of the *howdah*. Abu Turab Khan fell instantly lifeless on the elephant. Bhagwant Singh now proceeded against Saadat Khan himself, whereupon Mir Khudayar Khan, who was posted by the side of the Nawab with six thousand horse and one thousand

\* Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 14, Letters No. 40, 41 and 42. Rustom Ali, Elliot VIII, p. 52, gives the no. as 25,000, which is incorrect.

† It is said that when Saadat Khan entered his tent after his journey, he had put on a green robe and had a long white beard. Bhagwant's spies marked this and so at the time of the battle he attacked Abu Turab Khan who had put on a green robe and had a long white beard like Saadat Khan. The latter had, however, changed the green dress for a white one. Siyar. II.



musketeers, turned to face the enemy. Pushing on with great vigour, Bhagwant attacked Khudayar Khan's division and put him to flight. Then he turned to Saadat Khan. But, at this stage of the battle, Shaikh Ruhul Amin Khan Bilgrami, the uncle of the historian Murtaza Husain Khan, Shaikh Abdulla Khan of Ghazipur and Durjan Singh Chaudhari of Kora from Saadat Khan's right and Azmat Ullah Khan from his left surrounded him from all sides and covered him with arrows. Bhagwant Singh faced the odds unflinchingly and slew several of his assailants; but while doing so he was shot dead by Durjan Singh who, according to the author of the *Siyar*, was a relation of his but had joined his enemy.\* The battle cost the parties 5,000 men. Besides being himself wounded, Saadat Khan lost sixteen of his brave and trusted officers and a host of his troops. The victorious Khan sent Bhagwant Singh's head and his skin stuffed with straw to Delhi, where Rustam Ali Khan, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Hindi*, saw them hanging in the market near the police office. Saadat Khan appointed Shaikh Abdulla Ghazipuri his deputy in the *sarkar* of Kora Jahanabad and left him and his nephew and son-in-law, Abulmansur Khan there, while he himself proceeded to Delhi and waited on the Emperor on 22nd November, 1735.†

Sometime after, Bhagwant Singh's son, Rup Singh, who had taken refuge in Bundelkhand, made an attempt to enlist the support of the Maratha agent, Gobind Ballal, and meditated the recovery of his paternal estate with the help of the Deccanis. The Bundela Rajas also seemed inclined to help Rup Singh in his venture ‡ Abulmansur Khan, therefore, wrote to Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk, requesting his presence. Accordingly the Khan started for Kora Jahanabad on the 18th of February, 1736.

\* *Siyar*, II, 468. Mustafa, the translator adds without the warranty in the text that Durjan Singh had long been in Saadat Khan's service. Eng. T. I. 271.

† Hadiq. 680; Saadat-i-Jawed in Elliot, VIII. 342; Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII; *Siyar*, II 468; Shakir 22; Maadan IV 97a and b; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 14, letters, No. 40, 41 and 42.

‡ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 15, Letter No. 10.

But the Marathas and the Rajas of Bundelkhand were not earnest in their promise to the fugitive son of Bhagwant, for we hear nothing more about Kora in the pages of the Muslim historians, nor even in the Marathi letters. The district must have quietly submitted to Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk's rule.‡

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‡ Siyar. II. 46S.

## CHAPTER V

### SAADAT KHAN AND THE MARATHAS, 1732-1738

#### 1.—SAADAT KHAN PROPOSES TO RESIST THE MARATHA ADVANCE INTO NORTHERN INDIA

Emperor Aurangzib proved in fact a good friend of the Marathas whom he expelled from their barren home in the south only to found a greater Maharashtra in the north on the ruins of his empire. Since his death, the Maratha sphere of loot extended across the Vindhya in ever-widening circle, threatening the extinction of the Mughal authority in Malwa and Gujarat. It was the glory of Peshwa Bajirao to materialise the Maratha dream of Hindupad Padshahi by turning their former sphere of loot in Malwa into an effective conquest and urging his people to strike at the withering trunk of the Mughal Empire without wasting time in lopping off the branches. The effete rule of the later Mughals, the rivalry of the Hindustani and Turani factions at court and the struggle of the Rajputs, Jats and Bundelas to free themselves from the Muslim yoke afforded golden opportunities for the Maratha intervention in north-Indian politics. By the end of the third decade of the 18th century, the Deccan invaders who were, only ten years before this time, despised by the northerners as rustics became *de facto* masters of Gujarat, Bundelkhand and Malwa. From the year 1732 A. D. onwards their sphere of activity crossed the line of the Chambal and extended to the close vicinity of the imperial city of Agra. The ease-loving nobles of the imbecile Mughal court could do little beyond making a show of marching against the swarms of free-booters and in idling away their time in frivolous pursuits. The leader of the court party, the supple Samsam-ud-daulah, was in favour of propitiating the Peshwa, and advised the Emperor to concede the invader's demands. Jai Singh, the friendly Raja of Jaipur, also advocated a policy of conciliation with the Marathas who, he thought, could not be resisted effectively by physical force.

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, however, consistently opposed the policy of Khan Dauran and Jai Singh and advocated armed resistance to the intruders. Qamr-ud-din Khan, the wazir, although immersed in pleasures, supported Saadat Khan who was joined by enthusiastic Muslim chiefs like Muhammad Khan Bangash, Zafar Khan Turra-i-Baz Sarbuland Khan and others and by Abhai Singh of Jodhpur. The energetic, governor of Awadh entered into correspondence with the Nizam, probably urging him to keep the enemy engaged in the Deccan,\* and proposed to the Emperor that he would take upon himself the duty of checking the Maratha advance into northern India, if he were given the governorship of Agra and Malwa in addition to his old province of Awadh. "Jai Singh has ruined the entire Empire," he said to Muhammad Shah, "by his secret support of the Marathas. If your Majesty only confers on me the governorship of Agra and Malwa, I will not ask for any money aid. He (Jai Singh) has asked for a Kror of rupees, but I have enough money in my own treasury. Moreover, the Nizam who holds the Deccan, is my friend; he will hinder the Marathas from crossing the Narmada." The Emperor was impressed and took Khan Dauran and Jai Singh to task for the failure of the imperial campaign of 1734-35 and their agreeing to pay (March 1735) twenty two lakhs of rupees to Bajirao as the chauth of Malwa. But the intrigues of Khan Dauran and Jai Singh; who frightened Muhammad Shah by magnifying the dangers of an alliance between the Nizam and Saadat Khan, frustrated his scheme. The Mir Bakhshi pacified the Emperor by saying that he had promised Bajirao only those parganas in jagir which were in the possession of the refractory Rubelas and other rebellious tribes on the condition that he refrained from encroaching upon the imperial territory. Moreover the Maratha chief was loyal to the imperial throne. "The Marathas" he added, "cannot be subdued by force. I will persuade Bajirao, at least his brother Chimnaji, to come to wait on the Emperor. If his desires are granted, the imperial dominions

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\* Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 14; Letters No. 43, 50 and 54; and vol. 15, Letters No. 89 and 91.

will be freed from disturbance in future. If, on the other hand, Saadat Khan and the Nizam unite, they will set up another Emperor.”\* Muhammad Shah was terrified. Saadat Khan’s next proposal that he should be appointed to Bihar, while Malwa should go to Muhammad Khan Bangash † met with the same fate. It may be admitted that Saadat Khan and his friends did not realize the magnitude of the danger and dreamt the impossible dream of effectually stopping the Maratha expansion northwards. Yet, there is little doubt that had Saadat Khan been given supreme command and had he been fully backed by Muhammad Shah and all the resources of the Empire, Bajirao would have been obliged to lower his ever-increasing demands. As this was not done, the imperialists only frittered away their energy in endless separate engagements with separate Maratha contingents.

## 2.—SAADAT KHAN FAILS TO RE-INFORCE THE RAJA OF BHADAWAR, FEBRUARY, 1737

After three years of annual expeditions, Bajirao succeeded in wringing out Malwa from the Emperor (May 1736), when he was appointed deputy governor of that province. But the Peshwa’s chief demands not being conceded in full, he returned to the Deccan and after making grand preparations crossed the Narmada after the Dasehra of 1736, and sent Baji Bhivrao in advance “to secure the co-operation of Hirde Shah and Jagatraj, the two sons of Chhatrasal, and to reduce to obedience the chiefs of Bhadawar, Jatwada, Datia, Orchha and other Bundela chieftains.” Most of these chiefs were successfully reduced. But, at the instigation of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk who promised him assistance and advised him not to pay the enemy a single *kauri*, Anrudh Singh, son of Gopal Singh, Raja of Bhadawar ‡

\* Ibid, vol 14. Letter No. 47.

† Ibid vol. 14 Letter No. 39.

‡ Bhadawar lay a few miles east and south-east of Agra. Its boundaries are thus given by Murtaza Husain Khan---The Chambal on the north and the west and the village of Mahagwan in the south. Mahagwan,

assumed a stiff attitude towards Baji Bhivrao. Accordingly, the Marathas quickly penetrated into the Raja's territory and began a campaign of systematic plunder and devastation of his possessions. Relying on the promised re-inforcement of Burhan-ul-mulk, Anrudh Singh Bhadwariya boldly issued out of his residence, the town of Ater, about 1½ miles south of the Chambal and 26 miles north-east of Gohad, at the head of 7,000 troops and 45 elephants and gave battle to the overwhelming numbers of the enemy at the distance of two miles from there. At the instigation of one of the Raja's brothers who had thrown in his lot with the enemies of his house, the Marathas left one half their men to engage Anrudh Singh and sent the other half to capture his capital. Passing through the towns of Gohad and Barhad, the latter division made a wide detour round the Raja's capital and leaving his army a long distance on their left, appeared suddenly before the town of Ater which they began to plunder and ravage. Anxious to save his capital, Anrudh Singh retreated to Ater, fighting with the enemy all the way. Though he got safely back into the fort, his army was shattered and his resources exhausted. He begged for terms and was allowed to remain in possession of his state on payment of 20,00,000 of Rupees in hard cash, besides ten elephants. This happened on 28th February,\* 1737.

Some days before the fall of Ater, Saadat Khan, who had been directed by the Emperor to co-operate with the wazir and the Mir Bakhshi then about to proceed against the Marathas, started from Faizabad with Abulmansur Khan, Safdar Jang and Sher Jang and a big army with the double purpose of carrying out the imperial orders and reinforcing his deceased friend's son, Anrudh Singh Bhadwariya. Reaching the neighbourhood of the Erawa district, he received the information of the defeat of the Raja of Bhadawar and of the occupation, by the Marathas,

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which is 5 kos from the town of Gohad, divided the territories of Bhadawar and Gohad. See Hadiq p. 166. Mahagwan is about 17 miles south of Ater and 11 miles north-east of Gohad. Sheet 56 J.

\* Shakti 37; Rustam Ali in Elliot. VIII. 53; Sardesai, vol. I. (2nd ed.) p. 359; selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15, Letter No. 47.

of the fords and crossings on the Yamuna. He, therefore, stopped short, awaiting the course of further events.\*

### 3.—DEFEAT OF MALHAR RAO HOLKAR, 23RD MARCH, 1737

After the fall of Ater, a detachment under Malhar Rao Holkar, Pilaji Jadon and Vithoji Bule crossed the Yamuna near the town of Rapri in March, † 1737 to plunder the Doab and prevent Saadat Khan from effecting a junction with the wazir and Mir Bakhshi. Passing through the town of Shikohabad which was spared for a ransom of 1,50,000 Rupees, they advanced to Firozabad and Itimadpur, plundered and burnt the towns and ravaged the country upto the Moti Bagh, near Agra. Then, they proceeded to the town of Jalesar, some 26 miles north-east of Agra, when early in the morning of 23rd March, 1737 Abulmansur Khan at the head of 12,000 horse, came in sight. He was leading the advance-guard of Saadat Khan's army, who, on the news of Maratha penetration into the Doab, had made a forced march of eighty five miles to reach the vicinity of Jalesar. Considering Abulmansur Khan's force to be small, the Marathas, according to their traditional method of warfare, made an attempt to surround him from all sides. Without being besieged, the Khan retreated slowly and drew the enemy to near Saadat Khan's main army, fifty thousand strong. Burhan-ul-mulk's fierce charge scattered the Marathas about who fled in the utmost confusion and panic. For many miles the fugitives were pursued and about one thousand of them were captured near the tank of Itimadpur, about 10 miles north east of Agra. The rest crossed the Yamuna and rejoined Bajirao at Kotila near Gwalior on the 2nd April, ‡ 1737.

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\* Shakir, 37; Siyar, II 495; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15 Letter 47.

† Irvine, L. M. II 287 gives *Zil Hijjah* (April 1737) which is wrong. Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII. 53 commits the same error.

‡ Sardesai, vol I (2nd ed.) p. 360; Shakir 37-38; Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII. 53-54; *Tarikh-i-Ibrahimi* in Elliot VIII 262; Siyar II, 457 Hadiq. 384 and Qasim 387. Persian histories being based on Saadat Khan's

Flushed with this victory, Saadat Khan sent, on the 24th of March, an exaggerated account of his success to the Emperor and the nobles, writing to them that he had slain 2,000 Marathas, while 2,000 were drowned in the Yamuna including Malhar Rao Holkar and Vithoji Bule, and that he was going to drive back the rest beyond the Chambal. The Emperor was highly pleased with the Khan, loaded him with rich gifts and turned the Maratha Vakil out of the Court † Saadat Khan now marched to Agra and after staying there for a few days joined ‡ Samsam-ud-daulah and Muhammad Khan Bangash near Mathura on 22nd April, 1737. There, one day when they were feasting together, they learnt that Bajirao had marched on Delhi.

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exaggerated report give partly wrong account. The same is true of L. M. II. 287.

† Brahmendra Swami Charitra, Letter No. 27; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15. Letters No. 47, 22, 27 and 28. There is some difference in figures as given in different letters. I accept those given by Bajirao himself.

‡ Shakir, p. 38, says that after his victory over Malhar Rao, Saadat Khan rode out in pursuit of the Marathas for two days in the direction of Dholpur Bari, 18 kos from Agra, but he found no trace of the enemy. On the 4th day, he was about to start in the direction of the Chambal to drive the enemy beyond it, when he received pressing letters from Samsam-ud-daulah, who was jealous of Saadat Khan, requesting him to stay till he should join him. Samsam-ud-daulah arrived in three or four days and wasted as many days in entertainments. Meanwhile, Bajirao had advanced upon Delhi. Saadat Khan's scheme of the Maratha pursuit was, therefore, frustrated. Shakir has been blindly copied by the Siyar, the *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* and others. But he is not supported by truly contemporary Persian histories, like *Tarikh-i-Hindi* or by Marathi letters and documents, which say that Saadat Khan did not proceed south of Agra. In fact, Bajirao, who was greatly insensed against the Khan, waited anxiously for his coming south of Agra and then settling his scores with him. But instead of going south-ward, Saadat Khan marched towards Mathura. Khan Dauran did not advance south of Agra to join Saadat Khan somewhere there, as Shakir says, but the latter proceeded northwards and joined the former at Mathura. Khan Dauran's name was conveniently connected with the story, as he was known to be jealous of Saadat Khan's talents and good fortune. For the facts see Brahmendra Swami Charitra, Letter No 27; Rustam Ali in Elliot, Vol. VIII, 54; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15. Letter No. 34.



Learning from his agent Dhando Govind who was turned out of his camp by the Mir Bakhshi, about the lying invention of Saadat Khan, the Peshwa decided to make a sudden raid on Delhi and making forced marches reached the imperial capital on the 7th April, (7th Zil Hijah, 1149 H), detaching Baji Bhivrao into the Doab to divert Saadat Khan's attention. The Emperor, his court and the people of Delhi were terrified by the sudden appearance of the Marathas and made puerile arrangements for the defence of the city.\* As soon as this alarming news reached Saadat Khan and his brother nobles at Mathura they broke camp and hurriedly started for Delhi, reaching there on the 11th. But the Peshwa had retreated towards Rajputana† two days earlier. Saadat Khan now, once again, proposed that if he were given supreme command and the provinces of Agra, Gujarat, Malwa and Ajmer were granted to him, in addition to Awadh, he would undertake the responsibility of driving out the Marathas from northern India. But Khan Dauran and Jai Singh, who were opposed to the policy of armed resistance, advocated conciliation and accused Saadat Khan of having provoked Bajirao's raid on Delhi. Muhammad Shah was also inclined to a policy of peace. Hence disgusted with the pusillanimous conduct of the Emperor and the attitude of his opponents Saadat Khan retired to Awadh ‡

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\* Brahmendra Swami Charitra, Letter 27 ; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar. 15, Letters Nos, 47 and 37, Irvine L. M. 111 289, gives 9th Zil Hijah (9th April) which is wrong.

† The height of absurdity is reached in Imad which says that Bajirao was totally defeated by Saadat Khan and forced to offer the following terms :-

1, He would never cast his eyes on Awadh so long as it remained in the possession of the Nawab's house (2) he would assist Saadat Khan against any enemy, and (3) the Marathas would not come to Northern India without the Nawab's consent and permission. Saadat Khan did not condescend to accept these terms. He wanted to capture Bajirao and to keep him in chains, but owing to the pusillanimous conduct of the nobles of the Delhi Court and the jealousy of Khan Dauran he had to give up the idea. Imad. 9-17. As regards the details about the expedition, Imad's version is full of similar mistakes, see, pp 14-17

‡ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15, Letters No. 29; Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII, 35.

#### 4.—THE SUPPRESSION OF A REBELLION IN SOUTHERN AWADH JUNE, 1737

During Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk's absence from Awadh twenty Rajput chiefs, most of whom were tributary to the Nawab, formed a confederacy and, headed by their leader, Raja Nawal Singh of Tiloi, committed certain excesses in the southern districts of the province. Saadat Khan was at Delhi when he received the news of this rebellion.‡ He immediately despatched his son-in-law, Abulmansur Khan with twelve thousand cavalry and a powerful artillery to quell the rebellion. Abulmansur Khan penetrated into the heart of Nawal Singh's territories and captured several redoubts in the vicinity of Tiloi. He was yet busy against others, when he learnt that the confederates of the rebellious Raja were concentrating their forces in the Amethi fort, situated about 26 miles south-east of Tiloi. Leaving, therefore, the work of the reduction of Nawal Singh's territory half finished the Khan turned towards Amethi.

During the course of Abulmansur Khan's progress towards Tiloi, Nawal Singh and the Raja of Amethi with their confederates were hanging in the rear of the Khan's army. Suddenly the enemy struck tents and marched towards Amethi with the object of drawing away the besiegers in pursuit and thus relieving the pressure on the fort of Tiloi. But Abulmansur Khan refused to be out-manoeuvred, and reached Amethi on 12th June, 1737. Within twenty four hours he completed arrangements for a regular investment of the fort. Amethi was a large and strong fort which, it is said, could accommodate an army of 20,000 horse within its wooded shelter. All round it was a deep and wide ditch and near its base was a dense and extensive jungle of thorny bushes and *babul* trees (*acacia*). For sixteen days, the besieged offered a stout resistance. But Abulmansur Khan's energy and determination surmounted every obstacle. His artillery reduced the besieged to great straits so that, during the night of 28th of June, Nawal Singh and other

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‡ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15, Letter No. 23.

Rajas fled from the fort which was occupied the next day by the deputy governor's men.

Both the sides suffered considerable losses. But the actual figures have unfortunately not been recorded by Sayyid Muhammad Bilgrami, the only contemporary who cared to chronicle the details of this campaign. Mir Muhammad Muhsin, *alias* Sayyid Roshan Bilgrami, a brave officer in the Nawab's army, won high recognition for conspicuous bravery in this expedition. Sayyid-Al-Rasul, another brave Bilgrami Sayyid, received a bullet in the calf of his leg on the first day of the siege and expired three days after. He lies buried at the bank of a tank near the Amethi fort.\*

After this victory Abul-mansur Khan returned to meet his uncle Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk. He miscalculated his success, which was far from being decisive. Raja Nawal Singh's power was not broken; he had simply bent before the storm to raise his head again.

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\* Tabsirat, 218b and 219a

CHAPTER VI  
THE BATTLE OF KARNAL AND THE LAST DAYS  
OF SAADAT KHAN

1.—THE MUGHAL COURT MARCHES TO KARNAL

The robber was sometimes the preliminary role of a patriot in medieval history. Nadir, too, who had originally been a Turkoman robber, came forward a saviour of his country, Persia, against the Afghan aggressors who had deposed Shah Husain Safawi in 1722. He drove the enemy out of Persia and crowned himself king in 1736. He then began a campaign against the Afghans of Qandhar and sent repeated requests to the Mughal Emperor to prevent the fleeing Afghans from escaping into his territories. As Muhammad Shah ignored these requests, the ambitious Persian monarch, after the fall of Qandhar in March, 1738, stormed Kabul on 29th June and Jalalabad on the 17th September. Crossing the Indus, Nadir Shah then captured Lahore on the 21st January, 1739 and started in the direction of Delhi.

Muhammad Shah was personally incapable of ruling the Empire, and his court was a scene of party strife and vile intrigue. The two chief parties,—the Turani and the Hindustani—were headed by Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah and Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daulah respectively. When the news of Nadir Shah's advance to the Panjab was announced at Court, each party accused the other of having invited the invader. The intrigue and chicanery underlying the proceedings of the nobles during this crisis is clearly unfolded in the two rival works, the *Hikayat-i-Fateh Nadir Shah* and the *Jauhar-i-Samsam* written by the proteges of the Nizam and Samsam-ud-daulah respectively soon after the Persian invasion and meant to extol the virtues of their patrons and to expose the intrigues of their rivals throughout Nadir Shah's stay in India. The whole atmosphere was so thick with pernicious lies that it was almost impossible

for the contemporaries to know the truth. Even Rustam Ali Khan, who was out of party strife, was led to believe that Nadir Shah had invaded the country at the instigation of the Nizam and Saadat Khan.\*

For full seven months after the loss of Ghazni (10th June, 1738), the Mughal court remained absolutely inactive. When Nadir had arrived near Lahore, the three great nobles, Nizam-ul-mulk the wakil-i-Mutlaq, Qamruddin Khan the wazir, and Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daulah the Mir Bakhshi, left Delhi on 20th January, 1739 and reached Panipat on the 28th. Here, the Emperor joined them on 6th February and then they all resumed their journey and arrived and encamped at Karnal, 20 miles north of Panipat. The imperial camp stood immediately north of the town and along the western bank of Ali Mardan Khan's canal which ran about 6 or 7 miles west of the Yamuna. Round the camp was erected a mud wall many miles in circuit. On all sides of this wall deep trenches were dug and military outposts were established to guard against surprise attack. †

Early in the morning of 22nd February, Nadir Shah left Sarai Azimabad and, crossing the canal of Ali Mardan Khan with his whole army, encamped six miles north-east of Muhammad Shah's camp. The Persian fighting force numbered about 65,000 horse, while the combatants of the Indian army amounted to about 75,000 men. ‡

## 2.—SAADAT KHAN ARRIVED AT KARNAL, 22ND FEBRUARY, 1739

In response to the Imperial summons Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, having left Abulmansur Khan in charge of Awadh, started on a long and arduous journey of over 450 miles in the third week of January, 1739, with a well-equipped army of 30,000 horse, a good park of artillery and vast stores of materials of war. Accompanied by his nephews, Mirza Muhsin

\* Hikayat 2a-14a; Jauhar. 2a; Rustam Ali in Elliot. VIII 60.

† Hikayat. 17b-19a; Anand Ram, 24-25; Jauhar. 5a; Shakir 40; Qasim 392.

‡ Sarkar L, M II, 337-8.

and Nisar Muhammad Khan Sher Jang, he, although suffering from a wound in his leg, made incessant marches of more than three weeks and reached Delhi on the 17th February. Here, he halted\* on the 18th to give much needed rest to his worn-out men and beasts of burden. He was up again early in the morning of the 19th and covered the distance of 55 miles between Delhi and Panipat during the next three days, reaching the latter town in the evening† of the 21st. Having passed the night at Panipat, he resumed his journey early at dawn next morning and a little before mid-night of 22nd February arrived near the imperial camp at Karnal with the main part of his army, while his baggage loaded on several hundred camels was leisurely coming behind. ‡

While yet a few miles south of Karnal, the Emperor received the report of Saadat Khan's near approach. Accordingly, he directed Khan Dauran to go out to welcome the governor of Awadh. Khan Dauran received Saadat Khan a mile in advance and both entered the camp on the same elephant at mid-night. The Khan was assigned quarters near the imperial tents and behind those of Khan Dauran and the Emperor sent him food from his own kitchen.↓

Towards the evening of the 22nd, only some hours before the arrival of Saadat Khan at Karnal, the Persian scouts reported to Nadir Shah that the Khan had reached Panipat in the evening of the 21st. The Persian monarch, therefore, immediately despatched a detachment of his army to intercept the Khan and to prevent him from effecting junction with Muhammad Shah. Though altogether ignorant of the whereabouts of the enemy, Saadat Khan luckily avoided the path of the Persian advance guard and joined the Emperor at mid-night. But the Persians intercepted and attacked his baggage train which was insuffi-

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\* Delhi chronicle, 3.

† Jahan-Kusha, 200.

‡ Qasim 392; Abul Qasim, 14b and 15a; Harcharan, 359b, Hikayat, 19b; Anandram, 25; Ashob. 163-67; L. M. II. 349.

↓ Jahan Kusha. 200; and *ibid.*

ciently guarded and was leisurely advancing from the town of Panipat. \*

### 3.—SAADAT KHAN GOES OUT TO FIGHT, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1739

Next morning, Saadat Khan went to pay his respects to the Emperor. At court he met Nizam-ul-mulk and other nobles and a council of war was held to discuss the plan of operations to be adopted against the enemy. The Nizam proposed that the battle should be postponed to the 25th of February. This had not yet been approved of by the Emperor, when some scouts brought the disturbing news that Saadat Khan's baggage had been attacked by the Persian van who had killed some of his men and were carrying away 500 of his loaded camels.

With great impatience (*betahana*), Saadat Khan (who was proud of his personal bravery and powerful army) took up his sword he had placed before the Emperor and requested his permission to go to the rescue of his men. Nizam-ul-mulk impressed on him the need of caution and delay, for his troops were fatigued on account of one month's continuous journey and the day also was far spent. The other nobles and even the Emperor urged the same course. But the sensitive and quick-tempered Saadat Khan would not listen to argument. Issuing out of the imperial tents with one thousand horse and a few hundred foot that were in attendance upon him, he made a rash advance against the enemy in complete disregard (*aar kamal be parwahi*) of artillery or any other preparation. He sent out a few heralds to proclaim to his men to join him immediately. But the worn-out troops would not stir out of their tents; they would not even believe the heralds, for they knew that Saadat Khan had gone to wait on the Emperor. After a great deal of remonstrance, however, about 4,000 horse and 1,000 foot joined the Nawab. †

\* Jahan Kusha, 200;

† Abdulkarim, 15a; Anand Ram, 27; Maadan, IV, 117b; L. M. II, 344.

#### 4.—DEFEAT AND CAPTURE OF SAADAT KHAN, 23RD FEBRUARY 1739

Nadir Shah, whose army consisted wholly of mobile cavalry and artillery, left a division in charge of his camp, three miles east of the Mughal entrenchment and concealed three thousands of his best troops, divided into three groups, in ambush. In front of them were ranged numerous swivel-guns, resting on their prongs and *zamburks* mounted on trained camels which sat down at command and permitted the firing of these long guns from their backs. Across every two camels was erected a platform on which were placed naphtha and some other combustibles to be set on fire at the time of engagement to frighten the Indian elephants. The centre was under the Persian monarch's son, Prince Nasr-ullah, while Nadir himself, in his full military dress, took the command of the van. In front of the van were posted two divisions of 500 horse each to be sent against the Indian army to skirmish with it at the first instance and to draw it into the field.†

As Saadat Khan was seen advancing towards the field a little after 1 p. m. on the 23rd of February, Nadir Shah despatched one of the two bodies of skirmishers against him. The skirmishers received the Khan with a sudden discharge of arrows. Saadat Khan gave the Persians a fitting reply and charged them vigorously. They retreated towards their main army, discharging their arrows and muskets all the way and drawing Saadat Khan to the ambuscade prepared before-hand, about three miles east of Muhammad Shah's camp. Thinking that he had succeeded in driving back the Persian advance-guard, Saadat Khan sent fast couriers to the Emperor, begging for immediate reinforcements to complete his work. Meanwhile, the Persian cavalry drawing aside, all of a sudden, many hundreds of swivel guns, in ambush, poured in regular volleys and shot a considerable number of Saadat Khan's troops dead. Another good number grew confounded and fled from the

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† Sarkar, L. M. II. 345-46.



field. Without being dismayed Saadat Khan bravely stood his ground for sometime more in the midst of the enemy's deadly fire.\*

While the battle was going against Saadat Khan, Khan Dauran started with 8,000 soldiers to re-inforce him. But the second division of the Persian skirmishers kept him busy more than one mile west of Burhan-ul-mulk. For two hours the Mir Bakhshi's men offered a stout resistance to the enemy. But when they saw no hope left, about 1,000 of them dismounted and continued fighting desperately on foot till they were all slain. The Khan himself received fatal wounds in the face and fell unconscious in the *hourda*. About sunset he was carried back to his tents by Majlis Rai and his other faithful attendants.†

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, who had received two wounds and whose ranks were thoroughly shattered, was still standing in the field with a few of his friends and relations, exposed to the murderous fire of Nadir's guns. Round his elephant were his two nephews, Sher Jang and Mirza Muhsin, elder brother of Abulmansur Khan (Safdar Jang), both mounted on elephants and a few devoted followers ready to die with their master.‡ But for an unfortunate accident he would most probably have safely escaped from the field. His nephew Sher Jang's elephant suddenly grew furious and got out of control. It mischievously charged Saadat Khan's elephant and drove it into the enemy's ranks. Saadat Khan went on boldly shooting arrows to resist capture. Just then a young Turkoman soldier from Nishapur, Saadat Khan's birth-place, who happened to recognise the Khan quickly rode up to him and climbing his elephant by the rope hanging from it, asked him to surrender. Saadat Khan signified his submission and was carried a prisoner to Nadir Shah's camp. †

\* Abdul Karim, 15a; Hartcharan, 360b; Anand Ram, 27; Hikayat, 24 Jauhar, 7a.

† Anand Ram 27-31; Jauhar, 8b-9b; Hikayat, 25a and b; Sarkar, L. M. II. 347-48.

‡ Jauhar, 1a.

† Qasim, 303.

Late in the afternoon, Muhammad Shah, accompanied by the crafty Nizam and the voluptuary wazir marched out of his camp with all his army and artillery. But his huge hosts remained standing along the canal, more than one mile west of the scene of battle; and when Saadat Khan and Khan Dauran were forced out of the field, the Emperor also retired to his camp at sun-set. The battle which had begun at about 2 p. m. was over after 5 p. m.

### 5.—SAADAT KHAN NEGOTIATES PEACE

After the *isha* prayer (about 8 p. m.) Saadat Khan was brought before Nadir Shah. The Persian monarch questioned him in these words :—

“You are a Persian (like us), and yet without any regard for our common faith (Shiaism), you were the first to come to fight us.”

Saadat Khan replied, “If I had not preceded and out-done others, all the chiefs and nobles of Hindustan would have charged me with being in treacherous league with your Majesty; and the very term ‘Persian’ would have become an object of scorn in this country. Thank God that I have fallen into the generous and just hands of Your Majesty, and have not carried with me the stigma of disloyalty and treachery (to my master).”

Nadir Shah was much pleased at this clever reply and remarked, “I shall raise you to a position of distinction in the States of Persia and India. \*

The Shah then turned to the business and said, “Muhammad Amin ! What is the intention of your monarch? What purpose can he serve with such a beggarly force as that commanded by Khan Dauran? Why does he not come to me like a brother?” But he admitted that the Indian soldiers had fought with reckless bravery, commenting, however, that they knew how to die and not how to fight.† Saadat Khan gave a diplomatic reply, “The Emperor’s resources,” he said, “are vast. Only one of

\* Imad 25.

† Haricharan, 363a; Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII. 62

his nobles came to fight today and has gone back on being accidentally wounded by a shot. But there are many other amirs and brave Rajas with countless hosts still left. The fortune of the war does not depend on any one noble." Nadir Shah was confounded and determined to make peace. Appealing to Saadat Khan's sense of patriotism for his native land and love for his religion the Persian invader persuaded him to reveal to him a plan whereby he might get some money from Muhammad Shah and go back to fight the Sultan of Turkey. Saadat Khan answered, "Asaf Jah is the key of the Empire of India. Your Majesty may call him and negotiate terms with him."†

Next morning, 24th February, Nadir Shah sent an invitation to the Nizam, assuring him and the Emperor against all treachery. Saadat Khan also wrote to Muhammad Shah to the same effect. The Nizam obeyed the call and on reaching the Persian camp was received well by the Shah. After a long discussion the war indemnity was settled at fifty lakhs of Rupees. On the 25th, the Emperor, in response to Nadir Shah's invitation, paid him a visit, dined with the Persian monarch and after having ratified the agreement made by the Nizam returned to his camp a little before sun-set. Much of the anxiety of the Indian army was now over. ‡

#### 6.—NADIR BREAKS THE TREATY AT THE INSTIGATION OF SAADAT KHAN

Samsam-ud-daulah Khan Dauran, the Imperial Bakhshi, died four hours after night-fall on the 25th February, 1739. As soon as the news reached him, the Nizam hastened to the Emperor and requested him to confer the vacant office on his eldest son, Ghazi-ud-din Khan Firoz Jang. Azim-Ullah Khan, Qamr-ud-din Khan's nephew urged his own claim on the ground of his seniority in age, and on his failure to get it, angrily started to join Nadir Shah. The Nizam and the wazir, however, brought him back from the way, and to silence him

† Hadiq, 384; Siyar, II. 483; M. U. I. 466; Sarkar, L. M. II. 348.

‡ Sarkar, L. M. II. 356-365.

the hoary schemer of the Deccan put upon himself the robe of the office. \*

When the news of the Nizam's appointment as Mir Bakhshi reached Saadat Khan in the Persian camp, he was beside himself with rage. Since the dawn of his prosperity he had entertained the hopes of, one day, becoming the head of the Imperial army and first Lord of the Empire (Amir-ul umra), and the Nizam had promised to help him in the realisation of his ambition. But when he heard that in violation of his word the Nizam had secured the post for himself, Saadat Khan, out of a feeling of jealousy and vengeance, represented to the Persian conqueror, at the next audience with him, that fifty lakhs of Rupees fixed by him as the war indemnity were a most moderate sum and that if he went to Delhi he could easily obtain twenty krores of Rupees in hard cash besides countless jewels and other valuables. "At-present" he added, "the imperial court has no noble of greater eminence than the Nizam, who is a cheat and a philosopher. If this deceiver is entrapped, every-thing would happen as your Majesty desires. If you order me, I shall call my troops and baggage from the imperial camp and place them in your Majesty's camp." Nadir Shah was highly pleased and gave Saadat Khan permission to do so. Accordingly the latter called his troops with all their belongings and equipage and quartered them near the Persian encampment. †

The next few days passed in that treacherous lull which often precedes a storm. The two monarchs remained encamped in their places, and nothing except the Nizam's second visit to Nadir Shah and the Shah's wazir's visit to dine with the Nizam, took place. But the Persians continued to invest the Indian camp which caused a famine and distress in Muhammad Shah's army. ‡

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\* Haricharan, 364b; L. M. II, 355-56.

† Haricharan 364b; Isuhar. 24a; Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII 63; Ashob 274-77; Sarkar, L. M. II. 356.

‡ Delhi Chronicle, 4; Sarkar, L. M. II. 357.

On the 4th March, the conqueror's plan was revealed to the world. That day the Nizam, in obedience to the Shah's summons, paid a third visit to the Persian camp. He was discourteously received and asked to furnish twenty Krores of Rupees, besides 20,000 cavalry to serve under the Shah. The Nizam was confounded and "pleaded for abatement," saying that even fifty thousands were not available in the imperial treasury. Nadir Shah angrily charged him with falsehood, placed him in custody and forced him to write to the Emperor to pay another visit to the conqueror.\* Muhammad Shah had no choice but to obey the Shah's call on the 6th. He was accorded no welcome, and shown no courtesy; but was left uncared for for some time and kept under a Persian guard. Next day his *harem* with all its equipage was called and lodged near the Persian camp. Qamr-ud-din Khan the wazir was also brought to join his master in custody. Minor officers and soldiers were allowed to disperse and go back to their homes. In their attempts to escape a large number perished at the hands of the Qizilbash marauders and the revolted peasantry.†

#### 7.—SAADAT KHAN APPOINTED *Wakil-i-Mutlaq* AND SENT TO DELHI

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk's treachery was now handsomely rewarded. On behalf of both the monarchs, Nadir Shah and Muhammad Shah, he was elevated to the exalted office of the *Wakil-i-Mutlaq*‡ (Regent plenipotentiary), a dignity which was, then, held by the Nizam on behalf of the Indian Emperor only. The evil in Saadat Khan must now have been satisfied at his rival's suppression and his ungrateful master, Muhammad Shah's humiliation in the Persian camp.

On the 7th March, Saadat Khan and Tehmasp Khan Jalair, representing the Emperor and the Shah respectively, were despatched, at the head of 4,000 horse, to Delhi to secure the

\* Haricharan, 365a

† Sarkar, L. M. II 360.

‡ Abdul Karim, 19b, Ashob. 293.

capital and to establish there the conqueror's rule. They were also commissioned to make preparations against the arrival of the Shah and to see that the imperial property was not secreted or removed during the change of regime. Saadat Khan was entrusted with two letters addressed to Lutfullah Khan Sadiq, governor of Delhi, the one from Nadir Shah confirming the governor in his office and the other from Muhammad Shah calling upon him to deliver the keys of the imperial palaces and establishments to Tehmasp Khan Jalair.

Saadat Khan and his party reached near Delhi on the 9th of March. As the Khan had received the information that Lutfullah Khan was thinking of defending the fort, he wrote to him, from one stage north of Delhi, asking him to deliver it peacefully. The subedar of Delhi saw the wisdom of the advice and made over the keys of the fort and those of the imperial stores and establishments to Nadir Shah's agent.\*

Accompanied by Muhammad Shah, who as an act of courtesy, rode a few yards behind him, the Persian conqueror left Karnal on the 11th March and reached the Shalimar garden, north of Delhi, on the 17th. Here, both the monarchs were welcomed by Saadat Khan who had advanced from the city one day earlier. At about noon on the 18th, "the fallen descendant of Babar and Akbar rode into his capital on a portable throne (*takhat-i-rawan*) in silence; and humility; no band played, and no banners were carried before him." Next morning, one hour after sun-rise, the proud Persian conqueror entered the Mughal palace in a grand procession, the Qizilbash horse standing arrayed on both sides of the road from the Shalimar garden to the entrance of the imperial fort. Muhammad Shah welcomed him and spread his most valuable carpets decorated with needle-work of silver and gold and other rare stuffs to place his foot on. Nadir Shah took up his residence in Shah Jahan's favourite apartments near the Diwan-i-Khas, while the Emperor was asked to live in the chambers near the Asad Burj.†

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\* Shakir. 44.

† Jahan Kusha, 204; Anand Ram, 44.

## 8.—DEATH OF SAADAT KHAN, 19TH MARCH, 1739

After Nadir Shah's arrival at Delhi, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk rose very high and became the recipient of great favours from the Persian conqueror. He remained in attendance on him throughout the day, and all the nobles, great and small, sought audience with the Shah through his mediation.\* In the night following the 19th of March, 1739, he retired to his house (Dara Shukoh's mansion) in the city and died suddenly an hour or so before the day dawned† on the 20th. He was buried outside Shah Jahanabad. ‡

Historians are sharply divided in their opinion about the cause and manner of Saadat Khan's death. "Nawab Burhan-ul-mulk," writes Abdul Karim, a contemporary historian, "remained in the fort till sunset. But he was suffering from excessive pain (in his leg) which he could not bear. As he had great regard for his own honour, he kept up appearance. When his condition became hopeless, he returned to his house and died a little before next morning."† Abul Qasim Lahori, another contemporary, held that Saadat Khan died of bodily ailments (*arza-i-badani*) †† These have been copied blindly by later historians, like Murtaza Husain Khan,\*\* Ghulam Husain Khan,†† Muhammad Ali Ansari\*\* and others. Hari Charan Das, who was a pensioner of Shuja-ud-daulah, the grandson of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, maintained that the Nawab succumbed to a cancer in his leg, though to his credit it must be said that he also mentioned that according to another version "As Nadir Shah demanded the sum he had promised,

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\* Jauhar. 25b.

† Abdul Karim, 19b; Jauhar. 25a; Ashob 256. Delhi chronicle, p. 6. recorded it next morning.

‡ Imad 30.

↓ Abdul Karim, 19b

†† Qasim. 395.

\*\* Hadiq. 135.

†† Siyar. II. 485.

\*\*T. M. 1172. see also MaadJan, IV. 1210; M. U. I. 766; Khairidin, 61; Azad. 700; Saranihat 9b.

Saadat Khan took diamond powder to save his name and honour and died about next morning.”\* Ghulam Ali of Lucknow who composed the *Imad-us-Saadat* under the patronage of Saadat Ali Khan, the second son of Shuja-ud-daulah, preferred the former version and boldly denounced the latter, in a long but unconvincing discourse, as the lying invention of some malicious detractors.† He had been copied by court flatterers like Harnam Singh and Bahadur Singh some years later. ‡

Rustam Ali, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Hindi*, an extremely reliable contemporary work, describes Saadat Khan's death in the following words :—

“It is narrated that, one day, Nadir Shah, in his public court, spoke some harsh and abusive words to Nizam-ul-mulk and Burhan-ul-mulk, and threatened them with (corporal) punishment. When they left the court, Nizam-ul-mulk, with all the lying and fraud to which he was naturally habituated, spoke to Burhan-ul-mulk, some very soft and heart-rending words, and told him that it would now be difficult to escape the hands of that tyrant; he advised that both should, at the same moment, go home, and, taking a cup of deadly poison, pursue the path to death, and sacrifice their lives to their honour. After this, that chief of deceivers went to his house, and, having expressed his will to his relations, drank a cup of water mixed with sugar, covered himself with a sheet and went to sleep. Burhan-ul-mulk, who was a true soldier and was not aware of his perfidy, as soon as he heard this, drank a cup of poison, and went to the next world.‡ Muhammad Muhsin, the author of the *Jauhari-Samsam*, writes that when the sum of money and jewels promised by Saadat Khan did not come forth, Nadir Shah asked him to produce them; he uttered a few abusive words and spat on his face. He even threatened the Khan with corporal punishment, if he did not bring the sum soon. Saadat Khan

\* Haricharan, 366a.

† *Imad*, 28.

‡ *Saadat-i-Jawed* in Elliot, VIII, 343; *Yadgar-i-Bahaduri* in Elliot VIII, 427.

‡ *Tarikh-i-Hindi* in Elliot, VIII, 62-65.



felt greatly insulted and retired to his mansion. His self-respect asserted itself again and again, and so he drank a cup of poison and died during the night of 9th Zil Hijjah, 1151 H. (19th March, 1739 A. D.).\* Rustam Ali and Muhammad Muhsin are supported by other writers, such as, Ashob and Muhammad Aslam. A Delhi diarist records in his diary, the *Waqa-i-Shah Alam Sani* in the entry, dated 10th Zil Hijjah, 1151 H. that Saadat Khan took poison and died.† This version of the story reached the desert land of Rajputana and Surajmal, the famous bard of Bundi, immortalised in his work, the *Vansbhaskar*, put it into the following verse :—

अब इत खान सहादत जानी, मैं हराम यह शाह पिछानी ।

जियत नाहिं छोरेहि हज़रत हट, यह बिचारि बिस खाय मरयो शट ॥‡

“Saadat Khan now realized that the Shah had known him to be a traitor. He thought that so long as he was alive the Shah would not give up his demands. So he took poison and died.”

Little comment is needed to show that the latter version is more reliable. Nothing can be more contemporary and impartial than the entry in the Delhi chronicle (*waqa*) made by a disinterested diarist only some hours after Saadat Khan's death. Muhammad Muhsin and Ashob who were, at the time, present at Delhi, and Rustam Ali, who was free from court intrigues and party strife and recorded the incident within a year of its occurrence, support the chronicle and give minute details. A perusal of Haricharan Das's narrative, written in the third generation after Saadat Khan, produces the impression that the author himself believed the latter version, while the former was only intended to please his patron. Ghulam Ali and other Lucknow historians were neither contemporary nor disinterested writers. Abdul Karim and Abdul Qasim, though contempo-

\* Jauhar, 264; Ashob 296; Muhammad Aslam in Elliot, VIII. 174.

† Delhi chronicle, 6.

‡ Vans Bhaskar, p. 3285.

raries, wrote many years after Burhan-ul-mulk's death and were misled by the fact that Saadat Khan had, for about four months, been suffering from a wound in his leg which had deteriorated into a cancer and hence they believed that he had died of it.

## CHAPTER VII

### CHARACTER OF SAADAT KHAN

#### 1.—SAADAT KHAN AS A MAN

If Saadat Khan's portraits preserved at Lucknow bear any fidelity to their living original, he must have been a tall and handsome man of fair complexion, broad forehead, bright eyes and a long prominent nose. He kept long mustaches clipped off in the middle after the orthodox Muslim fashion and had a short Persian beard. But, in his old age, he had grown a long, flowing white beard\* which made his person all the more imposing. His limbs were symmetrical, his constitution was robust and he maintained unusually good health till the day of his death.

Saadat Khan was plain and unostentatious in his habits and dress, frank and free with his equals, and considerate and kind to his friends and dependants. He could not, however, get on well with his superiors, and once he had risen to power and affluence, he preferred the society of "the humble recluse" to that of high nobles and emperors.† He was extremely sensitive and was sometimes subject to a sudden outburst of violence of temperament. His conduct was overbearing, and he always bore himself with the hauteur of a *haft-hazari*, as Sarbuland Khan justly remarked.

Yet, Saadat Khan was neither harsh nor vulgar in his manners. He was a man of graceful demeanour, of cultured disposition and of refined taste—qualities summed up by Qasim Lahori in one appropriate Persian phrase, "*husn-i-akhlaq*." He was also courteous, social, generous and cheerful. "He was" says the anonymous contemporary in William Hoey's *Memoirs of Delhi*, "so cheerful and pleasant, so free and easy, that even at sixty years of age, when his beard has become quite grey, there was

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\* *Siyar* II. 468.

† *Appendix to Memoirs of Delhi*, p. 1.

not a wrinkle on his forehead.”\* Like most of the children of Iran he possessed a poetic turn of mind and sometimes composed verses under his pen-name of Amin. Some of his verses are found in the “*Riyaz-us-Shuara*” compiled by Ali Quli Khan Daghestani.† He had a love for beautiful gardens, but had no passion for fine architecture. All his buildings were commonplace necessary things which could not withstand the ravages of time and weather and decayed quickly. Such was the fate of his unpretentious palaces at Faizabad.‡

## 2.—SAADAT KHAN AS A SOLDIER

Saadat Khan was pre-eminently a warrior of knightly accomplishments. He possessed almost all the qualities of a great soldier, uncommon personal prowess, an unflinching courage, a bold and venturesome temper, power of vigilance, tireless energy and capacity for enduring fatigue. But his most prominent qualities to which chiefly his success against his enemies can be ascribed, were his personal intrepidity and his iron-will. Although suffering for three months from a wound in his leg which had degenerated into a cancer Saadat Khan made successive marches for over one month to reach Karnal, a distance of more than 450 miles from Faizabad, and fought the Persians the very next day of his arrival, without a single day's rest. In all the battles that he fought, he played important parts, throwing himself head-long into the foremost rank. But he seems to have lacked some of the qualities of a great general. We do not find any regular plan or skilful combination in any of his battles. He could not always change his tactics to suit different situations and therefore met with a miserable failure against the Jats of Agra. A spirit of impatience and rashness pervaded his whole being before engagement with an enemy; but, at the time of actual fighting, he was calm and deliberate.

When governor of Awadh, Saadat Khan maintained a regular army, about fifty thousand strong, which swelled to a much

\* App. to Memoirs of Delhi, p. 2.

† Imad 30.

‡ Memoirs of Faizabad, p. 3.

higher figure in times of emergency. His troops were well-fed, well-clothed and well-armed, and were ever kept in readiness for battle.\* Cavalry was the most numerous and the most important branch of Saadat Khan's force, but he had infantry too and his chief officers were mounted on elephants. He possessed a large park of artillery also. There was, of course, little of military parade and regimental discipline those days. But constant service in the field and long marches through a difficult country under the vigilant guidance of Saadat Khan himself turned even raw recruits into experienced soldiers. Murtaza Husain Khan, the historian who had, for some time, been in Burhan-ul-mulk's service writes that Saadat Khan kept his troops employed in toil so that it had become easy for his army to march at the speed of forty *kos* a day. †

The usual rate of pay of each trooper in Saadat Khan's army was thirty rupees a month. But he was ever a friend of his soldiers and helped them with loans and free gifts, besides regularly paying them their monthly salaries. On his death it was found that his army owed him two krores and a few lakhs of rupees.‡

### 3.—SAADAT KHAN AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Like Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-mulk in the Deccan, Saadat Khan had made it the chief object of his life to make himself virtually independent in Awadh and to turn it into a hereditary possession of his family—an object he achieved without much difficulty or exertion. Without any ceremony he violated the imperial orders calculated to deprive him of Awadh. In the 9th year of Muhammad Shah's reign (July, 1727—June 1728) he was transferred to Agra. Pretending to march to his new charge, he left Delhi where the new orders were served on him. But as soon as he had reached Agra, he turned to his left, crossed the Yamuna and hurried to Awadh.‡

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\*Siyar. II. 475.

†Hadiq. 384 ; Seletcions from the Peshwa Daftar, vol. 15. Letter no. 20

‡Hadiq. 385 ; Saadat i-Jawed in Elliot, VIII. 343.

‡ Rustam Ali in Elliot, VIII. 46.

Once he had regarded himself as the sole master of Awadh, Saadat Khan identified himself with it and spent most of his time within its limits.\* He suppressed lawlessness and established a stable government in the province. He could not, of course, "root out" all the big land-lords, but he succeeded in keeping them thoroughly in check and reconciling them to his rule by his wise and tolerant policy. The smaller zamindars and the peasantry welcomed his rule, as it afforded them protection from spoliation by powerful chiefs, and from plunder and anarchy attendant on the frequent changes of governors. And well did Saadat Khan repay the people. We have no details to form a correct idea of his internal policy; but from the general statement of the Persian authorities it seems pretty certain that his policy was to cherish the peasantry and to protect it from oppression and tyranny (*rayat-parwari*).†

Saadat Khan was something more than a mere successful soldier. He had some notion of civil government.‡ Contemporary historians bear testimony to the fact that Awadh was much better governed under him than under any governor since the last quarter of the 17th century and the people were contented and prosperous. Without rack-renting the peasantry he greatly increased the revenue and put his finances in order. If Ghulam Ali may be believed, Saadat Khan left behind nine krores of Rupees in hard cash. †† If two krores of Rupees\*\* that were paid by his successor Abulmansur Khan to Nadir Shah as the ransom imposed on the subedar of Awadh and two krores and a few lakhs which his troops were found to owe to him, were included in Ghulam Ali's estimate, there is no reason why the figure should appear incredible. Considering the expenditure on his huge standing army and his generosity to his relations and dependants and Persian adven-

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† App. to Memoirs of Delhi, P. 1.

‡ M. U. I. 466; Hadiq, 384; Imad. 8.

‡ Imad 29.

†† Ibid.

\*\* Jahan Kusha, Per. text, p. 27, has one kore, but two Mss older than the text preserved at the Victoria Library, Udaipur, have two krores see p. 161b.

turers and envoys\* his immense savings do credit to Saadat Khan's financial skill.

Like a wise ruler Saadat Khan was prompt in recognising the merits and talents of his officers and in rewarding them for faithful service.† He picked Shaikh Abdullah of Ghazipur up from the lot of a sufferer at the hands of Fakhrud-daulah, governor of Bihar, and raised him to the rank of an officer in his army.‡ This man faithfully served his new master in various capacities and rose to be Saadat Khan's deputy in his native district of Ghazipur.‡

In spite of the positive assertion of William Hoey's "anonymous contemporary" that "about two hundred thousand sons and daughters and wives of Hindu *kafirs* were raised by the might of his (Saadat Khan's) sword to enjoy the blessings of Islam," †† an impartial student of Saadat Khan's administration in Awadh cannot but observe that he was not usually dominated by a spirit of religious intolerance. The above statement stands altogether alone in solitary seclusion. The contemporary Muslim historians who indulged in superlatives in praise of the bigotry of Muhammad Amin Khan and the Nizam have not a word to say about Saadat Khan's intolerance. Nor have the Hindu historians like Anand Ram, Haricharan Das and others, recorded, anything about his supposed anti-Hindu activities. There is, on the other hand,

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\* Qasim. 350 and 354 says that during the 14th year of Muhammad Shah's reign Saadat Khan gave to one Persian ambassador presents valued at three lakhs of rupees, besides a costly entertainment given in his honour.

† Hadiq 386

‡ Siyar. II. 469.

‡ Balwant 11a.

†† App. to Memoirs of Delhi p. 2.

Mustafa the translator of the Siyar gives wrong translation of a Persian phrase given in the text, vol. II p. 486, to express Saadat Khan's character. The phrase is : *نشده مزوی و مردت داشت* It has been translated by Mustafa as "he was a zealous asserter of his religion." Eng. Tr. vol. I. p. 270. I have compared the Lucknow and Calcutta texts and found the above phrase identical in both. Readers having no knowledge of Persian are sure to be misled by such wrong translation. Can Hoey's translation be dissimilar to Mustafa's?

abundant evidence that Saadat Khan patronised the Hindus and raised many of them to high and responsible posts. In fact, a Shia as he was, he trusted Hindus more than Sunni Muhammadans. When governor of Agra, his deputy—the next highest officer in the province—was Nilkanth Nagar, a Gujarati Brahmin. Since the Nawab's appointment to Hinduan and Bayana, his chief revenue officer had been Atma Ram,\* a Khatri from the Panjab, who was promoted to the office of Diwan, that is, head of the departments of revenue and civil justice, when Saadat Khan became governor of Awadh. The Nawab gave him his confidence and support, and very seldom interfered with his work. The Diwan's sons, grandsons and relations were pushed to the front and appointed to important posts in the province. One of his grandsons, Raja Lachhmi Narayan, became Saadat Khan's wakil at the imperial court and procured the viceroyalty of Awadh for his son-in-law Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang. Many other instances of Saadat Khan's patronage to Hindus may be cited, but these are enough to show that an intolerant bigot would not have been guilty of such favours to idolators.

#### 4—SAADAT KHAN'S PLACE AMONG THE MUGHAL NOBLES

With the exception of Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-mulk, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk was undoubtedly the ablest and most energetic of the Mughal nobles of the second quarter of the 18th century. Qamr-ud-din Khan, the *wazir*, was a voluptuary, caring little for anything except for wine and women. † Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daulah was "a carpet-knight and court-flatterer without any administrative capacity or experience." ‡ All the three, chiefly the Nizam and Khan Dauran, were jealous of Saadat Khan's ability and good fortune. They thwarted his attempts to get himself appointed Mir Bakhshi (Head of the Imperial army)—an office he had coveted for a long time and for which he was the most highly qualified

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\* Imad 56.

† Warid. 220a--221b.

‡ Sarkar, L. M. II 313.



noble except the Nizam. Had this ambition of his been fulfilled, Nadir Shah would have returned from Karnal, and Delhi would have escaped the horror of spoliation and massacre at the hands of the Persian invader.

In normal circumstances, Saadat Khan was loyal and grateful to his patrons and employers. Murtaza Husain Khan bears testimony to his grateful conduct towards his ex-master Sarbuland Khan on more occasions than one. \* He was one of those few nobles who were jealous of the Empire's prestige. He was the soul of the Mughal resistance to the Maratha advance to Northern India in the fourth decade of the 18th century, and he was the first to encounter the Persian invader on behalf of his master, Muhammad Shah. Yet all this so long as it did not interfere with his cherished schemes of self-elevation and self-aggrandisement "in furtherance of which he was regardless alike of gratitude, loyalty or patriotism." He became an active party to the assassination of his great patron, Sayyid Husain Ali Khan, because he knew that he would gain more in the confusion attending a change of regime. He betrayed his royal master, Muhammad Shah, because he could make, he thought, better terms with Nadir Shah.

Saadat Khan had only one son who pre-deceased his father before he had reached his youth. He left behind five daughters, the eldest of whom was married to Abul Mansur Khan. The latter succeeded his father-in-law as governor of Awadh.

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\* Hadiq, 395.

## APPENDIX I

## Saadat Khan's Family

Saadat Khan married three wives in India, of whom the first died soon after the marriage. She was a daughter of Kalb Ali Khan, an imperial officer at Delhi. Of the other two, one was a daughter of Sayyid Talib Muhammad Khan, and the second was a daughter of Nawab Muhammad Taqi Khan, sometime governor of Agra. He had only one son who died of small-pox while yet a boy. He left behind five daughters whose names and those of their husbands are given below :—

1. Sadar-un-nisa or Sadar-i-Jahan Begam, entitled Begam Sahiba was married to Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang. It is said that she was born of a slave girl. (See History of Asaf-ud-daula by Abu Talib, tr. by W. Hoey. p. 5). She was a talented, wise and virtuous lady, and died in 1796.

2. Haniga Begam *alias* Nur Jahan was married to Naseer-ud-din Haider, son of Saadat Khan's youngest sister and her husband Mir Muhammad Shah. He died fighting in the first Bangash war.

3. Huma Begam *alias* Bandi Begam was married to Siyadat Khan, a son of the elder brother of Saadat Khan, entitled Saiyadat Khan.

4. Muhammadi Begam was married to Muhammad Quli Khan, son of Safdar Jang's elder brother, Mirza Muhsin. Muhammad Quli Khan was slain at Shuja-ud-daulah's orders.

5. Amna Begam was married to Sayyid Muhammad Khan, son of Mirza Yusuf.\*

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\* Imad. 9-30; Sawanihat 22,

## APPENDIX II

**Diwan Atma Ram and his Family**

Atma Ram was a Khatri from Bhilowal in the Panjab. Saadat Khan had appointed him his revenue officer in Hinduan and Bayana. Owing to his skill as a financier and owing to his faithful services to the Nawab, he was raised to the exalted office of Diwan, when Saadat Khan became governor of Awadh. He had three sons, Har Narayan, Ram Narayan and Pratap Narayan.

Har Narayan was Saadat Khan's Wakil at the imperial Court.

Ram Narayan became Safdar Jang's Diwan.

Paratap Narayan also held some important post.

Har Narayan had three sons—Lachhmi Narayan, Shiva Narayan and Jagat Narayan. Lachhmi Narayan was given the title of Raja and was appointed his Wakil at the Delhi court during the later days of Saadat Khan's life. He remained in that office all through the time of Safdar Jang. Shiva Narayan and Jagat Narayan held important posts and were much in favour with Safdar Jang.

Ram Narayan had two sons—Maha Narayan and Hirde Narayan. Of these the first was entitled Raja and became Shuja-ud-daulah's Diwan.

Pratap Narayan, popularly known as Pratap Singh, had no son. He adopted a boy of the name of Shiva Charan.\*

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\* Imad, 56; Hadiq, 150.

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# Book II

Safdar Jang

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## CHAPTER VIII

Abul Mansur Khan Safdar Jang, 1708-1754

### EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

#### 1.—SAFDAR JANG'S ANCESTORS

As has been said in Chapter III the original name of Abul Mansur Khan Safdar Jang was Mirza Muhammad Muqim and he was the second son of Jafar Beg Khan and the eldest sister of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk. Jafar Beg Khan was a descendant of Qara Yusuf, a Turk of Qaraqonilu tribe and ruler of Tabriz in the province of Azerbaijan in Persia. Qara Yusuf, who traced his pedigree, on his mother's side, to Taaus, a descendant of Hasan the second *imam*, was driven out of his country by Amir Timur, (1369-1405 A. D.), the illustrious ancestor of Babur and Akbar of India. During the reign of Shah Rukh Mirza, second son of Timur, Tabriz was, however, recovered by Jahan Shah, son of Qara Yusuf, whose descendants continued to rule over their paternal state till Mansur Mirza, a contemporary of Shah Abbas I, (1582-1627 A. D.) was deprived of it by that Persian monarch. Abbas, the Great, brought the Mirza to his capital and directed him to settle in the town of Nishapur and gave him a *jagir* for his maintenance. Jafar Beg Khan, the father of Mirza Muhammad Muqim was, it is said, sixth in descent from Mansur Mirza.\*

#### 2.—BOYHOOD AND EDUCATION, 1708-1722

Of his several wives, Jafar Beg Khan was most passionately attached to the sister of Saadat Khan. By her he had two sons Mirza Muhsin and Mirza Muhammad Muqim. Mirza Muqim was only six months and his elder brother only four years when their mother died, leaving them to be taken care of by her bereaved husband. Both the children were, therefore, brought up by Saadat Khan's second sister who was married to Mir Muhammad Shah, son of Burhan-ul-mulk's uncle, Mir Muham-

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\*Imad. 8 and 9.

mad Yusuf.\* In her home, Mirza Muhammad Muqim grew up a gallant and promising boy. Reason has been given in section sixth of Chapter III for believing that the Mirza was about sixteen years of age in 1724 A. D. He must, therefore, have been born in or about the year 1708 A. D.

Mirza Muqim was highly educated and cultured. His letters, written during and after the lifetime of Saadat Khan, with their easy, flowing style, show the Mirza's mastery of the Persian language. They are also mostly free from useless rhetoric, difficult figures of speech and round-about expression so common in Persian composition of that age. † Contemporaries like Murtaza Husain Khan, who knew him intimately, bear testimony to his pleasing and dignified manners, cultured disposition and refined taste as early as the year 1731 A. D., which ‡ indicate good breeding from an early age. It seems almost certain that, if not a finished scholar, Mirza Muhammad Muqim had come to India, having at least finished his schooling in the country of his birth.

We have no materials to ascertain his acquirements as a soldier during his boyhood in Persia. But eighteenth century, like all others of the medieval age, was a time when military qualifications were considered indispensable even for those employed in civil service or civic avocations †† of life. Mirza Muqim would not have been an exception to the rule, for his boyhood passed during a critical period of Persia's history, when she was being overrun by Afghan usurpers, and when there was great confusion in his province of Khurasan. He must have acquired at least the rudiments of military science of his time. Though battlefield was not his special province, yet he remained a fairly active soldier throughout his career in India.

### 3.—THE PERIOD OF APPRENTICESHIP, 1724-1739

When Muhammad Muqim was about fifteen years of age he was invited from Nishapur by his maternal uncle Saadat Khan

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\*Sawanihat. 2a.

†Mansur-ul-Maktubat.

‡Hadiq. 385-386. See also Imad 31.

††Officers of the Mughal Government, whether civil or military, were enrolled as members of the army. Similar was the rule in other Islamic countries.

Burhan-ul-mulk, then governor of Awadh. The youngman landed at Surat in April, 1723, and, after a laborious journey of more than 700 miles arrived at Faizabad in about two months' time. As he was gifted with the noble qualities of head and heart, Saadat Khan gave his eldest daughter, Sadar-un-nisa *alias* Nawab Begum, in marriage to him in preference to his brother's son, Nisar Muhammad Khan Sher Jang. The Nawab then appointed him his Deputy in Awadh and obtained for him the title of Abulmansur Khan from Emperor Muhammad Shah.

As deputy-governor of Awadh (1724-39) Abulmansur Khan was required to familiarise himself with civil and military affairs which enabled him to have much administrative experience that stood him in good stead when he succeeded his uncle and father-in-law in the office of governor. Saadat Khan, who looked upon him as his son, nominated him his successor and associated him in the administration of the province. Under his fostering care and that of Diwan Atma Ram, a competent financier, Abulmansur Khan learnt the intricacies of a government and acquired so much practical knowledge of civil and military administration that, during the last few years of his rule, Saadat Khan was pleased to leave to him the sole charge of the government of Awadh,\* himself devoting a major part of his time to the Delhi politics.

During the period of his apprenticeship Abul-mansur Khan acquired no less training and experience in the conduct of war. In all the important battles that Saadat Khan fought after 1724 we find his son-in law by his side. Abulmansur Khan fought along with his father-in-law against Bhagwant Singh Khichi of Kora Jahanabad in November, 1735. When Saadat Khan returned to Delhi after the successful termination of the campaign, he was left at Kora in command of the Awadh army to help Shaikh Abdulla Ghazipuri, the governor's deputy in the district, to reduce the new territory to order and to guard against a possible invasion of the Marathas who had been invited by Rup Singh, a fugitive son of the deceased Bhagwant Singh.

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\*Imad 9; Maktubat, 59-63.

In March, 1737, he outwitted Malhar Rao Holkar and his troops near the town of Jalesar, by drawing them slowly to near Saadat Khan's main force whose one cavalry charge scattered the Marathas about and drove them out of the field. In June, 1737, he quelled an insurrection in southern Awadh by defeating a combination of several Rajput chiefs led by their leader Nawal Singh, Raja of Tiloi. The confederates, who had taken shelter in the Amethi fort, were dislodged from it and the stronghold was captured by the deputy governor's men. In December, 1737, he was sent by Saadat Khan to the relief of Nizam-ul-mulk who had been besieged by Bajirao at Bhopal. But he was intercepted by Malhar Rao Holkar and was forced to retreat.\* Early in 1738, Abulmansur Khan undertook an expedition to Jaunpur to deprive Rustam Ali Khan of the four districts of Jaunpur, Mirzapur, Ghazipur and Banaras. Though no fighting was done, he was able to achieve his object by diplomacy, backed by force, and Rustam Ali Khan had to seek refuge by flight†.

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\* L. M. II. 394.

† Balwant 9b.12a.



## CHAPTER IX

### SAFDAR JANG, GOVERNOR OF AWADH, 1739-1754

#### 1.--- ABULMANSUR KHAN'S CLAIM TO AWADH UNSUCCESSFULLY DISPUTED, APRIL 1739

On Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk's death on 19th March, 1739, there was some dispute about succession to the governorship of Awadh. Two candidates contested for the office-- Sher Jang and Abulmansur Khan, both being closely related to the deceased. Nisar Muhammad Khan Sher Jang, son of Siyadat Khan\* (Mir Muhammad Baqar), elder brother of Saadat Khan, petitioned Nadir Shah through Tehmasp Khan Jalair, praying that the Shah be pleased to recommend him to Emperor Muhammad Shah, and pleading that so long as he, the son of the deceased governor's brother and, therefore, the rightful heir to his office and dignity, was available the vacant post should not be conferred on Abulmansur Khan who was merely a son of the late Burhan-ul-mulk's sister. On behalf of Abulmansur Khan Lachhmi Narayan, a loyal and hereditary wakil of Saadat Khan at the imperial court, submitted an application to the Shah through Abdul Baqi Khan, the Persian Wazir. He argued that neither Abulmansur Khan nor Sher Jang was an heir to Saadat Khan's office and property which belonged to the Emperor who might confer them on any body he pleased. But if a choice were to be made between the two candidates, it should not be forgotten that Saadat Khan had not been well-disposed towards Sher Jang, and had given his eldest and most beloved daughter in marriage to Abulmansur Khan in preference to Sher Jang, though the latter happened to have been more closely related to him. Moreover, Abulmansur Khan was decidedly a better man. He was honest, trustworthy and God-fearing. He possessed natural talents and was popular with his late uncle's troops.

\* Siyaadat Khan died in Rajab 1144 H. ( 29th December 1731--27th January 1732 ) See *Tabsirat-ul-Nazirin*, p, 201a.

He had, above all, managed to collect two krores of Rupees intended as a present (*peshkash*) to the Shah in anticipation of his appointment.\*

Upon the financial resources of the respective candidates depended their success or failure. Whichever of the two could please the Persian conqueror by rich presents was sure to win the coveted office. As Abulmansur Khan was in possession of his uncle's hoards at Faizabad, his prayer was accepted. Two hundred † Qizilbash horse were sent to Awadh to bring two krores of Rupees in which was included the ransom imposed on Saadat Khan, and to invest Abulmansur Khan with the robes of the governorship of the province. They brought on 13th May, ‡ 1739, one kroré and eighty lakhs of Rupees with some precious articles, including a huge elephant. To these was added a sum of twenty lakhs of Rupees from Saadat Khan's house at Delhi and the entire amount was deposited in the Shah's treasury. †† Soon after Nadir Shah's departure from Delhi Emperor Muhammad Shah conferred on Abulmansur Khan the title of Safdar Jang (Lion of Battle) and confirmed him in Awadh with all its *sarkars*, granting him the Jagirs held by his uncle.\*\*

## 2—DEFEAT OF THE RAJA OF TILOI, NOVEMBER 1739

For some months after his appointment Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang must have had a very busy time. Contemporary historians, whose theme in almost all cases was Delhi history, seldom bestowed a passing glance at the happenings in the provinces. We know, however, from the *Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsh*, a history of Faizabad, that the news of Saadat Khan's death

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\* Imad 30 and 31.

† Imad. 31 Siyar, II. 485, says that one thousand troops were sent to Awadh.

‡ Delhi Chronicle, 6

†† Abdul Karim, 22b; Hadiq, 135; Shakir. 47; Maadan IV. 123b; Siyar II. 485; Imad. 31. Only Anand Ram, p. 52, says one kroré. *Jahan-Kusha*, Persian Text, 207, gives one kroré, but two Mss. older than the text, preserved at the Victoria Library Udaipur (p. 161b) have two krores of Rupees.

\*\* Maktubat, Letters No. 12, 16, and 17.

had instigated Awadh to rebellion. All classes of lawless men who thrive in disorder, and many of the big chiefs who were still anxious to regain their freedom, raised their heads in various parts of the province. Shaikh Nasrat-ullah and Farhat-ullah, landlords of Amethi Bandagi, 14 miles south-west of Lucknow, joined hands with the Rajput rulers of Hasanpur, Tiloi and Garh Amethi in the Sultanpur district and the newly converted Pathans of Jagdishpur, situated about 11 miles north-east of Tiloi, and created a wide-spread insurrection. Safdar Jang was dismayed for a time. But, after some hesitation, the new governor, encouraged by his wife, the courageous and talented Sadr-un-nisa, marched out of Lucknow with his Mughals and artillery and defeated and dispersed the rebels who had not yet been able to organise themselves and gather sufficient strength.\* Similar other risings might have taken place in other parts of the province. Safdar Jang's letters addressed to the Emperor between 1739 and 1743 indicate his anxiety about the turbulence of big Awadh chiefs who might commit mischief any moment. Two of his letters reported actual outbreaks in the southern and the north-western parts of his *suba* and of his success over the rebel chiefs.

Taking advantage of the change of government, the Raja of Tiloi, a hereditary enemy of the house of Safdar Jang, made a fresh attempt to regain his independence, of which his warrior ancestor, Raja Mohan Singh, had been deprived as early as 1723. He amassed sufficient materials of war and concentrated his troops in the strong fort of Tiloi, the seat of his residence, which was surrounded by an extensive belt of dense and thorny jungle. In order to quell the rebellion Safdar Jang set out from Lucknow with his army and a large park of artillery and after a few days' successive marches reached Tiloi on 10th November, 1739. The Nawab's men quickly besieged the fort and delivered a vigorous assault on it. The Rajputs offered a stubborn resistance, came out of their stronghold and there was open fierce fighting for about

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\* William Hoey's *Memoirs of Delhi and Faizabad*, Vol. II pp, 246-47.

two hours. But they could not stand before the artillery and superior discipline of the Mughals. A large number of the Raja's men and a few of his chief officers were slain and the rest lost hope and escaped from the field.\* Safdar Jang made no further attempt to dislodge the rebel and returned to Faizabad. Although the Raja failed to realise his dream of independence, yet he could not be ousted and remained in possession of his estate.

### 3.—DEFEAT OF NAWAL SINGH GAUR OF KATESAR, MARCH 1741

Early in 1741 Safdar Jang was obliged to undertake a punitive expedition against Nabinagar and Katesar,† near the ancient town of Laharpur in the modern district of Sitapur. The ruler of these places, Raja Nawal Singh Gaur, traced his descent from one Raja Chandra Sen, a Rajput of the Brahma-Gaur clan, who, according to the family tradition, had migrated with Saadat Khan from Delhi to Awadh and settled at Katesar. Proud of the strength of his forts, vastness of his army and abundance of materials of war, Nawal Singh, who had added considerably to his ancestral estate, meditated open independence and refused to pay the government revenue. Thinking his immediate suppression necessary, Safdar Jang left Faizabad towards the end of February, 1741 and after more than ten days' laborious journey reached Nabinagar on or about the 8th March. On the 9th, his forces invested the forts of Nabinagar and Katesar which were situated in the centre of the Raja's dominion and were surrounded each by a deep and wide moat full of water. Safdar Jang's men erected batteries all round the ditches from where his big field guns maintained a hot and effective fire day and night. The besieged put up a brave resistance and fought with heroic courage, but lost a large number of their men. The Nawab ordered mines to be dug under the towers of the forts and batteries to be advanced to support his men. Nawal Singh and his followers

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\* Mansur, Letters No. 27 (to the Emperor) and No. 3 to Ishaq Khan.

† Nabinagar is 17 miles N. E. of Sitapur and 2 m. N. W. of Laharpur. Katesar is about 3 miles N. W. of Nabinagar.

who had fought for eleven days and nights were now reduced to great straits and growing apprehensive of the safety of themselves and their families, they left the fort during the night of 19th March, 1741.\* In the course of his flight, the Gaur chief lost some more of his men. His brother was captured alive. Both the forts were now occupied by Safdar Jang who thereafter returned to Faizabad in triumph.† Nawal Singh Gaur seems to have tendered his submission in time, and accordingly his territory was restored to him.

#### 4.—SAFDAR JANG ORDERED TO AID ALIVRADI KHAN 1742

Having defeated and slain his master, the voluptuous and foolish Sarafranz Khan on 20th April, 1740,‡ Alivardi Khan, who had been raised by the victim's father from poverty to power, usurped his provinces of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa, and set himself up as governor for which he obtained the formal sanction of his Mughal suzerain by a lavish present of money and jewels. One of the Khan's disaffected officers, named Mir Habib, invited Bhaskar Pant, commander-in-chief of Raghuji Bhonsle of Nagpur, to invade Bangal. Early in 1742, Bhaskar crossed the forest of Ramgarh and plundered and ravaged the Panchkot (Panchet) Pargana in the month of April. Alivardi Khan, who had, a few months before, rescued his nephew and son-in-law Sayyid Ahmad Khan, entitled Saulat Jang from a

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\* Safdar Jang's letter gives Shamba (Saturday), 2nd Muharram. Saturday, the 2nd Muharram fell on 31st March, 1739 and on 3rd January, 1757. On 31st March 1739 (10th April, 1739, New Style) Safdar Jang was at Faizabad, trying to get himself appointed Subedar, and on the latter and subsequent dates he was at Delhi. In a letter to Alivardi Khan in which he refers to this, his Khairabad (Katesar) expedition as having been just concluded, he prays for Alivardi's success in Cuttock in which he was then busy (see Mansur. p. 89). Alivardi was busy in recovering Cuttock early in 1154 H. Therefore the date of Safdar Jang's victory over the Katesar chief is Monday, the 2nd Muharram, 1154 H., Shamba (Saturday) being a clerical error for Do-Shamba (Monday). This is fully confirmed by another letter of Safdar Jang (see Mansur. 114-115) which says that he was in the vicinity of Khairabad on 15th Zil Hijja 1153 H.

† Mansur. Letter No. 4 pp-6-7.

‡ Sardesai, II. 484, and P. E. Roberts, Historical Geography of India—British Period, give 1741.

revolution at Cuttock caused by the latter's misrule\* was leisurely returning to Murshidabad, when he heard, near Midnapur, the news of the Maratha invasion of Bangal. He hastened towards Burdwan where two skirmishes were fought, in both of which Alivardi Khan receiving the worst of it. The Khan now pushed his way to Kutwa, being constantly harassed by the Marathas all the way and his men reduced to starvation.† Meanwhile, leaving the major part of the Maratha army at Kutwa, Mir Habib with seven thousand active horse quickly marched to Murshidabad, raided the houses of a few of the rich inhabitants on 15th May and brought to Bhaskar Pant two krores and a half of Rupees.‡ Informed of this, Alivardi Khan hurried to Murshidabad where he arrived in the evening of the day the Marathas had left it. The Hugli being in flood, Bhaskar could not pursue him immediately.

Alivardi Khan now began making grand preparations to drive out the Marathas as soon as the rainy season was over. In response to his summons his youngest nephew and son-in-law Zain-ud-din Ahmad Khan Haibat Jang, governor of Bihar, joined him with as many troops as his province could spare. Alivardi Khan also wrote to the Emperor through Murid Khan, whom the Delhi Court had sent to Bangal to demand the revenues of the eastern provinces, pleading his inability to pay the imperial dues till the Marathas were driven out, and appealing to Muhammad Shah for immediate aid. Anxious to save the provinces of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa from the hands of the Deccan freebooters, the Emperor ordered Safdar Jang to go to the aid of Alivardi Khan as speedily as he could. Amir Khan Umdat-ul-mulk, governor of Allahabad, was directed to expedite Safdar Jang's march to Bangal.\*

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\* Siyar. II 503-5. Sardesai, II 434-5, says that Siraj-ud-daula was the governor of Orissa and his misrule had led to the revolution in Cuttock. This is opposed to the version given in Persian sources. Moreover, Siraj-ud-daula was not more than 9 or 10 years of age in 1742. A. D.

† Siyar, II. 509-513; Sardesai. II 486.

‡ Sardesai II 486; Siyar II 513 says that from Jagat Seth's house alone lakhs of rupees in cash besides many valuable articles were plundered. He does not give the total value of the plunder.

Muhammad Shah also wrote to Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, who was inimical to Raghuji Bhonsle, to drive Bhaskar Pant out of Bangal, for which service he promised him the *chauth* on the revenues of the three provinces and the grant of a *sanad* (letter of appointment) for the governorship of Malwa.†

### 5.—ACQUISITION OF THE FORTS OF ROHTAS AND CHUNAR

Having received the imperial orders, Safdar Jang, while professing his zeal for Muhammad Shah's service, pleaded that there being no strong fort in his province where he might lodge his family, it was not possible for him to undertake a distant expedition, leaving his people at the mercy of the turbulent Awadh chiefs who were capable of creating disturbance in the twinkling of an eye. Nor was it safe to take his family with him, for an expedition against the Marathas was sure to be attended with great dangers. He, therefore, requested the Emperor to grant him the strong forts of Rohtas and Chunar where he might place his ladies and dependants and go to fight the Marathas without being oppressed by the thought of their safety. Safdar Jang directed Raja Lachhmi\* Narayan, his agent at the imperial court, to impress on Muhammad Shah that one indispensable condition of his undertaking the expedition was the grant to him of the forts and asked him to do his best to secure their cession. He also urged Amir Khan Umdat-ul-mulk to represent his case to the Emperor. Anxious as he was for the safety of Bangal, the Emperor complied with Safdar Jang's demands and issued two *farmans*, ordering the commandants of the said forts to hand them over to the governor of Awadh.‡

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† Sardesai, II 440 For the emperor's instructions to Amir Khan see Siyar II. 515-517; M. U. I 365. Imad's version breathes of a partisan spirit. It says that the emperor being offended with Alivardi for his failure to pay the promised revenue, wanted an opportunity to punish him. Amir Khan knew Muhammad Shah's mind and wrote to him that as Alivardi was busy against the Marathas and the territory was denuded of troops, it was easy to get rid of him, a slayer of his master (aqa kush) and Safdar Jang was the fit person to accomplish this work. Hence the emperor directed Safdar Jang to proceed to Bangal (see Imad p. 33).

\* Maktubat, pp. 183-186.

† Siyar. II. 500-21; M.U. I. 365.

The above preliminaries settled, Safdar Jang left Faizabad early in December, 1742, at the head of about seventeen thousand well-equipped horse, of which 6,000 to 7,000 were Qizilbash deserters from Nadir Shah's army, a good park of artillery and other materials of war and started in the direction of Patna. Having reached Banaras, he crossed the Ganga on a bridge of boats prepared at his orders and marched on to Chunar. He garrisoned the fort with some of his faithful troops and in great military array resumed his march to the capital of Bihar.‡

#### 6.—SAFDAR JANG'S DOINGS AT PATNA

On his near approach, the historic city of Patna was filled with consternation and dismay. The people's fears, shared also by their deputy-governor, Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, father of the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, arose from their knowledge of the conduct of the Qizilbash troops who had carried out a general massacre at Delhi more than three years and a half before. Imploring the intercession of Murid Khan, the imperial agent, Hidayat Ali Khan advanced as far as Maner, some miles west of Patna to welcome Safdar Jang. The governor of Awadh received him well and both marched to Patna on the 17th December, 1742.

Safdar Jang encamped at the village of Bankipur, outside the old Patna city, and directed Hidayat Ali Khan to vacate the fort for him and his troops. Before these orders could be carried out, he posted some of his Mughal soldiers at the gates of the fort, stopping ingress to and egress from it. With the help of a few servants Ghulam Husain Khan, then a boy of about fifteen years of age, cautiously removed, during the night, Haibat Jang's property and servants and as much of his furniture as he could to a convenient place near the fort. But it proved to be unsafe, and, therefore, Hidayat Ali Khan had

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‡ Siyar II. 421; M. U. I. 365, Maadan. IV. 152 apologetically says that Safdar Jang advanced as far as Banaras, and only his advance troops reached Patna. Imad p. 34 says that traditions differ. One says that he entered Patna, while the other says that he did not.



to remove them to a house near his own. Next day, Safdar Jang made a pompous entry into the town, took a survey of the fort and put it in the charge of his own officers. He then went out to visit the tomb of his maternal grandfather (father of the late Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk) situated outside the city, and to say his prayers there after which he returned to his camp at Bankipur.

The gentry of the town, the mansabdars, zamindars and Jagirdars of the province repaired to Bankipur to wait on Safdar Jang. But the proud governor of Awadh did not receive even the highest among them with as much consideration as they deserved. In spite of a polite protest by Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, he forcibly obtained possession of two or three elephants and three or four big field-guns—the best of those that had been left at Patna by Haibat Jang, governor\* of Bihar.

#### 7.—SAFDAR JANG RETURNS TO AWADH

While Safdar Jang was openly acting like an enemy at Patna, Alivardi Khan was busy re-organising the administration of Cuttock in Orissa. On the 6th October, 1742, he had driven out Bhaskar Pant by crossing the Ganga during the previous night and falling upon the unsuspecting Marathas at Kutwa.† He had then returned to Cuttock, and as he feared that the Marathas might appear again, he remained there for sometime to guard his frontier and to reorganise his forces. Here it was that he received reports of Safdar Jang's arrival at Patna and of his having forcibly occupied the fort in defiance of the friendly relations that existed between them. He immediately started towards Murshidabad, his capital and wrote to Safdar Jang requesting him to go back to Awadh as the Marathas had been driven away beyond the lake Chilka. The Khan also

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\*Siyar. II. 521-22; T. M. 23a. Paris Ms of Akhbarat gives details; also letters of the English Factory. Both Inad and Maadan are silent about Safdar Jang's conduct at Patna.

† Siyar II, 518-19; Sardesai II, 488.

appealed to the Emperor to order Safdar Jang back from Patna; for he did not stand in need of help from an ally like him ‡

Muhammad Shah, thereupon, wrote a special note with his own hand commanding Safdar Jang's immediate return to Awadh and entrusted it to Lachmi Narayan, his agent at Delhi, with orders to transmit it to his master as speedily as possible. But before the imperial note could reach him, Safdar Jang's spies reported the offence Alivardi Khan had taken at his conduct and of the movements of Balaji Bajirao from Bundelkhand towards Banaras.\* Afraid of the safety of his province, Safdar Jang, who had hereditary enmity with the Peshwa, left Patna, crossed the Ganga at Maner and set out for Awadh.† He had not yet reached Faizabad before he received the alarming news that Balaji had reached Banaras by way of Allahabad. Without entering his capital, Safdar Jang hastened towards Banaras and sent Raja Nawal Rai ahead with a powerful army to encounter the enemy. But Balaji had already left Banaras before the Raja's arrival. Safdar Jang, therefore, returned to Faizabad.‡

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‡ Siyar II, 522; M. U. I. 365.

‡ Mansur 153; Sardesai, II 46. The Peshwa proceeded to Banaras, then to Gaya and finally to Mnrshidabad. He first met Alivardi Khan on 10th April, 1743---Ibid.

† Siyar II 522, Imad, p. 34, is full of mistakes and inconsistencies. T. M., 123, says that Safdar Jang took 12 lakhs of Rs. from Alivardi Khan for the expenses incurred in his journey before he left Patna. This is quite probable.

‡ Mansur., letter, No. I, to Maharana Khadaula. pp. 154-155.

## CHAPTER X

### SAFDAR JANG AS MIR-I-ATISH—SUBJUGATION OF RUHELKHAND, 1744-1746

#### 1.—SAFDAR JANG SUMMONED TO COURT, 1743

After Nadir Shah's departure from Delhi Emperor Muhammad Shah, who had for sometime harboured suspicion against the powerful nobles of the Turani party,\* conceived the policy of patronising those of the Irani party in order to use them as a counterpoise against the former. The most important among his new favourites, who were set up against Nizam-ul-mulk and Qamar-ud-din Khan, were Amir Khan Umdat-ul-mulk and Ishaq Khan Mutman-ud-daulah who were raised to the responsible posts of the third Bakhshi and Diwan of Khalsa respectively. The Emperor even thought of replacing Qamar-ud-din Khan the wazir, by Amir Khan, his conscience-keeper; but he was confounded when the Wazir threatened resignation and left Delhi to join his cousin, the Nizam, who was encamped outside the city intending to march away to the Deccan. On the advice of Nizam-ul-mulk, Amir Khan was sent away to Allahabad early in April, 1740, to soothe the feelings of the aggrieved Wazir.† But the intrigues against the Turanis did not come to an end during the temporary exile of Amir Khan. Ishaq Khan acquired an ascendancy at Court, and after his death on 28th April, 1740, his son Mirza Muhammad, created Ishaq Khan Najm-ud-daulah, quickly acquired a greater hold on Muhammad Shah's mind than his deceased father ever had. The Nizam having departed for the Deccan on August 6th, 1740, and Qamar-ud-din Khan being addicted to sensual pleasures, the Irani party became the centre of interest at court. Amir Khan was also busy pushing his partymen's interest from Allahabad. He found a stalwart in the person of Abulmansur

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\* The Turanis were Central Asian Sunnis, while the Iranis were Persian Shias.

† Siyar II 486-87; Abulkarim, 874; T. M. 119b-120a

Khan Safdar Jang who, in a few years' time, became the most important pillar of the Irani party in India.\*

Towards the end of August, 1743, Muhammad Shah, desirous of strengthening the Irani faction, summoned Amir Khan and Safdar Jang from their respective provinces of Allahabad and Awadh to Court.† On the advice of Amir Khan, Safdar Jang, who had hitherto studiously avoided leaving his province, except once, on one pretext or another,‡ decided to comply with the imperial orders. As it was agreed that Amir Khan should reach Delhi first, the Khan left his deputy Sayyid Muhammad Khan at Allahabad and started for the imperial capital where he arrived on 17th November, 1743.‡

Having made elaborate preparations for the journey, Safdar Jang nominated Raja Nawal Rai (who had risen from an ordinary post to be the Bakhshi of the Nawab's army by sheer dint of his merits) as his deputy and left Faizabad on an auspicious day in the first week of October, as suggested by his astrologer Abdul Rahim Khan, taking with him Hidayat Ali Khan†† and his son Ghulam Husain Khan who had arrived from Bihar only a few hours before. He remained encamped outside the city for some days and started finally for Delhi in the third week of October. A few days' journey brought the party to a spot on the Ganga between Kanauj and Makanpur, where the Nawab halted for three or four days, waiting for the construction of a bridge on the river. When it was ready, he sent Nawal Rai back to Awadh and himself crossed the river with his family and troops. Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, who was appointed Faujdar of Khairabad Sarkar (modern Sitapur

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\* Siyar II 847.

† Siyar III 849. Safdar Jang was invited on the advice of Amir Khan (See Abulkarim, 87a ).

‡ Mansur, letters to the Emperor.

‡ Delhi chronicle, 21; Siyar III 850.

†† Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, deputy-governor of Bihar was suspected by Haibat Jang and Alivardi Khan of having been in treacherous collusion with Safdar Jang during the latter's stay at Patna. Hence Hidayat Ali Khan had left Bihar to join Safdar Jang.

district) not choosing to be placed under Nawal Rai's orders preferred to remain in the camp. The party reached Jalesar on the day of Id which fell on 17th November. Here, Safdar Jang stopped for that day and performed the rites of the festival in a tent erected for the purpose. March was resumed the next day and when Delhi remained two or three stages away Sher Jang and Raja Lachhmi Narain came from that city to receive the Nawab. In two or three days, Safdar Jang reached within sight of the imperial fort and performed the ceremony of saluting the Emperor from the bank of the Yamuna. This has been described by Ghulam Husain Khan, who saw the whole ceremony with his own eyes, in the following words :—

“Having arrived near the bank of the Yamuna on a date which passes out of my memory at this time, Safdar Jang thought it advisable to make his appearance with some pomp and magnificence. Leaving his heavy baggage in his camp, he marched on in military array opposite to the imperial fort at Delhi. He had with him over ten thousand horse, all well-mounted and well-armed, the Hindustanis upon horses of value of their own country, while the Mughals dressed in scarlet uniforms were upon Persian horses, adorned with silver trappings. Besides, there were some elephants caparisoned with clothes worked in threads of silver and gold and having *amaries* covered over with silver and gold platings. Of the elephants three bore the Nawab's standards. Luckily it had rained during the previous night and the morning proved fair and pleasant. When Safdar Jang reached opposite to the Octagonal Tower (Musam-man Burj) of the Hall of Private Audience, which, being richly gilt, was shining like the sun, he alighted from his elephant, bowed low according to custom and stood awhile in a respectful posture. After having received some roses sent by the Emperor (in answer to his bow) through an eunuch of his court, he mounted again and returned to his camp, leaving the Emperor, who was sitting inside the Tower, much

pleased with the show and the warlike appearance of his troops.”\*

On 27th November, 1743, the day fixed for his interview with the Emperor, Safdar Jang crossed the Yamuna with all his troops and baggage on a bridge of boats and encamped at the other bank of the river. Wazir Qamruddin Khan came out of the city to welcome him. After an exchange of usual courtesies and presents, the Wazir returned to court. A little while after, Safdar Jang entered the city in great military array, and paid his respects to the Emperor towards the evening. He took up his residence in the mansion of Dara Shikoh, which had been in the possession of his family from the time of Saadat Khan.†

## 2.—SAFDAR JANG APPOINTED MIR ATISH AND GOVERNOR OF KASHMIR, 1744

Within a few months of Safdar Jang's arrival, the Irani party led by Amir Khan, a highly connected, clever and smooth tongued courtier, successfully persuaded Muhammad Shah to remove Hafiz-ud-din Khan, a Turani noble attached to his leaders Qamr-ud-din Khan and the Nizam, from the office of Mir Atish (Superintendent of Imperial Artillery) and appoint Safdar Jang in his place. The Emperor, impressed also with his dignified conduct and the strength and warlike array of his troops,‡ formally installed Safdar Jang in the office on 21st March, 1744, and expressed the hope that he would prove loyal and successful in his new dignity. As usual with the Mir Atish, one of whose duties was the protection of the persons of the Emperor and his family, Safdar Jang took up his residence in the imperial fort and organised the artillery on proper lines.‡

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\* Siyar. III 850; Eng. translation by Mustafa, Vol. III 224-25, I have corrected some mistakes in the translation by consulting the Persian text and have accepted the rest of it.

† Siyar. III 851.

‡ Haricharan, 382b.

‡ Siyar III 852; Abdulkarim, 87a; Maadan IV 153b; Imad 34.

Safdar Jang now rose fast in the imperial favour. In addition to his former posts, he was appointed governor of Kashmir on 4th October, 1744. He despatched his cousin Sher Jang to rule his new province. Having reached Kashmir Sher Jang invited Babar-ulla, a brave rebel chief of that region, to a conference and, breaking the pledge he had given for his safety, threw him into a dungeon. The province now quietly submitted to the Nawab's rule. After some days' stay, Sher Jang returned to Delhi, leaving Afrasiab Khan, an able officer in Safdar Jang's service, in Kashmir.\*

### 3.—ORIGIN AND RISE OF ALI MUHAMMAD KHAN RUHELA

During the reign of Bahadur Shah (1707-1712), an energetic and ambitious Afghan slave, named Daud, fleeing from the house of his master, Shah Alam Khan, an Afghan resident of Toru Shahmatpur in Roh (mountainous tracts of Afghanistan), came to Ruhelkhand, then known as Katehr, and took up service under a local chief. While in the service of Mudar Shah of Madhkar, 13 miles east of Chandausi, Daud took part in an expedition against the ruler of Bankauli, 26 miles north of Bareilly, where fell into his hands among other things a handsome Jat boy of seven or eight years of age. He converted the boy into Islam, named him Ali Muhammad Khan and adopted him as his son.† Some years after, Daud, relinquished service under Mudar Shah and entered that of Raja Debi Chand of Kumaon. Next he treacherously deserted his

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\* Siyar III 853; Maadan IV 154a

† Gulistan. tr. by Elliot, 5-7. Contemporary Persian authorities say that Ali Muhammad Khan was of Jat parents. See Gulistan. 7; Abdulkarim, 88b, Ashob, 424; Siyar. II 480. A partisan attempt has, however, been made in modern times to prove that he was a Sayyid. Najmul Ghani of Rampur has invented a false pedigree of the Khan, tracing it to Muhammad. The Maulvi's discussion is altogether unconvincing and ridiculous. His object seems to be to prove that the present ruler of Rampur is a Sayyid.

new master in a battle between the Raja and Azmat Ullah Khan, deputy-Faujdar of Muradabad, and was consequently put to death at the Raja's orders. Ali Muhammad Khan now succeeded in command of Daud's army and entered service under Azmat Ullah Khan in 1722.\*

Having obtained possession of Nibia Bowli and other villages in Daud's jagir, Ali Muhammad Khan, who now passed for a Ruhela, took up his residence at Bisauli, 14 miles south-east of Chandausi, augmented the number of his troops and extended his possessions all round, plundering and sacking the villages of the neighbourhood. In quick succession he surprised and killed Muhammad Saleh, an eunuch of the Delhi court in charge of pargana Manauna (1727) and secured the murder of Duja (Durjan Singh), zamindar of Aonla† and the neighbouring villages, by a hired assassin and obtained possession of their territories.‡ He thus became master of a considerable part of the modern Bareilly district and began to give himself airs as if he were an independent ruler. He managed to secure the patronage of the Wazir who was on the look-out for supporters against the Irani party at the court. In 1150 H (1737-38 A. D.) he rendered a signal service to Wazir Qamruddin Khan by assisting his army against Sayyid Saifuddin Khan of Jansath and killing the latter at a critical moment of the battle, for which he was rewarded with the title of Nawab and a reduction in the revenue payable by him.↓ But during Nadir Shah's invasion the Ruhela evaded payment of government dues and forcibly occupied the imperial territory as far as Richha 18 miles N. W. of Pilibhit. On 5th April 1741 (19th Muharram, 1154 H)\*\* he surprised and slew Raja Harnand and his son Moti Ram who had been despatched by the wazir to call him to account, and

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\* Gulistan 9-10.

† Aonla is 17 miles N. of Badaun and Manauna is about 2 m. W. of Aonla. Sheet 53 P.

‡ Gulistan. 11-12; Hadiq 139.

↓ I bid. Hadiq exaggerates and says that Ali Muhammad Khan was given a mansab of 5,000 zat and 5,000 sewar.

\*\* Akhbar-ul-Sanadid, (Urdu) vol. 1 p. 1-5.



quickly occupied Muradabad, Sambhal, Shahabad, Shahjahanpur and several parganas of Bareilly, but not the latter town yet.\* His power and prestige swelled beyond all expectations.

The wazir, wedded to a life of pleasure, confirmed the Ruhela in his illegal possessions instead of taking steps to chastise him for his aggressions. The latter thereupon agreed to pay the government revenue.†

Free from the fear of the Delhi Court whose suspicion he had lulled by his recent outward submission, Ali Muhammad Khan invaded the country of Raja Kalyan Chand, successor of Debi Chand of Kumaon to avenge Daud's death. After the battle of Rudrapur, 14 miles N. W. of Baheri, the Raja fled to Almora and thence to Garhwal. The Ruhelas occupied his dominion, made numerous prisoners, destroyed Hindu temples and slew cows in public streets. Ali Muhammad Khan annexed Kashipur, Rudrapur and two other parganas south of the hills to his territory, and leased the rest to a relation of the ex-ruler of Kumaon.‡

#### 4.—SAFDAR JANG INSTIGATES THE EMPEROR AGAINST THE RUHELA CHIEF, FEB. 1745

Between Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang and Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela, there was an important cause of enmity. The Ruhela dominion lay on the North-west frontier of Awadh with no permanent barrier like a river or a mountain between them. A man of great energy and ambition, the unscrupulous Ali Muhammad Khan was steadily pushing on his conquests in all directions. Delhi being very near in the west, he could not extend his frontier much further in that direction; the presence of mountains barred his progress in the north and the east, and he would not advance to the south where lay the territory of a brother Afghan—Muhammad Khan Bangash. Safdar Jang,

\* Gulistan, 17; Gul. 15a; Hadiq 139; Siyar. III 854; Haricharan, 385b Anand Ram makes a bare reference. 336.

† Hadiq 140; Siyar III. 855; Anand Ram, 335.

‡ Gulistan 18; Gul. 16a and b; Hadiq 140; Abdulkarim, 86b; Shakir, 86; Anand Ram, 335.

therefore, naturally feared that Ali Muhammad Khan, accustomed to a life of incessant military activity, would sooner or later turn his arms against Awadh. Nor was this fear altogether groundless. Debi Das, Deputy Faujdar of Kanauj, reported to Safdar Jang, probably soon after his appointment, that the Ruhelas were carrying on depredations on the north-west frontier of his province.\* The Ruhela character and the nature of their raids clearly unfolded in the letters of the *Gulshan-i-Bahar*† leave little doubt in the mind of the student that Ali Muhammad Khan's men must have repeated their raids on the Awadh frontier. Hence Safdar Jang regarded the Ruhela colony as a perpetual source of menace to the safety of his hereditary province.‡

Early in 1745, Safdar Jang found a convenient pretext to instigate Muhammad Shah to uproot the Ruhela colony in Katehr. Some of his men, who were cutting timber, under the supervision of his *Darogha-i-Imarat* (Superintendent of P.W.D.), in the forest at the foot of the Kumaon Hills, were attacked and driven out by Ali Muhammad Khan's Ruhelas. Highly enraged, Safdar Jang represented the matter to the Emperor and proposed a punitive expedition against the Khan.‡ Muhammad Shah, who had been nursing a grievance against the Ruhela for his open pretensions of independence, accepted the proposal.‡‡

##### 5.—IMPERIAL OPERATIONS AGAINST THE RUHELA

The Emperor left Delhi on 25th February, 1745, with the Wazir Qamruddin Khan, Safdar Jang, Amir Khan and other nobles and a formidable army, and passing through Loni, Garh-

\* Mansur, Letter to Raja Anrudha Singh, p. 162.

† *Gulshan-i-Bahar*, pp. 8, 13, 54 and 55.

‡ Abdul Karim, 88 b; Shaker, 86; Ashob 426.

‡ Hadiq 140. It adds that Safdar Jang promised Rs. 1,50,000 for the expenses of the campaign.

‡‡ Ali Muhammad K. began to act as a rebel and a king. He withheld revenues (Anand Ram 335) and made for himself red tents, the possession of which was one of the royal prerogatives in Mughal India (Abulkarim, 88b; Haricharan, 383 o; M. U. II. 843).

muktesar and Shahbazpur by leisurely marches, reached near Sambhal on 30th April. Here, Qaim Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad joined him on the 2nd May. On the 24th, the imperial army reached within 8 miles of the Ruhela stronghold of Bangarh, situated about 10 miles north of Badaun, in which Ali Muhammad Khan had taken shelter, after the latter's two successive attempts to come to terms had failed.\*

The military operations against Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela reveal total bankruptcy of soldierly talents of Muhammad Shah and his nobles and excite ridicule of the student familiar with the exploits of Akbar and Aurangzeb. Their inefficiency in the field was aggravated by disgraceful quarrels among them. Safdar Jang and Amir Khan strongly desired the total ruin of the Ruhela upstart, while the wazir and Qaim Khan Bangash saw in Ali Muhammad's fall the triumph of the Irani party and secretly supported the enemy.† On the way from Delhi to Bangarh there were out-bursts of prejudice and bad blood between Safdar Jang and the wazir, and between Qaim Khan and Safdar Jang, and the Emperor himself had to reconcile the disputants on the latter occasion.‡ The power and energy of the court were thus frittered away in selfish wranglings, and all the armed strength of the Empire failed to capture the insignificant fort of Bangarh until after Ali Muhammad had vacated it.

In the afternoon of the 24th of May, the Ruhelas left their stronghold, which was surrounded by a two-mile wide forest, and appeared near the imperial camp. Safdar Jang and Amir Khan, placing artillery in front, proceeded against them, and were soon followed by the wazir. The enemy was defeated and pushed back, and the nobles returned to camp without pressing their advantage home. On the 25th, there was no

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\* Anand Ram, 204-251. Siyar III. 855, says that the Emperor reached Badaun, which is unlikely, for it is 15 miles south of Bangarh. Haricharan, 385b, gives 1157 H., which is wrong.

Loni is 7 m. N. E. of Delhi and Shahbazpur is 7 m. E. of Garhmuktesar sheet 53L.

† Siyar III. 855; Hadiq 14b; M. U. Vol. I 359 and vol. II 843.

‡ Anand Ram 206 and 247.

fighting, but about midnight the Ruhelas issuing out of their ambush, opened fire on the imperialists and retired only three hours before dawn. On the 26th, Qaim Khan was directed to deliver an assault on Bangarh, but owing to extreme heat there was little fighting. The 27th was passed in rest. This day, Raja Nawal Rai, deputy-governor of Awadh arrived, in obedience to his master's summons, near to the east of Bangarh. As the Ruhela stronghold lay between the Raja and the imperial camp, Safdar Jang fearing lest the enemy should fall on his troops who were worn out by many days' incessant marches advanced with a part of his army some miles east of Bangarh and brought Nawal Rai to camp in the afternoon. With the Raja was the future historian Murtaza Husain Khan, then only a risaldar in the Awadh army. Next day, the nobles advanced from their places, erected batteries and began firing field guns to which the enemy replied from within the fort. On the 29th, the Mughals took rest. On the 30th, Amir Khan, Safdar Jang and some other nobles advanced their batteries two miles further in the direction of Bangarh and captured two of the four mud forts around the principal Ruhela stronghold. Towards sunset the nobles returned to their tents behind the batteries. At the dead of night Ali Muhammad Khan's men made their appearance to deliver a surprise attack, but owing to the vigilance of the Mughal artillery, had to return without achieving their object.\*

#### 6—ALI MUHAMMAD KHAN TAKEN TO DELHI, JUNE, 1745

Anxious to save the Ruhela leader, Qamruddin Khan interceded for him with the Emperor. Accordingly, in the morning of the 2nd June, the Ruhela sent a formal message of submission and shortly after himself, accompanied by his two sons, chief officers and three to four thousand troops, repaired to the imperial camp. First he called on Qaim Khan and then on the Wazir who brought him to the imperial presence with his hands tied by a handkerchief. Muhammad Shah pardoned him and

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\* Anand Ram, 250--257; Siyar. III 855; Hadiq. 140; Ashob 428; Gulistan. 21 Murtaza H. Khan, Ashob and Anand Ram, all the three were present in the campaign. But Anand Ram's account written immediately after, is the best and most reliable.

made him over to the custody of the wazir. Bangarh was pulled down and the Ruhela property and dominion were confiscated. The Emperor left for Delhi on 4th June and reached there on the 30th.\*

The story of Ali Muhammad Khan's stormy life may, at this place, be briefly carried to his death. Sometime after his arrival at Delhi, the wazir set him free and appointed him *Faujdar* of *Chakla Sarhind*.† On Ahmad Shah Abdali's entering Lahore on 21st January, 1748, the Ruhela, who appears to have entered into correspondence with the invader, left Sarhind, reached Saharanpur on 24th February, and crossed the Ganga near Daranagar on the 1st March.‡ Having reached Muradabad, he drove out the wazir's deputy, forced Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, *Faujdar* of Bareilly, to submit and once again became the master of Ruhelkhand. But he did not live long enough to enjoy the fruits of his usurpation. He died on 25th September, 1748.‡

#### 7—SHUJA-UD-DAULAH'S MARRIAGE, 1745

Offended with Amir Khan's unbecoming conduct towards himself and slighting behaviour towards Najmuddaulah the Emperor desired to strengthen the latter's position and raise the status of his family to one of equality with the former. Accordingly, he negotiated a match between Jalaluddin Haider, later on entitled Shuja-ud-daulah, the only son of Safdar Jang, and the sister of Ishaq Khan Najmuddaulah who was the Emperor's greatest favourite. The bride, who subsequently acquired fame as Bahu Begam, was declared by Muhammad Shah to be 'his daughter'. He deputed Amir Khan to make on his behalf suitable preparations for her marriage.\* The wedding took place towards the end of 1745 A. D.‡

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\* Anand Ram, 257--264; Hadiq 141; Siyar. III. 855.

† Anand Ram, 334.

‡ Gulshan-i-Bahar, 54.

‡ Gulistan. 28; Hadiq. 141.

\* Siyar III. 858.

† Imad, 36. The marriage took place a month or two after Qamr-ud-din Khan's fall from the steps of his residence which occurred on September 23, 1745, (Anand Ram 148)

Safdar Jang provided the bride-groom's gifts to the bride (*Sachaq*) on a regal scale, and sent them to the house of Najmud-daulah in a long procession, accompanied by his friends and well-wishers. From the foot of the imperial fort to Kotila Firoz Shah nothing could be seen except trays full of various kinds of sweets, fruits, wearing apparel, ornaments and bottles of perfumed essence. There were large numbers of vessels, such as cups, dishes and other crockery of various shapes and workmanship. Conspicuous among these were more than a thousand silver vessels enamelled with gold, none of which cost less than one hundred rupees. Next day, Najmud-daulah sent *Mahdi* to the bride-groom's house, which was even more costly than the *Sachaq*. On both the occasions sumptuous feasts and grand entertainments were held. After the wedding Najmud-daulah gave a rich dowry to his sister. Safdar Jang distributed large sums in charity and held grand illuminations the like of which had not been seen in any marriage except in that of Jafar Khan, the wazir of Shah Jahan, or in that of Emperor Farrukhsiyar.\*

On Amir Khan Umadat-ul-mulk's murder which occurred on January 5, 1747, Safdar Jang became leader of the Irani party. The Wazir Qamrud-din Khan being immersed in degrading pleasures and the Nizam awaiting his fast approaching end in the Deccan, Safdar Jang now leapt to the front in the Mughal peerage, and in the midst of youthful mediocrities he began to be considered as the only powerful, experienced and sober-minded noble at the imperial court. He acquired an important place in Muhammad Shah's estimation and delicate state business, like the diplomatic relations with the Marathas, began to be transacted through him.†

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\* Haricharan, 393-4; Siyar III, 858, Maadan gives the same account as the Siyar. Imad. p, 36, says that forty six lakhs of rupees were spent in this marriage, while in Dara's marriage, the most costly among those of the Mughal princes, only thirty one lakh's of rupees were spent

† Selections from Peshva Daftar, vol II letter No. 2,

## CHAPTER XI

### THE FIRST INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI JANUARY-MARCH 1748

#### 1.—THE ABDALI CAPTURES KABUL AND PESHAWAR

The ancestral home of Ahmad Shah Abdali was in the Herat district, but for sometime the family seemed to have resided in Multan from where his grandfather, Abdulla Khan, accompanied by Muhammad Zaman Khan, the Shah's father, had returned to Herat in or about 1717 A. D.\* Ahmad Khan, as was his original name, was born at Herat in 1724. Here Abdulla Khan and his family experienced many ups and downs of fortune in the Afghan struggle with the Persian governor of their province, and, after the latter's withdrawal, in the scramble for supremacy in Herat. But the town was recovered by Nadir Shah and Ahmad Khan and his brother Zulfiqar Khan fled to Qandhar, where they were imprisoned by Shah Husain Ghilzai. When Nadir captured Qandhar in March, 1737, Ahmad Khan was released and appointed an ordinary attendant by the Persian monarch. Endowed as he was with the rare qualities of leadership, the Khan soon rose to be a commander in Nadir's army, and when his master was assassinated in his camp at Fatehabad near Kuchan in Khurasan, in the midnight † of 19th June, 1747, he fled to Qandhar, seized a convoy of treasures escorted by Nasir Khan, governor of Kabul, defeated and killed the governor of the town and carried out his enthronement under the title of Ahmad Shah Abdali in July or August, 1747.‡

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\* Husain Shahi, 3a.

† Jahan Kusha 245; Husain Shahi, 4b. Both have Sunday 11th Jamadil II. 1163 H. Sunday appears to be a mistake for Tuesday.

‡ Husain Shahi, 55; Abdulkarim, 94b; Anand Ram, 297; Siyar. III. 861. Abdal was the title of an ancestor of Ahmad Shah given by a saint. It means one free from worldly attachment. Ahmad belonged to the Saddu-Zai clan of Afghans. He assumed the title of Durr-i-Durrani (Pearl among pearls)

Ahmad Shah now released Nasir Khan, and appointing him governor of Kabul on his own behalf, sent him to his province with definite instructions to send him five lakhs of rupees without delay.\* On his arrival at Kabul, Nasir Khan, however, repudiated the agreement on the advice of the Afghan chiefs of the town, turned out the Shah's men and represented the matter to the Emperor of India. He was soon punished for his breach of faith by an invasion of his province in October, 1747 and was forced to take refuge at Peshawar. When the Abdali advance-guard under Jahan Khan appeared near Peshawar, Nasir Khan fled in perturbation of mind to Lahore, reaching there on 25th November. The Shah occupied Kabul and Peshawar, crossed the Indus at Attock, and after plundering a few villages near Hasan Abdal, returned to Peshawar to make preparations for an invasion of India. †

## 2.—DEFEAT OF SHAH NAWAZ AND LOSS OF THE PANJAB JANUARY 1748.

The Panjab then the North-West Frontier province of the Mughal Empire and torn assunder in a fratricidal war between the sons of the deceased governor Zakaria Khan, was, since 1745 inviting a foreign invasion. On the death of Zakaria Khan, the last notable governor, his eldest son Yahia Khan was appointed deputy governor of Lahore and Multan in September, 1745, on behalf of his uncle and father-in-law, Qamr-ud-din Khan. But Zakaria's second son Hayat-ullah entitled Shah Nawaz Khan, defeated his elder brother, threw him into prison and forcibly obtained possession of the provinces. Yahia Khan escaped from the prison in the midnight of 25th December, 1747, and fled to the wazir. At the instigation of Adina Beg Khan one of his officers, "who was a devil in human form," Shah Nawaz implored the assistance of the Abdali against his brother and the wazir. ‡

\* Husain Shahi 5a ; Abdul Karim 94 b, Anand Ram 297, Siyar III 61.

† Anand Ram, 302, 303, 308 and 309

‡ Siyar III. 861 ; Ashob 453 ; Anand Ram, 306--7.



Glad to get an early opportunity of recovering Nadir Shah's full heritage in India, Ahmad Shah crossed the Indus with about 18,000 troops in the first week of January, 1748 and proceeded towards Lahore, plundering and burning the villages on the way. He sent Shah Sabir, his spiritual preceptor, ahead to negotiate and win over Shah Nawaz Khan and offer him prime-ministership of the Indian Empire, should the Abdali succeed in stepping into the shoes of Muhammad Shah.\* But Shah Nawaz, listening to the advice of the wazir not to mar the good name of their family, and learning that the Abdali had no field artillery, had Shah Sabir arrested and killed, and made preparations to intercept the march of the invader. Informed of this, Ahmad Shah forded the Ravi on 20th January, encamped at the Shalimar Garden, 5 miles east of the present town of Lahore and next day fought with the local governor who had come to give battle at the head of 25,000 troops. The contest was indecisive, but when the Indian army was returning from the field in the evening, the mounted Afghan musketeers delivered a charge, fired a round of volleys and forced them out of the field. The darkness of the night and the presence of some Indian soldiers outside the town, however, prevented the Afghans from entering into Lahore.

During the night, Shah Nawaz Khan feeling panicky abandoned Lahore, and fled towards Delhi with his family, valuable jewels and ornaments. Left to their fate, the chief men of the town like Mir Momin, Lakhpat Rai, Surat Singh and others went out to wait on the invader who granted quarter to the people for a ransom of Rupees 30,00,000. The Shah then occupied the town, appropriated all the artillery, military stores and horses and camels in Lahore, and in spite of the agreement, his troops plundered most parts of the city. Here he stayed for one month and ten days, appointed his own governor and increased the number of his troops.†

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\* Anand Ram, 325, Siyar. III 362.

† Anand Ram, 326--330; Abdul Karim 95b--96a; Siyar, III, 862--63. The Siyar says that Adina Beg was the first to flee and his example was followed by others. In the battle, too, he remained standing like a wooden figure.

## 3 --PRINCE AHMAD SENT AGAINST THE ABDALI.

One might have supposed that after the humiliation and spoliation of Nadir's invasion, Muhammad Shah and his court would have grown wiser and shaken off their lethargy on the first news of the Abdali's march towards Kabul. But, in spite of the lessons of 1739, the proceedings of the Delhi court were marked by as much carelessness, ignorance and inefficiency in 1748 as in the year of the Persian invasion. The Emperor received the definite news of the Abdali's arrival at Kabul and of his sending his advance-guard towards Attock on the 12th November, 1747. Though he sent his advance-tents out of Delhi on 3rd December, he postponed his departure first to the 13th and then to the 24th. Meanwhile, learning that the invader had returned from Hasan Abdal, he gave up the idea of the expedition. Then came the news, on the 1st January, only three days after the arrival at Delhi of Nasir Khan, that the Abdali had left Peshawar and was marching to Lahore. Muhammad Shah then being ill, he sent, on the 18th, his nobles, Qamruddin Khan the wazir, Safdar Jang Mir Atish, Nasir Khan ex-governor of Kabul, and others with a huge army and a large park of artillery against the invader, disbursing Rs. 60,00,000 for their expenditure. Safdar Jang's share was eight lakhs and fifty thousand Rupees. He was, in addition given Ambala and some other parganas in jagir. Although the request of Ishwari Singh of Jaipur for grant to him of the fort of Ranthambhor was disregarded on the advice of the wazir and Safdar Jang, he left Delhi on the 23rd to join the party.\*

The nobles had not yet reached Narela, 16 miles N. W. of Delhi, when they heard of the fall of Lahore. They were filled with anxiety and sent a representation to the Emperor to come in person or send the crown prince instead. Accordingly, Muhammad Shah despatched Prince Ahmad under the guardianship of Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang on 8th February. The prince joined the army at Barauna, 4 miles south of Narela, on the

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\* Anand Ram, 308--315 ; Abdulkarim, 97a. Delhi Chronicle, p. 33, has Wednesday 22nd as the date of Ishwari Singh's departure. It is obviously a clerical error for 23rd.

10th and reached Panipat on the 20th. Here the Wazir was appointed to lead the van, Safdar Jang right wing and Ishwari Singh left wing, while the prince with Sadat Khan and the bulk of his army remained in the centre. Nasir Khan, the ex-governor of Kabul was directed to protect the near-guard. In this order the prince proceeded further, reached Karnal on the 29th and Sarhind on March 6th. He halted for one day at Sarhind, where in the fort he lodged a part of his treasure and heavy baggage under a strong guard, and then resumed his march on the 8th to ford the Satlaj at the ferry of Machhiwara instead of crossing it at Ludhiana which lay on the direct route to Lahore. He had yet covered only fourteen miles and was encamped near the village of Bharali, about 11 miles south of Machhiwara when he received the alarming reports that Sarhind had fallen into the hands of the enemy.\*

This happened in the following manner. Heaving received the definite news that the Mughal Prince was marching along the road to the Panjab, Ahmad Shah Abdali left Lahore on 29th February and started towards Delhi. He maintained strict secrecy about his movements and ordered his men to slay every Indian they could find near their camp. On the way, his scouts informed him that the prince had left a part of his treasure in the fort of Sarhind and was advancing towards the Satlaj to cross it at Machhiwara. The Abdali, therefore, avoiding the path of the Indian army, forded the Satlaj twenty two miles west of Machhiwara on 11th March, covered 40 miles during

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\* Anand Ram. 323, 324, 333, 336 and 337; Abdul Karim, 97b; Siyar. III 863; Gulistane. 101.

T. Ahmad Shahi is the only authority which says that the Prince received regular news about the movements of the Abdali. It says that at Sarhind he heard that the enemy had left Lahore. On approaching Machhiwara he first learnt that the invader was coming towards the Satlaj and then that he had crossed the river near Ludhiana. The Prince, therefore, began his march towards Ludhiana and 2 or 3 hours after his start news came that the enemy had reached and plundered Sarhind. See pp. 5a-6a. This is opposed to the version given in all other contemporary works including Anand Ram's Tazkira which was written immediately after the battle and is the most detailed and accurate work on the subject.

the night and reaching Sarhind by way of Ludhiana plundered the treasure and the town and slew the garrison the next day. He then pitched his camp in the imperial garden outside Sarhind.\*

The Intelligence Department of the Indian army was so inefficient that though the Abdali had passed some miles west of the prince's forces, no information of his movement had been procured till he had committed frightful atrocities at Sarhind. When Nawab Safdar Jang reported this sad news, brought by his ten Irani troopers, the Wazir disbelieved it. It was, however, soon after confirmed by the Wazir's own couriers who were now sent to Sarhind to ascertain the truth.† The Prince, therefore, began his return march on the 13th of March and arrived at the village of Manupur, about 10 miles north-west of Sarhind. Here an entrenchment was erected with big field-guns mounted on mounds of earth, arranged and tied together after the Rumi fashion, and with a deep ditch all round it. One great deficiency was the scarcity of water. Many wells were sunk, but they could not adequately satisfy the need of such a huge concourse of men and animals ‡

The news of the plunder of Sarhind reached Delhi within a few days of the occurrence and filled the imperial city with consternation. The Emperor and his court made elaborate preparations for defence, and awaited news of the further movements of the enemy.‡

The Durrani Shah now advanced four miles from Sarhind, and there remained only about six miles' distance between the opposing forces. The Afghan army was composed of 12,000 light cavalry of whom about 6,000 were mounted musketeers. It had no big cannon, except a few that the invader had seized at Lahore and Sarhind. The Indian army was vastly superior

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\* Anand Ram, 337 ; Abdul Karim, 97b ; Siyar. III. 863 ; T. A. in Elliot. III. 107 ; Tabsir 151 b.

† Gulistane. 101-103.

‡ Anand Ram: 339 ; Siyar III. 864.

↓ T. Ahmad Shahi, 6b ; Anand Ram, 341-42.

in number, it being variously estimated at 2,50,000,\* over 2,00,000† and 1,10,000.‡ troops and about two thousand guns. But considering the excessive number of non-combatants that followed combatants in that age, the total Indian fighting force could not have exceeded 70,000\*\* men.

#### 4.—BATTLE OF MANUPUR 21ST MARCH, 1748

From the 14th of March, the day the two armies came close to each other, there were daily skirmishes between the scouts of both the sides. Ishwari Singh was in favour of a pitched battle and suggested an immediate attack. But the wazir was in favour of a concentration of their efforts on cutting off the enemy's supplies, which would force him to retire, and hence he rejected the Raja's proposal. ††

The Abdali too being conscious of his inferiority in numbers followed the policy of obstructing the supplies of the Indian army and harassing it by sudden irregular attacks.

After full six days' indecisive skirmishes and fruitless negotiations the Abdali got ready for a final struggle. On the 19th of March, he captured a mound of earth, situated on the plain between the two forces and opposite to Qamr-ud-din's camp, stationed a big gun on it and began firing at the Mughals. The wazir could no longer postpone the final action and appointed 21st March for a pitched battle and made due preparations for it. Unluckily, however, only a few minutes before Prince Ahmad's start, Qamr-ud-din Khan was struck by a cannon ball in an inner room of his tent, where he was reciting religious verses (*wazayaf*) after his morning prayer, and expired a little while after. Without being dismayed, his eldest son, Mir

\* Husain Shahi, 6b.

† Gulistanc, 101.

‡ Gulistanc, 25.

\*\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 6a.

†† Anand Ram, 345 But Gulistanc, pp. 104-105, says that Safdar Jang made this proposal and the wazir rejected it.

T. Ahmad Shahi, p. 7a gives 12th March (13th Rabi. I) as the date of the beginning of skirmishes, which is wrong.

Mannu; in obedience to Qamr-ud-din's dying advice and in consultation with the prince and Safdar Jang, concealed his father's demise and had it proclaimed in the camp that the wazir being ill was not going to lead the army in person, but was sending his son instead. With as little delay as possible the prince's army was marshalled in battle array with the imperial artillery in front, Mir Mannu (Muin-ul-mulk) in charge of the advance-guard, Safdar Jang in command of the right wing and Ishwari Singh in charge of the left, while the Prince stood in the centre with the bulk of his army. Nasir Khan was directed to command the rear guard. Ahmad Shah Abdali who was the first to reach the field, divided his mobile army into three divisions, told off two of them against the Mughal right and left wings, while the third consisting of six thousand mounted musketeers\* and zamburks on trained camels under his personal command faced Mir Mannu and his Mughals. The battle began at noon with the discharge of artillery from both the sides. The Afghan right wing divided itself into two parts, each of which one after another quickly charged the Rajputs and galloped back to its position. The Rajputs who were preparing for a hand-to-hand fight were taken by surprise and lost many of their men. Without striking a blow Ishwari Singh to whom the news of the wazir's death had leaked out suddenly abandoned the field with his whole force of 20,000 Rajputs and fled towards Jaipur, leaving a part of his artillery and baggage in the Mughal camp.† Through the gap thus created on the Prince's left, the Afghan right wing proceeded to attack the Indian rear and baggage. Though it inflicted a great loss on the Mughal rear, Nasir Khan was able to repel the enemy. The Afghans now reached near the Prince's centre, but Mir Mannu,

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\* Anand Ram, 355, gives the no. as 12,000,

† All the authorities say that Ishwari Singh fled at the very beginning of the battle without striking a blow. But Gulistane, a secondary source, states that the Rajputs fought well and only towards the end of the battle, the remnant of their force left the field. Gulistane, p, 110. According to Anand Ram the Rajput force numbered 20,000 troops. But Siyar says 20 to 30 thousand, Gulistane 30,000 and Imad and Maadan further exaggerate it to 32,000 and 40,000 horse respectively.

Nasir Khan and Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang boldly charged them and repulsed them with some loss. The Abdali Shah at this time delivered an attack on the Indian van which had by now become one with the centre. Supported by his brothers, Fakhr-ud-din, Sadr-ud-din, and Najm-ud-din, Mir Mannu fought with super-human valour, emptying two quiver-fuls of arrows, and slaying many Afghans. But he lost some of his chief officers, like Jan-nisar Khan, Shihab-ud-din Khan and the latter's son, and Bahroz Khan, and himself and his brother Fakhr-ud-din received slight wounds. The Abdali pressed on and it appeared that a great disaster was going to befall the Mughal army.

When the prospects appeared gloomy in this part of the field, the right wing under Safdar Jang was winning a complete victory over the enemy. The Abdali's division facing Safdar Jang had captured a hillock opposite to the Indian right wing and was firing long swivels from the back of his camels who were seated on this raised mound overlooking the Mir Atish's trenches. Safdar Jang ordered 1,700 of his musketeers to dismount and attack the Afghans. These men rushed at the enemy, fired their long guns, slew most of the Afghans and captured the hillock with all the enemy camels and guns. The remnant of the enemy fled and were charged by Safdar Jang's Qizilbashes who captured all their swivels and camels. The Abdali's troops made a fresh attempt to retrieve their position and to recapture the hillock, but they were beaten back by the governor of Awadh. At this time, Safdar Jang received news of the sad plight of the imperial van and centre. So he quickly despatched sufficient re-inforcements in men and artillery to the Prince, and at the same time attacked the Shah's men from his side. Throwing himself, his troops and artillery between Mir Mannu and the Afghan force, he brought the latter to a stand. Already fatigued, the enemy found themselves suddenly assaulted by a body of fresh Irani troops who poured murderous fire on them. At this time, some cart-loads of rockets, which the Shah had seized and brought from Sarhind, caught fire, and thousands of them were in a sudden blaze.

Flying in all directions, these took a heavy toll on the lives of the hard-pressed Afghans and scattered them in the field. Baffled in his attempts to rally them, Ahmad Shah Abdali prudently left the field after his army was broken and his men had fled to their encampment. At night-fall the Mughal Prince returned victorious to his camp.\*

### 5—FLIGHT OF THE ABDALI SHAH, 25TH MARCH

For fear of a surprise attack, the Indian army passed the night on horse-back, while the chiefs and nobles remained seated on their elephants. As the Abdali did not move out of his camp, there was no fighting on the 22nd or on any subsequent day. In order to lull the suspicion of the Mughal prince and to conceal his own discomfiture, Ahmad Shah Abdali opened negotiations for peace through Safdar Jang, agreeing to retire, if the Trans-Indus provinces, including Afghanistan, were formally ceded to him and 25,00,000 rupees from the revenues of the Panjab were annually remitted to his treasury. These demands were, of course, rejected, and in the morning of the 26th, the Indian army mounted for battle, when, to their surprise and joy, they found that the enemy had fled the previous night, leaving a part of his artillery and heavy baggage in the garden outside Sarhind. No pursuit worth the name was made. The Indian army, ignorant of the Abdali's whereabouts and afraid of a surprise attack slowly and haltingly moved behind the enemy and fought light skirmishes with his rear on the 26th and 27th of March. But the Abdali had a few days' clear start, and so the Prince gave up the idea of an

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\* Anand Ram, 351-362, Abdulkarim, 98b; Siyar III, 864; T, Ahmad Shahi, 7b-8b, T. M. 134a and b; Shakir, 62; M. U. I. 366, Gulistane, a Persian-born author, ascribes the victory entirely to the valour of Safdar Jang and his Persian troops and alleges that the Hindustani and Turani troops did nothing. See Gulistane pp, 111-112. Anand Ram, Mir Munshi to the wazir, on the other hand, extols the valour of Mir Mannu and alleges that the victory was chiefly due to him. He, however, adds that Safdar Jang attacked the enemy from his side and fought bravely.

T. Ahmad Shahi, pp, 7a and b; gives wrong dates of the skirmishes and of the death of Qamr-ud-din Khan. According to it Safdar Jang was in charge of the left and Ishwari Singh in charge of the right wing.



encounter with him.† He remained two days more in the camp and recovered Sarhind on the 28th.

The next day, Prince Ahmad resumed his march towards Lahore and reached the bank of the Satlaj near Ludhiana on the 31st. Here, he halted for many a day owing to the illness of Nawab Safdar Jang who had become the Prince's chief adviser and virtual head of the army after the death of Qamrudin Khan. No further advance was made even after the recovery of Safdar Jang who did not favour the idea of an expedition against the Abdali at this time.

The news of the Prince's victory and the enemy's flight reached Delhi on the 28th of March. Highly pleased with the valour of Mir Mannu and Safdar Jang, Muhammad Shah conferred the governorship of Lahore and Multan on the former and summoned the Prince and Safdar Jang back to Delhi. An imperial *farman* reached the Prince on the 19th April, and so he sent Mir Mannu to his new charge on the 21st and Nasir Khan to Kabul on 22nd, and himself began his return march to the capital the next day.\*

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† Anand Ram, 368, 375 and 376; T. Ahmad Shahi, 10a-11a.

\* Siyar, III.864; Abdul Karim, 103a; T. Ahmad Shahi, 11c.

## CHAPTER XII

### SAFDAR JANG, WAZIR OF THE EMPIRE, 1748-1753

#### 1.—ACCESSION OF AHMAD SHAH, 28TH, APRIL 1748

Emperor Muhammad Shah, whose illness had taken a serious turn some days after the departure of his son against the Abdali invader, died in the *Moti Mahal* (Pearl Palace) of the Delhi Fort at about two during the night of 25th April, 1748.\* Malka-i-zamani (eldest queen of the deceased) wisely concealed her husband's demise and sent express letters to her step-son to hurry back to Delhi. Prince Ahmad received these letters on 28th April in his camp near the historic town of Panipat. On the advice of Safdar Jang† he carried out his enthronement the same day and assumed the title of Mujahid-ud-din Ahmad Shah Bahadur Ghazi. Safdar Jang held, with his own hands, over the Prince's head the royal umbrella he had prepared out of an ordinary basket by covering it with a piece of embroidered cloth, presented his *Nazars*, (offerings by way of homage) and congratulated him on his accession. Other nobles in the camp followed suit. The new Emperor promised *wizarat* (Prime Minister's post) to Nawab Safdar Jang ; saying, "I congratulate you on your wazirship."‡

Ahmad Shah now resumed his journey and reached within a few miles of Delhi on the 1st May. Muhammad Shah's death was, therefore, made public and his dead body was taken out of the fort in procession and buried near the tomb of Nizam-ud-din Aulia. On the 2nd, the new Emperor arrived at the Shalimar

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\* Delhi chronicle, 34, Abdulkarim, 103b, Siyar. III. 864 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 11b.

† The Prince desired to postpone his enthronement till he had reached Delhi. But Safdar Jang wisely insisted on an immediate proclamation of his accession and not allowing a moment's interregnum which was likely to be fraught with dangers (T. Ahmad Shahi, 12a).

‡ Delhi Chronicle, 35 ; Siyar III. 864 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 12a. The chronicle's date is 30th Rabi, II. It ought to have been 1st Jamadi, I of 1161 H.

garden and, here, his coronation again took place with befitting splendour and festivities. At about 11 in the morning of 4th May, he entered the city, mounted on a huge elephant, in a grand procession and on the 9th, he paid his first royal visit to the Jama Mosque where he heard the *Khutba* (prayer for the sovereign) recited in his name.\*

## 2.—SAFDAR JANG APPOINTED WAZIR, 29TH JUNE, 1748

Although Safdar Jang had been nominated to the *wizarat* on the very day of Ahmad Shah's accession at Panipat, the post had not yet been formally filled. Both the new Emperor and Safdar Jang had some anxiety about the intention of Nizamul-mulk, the hoary able schemer of the Deccan, whose love for power and office had not abated with age. To ascertain his views, they wrote to the Nizam to come to Delhi and guide the Empire as its chief minister. The Nizam begged to be excused on account of old age and ill-health and advised Safdar Jang to accept the office, concluding his letter with these words: "You are the most promising of the children of the time. Do whatever you think good for the interest of the State and bring, in what ever way you can, the Empire to order." Though he continued to discharge the duties of wazir, Safdar Jang dared not openly assume the robe of the office even after the receipt of the letter. On the Nizam's death, which took place at about 4 p. m. on 31st May 1748, the Emperor formally appointed Safdar Jang to the vacant post on 29th June, 1748, loaded him with rich gifts, promoted him to be a *mansabdar* of 8,000 *zat* and 8,000 *sawar* and conferred on him the titles of *Jamat-ul-mulk Abul-ul-mansur Khan Bahadur Safdar Jang Sipah-salar*.† The

\* Delhi Chronicle, 35-36 ; T. Ahmad Shahi 13b ; Siyar III. 865.

Here one day's discrepancy occurs between the dates given by the *Chronicle* and T. *Ahmad Shahi* and other authorities. This was due to the fact that according to the first two works Rabi II. of 1161 A. H. had 30 days, while according to others it had only 29. I follow the latter as given in Kanu Swami Pillai's *Indian Ephemeris*.

† Siyar. III, 868-869; Shakir. 62; Azad. 87b and 88a; T. M. 137a-138b; Delhi Chronicle, 35-37; Tabsir. 25b; T. Ahmad Shahi, 14b.

Ghulam Ali and Sultan Ali Safavi writing in the prejudiced atmosphere of the Lucknow court early in the 19th century maintained that Safdar Jang

same day, he was appointed superintendent of the private chamber (*Ghusal khana*). On the 16th July, the governorship of Ajmer and Faujdarship of Narnaul were conferred on him in addition to his hereditary province of Awadh, and his son Jalaluddin Haider was given the title of Shuja-ud-daulah Bahadur and was promoted to his father's former office of Superintendent of Imperial Artillery.† Safdar Jang exchanged his new *suba* of Ajmer with that of Allahabad ‡ which was contiguous to Awadh and had been conferred on Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang, the new Amir-ul-Umra and Mir Bakhshi. These two nobles and Javed Khan divided among them the *jagirs* of the late Nizam and Qamrud-din Khan, leaving to the latter's sons those *parganas* only which had been held by them during the life time of their fathers.‡

### 3.—THE WAZIR'S TASK AND DIFFICULTIES

The new wazir succeeded to a task that was more arduous than that any Mughal chief minister had had to face since the days of Bairam Khan, the celebrated young Akbar's guardian in 1556. The Empire which had once embraced practically the whole of the continent of India had dwindled into insignificance and most of the provinces had shaken off its yoke. Bangal, Bihar and Orissa under Alivardi Khan and Awadh and Allahabad under the wazir himself were independent in all but name. Ruhelkhand was usurped by Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela. The major part of Agra and some portion of the Delhi province as far north as Faridabad were under Surajmal Jat and his

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was appointed Wazir on the very day of Ahmad Shah's accession, and alleged that the view that he did not put on the robe of the office till the death of the Nizam was wrong. They are not supported by any contemporary historian. Imad 39; Maadan, IV 165b. Guistane, pp 26 27, says that Intizam-ud-daulah, son of Qamruddin, was also a candidate for *wizarat*. So Safdar Jang wrote to Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela for help. The Khan sent Hafiz Rahmat with a rathan contingent which blocked Intizam-ud-daulah's passage to court. Safdar Jang, meanwhile, went to the palace and was invested with the robe of the office. This is later gossip.

† Delhi Chronicle, 39; Siyar, III 874; T. Ahmad Shani, 15b.

‡ Siyar III, 833.

\*\* T. Ahmad Shani, 15b--16a.

clansmen,\* while Rajputana, including Ajmer, enjoyed the Rajput rule without being under even the thin veil of the Mughal supremacy. In spite of the Mughal governor, Gujrat had, for several years, passed under the sphere of influence of the Marathas who had permanently established themselves in Bundelkhand and Malwa also. The whole of the Deccan was indifferent to the titular Emperor and the trans-Indus provinces had fallen into the hands of Ahmad Shah Abdali in November, 1747. The Mughal territory being thus confined from Agra to Attock, the term empire had become a misnomer.

The loss suffered by the moral prestige of the empire was even greater. The Marathas, taking no account of the fast decaying Mughal power, which no longer commanded the awe and respect of its subjects, had been dictating terms at Delhi for several years past. By their systematic annual expeditions Holkar and Sindhia were making Northern India prostrate before their might. Raghuji Bhonsle's repeated incursions in the eastern provinces had stopped the flow of yearly revenue from Bangal. The Abdali invader had begun to play the role of Nadir Shah. In treacherous alliance with him were the Ruhelas of Ruhelkhand whose object was the establishment of Afghan supremacy in Hindustan. Even the slightest movement of the Afghan invader, therefore, sent a thrill of fear through the Delhi court. The total extinction of the Mughal Empire appeared to be only a question of time.

Safdar Jang was not insensible to these dangers. He was anxious to save the Empire.† But his enemies gave him no chance. The Turani party headed by Intizamuddaulah, the second son of the late *wazir* Qamruddin Khan, regarded *wizarat* to be his by hereditary right, and supported by his two powerful relations—Mir Mannu, governor of Lahore and Multan and Nasir Jang, governor of the Deccan—was plotting the *wazir's* overthrow. In alliance with the queen-mother Udham Bai, a woman of low origin and taste, the eunuch Javed Khan, entitled

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 23b.

† Sardesai, Vol. III, p. 8.

Nawab Bahadur, was usurping the function of the chief minister, artfully alienating the Emperor from Safdar Jang and introducing his young master to all sorts of sensual pleasures. A light-headed (*subuk-maghz*) youth, Ahmad Shah gave no support or confidence to the wazir\* and throughout his inglorious reign followed the suicidal policy of playing one party against the other, which is so clearly unfolded in the letters of the Maratha *vakils*, the Hingne brothers and in those of Antaji Mankeshwar.

#### 4.—THE WAZIR'S POLICY

After his nomination to the office of Wazir, Safdar Jang placed before him a bold and ambitious programme which appears to us to have been incapable of realisation in its entirety, even if he had been lucky enough to have obtained the full support of the Emperor and his court. During the first three years of his ministry he dreamt the dream of extending the boundaries of the dwindled empire to the south-eastern frontier of the Persian kingdom in the north-west, and to the

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† The author of the T Ahmad Shahi, who was a courtier of Emperor Ahmad Shah, records a typical example of the Emperor's thoughtless and irresponsible conduct which shows how completely he had fallen under the evil influence of Javed Khan from the very beginning of his reign and how he himself threw obstacles in the work of the Wazir. He writes: Ahmad Shah busied himself in pleasures and left all the work to Javed Khan who became master of affairs both inside and outside the imperial *harem*. Safdar Jang, realising how artful and ambitious Javed Khan was, represented to the Emperor one evening, "Unless Your Majesty personally looks after the administration, the affairs of the Empire will not improve." Ahmad Shah replied, "Whatever you want to represent, you may say to Nawab Bahadur and he will communicate it to me." With these words on his lips he went into the *harem*. Safdar Jang said to Javed Khan that if the emperor would not look after the affairs of the country the army, the servants and the finances, he (Safdar) would not be able to discharge the duties of *Wizarat*. If the Emperor gave him an hour or two of his time, he would represent things to him in detail and then act according to his orders. The eunuch replied that the wazir might as well say the same things to the Emperor, adding that he (Safdar) was wazir and had the whole administration in his charge, he might do as he liked. Safdar Jang was offended and went back to his house thinking that the Emperor himself was responsible for Javed Khan's usurpation of administration. (see T. Ahmad Shahi, 17b)

river Narmada in the South.\* Within the empire he was anxious to uproot the colonies of the Jats and of the Bangash and Ruhela Afghans. After Ahmad Shah's second enthronement at the Shalamar garden, he urged the new Emperor not to enter the capital, but follow up his recent success against the Abdali, march beyond the Indus and recover Afghanistan.† But instigated by Javed Khan, Ahmad Shah preferred the life of slothful ease to one of perilous enterprise. When the wazir returned to Delhi after the successful termination of his campaign against the Ruhela and Bangash Pathans early in 1752 he re-opened the question of the recovery of the Panjab and Afghanistan with the help of the Marathas.‡ But this time, too, it met the same fate as before. As time went on, Safdar Jang realised the unfeasibility of his scheme, which he was obliged to give up item by item. At the end his desire to maintain his position at court against a host of his enemies absorbed all his attention. The following pages will deal with his unsuccessful efforts to translate a part of his scheme to reality, and to battle against the reactionary forces at court to whose intrigues he finally fell a victim.

#### 5—AN ATTEMPT MADE ON THE WAZIR'S LIFE

30TH NOVEMBER, 1748

Desirous of supplanting the Wazir, Intizam-ud-Daula, who was far inferior to his rival in ability, courage and military strength, hatched a plot against his life towards the end of November, 1748. He concealed some light guns, muskets, rockets, swivels and other combustibles on the invisible roof of a house situated inside a covered passage, known as *Chhata-i-Nigambodh*, and had them trained and levelled at a rider passing in the street below, by expert gunners. This passage lay near the canal in the Nigambodh mohalla of Delhi north of the Calcutta gate of the Red fort, and Safdar Jang usually passed through it on his way to and back from the court. On the day of *Id*, which fell

\* Shakir, 65.

† Shakir, 63; Haricharan, 399b.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 225.

on 30th November, 1748, the Wazir was returning to his house after the congregational prayer with the Emperor at the *Idgah* and after having conducted the latter back into the royal fort, and as soon as he reached the dark, covered passage, the plotter's agents set fire to the carefully arranged artillery. There was a sudden explosion, filling the passage with smoke and setting fire to the thatches of a few of the shops near by. Guns, muskets and rockets were discharged, killing a few of the Wazir's attendants, riding in front of him. Safdar Jang's own horse was struck by a bullet and fell down on the ground with its master, but the Wazir was lucky enough to escape injury. The party was alarmed and in spite of an immediate search, no culprit could be discovered. The back door of the shop from which artillery fire came was found locked from outside on the outer side of the sheltered passage. It was generally believed that Intizam-ud-Daula was the author of the outrage. Safdar Jang ordered the demolition of the covered passage and the houses that stood on both sides of it. All the houses and shops between the mansion of Dara Shikoh, the Wazir's residence, and the canal running near the Nigambodh quarter were levelled to the ground. From very ancient times Hindu mendicants and beggars had been living in this part of the city; these were now turned out and the site of their houses became the residence of Safdar Jang's troops.\* This outrage, committed within a few months of his installation, brought about a misunderstanding between the Wazir and the Emperor, as he suspected the latter's connivance at the Turani hostility. Safdar Jang, getting scent of the dangers ahead, ceased to appear at the court, and on the 5th of December, † 1748, sent out his advance-tents to the river bank in readiness for his departure for Awadh. Events in the immediate future were to prove that he had correctly divined the motives and object of his enemies their common and master.

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\* Delhi Chronicle, 46 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 17b-18b ; Shakir 72 ; Abdul Karim, 104 ; T. M. 193a and b ; Tarikh-i-Ali, 193a and b ; Mirat-i-Aftab-Numa, 241a. Tarikh-i-Ali gives the best account. Shakir mistakingly thinks that this outrage was committed after the murder of Javed Khan.

† Delhi Chronicle 46.



6.—A CONSPIRACY TO SUPPLANT THE WAZIR,  
JANUARY—MAY, 1749

The Wazir's withdrawal from the city was Javed Khan and Intizam-ud-Daula's opportunity. The greedy eunuch looked upon Safdar Jung as an obstacle in the path of his ambitious and malignant scheme of acquiring the supreme influence with the Emperor and power in the country. Intizam-ud-Daula regarded him as the usurper of chief ministership which, but for Safdar Jang, must have been conferred upon him after the death of his father. These intriguing personages impressed upon the foolish emperor that it was a most convenient and suitable opportunity to strike a blow at Safdar Jung. Unmindful that Ahmed Shah Abdali was casting his longing eyes on the Panjab, the Emperor in alliance with the nobles of the Turani faction, began plotting the overthrow of his Wazir. He laboured under a misapprehension that Safdar Jang's territorial, financial and military strength was a menace to his safety, and wrote a letter to Nasir Jang, the second son of Nizam-ul-Mulk and his successor in the viceroyalty of the Deccan, urging his immediate presence at court with as many troops as his provinces could spare.\* Javed Khan also wrote to him in the same strain. The object of the conspirators—the Emperor, Javed Khan, Intizam-ud-Daula, Nasir Jang and Ghazi-ud-Din Khan Firoz Jang—was to procure by military pressure the dismissal of the Wazir and the Mir Bakhshi (Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang who was the Wazir's friend) and to get Intizam-ud-Daula and Nasir Jang appointed in their respective places as soon as the latter had arrived with his formidable hosts.

Leaving his deputy Sayyid Lashkar Khan at Aurangabad, then the capital of the Nizam's dominion, Nasir Jang started towards Delhi with an unwieldy army, estimated at 70,000 troops, and a large park of artillery, in March 1749, giving out that he was going merely to pay his respects to the Emperor. In order to keep the wazir off his guard, he wrote to him a diplomatic letter which ran as follows :—

“The sole object of my intended visit is to chastise the Marathas here. Your Excellency should kindly do me the

\* Siyar, III 886 ; Masir-i-Asafi, 127a ; M. U. III, 850.

favour of getting me confirmed in the governorship of the Deccan and of appointing me Mir Bakhshi in place of Sadat Khan Zulfiqar-Jang who has snatched it from me. Being then of one mind with you, both of us would put the Empire in order. Balajirao has seized the Empire even upto Hindustan. He is a dishonest cheat. If you rely upon his friendship, you will certainly be deceived. His profession is cheating, and he looks to money and to nothing else. Give me a safe-conduct and let us enter into an agreement for the chastisement of Balajirao. (Believe me) I am at your orders."

To ascertain the attitude of the Marathas with whom he had been friendly since 1747, Safdar Jang called Bapuji Mahadeva Hingane, the Maratha wakil at Delhi, and showed him Nasir Jang's letter in the original, adding. "If Balajirao's faith be as is described herein, I should form an alliance with Nasir Jang. You need not blame me then." Already aware of Nasir Jang's plan and of the contents of the letters he had written to the Emperor, Firoz Jang and Intizam-ud-daula, Mahadeva exposed the former's double-dealing and told the wazir that the Turani leader of the Deccan desired to sow the seed of enmity between him and the Peshwa, and that if he succeeded in this, he could achieve his main object, viz., supplanting the wazir, without much difficulty. Already suspicious of Nasir Jang's move, Safdar Jang now realised the danger he was in and requested Mahadeva to write to Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia to obstruct the enemy's further advance to Northern India, and offered to pay them handsomely for this service. The wazir asked the Maratha wakil to write to Peshwa that the occasion was the test of the Maratha professions of friendship; but if they failed him in his need he knew how to overcome the enemy. He was the master of 50,000 troops and was prepared for any emergency. The Holkar and the Sindhia, who were returning to the Deccan in view of Shahu's failing health, were not anxious to provoke the powerful Turani chiefs. Nor would they like to break with the Nawab—Wazir. So they proposed extravagant terms which, they knew, could not be accepted by Safdar Jang.

Disappointed by his Maratha friends, the wazir watched the situation with care and anxiety and at the same time made preparations to meet it. He instigated Sad-ullah, deputy-governor of Bijapur and Adoni, to rebel, against Nasir Jang, summoned Raja Nawal Rai from Awadh with as many of his troops as the province could safely spare, and invited his other friends and followers from all quarters. Meanwhile, Nasir Jang had reached Burhanpur (about the middle of April 1749), and proceeded towards the Narmada. Maharaja Ishwari Singh of Jaipur and the Raja of Kota prepared to join him as soon as he were to advance north of the river. But, on behalf of the wazir, Jayappa Sindhia, who appears to have been again written to by Safdar Jang, took up his post in the vicinity of Kota to oppose Nasir Jang's progress and to embroil him with the local Raja or with the Maharana of Udaipur. The storm, however, subsided as quickly as it had risen. Becoming uncomfortable at the wazir's military preparations, the Emperor directed Nasir Jang to go back to the Deccan. The imperial letter reached the latter on the 4th May, when he was about to cross the Narmada. With great reluctance, he returned to Aurangabad,\* and the wazir was thus saved from an inevitable ruin.

Even after this Safdar Jang was not pacified and he did not return to his residence in the city. The craven Emperor and the cowardly eunuch had, therefore, to climb still further down. Accompanied by his mother, Udham Bai and by Nawab Bahadur Javed Khan, Ahmad Shah paid a visit to the wazir in his tents at the river bank on 17th April, 1749, tried to convince him of his innocence about the plots, and pacified him by open signs of humility and friendliness. The Emperor promised to give the wazir his support and confidence and brought him back to the Court.†

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\* Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol II. Letters No. 12e and 13; T. Ahmad Shahi, 36b; M. U. III 831; Masiri-Asafi, 127b; Nasir Jang's letter to Ahmad Shah translated in Najmul-Ghani's Tarikh-Haidra-bad Deccan (Urdu) pp. 180-181.

† Abdulkarim, 104a; T. Ahmad Shahi, 18b, 35b; Hadiqat-ul-alam, II. 191.

## 7—WAZIR'S COUNTER-PLOTS AGAINST THE TURANI NOBLES

These conspiracies, the object of which was nothing short of the total destruction of the Wazir, did not fail to produce their worst effect on Safdar Jang's sensitive mind. Not the least behind anybody in the arts of intrigue and self-aggrandisement, he had already been using his official position to undermine the power and prestige of the Turani nobles, Intizam-ud-daula and Firoz Jang, by depriving them of the jagirs held by their fathers and at their expense enriching himself and his followers.\* To counteract the malicious designs of Nasir Jang, he had written seductive letters to Sadulla Khan (better known by his title of Muzaffar Jang), deputy governor of Bijapur and Adoni, instigating him to rebel against his master (Nasir Jang, who was at that time advancing to Delhi to procure the dismissal of Safdar Jang), and to seize his *subas* which the wazir promised to confer upon the Khan by a patent of appointment to be secured through his influence.† Now the Turani attempts on his office and life made him strengthen his own party and followers, vow vengeance against his enemies, and try to cripple them permanently so as to make them for ever impotent for evil.

Realising that the chief sources of strength of the Turani chiefs at Court were the Panjab and the Deccan, Safdar Jang first selected Muin-ul-Mulk, Viceroy of the former province, to be the object of his malignant design. For this purpose he used Nasir Khan, ex-governor of Kabul and Ghazni, to be his tool. After the Mughal victory at Manupur, this Nasir Khan had again been appointed governor of Kabul; but he had no troops nor money to recover his new charge from the hands of Ahmad Shah Abdali. For some time he lived at Lahore in poverty and unemployment. Muin-ul-mulk took pity on him and appointed him *faujdar* of the four *mahals* of Sialkot, Gujarat, Aurangabad and Pasrur, and promised him his full assistance in the recovery of Afghanistan. Safdar Jang induced him to augment his troops, fight Mir Mannu and drive him out of the Panjab, promising that the patent of appointment for that pro-

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 16a.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 36b

vince would be sent to him immediately after his success in the enterprise. A weak-minded simpleton of ungrateful nature, Nasir Khan easily fell into the trap. He now turned against his master, successfully seduced one thousand of his troops to desert to his own service, and secretly waited for a suitable opportunity to attack Muin-ul-Mulk. But the plot leaked out and Muin-ul-Mulk marched to Sialkot sometime about July, 1749. Nasir Khan was utterly defeated after four hour's contest and fled from the field, leaving the victor in possession of all his four *mahals*. The Khan reached Delhi in shame and disgrace and became an object of public ridicule and scorn.\*

The first plot (Nasir Khan's) had not yet materialised before Safdar Jang came out with a fresh one, ostensibly to plan to strike simultaneously two sudden and vigorous blows at Muin-ul-Mulk in two different places in the latter's own *subas*. This time, his instrument was Shah Nawaz Khan, the second son of Zakariya Khan and a near relation of Muin-ul-Mulk himself. He had, for sometime, held the viceroyalty of Lahore and, after his defeat at the hands of the Abdali in January, 1748, was living in unemployment at Delhi. Though descended from the staunch *Sunni* stock of Central Asian Turks, he had sometime before turned a *Shia*. Hence Safdar Jang, himself a *Shia*, took a fancy for this man and got him appointed *Subedar* of Multan, which was included in Muin-ul-mulk's viceroyalty. He then furnished him with some troops and money, and despatched him to Multan, probably in May, 1749, advising him to increase his military establishment and seize Lahore from Muin-ul-mulk, as it was his by personal right as well as by inheritance. The Khan reached Multan and began to collect troops from all directions. He even induced some of Muin-ul-mulk's soldiers to take service under him. In a few months' time he gathered round him 15,000 horse and foot, and made secret preparations to march over to Lahore and surprise the viceroy. But Muin-ul-mulk soon discovered the plot and quickly sent a well-equipped force under Kuramal and Asmat Khan to Multan to crush Shah Nawaz Khan before he could gather more strength. A brave and enterprising

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 25 a; T. M. 145a.

soldier Shah Nawaz boldly attacked the Panjab army and fought most bravely ; but he was struck by a cannon-ball and fell dead in the field. Thus Safdar Jang's second attempt to ruin Muin-ul-mulk was also foiled (Sept.-Oct. 1749) and the latter now conferred Multan on his diwan, Kuramal.\*

Safdar Jang's position was, now, gradually becoming unenviable. Partly by circumstances over which he had no control, but mainly by his selfishness, self aggrandisement, tactlessness and hatred of the Turani nobles and Pathan adventurers, he had made numerous enemies around him. A man of Javed Khan's vulgar and inordinate ambition was not likely to play a second fiddle to anybody, whether at court or in administration, when he could easily keep the puppet Emperor in his tight grips. Intizam-ud-daula would not forgive Safdar Jang for having robbed him of his inheritance, the wizarat. The governors of the Deccan and the Panjab—Nasir Jang and Muin-ul-mulk—who were connected with Intizam-ud-daula by family and marriage ties, would support their own leader. Yet, instead of pacifying them and keeping them contented by justice, fair-play and occasional acts of favour, Safdar Jang would play the Lord and intrigue to bring about the downfall of each and all. He would raise the Persians, other *Shias* and his Hindu friends to positions of trust and importance and gather hosts of favourites round him as a counterpoise against his enemies, who had formed aristocratic connections and established hereditary influence and prestige from several generations in the past—respected even by the greatest of Rajas and Maharajas in the land. He even alienated the sympathies of the Emperor and his household by assigning for himself most fertile tracts of the country and by misappropriating revenues from the crown-lands (*Khali sa*) and starving the imperial troops and servants. No wonder, then, that the new Wazir realised very soon that his position was one of bed of thorns.

#### 8—THE SECOND INVASION OF AHMAD SHAH ABDALI, 1749

Hearing that the Panjab was distracted by a civil-war and the Delhi court was divided against itself, Ahmad Shah Abdali

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 25*b*; T. S. 154*a*; Maskin, 7-8.

thought it to be a good opportunity to wipe off the disgrace of his previous defeat. He, therefore, crossed the Indus at Attock towards the end of 1749 and after successive marches reached near Lahore. The local governor, Muin-ul-mulk, who had not yet been able to consolidate his position fully, proceeded northward with as many troops as he could hastily collect. He crossed the Ravi and entrenched himself three miles east of Wazirabad. The parties were well-matched and hence neither the Abdali nor Mir Mannu was prepared for a pitched battle. The scouts of the two armies fought only light skirmishes with no decisive results. The Afghans spread themselves in all directions and began the merciless task of plundering and burning the villages in the neighbourhood of Lahore. After months' desultory but well-matched fighting the two antagonists, none of whom was predominantly superior to the other in military strength, came to terms. There was no immediate prospect of reinforcement from the imbecile court of Delhi and instead of doing anything for the safety of the Empire's North-Western frontier the Wazir was jubilant over the misfortune of this Turani rival's brother. Muin-ul-mulk, therefore, agreed to pay to the Shah an annual sum of Rs. 14,000 as the surplus revenue of the four districts of Sialkot, Aurangabad, Gujarat and Pasrur assigned to Nadir Shah by the late Emperor Muhammad Shah in 1739 for the pay of the garrison at Kabul. After this settlement the King of Afghans returned to his country,\* and the imperial nobles went on quarrelling as hard as ever.

9—FIRST EXPEDITION AGAINST THE JATS OF BALLAMGARH,  
DECEMBER, 1749

Some time in December, 1749, Safdar Jang, who had now obtained a breathing time from court intrigues to think of state affairs, started against the Jat colony of Ballamgarh which lies about 24 miles south of Delhi. Here, the local Jat leader, Balram (*alias* Ballu whose name is associated with the town) was openly defying the authority of the Lord of Hindustan. Formerly an obscure rent-collector (*malguzar*) of the town of Faridabad, he had risen to prominence on account of the support he was

\* Abdulkarim, 104b ; M. U. 1. 360 ; Siyar. III. 875 ; Maskin, 4.

receiving from the head of his tribe, Surajmal of Bharatpur. He acquired fame by defeating the troops of Mir Yahia Khan, a son of the late Zakariya Khan, and driving them out of the Mir's Jagir in *pargana* Faridabad. As this aggression remained unpunished, he was encouraged to bring gradually the neighbouring villages under his possession. To crown his achievements he built a strong mud-fort in his native village and named it Ballamgarh (after his own name), and during the latter days of Qamrud-din Khan's weak administration extended his sway over the whole of the *parganas* of Faridabad and Palwal which he began to rule as a Rai\* (noble). The new wazir, who was given Faridabad in jagir, called upon Balram and Surajmal to surrender the district; but they refused to do so. Hence Safdar Jang marched out of Delhi to reduce the Jats to submission. Simultaneously with the wazir, Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang the Mir Bakhshi, who had left Delhi early, on November 26, 1749, and had spent the first ten days of Muharram, 9—18 December, 1749, at Pataudi, 40 miles s. w. of the capital, prepared himself to take the field against Surajmal on the northern frontier of the Bharatpur territory. It seems that there was a secret understanding between the wazir and the Mir Bakhshi that they should begin their campaigns against the Jats from two different directions at the same time and catch Surajmal between two fires. Accordingly, Safdar Jang captured Faridabad, put it in the charge of his men and asked Surajmal to evacuate all the imperial territory in his possession. But Surajmal was not the man to be cowed down into a peaceful surrender of the places demanded by the wazir. The parties, therefore, made preparations to decide the quarrel by an open contest in the field. But fortune favoured the brave Jat; Safdar Jang, who had received the reports of the defeat and death of Qaim Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, left the subjugation of the Jats to a future date and returned to Delhi to induce the Emperor to undertake an expedition against the Bangash Pathans of Farrukhabad.†

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 21b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 28b.



## CHAPTER XIII

### SAFDAR JANG AND THE BANGASH NAWABS OF FARRUKHABAD, 1749-1750

#### 1—EARLY HISTORY OF THE BANGASH NAWABS

Muhammad Khan Bangash, the founder of the ruling house of Farrukhabad, was a Pathan of Karlai Kaghzai clan. The term Bangash, originally meaning the mountainous country, presumably of south-eastern Afghanistan, but, later on, applied to the inhabitants of that region, was the appellation of his ancestors.\* His father, Malik Ain Khan, leaving his native land, came to Hindustan during the reign of Aurangzeb and settled at Mau Rashidabad, 2 miles north of the modern town of Qaim Ganj, where Muhammad Khan was born in or about 1665 A. D. At an early age Muhammad joined the band of Pathan free-booters of his neighbourhood who used to hire themselves to the mutually quarrelling Rajas of Bundelkhand. Soon his courage and ability brought him to the front and setting himself up as a leader on his own account, he acquired great reputation in the locality. But it was not till 1712 that he could have an opportunity of displaying his talents in the wider arena of Hindustan. In November of that year, he joined Farrukhsiyar with 4,000 to 5,000 men and showed great zeal in his cause in the battle of Agra on 10th January, 1713, for which he was rewarded with a grant of land in Bundelkhand and in the present district of Farrukhabad. Here, he founded the towns of Qaim Ganj, Muhammadabad and Farrukhabad, naming the latter after the name of the Emperor and making it his residence. As a reward for his defection of Sayyid Abdulla Khan and for his services in the battle of Hasanpur, Muhammad Shah appointed him governor of Allahabad which included the whole of Bundelkhand except the *sarkar* of Kalpi, on 25th December, 1720†. Twice, he penetrated into the heart of Chhatarsal's dominion and captured the strong fort of Jaitpur in December, 1728.

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\* Wali-ullah, 45a-46b.

† Kamwar, II 331b.

But Bajirao came to the Bundela chief's assistance, besieged the Khan at Jaitpur and forced him to withdraw from Bundelkhand in the summer of 1729.\* Hence, he was deprived of Allahabad and appointed to Malwa in September, 1730. Here, too, he spent his time in fighting desperately with the Marathas but with little success. At the end of 1732, he was, therefore, removed from Malwa which was conferred on Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur.† Towards the close of 1735, he was, once again, given Allahabad, but Sarbuland Khan, the previous governor, was restored to it in May, 1736. Since that year, he seems to have lived retired in his estate, coming to public notice only now and then against the Marathas or other rebels. He died on 17th December, 1743 ‡ and his dominion, which comprised the whole of Farrukhabad district, western half of Kanpur, almost the whole of Mainpuri, more than half of Etah, two parganas of Badaun across the Ganges, and a part of Aligarh and Etawah passed to his eldest son Qaim Khan.‡

## 2.—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF QAIM KHAN, 22ND NOVEMBER, 1749

There had been a feeling of rivalry, bordering on positive enmity, between Muhammad Khan Bangash and Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk. In 1728, the latter is said to have encouraged Chhatrasal Bundela in his resistance against the Bangash chief and, in the following year, he had unsuccessfully plotted to seize the person of Qaim Khan, when the latter had gone to Faizabad to request a loan of a part of the Awadh army to relieve his beleaguered father. †† Safdar Jang inherited his father-in-law's policy towards the Nawab of Farrukhabad. He would not tolerate the existence of an equally able chief whose estate lay on the western boundary of Awadh and who was in close alliance with the Nawab-wazir's enemy, Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela. Being of the same race and religion, Muhammad Khan Bangash

\* Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. XIII.

† Ibid ; L. M. II 249-255.

‡ Walli-ullah, 132.

‡ J. A. S. B. ( 1878 ) p. 346.

†† L. M. II. 237 and 240 ; J. A. S. B. (1878) p. 30.

had more than once saved the Ruhela from the wrath of the imperial court. In 1745, Qaim Khan had given shelter to the Ruhela family and treasures and saved him from an inevitable ruin by siding with Qamr-ud-din Khan, Safdar Jang's rival. Fearing an alliance between the Bangash and the Ruhela chiefs—a most natural thing in the world—Safdar was awaiting an opportunity to encompass the ruin of both.

His opportunity came after July, 1749 when he had obtained a temporary respite from the Turani intrigues. He, then, persuaded Emperor Ahmad Shah to appoint Qaim Khan to the government of Ruhelkhand and call upon him to recover it from Sadulla Khan, son of Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela, lately deceased. The royal *farman* together with a flattering letter written by the wazir was sent to Qaim Khan by the hand of Sher Jang.\* Unable to resist the temptation of the weighty bait, the Khan fell into the trap so cleverly laid by Safdar Jang. His demand of the surrender of Ruhelkhand having been left unheeded by Sadulla Khan, Qaim Khan crossed the Ganges with 50,000 troops and a good part of artillery, supplemented by contingents of friendly Rajas of Sachendi, Ruru and Shivarajpur and encamped a few miles south of the village of Dauri Rasulpur, 5 miles south east of Badaun where the Ruhelas had assembled 25,000 men. The battle began in the morning of 22nd November, 1749.† After a preliminary engagement, Qaim Khan charged the enemy and was drawn into an extensive ravine on both sides of which grew tall *bajra* (millet) crops in which the Ruhelas had concealed 8,000 of their experienced match-lock-men. There, he was suddenly assailed by the Ruhelas who fired their firelocks

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\* Abdulkarim, 104b ; Siyar. III 874.

Lucknow historians like Imad. p. 4 ; Harcharan, 402a ; Maadan, IV. 107b and others deny Safdar Jang's instigation or pass over it without taking any notice of it.

† Irvine's date, J. A. S. B. (1878) p. 380, falls short by one year. First rate authorities, like Delhi Chronicle, 52 and Fabsir, 254b, have 12th Zil Hijja 1162 H. But Siyar and T. M. Maadan erroneously give 1161 H.

from the edge of the ravine. The Khan perished with most of his chiefs, and his army fled away in great panic and disorder.\*

3.—SAFDAR JANG CONFISCATES THE BANGASH DOMINION,  
JANUARY, 1750

The news of Qaim Khan's defeat and death which reached Delhi within a few days of its occurrence was highly gratifying to the wazir. He instigated the Emperor to confiscate the deceased's dominion and property in accordance with a well-known Mughal custom that the sovereign was the heir to the land and personal effects of all his nobles, suggesting that the imperial presence in the vicinity of Farrukhabad would overawe Qaim's mother into a speedy surrender of his belongings. Ahmad Shah approved of the scheme and gave Safdar Jang leave to start for Farrukhabad on 2nd December, 1749, himself leaving Delhi on the 9th to join the wazir and party.† When they reached Aligarh, Safdar Jang left the Emperor there and himself, with 40,000 Mughals, advanced to Thana Daryao-ganj, 35 miles north-west of Farrukhabad. Almost simultaneously with him Raja Nawal Rai, in obedience to his master's summons, arrived at the head of a big army within three miles of Khudaganj, 15 miles S. E. of Farrukhabad, on 29th December.‡ The wazir's strategy evidently was to intercept the Pathans between the two forces from the north and the south, should they manifest signs of resistance. But he was clever enough to try art first. In reply to the petition of Qaim Khan's mother requesting him to confirm Imam Khan, her son, in his hereditary estate, Safdar Jang wrote that he had already obtained the Emperor's permission for it, but, as usual, on such occasions, she, as well as Imam Khan, must appear in person in his camp and offer customary presents

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\* Gulistan 29-30 ; Siyar Ill. 874 ; Tabsir 254b ; Hadiq 141 ; Imad 44-45 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 22b-23. a.

† Delhi Chronicle, 53 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 24a Abdulkarim says that one reason why Safdar marched against Bibi Sahiba, mother of Qaim Khan, was that she had invited the Marathas against the Ruhelas. Safdar, therefore, feared that, if successful, the Marathas would create trouble in Awadh, too, ( See Sarkar MS. p. 249 ).

‡ J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 50.

(*peshkash*) to the Emperor. He cunningly added that Qaim Khan had been like a brother to him and hence he would do his best to avenge his death.\* Deceived by these flattering words, Bibi Sahiba (Qaim's mother) recalled the troops she had posted at Khudaganj to bar Nawal Rai's passage, and repaired under a strong escort of 30,000 Pathans to the wazir's camp at Daryaganj on 3rd January, 1750.† Nawal Rai also arrived a few days later. After some days' negotiations, it was settled that on payment of sixty lakhs‡ of Rs. the Bangash estate would be confirmed by grant to Imam Khan. Bibi Sahiba was then sent back to Farrukhabad to make arrangements for the payment of the promised sum, and the Emperor now left Aligarh on 18th January and returned to Delhi on the 26th.\*\* But the cash and goods found at Farrukhabad were estimated at forty five lakhs only. Hence Bibi Sahiba was again invited and detained in the wazir's camp as hostage till the balance were paid up. Some of Muhammad Khan's sons and slaves (*chelas*) were also kept under surveillance.

Free from the anxiety of a Pathan revolt, Safdar Jang now marched on Farrukhabad and encamped at Yaqutganj, 5 miles south-west of it. Nawal Rai separated from his master and passing through Shamsabad and Farrukhabad reached Yaqutganj the next day. Several days passed away, but Imam Khan was not invested with the grant of his paternal estate. In flagrant violation of his word, the wazir confiscated the Bangash dominion except twelve villages including the town of Farrukhabad which had been granted to Muhammad Khan Bangash in perpetuity (*Altamgha*) by the late Emperor Farrukhsiyar.†† He

\* Imad. 45.

† Delhi Chronicle, 54

‡ Abdulkarim. 251, has fifty lakhs, while other authorities have sixty, Irvine J, A. S. B. (1879), p. 53, says that on Bibi Hajian's (another widow of Muhammad Khan) agreeing to fifty lakhs, Safdar asked for a blank paper with her seal affixed to it This was done and the wazir wrote sixty lakhs instead of fifty. I have not found this version in any non-Pathan contemporary work.

\*\* Delhi Chronicle, 54 and 55 ; T. Ahmad Shahi 24b.

†† Siyar III 875; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol II, Letter No. 14a ; T. Ahmad Shahi 24b ; M. U. III 772. Irvine is silent on the point.

posted his own men as revenue and police officers in the annexed country and remained at Yaqutganj for a sufficiently long time to help them in the consolidation of their charge. He then left his new acquisition in charge of Nawal Rai who was also his deputy in Awadh and Allahabad, and returned to Delhi, with the five *chelas* of the Bangash family, reaching there on 8th June, 1750.\*

#### 4.—SECOND EXPEDITION AGAINST THE JATS OF BALLABGARH, JULY 1750

Within two months of his return from Farrukhabad Safdar Jang was forced to undertake a second expedition against the Jats of Ballabgarh whose subjugation he had left incomplete in January, 1749. On the 28th July, 1750, some of Balram's men attacked the wazir's outpost at Shamspur, some miles south of Delhi, plundered and destroyed it. On receipt of the news of this outrage, Safdar Jang sent an army to punish the wrong doers. But instead of delivering the men concerned Balram made ready for a contest. On the 30th July, in the midst of rains, the wazir, therefore, started from Delhi and arriving at Shamspur spent the night near the *thana*. Here, he received Nawal Rai's letter reporting a formidable Pathan rising at Mau and Farrukhabad. Realising the gravity of the danger, Safdar Jang decided to make peace with the Jats and wrote to Nawal Rai not to precipitate action, but wait till his arrival with reinforcements. Next morning, he advanced to Khizrabad, 7 miles south of the capital, and opened negotiations with Balram through the mediation of the Maratha wakil in his camp. Balram was conducted by the wakil, both his hands tied together with a hand-kerchief, and was pardoned† by the wazir who thus "gave an implicit sanction to his illegal acquisition." The same day, the wazir despatched a part of his army under Naseer-ud-

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\* Delhi Chronicle, 54 ; Abdul Karim, 251 ; Tabsir. 254b ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 24b.

The five chelas were :-

Shamsher Khan, Jafar Khan, Muqim Khan, Ismail Khan and Sardar Khan.

† Delhi Chronicle, 57 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 23a and b.

din Haider, his cousin and the contingents of Muhammad Ali Khan and some other commanders to reinforce Nawal Rai and himself returned to Delhi to seek the Emperor's permission to go to Farrukhabad.\* Meanwhile in response to the wazir's invitation Surajmal, who had been backing up his clansmen of Ballabgarh, arrived near Delhi. Safdar Jang met him near the tank of Kishan Das, not far from Khizrabad, and both entered into a friendly alliance. Surajmal then returned to his country and the wazir went back to Delhi. †

5.—THE PATHAN RISING AT MAU AND FARRUKHABAD,  
JULY, 1750

To understand how the Pathan rising occurred it is necessary for us to have an idea of the fast-moving events in the Bangash territory since the wazir's return to Delhi. Only a few days after Safdar Jang had left Yaqutganj, Nawal Rai put Muhammad Khan Bangash's five sons named Imam Khan, Husain Khan, Fakhr-ud-din Khan, Ismail Khan and Karimdad Khan in chains and sent them prisoners to the fort of Allahabad.‡ He, then, made the historic town of Kanauj his head-quarters, it being almost midway between Awadh, Allahabad and the Bangash estate, all in his charge. Believing that the Pathans had quietly submitted to his rule, he gave leave to most of his troops in the beginning of the rainy season (July) so that out of 40,000 troops that composed his army only seven to eight thousand†† were left with him. Bibi Sahiba was still kept under surveillance. One night, Sahib Rai Kayasth, a faithful servant of the Bangash house, who had managed to be admitted into Nawal Rai's service, cleverly obtained his old mistress's release when the Raja was under the effect of wine. Immediately seating her in a cart drawn by sturdy fleet bullocks, he sent her to Mau. Next morning, Nawal Rai regretted his folly and told off some swift horse

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\* Siyar III. 876

† Selections from Peshwa Daftar. Vol. II. Letter No. 15.

‡ J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 55; Walli-ullah, 65b.; Abdulkarim, 251; Tabsir, 254b.

†† Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II, Letter No. 14a

in pursuit of the fugitive. But it was too late ; she had reached Mau in the morning.\*

At the town of Mau, then, as now, predominantly populated by Pathans, the much afflicted Bibi Sahiba uncovered her head, related to the chief men of her race the story of her sufferings and humiliation, and rebuked them for their cowardly inactivity. Exceedingly ashamed, these men placed the veil back over her head, and vowed vengeance on Nawal Rai.† One of the most turbulent and freedom-loving peoples in the world, the Pathans had already begun to grow restless at the Raja's attempt to rule with a strong hand. ‡ Some of them secretly rode to Farrukhabad where Ahmad Khan Bangash, one of the numerous sons of

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\* Abdulkarim, 252 ; Gulistan, 36a. Siyar III. 875-76 also agrees. Gulistan wrongly thinks that Nawal Rai was at Lucknow.

† Abdulkarim, 253. Irvine is silent about this. His account is based mainly on Pathan sources whose authors did not like to record anything that appeared to them to be insulting to themselves or to their chiefs.

‡ Siyar. III. 875 ; Imad 46.

Imad gives a story of the rapacity and high-handedness of Nawal Rai's subordinates which has been readily accepted by Irvine. It runs as follows:--A Hindu soldier in Nawal Rai's service purchased some cotton thread from an Afridi woman at Mau, who lived by spinning from a charkha. One month after, he brought the thread and demanded his money back. The woman remonstrated, whereupon the man called her names. She also retorted and the soldier grew angry and gave a few shoe-blows upon her head. The woman went to Ahmad Khan Bangash and reproached him thus:--"It had been better, if God had given thy father a daughter than such a son as thou. Cursed be thy turban that thou causest an Afridi woman to be thus treated by a police footman no better than a Hindu. . . ." Ahmad Khan spent two days without food and kept on weeping for two nights. He went to Rustam Khan and with his advice decided to attack Nawal Rai. (See Imad p. 45).

I disbelieve the story on the following grounds :-

- A. According to Imad the scene of the story was Mau while Ahmad Khan lived at Farrukhabad (See T: Ahmad Shahi, 26a) and came to Mau after war had been decided upon.
- B. A similar rebuke was administered by Bibi Sahiba to Pathan leaders at Mau. (Abdulkarim, 253)--
- C. The story is not given in any non-Pathan work before Imad which is not a contemporary work.



Muhammad Khan, was living in neglect and poverty, and brought him to Mau, and here he was formally installed as leader by Bibi Sahiba in July, 1750.

The Pathans were now ready to strike a swift and vigorous blow at Nawal Rai at the earliest opportunity. But their one difficulty was want of funds. This was partly obviated by the offer of a few thousands of rupees by Rustam Khan Afridi, a Pathan chief of note at Mau, on the condition of the cession to him of half of the Bangash territory after it had been recovered from the enemy. Some thousands were borrowed from a rich Kurmi of Chiloli near Qaimganj\* and 70,000 of Rupees and 1,000 gold coins were plundered from the house of a rich merchant in a small town, 32 miles from Mau. Some of this money was distributed among the Pathan chieftains, and 6,000 men assembled within a day or so. Ahmad Khan was now invested with the robes of Nawab by his step-mother, Bibi Sahiba. He appointed Rustam Khan Afridi his Bakhshi and sent his troops in all directions to drive out Safdar Jang's police and revenue officers. This work was done in the characteristic Pathan fashion. Some of the wazir's kotwals were slain, while others were seated on asses, paraded through the streets of their towns, and turned out with great indignity.† Within eight days, Ahmad Khan's army swelled to 12,000 horse and 12,000 foot, and he now began his march towards Farrukhabad. ‡

#### 6—BATTLE OF KHUDAGANJ ; DEFEAT AND DEATH OF NAWAL RAI, 13TH AUGUST, 1750

On the first news of the Pathan rising, Nawal Rai wrote to the wazir informing him of the state of affairs and urged Baqa-ullah Khan, his chief assistant in the Allahabad province, to come immediately to his aid. He, then, started towards Farrukhabad, crossed the Kalinadi and encamped at its bank near Khudaganj, 16 miles south-east of Farrukhabad. Here he received definite orders from the wazir to wait till his arrival with

\* J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 59.

† *Imad.* 46-47,

‡ *Ibid.*

reinforcements. Accordingly, the Raja entrenched himself where he was, enclosing his camp with a ditch along which he ranged his guns, secured together by iron chains.\* His troops numbered 8,000, all told.†

Meanwhile, Ahmad Khan Bangash arrived with his 24,000 troops and encamped south of the village of Rajepur, 4 miles N. W. of Khudaganj, at a spot from where Nawal Rai's camp was a little over two miles away. The opposing forces lay facing each other for about a week. ‡ The Raja had issued strict orders to his troops not to mount for battle, but remain vigilant in their places. In order to lull his suspicion and keep him off his guard, Ahmad Khan made overtures for peace, asking only for the release of his brothers.†† The Bangash chief now learnt from Raja Jaswant Singh of Mainpuri that the re-inforcements sent out by the wazir had arrived at Sakit, 20 miles north-west of Mainpuri, and so he decided to attack the Raja next morning. To study the enemy's position, a clever spy, named Gul Mian, was sent, disguised in a beggar's attire, to Nawal Rai's entrenchment. This man reported that the only vulnerable point in the Raja's entrenchment was a portion of his rear which rested on the bank of the Kalinadi and had been left unprotected by guns. On this the Pathans decided to make a surprise attack before it was morning.

During the night of 12th August, 1750, Ahmad Khan Bangash mounted his *palki* ( he was lame ), left his camp with his troops and, avoiding Nawal Rai's front by making a wide detour round the west of the enemy's entrenchment, got to his rear on the Kalinadi one hour and a half before dawn. The Pathans immediately gave reins to their horses and made an assault on the position held by Barah Sayyids. The Sayyids, who were vigilant, fought bravely and drove their assailants back. But, by threatening to kill himself, Ahmad Khan succeeded in rallying his men and leading them on to a second attack. The

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\* Siyar. III, 876.

† Imad p. 47. The Pathan sources give a higher number.

‡ Tabsir 256b.

†† Siyar. III. 876 ; Walli-ullah, 66a.

Pathans dismounted from their horses, tied the skirts of their long coats round their waists and fell fiercely on the Sayyids. This time, they defeated the enemy some of whom were slain and the rest fled in disorder, leaving the way open for the Pathans. Ahmad Khan and his men now penetrated into the entrenchment. It being the 11th of the bright half of the Hindu month of *Shrawan*, the last quarter of the night was very dark and confusion was aggravated by rain. Nothing could be seen and to the good fortune of Ahmad Khan the Raja's guns were fired at random without doing any execution. By the time the sun rose on the horizon on the fatal 13th of August,\* 1750, the Pathans had reached close to the Raja's own tent. The main body of his troops being distributed to the batteries, the number of men posted round his tent was extremely small. The Raja was informed of the near approach of the Pathans. But, as usual with him, he would not stir out without saying his morning prayers. A second messenger appeared and reported that all was going to be lost. Now Nawal Rai armed himself, mounted his elephant† and with three to four hundred men and six or seven officers got ready to proceed against Ahmad Khan. Meanwhile, Rustam Khan Afridi and Muhammad Khan Afridi with 5,000 troops appeared at a small distance and passed by the Raja's retinue without knowing who he was. Seeing this, a Pathan in Nawal Rai's escort, choosing to be traitor to his salt, invited them in sweet Pushtu tunes played on his *algoza* (flute) to where the Raja was standing. The hint was taken. Rustam Khan and his men turned back and attacked Nawal's retinue. The Afridi musketeers shot many of the enemy dead and most of the rest turned their backs and fled. But the Raja, with the words of abuse on his lips, went on shooting arrows at the Pathans. One of these hit Muhammad Khan Afridi in the chest

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\* Sardesai, Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol II II p. 24, gives 15th July 1749. Irvine, J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 62, gives 2nd August 1750 (old style) which according to the N. S. would be 12th August. The actual date was Friday, 11th Ramzan 1163 H. (See Tabsir 255b). Other histories have Friday 10th Ramzan. Friday 11th (it was not 19th) Ramzan fell on 3rd August (O. S.) and on 13th (N. S.).

† J. A. S. B. (1879) pp. 62-63; Azad, 90 a and b.

without doing much injury. Another pierced the neck of a Pathan soldier near Muhammad Khan and killed him instantly. In this way, a few of the Pathans fell victims to the Raja's deadly arrows. At this time, Mir Muhammad Saleh, a faithful Sayyid of Barah in Nawal Rai's service, advanced to his support ; but he was immediately shot dead by a slave of Muhammad Khan Afridi's father. Nawal Rai was now completely surrounded by his assailants. In the thick of fight he was struck by a bullet and fell lifeless on the *bowdab* of his elephant. His leaderless army fled in extreme panic and disorder. The Pathans pursued the fugitives and put many to the sword.\* The rest succeeded in crossing the Kalinadi, and not before it had taken the toll of numerous lives. The Raja's elephant-driver swam the animal with his master's dead body on it and fled to Kanauj. The whole of Nawal Rai's camp with its rich treasure, baggage and artillery fell into the hands of the victors.† The total loss of lives on the Raja's side was 500 ;‡ and, besides himself, the men of note that perished in the fight were Mir Muhammad Saleh and Ata-ullah Khan, son-in-law of Haji Ahmad, the elder brother of Alivardi Khan of Bangal.

The very next day of this unexpected victory Ahmad Khan's army swelled to 60,000, a part of which he detached under Bhure Khan, one of his father's slaves, to wrest Kanauj from the hands of Nawal Rai's men. He then returned to Farrukhabad and the whole of his paternal state reverted to him without delay. On the day of the battle, Baqa-ullah Khan of Allahabad had reached within eight miles of the field to reinforce the Raja when he learnt the woeful news from the fugitives who were swarming from Khudaganj. Accordingly he hurried back to Kanauj, and sent the Raja's family and dependants under a safe escort to Lucknow, while he himself retreated to Kora Jahana-bad. Bhure Khan, therefore, found Kanauj denuded of troops and captured it without the least resistance. He acquired immense riches, furniture and materials of war. ††

\* Imad. 47-48 ; Tabsir. 256*b*. T. Ahmad Shahi, 26 *a* and *b*, gives a brief and at places, wrong account.

† Siyar. III. 876 ; Tabsir. Ibid.

‡ Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II. Letter No. 14*a*

†† J. A. S. B. ( 1879 ) pp. 65-66

## CHAPTER XIV

### FIRST PATHAN WAR AND AFTER, 1750-1751

#### 1.—THE WAZIR MARCHES TO BADHARI

Exactly ten days before the disaster of Khudaganj the Emperor was prevailed upon to grant Safdar Jang permission to proceed to the aid of the hard pressed Nawal Rai. The audience of leave-taking was held on 3rd August, 1750, when Ahmad Shah bestowed on the wazir a dagger, a sword, a shield and a wreath of flowers, and appointed Jalal-ud-din Haider deputy wazir to officiate for his father during the latter's absence from Delhi.\* Ishaq Khan Najmud-daulah, Mir Baqa a son of the late Qamrud-din Khan, Sher Jang and some other nobles were directed to march with the wazir. Safdar Jang left Delhi with 30,000 troops and a good park of artillery and had traversed only 40 miles† when he received the overwhelming news of Nawal Rai's defeat and death. In a fit of rage mixed with feelings of revenge he issued orders to the commandant of the Allahabad fort and to his son at Delhi to put the five slaves and five sons of Muhammad Khan Bangash to death.‡ But, in his cool moments, he realised that it was not easy to humble the victorious enemy's hosts by his 30,000 dispirited troops. Accordingly, he decided to collect a big force before a trial of strength with the Pathans, and wrote to the Maratha chiefs, Sindhia and Holkar, Raja Surajmal Jat and some other friends to come speedily to his assistance. Surajmal with his Jats joined him at Aligarh,†† after which the wazir marched to the town of Marhara, 7 miles south-west of Kasganj in the Etah district. Here, he remained encamped for over a month to enable his friends to effect junction with his troops. Ismail Beg Khan, Naseer-ud-din Haider, Raja Debi Dutta and Muhammad Ali Khan who had been despatched ahead to re-inforce Nawal Rai

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\* Delhi Chronicle, 57.

† Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II Letter No. 14 a ; Siyar III. 876.

‡ J. A. S. B. ( 1879 ) pp. 68-69 ; Imad. 45 ; Hadiq, 73.

†† Sujan Charit, 61-64.

but had not been able to advance beyond Mainpuri before the disaster of Khudaganj, rejoined Safdar Jang at this place. Maharaja Ishwari Singh of Jaipur sent 5,000 troops under his Bakhshi Hemraj\* and Raja Himmat Singh of Bhadawar, Rao Bahadur Singh of Ghasre,† Kamgar Khan Baluch and some others, except the Marathas who were in the Deccan, arrived with their contingents. The wazir now resumed his journey, forded the Kalinadi and encamped a few miles south-east of the village of Badhari,‡ situated 5 miles east of Kasganj.

## 2.—THE RIVAL FORCES ENTER THE FIELD

The total strength of Safdar Jang's army including 15,000 troops of Surajmal is put by Sudan, the author of *Sujan Charit*, at 95,000 horse, innumerable foot, 300 elephants and 1,000 guns.‡ Murtaza Husain Khan makes it to be one lakh and thirty thousand strong,\*\* while Ghulam Ali further exaggerates it to the incredible figure of two lakhs and a half.†† Shakir Khan, who was at Delhi, estimated it at 60,000 horse and musketeers,‡‡ while Ghulam Husain Khan whose father was present in the field gives Safdar Jang's fighting strength as 70,000 horse,‡‡ The last number is nearest the truth.

But this huge force was composed of discordant units among whom there was no other bond of union except the person of the wazir. It lacked cohesion and discipline and hence it was no better than an armed mob. An incident that took place at Marhara revealed its inherent weakness as an instrument of war. On the 20th August, a camel driver of a Mughal trooper cut a tree in front of the house of one Inayat Khan, a resident of Marhara and a soldier in the wazir's army. Inayat Khan punished the offender. This provoked the Mughals who plundered

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\* Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II Letter No. 23.

† *Sujan Charit* 71 ; Selections, etc., Vol. II L. No. 23.

‡ Delhi Chronicle, 38; Hari Charan, 204a

‡ *Sujan Charit*, pp. 60 and 71.

\*\* Hadiq, 174.

†† Imad, 48.

‡‡ Shakir, 64.

‡‡ *Siyar*, III. 877.

the town, killed Inayat Khan and his son and carried many men, women and children of Marhara into captivity. At the wazir's orders, his brother-in-law Naseer-ud-din Haider had to work the whole night in restoring order before the prisoners could be set at liberty and their property restored to them.\*

By this time, Ahmad Khan Bangash had arrived with 20,000 Pathans and encamped south of the Ganga and 10 miles east of the wazir's entrenchment. It seems that his raw levies had melted away on the news of the wazir's arrival in person, and that the Pathans of Shahjahanpur, Tilhar, Bareilly and Jaunpur had made poor response to his appeal for aid. But Sadulla Khan Ruhela, son of Ali Muhammad Khan of Ruhelkhand, forgetting Qaim Khan's invasion of his country, despatched 10,000 brave troops under Parmul Khan and Daur Khan in the nick of time.† Crossing the Ganga they joined Ahmed Khan and swelled his tiny force to 30,000.

### 3.—BATTLE OF RAM CHATAUNI AND DEFEAT OF THE WAZIR, 23RD SETEMBER, 1750

In the night previous to the battle the wazir called a council of war and summoned Hidayat Ali Khan, father of the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, who had some experience of warfare with Pathans, to give his opinion as to the proper method to be followed in the impending battle. The Khan said, "They (Pathans) usually conceal themselves in ambush and when they find the other side off its guard, they appear suddenly from some direction and attack it simultaneously with great noise. If, at this critical time, sufficient perseverance is shown, the Pathans

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\* Siyar III. 877. Mustafa, the translator of the Siyar, erroneously reads Marhara as "Barr" (Eng. Tr. Vol. III. 293). This led Elliot (Supp. Glossary p. 110) and Elphinstone (H. of India, 6th ed., p. 736) to remark that Safdar Jang plundered the town of "Barah."

† Sujan Charit, 73 ; Gulistan 37 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 26b ; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol II. Letter no. 20. As for the number, Sujan Charit has 10,000, while the Marathi letter has 15,000. Irvine erroneously believed that the Ruhelas did not join Ahmad Khan this time. He thinks that they joined the Bangash for the first time in the second war with Safdar Jang. See J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 91. This is undoubtedly based on Imad's wrong version.

cannot stand any longer and are defeated. So Your Excellency should post three or four thousand trusted Mughal infantry, armed with muskets and jazails, in front of your own elephant so that, in case of an emergency, they may lay the enemy under the fire of their guns." Hidayat Ali Khan had not yet finished, before Ismail Beg Khan, the wazir's chief commander, interrupting said that next day he would bring Ahmad and his dependents prisoners by one corner of his bow. Hidayat Ali was silenced and his saner advice was left unheeded,\*

The fatal 23rd of September, 1750 dawned. After his usual morning prayers the wazir mounted his elephant and marshalled his huge hosts in battle array, posting Surajmal with his Jats on his right, and Ismail Beg Khan and Raja Himmat Singh Bhadwariya with their troops on his left, while he himself, surrounded by the bulk of his men, stood in the centre with Naseeruddin Haider and Ishaq Khan Najumud-daula by his side and 5,000 picked Qizilbash troops in his immediate front. The advance guard was composed of Kamgar Khan Baluch, Mir Baqa, Sher Jang, Bahadur Khan and Ramzan Khan and their contingents. The artillery—about 1,000 guns of all calibres—was drawn up in one long row along the entire front under the shelter of which the army set in motion and reached the extensive plain of Ram Chatauni,† about 6 miles west of the town of Patiali, at 9 o'clock in the morning.

On his side, Ahmad Khan Bangash divided his troops into two main bodies—one consisting of 10,000 Pathans, chiefly Afridis, under Rustam Khan Afridi, he sent against the enemy, while the other, under his personal command, he placed in ambush behind a jungle that grew in one corner of the field. As the Pathans were seen moving at a distance, Safdar Jang's men took up the offensive, and the action began with artillery fire and the discharge of rockets from both sides. When the guns had slackened

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\* Siyar III 877.

† Sujan Charit, 79-80 ; Siyar, III. 878 ; Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II. Letter no. 20. Ram Chatauni, a Hindu shrine and place of local pilgrimage, is quite near Dandwar Gang Railway Station and the village of Mohanpur. Sheet no. 54. I.



their fire, the wazir's right and left wings under Surajmal and Ismail Beg Khan respectively advanced against Rustam Khan. The Jats under Balram, who were in the front line, occupied an eminence, the site of a deserted village that stood between them and the enemy, planted their guns on its top and pressed the Pathans hard by their murderous fire. Followed by six to seven thousand troops, Rustam Khan now hurried to his men's support. He carried the height, captured the guns of the Jats, and began a hand-to-hand encounter with the enemy. Though hopelessly out-numbered, the Jats, for sometime, maintained their ground firmly. But they lost heavily, and some of their gallant officers like Chain Singh, Sahib Ram and Tilok Singh Tomar were slain, fighting bravely to the end. Seeing this, Surajmal detached his maternal uncle, Sukh Ram, to reinforce Balram. \* Surajmal, Ismail Beg Khan and Himmat Singh also advanced in a semi-circle and took the Pathans by a discharge of their arrows and muskets. Rustam Khan now jumped out of his *palki* and surrounded by his brave clansmen, all on foot, fought most gallantly. But heavy were the odds that he had to face. He was struck by a bullet and killed as also his six to seven thousand men, but not before they had slain three to four thousand Jats. The rest of the Khan's men fled in extreme panic in the direction of Aliganj, and were pursued by the victors who were thus drawn more than four miles away from the wazir's centre. †

Meanwhile, word was brought to Ahmad Khan Bangash that Rustam Khan Afridi had been defeated and slain and that the Jats were in hot pursuit of the remnant of his army. Without being disturbed, the Khan summoned his tribesmen and told them that Rustam Khan had defeated the Jats and taken Surajmal, Ismail Beg and Himmat Singh prisoners, and that if they (Bangashes) also made a like attempt to defeat the wazir, there would be no occasion for the Afridis to taunt them. All agreed. Ahmad Khan first sent 10,000 Ruhelas under Parmul Khan ahead. They made a rush at the wazir's advance-guard.

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\* Sujan Charit, 83-86 and 91-97; Siyar. III. 878; Gulistan. 38; Hadiq 174; Selections from Peshwa Daftar. Vol. II. Letter no. 20.

† Haricharan, 405 a; Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. I. p. 35.

Without offering the least resistance Kamgar Khan Baluch, Mir Baqa, Ramzan Khan and Bahadur Singh, who were in treacherous collusion with the enemy, turned and fled. Sher Jang followed suit. Safdar Jang now ordered Muhammad Ali Khan and Nurul Hasan Khan Bilgrami to advance to the aid of the remnant of his van. Cutting their way with great difficulty through the crowds of men and elephants Nurul Hasan, his brothers and Abdun-nabi Khan, a *chela* of Muhammad Ali Khan with 300 troops succeeded in reaching the front. But the panic of the Mughals was so great that Nurul Hasan's efforts at rallying them proved fruitless. So the Khan and his followers turned to the left so as to rejoin the wazir's centre from that side. But they were suddenly attacked by 300 Ruhelas, who were detached from this main body, in their rear. Nurul Hasan encountered the enemy and overthrew their ranks. But the Ruhelas quickly recovered themselves and cut their way to Muhammad Ali Khan's division where in a severe fight the latter was wounded by a bullet, Nurul Hasan Khan's elephant was incapacitated owing to several sword cuts, and Mir Ghulam Nabi and Mir Azim-ud-din, both Sayyids of Bilgram, lost their lives. \*

While things were going on thus on the left hand side of the wazir's centre, the main force of the Ruhelas was fast approaching his front. As the enemy drew near, the five thousand Mughals, who were posted in the wazir's immediate front, discharged their guns loaded with spikes instead of balls.† These produced a great deal of noise and smoke, but did no execution. When the smoke had subsided, Ahmad Khan Bangash suddenly appeared from behind a grove of *Palash* trees after 2 p. m. and led his men on to the attack. The Pathan archers and musketeers threw the Mughal ranks into confusion and put them to flight.

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\* Siyar III, 878 ; Imad 49 ; Haricharan, 405 a ; Hadiq 174 ; T. M. 15ob ; Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol II. Letter No. 20 ; Sujan Charit, 86-89. Letter No. 23 of the Selections, etc, is based on hearsay. It was natural for Mir Baqa, a brother of Intizamuddaulah to have had an understanding with the Pathans. But letter No. 20 of the Selections etc, says that Sher Jang, too, was in conspiracy. Ahmad Khan had also unsuccessfully tried to win over Surajmal (see Sujan Charit, pp. 76-78).

† Selections etc, p. 35 ; Hadiq. 174 ; J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 74.

ollowed by a band of devoted followers Naseeruddin Haider ben boldly stepped forward and charged Ahmad Khan's front rank vigorously. Having slain seven Patbans with his own sword, he met Mustafa Khan Matania in a personal combat. Both fought valiantly and fell down their horses, and succumbed to the wounds they had received. Ahmad Khan immediately pushed on to the space vacated by Naseeruddin's fall and attacked the wazir's centre, which the latter had unwisely weakened by sending away re-inforcements to the support of his wings and advance-guard. By this time, about 300 Pathans had reached Safdar Jang's rear and emptied their muskets on his men. He was, thus, at one and the same time, attacked from two directions. His elephant driver and attendant, Mirza Ali Naqi, were shot dead. The wazir himself was struck in the jaw by a bullet and fell unconscious on the *howda*. Fortunately, the *amari* being made of high bars of metal, he was protected from further injury. Thinking the *howda* empty the Pathans passed on, not knowing where the wazir was. At this critical moment Jagat Narayan, a grandson of Diwan Atma Ram, leapt down his horse, climbed Safdar Jang's elephant and taking his seat as driver brought it out of danger. The victorious Bangashes, actively searching for the wazir, now arrived where Ishaq Khan Najm-ud-daulah was standing with a group of his faithful men, and cried out, "Where is Abulmansur Khan? Where is Abulmansur Khan?" Preparing to resist the enemy, Ishaq Khan replied in an equally loud voice, "I am Abulmansur Khan." At these words, the Pathan hosts fell on him from all sides, and although he continued shooting arrows, they cut off his head and took it away to Ahmad Khan Bangash. It was there recognized to be the head of Ishaq Khan. The wazir had, by now, recovered from his swoon. He ordered his drums to be beaten aloud so as to rally his men. But with the exception of 200 men none rallied to his support. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. With great reluctance Safdar Jang withdrew himself from the field and marched to Marhara, reaching there after nightfall. Much of his treasure and baggage was plundered by his own ungrateful Mughal troops, and what

remained fell a prey to the victorious Pathans.\*

Meanwhile Surajmal, Ismail Beg Khan and Raja Himmat Singh were returning from the pursuit of the Afridis. On the way, they heard of the wazir's defeat and withdrawal from the field. So they halted near a tope of *palash* trees to await the further movement of the Pathans. But Ahmad Khan Bangash too, though master of the wazir's camp with its rich treasure and equipage, was also in suspense and anxiety about Surajmal's intentions. He discreetly forbade his troops to move in the direction of the Jats. Accordingly, Surajmal and his friends, equally apprehensive of the victorious Pathans, retired to the bank of the Kalinadi, spent the night there and early next morning returned to their respective homes.

#### 4.—THE WAZIR'S RETURN AND THE FAILURE OF A PLOT AGAINST HIM

Safdar Jang got his wound dressed at Marhara and spent the night there. At midnight, he was rejoined by Hidayat Ali Khan who brought with him a few pieces of cannon and some stragglers from his army. Next morning, the 24th September, he resumed his journey, followed only by a fragment of his once mighty army. Hardly had he covered six miles when a camel-driver handed over to him a letter from Raja Lachhimi Narayan announcing the happy news of the birth of the wazir's first grandson, the future Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah of Awadh. His grief was temporarily changed into joy; but the disaster and humiliation of his defeat had so overwhelmingly depressed his spirits that he observed no rejoicings usual on such an occasion.‡ On the 30th September, he reached near the Yamuna and encamped at Barapula.

The news of the wazir's defeat had spread like wild fire throughout the country. It was everywhere earnestly believed that he had met his death at the hands of turbulent Pathans.‡

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\* Siyar. III. 978; Imad 49; Hadiq. 174; Haricharan. 405a; Sujan Charit, 39-90; Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol II. Letter 2; T. Ahmad Shahi, 27a. The last named work gives a brief and partly in-correct account.

† Sujan Charit, 91-99.

‡ Imad, 50.

At Delhi, the wildest of rumours were afloat. The Emperor, Javed Khan, and the Turani nobles began to concert measures to confiscate Safdar Jang's property and raise Intizam-ud-daulah to *wizarat*. But the wazir's wife, Sad-run-nisa, collected 10,000 troops and exhorted her son Jalaluddin Haider to stand on defence.\* This disconcerted the plan of the plotters who now discreetly decided to wait for the confirmation of the news of the wazir's death before coming to extremities with his wife. A few days later, Safdar Jang arrived at Barapula. He appears to have determined to collect another army and defeat the Pathans before entering Delhi. But, owing to the Emperor's insistence, he went to his house in the city.† Informed of the conduct of his court enemies during his absence from Delhi, he sent threatening messages to Udham Bai (the queen-mother) and Javed Khan that he was still a match for them. Both declined having harboured evil intentions against him and readily offered apology.‡

Yet the wazir's enemies were not discouraged. They set to work to make whatever capital they could out of Safdar Jang's reverse. For the first time in the Mughal history, the imperial

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\* Malhar Rao Holkar wrote to the Peshwa in two of his letters that Safdar Jang was killed. See Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II. L. 23 and 24.

Siyar. III. 381 ; Imad. 50

† Selections from Peshwa Daftar. Vol II Letter No 20 ; Siyar. III. 381. I reject the prejudiced Pathan version which has been uncritically accepted by Irvine (J. A. S. B. 1879 pp. 76, 83-85) that on reaching Delhi Safdar went secretly to his house. I prefer the Siyar's version, for it is more contemporary and Hidayat Ali Khan, the historian's father, was present at Delhi at the time.

T. Ahmad Shahi written by a contemporary courtier is silent on the point. It only says that Safdar Jang arrived wounded, and did not go to court for about two months. One day during his visit to the Qudsia garden the Emperor passed by the wazir's house and then Safdar Jang came out and interviewed him. Ahmad Shah asked about his health, saw his wound and consoled him. The wazir went to court, like one in humiliation, after his wound was healed. See T. Ahmad Shahi, 266-27 a. The date of Safdar Jang's arrival back given by this work is wrong.

‡ Siyar. III. 381.

wazir had been decisively beaten by an obscure and negligible enemy. Intizam-ud-daulah, the Turani leader, was not the man to let such an unexpected occurrence be forgotten, without turning it to his advantage. He instigated the Emperor to forbid Safdar Jang the Court on the plea that an ancient rule of the Mughal house required that a defeated wazir must lose his post and go into retirement. Safdar Jang was now at his wit's end. He could see no better expedient to get out of his difficulties than to propitiate his cunning rival, Javed Khan. He offered the Khan a huge bribe of seventy lakhs of Rupees and the artful greedy eunuch managed to get Safdar Jang pardoned and re-installed in the *wizarat*.\*

#### 5.—AHMAD KHAN'S WORK AFTER HIS VICTORY

Flushed with his unexpected victory over the wazir of the Empire, Ahmad Khan Bangash made speedy arrangement for the occupation of the imperial territory round Farrukhabad and of Safdar Jang's provinces of Awadh and Allahabad. He despatched some of his numerous half brothers and *chelas* with their contingents to various directions and they obtained possession of all the country from Aligarh to Akbarpur, 26 miles east of Kanpur,† He sent Shadi Khan, another of his step brothers, with 20,000 troops to occupy Allahabad,‡ Muhammad Amin Khan to subdue the Ghazipur district and Mahmud Khan, his own son, with 10,000 horse, numerous foot and a good deal of artillery and Jahan Khan as his chief adviser to bring Awadh under his control. Munawar Khan was appointed *faujdar* of Sandi and Pali†† and Khudadad's Khan that of Bilgram\*\* (both formed the western frontier of Awadh and were included in it).

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\* T. M. 151 a ; Siyar. III. 881 ; Imad. 50 ; Abdulkarim 261.

† Walli-ullah. 68b ; J. A. S. B (1879) p. 76 ; Selections etc Vol. II. letter no. 20

‡ Hadiq. 174,

†† Sandi is 16 miles North of Kanauj, and Pali is 18 miles N. W. of Sandi, Sheet 54 M.

\*\* Bilgram is 16 miles S. W. of Hardoi. Sheet 63 A.

In response to Ahmad Khan's appeal to co-operate in the reduction of the wazir's dominion Hafiz Rahmat Khan despatched Parmul Khan with a strong body of Ruhela troops who took possession of the *pargana* of Shahabad and the *sarkar* of Khairabad,\* roughly equivalent to the modern district of Hardoi, western half of Kheri-Lakhimpur and Sitapur, without any serious opposition from the people.†

#### 6.—THE PATHAN OCCUPATION OF AWADH

A few days after the battle of Ram Chatauni, Mahmud Khan Bangash began his march towards Lucknow. On his arrival near the western border of Bilgram, 16 miles south-west of Hardoi, his men picked a quarrel with the residents of the town, and inflicted some injury on them. The Bilgramis, then as efficient in the use of sword as of pen, retaliated and wounded some of the Pathans, and carried away about 200 beasts of burden from their camp. Highly indignant, Mahmud Khan now determined to sack the town. The people, also, made elaborate preparations to stand at defence. But the calamity was averted by the timely intervention of some respectable Shaikhs of the place who had been old acquaintances of Ahmad Khan Bangash; and after a peaceful compromise, Mahmud Khan resumed his march towards Allahabad, sending one of his uncles with 20,000 Pathans to Lucknow to bring that part of Awadh under his father's rule.

On his arrival in the vicinity of Lucknow, this Bangash chief took upon himself the work of the reduction of important places in the suburbs, and detached a contingent of 5,000 troops under an able commander to occupy the city. As Lucknow had been vacated by Safdar Jang's officers who had retreated to the shelter of the Allahabad fort on the first news of their master's defeat, the Pathans met with no resistance.‡ An Afghan Kotwal

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\* Khairabad, originally the headquarters of the district, is about 4 Miles S. E. of Sitapur. Sheet 63 A.

† Gulistan, 39.

‡ Siyar III. 879-80. Siyar's date, 16th Jamadi I, 1164 H. regarding Mahmud Khan's arrival and conduct at Bilgram is erroneous. It should be either Ziqada or Zil Hijjah, 1163 H.

and a strong garrison were established in the city. With the capture of Lucknow, the reduction of a major part of Awadh was complete. Some of the big landlords had been totally indifferent, for the change afforded them a good opportunity of regaining their lost power and possessions. A few, like Sumer Singh, son of Raja Hindu Singh Chandel of Sachendi, Rup Singh son of Bhagwant Singh Khichar of Asothar, Akbar Shah of Azamgarh, Balwant Singh of Banaras and Prathipati of Pratabgarh, who had been inimical to Safdar Jang, openly went over to the side of the enemy. That was why the Pathans met with little opposition throughout Awadh.

#### 7.—THE PATHANS DRIVEN OUT OF AWADH

But the city of Lucknow and, with it, the whole of Awadh passed as easily out of the Pathan hands as it had fallen into theirs a month or two before. The new Kotwal's tyranny soon alienated the sympathy of the people from their Pathan masters. Shaikh Muiz-ud-din Khan, a respectable citizen and leader of the Shaikh-zadas of the town tried to bring home to the Bangash chief, who was encamped outside Lucknow, the evil consequences of the rapacity and oppression of his subordinates and to persuade him to make the administration more humane ; but it fell on flat ears. The fire of discontent thus went on smouldering till a chance spark, one day, set it violently ablaze. In a quarter of the city three Pathans, boastful of the swordsmanship of their race, were arrogantly taunting the cowardice of Safdar Jang and his Mughals. A Shaikhzada, who happened to be present there challenged their statement and the altercation ended in a free fight in which the Shaikhzada was killed. Towards the evening, thirty Shaikhzadas assembled at a place and gave the three Pathans a most severe beating. The latter also made preparations to retaliate. Realising that there would be no end of the Pathan tyranny without a fight, the Shaikhzadas organised themselves under Muiz-ud-din Khan and turned the Pathan kotwal and his garrison out of the city, substituting a Mughal in his place, and declaring that he had been sent by the wazir for the purpose. The Bangash chief became highly indignant



and marched on the city in order to sack it. A hotly contested battle was fought near the bank of the Gomti on the side of Ismail Ganj, situated to the east of the fort but demolished long since, in which a handful of Shaikhzadas defeated and put to flight 5,000 troops of the enemy. This battle finally decided the fate of the Pathan rule in Awadh. Encouraged by the Shaikhzadas' exploit the residents of other towns in the *suba* also drove out their new rulers, and Mahmud Khan who had been recalled to Allahabad by his father could not make a fresh attempt to regain the province. But nine thousand Pathans ejected from Sandila, Bilgram, Kakori and other towns assembled somewhere near Lucknow to try their luck once more with the Shaikhzadas. Muiz-ud-din Khan invited the residents of other towns and with their help fought the Pathans and repulsed them with heavy losses. The time happily coinciding with the wazir's start on his second expedition against Ahmad Khan Bangash, the Pathans to a man retreated to Farrukhabad, and Awadh reverted to its legitimate ruler, Nawab Safdar Jang.\*

#### 8.—SIEGE OF ALLAHABAD

Simultaneously with Mahmud Khan's start towards Awadh after the victory at Ram Chatauni, Shadi Khan, a step-brother of Ahmad Khan Bangash, began his march, at the head of 20,000 horse and foot, in the direction of Allahabad. As soon as this news reached Lucknow Baqa-ullah Khan, a nephew of the late Amir Khan, and Pratap Narayan the youngest son of Diwan Atma Ram, fearing to be intercepted between two fires, beat a rapid retreat to Allahabad and took shelter within its strong fort. Learning from the fugitives that Shadi Khan was on his way to his city, Ali Quli Khan, deputy governor of Allahabad, proceeded, with his own army and a part of that of Pratap Narayan, to fight the enemy. The opposing forces met near Kora Jahanabad, 24 miles south of Kanpur, where a well-contested battle was fought in which Shadi Khan was defeated and put to flight. Ali Quli Khan then returned to Allahabad.†

\* Siyar. III. 880 ; Imad 50-51.

† Hadiq, 174.

Hearing of Shadi Khan's repulse Ahmad Khan Bangash set out in person against Allahabad. At this news, Pratap Narayan, Baqa-ullah Khan and Ali Quli Khan, feeling themselves unable to face the superior numbers of the enemy, shut themselves up in the fort and made elaborate arrangements to stand the siege. They threw a bridge of boats over the Yamuna from the Tribeni Gate of the fort to the small town of Arail, situated on the right bank of the Yamuna and about 1/2 mile S. E. of the fort and posted a strong division of their troops under Baqa-ullah Khan at the southern end of it to strengthen the defence and to ensure the safe passage of men and provisions from the neighbouring country into the fort.\*

Meanwhile, Ahmad Khan Bangash arrived at Kora, where he received friendly letters from Raja Prathipati of Pratapgarh and Raja Balwant Singh of Banares, promising to help him to capture the fort of Allahabad after which the whole of that *suba* and the eastern Awadh would easily fall into his hands. Encouraged by these invitations, the Khan resumed his march and reached Allahabad sometime in February, 1751. Prathipati had already arrived near the left bank of the Ganga, and both now crossed over to Jhusi, about one mile east of the fort. Here, on a mound known as Raja Harbong's fort, Ahmad Khan erected his guns and began discharging them at the fort. The besieged too kept up an artillery fire all day long. To encourage his fellow-besieged Baqa-ullah Khan, a man of great military talents, marched from his encampment near Arail to the fort and back in military array every morning and evening. Luckily for them, a Naga Sannyasi of reckless bravery, named Rajendra Giri Gosain,† who had come on a pilgrimage to the holy *Prayag*

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\* Hadiq, 174.

† Rajendra Giri was a Naga Gosain and Sannyasi from the village of Moth, 32 miles N. E. of Jhansi and included in that district. The Marathas had given him Moth in Jagir. Here, he built a fort for himself and made it his residence. Gradually, he acquired possession of a large number of villages in the vicinity and was, therefore, driven out in or about 1750 by Naroshankar, the Maratha Officer in that region, who had once been his patron. Rajendra Giri, then went to Allahabad and rendered valuable service to Safdar Jang's men, besieged there. He was introduced to the wazir

took the side of the besieged. In spite of the repeated requests of Ali Quli Khan and his friends, he would not consent to go within the shelter of the fort. Followed by some of his valiant disciples, who were stark-naked men with ash-smearred bodies and long locks, he would fall upon the Pathans twice or thrice a day, kill some of them and then return to his tents between the old city and the fort. In this way, fighting went on for many a day, but the Pathans could not make any impression on the enemy. Their wrath, therefore, fell on the innocent and defenceless residents of the town. From Khuldabad to the foot of the fort the extensive city of Allahabad was plundered and burnt by the Pathan hooligans who carried away 4,000 women and children of respectable families as prisoners. The abode of Shaikh Afzal Allahabadi and the quarter of Daryabad, which was exclusively populated by Pathans, were the only parts that were spared from their greed of plunder and the vindictive ferocity of fire and sword.\*

When every attempt to carry the fort had failed, Ahmad Khan decided to capture the town of Arail and cut off supplies of men and provisions to the besieged. Accordingly, he directed Raja Balwant Singh of Banares, who had shortly before arrived at Jhusi in compliance with the Khan's summons, to cross over to Arail, drive Baqa-ullah and his men into the fort and then to obtain possession of the bridge and deliver an attack from the south. Ahmad Khan also made preparations to attack the fort from the east simultaneously with the Raja's attack from the side of Arail. In order to prevent this strategy of the Pathans, Ali Quli Khan, who had received the timely news of

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under whom he accepted service on two conditions (a) he should not be required to salute him and (b) he should have the permission to beat his drums in his master's retinue. He fought bravely for the wazir in the second Pathan war and in the civil war with the Emperor, losing his life in the latter. His chief disciples were Umrao Giri and Anup Giri of whom the latter bore the title of Himmat Bahadur. Shuja-ud-daulah became a great patron of these two young men who remained in his service for a long time. See Hadiq, 168-69; Imad. 64; J. A. S. B. (1879) P. 79n.

\* Siyar. III. 879; Khazana-i-Amitah, 83; Selection from Peshwa Daftar, Vol II. Letters 29 and 30.

the enemy's designs decided to come out and fight in the open. Next morning, Ali Quli Khan, Pratap Narayan, Baqa-ullah Khan and Rajendra Giri assembled their men outside the fort and near the old city and marshalled them in battle array. On his side, Ahmad Khan sent the bulk of his troops under Mansur Ali Khan and Shadi Khan to encounter the enemy and himself followed them a little later. After three hours of cannonading, the armies came to close quarters, and Raja Prathipati, the leader of the Pathan advance-guard, delivered an attack on Baqa-ullah Khan's division. Mansur Ali Khan, advancing to support the Raja, got ahead of him. A fierce hand-to-hand fighting took place. Baqa-ullah Khan lost a considerable number of his men and withdrew across the bridge. The gunners within the fort, frightened at this reverse, abandoned their places, and fled to join the fugitives. Rajendra Giri and his friends also went back to their camp. The victorious Pathans occupied the field, but as the enemy had broken the southern end of the bridge, they could not pursue the fugitives.\*

The siege had now lasted for full fifty-four † days and there appeared to be no prospect of its successful termination. The enemy being in possession of the bridge commanded supplies from outside, and the strategic situation of the fort baffled every Pathan attempt to capture it. Meanwhile, news arrived with startling suddenness that Safdar Jang had left Delhi with a formidable Maratha army and had defeated and put to flight Shadil Khan Pathan *faujdar* of Kol (Aligarh) and Jalesar. Filled with anxiety about the safety of his paternal dominion, Ahmad Khan Bangash raised the siege, contrary to the advice of Prathipati, and beat a rapid retreat to Farrukhabad early in April, 1751.

#### 8.—PATHAN DISTURBANCE IN JAUNPUR AND BANARAS

Before his march against Allahabad, Ahmad Khan had appointed Muhammad Amin Khan, one of his step-brothers,

\* J. A. S. B. (1879) pp. 80-81.

† Hadiq, 168 and 174. Siyar. III. 881 says, it lasted for four months. But I prefer Murtaza Husain's version, for he was then present in the fort with his master, Pratap Narayan.

*faujdar* of Ghazipur and Sahib Zaman Khan Jaunpuri, a cousin to one of his wives, to Jaunpur, Banaras and Chunargarh with orders to eject Safdar Jang's officers from the districts and occupy them without delay. Ghazipur submitted to the Pathans without the least resistance, its *faujdar*, Fazl Ali Khan having fled away on the first news of the enemy's approach. But Balwant Singh, the ruler of the latter three districts, refused to give them up to Sahib Zaman. Therefore, Ahmad Khan despatched re-inforcements to Jaunpur and directed Akbar Shah, chief of Azamgarh, and Shamsbad Khan Zamindar of Mahaul, 23 miles N. W. of Azamgarh, to co-operate with Sahib Zaman in expelling Balwant Singh from his territory. The allies assembled their troops—1,700 horse and 10,000 foot—at Akbarpur, 32 miles south-east of Faizabad, and captured the fort of Surharpur, near their camp, after a siege of fifteen days. Jaunpur also fell after a feeble resistance of six hours. In spite of these successes, Sahib Zaman thought himself to be no match for the Raja and, therefore, instead of marching direct to Banaras, he retired to Nizamabad, 32 miles north-east of Jaunpur. Balwant Singh, equally apprehensive of his Pathan rival, thus got some respite to chalk out a plan of action for the future.\*

Not long after, Balwant Singh received the reports of Ahmad Khan Bangash's advance towards Allahabad. Resistance being useless under the altered circumstances, the Raja sent Lal Khan Risaldar and Rasul Khan Bakhshi with presents for Ahmad Khan. The Khan received the agents well, and issued orders demanding the Raja's presence in his camp.

Accordingly, Balwant Singh went to Allahabad, made a present of one lakh of rupees to Ahmad Khan, and was confirmed in one half of his territory, the other half, viz, north of the Ganga remaining with Sahib Zaman Khan. But, when he had returned to Banaras he learnt that the Bangash chief had his eye upon the whole of his estate and had promised Sahib Zaman assistance in driving him out of Banaras. He, therefore, bided his time in anger. Meanwhile, he heard that Ahmad Khan had raised the

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\* Balwant, 27a and b.

siege of Allahabad and was retreating to Farrukhabad. Without delay, the Raja left Gangapur, near Banaras and reaching Mari-ahu, 12 miles south-west of Jaunpur, demanded the evacuation of his territory by Sahib Zaman Khan. The weak-minded Khan was confounded, left Jaunpur and fled to the Champaran district beyond the Gandak. Balwant Singh thus recovered the whole of his dominions without a fight. \*

The Pathan disturbance in Awadh and Allahabad was like a huge storm that had swept the country from one corner to the other, but subsided as quickly as it had risen. Only a few towns, like Faizabad and Banaras, were lucky enough to escape the misery that befell Allahabad and Lucknow. Yet, the residents of even these towns lived in a state of consternation during this temporary period of Pathan ascendancy. A Marathi letter of the beginning of March, 1751, describes the condition of one of them in these words ; "In the midst of a banquet given to the Brahmins arrived a letter from Bapuji Pant Hingne (Maratha wakil at Delhi) reporting that the Pathans had arrived at Allahabad, plundered the new town and carried away women into slavery. In Banaras, too, there is a great commotion. For two days the holy city went without light. It has been in fear for ten days. The bullock-cart hire from Kashi to Patna has risen to eighty rupees. Load carriers are not available. The residents are leaving the town and fleeing to wherever they can. At this, the Pathan chief (Sahib Zaman) has sent *parwanas* to seven principal bankers, promising safety of life and property to the people and adding that 'I am the Emperor's servant. I have not come to plunder the town or to molest the ryot.' Thus he persuaded the people to remain in the city. Yet they are panic-stricken. Let us see what God has in store for † us." The fate of the places that had suffered from ravages at the hands of the Pathans could well be imagined. In two of his letters, Govind Pant Bundele, the Maratha agent in the Doab, reported to the Bhau Sahib to-

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\* Balwant, 27b—29; Sardesai, Panipat Prakarna, p. 13.

† Rajwade III. 376; also quoted in Sardesai, Panipat Prakarana, p. 11; Imad, 50. The principal bankers of Banaras interviewed the Pathan general Sahibzaman on the way and averted his visit to the holy city by promising to pay him seven lakhs of rupees.

wards the end of February, 1751, that confusion to the extent of anarchy reigned supreme throughout the Doab and the province of Allahabad. Everywhere in that region merchants had closed their shops, traffic was obstructed, and business had come to a stand-still. The people were fleeing into the jungle and even one-fourth of the revenue could not be realised. \*

Even in those parts of the two provinces which had not been visited by the enemy big landlords had risen against Safdar Jang's rule. The Bisen ruler of Gonda, Janwar chief of Balrampur and some other Rajput lords formed a confederacy under the leadership of the Raikwar chief of Ramnagar in Barabanki, and drove the Nawab-Wazir's officers from the northern districts of Awadh. Then, they marched towards Lucknow recently recovered from the Pathans, but still denuded of troops. But, they were opposed by the redoubtable Shaikhzadas and the Muslim Khanzadas of Mahmudabad and Bilehra. † In a fiercely contested battle fought somewhere north-west of Barabanki the Rajputs were defeated and repulsed with great slaughter. The Raja of Balrampur was killed, the Raikwar power was broken and Mahmudabad began to come into prominence from this date. ‡

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\* Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II. Letters 29 and 30.

† Mahmudabad is in the Sitapur district and is situated 11 miles N. W. of Fatehpur Tahsil. Bilehra is in Barabanki and is 8 miles S. E. of Mahmudabad.

‡ Dist. Gazetteer of Barabanki (1904), p. 162.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE SECOND PATHAN WAR AND AFTER

1751—1752

#### 1—SAFDAR JANG INVITES THE MARATHAS TO HIS AID.

From the moment of his return, Safdar Jang's mind was totally engrossed by the thought how to wipe off the disgrace of his defeat. So sorely did he feel humiliated that he passed most of his time in his private chamber with his head down-cast. But Sadrunnisa cheered him up and with a true wifely devotion placed all her hoards at his disposal.\* The wazir then summoned his chief officers and friends like Ismail Beg Khan, Raja Lachhimi Narayan, Raja Nagar Mal, Surajmal, Abdul Ali Khan, uncle of the author of the *Siyar*, and others and with their advice decided to call in the Marathas to his aid. The Emperor and the Turani nobles in secret sympathy with the Pathans, however, tried to create difficulties for him; and Ahmad Khan Bangash, with perfect hypocrisy that characterised the rulers of the 18th century India, submitted a petition to Ahmad Shah, begging his royal pardon for his acts. The fickle-minded monarch held out hopes of pardon to the Khan and summoned Mir Mannu from Lahore and Nasir Jang from the Deccan so as to thwart with their help the wazir's attempt to recover his power. † But they had their own troubles in their respective provinces and hence Ahmad Shah's plan came to naught. The wazir now made grand preparations for a fresh campaign against Ahmad Khan Bangash, and wrote repeatedly to the Maratha chiefs, Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia to come speedily to his assistance. When they had reached Rajputana on their way from the Deccan, Safdar

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\* Imad 53. She offered Rs. 1,10,000 and 4,000 *asharfis* (gold coins).

† Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 11. Letter No. 20. But Irvine's Pathan authorities say that Ahmad Khan did not send any petition. The Emperor himself terrified at the Khan's progress towards Delhi, sent him a robe of honour, a sword, an elephant, a horse and other gifts and an apologetic *farman* relating what had been done, had been done by the wazir and not by him. On the receipt of these things the Khan returned to Farrukhabad. See J.A. S. B. (1879) pp. 75—76.



Jang sent Raja Ram Narayan, his diwan and Raja Jugul Kishore, Alivardi Khan's Wakil at Court, to bring them to Delhi. The Rajas met the Maratha chiefs near Kota\* and they all started for the imperial city towards the end of February. On their near approach the wazir took formal leave of the Emperor on the 21st of February and entered his advance tents which had been pitched at the river bank outside Delhi. On the 28th, he moved forward and encamped near Kishan Das tank. Here, Malhar Rao Holkar joined him on the 2nd of March, † and the two entered into a formal agreement. In accordance with this agreement, the Holkar and Sindhia promised to help the wazir in his Farrukhabad campaign for a daily allowance of 25,000 Rs.

All the historians of this period of Indian history from Elphinstone down to Irvine have strongly condemned Safdar Jang's "recourse to the humiliating expedient of calling in the Marathas" and with their aid crushing the Pathans of Farrukhabad and Ruhelkhand.‡ But, to a modern student, in possession of the contemporary sources, Marathi as well as Persian, this view appears to have been taken in utter disregard of the circumstances of the case. It may be explained here at the risk of repetition that the Ruhela and Bangash Pathans were in treacherous alliance with the Abdali invader of Afghanistan. The history of the next ten years clearly demonstrates that Ahmad Shah Abdali swooped down the plains of Northern India every time that his Pathan-brethren in Hindustan were hard pressed by their enemies, not only to rescue them but also to help them in the realisation of their dream—the Pathan supremacy in India. †† The Turani nobles, the only powerful Muslim chiefs, (Alivardi Khan not being concerned with court politics), were

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\* Selections etc. Vol II. Letter No. 28 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 28a ; Imad. 57. Siyar wrongly has Lachhmi Narayan instead of Ram Narayan.

† Sardesai. Panipat Prakaran, p. 9, gives wrong date, 1750, The Sindhia and Holkar had not arrived at Delhi till the beginning of March, 1751, having been absent in the Deccan for more than a year owing to Shahu's illness and death.

‡ Elphinstone's History of India (6th Ed.) P. 736 ; Beveridges. A Comprehensive H. of India, Vol. I. P. 403 ; Irvine ; J. A. S. B. (1879) P. 85.

†† Patren Yadi, etc. Letter No. 83 and p. 89 ; Rajwade. III. 160.

the sworn enemies of the wazir and were in secret sympathy with the Pathan rebels. Hence Safdar Jang could either allow the Pathans to usurp the Mughal sovereignty and his own provinces of Awadh and Allahabad together with his office, or crush them with the help of the Marathas, the only people equal to the task. He had, in fact, to make choice between two evils—a foreign invader assisted by enemies at home and selfish hereditary rebels whose attitude for some years past had been distinctly loyal and who had been his own friends since 1747.\*

The charge that he was the first Muslim nobleman to invite active Maratha intervention for the solution of a domestic dispute does not stand any test of truth. It is a matter of common knowledge that Sayyid Husain Ali Khan had brought the Marathas to Delhi in 1719 to assist him in deposing Farrukhsiyar, and in December 1732 Nizam-ul-mulk had entered into a secret pact with Bajirao and encouraged him to attack the Mughal territory in northern India. Nevertheless, the step taken by Safdar Jang was a highly courageous one. The Marathas were his hereditary enemies, and were stoutly opposed by his father-in-law Saadt Khan for nearly a decade, and in his company Safdar Jang too had fought more than one battle against them. An unfortunate incident in February 1744 had almost brought him on the verge of a war with the Peshwa. The Maratha wakil Mahadeva Bhat Hingane had accepted the agency of Jaipur State at Delhi in addition to his main duty as the Peshwa's representative at the imperial court, and in his new capacity he called on Safdar Jang to adjust certain matters relating to the Kachhwaha ruling family. During the altercation Mahadeva Bhat used foul language in regard to Safdar Jang and directed his followers to apprehend him. This led to a conflict between the parties, in which Mahadeva Bhat received fatal wounds. His son too was wounded, and both had to be carried back to their residence. Mahadeva died at mid-night; but his son was lucky enough to recover.† Safdar Jang had statesmanship to

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\* Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II. Letters 2, 4, 9, and 13; Patren Yadi etc. Letter No. 67.

† Purandare Daftar, Vol. I. Letter, 154.

forget the age-long enmity and to recognise the role that the Marathas were likely to play in north-Indian politics.

### 2.—DEFEAT AND FLIGHT OF SHADIL KHAN, MARCH, 1751

When all necessary arrangements had been completed and Safdar Jang had obtained a renewal of the services of Raja Surajmal and his Jats, on an allowance of Rs. 15,000 per day, he set out from Delhi about the second week of March, 1751, leaving his son Jalaluddin Haider as deputy wazir to represent him at court. Reaching Agra, he despatched 20,000 light Maratha cavalry against Shadil Khan, *faujdar* of the country extending from Aligarh to Patiali and brought under the Pathan control after the wazir's defeat at Ram Chatauni. These troops crossed the Yamuna and surprised Shadil Khan, whose force did not exceed 4,000 horse and 4,000 foot, somewhere near Qadir Ganj, 30 miles north-east of Etawa, in the last week of March. The Khan was defeated and repulsed with great slaughter. The victors pursued the fugitives and made a large number of them prisoners. But most of them including Shadil Khan successfully eluded their pursuers and fled across the Ganga to the Badaun district. The Marathas acquired an immense plunder, numerous horses and many elephants.\*

### 3.—SIEGE OF FATEHGARH, APRIL 1751

On the receipt of the news of Shadil Khan's defeat and flight, Ahmad Khan Bangash raised the siege of Allahabad and hurried quickly back to Farrukhabad, reaching it in six days. Most of the mercenaries that had swarmed under his victorious banners some months before now melted away in all directions. He sent his family and dependants to the Ruhela country and feeling his capital indefensible, he retreated with the remnant of his army to Husainpur, a place of great strategic importance with a small but strong fort known as Fatehgarh, on the right bank of the Ganga, about 3 miles south-east of Farrukhabad. Here he entrenched himself in the ravines round the fort. He set up his own head-quarters on the bank of the Ganga, threw a

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\* Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. II, Letter No. 32 ; Vol. XXVI. 176; Patren Yadi, etc. Letter No. 79 ; Siyar, III. 881.

bridge of boats over the river to command supplies from the neighbouring country and planted his guns at the head of the ravines, tying them together with strong chains. Mahmud Khan from Awadh and Shadil Khan from his refuge at Qadir Chauk, 5 miles from Qadir Ganj, arrived shortly after and encamped on the left bank of the river.

A little before Ahamad Khans's arrival at Farrukhabad the wazir had detached a Maratha contingent under Gangadhar Tantia to intercept the Khan on the way and to cut off his supplies of provisions and water. As usual with them, the Marathas fell to the merciless task of plundering and burning the countryside, and reached Farrukhabad only to find the town deserted. So they advanced to Fatehgarh and encamped a few miles north-west of it. Informed that the Pathans had left some of their big guns at Yaqut Ganj, 3 miles south of Fatehgarh, Gangadhar sent off some of his men to drag them over to his camp. As soon as the Marathas appeared with the guns near Qaimbagh, half a mile south-west of Ahmad Khan's entrenchment, the Pathans fell on them, seized the guns and drove them back to their camp. At this, Gangadhar himself arrived with the bulk of his army, but he, too, met with the same fate.\*

Meanwhile, accompanied by the Maratha and Jat auxiliaries, the Nawab-wazir arrived near Fatehgarh. He posted Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia at Qaimbagh and himself moved further south and encamped at the ferry of Singhirampur, on the right bank of the Ganga, about 10 miles south of the Pathan entrenchment. Ahmad Khan Bangash was thus surrounded on north, west and south. Every day an artillery duel was fought from morning to evening. Sometimes the Marathas would engage the enemy single-handed, at others the wazir would detach some of his Mughals to reinforce them. In these skirmishes, many days were passed and yet as Ahmad Khan was continually in receipt of supplies from the other side of the river, little impression could be made on him. Safdar Jang realised this and decided to cut off the enemy's access to the country

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\* J. A. S. B. (1179), 90.

north of the Ganga. Accordingly, he directed Sayyid Nurul Hasan Khan Bilgrami to collect boats and throw a bridge over the Ganga near Singhirampur. Fearing attack from all sides, Ahmad Khan Bangash deputed his son, Mahmud Khan, to prevent the throwing of a bridge. The latter took up his stand on the left bank of the river opposite to Singhirampur and made every effort to obstruct the progress of Nurul Hasans's work. But it continued steadily under the cover of artillery fire and the bridge was ready on the 27th April. The siege had now lasted for full twenty five days. \*

#### 4.—DEFEAT AND FLIGHT OF THE PATHANS

28TH APRIL, 1751

In response to Ahmad Khan Bangash's appeal for aid, Sadulla Khan Ruhela, the chief of Ruhelkhand, arrived at the head of 12,000 brave troops on the very day the bridge had been completed, and encamped on the left bank of the river opposite to Fatehgarh. † On the advice of Bahadur Khan, an impetuous Ruhela commander, who had been instrumental in bringing him to Fatehgarh, Sadulla Khan sent a boastful message to Ahmad Khan that next day he would cross the river and would bring with him the heads of the wazir, Surajmal Jat and the Maratha chiefs as an offering to the chief of the Indian Pathans. As the day dawned on the 28th of April, ‡ 1751, the Ruhelas got ready for the battle and were joined by Mahmud Khan and Munawwar Khan. They all numbered 30,000 combatants. ††

\* Patren Yadi, etc., Letter No. 83; Siyar. III. 882.

† Irvine, J. A. S. B. (1879) P. 91. Imad, p. 58, says that the Ruhela had first rejected the Bangash invitation to come to his aid on the ground of blood feud between them, caused by Qaim Khan's death. But, when Ahmad Khan made him a gift of Qaim's blood he agreed to join.

‡ The correct date was 3rd Jamadi II of 1164 H. (28th April, 1751, N. S.) See Patren Yadi, etc. Letter No. 79 and p. 87; Siyar III 882. In Letter No 83 of Patren Yadi, etc. 1st Jamadi II given by the Peshwa as the date of the despatch of Jayappa's Letter to him is erroneous. The mistake being either a misprint or due to clerical error.

†† Patren Yadi etc. Letter No. 83. Imad's numbers are one lakh and a half (p. 58), clearly an exaggeration.

To prevent the junction of the Ruhelas with the main body of Ahmad Khan's troops, still lying at Fatehgarh, Safdar Jang quickly despatched a part of the Maratha force under Gangadhar Yaswant, the Jats under Jawahar Singh, son of Surajmal, and some of his Mughals across the bridge at Singhirampur to attack Sadulla Khan, while the bulk of his army remained in its place to keep a vigilant eye on the Bangash troops. The battle began with the discharge of rockets and musketry from both sides. When the artillery fire had slackened a bit, the Pathans attacked the enemy sword in hand. As usual with them, the Marathas retreated slowly and lured Bahadur Khan who was in charge of the Ruhela advance-guard, some distance away from the field. The reckless Khan enthusiastically gave the retreating enemy a chase and was thus separated from the main body of his troops under Sadulla Khan. At this critical moment, the Marathas attacked him from one side and the Jats poured incessant fire from the other. Bahadur Khan was completely overwhelmed and lost a majority of his brave followers. He fought most desperately, but reckless bravery and cool, obstinate courage could hardly make up the deficiency in numbers. He fell along with ten to twelve thousand Pathans. Seeing this, Sadulla Khan lost heart and fled towards Aonla, reaching there the next day without a single attendant. Mahmud Khan and Munawwar Khan were also filled with consternation. They hastily crossed the Ganga and joined Ahmad Khan at Fatehgarh an hour or so before sunset. The victors made numerous prisoners, acquired an immensely rich booty and captured many elephants and several thousand horses.

The news of this disaster struck despondency and terror into the heart of the Bangash troops. To reassure and hearten them Ahmad Khan went personally to all his batteries and asked his men to be vigilant, promising that he would surprise the enemy before it was morning. But this proved to be of no avail. Three hours after nightfall, the Marathas, who had occupied the northern bank of the Ganga, set fire to Sadulla Khan's baggage and the huge conflagration sent forth its light to Fatehgarh. Filled with consternation at the sight, the Pathans urged their chief to take

refuge by flight. Seeing no other course open except death or flight, Ahmad Khan began his retreat up stream along the right bank of the Ganga during the night of 28th April. Before dawn, the vigilant Marathas were upon his rearguard. Some of the Pathans were set upon and slain and some were drowned in the hurry of their attempt to cross the river. But the majority, including Ahmad Khan, his son and brothers got across in safety. They fled to Shahjahanpur and from there retreated to Aonla to take shelter with Sadulla Khan.

A few hours after Ahmad Khan's flight, his Pathan troops posted at the batteries heard this paralysing news. Without caring for his friends, each man fled to wherever he could. Some made an attempt to cross the Ganga, while others concealed themselves in the brushwood in the bed of the river. The Marathas fell on them, plundered all their effects, slew heaps of them and made countless prisoners. A majority of those who had desperately thrown themselves into the river was drowned. Innumerable horses and camels, many elephants and valuable baggage and furniture passed into the hands of the Deccanis.\*

The importance of this victory has been thus succinctly described by Govind Pant : "The Pathans have been defeated. Now the condition of the country will be good. Had they not been crushed, our control from that part of the country would have been withdrawn, and the zamindars would have joined hands with the Pathans. The Pathan ambition was to seize the Empire. If they failed in this, they wanted to obtain possession of the Emperor's person, kill the wazir and usurp the posts of Wazir, Diwan and Bakhshi. This was their most cherished ambition." †

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\* Patren Yadi etc. Letter No 79, 82 and 83 ; T. Ahmad Shahi 28a Siyar III 882 ; Gulistan. 40-41 ; Hadiq 175 ; M. U. III 773-74

J. A. S. B. (1879) pp. 97-98. Siyar. T. M. and M. U. wrongly think that Ahmad Khan was also present in the battle.

† Rajvade III. 160. Similar feeling is voiced in the Peshwa's letter to Jayappa Sindhia, dated 31st May 1751. He writes :- Praised be your courage, bravery and Rustam-like valour, and praised be the valour of your men. It is not an ordinary thing that our Deccan forces crossed the Yamuna

Burning with the thirst of revenge for the Pathan wrongs in Awadh and Allahabad, the victors devastated the Bangash territory with fire and sword. When revenge had been satisfied, the Nawab-Wazir made arrangements for the occupation of the conquered country, garrisoned Farrukhabad, Mau, Qaimganj and Kanuj and appointed police and revenue officers in all the parganas of the land. This took more than a month and the rainy season of 1751 drew quite near. Warfare being impossible during the next four months, Safdar Jang left for Lucknow to bring his provinces, then in the throes of a revolution, to order, while the Marathas remained encamped in their places.

#### 5—AHMAD KHAN'S ATTEMPT TO REGAIN HIS COUNTRY

While the wazir and his allies were busy in the work of destruction, Ahmad Khan and Sadulla Khan, fearing immediate pursuit, were flying to the hills of Kamaun. They had not yet advanced beyond Muradabad when they heard the welcome news of the wazir's departure for Lucknow. Accordingly, they returned to Aonla and spent the four months of the rainy season there without being disturbed by the enemy.\*

When the rains were nearly over and the Pathans saw their enemies still scattered and unprepared, they resolved to make an attempt to recover their paternal lands. With the assistance of the Ruhelas, Ahmad Khan's men threw a bridge over the Ram Ganga and made preparations to cross over to their former territory. Informed of the Pathan movement, the Marathas, who had sent away their guns to Kalpi† and dispersed most of their troops, despatched Khande Rao, son of Malbar Rao Holkar, to drive away the enemy. Khande Rao was badly caught by the Pathan advance-guard under Dunde Khan at a place on the

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and the Ganga fought with the Pathans and Ruhelas and obtained victory over them. You are loyal servants and pillars of the State and readily do whatever you want to do... News had spread as far as Iran (Persia) and Turan (Central Asia) that the wazir had fallen. You have restored him (to his place). What other thing can be greater than this?" Patren Yadi etc., Letter No. 79.

\* Gulistan 41.

† Rajwade, III, 384.



river where it described a semi-circle. But he was allowed to retreat probably because Ahmad Khan was anxious to secure the good will of the Marathas. The Pathans now pursued him with the object of crossing the Ganga at Singhirampur and attacking Malhar Rao who was lying on the other side of the river with a handful of Maratha troops. But they found the bridge broken. A distant artillery fire, therefore, ensued from both sides and continued for a week. Meanwhile, Ahmad Khan's supplies running short, he marched along the left bank of the river in order to join Najeeb Khan Ruhela, who was coming to re-inforce him with fresh men and provisions, to cross the Ganga at the ferry of Surajpur, about 30 miles above Farrukhabad, and suddenly attack the Marathas.

Informed of the Bangash's activity, Safdar Jang crossed the Ganga at Mahdi Ghat, 40 miles below Farrukhabad and rejoined Malhar Rao at Singhirampur on 25th November, 1751, before the Pathans could carry out their plan of a sudden attack on the Marathas. The wazir's arrival infused fresh vigour into the heart of his enemies. The allies quickly threw a bridge of boats over the Ganga at Kamraul, 28 miles above Singhirampur and despatched 25,000 active Maratha horse across the river. The Ruhelas were filled with panic and beat a hasty retreat in the direction of Aonla. They were soon joined by Ahmad Khan and his clansmen. The Marathas and the Mughals overtook them on the way and a severe action took place in which both sides lost heavily. The Pathans received the worst of it, but they succeeded in making good their escape to Aonla.\*

#### 6.—THE PATHANS BESIEGED IN THE HILLS

Within twelve hours of their arrival at Aonla, the Ruhelas set their houses in flames and in company with Ahmad Khan Bangash started towards the Kamaun hills, keeping their families and treasures in the centre of their forces. After several days' successive marches *via* Rampur, Muradabad and Kashipur, they

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\* J. A. S. B. (1879) pp. 104-106; T. Ahmad Shahi, 28b.

reached a hilly place known as Chilkiya,\* 22 miles north-east of Kashipur. Finding it a place of great strategic-importance with a plain in the middle, surrounded by deep impenetrable forest on three sides, the Pathans encamped in the centre and lodged their families under a strong guard, in the fortified village, north of it. They dug a deep and extensive ditch on the fourth side which had no natural barrier like a river or hill to bar the enemy's passage. At the edge of this ditch they erected an earthen wall and many towers along which they ranged their guns in rows and secured them together with strong iron chains. But their one difficulty was want of provisions which was subjecting them to starvation. Hence after subsisting for a few days on sugarcane, Ahmad Khan appealed to the generosity of the Raja of Almora. In order to starve the enemy into submission the Nawab-wazir had already written to the Raja not to help the Pathans. But the lord of Almora, true to the traditional Hindu hospitality to the fallen, nobly responded to the refugees' appeal and provided them with abundant† grain.

On his side Safdar Jang, immediately after driving away the Pathans, crossed the Ganga and detached some thousand swift Maratha cavalry under Gangadhar Yaswant to pursue the enemy.

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\* Gulistan. 43. Hadiq, 674, says that the Pathans took refuge at Lal Dang. Hamilton, p. 110, follows him. Siyar. III, 882 and M. U. I. 367 give the foot of the Madaria hills, an off-shoot of the Kamaun hills near Chilkiya.

According to T. Ahmad Shahi, p. 28b, this place was about a hundred Kos long and 30 to 40 Kos broad. The same authority says that the Pathans wanted to cross over to Sarhind, plunder it and then to march to Lahore (evidently to seek help from Ahmad Shah Abdali).

† J. A. S. B. (1879) p. 108; T. Ahmad Shahi, 29a.

Compare:—During the summer of 1750 A. D. Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang. Mir Bakhshi of the Empire, undertook a campaign against Maharaja Ram Singh of Jodhpur. With the scorching sun overhead and the burning sand of Marwar summer underfoot. Sadat Khan's men began, one noon, to languish for want of water. So the thirsty Musalmans quitted the field, and starting in search of water, accidentally reached near Ram Singh's troops. The generous Rajputs guided their enemies to a well, had water drawn by their own men to quench the Muslims' thirst and conducted them back to Bakhshi's army. A cousin of the author of the Siyar was an eye-witness of this generous treatment Siyar. III. 885.

Next, he urged Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia to overtake Ahmad Khan Bangash. But the Maratha chief's policy was to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Now that the Pathans had been fully defeated, they had grown averse to their total extermination. Hence they brought forth one excuse or another, engaged themselves in plundering the prosperous towns of Ruhelkhand, and warned Ahmad Khan to be on his guard, for they would soon be upon him. Meanwhile, news arrived that the Pathans had taken shelter at the foot of the Kamaun hills. The wazir and his allies, therefore, advanced by forced marches and encamped at a little distance south of the Pathan entrenchment. Every day the Marathas would issue out of their camp and irregular fighting would take place between the skirmishers of the opposite sides. But, owing to the presence of a dense forest and a stream of water that flowed from the hills and ran all round the Pathan entrenchment in an artificial channel, the besiegers toiled in vain to get an entry into the enemy's position. Hence Safdar Jang erected batteries and began discharging big guns every day. These tactics were pursued for about two months, but without deciding the contest one way or the other.\*

#### 7.—DEFEAT OF RAJENDRA GIRI GOSAIN

Meanwhile, news came that Ahmad Shah Abdali was coming to invade the Panjab so as to divert the wazir's attention towards the Mughal north-western frontier and thereby save his brother Pathans from an inevitable ruin.† Raja Lachhimi Narayan wrote to the Nawab-wazir that the Emperor would soon direct him to make peace with the enemy and be back to Delhi. This made Safdar Jang extremely anxious to strike a swift and successful blow at the enemy, and for this purpose he called a council of war of his friends and officers. The Maratha chiefs in sympathy with the Pathans, pleaded their inexperience in fighting against entrenchments. But Rajendra Giri volunteered

\* J. A. S. B. (1879), 109; T. Ahmad Shahi, 29a.

† Rumours of the Abdali's approach were current since Zil Hijjah 1164 H. (November, 1751). See Patren Yadi, etc. Letter no. 112; Sardesai misinterprets the date as Zil Hijjah, 1165 H.

himself to fight the enemy. Next morning he sent some Mughal troops to attack the batteries of Najeeb Khan and Sayyid Ahmad on the eastern wing of the Pathan entrenchment so as to draw the majority of Ahmad Khan Bangash's men to that point and then make a sudden charge on the latter with the bulk of his brave Naga soldiers. But his plan was treacherously betrayed to Ahmad Khan by Jayappa Sindhia. Hence the Khan concentrated the Pathans round his battery and did not send any of them to the support of his left wing. Informed of this Rajendra Giri sent one of his chief disciples with his contingent against Ahmad Khan, while he himself remained standing with the bulk of his army in the plain below. The Pathans also descended from their position and an artillery duel began which lasted for one hour. Then the armies came to close quarters. In the grim hand to hand fighting the Nagas began to give way. Seeing this, their young commander advanced to the front and dismounting from his horse, attacked the enemy and put up a most gallant fight. His example was ungrudgingly followed by his personal followers. But they were hopelessly outnumbered and slain. At this, the Naga army fled in disorder. It was already evening and, therefore, Rajendra Giri, who was far behind in the plain, retired to his camp. The Pathans pursued the fugitive and came back after plundering some baggage and burning some gun carriages of the wazir's establishment.

Rajendra Giri's defeat greatly discouraged the wazir. He mounted his elephant and marched towards Kashipur in excessive haste and perturbation of mind. But Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia "prevented the wazir from carrying out his foolish intentions, which were quite contrary to the dignity of his station" and brought him back to his encampment.

#### 8. PEACE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

A few days after the Gosain's defeat, the Emperor sent an urgent *farman* through Ali Quli Khan ordering Safdar Jang to come to terms with the Pathans, and recalling him to Delhi in view of the Abdali's rapid advance towards Lahore.\* The Marathas also strongly desired an early termination of the

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 30 b-31 a.

campaign, chiefly because the unhealthy climate of the hills was telling heavily upon the health of the Deccan troops. To the Pathans, reduced to the state of homeless wanderers and suffering from the inclemency of weather and ravages of sickness nothing could be better than the end of their misery.\* They had begged the Maratha intercession several times after their defeat at Fatehgarh. The wazir, too, had now no option but peace. Accordingly, Ali Quli Khan was sent to sound Ahmad Khan Bangash. But as the wazir's conduct inspired little confidence, the Pathans desired the Maratha chiefs' mediation, for they alone could enforce the terms of the proposed peace. The Sindhia and Holkar agreed and sent Khande Rao to invite Mahmud Khan † and Hafiz Rahmat Khan to a conference. The latter responded to the call and repaired to the wazir's camp with 200 trusty Pathan horse. During the night, 1,000 Mughal troops surrounded the Pathan tents at the orders of Ali Quli Khan, who knowing the hostility the wazir's men bore to the Pathans, had deputed his own followers to protect the persons of the guests. But the latter suspecting treachery, immediately mounted and rode away to their entrenchment, faithfully assisted by the Marathas who had pledged word for their safety. The negotiations thus fell through.

At this time, alarming reports were received that the Abdali had crossed the Indus and was coming to rescue Ahmad Khan Bangash and Sadulla Khan Ruhela. The Marathas, seriously alarmed at the prospect of a war with the redoubtable invader, urged the wazir to come to a speedy settlement with the enemy. After some discussion, Safdar Jang agreed to pardon Ahmad Khan Bangash in consideration of a fine of thirty lakhs of rupees (according to another authority eight lakhs), if, as security for payment of it, he surrendered half of his territory till such time

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\* Imad p. 59. says that the Pathans were suffering from an acute famine, and so they submitted. But this is not borne out by contemporary authorities.

† According to Imad (p. 59) Ahmad Khan Bangash agreed to send his son to the wazir, if Khande Rao, Malhar's son was sent to his camp as his surety; and this was done by Malhar Rao Holkar.

as the whole sum was paid out. Accordingly, Ali Quli Khan and Gangadhar were despatched to negotiate with Ahmad Khan Bangash. As previously advised by the Marathas, the Khan accepted the terms in toto and sent Mahmud Khan and Hafiz Rahmat Khan to wait on the wazir. Safdar Jang granted them audience the next day and on the 3rd day he set out for Lucknow, taking Mahmud Khan, Hafiz Rahmat and Gangadhar with him, while the Marathas retired to quarter themselves at Kanauj. When he reached the town of Mohan, 15 miles south-west of Lucknow, the wazir gave Hafiz Rahman Khan leave to return to his country and permitted the Ruhelas to return to their possessions on their binding themselves to pay the revenues in future. He signed the treaty at Lucknow, confirming one half of the Bangash State—Farrukhabad and some other parganas worth 16 lakhs rupees a year—in the name of Ahmad Khan and conferring the other half (i. e. 16½ parganas) on his Maratha allies in lieu of Rs. 30,00,000 that he owed to them for their assistance in the campaign. The country surrendered to the Marathas extended from Kol (Aligarh) in the north to Kora Jahanabad in the south-east. It was made over to them for such time as Ahmad Khan could not pay off the fine. But in practice there was nothing to prevent them from holding it indefinitely and they actually held it till 1761 when, as the result of their reverse at Panipat, they were temporarily driven out of Northern India. The Ruhelas were allowed to retain their lands, besides Mirabad, and some other parganas they had seized from the Bangashes after Qaim Khan's death. But they were to pay revenue for these latter parganas. Safdar Jang kept some parganas for himself. This peace was made early in February 1752.\*

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\* From the siege in the hills to the peace I have followed chiefly Irvine's "Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad" in J. A. S. B. (1879) pp 108-122, which is based on Hisam-ud-din Gwaliori's book. Other authorities that I have consulted are:—T. Ahmad Shahi, 28b-31b; Gulistan, 41-44; Siyar III. 881-2; Hari Charan, 407a and b; T. M. 15 a; Maadan. IV. 180b; Hadiq 175 and 674; Abdul-karim, 262-266; T. A. in Elliot, VIII. 119-120; Imad 59. All these, except Gulistan, give a mere summary, and some, like Imad, are full of mistakes.

In spite of its success the campaign proved disastrous to the interest of the Wazir. It was subversive of the cordiality that had existed for some time between him and the Maratha chiefs. After the victory at Fatehgarh, Malhar Rao Holkar had requested him to make over to the Peshwa the Hindu places of pilgrimage—Faizabad (Ayodhya), Allahabad (Prayag) and Banaras (Kashi).<sup>\*</sup>—a request which could not safely be granted in its entirety. Then the disappointed Marathas, discovering the Wazir's vindictive determination to exterminate the Pathans and his dependence on them, began playing the double game of keeping both the parties pleased—a conduct that frustrated Safdar Jang's designs and saved the Pathans from inevitable ruin. The Holkar and Sindhia so managed the things as to come out of the campaign the sole gainers. In addition to acquiring karors-worth booty and half the Bangash territory and their daily expenses from Safdar Jang, they exacted fifty lakhs of Rupees † from Ahmad Khan Bangash and Sadulla Khan Ruhela, not as war indemnity as the historian Sardesai suggests, but as price for having secured for them such favourable terms, while the Nawab Wazir "had no more than the empty gratification of having humbled the enemy." Above all Safdar Jang's long absence of more than a year gave a splendid opportunity to his enemies to acquire great power and prestige at court and to turn the Emperor's heart from him. Javed Khan became wazir in all but name, and Safdar Jang's attempt to regain his power, after the termination of this campaign, led to his dismissal and downfall.

#### 9.— MURDER OF RAJA PRATHIPATI OF PRATAPGARH

Safdar Jang now appointed Muhammad Quli Khan, son of his elder brother Mirza ‡ Muhsin, his deputy in Awadh and

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<sup>\*</sup> Patren Yadi etc, Letter No. 83. Malhar Rao's desire was to level to the ground Aurangzeb's mosque at Banaras, built on the site and out of the materials of the ancient temple of Visheshwar and re-construct it into a temple. But the Brahmins of Kashi, afraid of their own lives, appealed to the Holkar to refrain from this. See Rajwade, III. 397.

Also given in Sardesai, Panipat prakaran, p. 13.

† Imad, 59; Sardesai, Panipat Prakaran, p. 13.

‡ Mirza Muhsin had been raised to the rank of 7,000 zat and 7,00

started on a tour of his subas to re-organise the administration thrown into disorder on Nawal Rai's death, and to chastise Raja Prathipati of Pratapgarh and Raja Balwant Singh of Banaras for the help they had given to the Pathans early in 1751. From Faizabad the wazir turned southward and despatched a friendly letter to the lord of Pratapgarh requesting him to come in person to his camp, and promising him his pardon for the Raja's conduct during his temporary eclipse at the hand of the Pathans. Prathipati obeyed the call and appeared in the Nawab-wazir's camp at Sultanpur, 36 miles south of Faizabad. During the interview Safdar Jang treacherously kept the Raja off his guard by a sweet and friendly conversation and made a sign to Ali Beg Khan Kharji, one of his favourite bodyguards, to despatch off the visitor. A soldier without a conscience the Khan quickly plunged his dagger in the left side of the Raja's abdomen. The unsuspecting victim, who was totally unarmed, sprang upon his murderer, bit a piece out of his cheek and then fell down dead on the ground. For this black deed, the Nawab-wazir rewarded the assassin with the title of *Shitab Jang*\* (Firm in War).

Prathipati was a grandson of Raja Pratap Singh, a Sombansi chief of considerable importance, who had founded the town of Pratapgarh, 32 miles north of Allahabad, in the heart of his dominion. On Pratap Singh's death his sons began to quarrel among themselves and one of them, named Jai Singh, defeated his brothers with the help of Ruh-ul-Amin Khan Bilgrami, a Faujdar in the Allahabad suba and became Raja. Jai Singh was a capable and strong ruler. He was also cultured. He was familiar with the ceremonious etiquette of the Musalmans, put on Muslim dress and observed Muharram. In or about 1719 he was succeeded by his son Chhatardhari Singh who appears to have been a ruler of little or no mark. During his rule, more than half of Pratapgarh estate was annexed by Saadat Khan. He had five sons by his two wives. Of the first were born

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*sawar* by Emperor Ahmad Shah on 16th March, 1749. He died of cholera in the night of 16th December, 1749. See Delhi Chronicle, pp. 48 and 53.

\* Balwant. 30a ; Hadiq, 647 ; Siyar, III. 882 ; Maadan. IV, 181a.



Medni Singh, Budh Singh, and Dalthambhan Singh, and by the other, named Sujan Kunwari, a lady of exceptional physical charms, he had Prathipati Singh and Hindupati Singh. Utterly infatuated with Sujan Kunwari, the Raja nominated her eldest son, Prathipati his heir, unjustly depriving Medni Singh, his eldest son, of his birth right. The latter resented his father's injustice and fought several pitched battles with him, but without success. Chhatardhari Singh died of paralysis, and Prathipati succeeded him as Raja. The new Raja possessed very handsome features, a polite disposition and a refined taste. He was an able soldier, and a capable man of affairs. He was master of Arabic, Turki, Persian and the language of the Afghans, besides knowing his own mother tongue, Hindi. In daily conversation he spoke flawless Persian which it was difficult to distinguish from that of a fresh arrival from Persia. Like his grandfather, he was an adept in the courtesy and etiquette of the Muslims. In dress and food, too, he was inspired by Muslim tastes. Prathipati was expert in horse-riding, polo, archery and swordsmanship. He was a friend of the historian Murtaza Husain Khan of Bilgram and was about thirty two years of age at the time of his assassination\* (early, 1752).

#### 10.--SAFDAR JANG'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST RAJA BALWANT† SINGH OF BANARAS, 1752

From Sultanpur the Nawab-wazir moved towards Jaunpur

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\* Hadiq. pp. 672-674.

After Hindupati's murder, his son Duniapati then aged only 12, became the ruler of Pratapgarh. He was even more handsome than his father. Some years after he met the same fate at the hands of Shujua-ud-daula as his father had met at the hands of Safdar Jang and Pratapgarh was annexed to the Nawab's provinces. Sometime later it was, however, made over to Hindupati, Prathipati's brother. But the latter was unable to pay the excessive revenue and so he was deprived of the Taluqa. Upon this Hindupati went to Shuja-ud-daula and in greed for his paternal estate, became a Musalman and was, therefore, restored to Pratapgarh. But he was murdered for his apostacy by his proud clansmen. On his accession, Asaf-ud-daula re-annexed Pratapgarh, but Prathipati's descendants succeeded in wresting it from the hands of that Nawab-Wazir. Hadiq 674.

† His correct name was Baliwand.

to settle his score with Raja Balwant Singh of Banaras. We may here briefly trace the early history of the present ruling house of Banaras. During the early years of Muhammad Shah's reign, one Mansa Ram, a Bhuinhar Brahmin of Gautam subcaste and resident of the village of Titharia, now known as Gangapur, went to Banaras and took service under Rustam Ali Khan, Nazim of the *sarkars* of Banaras, Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Chunargarh. Within a few years, Mansa Ram's ability and business talents won complete control over his indolent master's mind and made him the *de facto* ruler of the districts. This arrangement continued till 1738 when Saadat Khan, to whom these districts had been leased a few years earlier, directed Safdar Jang to call Rustam Ali Khan to account for his delinquency. Unable to answer the charges against him, Rustam Ali sent Mansa Ram to Safdar Jang's camp at Jaunpur to make his peace with the Nawab. The negotiations ended in the dismissal of Rustam Ali Khan and the appointment of Mansa Ram's son Balwant Singh to the three *sarkars* of Banaras, Jaunpur and Chunargarh for an annual revenue of thirteen lakhs of rupees. To the remaining *sarkar* of Ghazipur, Shaikh Abdulla was appointed for three lakhs. Mansa Ram returned to Banaras as its ruler on 9th June, 1738, while Rustam Ali Khan retired to Allahabad. Within a year of this transaction Mansa Ram breathed his last and his son Balwant Singh obtained the confirmation of the districts and the title of Raja from Emperor Muhammad Shah. He made Gangapur\* his residence and built a mud fort there. Gifted with the virtues of wisdom and foresight, he strengthened his position slowly but steadily by weeding out old zamindar families in his territory and obtained a state of almost entire independence of the Nawab of Awadh. But he paid the revenue punctually so as to disarm the suspicion of his overlord. During Safdar Jang's absence at Delhi, Balwant Singh turned out the Nawab's agent (*sazawal*), obtained possession of some *parganas* of the Allahabad Province and defeated Ali Quli Khan, Deputy Governor of that *suba*, who had advanced to Chunar to punish the Raja's aggressions. This victory turned Balwant's head, and, early in 1751, he threw in his lot with

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\* Gangapur is 7 miles S. W. of Banaras. Sheet 63 K.

Safdar Jang's enemy, the victorious Ahmad Khan of Farrukhabad. On the Nawab-Wazir's successful march against the Pathans in March, 1751, Balwant Singh, however, drove the Bangash agent, Sahib Zaman Khan, out of his territory. Early in March, 1752, on the receipt of the news of the murder of Prathipati of Pratapgarh and of the Wazir's advance to Jaunpur to chastise him, Balwant Singh, apprehensive of his safety, left Gangapur, crossed the Ganga and took refuge in his stronghold in the hills of Mirzapur. Meanwhile, Safdar Jang reached Banaras, plundered the fortress and town of Gangapur and detached a part of his army to pursue the Raja. Informed of the Nawab-Wazir's designs, Balwant Singh sent Lal Khan, a trusted officer of his, with a present of two lakhs of rupees, to Safdar Jang, begging pardon for his conduct in the past and promising an additional revenue of two lakhs per year. Lal Khan was introduced to the Wazir by the latter's favourite, Sayyid Nurul-Hasan Khan Bilgrami who also pleaded the Raja's cause. Safdar Jang agreed to pardon Balwant Singh, on the condition that he came to wait on him in person. But the Raja was too clever to be beguiled into the fate of Prathipati. In spite of Safdar Jang's insistence and Nur-ul-Hasan's assurance about the safety of his life, Balwant Singh could not be prevailed upon to pay the Nawab Wazir a visit. Foiled in his attempts to entrap the Raja, Safdar Jang restored him to his possessions and made preparations to hurry back to Delhi where the imperial messages were urgently demanding his presence to settle the affair of Ahmad Shah Abdali.\* This took place towards the end of March or in the first week of April,† and the Nawab-Wazir began his return march to the imperial capital on 3rd April, 1752.

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\* Balwantnama, 2a-31a., Tarikh-i-Banaras, 7a 64b; Hadiq 675. The Tarikh-i-Banaras is full of errors and is partial to the Raja.

After the Wazir's departure, Balwant Singh returned to his possessions. As his recent experience had showed him that Gangapur was unsafe, he transferred his capital to Ramnagar, on the left bank of the Ganga, and 2 miles south of Banaras, and built a fort there. He increased his wealth and power and died in August, 1770 A. D.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 33 B.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CIVIL WAR AND THE LAST DAYS OF SAFDAR JANG, 1752-1754

#### 1.—THE THIRD ABDALI INVASION, JANUARY-MAY, 1752

During the Wazir's absence from Delhi, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Panjab for the third time. Owing to internal disturbances in his *suba* Muin-ul-mulk had not been able to pay the Shah the promised revenue of the four *mahals* for any of the three years past. Regarding this as a breach of the treaty and as a positive proof of the governor's unfriendly attitude, the king of Afghans started in December, 1751 to punish the offender.\* When his vanguard appeared near the Indus, Muin-ul-mulk sent him nine lakhs of Rupees in cash as a part of the tribute and promised to pay the rest in the near future.† Yet the Shah advanced on, crossed the Indus and the Jhelam and finally the Chinab near Wazirabad, and encamped at a few miles' distance from the Bridge of Shah Daula, 22 miles north of Lahore.

On the news of the enemy's near approach, Muin-ul-mulk took prompt measures of defence and sent his family and dependants away to the Jammu hills for safety. This proved to be a signal of alarm, and rich inhabitants of Lahore began to flee to such places of safety as they could find. Muin-ul-mulk now quickly crossed the Ravi and formed an entrenchment near the Bridge of Shah Daula. For many a day the opposing forces lay facing each other, the patrols of both sides engaging in irregular and light skirmishes only. Getting tired of this unprofitable warfare, the Shah left his main army in his camp north of the Indian entrenchment and himself with a strong contingent of horse marched rapidly to Muin-ul-mulk's right, and making a wide detour round it, appeared suddenly near Lahore. Thus

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\* Another important cause of this invasion was to relieve the Hindustani Pathans from the grip of Safdar Jang.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 31a.

out-manoevred, Muin-ul-mulk was filled with anxiety about the safety of his capital, and hastened back without delay towards Lahore, sending a detachment of 900 Mughal horse ahead to drive away the invader from before the city. This succeeded in dislodging the Afghans from their position, who retreated to the Shalamar garden and encamped there. Muin-ul-mulk now crossed the Ravi and entrenched himself outside the city. For one month and a half irregular fighting took place every day between the scouts of both sides ; but none of the two dared come out for a decisive fight in the open. For want of big pieces of cannon the Afghans found themselves unable to capture Lahore. Their wrath fell upon the defenceless people of the neighbouring villages which they systematically plundered and ravaged throughout the duration of the siege. The Abdali employed these tactics to draw the Mughals out of their strong entrenchment, but without any success.

All this while neither the Emperor nor the wazir raised his finger to help the hard-pressed governor of the frontier province. In spite of the repeated orders of recall Safdar Jang, who was an avowed enemy of Muin-ul-mulk, unconcernedly went on with the work of punishing the refractory zamindars in Awadh and Allahabad and re-establishing his rule in the provinces. Disappointed from Delhi and realising that the policy of standing the siege would inevitably end in starvation and surrender, Karamal, the governor's Diwan advocated a pitched battle in the open. But Bhikhari Khan, Momin Khan and Adina Beg were opposed to it. At last the inevitable happened. Corn grew scarce, wells were exhausted and grass could not be had, so thoroughly had the Afghans ravaged the vicinity. Worst of all, the place of encampment of the Indian army became very unhealthy owing to long confinement of the men and animals within it. Hence another place of encampment was chosen and the march began early in the morning of 15th of March, 1752 with the advance-guard under Adina Beg, the rear under Karamal and the centre in charge of Muin-ul-mulk himself. The vigilant Shah was highly elated at the news and instantly attacked the moving columns of the Mughals in front and rear. The three divisions

of the Lahore army were soon separated from one another, and it appeared that all was going to be lost. At this crisis, Karamal hastened to his master's assistance. In the way his elephant received a fatal wound from a cannon ball, and while the brave *diwan* was changing it for another, he himself was struck by a bullet and fell down dead on the ground. At this, the Indian rear fled in panic, and the Afghans quickly pressed on Muin-ul-mulk's own division. Despite the odds against him, the valiant *subedar* of Lahore stood the ground unflinchingly, and left the field only after the darkness of the night had fallen on the scene. With his troops, who had survived the terrible Afghan onslaught, he repaired to the Idgah to join Adina Beg. But the latter, who had remained thoroughly inert throughout the day, had already abandoned his position and fled to a place of safety. Worn-out and dejected, Muin now reluctantly entered the city.

During the dark dismal night of the 18th March the city of Lahore was filled with great consternation and tumult. Along with the Indian fugitives some Afghan soldiers had stealthily entered into the city and had begun plundering whatever they could lay their hands on. Nothing could be seen, so completely dark was that night. All were terror-stricken.

Next morning, Muin-ul-mulk made arrangements for defence, and posted his 10,000 troops, all that were left with him after the previous day's catastrophe, to man the city walls on all sides. But the Abdali being equally anxious for the cessation of warfare, invited him to a conference to settle terms of a peace. Accompanied only by three of his trusted officers Muin-ul-mulk boldly went to the enemy's camp and was well received by the Shah. He then surrendered himself to the king of Afghans, and the latter pleased with Muin's dignified conduct and frank talk, appointed him Governor of Lahore and Multan on his own behalf and issued orders to his men not to plunder or molest any body.\*

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 30a 33 ; Delhi Chronicle, 69b ; T. M. 153b ; Siyar III. 889 ; Husain Shahi, 8a-9a ; Farhat-un-nazirin in Elliot, VIII. 167-68 Sardesai Panipat, 10-11. The last three have some errors.

## 2.—SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE WITH THE MARATHAS

All this while, the Emperor, alarmed at the progress of the invader, was sending urgent messages to Safdar Jang to come with all haste and make arrangements for checking the further advance of the Afghans. But the Wazir, desirous of seeing Muin-ul-mulk permanently crippled and making the Emperor feel his Court's helplessness, did not bestir himself in time. Meantime, the news of the fall of Lahore reached Delhi on the 23rd of March, the eighth day of the occurrence, and filled the imperial city with the greatest alarm and consternation. Rich citizens began to flee in panic to places of safety, and most men sent their families away to Mathura or other towns in the possession of the powerful Jat ruler of Bharatpur. Business came to a stand-still, and grain supply to Delhi was stopped for sometime.† Emperor Ahmad Shah now wrote by his own hand a most urgent and angry letter of recall to the Wazir on the 23rd of March, summoning him back to Delhi without delay and urging him to bring with him a powerful Maratha force at any price. On receipt of this note (on the 27th March), Safdar Jang put off the settlement of his score with Raja Balwant Singh of Banaras, patched up a hurried truce with him and despatched off fast couriers to request the Maratha army then on its way to the Deccan to stay on in Hindustan. On the 3rd of April, 1752, the Wazir himself began his march towards Delhi and somewhere near Kanauj met Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia. Here, the Emperor and the Peshwa, represented by Wazir Safdar Jang and the Holkar and the Sindhia Chiefs respectively, entered into a defensive agreement whereby the Marathas undertook to protect the Empire from the clutches of the Abdali invader and the internal foes. The following were the terms of this treaty:—

1. The Peshwa agreed to protect the dwindling Empire from all its enemies, whether they were foreign

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Siyar erroneously thinks that the fighting continued for four months, Farhat un-nazirin charges Adina Beg with having shot Karamal from behind.

† F. Ahmad Shahi 31a and 33b.

invaders like the Abdali or domestic rebels like the Indian Pathans and Rajput Rajas, recover the imperial lands from them and restore the same to the Emperor.

2. In return for the above mentioned support the Emperor was to pay to the Peshwa fifty lakhs of Rupees, out of which thirty lakhs were for driving out the Abdali and the rest for suppressing the internal rebels.
3. The Emperor consented to grant to the Peshwa the *chauth*, viz. one fourth of the imperial revenue, in the provinces of the Panjab and Sindh (including the four *mahals* of Sialkot, Pasrur, Gujarat and Aurangabad ceded to the Abdali) and in the districts of Hisar, Sambhal, Muradabad and Badaun.
4. The Emperor was further to appoint the Peshwa Governor of Ajmer (including the *faujdar* of Narnol) and Agra (including the *faujdar* of Mathura), and the latter was to enjoy all the privileges and remuneration pertaining to the said offices.
5. The Peshwa was to bind himself to administer these provinces in accordance with the age-long regulations and conventions of the Mughal Empire. He was to recover lands from the rebels and revenue-defaulters in these *subas*, keep for himself only one half of the lands recovered, and respect the rights of the imperial officers and jagirdars. He was not to meddle with the administration of the courts and the forts in his *subas* which were under the direct control of Delhi Court. Nor was he to obtain possession of any piece of land or money not granted to him by imperial orders.
6. On behalf of the Peshwa, the Maratha generals had, like other imperial mansabdars, to attend the Mughal Court and join the imperial army on march or in an expedition at the orders of the Emperor.



A ridiculous procedure was adopted in order to save the Emperor's prestige and honour. On behalf of the Peshwa, this treaty was first drawn up in the form of a petition by his lieutenants, Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia, and submitted to the Emperor, praying him to grant the petitioner's requests. The Peshwa promised to abide conscientiously by the above terms and called upon God and the lesser Hindu deities, like the *Sun, the Book [ Vedas ] Bel Bhandar, Tulshi and the Ganga* to attest the fidelity of his word. Emperor Ahmad Shah then issued a royal *farman*, granting all the requests of Balaji Rao.\* This treaty remained a dead letter. It was not ratified or enforced by the Emperor.

### 3.—SAFDAR JANG'S SCHEME OF THE RECOVERY OF THE PANJAB AND AFGHANISTAN FRUSTRATED

While the Wazir, in the company of his Maratha allies, was making a show and ponderous march towards Delhi, the Abdali's agent, Qalandar Khan, arrived at the Indian capital on the 11th April, to demand a formal cession of the Afghan conquest, *viz.*, the *subas* of the Panjab and Multan. Though the possibility of the enemy's marching against Delhi had definitely disappeared, it seems that the Emperor and his favourites were now haunted by another night-mare of an entirely different nature. They feared that if the Wazir arrived in time and were successful against the invader, he would have an enormous accession of power which would endanger their safety.† Hence, on the 23rd of April, before Safdar Jang could approach Delhi, Javed Khan introduced Qalandar Khan to the Emperor in the Private Audience Chamber and recommended the conclusion of a treaty satisfactory to the Shah. The craven Emperor formally ceded the Panjab and Multan to the Abdali and gave the envoy his

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\* Rajwade. Vol. I. 1. and Vol VI. 199. Sardesai, Panipat Prakaran, 11, gives 1750 A. D. as the date of this treaty, which is wrong.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 34b; Sardesai, Panipat Prakran, 18-19. However brave and able, the Abdali was not yet a match for the Emperor. He himself was utterly diffident, and did not dream of marching on Delhi.

parting message in these words : "I am faithful to my promise ; but, if your master goes back upon the agreement, I am prepared to fight also." To assure the Indian monarch of the friendly intention of the Shah, Qalandar Khan placed the royal letter on his head and said that whoever would break the treaty would draw down upon himself God's vengeance. Emperor Ahmad Shah then gave the envoy leave of return to his country, bestowing on him 5,000 Rupees, besides costly robes of honour on him and his three companions. \*

Accompanied by a Maratha force, 50,000 strong, Safdar Jang arrived at Delhi on the 5th May, exactly twelve days after the ignominious treaty had been signed by the Emperor. The Wazir's cherished scheme was to drive the Afghans out of the Panjab and Multan with Maratha assistance and place the latter, as imperial governor, in charge of the north-western frontier province. This policy would be, he believed, productive of two important results. The Marathas would naturally resist the Abdali advance to their new *subas*, and the Emperor would be relieved of the trouble and expense of defending his frontier in that direction. As soon as this plan had materialised Safdar Jang wanted to push on to Kabul and bring back Afghanistan also under the Mughal sway. But if the Marathas, disregarding the treaty obligations, were to prove selfish he would use the Rajputs as a counterpoise against them and despatch Bakht Singh and other Rajas to hold the line of the Narmada so as to keep the Maratha predatory activities confined to the south of that river.† To his great surprise, however, he learnt from Javed Khan the very next morning of his arrival that the provinces in question had been ceded to the enemy less than a fortnight before. So greatly was the Wazir incensed against the imbecile conduct of the Court that he remained encamped outside the city and protested against the disgraceful treaty made in his absence, urging the Mughal sovereign to recover the

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\* Delhi Chronicle, 70--71 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 331-34<sup>b</sup> ; Siyar.

III. 889.

† Shakir. 65.

territory from Lahore to Kabul with Maratha help.\* But Javed Khan vigorously opposed the Wazir's scheme and caused the youthful Ahmad Shah to be absorbed in more agreeable pastimes. Safdar Jang represented that, in compliance with the repeated imperial orders, he had brought Malhar Rao Holkar on the promise of fifty lakhs of Rupees, and his demands would have to be fulfilled, whether a campaign against the Abdali were to be undertaken or not. Yet the Emperor was not disturbed, and the Wazir, finding the treaty with the Marathas turned into a scrap of paper and the whole of his scheme utterly frustrated, sat sullen and exasperated in his tents on the bank of the Yamuna.

As soon as the news had leaked out that the engagement with them was not likely to be fulfilled, the Marathas began to plunder the villages around Delhi. Every morning they would issue out of their camp in small foraging parties, ravage the country as far as they could reach and return laden with plunder in the evening. Most of the villages to a distance of forty miles all round Delhi were plundered, and the capital itself lay at their mercy. Terrified at the possible fate of the imperial city, Javed Khan was obliged to have recourse to an expedient of satisfying the Maratha claims and getting the Court out of the impasse. He got Ghazi-ud-din Khan Firoz Jang, the eldest son of the late Nizam-ul-mulk appointed to the six *subas* of the Deccan on the latter's promising to fulfil the financial obligations to the Marathas, now reduced by mutual agreement from fifty to thirty lakhs of rupees, in lieu of fee for his appointment. Malhar Rao, anxious to relieve the Peshwa (who was, at this time, defeated by Salabat Jang near Poona) of his difficulties in the Deccan, promptly agreed to assist Firoz Jang against his younger brother Salabat Jang who was ruling at Haidrabad with French help. To get rid of the presence of the roving bands of the Deccanis, Javed Khan paid Malhar Rao an additional sum of a few lakhs of rupees from the imperial treasury, and speedily got the patent of appointment of Firoz Jang issued on 14th of May, 1752. Thereupon, the Marathas left the vicinity of Delhi the same day,

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 34b and 40b.

and Firoz Jang also began his march to the Deccan a few days later.\*

Now that the Maratha question had been solved and the Abdali had retired to Afghanistan, the refugee citizens of Delhi came back to their homes. The Emperor sent word to Safdar Jang also, who had all this while remained encamped on the river bank, to return to the city and enter his mansion. Taking advantage of his master's anxiety to appease him, the Wazir requested for the remission of the revenue of the preceding two years due from Awadh and Allahabad, his plea being that he had not been able to realise anything owing to the Pathan disturbance in the provinces. He further begged the Emperor to transfer to him all the jagir lands in his *subas* and appoint Rajendra Giri Gosain, *faujdar* of Saharanpur and two of his other favourite officers to Etawa and Kora respectively, both the districts being crown lands till that time. Emperor Ahmad Shah reluctantly granted all the above requests and Safdar Jang entered Delhi with an air of satisfaction on 12th July, 1752.†

#### 4—MURDER OF JAVED KHAN, 6TH SEPTEMBER, 1752

Safdar Jang now found that he was left Wazir in name only. All the authority and prestige of his office had passed into the hands of Javed Khan who, in alliance with the queen-mother, was keeping the senseless Emperor under his tutelage and was transacting all important business of the state. From the very day of the Wazir's appointment, the cunning greedy eunuch had been thwarting Safdar Jang's schemes to re-establish the

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\* Delhi Chronicle, 71; T. Ahmad Shahi, 35; Siyar III 889; T. M. 153b; Hadiqat-ul-alam, II. 235-36; Patren Yadi etc. letter No. 102; Purandar Daftar Vol. I 228.

Nasir Jang was murdered on 15th December, 1750, and Firoz Jang nominated to the Deccan on 31st January, 1751. On 1st February, 1751, he was given leave to depart for his *subas*, but as he was unable to pay the excessive *peshkash* of 2 karores and 80 lakhs of rupees, he did not leave Delhi. Meanwhile Zulfiqar Jang was dismissed from the post of Mir Bakhshi which was conferred on Firoz Jang on 17th June. In May, 1752, he was re-appointed to the Deccan on his promise to pay Malhar Rao 30 lakhs of rupees ( T. Ahmad Shahi 35 and 37a; Delhi Chronicle, 61, 63, 71 ).

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 38a and b.

imperial authority in the provinces, and concerting measures to bring about his dismissal and down-fall. During the Wazir's absence in the Ruhelkhand campaign, he had usurped power to appoint and dismiss a chief commander of the imperial forces, make war or peace with a foreign country and raise an humble individual of low origin to the Mughal peerage. At his instigation, the Wazir's friend and partisan, Zulfiqar Jang (who was a Shia like himself) was dismissed from the post of Mir Bakhshi and Ghazi-ud-din Khan Firoz Jang, a pillar of the Turani party, was nominated to fill the vacancy; on his advice, the Panjab and Multan were ceded to the Abdali, and on his recommendation Udham Bai's uncle, Aman Khan, a low musician by birth and profession, was ennobled with the title of Muatqad-ud-daula and the rank of 7,000 horse and raised to a status of equality with the biggest nobles of the Court. All this was highly offensive to the Wazir who would not tolerate the idea of a partner in the direction of Government. Nay, he was compelled to feel that he could not function as Wazir so long as this powerful eunuch was allowed to remain at the court. Nor was Javed Khan willing to part with power and his hold on the youthful Emperor. Thus, these two personages became deadly enemies, each waiting for a suitable opportunity to oust the other from the court.

From the day of Safdar Jang's return to Delhi the relations between him and Javed Khan were completely embittered. On 12th July, 1752, when the Wazir was returning from his camp on the opposite side of the Yamuna to his residence in the city, Javed Khan wishing to extract a respectful visit from him went and sat in the Anguri garden which lay on the way to the former's house. Unwilling to pay court to the eunuch, Safdar Jang marched straight on to the city, without minding Javed Khan's presence. This was too much for the proud and all-powerful eunuch. Immediately inviting Ballu Jat, who happened to be in Delhi at the time, he artfully seduced him from Safdar Jang's friendship and appointed him *faujdar* of Sikandrabad, Emperor's privy purse estate (*Jaib-i-khas*), with instructions to seize it from its rightful *faujdar* without delay. Only a few days after his investiture, the Jat crossed over to Sikandra, defeated

Qamar Ali, the officer in charge, slew his son and forcibly wrested the district from his hands. He then began a reign of terror plundering whatever he could, digging up the floors of the houses of rich men and torturing merchants to extort money from them. Sikandrabad being only 32 miles (south-east) from Delhi, the news of these oppressions reached the imperial court the very same night. Safdar Jang who was present at the audience asked Javed Khan "What is this affair? If you have conferred the *faujdar* on Ballu, why is he causing the slaughter of so many men, and plundering their property? If, however, he has done all this without your permission, I am marching to the place and will bring him a prisoner." The Khan evading a reply to this straight question, said that he himself would go to punish the man. But, next day, he only despatched a small force under his *jamadar* Nar Singh Rao with positive orders not to fight except in case of extreme necessity. Nar Singh allowed Ballu to escape with all his booty to the fort of Dankaur,\* situated about 15 miles east of Ballamgarh, in Javed Khan's personal jagir. The Wazir's force under Rajendra Giri arriving meanwhile opened an offensive against Ballu. But the clever Jat, without risking a battle in the open, collected a few boats, crossed the Yamuna and marched safely back to Ballamgarh. Rajendra Giri returned to his master without having been able to chastise Ballu for ravaging the Emperor's privy-purse domain which lay very close to Delhi. The Wazir was helpless. He charged Javed Khan, in open court, with having instigated the miscreant to perpetrate the crimes. The eunuch became silent and hung his head down in shame.†

The Ballu-Jat episode proved to be the last straw on the camel's back. Safdar Jang felt that either he must retire into private life or contrive the eunuch's total destruction. Experienced in the art of treacherous assassination, he resolved in a fit of extreme exasperation to get rid of Javed Khan's interference once for all by securing his murder, justifying his conduct

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\* For Sikandrabad and Dankaur see sheet No. 53 H.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 38b-40b ; Shakir. 71. The last named work mistakingly gives Surajmal instead of Ballu

on the plea that an open battle would cause much loss of life and money. To avoid the possibility of a rising which might follow the murder of the Emperor's great favourite, he secretly made military preparations and invited his stead-fast ally, Surajmal of Bharatpur. Accompanied by Ballu and an agent of Maharaja Madho Singh of Jaipur and their forces, Surajmal arrived and encamped near the temple of Kalka-Devi, close to the modern Okolah Railway Station, six miles south of Delhi. Both Javed Khan and Safdar Jang wanted that these notables should see him first and make their representations to the Emperor through him alone. At last, it was decided with the Emperor's permission that both the Wazir and Javed Khan should together grant interviews to the Jat chief and his companions at Safdar Jang's residence and 6th September, 1752, was fixed for it. This day, the Wazir sent a polite invitation to Javed Khan to breakfast with him and, at the same time posted some of his faithful troops in his house with the utmost secrecy and precaution. On Javed Khan's arrival, the Wazir received him with much apparent cordiality, and both dined at the same table. Surajmal arrived in the afternoon, and then they held consultations for some time. Sometime after the Wazir gave his hand to the guest and conducted him to a private room in a bation of his mansion which was known as Machhi-Bhawan, on the pretext of taking his counsel about Surajmal in private. As soon as they had lifted up the curtain and entered into the room, Safdar Jang uttered one or two ironical expressions, and assuming a tone of aspersivity, referred to Javed Khan's meddling in the state affairs. But, before the conversation could become very unpleasant, the Wazir got up to go to his *harem*. Just then Ali Beg Khan Jarji (according to another Muhammad Ali Jarji), the murderer of Raja Prathipat, in company with a few iron-clad Mughals, suddenly appeared from behind. In the twinkling of an eye he plunged his dagger into Javed Khan's stomach and his companions despatched the eunuch in an instant with their daggers and swords. Cutting off his head, they threw it down the gate of the house, where were crowding the victim's unsuspecting retainers, and his trunk on the bank of the Yamuna.

At this tragic occurrence Javed Khan's men were alarmed and fled away in the utmost confusion. But many of them were overtaken and plundered by the Wazir's Mughals and bad characters of the city\*.

Javed Khan, who thus met with a tragic end, was originally a low born slave, but had, by reason of his smooth tongue, pushing habits and intimacy with Queen Udham Bai, risen to be assistant superintendent of the imperial *harem* and diwan of Begam's Jagirs during the reign of Muhammad Shah. On the accession of Ahmad Shah, the only son of his beloved, he was first raised to the *mansab* of 6,000, next appointed superintendent of the Privy Audience Chamber, and then in addition to his previous offices, was at once put in charge of several departments, namely, the Intelligence Department, the Imperial elephants, the confirmation of grants and appointments, estates of Begams and the Emperor's private purse. Finally he became a *kaft-hazari*, and was ennobled with the title of Nawab Bahadur—never before given to any noble at the imperial court.

Though totally unlettered and utterly ignorant of war or civil administration, the Nawab Bahadur had acquired such boundless influence over Ahmad Shah's dull mind that, in actual wielding of power and prestige, all other ministers including the Grand Wazir became distinctly his subordinates. In fact, he became the Emperor's sole adviser and deputy in all matters of private or public importance. He maintained his hold over his royal master by keeping him immersed in pleasures and by pondering to his vices. Hereditary nobles felt insulted at being placed under the orders of this slave upstart who, in his turn,

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 40a-41b ; Abdulkarim, 108b-109a ; T. M., 154a and b ; Siyar. III 810 ; Delhi Chronicle, 73 ; Tabsir. 272b ; Shakir, 71 ; Hari Charan, 408a ; M. U. I. 367 ; Ahwal, 195a. Imad. 60, Abdulkarim, 109a ; and Azad, 85, say that the Emperor directed the Wazir to have Javed Khan killed, which seems to be unlikely.

When they heard of the murder, the men outside the Wazir's house created a great commotion. Thinking that Surajmal was also murdered the Jat troops surrounded Safdar Jang's house. They dispersed only when Surajmal had come out and showed his face to them. (See T. Ahmad Shahi, 41b)



offended at their aristocratic aloofness, contrived to bring them into royal disfavour, and surrounded himself by smaller nobles for whom he obtained promotions and jagirs. But the eunuch was hated most for his inordinate greed for money, and his very intimate relations with the queen mother, Udham Bai, over whom he had acquired perfect control. In defiance of all etiquette and rules of the Mughal seraglio, he spent his nights in the company of Ahmad Shah's mother in the imperial *harem*. The scandal at last became public, and was freely talked about in the lanes and *bazars* of Delhi.\*

#### 5—SAFDAR JANG OFFENDS THE IMPERIAL FAMILY AND COURT : FAILURE OF HIS ADMINISTRATION

The murder of Javed Khan was productive of results the contrary of which had been expected by Safdar Jang. The Wazir had hoped that, after the all powerful eunuch's removal, he would acquire an ascendancy at court and complete hold over the Emperor's mind, and with no intriguing rival to thwart his schemes, he would have a clear field for his activities for self-aggrandisement. But that was not to be. "When the news reached the Emperor," writes author of the *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi*, "he was much perplexed. Meanwhile, Khwaja Tamkin the Wazir's agent, came to the palace-fort at the head of a big army, had an audience with the Emperor through the *nazir* Roz-i-afzun Khan and offered the Wazir's excuses and apologies for the audacious act. He reassured the Emperor, in every way possible, of the Wazir's readiness to loyally carry out every order of his, and returned with a reply..... The Emperor and his mother were filled with grief. It is said that Udham Bai observed rites of mourning, put on white robes and took off jewels and ornaments from her hands and neck [as if she had really become a widow only now]. But the Emperor said nothing to anybody about this matter."† The imperious queen-mother, the patron of the deceased, even openly exhibited her

\* For Javed Khan's life see. T. Ahmad Shahi, 14b-15b, 20b, 25a, 28b, 40a ; Delhi Chronicle, 39, 44, 63, 73 Shakir, 34-35, 63, 71 ; Siyar, III. 872, 892.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 41b-42a.

highest displeasure at the crime and Ahmad Shah turned his heart away from the Wazir in disgust and alarm. In spite of Safdar Jang's excuses, the imperial family was completely alienated from him, and the Emperor, always accustomed to lean on others, now began extending his favours to the Wazir's enemies and finally fell completely into the hands of Intizam-ud-daula and his companions. This was brought about only gradually, Safdar Jang's conduct during the next seven months being no less responsible for the result than his original crime itself.

Safdar Jang's grasping conduct after the murder of Javed Khan became like that of a selfish dictator, caring for nothing else but personal domination at the Court and in the realm. On the very day of the heinous crime, he made arrangements for escheating the deceased's property and estate and appointed his own men to see that nothing was displaced or secreted during the change of masters. He placed the imperial work-shops, which had been in charge of Javed Khan, under the control of his own nominees. Not content with these measures, the Wazir arrested Lutf Ali Khan the eunuch's *diwan*, and Ismail his personal valet, to make them disgorge their master's buried treasures.\* This done, he proceeded to secure his hold over the imperial fort and surround Ahmad Shah's person by his own creatures. First, he appointed one of his trusted captains, Abu Turab Khan, commandant (*qiladar*) of the fort in place of Haji Muhammad, a loyal hereditary servant of the Emperor, with positive instructions not to admit anybody armed or on horseback except his own partisans. Then, he posted Kishan Narayan, son of his loyal agent Raja Lachhimi Narayan, at the gate of the Privy Council (*Diwan Khas*) to restrict admission to the presence of the Emperor.† While these two agents and their assistants were so strictly and literally carrying out the Wazir's orders that no noble or official who was not his partisan could have access to the Emperor or even come inside the fort, Safdar Jang remained in his own mansion, summoning the imperial clerks and officers and transacting state business there.‡

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 42a.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 42b.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 42a.

Ahmad Shah now realised that he had been reduced to the status of a captive, immured within the four walls of the palace and cut off from the society outside. On Friday, the 15th September, 1752 he rode out to say his prayers in the wooden mosque inside the fort, but no noble except a few favourite officers of the Wazir like Khwaja Tamkin Khan, Kishan Narayan, and one or two others and the *qazi* attended the royal retinue. At the time of entering back into the palace, the Emperor asked Kishan Narayan, "None of the courtiers who present themselves at the time of *darbar* or royal *cortege* has turned up today. The imperial officers appointed for mounting guard also do not come into the fort. Does the *qiladar* not admit them or has the Wazir-ul-mumalik forbidden them entree?" Abu Turab Khan sent the reply, "I admit every body who comes. If none comes, what can I do?" On Sunday, 17th September, the Emperor held court, but, in spite of the previous notice, no noble except Shujaud-daula attended it. All applied for leave on the plea of illness. Next day, too, *darbar* was held, but again without any noble attending it. This day Ahmad Shah conferred on the *nazir* Roz-i-afzun Khan some offices like the Superintendence of drinking water for Emperor, betel leaves and perfumery—all held by Javed Khan till his death and must always be entrusted to the most loyal hands. Some other important departments in charge of Javed Khan were given by the Wazir to his own men; and yet his mind was not composed. He suspected that Udham Bai, his avowed enemy, was secretly corresponding with the Turani and Afghan nobles. So, besides keeping a strict watch at the gates of the imperial *harem* and restricting admission to the queen-mother's presence, Safdar Jang sent eight women spies to reside in the royal seraglio as domestic servants and find out the contents of all letters sent out of it. Udham Bai was highly enraged at this audacious act and dismissed the women with rewards. Growing more suspicious than before, Safdar Jang sat sullen in his house and sent word that he would not go to the court unless the fullest assurances, were given about his safety. Resourceless as Ahmad Shah was, he had to bend before the determination of the Wazir. Taking his mother with him he

paid a visit to the latter's house on Saturday, 23rd September, assured him of his confidence and support and brought him to the fort, giving him leave to return from the gate of the Diwan Khas. Yet, the Wazir does not appear to have been fully satisfied. The Emperor had, therefore, to yield further, and promise not to make any appointments without his consent. Accordingly, the Wazir nominated several of his favourites to minor yet important posts in the fort and outside, and old imperial servants were obliged to make room for them. On the 29th of September, the Emperor conferred on Shuja-ud-daula, the Wazir's son, four important offices held by Javed Khan, namely, *Bakhshi ship of Abdis*, superintendentship of confirmation of appointments and grants, command of macebearers and the charge of personal riding establishment (*Jilau Khas*). Now, for the first time after the murder of Javed Khan, Safdar Jang repaired to the Court on Sunday, the 1st October. Imad-ul-mulk and Samsam-ud-daula, (son of Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daula, Muhammad Shah's Mir Bakhshi) who outwardly professed to be the Wazir's partisans, also attended the Court this day, Intizam-ud-daula still absenting himself on the plea of illness. The Wazir, now enjoying full powers for the first time since his elevation to chancellorship, filled during the next few months whatever offices he thought necessary by his own nominees. On the death of Firoz Jang, he got the former's son Shihab-ud-din appointed Mir Bakhshi with the title of Amir-ul-umra Imad-ul-mulk Ghazi-ud-din Khan Babadur on 12th December, 1752. On 1st January, 1753, his own son Shuja-ul-daula was appointed Superintendent of the Privy Audience Chamber (*Ghusalkhana*) in addition to the pluralities already conferred on him. On the 14th, he raised Saad-ullah to the post of fourth Bakhshi, and only three days later he pushed Mirza Ali Khan, Shuja-ud-daula's brother-in-law, to the office of third Bakhshi. The Emperor's person was thus surrounded by the Wazir's creatures and the court filled with his relations, favourites, and minions. Ahmad Shah was alarmed, but durst not do anything \* for sometime.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 425-43 b; Delhi Chronicle, 73-75.

Safdar Jang had already antagonised most of the hereditary and powerful nobles at the Court and in the provinces. Instead of keeping his colleagues contented, he followed from the beginning of his administration the policy of not allowing any body to be rich and powerful [*na khwast ki kase sarsabz sbawad*]. † Months had not elapsed since his installation as wazir, and he had deprived Intizam-ud-daula of the district of Sarhind the revenues of which had been assigned to him in lieu of pay of 5,000 Turani Mughal troops. He had secured to himself the transfer of rich hereditary jagirs held by Firoz Jang, Intizam-ud-daula and a few other Turani nobles, setting the whole race of the Central Asian Sunni Mughals against him. ‡ Similarly, he had driven the Ruhela and Bangash Pathans and their kins-men—who formed the most important element of the Muslim population of India, next only to the Turanis—to be his implacable enemies. No doubt, Safdar Jang still enjoyed the services of some *Sunni* officers, but they were only a few self-seeking individuals. The only class of Indian Muslims on whom he could rely for support was the small minority of his co-religionists, the *Shias*. Among this class there was, at this critical time, only one great noble, namely Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang, who was dismissed sometime back from Mir Bakhshi's post and was living in forced retirement and poverty since June, 1751. The Wazir was thus left without a powerful friend at the Court. In the provinces, too, he had but a few allies; he had foolishly offended such a neighbour as his co-religionist Alivardi Khan of Bangal as early as 1742 A. D.

The general public was equally dissatisfied. During the long but imbecile rule of Muhammad Shah the Delhi Government had gradually run bankrupt and the Emperor had ceased to be the master of all provincial governors. Now, the policy of self-aggrandisement followed consistently by Safdar Jang and Javed Khan and the former's placing the interest of his own provinces above those of the Empire, had led to the break-down of the

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† T. Ahamad Shahi, 16a.

‡ *Ibid.*

administration. The Wazir, the all-powerful eunuch and their favourites had set apart for themselves rich estates, their greedy agents proving more oppressive to the people than hereditary imperial revenue collectors. Safdar Jang had deprived the petty jagirdars in Awadh and Allahabad of their estates—their only means of livelihood—by securing their transfer for himself, and had usurped all the crown lands in the districts of Etawa and Kora Jahanabad. He had conferred rich districts upon his favourites like Rajendra Giri Gosain whose strict impartiality in revenue collection gave offence to Muslim zamindars and pious Sayyids enjoying preferential treatment for centuries in the past.\* Using his official position as Chancellor of Exchequer, Safdar Jang was misappropriating revenues of the Empire and spending them on his personal military establishment, while the imperial clerks, household servants and troops starved and their salaries fell two years in arrears. Legitimate demands of the royal forces remaining unheeded, the soldiers would often raise a commotion, stop entrance into and exit from the palace-fort and cut off water supply to it, and yet their accounts could not be cleared. The Court historian laments in the agony of his heart: “The Empire was utterly ruined.....The Wazir took away what he liked from the revenue of crownlands, and nothing would go to the imperial treasury. He was an impoverisher of his master.....The Wazir was busy setting his own house in order and bent upon bringing the Empire to ruin.”†

The greatest cause of the dis-satisfaction of the people was the Wazir's indifference and inability to protect the country from internal and external invaders. The Marathas had been threatening the imperial capital and Ahmad Shah Abdali was meditating a renewal of his invasion of the Panjab. A Maratha army, 3,500 strong, arrived and encamped at Talkatora on 22nd October,\* 1752. The imperial scouts reported in November that the Abdali monarch had arrived at Jalalabad on his way to Lahore and his general Jahan Khan had advanced to the bank of the

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 44b-45a.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 44b; Shakir, 34-35.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi; 44 a.

Indus. Citizens of Lahore were terrified and the richer of them fled to Delhi with their families and valuables. The Indian capital, too, was filled with alarm. Safdar Jang, the only powerful noble at the court, now requested the Emperor to march in person to oppose the advance of the invader. The resourceless Mughal King replied, "I have neither war equipment nor an army under me to rely upon. If my marching in person can be of any good I *alone* am ready. At present you are the sole centre of administration. All the country and its income and expenditure are in your hands. Try to collect money to pay the troops and get ready a war-equipment (for my march)."\* The Wazir remained silent at the time; but some days after, when the rumours of the enemy's advance again became current, he proposed on 18th December that the Emperor should start against him on the 16th, that day being fixed by astrologers. After consulting the queen-mother the Emperor sent the reply: "Neither I nor the Wazir possess as a treasure. The condition of the country, the troops and treasury is evident to him. If it is possible by exertion to make preparations for the march, I should be informed so that I may be satisfied and begin the start."† The Wazir again could give no reply. In this way more than two months were wasted. Meanwhile, the King of Afghans arrived at Attock and sent an agent to demand fifty lakhs of rupees—the tribute the Delhi Court had agreed to pay by the treaty of April, 1752. This man reached Delhi on 13th February,‡ 1753 and was granted an audience by the Emperor on the 15th. On 10th February, another Maratha force, 4,000 in number had come to Delhi and encamped near the Kalka Devi's hillock, and Safdar Jang, ever ready to face the Pathan invader from the north west, urged the Emperor once again to lead an expedition against the Abdali, agreeing to place his 30,000 troops at the disposal of the Court and promising to secure the services of 30,000 Marathas within a fortnight. But the Emperor and Intizam-ud-daula were plotting the overthrow of the Wazir, and, therefore, his scheme

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 45 b

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 46 a.

‡ Delhi Chronicle, 76.

was left unheeded. Now Safdar Jang dismissed the Pathan envoy on 22nd of March and began making preparations for a civil war against his master.\*

6.—CONSPIRACY AGAINST SAFDAR JANG : HE IS FORCED TO  
LEAVE DELHI, MARCH, 1753

The popular indignation at Delhi against Safdar Jang's dictatorship had, by this time, reached its climax, and the inexorable Nemesis was to overtake him now. During the preceding few months, a party antagonistic to him had been slowly but steadily gaining ground and a conspiracy being secretly matured to bring about his fall. Compelled by his natural aversion to business as well as by the Wazir's galling bondage, Ahmad Shah had, after the murder of Javed Khan, left all the work of administration to his mother and was seeking consolation in the pleasures of the harem. Udham Bai had thus become the *de facto* head of the Government, transacting all important state business and granting audience to high officials from behind the *purdah*.† An avowed enemy of Safdar Jang, she used her position of supreme authority and power to form under her own leadership a coalition against the Wazir, Intizam-ud-daula through his clever mother, Sholapuri Bai instigating her to strike a swift and vigorous blow at their common foe.‡ Imadulmulk, Hisam Khan Samsam-ud-daula, (son of Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daula of Muhammad Shah's time), Aqibat Mahmud Khan and some other nobles were gradually won over, and although outwardly professing to be the Wazir's partisans, they secretly joined the conspiracy against their benefactor. It was decided that first they should liberate the Emperor by depriving Safdar Jang's son and his creature Abu Turab Khan of the offices of *Mir Atish* and *Qiladar* of the fort and ending the Wazir's influence in the imperial citadel, and after this they should concert measures to procure the latter's dismissal and downfall.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 47b, 49b ; Selections from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 21, pp. 53, 54, 55.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 46 a.

‡ Imad. 22.



Assured of the full support of the Emperor and the Queen-mother, Intizam-ud-daula, who had hitherto been only secretly intriguing and plotting against the Wazir, now thought it no longer necessary to conceal his enmity. Even when all other nobles had been induced to attend at the court, he persistently refused to enter the fort on the plea that its internal and external management was entirely in the hands of Safdar Jang's men, and began to enlist troops in anticipation of the coming struggle. The Wazir also became alert and cautious and gave up passing by Intizam-ud-daula's house, lest he should be attacked by the latter or fired at from within. Delhi was, therefore, filled with wild rumours and the people apprehended a clash every day. Outwardly pretending to be a firm supporter of the Wazir, Ahmad Shah was in secret sympathy with Intizam-ud-daula and promised him his assistance. Without seriously meaning it, he was apparently acting as a peace-maker between the rivals. One day, Safdar Jang decided to have a joy ride to the Char Bagh. Informed of this, Intizam-ud-daula also equipped his troops and prepared to ride to the place. But the wazir discreetly gave up the idea of the march and the clash was thus avoided that day. On another day, when Shuja-ud-daula went on a hunting excursion towards Wazirabad, the leader of the Turanis mounted and went to the house of a Mughal captain. The people feared an immediate out-break of hostilities and so the city was filled with confusion and tumult, which ceased only after Intizam-ud-daula had returned to his mansion. At the midnight of 13th March, Safdar Jang sent Khwaja Tamkin to warn the Emperor that as Intizam-ud-daula was making preparations for a night attack on him, he had also got his troops ready. Upon the Emperor's questioning him, Intizam-ud-daula sent a written reply that, far from making any preparations for an attack, he had not even dreamt of such a thing. He possessed no troops, he added, except a handful of watch-keepers (*chauki-daran*). The answer did not satisfy Safdar Jang, and the two rivals began concentrating their troops in the city in readiness for a battle. This threw the whole of Delhi in panic; and, next morning, merchants began transferring their goods from their shops to their houses. Richer citizens hired guards for the defence of

their home and hearth. The Marathas took their stand before Intizam-ud-daula's house, and the imperial mansabdars and troops of all descriptions assembled in the fort to defend it, should the riot spread there. The emperor sent repeated orders to the antagonists to disperse their forces. Intizam-ud-daula was the first to obey and withdraw his troops on the 14th. The wazir followed suit on the 16th, and then the commotion in the city disappeared.\*

Intizam-ud-daula's openly declaring himself against the powerful wazir and his determination to fight the matter out to the end, strengthened the side of the imperialists. Seeing the centre of opposition opened by a big noble, the discontented mansabdars and officers, who had been quietly waiting for a convenient opportunity now secretly joined Intizam-ud-daula. These enemies of Safdar Jang magnified Tamkin Khan's entering into the fort with his troops at such a late hour as midnight of 13th March into a *coup d'etat* designed to arrest the Emperor and his mother.† This was enough to enrage the craven and slothful Ahmad Shah and make him determined to end the wazir's control over the palace-fort once and for all by dismissing Shuja-ud-daula from the post of Chief of Imperial Artillery and to confer it upon his loyal partisan, Hisam Khan Samsam-ud-daula. But, afraid of incurring Safdar Jang's implacable enmity, the Khan refused to accept the office. Similarly two other nobles, Saad-ullah Khan and Sayyid Ali Khan dared not agree to bell the cat. Accordingly, the policy of openly dismissing Shuja-ud-daula was discarded in favour of one of secretly achieving the same object by a clever and tactful device. On the 17th of March, on which the Hindu festival of Holi fell this year, the Emperor summoned Shuja-ud-daula's deputy, Musawi Khan, Naib-Mir Atish and rebuked him in these words :—“The commandant of the fort prohibits the entree of imperial servants into the fort. It has been represented to me that the wazir's men come into the fort, sit down in your ante-room (behind the office of deputy-Mir Atish) and admit whom-

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 48a and b.

† T. M. 155b-156a ; Shakir, 72.

soever they like. What do you call all this?" Musawi Khan was filled with fear and could say nothing except utter a few words of excuses. The imperial censure was enough to undermine his authority; the officers of the imperial *topkbana* ceased going to him for their orders.\*

But this was only a prelude to the carefully planned *coup d'état* which the imperialists had decided to engineer in the course of the same evening (17th March). Hardly had one-fourth of the night passed, when they raised a false alarm that the wazir was coming to attack the imperial fort and enter it with a big force. This caused a great commotion in the city as well as in the fort. The imperial mansabdars, officers and troops armed themselves for its defence, and the Emperor ordered all the officers and troops of the artillery department to array themselves in battle order outside the fort. The qiladar Abu Turab Khan who, too, had taken his post outside fled to the wazir's house to inform him of the state of affairs. Hardly was his back turned when those of Safdar Jang's men who were still inside were turned out of the fort and its gates closed at Ahmad Shah's orders. The wazir was, thus, deprived of the command of the palace-fort by a bold stroke of policy. The big pieces of cannon arranged on the battlements of the fort were now loaded and turned towards Safdar Jang's house.†

When the day dawned on the 18th of March, the people learnt the truth and so the tumult in the city subsided immediately. As for Safdar Jang, finding himself outmanoeuvred and his mansion within range of gun-fire from the fort, he quitted it for another house he had built at some distance away. With the object of consoling him, the Emperor, this day, presented him, with a turban worn by himself, which Safdar Jang accepted respectfully. But he sent a petition to the Emperor, requesting permission to go to his provinces.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 48b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 49a; Delhi Chronicle, 76; T. M. 155b-156a; Siyar, III 891. The last named work says that the Emperor ordered Musawi Khan to carry a letter to the Wazir, and when he left the fort, all his men were turned out of it.

He wrote, "As Your Majesty's heart has, these days, been turned away from me, it is better that you should order me to go to any place you please. Out of my cash and effects you may pay my troops and the remaining you may attach to the imperial treasury. You may confer the Wazirship and other offices on whomsoever you please. The Wazir was deluded by the thought that this would frighten the craven Emperor and make him change his attitude towards him. But Ahmad Shah looked upon Safdar Jang's petition as a piece of unexpectedly good fortune, took him at his word and forthwith granted his request, permitting him to go to his *subas*, but mentioning not a word about his offices and property. The Wazir was not prepared for such an order; but he had now no alternative between obedience and open hostility. So, on 22nd of March, he gave *conge* to the Abdali's agent and, on the 23rd, sent out his own advance tents to Wazirabad, on the Yumuna, 3 miles north of Delhi. But he did not begin his march that day on the pretext of want of means of transport and porters.\*

On the day of the *coup d'etat* of the 17th March and, even once before it, Safdar Jang had made two successive attempts to arrive at a reconciliation with Intizam-ud-Daula and failing that to get rid of him like Javed Khan. On both these occasions he sent Imad-ud-Mulk, whom he had raised to the second most important and responsible office in the Empire, as his envoy to Intizam-ud-Daula's house to negotiate terms with him. But this ungrateful young man secretly came to an understanding with his maternal uncle (Intizam-ud-Daula) and although openly professing to be the Wazir's follower, he really joined the deadliest enemy of his benefactor. Getting scent of the danger, Intizam-ud-Daula refused to accept the Wazir's invitation to go to his house†, and he, Imad-ull-Mulk and

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 49a-49b; Abdul Karim, 109b; Shakir, 72; Hari-charan, 4 8b; T. M., 156; Siyar, III 891.

† T. Amad Shahi, 49a and 82b; T. M. 255a and 155b.

While departing for the Deccan in May, 1752, Firoz Jang, had entrusted his young son, Shihab-ud-Din, to the care of Safdar Jang. The Wazir got the boy appointed Naib Mir-Bakhshi. Firoz Jang died at Aurangabad and when the news reached Delhi on 29th October, 1752,

Samsam-ud-Daula with the Emperor's consent, began hatching a counter-plot against Safdar Jang's life. Their plan was to invite the latter to a conference in the Imperial fort, make away with him and get Intizam-ud-Daula appointed Wazir. They requested Bapuji Mahadeva, the Maratha Vakil, to send 5,000 troops to the fort to be kept in readiness against an emergency. This request was complied with. But, luckily for the Wazir, Malika-uz-Zamani, the Emperor's step-mother, to whom had leaked out the news of the plot, secretly sent Safdar Jang a letter informing him of the treachery and warning him against paying any visits to the fort.\*

Realizing that the situation had passed beyond the stage of negotiations, Safdar Jang now decided to quit Delhi. On the 25th of March, Ahmad Shah and his mother, anxious to expedite the Wazir's march, sent him the customary robes of honour and presents of the formal ceremony of leave-giving. So he reluctantly left the imperial city in the midst of rains on 26th of March, 1753, with his family and baggage and proceeded by the road along the bank of the Yamuna. On reaching opposite to the imperial citadel, he got down from his elephant and made a customary bow towards it. The light drops of rain mingled with the tears in his eyes, and the astrologers rightly predicted that he would never return to Delhi.† First he set up his tents at Takia Majnun and then moved on to Ismail Khan's Garden,

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Shihab-ud-Din, tutored by his steward Aqibat Mahmud, went at once to the Wazir's house, spent there the whole night and half of the next day in weeping. Safdar Jang took pity on him, made him exchange turbans with Shuja-ud-Daula and agreed to treat him as a son. Even the Wazir's wife remained unveiled before Shihab like a mother before her son. Safdar Jang prevented Firoz Jang's property from being confiscated by the Emperor and got Shihab appointed Mir-Bakhshi with the title of Imad-ul-Mulk Amir-ul-Umra. But this ungrateful youth, forgetting all the favours heaped upon him by the Wazir, joined Intizam-ud-Daula to encompass his benefactor's ruin. See, *Siyar*, III, 890; *T. M.* 155a; *M. U.* II, 827 *Shakir*, 66; *Abdul Karim*, 110a; *Imad*, 62-63.

\* Antaji Mankeshwar's letter, dated 28th March, 1753 in *Patten Yadi*, Vol. II. 86; also quoted in *Sardesai*, Panipat, p. 19.

† *T. M.* 156a; *Delhi Chronicle*, 76; *Haricharan*, 409a.

about 6 miles north-west of Delhi, still fondly hoping that the Emperor would recall him to court. In this hope, he lingered for weeks in the vicinity of Delhi, moving sometimes from right to left and sometimes from left to right, and postponing his departure to his *subas* on the plea of lack of porters and means of transport. But when he found no change in the Emperor's attitude, he felt compelled to prepare for battle, and summon Rajendra Giri Gosain and Surajmal Jat to his assistance.\*

#### 7—PREPARATIONS MADE FOR A CONTEST

After the Wazir's withdrawal from Delhi, the Emperor every day sent messages to expedite his march to Awadh. Growing gradually hopeless of being recalled, Safdar Jang refused to march and replied, "Where does the Emperor send me to? Has he appointed to me some expedition? Have I seized anything from the Emperor and have come here? I have left the city and am encamped here. Where should I go to now?" Being powerless to force the Wazir to retire and his troops clamouring for their pay which had fallen into arrears for months together, Ahmad Shah was inclined towards peace and sent two or three men to Safdar Jang's camp to negotiate terms with him. But the Wazir's condition precedent to peace was nothing short of the utter destruction of Intizam-ud-Daula and Imad-ul-Mulk, and so, on 29th of April, he sent back Aqibat Mahmud Khan with a challenge to them "to come out to fight, if they were men." Yet the Emperor despatched Hafiz Bakhtawar Khan and Hoshmand Khan on the mission of peace. But the sensitive Wazir made complaints against the two Turani nobles and said bluntly, "I will slay them any way I can." Next day, the 30th of April, he actually sent two troopers to shoot his enemies. They fired their muskets at Intizam-ud-Daula and Imad-ud-Mulk, when the latter, who were going to Court, had reached the gate of the fort at 9 a.m. But they missed their aim and fled towards the Wazir's camp. One of them was captured and beheaded. Imad-ul-

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 49b-a50; *Ibid.*, and Antaji's letter mentioned above.

Mulk was now determined to fight and said, "Now there is open enmity between me and the Wazir, and I must fight."\*

Even during the course of negotiations both the parties were raising fresh troops and summoning allies from far and near. Now the preparations began apace. Inside the city Intizam-ud-Daula and Imad-ul-Mulk devoted themselves to the task of strengthening the fortification and collecting troops and materials of war. The former took upon himself the work of persuading the nobles, their sons and high officials who were living in voluntary or forced retirement to serve under the imperial banners, while the latter threw himself with his characteristic vigour and zeal into the task of making other preparations for the contest. Udham Bai placed two crores of Rupees at Imad's disposal and to this he added 70 lakhs from his own pocket. He sent letters to the Maratha and Afghan chiefs to come and join the Emperor. On the very day of the Wazir's withdrawal from Delhi, the imperialists had come out of the city, and encamped on the sands of the Yamuna below the fort. There they threw up entrenchments and manned them with their troops and the Jat contingent in the imperial service.† Both the sides made frantic efforts to obtain the active support of the Maratha army at Delhi. Bapuji Mahadeva had already had secret understanding with the Emperor and had agreed to place 5,000 Maratha troops at his disposal in return for which Ahmad Shah promised to confer on the Peshwa Safdar Jang's provinces of Awadh and Allahabad. But Antaji Mankeshwar, the Maratha commander, intrigued both with the Wazir and the Emperor. In the end Mahadeva's iron-will prevailed and the Deccanis definitely joined the imperialists, rejecting Safdar Jang's offer of a rich jagir yielding sixteen lakhs annually. Yet in the beginning the Emperor had no men of note on his side except Intizam-ud-daula, Imad-ul-mulk and the Maratha commander. Most of the nobles, big and small, had thrown in their lot with the Wazir‡ who had at the time of his ensuing from Delhi 25,000 troops under his command.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 50a, 52b.

† T. M. 156b.

‡ Antaji Mankeshwar's letter already mentioned.

## 8—SAFDAR JANG'S MISTAKE AND DIFFICULTIES

But Safdar Jang took no advantage of his enemy's weakness by opening his offensive with determination and vigour and forcing him to abandon his plans. Had he done it, storm would easily have subsided. "Had the Wazir sent one of his able commanders in the beginning of the trouble," rightly observes Ghulam Husain Khan, "to bring the two (Intizam-ud-daula and Imad-ul-mulk) loaded in chains, the work could easily have been done, for they had then no power to offer any resistance." But he had been labouring under the delusion that a mere demonstration of force was enough to frighten his resourceless rivals into submission and oblige the weak-minded Emperor to recall him to Court. For, would he like, the Wazir thought, the useless destruction of the lives and property of the innocent residents of Delhi? He discovered, when it was too late, that his enemies were in dead earnest and resolved to fight to the bitter end. He was then at his wit's end and did not know what to do. To fight with the Emperor was highly improper and damaging to his reputation and was sure to bring to him the stigma of disloyalty and rank ingratitude.\* Moreover, most of his own partisans and relations and almost all his Mughal troops had their permanent homes in Delhi. These had left their families and property in the city and in open war would inevitably leave them at the mercy of his enemies. Yet Safdar Jang was not willing to submit tamely and suffer dismissal from his provinces as well as from wazirship. In this dilemma he wasted one month and a half. The Turani nobles, taking full advantage of his vacillation and inactivity, gathered a strong force and inspired the imperialists with courage and hope. A large number of Pathan and Barha Sayyid soldiers of fortune, Gujar and Baluchi leaders of mercenaries, and Rajput soldiers and chiefs, ambitious of a career of prosperity and desirous of securing grants of land, joined the Emperor in preference to Safdar Jang who had now become a rebel in the eyes of a vast majority of the people.† The Wazir's huge hosts.

\* Abdulkarim, 110b; Siyar. III. 891.

† *Ibid.*



exhausted his treasures during the period of his inactivity and idleness, and it became increasingly difficult every day to feed them when the war had protracted on for months together. Safdar Jang had never distinguished himself as a soldier or a general. His weakness and incapacity as a leader of men became apparent when he was pitted against Imad-ul-mulk, an impetuous unscrupulous youth of extra-ordinary talents, energy and organising skill, burning to distinguish himself in war as well as in diplomacy.

#### 9.—EARLY STAGE OF THE WAR

After about one month's aimless roaming from the west to south, Safdar Jang set up his camp on the 22nd of April near the gardens of Khizrabad, about six miles south of the capital.\* In response to his invitation, Surajmal, who had successfully completed his expedition to Ghasra, joined him here with 15,000 Jat horse on the 1st of May.† From the numerical superiority of his troops and the vastness of his treasures the general public and even experienced and sober men believed that the Wazir would be victorious. Hence Sadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang, ex-Mir Bakhshi, who had again been persuaded to take service under the Emperor at this critical juncture, went out of the city on pretence of a visit to the tomb of Shah-i-Mardan and joined Safdar Jang with his whole family and 5,000 men on 4th May.‡ Stung with the ingratitude of his royal master, who had ordered his summary dismissal in June, 1751 and subjected him to two years' forced retirement and poverty, Zulfiqar Jang strongly disapproved of Safdar Jang's conduct in having allowed himself to be turned out of Delhi and urged him strongly to make a bold attempt to set aside the ignorant and foolish Emperor and recover control of the Government. The Wazir replied that he was a loyal and obedient servant and did not have the intention of turning against his master. Zulfiqar Jang now said that loyalty and obedience had no meaning when the Em-

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 51.b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 53.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 53a; Delhi Chronicle, 77. Shah-i-Mardan's tomb

peror was not his own master. He was immersed in degrading vices and had fallen into the hands of youthful upstarts. This speech produced on the Wazir the effect that it intended to convey, and he now asked what he should do under the circumstances. The ex-Mir Bakhshi advised him to set up somebody on the throne, fight with Ahmad Shah, and when victorious crown a prince of the imperial family—an act which was not without a precedent in the past. Surajmal seconded the proposal.\*

Safdar Jang had already sent Rajendra Giri on 22nd of April, to plunder the Jagirs of the Turani nobles, situated near Delhi, and this had led to a sudden rise in prices in the capital. Now, Zulfiqar Jang's taunts stirred him to action and the very next day (5th May) he ordered the Gosain commander to go towards Barapula and Ismail Khan to go to the village of Nagli near the Yamuna to attack the houses of the Turani chiefs. This produced consternation in the city and alarmed the Emperor who wrote a note with his own hand to Mirza Ali Khan, Shuja-ud-daula's brother-in-law, to persuade the Wazir to give up his intention, deputing the venerable Nazir Rozafzun Khan also on the same mission. But Safdar Jang did not desist and gave no reply. Next day (6th May) the Emperor sent Khwaja Bhakhtawar Khan and Wajih Khan, and then the Wazir replied in clear terms: "Peace is possible only if the posts of Mir Bakhshi and second Bakhshi and the governorship of the Panjab and Multan are taken away from the Turanis, and given to my own nominees, and five robes of honour are sent to me so that I may grant these (as investiture for those posts) to any body I like. Further, Itimad-ud-daula (Intizam-ud-daula) and Imadul-mulk must be banished from the Emperor's presence. Otherwise, to be sure, to-morrow I shall attack their houses. My force awaits my orders, and the imperial fort is near and in fact in my view... .."†

Offended at this effrontery, Ahmad Shah formally dismissed Shuja-ud-daula from all his offices, including the command of

\* Hari Charan, 40<sup>9a</sup> and b; T. M. 156b; Sujan Charit, 162.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 53b.

the imperial artillery on 8th May and appointed Samsam-ud-daula *Mir Atish*, and Khwaja Ahmad *qiladar*. He directed Imad-ul-Mulk and Samsam-ud-daula to complete the entrenchments and move the batteries on the sand of the river forward, himself getting ready to mount, if Safdar Jang were to launch an offensive.\* But as the Wazir still believed that in view of the welfare of the residents of the city the Emperor would not push matters to extremity, he did not assume a vigorous offensive. Nor did he give orders for an open attack on the imperialists.† He directed Surajmal and Rajendra Giri Gosain to attack and plunder Old Delhi which had no city wall round it. On the 9th of May these leaders and their followers plundered the eastern quarter of the city near Lal Darwaza (Red Gate), which was almost exclusively populated by poor and middle class persons. Deprived of all their earthly belongings and rendered utterly homeless, the poor sufferers fled to the shelter of the walled town of New Delhi (Shahjahanabad). In the morning of the 10th the plundering hordes of Surajmal were again active and ravaged Sayyidwara, Panchkoi, Tarkaganj and Abdullanagar near Jaisinghpura. In this part of the city there were houses of some rich citizens who took up arms in defence of their families and property. At about half-past three in the evening Antaji Mankeshwar and Shadil Khan with the Maratha and Badakhshi contingents made a sortie from the imperial entrenchments and attacked Rajendra Giri who was in charge of the Wazir's van. This was the first battle of the civil war. The imperial artillery forced the Gosain leader to retreat with the loss of many of his followers. The Jats would everyday make their appearance in some quarters of Old Delhi, and the imperialists would hasten to oppose them. But as the imperial troops could not reach every place, and reached only a few quarters in time, the redoubtable Jats within a week sacked and devastated almost the whole of the Old City. Lakhs of victims of their vulgar greed and ferocious tyranny swarmed everywhere in the New City. The Emperor made temporary arrangements for their accommoda-

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 54a.

† Abdul Karim, 110a.

tion by vacating several garden houses, such as Sahibabad garden in Chandni Chowk, "Garden of Thirty Thousand". (*bagh-i-si-bazari*) and others.\* These horrors of Jat loot popularly called Jat gardi, remained green in the memory of the inhabitants of Delhi as late as the early years of the 19th century, when Sayyid Ghulam Ali was compiling his *Imad-us-Saadat*.†

#### 10.—SECOND STAGE OF THE WAR

The loot and devastation of Old Delhi led to a final rupture between Ahmad Shah and his Wazir. The infuriated Emperor banished the idea of a compromise from his mind, formally dismissed Safdar Jang from the office of the First Minister and appointed Intizam-ul-daula in his place on the 13th of May. As a reply to this the ex-wazir that very day placed an eunuch of handsome features, sometime before purchased by Shuja-ud-daula, on the throne, entitled him "Akbar Shah, the Just" and gave him out to be the grand-son of Kam Bakhsh, the youngest son of Aurangzib.‡ He constituted himself wazir, appointed Sadat Khan Mir Bakhshi and distributed other offices amongst his favourites. Safdar Jang then invested the capital and began fighting light combats in the streets of Delhi. At his instigation the Jats continued their work of destruction and in a few days so thoroughly plundered Old Delhi by piece-meal that nothing was spared, not even the house of Shah Basit, the spiritual preceptor of Safdar Jang, from their merciless hands. The whole of the Old City, whose population was a little larger than that of Shah Jahan's town was utterly ruined and was left without a lamp.‡ The ex-wazir thus allowed all his attention to be absorbed by this sort of political brigandage, and did not think of launching a vigorous offensive, and

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 54b-55a; Haricharan, 410b; Abdul Karim, IIIa; Shakir, 74; T. M. 156b; Siyar. III. 892; Delhi Chronicle, 77.

† Imad, 63.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 551; Tabsir, 274b; T. Aali 154b; Abdul Karim, 110a; Siyar. III, 892; Haricharan, 409a; Sujan Charit, 162.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 56a Siyar. III, 892; Sujan Charit, 167-181; Delhi Chronicle, 78.

concentrating his attack at one vulnerable point. In less than three weeks, therefore, he found the tables turned against him.

The very day the ex-wazir enthroned the young pretender, the Emperor sent off letters to every quarter, summoning zamindars, *amils*, rajas and masters of bands of mercenaries, to his assistance against the disloyal heretic (Safdar Jang). In a short time crowds of zamindars and ambitious soldiers of fortune, chiefly Pathans, Baluchis, Mewatis, Gujars and Barha Sayyids arrived in large numbers and swelled the ranks of the imperialists. Among the fresh arrivals the most important were Chinta† Gujar, Ballu Khan, Bahadur Khan Baluch, Muhammad Sadiq Khan, son of Saif-ullah Khan, and Najeeb Khan Pathan, the future rival of Imad-ul-Mulk. Chinta Gujar at the head of 2,000 troops and Najeeb Khan at the head of 15,000 Ruhelas, the natural enemies of Safdar Jang, joined the Emperor on 3rd June,‡ and turned the tide of the contest in favour of the imperialists.

A lad of only 17 or 18, Imad-ul-mulk became the supreme leader of the imperial forces within one month of Safdar Jang's withdrawal from Delhi. With his characteristic energy and zeal, he threw himself into the task of increasing the Emperor's army by seducing the ex-wazir's men with offers of higher pay and rewards. He issued a proclamation that each one of Safdar Jang's troops belonging to the *Sin Regiment* would be given a reward of fifty Rupees besides one month's salary (Rs. 50) in advance, if he left his master to join the imperial service. Tempted by these offers and afraid of the molestation of their families left behind in Delhi, the Mughals in the ex-wazir's service, most of whom were Central Asian *Sunnis* like their brethren, the Turani nobles, deserted him almost to a man and enlisted themselves under Imad-ul-mulk who constituted them—23,000 in number—into a separate regiment, popularly known

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† Like the Ruhelas Chinta was a predatory rebel. Safdar had more than once sent an army against him, but each time he had successfully eluded it. ( *Gulshan-i-Bahar*, 27-30 ).

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 57a ; Abdul Karim, IIIb ; *Siyar*, III, 892 ; T. M. 17a ; Shakir, 73 ; *Gulistan*, 49.

as *Badakhshi* Paltan with his steward Aqibat Mahmud Khan at their head. The Mir Bakhshi thought of another clever device to undermine the prestige of the ex-wazir and to win for his own cause the sympathy and support of the Muslim public of the country. He declared that war with Safdar Jang, a disloyal heretic (*niamak-baram rafizi*) who was fighting against the Khalifa of the age (Emperor) was a holy war (*jihad*) and hence he called upon all true believers to assemble under the Muhammadi standard he had set up and assist the imperialists in this meritorious work. At this, thousands of Musalmans of lower orders, especially the Panjabis and Kashmiris, flocked to the standard, vowed to fight the ex-wazir to the bitter end and created great enthusiasm in the city.

Imad-ul-mulk further weakened the ex-wazir by getting the property and houses of his partisans confiscated and bringing ruin upon all those citizens of Delhi who were even secretly in sympathy with Safdar Jang. The Mir Bakhshi reported to the emperor that during the night which followed the 16th of May cannon-balls and rockets were thrown from the mansion of Mirza Ali Khan and Salar Jang, brothers-in-law of Shuja-ud-daula, upon the imperial trenches which lay near it. This was enough for the Emperor to order the arrest of these two nobles, who, though near relations of the ex-wazir, were fighting on behalf of their royal master, and the confiscation of their houses with all the wealth and valuable furniture that they contained. The execution of the orders led to the ruin of a large number of people who, knowing how closely the two grandees were connected with the warring parties, had taken refuge in their houses as the safest places of shelter in Delhi. It also proved to be a signal for the indiscriminate plunder of the houses of all those who were either partisans or servants of Safdar Jang and even of those who were suspected to have been in any way connected with the ex-wazir. Many rich people who had nothing to do with him also fell victim to the vulgar greed of the imperial officers and their over-zealous subordinates.

Seeing that the imperialists were gathering fresh strength everyday, Safdar Jang shook off his lethargy, and fighting began with intensity and vigour from both sides. His men sometime attacked the city from one side and sometimes from another. By these tactics he succeeded in wresting Kotila (*Kohtila*) Firoz Shah from the hands of the imperialists during the night of 17th of May. Entering Old Delhi by the Kabuli Darwaza, he succeeded in forcing his way inside the Kotila. Meanwhile Sadil Khan and Debi Dutta, arriving there through a different route, attacked Safdar Jang's men, and fighting lasted till evening when both sides retired to their trenches. During the night the ex-wazir again attacked and captured the Kotila. Here Ismail Khan, his chief commander, erected batteries at the top of Firoz Shah's fort and began discharging his guns at the imperialists encamped at the foot of the fort, their shots falling inside the palace fort even. The Jats in the imperial service, whose entrenchment was near, suffered heavily; but with the cool obstinate courage that has ever characterised their race, they remained firm in their places. Their example was followed by the imperial Khanazadas who fired big guns arrayed on the Delhi Darwaza, the southern gate of the city, and demolished some of the bastions and ramparts of the Kotila. After some days of distant artillery duel Ismail Khan advanced his batteries and dug a mine upto the underneath of a bastion of the New City called the Blue Tower, with the object of capturing Intizam-ud-daula's mansion, situated adjacent to the tower and bordering on the rampart of New Delhi. He set fire to it in the morning of the 5th June. Although the whole of the tower did not blow up, yet more than 200 imperial troops and stonecutters were killed from the effect of the explosion and from the fall of the stones of the tower and of a house near the mansion of Intizam-ud-daula. At this critical time Safdar Jang's men made sudden attack from the edge of the river. These were opposed by 4,000 troops from the new Wazir's house. A fierce battle was fought and inspite of deadly fire from the imperial trenches, victory appeared to be within the grasp of Safdar Jang's army. But Imad-ul-mulk,

Hafiz Bakhtawar Khan, Najeeb Khan Ruhela and other imperialists rushed to the front, put up a most stout resistance and both sides suffered heavy losses. Najeeb Khan and his brother were wounded by bullets, and about four hundred Ruhelas lay dead on the field. Safdar Jang's assault thus did not succeed, and the parties remained where they were. Guns went on doing their work throughout the night, and about two hours before the day dawned on the 6th June, Ismail Khan left the Kotila and withdrew to the ex-wazir's entrenchments.\*

The imperialists now advanced their batteries and obtained possession of Kotila Firoz Shah and the Old Fort which is said to represent the site of the residence of the Pandavas, the famed heroes of the Mahabharat. Having mounted big guns on the top of these two forts which commanded Safdar Jang's entrenchments, they began to bombard his trenches. The ex-wazir was therefore forced to remove further south and after a few days' fighting he had to abandon his position by the river-side and retreat to Talkatora, about 4 miles south of the city. But he would every day attack some part of Delhi or its suburbs and the imperial troops would hasten to the threatened area and drive him out. In this irregular fighting the ex-wazir everyday lost some of his brave troops and in the battle of Idgah which took place towards the evening of the 12th June a large number of Jat soldiers and some of their chief officers lay dead on the field.\*

Imad-ul-mulk went on moving behind Safdar Jang, and almost daily engagements took place in which Jats and Nagas played important parts. Accompanied by his death-defying followers, the Naga leader, Rajendra Giri would at a convenient opportunity fall upon the fire-vomitting imperial artillery, slay some of the enemy gunners and return unhurt to his position. The credulous public believed that he was expert in with-craft

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 57b - 58a.



and hence was proof against bullets. In the evening of the 14th of June this recklessly brave chief met his end at the battle of Talkatora. At about 9 in the morning of this day the contending forces appeared, drawn up in battle array, Safdar Jang himself guiding his men from a distance. In the afternoon his Qizilbashs and Jats attacked the imperialists, slew a large number of Maratha and Badakhshi troops, and it seemed that the ex-wazir would inflict a crushing defeat upon them. But when the battle was raging fiercely, Imad-ul-mulk appeared with re-inforcements and heartened the dispirited imperialists. After a brave struggle the latter succeeded in repelling the enemy. In this Rajendra Giri received a wound from a bullet which proved to be fatal and he died of it the next day. The bravest and most fearless commander of Safdar Jang's army thus sacrificed his life in the cause of his master.\*

Rajendra Giri's death cast a gloom over the ex-wazir's forces and none felt the loss more sorely than Safdar Jang. For full ten days he remained utterly inert, and suspended all fighting. The imperialists also did not move out of their camp. The Nawab appointed Umrao Giri, chief disciple of the deceased, as commander of the Naga troops. But he himself did not personally ride forth in any battle after Rajendra Giri's death.†

#### 11.—LAST PHASE OF THE WAR

By this time Safdar Jang's ranks had grown considerably thinner by reason of numerous desertions from his army. On the other hand there was daily accession in the number and strength of the imperial troops, Ruhelas, Gujars, Baluchis, Sayyids, Hindu zamindars, Marathas and the troops sent by Sadulla Khan of Rubelkhand, Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, the Raja of Bikaner, Muin-ul-mulk of the Panjab and Muslim chiefs of various places swelling them to an enormous figure of

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 59a ; T. M. 157b ; Abdulkarim, 112a ; Syar III. 892; Haricharan, 410a; Delhi Chronicle, 78; Sujan Charit, 190—91. Gulistan 49. According to Imad, p. 64, Ismail Khan shot Rajendra dead from behind. But Gulistan says that he was shot down by Najeeb Khan.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 59b; Sujan Charit, p. 91—92

about one lakh of fighting soldiers. To everybody, therefore, the result of the civil war was a foregone conclusion and Safdar Jang's cause utterly hopeless. Hence his important officers and near relations also began leaving the ex-wazir and joining the Emperor. Even Sher Jang, son of Saadat Khan's elder brother deserted his cousin and presented himself before the Emperor on 27th of June. He informed the imperialists that Safdar Jang's army was paralysed, and there was left no powerful chief in his army except Surajmal, and that he too was at heart eager for peace, if he were pardoned and allowed to remain in possession of all his territories. The Jat Raja now made overtures for peace, but owing to the insistence of Imad-ul-mulk to fight to the end, these were rejected in toto. All this time desultory warfare went on and Safdar Jang was obliged to retreat further south, sometimes abandoning his baggage into the hands of the Maratha plunderers.\*

On the 1st of July there was a severe action in which artillery played the chief part. Then Safdar Jang sent his Jat and Naga troops to fight the Delhi army. In the engagement the imperialists were defeated. The Jats pursued the flying enemy, and a running fight was kept up. By an unlucky chance, however, a ball struck Gokul Ram Gaur, chief Bakhshi of Surajmal, and his lifeless body fell down the horse. The ex-wazir's victory was thus turned into a defeat and his army gloomily returned from the field.†

Safdar Jang now realised that so long as the enemy had the shelter of the fort and the city, it was impossible to beat him. So, on the suggestion of Surajmal, he left his encampment and passing via Chiragh-i-Delhi, marched on the 19th July to the village of Tilpat, 12 miles south-east of the Indian capital, so as to draw the imperialists to the open plains and engage them there.‡ Imad-ul-mulk also advanced his trenches and went on gradually occupying the ground vacated by the ex-wazir till he reached the temple of Kalka Devi (near Okola Railway Station)

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi 59b—61b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 61b-62a; Sujan Charit, 191—193.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 66 b; Sujan Charit, 194—199.

and the plain of Khizrabad, some six miles south of the city. For some days marching, counter-marching and daily skirmishes took place. At last on the 25th of July the Jats attacked the Ruhelas who were besieging the village of Garhi Maidan. A well-matched encounter lasted for several hours without any side showing signs of exhaustion or defeat. Eventually the Jats succeeded in beating their equally brave opponents, driving them from the field with heavy losses and capturing all their arms and guns.\*

This period of strenuous activity was followed by a few day's lull during which the rival forces did not move from their places. Angry at the pusillanimous conduct of the Emperor and the new Wazir to which he ascribed the defeat of 25th July, Imad-ul-mulk next day returned to Delhi and requested Ahmad Shah in vain to mount personally for the battle and decide the contest in one pitched battle. The imperial troops also raised a clamour for their salaries which had long fallen into arrears. On the 30th July Safdar Jang's army appeared near the canal of Badrapur and returned after a light skirmish. Then activities were again suspended for many a day, after which the ex-wazir's Qizilbashes, Jats and Nagas started in readiness for a battle on 19th of August. The imperialists faced the enemy keeping their artillery in front, and a fiercely well-contested battle was fought at several places along a line, over three miles in length, from Tughlaqabad to the bank of the Yamuna. At some places artillery duels were fought and at others hand to hand fighting took place, in the latter Pathans of Najeeb Khan and Jats of Surajmal distinguishing themselves most. A personal encounter took place between the Jats and the Marathas at one point in which both sides displayed great valour. But eventually the Jats were defeated and one of their chiefs received a spear-thrust. In the evening the combatants returned to their camps. Next morning Safdar Jang left Faridabad and a few days after retreated beyond Ballamgarh. He dug trenches and erected batteries at Ballamgarh, while his camp lay at Sikri, 5 miles further south. Imad-ul-mulk steadily advanced behind him by slow and gradual

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi; 66b; Sujan Charit, 194—199.

marches. He left Khizrabad on the 26th and passing by Kishan Das' tank and Badrapur, 16 miles south of Delhi, reached north of Faridabad on the 1st of September, his troops plundering the town the very day in defiance of his orders.\*

Imad-ul-Mulk now began making preparations to capture Ballamgarh, a very strong outpost between him and the ex-wazir's camp at Sikri. But, at this time Najeeb Khan Ruhela, Bahadur Khan Baluch and Chinta Gujar and their clansmen, whose pay had for sometime been in arrears, left their trenches in the front line of the imperial army, went to and took up their stand at Barapula and began to plunder the Emperor's partisans and foes alike. Next day troops of the imperial artillery department also left their batteries for Delhi to demand their salaries. Taking advantage of the absence of so large a number of the imperialists, Safdar Jang collected as many troops as he could and made a bold and powerful attack on the enemy's entrenchments on the 6th of September. But Imad-ul-Mulk with 20,000 horse hurried to re-inforce his men at the batteries, and after the whole day's fighting defeated the ex-wazir. On the 7th and 8th Surajmal's Jats, numbering from five to six thousands, spread themselves as far north as Kishan Das' tank, plundering grain merchants, killing soldiers, capturing their weapons and beasts of burden and thus cutting off supplies and re-inforcements to the imperial army. Seized with despair at the lack of provisions, absence of the Ruhelas and the Emperor's apathetic conduct, Imad-ul-mulk quitted his entrenchment on 11th September, saw Ahmad Shah on the next day and made strong representations for money and re-inforcement ; but these were left unheeded. Imad-ul.mulk, therefore, refused to move out of Delhi till Najeeb Khan and his clansmen had been paid their arrears of pay and induced to return to the field †

Realising that it was impossible to crush the ex-wazir thoroughly single handed, Imad-ul-mulk despatched urgent

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 67a-71a; Delhi Chronicle, 78-79; Antaji's letter, Journal of Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Vol. III, Nos, 2-4; Sujjan Charit, 200-206.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 71a-73a ; Delhi Chronicle, 79, 80.

letters of invitation to Malhar Rao and Jayappa, who were then in the Deccan, to come speedily to his assistance, for which the Emperor agreed to pay to the Peshwa one crore of Rupees, besides the governorship of Awadh and Allahabad already promised to him. But Ahmad Shah and his new wazir, Intizam-ud-daula, jealous of Imad-ul-Mulk's ability and afraid of his being transformed into another Safdar Jang, were at heart desirous of an early peace. Hence they wrote to Madho Singh Kachhwaha, Raja of Jaipur, to come to Delhi and bring about peace, and notwithstanding the Mir Bakhshi's entreaties to pay off the arrears of salaries of the starving troops and to come to the field in person, the Emperor did not move out of his capital. Intizam-ud-daula even readily entertained peace overtures of the enemy and on the 14th of September sent his agent Lutf-ullah Beg to the latter's camp to negotiate terms with him. Hence Imad-ul-mulk, who had returned to Delhi on the 11th sat angrily in his house.\*

Seizing this opportunity Safdar Jang and Surajmal boldly advanced to the north of Faridabad, attacked the imperial trenches on the 14th, left by the Mir Bakhshi at Sarai Khwaja Bakhtawar Khan, Badrapur and other places, defeated the Delhi army every where and carried away corn, oxen and other equipment. This drew down a volley of curses upon Safdar Jang and showers of taunts and of abuse upon Intizam-ud-daula, who was an intermediary of peace with the former, from the angry populace as well as nobles of Delhi. Next, during the night following the 20th of September the ex-wazir's men attacked from the south of Faridabad the imperial trenches in charge of Bakhtawar Khan, and at the same time his Jats, who were returning after having escorted Lutf-ullah Beg and Safdar Jang's own envoys to Delhi, charged the imperialists from the north, and slew a large number of Bakhtawar Khan's troops. Attacked at once in front and rear the Khan's men were about to give in, when they were timely re-inforced by the Lahore and Bikaner

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\* Shakir. 75 ; Abdul Karim, 280 ; Delhi Chronicle, 80 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 72a-73a.

contingents and Antaji's Maratha horse. The tide of battle now turned against the ex-wazir who was forced to accept defeat and return from the field. This treacherous policy of Safdar Jang caused great indignation at Delhi and led to the break-down of peace negotiations on 22nd September. †

Mean-while news came that Madho Singh and the Maratha chiefs had started from their respective countries. The ex-wazir also learnt that the Ruhelas had been paid a part of their arrears on the 24th, and that the Mir Bakhshi was on his return march to his entrenchments and was spending the night following the 28th of September in Najeeb Khan's camp at Barapula. In order to strike a swift blow before fresh troops under Imad-ul-mulk could reach the imperialists, Surajmal and other commanders of Safdar Jang with their troops and big and small pieces of artillery appeared before the entrenchment of the Delhi army in the morning of the 29th. They launched a vigorous attack on the right wing of the imperial trenches, which were in charge of the Marathas and were not protected by artillery. The Marathas were defeated with great slaughter. Abu Turab Khan, Hamid-ud-daula, Hafiz Bakhtawar Khan and Jamil ud-din Khan advanced to assist them, and the fight was still going on, when Imad-ul-mulk and Najeeb Khan appeared on the scene of action. The Mir Bakhshi infused fresh vigour into the imperialists and launched a bold offensive. A hotly contested battle was fought near the tank of Faridabad. Imad-ul-mulk led his own elephant into the thick of the ex-wazir's army. One of his elephants, carrying his banner, was struck by a cannon-ball in the forehead and expired instantly. Another ball broke the tusks of the elephant ridden by the Mir Bakhshi himself. The latter then took his seat on a horse and led his men on to the attack. The Jats were defeated and put to flight, both sides losing a large number of their men. Safdar Jang's chief commander, Ismail Khan received a spear-thrust. The victors now pursued the enemy for four miles and returned to the camp in the evening. Next day ( 30th September ) Imad-ul-mulk advanc-

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† T. Ahmad Shahi, 73a-75a,

ed his trenches to the village of Majesar, 1½ miles north of Ballamgarh, set up his batteries there and began to bombard the Jat stronghold. Najeeb Khan attacked and captured Sihi, nearly one mile east of Majesar, and the Ruhelas and the Marathas began to plunder the flourishing Jat territory in the neighbourhood. \*

12.—PEACE : SAFDAR JANG RETIRES TO AWADH  
7TH NOVEMBER, 1753

The war lasted for six months and exhausted the patience and resources of both the parties. The imperial troops and the Ruhela, Baluch and Gujar mercenaries were clamouring for their salaries which had for a long time fallen into arrears, and even the proceeds of the sale of ornaments, plates and furniture from the imperial establishments had not sufficed to clear off the dues of the soldiers.† Safdar Jang, equally hard pressed by heavy expenditure, was tired of the fruitless warfare in which he was the principal loser. ‡ Hence both desired peace before the Marathas could arrive from the Deccan—the Emperor, because their alliance with the ambitious Imad-ul-mulk would make the latter more formidable than the ex-wazir was a few months earlier, and Safdar Jang, because their arrival would forebode his utter ruin. Imad-ul-mulk alone was all for war, and was bent upon bringing about the total destruction of the ex-wazir with the object of taking the latter's *subas* of Awadh and Allahabad and acquiring for himself a dictatorial position at the Court and in the Empire. He urged the Emperor strongly times out of number to give up the weak policy of remaining on the defence, march in person to the scene of action and order the whole army to launch an all out offensive so as to finish the contest in one pitched battle. But the Mir Bakhshi's very eager-

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T. Ahmad Shahi, 75<sup>b</sup>-77<sup>b</sup>; Delhi Chronicle, 80; Shakir. 75; Sujan Charit, 212-222. The last-named makes Surajmal victorious which is opposed to truth.

† Delhi Chronicle, 80; T. Ahmad Shahi is full of accounts of tumults created by starving troops.

‡ Siyar. III. 893.

ness to crush Safdar Jang, which created strong suspicions in the mind of the new Wazir and the Emperor, and Ahmad Shah's natural cowardice came to the rescue of the ex-wazir. Determined to nip his nephew's schemes in the bud and save Safdar Jang to keep him a check on Imad-ul-mulk or even to utilise his services as an ally against the Mir Bakhshi, Intizam-ud-daula advised the Emperor and the Queen-mother to make peace, and Ahmad Shah who had cowardly been hiding himself in his palace accepted the proposal. Accordingly, when Surajmal made peace overtures towards the end of June, 1753, Intizam-ud-daula, entertaining them with alacrity, began to negotiate with him. But as Imad-ul-mulk would not agree to it, the negotiations had to be given up. Next, when the proposals again came in from the ex-wazir's side, Intizam-ud-daula sent his trusted agent, Lutf-ullah Beg on the 14th of September to negotiate terms with Safdar Jang who was encamped at Badshapur, 8 miles west of Ballamgarh. The latter gave *conge* to the *envoy* on the 20th, sending his own agents, Raja Lachhimi Narayan, Jugal Kishore, Makrand Kishore and Bhim Nath to Delhi on the same mission. But, as has already been related these negotiations came to an abrupt end owing to a treacherous night attack by Safdar Jang's army, and the hostilities were resumed immediately after.\*

Meanwhile Raja Madho Singh arrived at the head of a big force at the village of Mubram Nagar on 9th October to use his good offices to bring the civil war to an end. Intizam-ud-daula welcomed him there and the two rode together to Nagla, on the Yamna, 6 miles south of Delhi, where the Raja set up his camp. In order not to allow Madho Singh to see the Emperor through Imad-ul-mulk, the Wazir took out Ahmad Shah on a pleasure trip and introduced the Raja during the march on the 15th. On the 18th he was granted a formal interview in the private audience chamber and on the 23rd he held consultations with the Emperor in private. Ahmad Shah complained bitterly about Safdar Jang, Intizam-ud-daula and Imad-ul-mulk who were

\*T. Ahmad Shahi, 61a, 63a-66b, 73a-75a; Delhi Chronicle, 80; Shahi, 775.



ruining the Empire, and besought the Kachhwaha Chief to save it from utter destruction which was threatening it at that critical time. A loyal vassal and a man of experience, Madho Singh consoled the Emperor, saying that no evil would be allowed to come near the State. The Mughal Lord was pleased and taking off his turban with its jewelled aigrette placed it on the head of the Raja and honoured him and his chief followers with rich robes and gifts.\*

The Emperor ordered his men not to relax the military watchfulness and wrote to Imad-ul-Mulk to continue the war and not negotiate peace with the enemy. This was intended to ward off the suspicion of the Mir Bakhshi regarding secret negotiations through the Wazir and the Jaipur Raja. The Emperor also feared lest Imad-ul-Mulk should become an intermediary for peace and come to terms with Suraj Mal and Safdar Jang on his own account. The Jat chief had in fact opened negotiations with Imad-ul-Mulk about the middle of October and a peace would have been made through him, had not the Mir Bakhshi insisted on depriving Suraj Mal of all his territories except those originally possessed by his father, Badan Singh. In spite of these tactics, the Emperor's object could not remain concealed from the Mir Bakhshi. Safdar Jang handed over to Aqibat Mahmud Khan the copies of the letters from Ahmad Shah and his mother asking the ex-wazir to make peace through Intizam-ud-daula. The Emperor was therefore obliged to repudiate the charge and to write to Imad-ul-Mulk that he had no intention of peace and that all the letters had been forged by Safdar Jang—, of course a lie, pure and simple. But the Mir Bakhshi could not be deceived by such a denial, and in order to forestall his rival's designs himself now opened negotiations with the enemy. But Intizam-ud-Daula could not be beaten in the game of diplomacy and induced the Emperor to go on the pretext of a pleasure trip to Madho Singh's camp and make peace with Surajmal. Accordingly, on the 25th October, the Emperor marched for Khizrabad Garden, the Wazir joined him on the way and both rode to the Raja's camp. Madho Singh introduced Surajmal's

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 78a-81b.

agent, who offered presents to the Emperor and secured the pardon of the Jat chief. Ahmad Shah returned to Delhi, and next day Surajmal, coming with a slender escort from his camp south of Ballamgarh, saw the Wazir and the Raja and entered into a formal peace with the Mughal sovereign.\*

The pardon of Surajmal was the preliminary to the formal end of the civil war and the conclusion of a peace between the Emperor and the ex-wazir. On the 1st November Intizam-ud-Daula returned to the Court from his camp in Raja Jugal Kishore's garden, and on the 5th Madho Singh's agent, Fatah Singh, carried to Safdar Jang a royal *farman*, a *Khila'at* of six pieces, a jewelled crest, an aigrette, a necklace of pearls and a horse from Ahmad Shah, which Safdar Jang accepted with due respect and ceremony like a loyal subject. Imad-ul-Mulk protested against this secret peace, whereupon the Emperor and the Wazir feigned complete ignorance. Yet the civil war came to an end, and Safdar Jang was confirmed in the governorship of the provinces of Awadh and Allahabad. He struck his camp at the village of Sikri, 5 miles south-east of Ballamgarh and began his march towards Awadh on 7th November 1753. In recognition of his services Madho Singh was granted the impregnable fort of Ranthambhor, which had been refused to his predecessor by Muhammad Shah, and satisfied with the success of his mission he left for Jaipur.†

### 13.—SAFDAR JANG AFTER HIS RETURN FROM DELHI

Continuing his march in the direction of Agra, Safdar Jang reached Mathura on the 13th, and halted there till the 17th. He retained with him the handsome eunuch, whom he had raised to the throne some months back, lodged in red tents and surrounded by red screens (possessing red tents being one of the royal prerogatives in Mughal India), and hence the Emperor and his court entertained apprehensions lest the ex-wazir should create

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 81b-83b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 84a-85a; Delhi Chronicle, 81-82; Haricharan 412a; Siyar, III. 893; T. M., 107b; Sujan Charit, 222-223.

some trouble once again. On the 17th Safdar Jang crossed the Yamuna at Mathura and turned towards Awadh. On reaching the neighbourhood of the towns of Shikohabad and Firozabad on the 22nd, he despatched the bogus prince to Agra in the custody of Amar Singh, and himself marched on to Lucknow. Here he stayed for sometime to re-organise the administration which had fallen into confusion on account of the civil war, and then set out for Faizabad on 22nd December, leaving Muhammad Quli Khan alias Younger Mirza, son of his elder brother Mirza Muhsin, and Shuja-ud-Daula to complete his work there.\*

The most important problem that was at that time facing the Nawab was to increase his resources and re-organise his army in order to defend his territory from the Marathas and Imad-ul-mulk. The Peshwa had been granted Awadh and Allahabad in the beginning of the Civil War and his lieu-tenants naturally desired to wrest these promises from the hands of Safdar Jang. Imad-ul-mulk was no less hungrily awaiting an opportunity to undo his old patron and usurp his *subas* for himself. As early as 16th November, 1753 his steward Aqibat Mahmud Khan, had forged an imperial *farman*, purporting to grant Awadh to the Mir Bakhshi, and the latter had put on a *khila'at* (sent to him by the Emperor as a matter of courtesy) and had declared it out to be an investiture for the *subedari* of Awadh.† On the 19th of November when the news reached Delhi that Safdar Jang had left Mathura for Lucknow, Imad-ul-mulk openly declared that Awadh and Allahabad had been granted to him (Mir Bakhshi) and that he was going to obtain possession of them.‡ On 22nd December Ahmad Shah was really forced to appoint the Mir Bakhshi *subedar* of Allahabad.†† To counteract these machinations of Imad-ul-mulk and his Maratha allies, Safdar Jang cultivated friendly relations with the former's rival, Wazir. Intizam-ud-daula, and tried to win the favour of the Emperor by occasionally sending him presents.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 85b, 87a, 88a, 90a, 106a.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 87b.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 88a.

†† T. Ahmad Shahi 98a.

He sent forty falcons and some other hunting birds and eight cart loads of good sweetmeat of Lucknow which were presented to the Emperor by the Wazir on 9th January, 1754.\* A clever, though weak, politician, Intizam-ud-daula, in spite of his implacable enmity, had from the very beginning tried his best to save the ex-wazir from utter ruin. Now, he befriended him and his allies the Jats, to use them as a check on the ambitious schemes of his nephew, and got Safdar Jang's trusted officers, like Raja Lachhmi Narayan and Jugal Kishore, pardoned by the Emperor and their houses, confiscated during the Civil War, restored to them.†

Safdar Jang had already begun the work of re-organising his administration and reducing rebel zamindars to submission. Seeing Imad-ul-mulk's attention diverted towards the Jats, he marched to Jaunpur and from there to Banaras, reaching the latter place on 17th February 1754. Here the local Raja Balwant Singh, whose subjugation had been postponed in April 1752, had again shown open contumacy during the Civil War and had fought with the *naib-subedars* of Awadh and Allahabad. Now, on the near approach of Safdar Jang, he was filled with apprehension, crossed the Ganga and took shelter in Chandauli, 14 miles S. E. of Banaras. ‡ But he appears to have offered, his submission in time and saved himself from the Nawab's wrath.

#### 14.—SAFDAR JANG JOINS THE EMPEROR AGAINST MARATHAS AND IMAD-UL-MULK, MARCH-MAY 1754

Within four months of Safdar Jang's retirement, Emperor Ahmad Shah grew tired of Imad-ul-mulk's dictatorship and invited the ex-wazir to join an expedition against the Mir Bakhshi and his Maratha allies. This happened in the following manner. In response to Imad-ul-mulk's appeal for aid against Safdar Jang, Raghunath Rao with a large army consisting of the contingents of Malhar Rao Holkar, Jayappa Sindhia and other powerful

\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 106b.

† T. Ahmad Shahi, 97a.

‡ T. Ahmad Shahi, 112b.

chiefs arrived near Jaipur in November, 1753. But by this time the civil war had come to an end. So at the instigation of Imad-ul-mulk, who was burning with the thirst of revenge against Surajmal, a steadfast ally of Safdar Jang, the Marathas invaded the Jat territory and besieged Surajmal in the fort of Kuhmir in January 1754. Ghazi-ud-din Khan Imad-ud-mulk also joined the besiegers in March with a part of the imperial army and artillery. The siege protracted on for two months; and although, Surajmal was reduced to great straits, yet the fort could not be captured. Hence, with a view to bombard the Jat stronghold Imad-ul-mulk despatched Aqibat Mahmud Khan to Delhi to bring some heavy cannon from the imperial arsenal. This was Surajmal's opportunity. He wrote diplomatic letters to the Emperor and Intizam-ud-daula that unless Imad-ul-mulk's ambitious projects were nipped in the bud, his success would turn his head, and with the Maratha assistance he would replace the wazir and bring ruin to the Empire. He suggested to them to refuse the Mir Bakhshi the loan of field guns and to invite Safdar Jang and the Rajas of Rajputana and with their help drive the hated Marathas, the common foe of them all, out of northern India. The plan was approved of by the Emperor and the wazir who evaded the loan of the *top-kebana* and wrote confidential letters to Safdar Jang to march to the frontier of his province and join the Emperor as soon as the latter had reached Aligarh. Letters were also despatched to the rulers of Jaipur and Jodhpur to proceed with their armies and effect junction with the imperialists at Agra. Meanwhile Aqibat Mahmud engineered a riot which led to street fighting in Delhi. But Aqibat was defeated and forced out of the capital and the Emperor remained firm in his determination.

When encouraging replies had been received from all, the Emperor, with the paraphernalia of his court and *harems* and starving troops and beasts of burden left Delhi on 27th April 1754, giving out that he was going on a pleasure trip to the Doab. Safdar Jang also arrived at Mehdi Ghat on the Ganga below Qananj and encamped there awaiting Ahmad Sah's arrival at Aligarh. But instead of marching to the shelter

of the last-named fort as had been decided, the Emperor unwisely remained loitering in the neighbourhood of Sikanderabad. Informed of his movement, Malhar Rao who had made peace with Surajmal about the middle of May and had retired from before Kuhmir secretly left his camp, fell upon the unsuspecting Mughals during the night of 25th May, and plundered away everything except the jewelled treasure of Malka-i-zamani. Leaving all the ladies of his *harem* except his intriguing mother behind, the cowardly Emperor fled in panic towards Delhi even before the Marathas had made their appearance. The Wazir followed suit while the rest of the imperialists were scattered in utter confusion and panic and even the imperial ladies were taken prisoners. Meanwhile Imad-ul-mulk, in company with Malhar Rao, marched to Delhi, got his uncle Intizam-ud daula dismissed and himself appointed wazir in his place on Sunday, 2nd June, 1754. The same day he deposed Ahmad Shah, threw him and his mother into a dungeon and placed Aziz ud-din, son of Jahandar Shah, then aged 55 lunar years, on the throne, with the title of Alamgir II. Seeing that their plan had been totally miscarried, Safdar Jang returned to Awadh. The Marathas had already made peace with Surajmal, and now they retired to the Deccan.\*

#### 15.—DEATH OF SAFDAR JANG, 5TH OCTOBER 1754

Back from Mehdi Ghat, Safdar Jang threw himself into the task of strengthening his army and re-organising his resources so as to oppose successfully the ungrateful Imad-ul-mulk and the selfish Marathas who were casting longing eyes upon Awadh and Allahabad. At this time a boil appeared on one of his legs and soon degenerated into a cancer. Experienced and skilled physicians were baffled in their efforts to cure him, and he died at Paparghat on the Gomti, on 17th Zil Hljjah, 1167 H.

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\* T. Ahmad Shahi, 103b; 104b, 110a, 115a, 116a-124b, 126a-137a; T. M. 195a-163a; Abdul Karim, 280-82; Mirat III. 148b-149b; Siyar. III. 892-91; Shakir, 76-77; Hadiq, 135; Prof. Qanungo's H. of Jats, Vol I. pp. 87-94.

(or according to European calculation, 5th October, 1754 A.D.)\* His remains were sent to Delhi and interned near the shrine of *Shah i Mardan*. His son Shuja-ud-daula who succeeded him in the governorship of his *subas*, built a magnificent mausoleum over his grave, which cost three lakhs of rupees and is one of the finest works of its kind in India. On the gate of the mausoleum is inscribed the following verse, which gives the date of Safdar Jang's demise :—

چون آن صفدر عرصه سردی - زدار فنا گشت رحلت گفدین  
چنین سال تاریخ اُوشد رقم - که بادا مقیم بهشت برین †

When that Safdar (lion of the battle-field) departed from the abode of mortality (this world), the year of his death is thus recorded : "May he be a dweller in the highest paradise."

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\* T. M. 172a ; Abdul Karim, 283 ; Siyar. III. 894-95 ; M. U. I. 363 ; Gulistan. 50 ; Tabsir. 281a ; Maadan. IV. 187a. Imad. p. 65, gives 1166 H. which is wrong. Delhi Chronicle, p. 100, has 17th Muharram instead of 17th Zil Hijjah, which may be a clerical error.

† بادا مقیم بهشت برین ( 1167H. )

## CHAPTER XVII

### PERSONALITY & CHARACTER OF SAFDAR JANG

#### 1.—SAFDAR JANG AS A MAN

Like his predecessor, Saadat Khan and all his descendants on the *masnad* of Awadh,\* Nawab Wazir Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang possessed a handsome and imposing appearance—broad forehead, long nose, bright eyes, white complexion and a thick beard. To his natural gifts of intelligence and ready wit he combined a cultural disposition, charming manners and a refined taste. He was polite and attentive in conversation, but grave and dignified on occasions of public functions and festivities and stern at the time of awarding punishment to the guilty and the unruly.† He was not above the popular superstitions of his age which believed in omens and astrology, and had his own astrologers and star gazers. Highly educated as he was, he wrote Persian with flexibility and ease and his composition, except the conventional *alqab* and *adab* in his letters and petitions, used to be mostly free from the artificialities of difficult figures of speech and flowery expression. Himself a lover of literature, he patronised scholars, procured titles for them and granted them suitable allowances and rewards. Besides his own spiritual preceptor, Shah Basit, Safdar Jang patronised Shaikh Muhammad Hasan of Persia, Sayyid Zain-ul-ab-i-din Taba Tabai of holy Mashhad, Sayyid Muhammad Ali Aurangabadi, Mir Ghulam Nabi Bilgrami, Malik-ul-Ulema Maulvi Fazl-ullah Khan, Maulvi Hamd-ullah Khan, Mirza Ali Naqi, Shuja-ud-daula's tutor, and several others.‡ The author of the *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* records an incident which throws light on Safdar Jang's munificence to

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\* The portraits of the Nawabs and Kings of Awadh are preserved and exhibited at the Picture Gallery, Lucknow. I also saw Prince Babur, an illegitimate son of Wajid Ali Shah, ex-King of Awadh and his son and grandsons at No. 30, Park Lane, Calcutta, in March 1930. They possess handsome features of a prince, Asiatic or European.

† Hadiq, 385; Siyar. III. Imad 31.

‡ Siyar II, 615-618; Vol. III 878; Imad. 52.



poets as well as his own love for poetry. One day, writes he, the Nawab Wazir, while going to pay his respects to the Emperor, stopped inside the fort to enjoy the sight of the *Nahar-i-Fair*, a narrow canal running from the Yamuna into the imperial citadel. The sight was pleasing and induced reflection in the Wazir, and Safdar Jang asked his companion, Mirza Azmai Asfahani, who composed verses under his *nom-de-plume* of *Aksir*, to give a verse suited to the occasion. The Mirza, guessing the Wazir's innermost feelings, composed the following verse :—

قد خهیده سہ رۂ گریہ ام نہ شد =  
 این آب رفتہ رفتہ زیائے لاپل گذشت =

Safdar Jang was highly pleased, and rewarded the poet with a Turki horse adorned with gilded trappings, besides Rs. 5,000 in cash.\*

Safdar Jang's generosity to the poor and the needy was also great. Whenever a poor person begged for help, writes the author of the *Imad-us-Saadat*, the Nawab gave him fifty *asharfis* (gold coins). This was his practice throughout his life.† We are in possession of numerous letters written by Safdar Jang to his Naibs and *amils* ordering them to return the jagirs or restore subsistence allowances to pious Sayyids and other ancient families of Awadh who had been unjustly deprived of them by local officers.‡ He was essentially a man of kind heart who would be moved with pity at the sight of an enemy in distress. His patronage of Imad-ul-mulk, a hereditary enemy of his house, when he was left an orphan of 15 or 16 is an instance in point.

Safdar Jang's private life was marked by a high standard of morality, extremely rare in the class to which he belonged and in the age in which he lived. He married only one wife to whom he was ardently attached, and he had no mistress courtesan or concubine. "His natural modesty and sense of good conduct (literally gentle-manliness) did not make him

\* T. M. 172a-172b.

† *Imad* 31. Hadiq, 386 corroborates the fact that he was a generous man.

‡ *Maktubat*. pp. 172-180, 183.

desire the company of any woman except that of that illustrious and chaste lady (Sadrun-nisa)", writes Ghulam Ali of Lucknow.\* He was also a loving father, a kind relation and a faithful friend. On his accession to power, he invited many of his friends and relations from Persia and procured for them decent posts in the imperial service. He pushed his elder brother, Mirza Muhsin, to the rank of a *haft-hazari*, and obtained suitable *mansabs* for his brother-in-law Naseer-ud-din Haider, for the brothers-in-law of Shuja-ud-daula and for his other relations. To his Maratha allies he remained ever faithful, and although they were sometimes guilty of double dealing, he held firmly to their alliance till they openly made a bid for his *subas* of Awadh and Allahabad and threw in their lot with his implacable enemy, Ghazi-ud-din Khan Imad-ul-mulk. He repaid Surajmal's friendly devotion by confirming him in the vast territory from Mathura to Faridabad which the Jats, in defiance of imperial authority, had forcibly brought under their † partial control. He was not free from faults. He was fond of pomp and display and spent 46 lakhs on the marriage of his son. Sometimes he was vain, and haughtily disregarded the advice of wiser men. His chief defect, however, was his familiarity with perfidy and treacherous assassination which were his political instruments—things not altogether uncommon in the 18th-century India.

## 2.--SAFDAR JANG NO SOLDIER, BUT MASTER OF THE MOST MARTIAL CONTINGENTS OF TROOPS

Although his life was full of strenuous military activity, yet Safdar Jang could hardly be called a successful soldier. In fact, he lacked the courage and zeal of a soldier and the capacity and tact of a general, and hence throughout his official career he could not achieve unaided a single victory to his credit over an enemy possessing even half his financial resources and military strength. And yet strangely enough all his contemporaries--the Maratha chiefs, Rajput Rajas, Surajmal Jat and the Muslim

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\* Imad. 36,

† Imad 56; Elliot. VII. 362.

nobles and historians—regarded him as the most powerful Muslim chief and noble of India of their age. His strength lay in his territorial possessions, financial resources and *military establishment*. He maintained the most martial contingent of troops in the country and kept them satisfied by giving them liberal salaries and rewards and by his personal care for their welfare. Besides the contingents posted in his provinces under his Naibs, Safdar Jang kept a standing army of 20,000 ‘Mughal’ horse\* of whom six to seven thousands were Qizilbashes, the Iranian Turks, then regarded as the best soldiers in Asia. They had originally belonged to Nadir Shah’s army, but had chosen to stay on in India. The rest were Turanian Turks and Kashmiris, chiefly of the *Jadibal* district near Srinagar, who pretended to be ‘Mughals’, put on the Mughal dress and spoke the Persian tongue. † The Mughal cavalry formed the famous ‘Sin’ regiment, named after the first letter of the name of Saadat Khan. Besides, there was a good number of Hindustani troops of whom the most important element was that of the Naga Sanyasis, popularly known as ‘Gosains’. The troopers rode on sturdy, fleet horses, Persian or indigenous, and the Nawab supplied them with complete equipment, including uniforms and good arms. The Mughal horse-men, who were the wazir’s favourites, were paid at the rate of Rupees fifty per month, while a Hindustani trooper’s salary for the same period was thirtyfive Rupees only. ‡ Foot soldiers were paid at a lesser rate. There were no fixed rules for their increment or promotion, but whenever Safdar Jang reviewed his forces, he would give an increment of rupees ten to a trooper and rupees two to a foot-soldier, if he was pleased with his smartness or efficiency. The Nawab-Wazir was extravagantly liberal to his army and spent huge sums on it. He was always anxious to secure the services of an able commander, captain or soldier, by liberal gifts which he never deducted from their pay. He possessed a large park of artillery, the best in the country, next to the Emperor’s, and many war-

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\* T. M. 172a; lmad. 3r.

† lmad 3r

‡ Ibid; see also Siyar. II. 520.

elephants with huge *amaris* having gold and silver plating on them. His chief commanders were Ismail Beg Khan and Rajendra Giri Gosain. His war-camp comprised of everything that could be desired; he even carried boats in order to be able to throw a bridge swiftly over a river, should he have an occasion to cross it.†

### 3—SAFDAR JANG'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND POLICY

Safdar Jang was a pious *Shia* and went through the observances of his faith with scrupulous care and regularity. But he was not a bigot; his religious policy, unlike that of other medieval Muslim rulers was one of toleration. Indeed, he treated his Hindu and Muslim subjects alike, and his highest and most trusted officers were Hindus. Maharaja Nawal Rai,\* who died fighting for his master at Khudaganj, was his first assistant and head of the military and civil administration of the whole of his dominion—the highest post in Safdar Jang's gift. His Diwan in his *subas* and *vakil* at the imperial court were Raja Ram Narayan and Raja Lachhimi Narayan respectively. At Delhi the Nawab-Wazir's chief favourites were Raja Nagar Mal, *Diwan of Khalsa* and Jugul Kishore, *vakil* of Alivardi Khan. One of his two chief commanders was a Hindu. His chief allies were the Marathas and the Jats. It is no wonder then that Safdar Jang was accused of being pro-Hindu by the orthodox Muslim party (Turani) at the Delhi court.

### 4—SAFDAR JANG AS AN ADMINISTRATOR

Both as a statesman and as an administrator Safdar Jang did not rise above mediocrity. He lacked the prophetic foresight of a statesman and of a political genius and the reforming zeal of an administrator and was averse to taking risk which both can seldom avoid. He did nothing to arrest the fast downward march of the already much dwindled Empire or to improve the lot of the people in his charge. He carried out no reform in the much-abused revenue administration and took no measure

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† Siyar III. 850.

‡ For Nawal Rai's full account see Appendix A.

to purify the corrupt services and to protect the down-trodden peasantry from illegal exactions, internal disturbances and external raids. It is true that circumstances were not favourable for such a work and that none but a genius could have saved the Empire. But Safdar Jang had no idea or aptitude for any of these reforms. In his own provinces the pernicious system of grant of jagirs to soldiers and pious men of Islam continued as before.

As a wazir Safdar Jang was an utter failure. Partly by circumstances over which he had no control and partly by his own limitations and policy of self aggrandisement he had made numerous enemies around him. He followed the selfish policy of keeping his colleagues at the court, except those of his own party, in neglect and poverty, not allowing them to become rich and influential. He got their hereditary estates transferred to himself and kept them at an arm's length from the responsible work of administration. The result was that his chief opponents, the Turanis, whose ancestors had held ministerships for three successive generations in the past, and were respected for their positions and hereditary connections by the biggest Rajas and nobles of the land, grew more inimical than before, looked upon Safdar Jang as an usurping upstart, allied with the foolish Emperor and his intriguing mother, and instigated them to spoil all the schemes that Safdar Jang sponsored for the good of the state. The wazir was not gifted with that magnetic personality and that power and tact which disarm opposition and turn enemies into friends. Nor did he possess that magnanimity of soul and loftiness of character which raise a man above petty jealousies, make him forgive his enemies, and allow them to live and let live. He was equally devoid of the ability of building up coalitions against his adversaries and of the reckless daring which might have made him hit them hard at a suitable opportunity. Further, by reason of his limitations Safdar Jang did not even think of reforming the imperial army by making arrangements for the regular payment of the salary of the semi-starving troops, supplying them with good equipment, officering them by good and capable commanders and infusing a healthy

and vigorous discipline in them. He failed to make arrangements for the defence of the imperial capital against the roving bands of the Marathas even. His misappropriation of the revenues of the crown-lands as well as of the provinces reduced the Emperor and his household to want and poverty, and finally his open rebellion alienated the sympathy of the nobles and the public alike and earned for him the everlasting stigma of being a disloyal heretic (*namak haram wa sage rafizi*) at Delhi.

His greatest achievement was a lasting peace that he gave to Awadh and Allahabad, broken only by a temporary Bangash occupation of a part of the *subas* and a few local spasmodic outbreaks in the beginning of his rule. In an age when all parts of India were bowing low before the relentless might of Maharashtra Awadh and Allahabad were the only provinces which were still unvisited by their plundering hordes.\* Safdar Jang's formidable army and great financial resources were objects of terror to them as well as to the rebellious chiefs in his *subas*. His second gift was an uniform justice to all classes of his people. The author of the *Imad-us-Saadat* writes that "he (Safdar Jang) made his subjects happy by his justice." Mustafa, the French renegade and translator of the *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*, who resided for several years at Lucknow, gives the following story which he heard from Safdar Jang's contemporaries: Shuja-ud-Daula, enamoured of the physical charms of a Hindu lady of Banaras, who made no response to his amorous advances, escalated her house one night. But he was immediately captured by her relations who reported the matter to the Kotwal of the town. The Kotwal went to the Nawab-Wazir for orders and awakened him in the midnight. "Had you been equal to your office," angrily remarked Safdar Jang, "you would not have awakened me at mid-night to ask me what is to be done with rascals that are escalating a citizen's house." The Kotwal took the hint, and

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\* The only exception was the Panjab. But it had passed under the Abdali and only within two years of Safdar Jang's death the Marathas brought it under the sphere of their influence.

returning to his place, gave Shuja-ud-Daula a most severe beating, and dragged him to the prison, where he was confined for seven days without food. At the end of the period, he was conducted in the same condition to make his vow to his father. Safdar Jang looked slightly at him and ironically remarked, "So, Sir, it is you." And although Shuja-ud-Daula would come to pay his respects twice a week, the Nawab-Wazir did not speak a second word to him for six months, and was reconciled to him only after a year.\* This story may not be literally true; but it must have some foundation, for Mustafa heard it only 20 or 25 years after the Nawab-Wazir's death. It undoubtedly shows the popular estimate of Safdar Jang's administration of justice by the posterity.

The lasting peace and uniform justice, which kept the strong and the unruly in check and created a feeling of security of life and property, gave an impetus for the development of liberal arts and profitable industries, and made Awadh evolve a distinct type of culture, known throughout India as the *Lucknow Culture*† When all other provinces were sinking into a state of degeneration and anarchy, Awadh progressed to rival Delhi in wealth, magnificence and culture in the time of Safdar Jang's son and grandsons.

Though not a successful wazir, Safdar Jang filled the office with dignity and firmness, and proved more consistent and hardworking than his predecessor, the slothful Qamar-ud-Din Khan. And he was undoubtedly more loyal and successful than any of his numerous successors from Intizam-ud-Daula downward, who disgraced the exalted office of wazir from the later days of Ahmad Shah's reign to the time of Bahadur Shah II, the last prince of the house of Babur who sat on the throne of Delhi.

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\* Siyar, English Translation, Vol. IV. 65--67n.

† It became debased in the time of Asaf-ud-daulah and his successors.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

#### 1.—ADMINISTRATION

The Mughal province of Awadh extended from the river Gandak in the north-east to the Ganga in the south-west, and from the Tarai of Nepal in the north to the river Sai in the south. East of it across the Gandak lay the province of Bihar, south of it Allahabad and west of it the *subas* of Muradabad (created in the time of Farrukh-siyar) and Agra. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk added to it the *sarkar* of Kora Jahanabad (in Allahabad), roughly equivalent to the modern district of Fatehpur, the estate of Sachendi in Agra and the modern districts of Banaras, Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Azamgarh, Balia and the eastern portion of Mirzapur, all these then forming a part of the Allahabad Suba. In addition to Awadh Safdar Jang acquired in 1748 the province of Allahabad which lay on the southern frontier of Awadh and was bounded by the modern Bihar in the east, the present Madhya Pradesh in the south and the Mughal Suba of Agra in the west. But the southern half of Allahabad, which comprised the whole of Bundelkhand except the *sarkar* of Kalpi, could not be recovered from the hands of the descendants of Chhatrasal Bundela. Awadh was then divided into five *sarkars*, namely Faizabad, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Khairabad and Bahraich, while Allahabad was composed of seventeen\* *sarkars* (according to Murtaza Husain sixteen) of which the most important were Allahabad, Arail, Ghazipur, Chunar, Mirzapur, Banaras, Jaunpur, Karra Manikpur, Shahzadpur, Zamania, Kora-Jahanabad and Kalinjar.

Both Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang were absolute masters of their territory—independent in practice, though not in name, of their nominal sovereign at Delhi. They did not take their orders from the wazir or any other dignitary of the Mughal

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\* In the time of Akbar there were ten Sarkars.



Court, furnished no account of their revenues to any higher authority, and behaved like independent rulers, appointing all their subordinate officers and granting them titles and ranks as they liked. But according to the political fashion of India of the time, they pretended to be mere governors, and made the show of obeying such of the imperial orders as did not interfere with the free exercise of their power, but enhanced their prestige or material resources.

Each had, in his time, a Naib or Deputy-governor who was the virtual head of both civil and military administration of the province, the *Subedar* being more interested in the Delhi politics than in the details of his provincial government. The Diwan, the next officer, was in-charge of revenue and civil justice, but unlike the practice during the early Mughal rule he was practically subordinate to the Deputy-Governor. Even when the Awadh dominion grew very vast by the addition to it of Allahabad and the Bangash estate in the time of Safdar Jang, Raja Nawal Rai was retained the Deputy-Governor of the whole country. But on the Raja's death in 1751 a separate Naib was appointed to each province—Muhammad Quli Khan to Awadh and Ali Quli Khan to Allahabad. Besides the Naib and the Diwan there were in each suba a Bakhshi (pay-master), a Qazi (Muslim judge), a Sadar (head of religious endowments and charity) and a Buyutat (registrar of deceased persons' property). For purposes of revenue collection and police administration Safdar Jang divided Awadh and Allahabad into large districts, more extensive than the jurisdictions of Faujdars, and appointed Nazims at their heads.\* In each district a few of the parganas were grouped together and placed under an *amil* (revenue collector)† who was assisted by *Tahsildars*, posted in each *pargana* or *mahal*. *Faujdars* and *Krories* were abolished. The Nazims and amils possessed contingent of troops whose number varied according to the geographical situation of each district and the character of the people inhabiting it. We have no precise data

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\* Chronicles, p. 127n.

† Mansur, pp. 176–178.

to form a correct idea of the nature and procedure of the assessment of revenue. It appears that in certain parts of the provinces the government dealt directly with the cultivator (*amani*), while in others contract system (*ijara*) was the rule. Zamindars, big and small, were allowed to remain in possession of their lands. They realised the taxes from the ryot in their estates, exercised full judicial and executive authority over them, and paid government revenue in the form of tributes, without submitting any account of their collections to the Nawab. As a rule they did not pay the tributes without force being applied to them or at least military pressure exerted upon them. The government employed many *saxawals* who were sent to demand revenues from the landed chiefs. Numerous Jagirdars (rent-free land holders) especially Muslim Shaikhs and Sayyids and soldiers of fortune, existed in the provinces. But the revenue regulations appear to have been mild and the government demand equitable, and hence the people were prosperous and contented. Mr. C. A. Elliot's personal quest in the district of Unao brought him to the conclusion that Safdar Jang's administration "secured as much prosperity to the country as any native Government ever has done.."\*

Like all Muslim governments of the country the Nawabi administration of Awadh and Allahabad under Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang was a military occupation of the land. Besides a huge and well-equipped force always kept at Faizabad in readiness for service, a strong garrison was posted at the head-quarter of each district to keep the big turbulent chiefs in check. In the work of revenue collection amils and tahsildars also were helped by troops. The administration of each of the important cities like Faizabad, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Banaras, Allahabad and others was in the hands of a Kotwal, a military officer, who was assisted by a band of troops, *barkaras* and menial servants.† All the officers in the provinces except the Diwan and the Qazi were expected to be commanders and were

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\* Chronicles, p. 127.

† Imad, 50; Siyar, English Translation, Vol. IV. 65n.

enrolled as members of the army, and the government did nothing beyond the collection of revenue and the protection of the people from internal disturbances and external raids.

## 2.—THE POPULATION

Awadh and Allahabad were preponderately Hindu provinces in the eighteenth century with only a sprinkling of Muhammadan population in them. Even after well-nigh two hundred years that have elapsed since the death of Safdar Jang Muslims in these provinces are still in a small minority.\* The most notable element of population then were Rajputs, spread over the whole territory and divided into numerous clans and septs and branches of these septs. Prominent among them were the Baisas and Kanhpurias in the modern districts of Unao and Rae Bareli, the Bisens and the Janwars in Gonda, the Raikwars in Bara-Banki, the Sombansis in Pratabgarh, the Khichers in Kora Jahanabad and the Bundelas in Bundelkhand. Each of the big or small Rajput chief possessed a strongly built brick or mud fort (*Garhi*) in an almost inaccessible village, surrounded by a belt of thick forest, and exercised *de facto* sovereignty within his estate. He granted jagirs to the younger branches of his family and to pious Brahmins and village artisans, levied tribute from petty zamindars under him and summoned the levies of his clansmen to service in times of war. So closely was he connected with his land and people that practically he could not be deprived of his estate by the provincial authorities. † The next important class was that of Brahmins, chiefly of Kanya-Kubja sub-division, some of whom were priests, astronomers, astrologers and teachers, while others chose the career of a soldier. They formed the best fighting element in Awadh, next only to the Rajputs. The Pasis were soldiers as well as watchmen, while the Ahirs and Kurmis were the principal agriculturists. The Muslims were then an essentially urban people and had not

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\* This applied to the best days of the Muslims before the partition of the country. After the partition the Muslim population has fallen low.

† Chronicles, p. 129.

taken to any other profession except that of a soldier or of a civil officer. The most numerous among them were two classes —Afghans and Shaikhs. The Afghan families had their colonies at Jaunpur, Allahabad and Malihabad, while the Shaikhs had settled in large numbers in Lucknow, Kakori, Khairabad, Gopmau, Pihani and Bilgram. A large number of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang's friends, officers and troops, several thousands of whom were Iranian Turks, settled at Lucknow and Faizabad. In the former city some of the muballas (quarters) like Katra Abu Turab Khan, Katra Khudayar Khan, Katra Bizan Beg Khan, Katra Muhammad Ali Khan, Katra Husain Khan, Sarai Maali Khan and Ismail Ganj (all of them still in existence except the last) were named after some of the Nawab's officers and commanders. At a distance of four or five miles west of the ancient town of Ayodhya, Saadat Khan founded, on the bank of the Ghagra (also called Sarju), a new town and named it Faizabad, adorning it with stately buildings and pleasant gardens, and asking his troops and officers to build houses for themselves and settle there. Safdar Jang added to its edifices and increased its population. Faizabad thus became a Muslim colony of first importance in Awadh in the first half of the 18th century.

### 3.—INDUSTRIES AND TRADE

The province of Awadh has ever been rich in agricultural wealth. With its temperate climate, copious rainfall and fertility of soil, it yields abundant crops of wheat, rice, barley, gram, oats, oil seeds and other corn. More valuable crops like cotton, opium, sugar-cane, musk-melons, water-melons and betel-leaf are also produced in most parts, while fruits like mangoes, guavas, black and yellow berries, and vegetable of numerous variety are grown in every village, earning for the province the fitting name of the "Garden of India". Allahabad is no less fertile and rich than Awadh. In industries too the provinces were not backward during the period under review. As early as the first half of the 17th century Awadh's calico commanded a ready market in London and in 1640 the English East India Company had established a factory at Lucknow for the supply

of calico pieces woven at Daryabad ( near Bara Banki ), Khairabad and some other places. The English merchants styled them “*derriabauds*” ( cloth of Daryabad ), “*kerriabauds*” ( cloth of Khairabad ), and “*eehbaryes*” ( some cloth favoured by Akbar ). In western Awadh a cloth known as *mercoolis* was manufactured on a large scale and was purchased by the company.\* The cotton industry continued to flourish in the first half of the 18th century, and Khairabad and Daryabad remained centres of calico, chintz and *gaxi* † ( white coarse cloth like khaddar ) manufacture. Shahzadpur in Allahabad was famous for its chintz and coarse cotton cloth and some time before our period it supplied tents, canopies and screens to the Mughal Emperors. But the latter industry had declined during the 18th century. Mirzapur was a big commercial mart of the woollen and silk cloths and other commodities from Kashmir, Naini Tal, Kamaun, Bangal, Lhasa and other places. The town was full of rich merchants who sent out local productions and manufactured goods to various provinces and imported from outside such articles of trade as were not produced in the locality. Scents, perfumed essence and fragrant oil were special favourites with the upper classes, and hence these were prepared at many places. Ghazipur was the centre of the manufacture of rose scent and rose water. At Jaunpur too perfumed essence and fragrant oil, chiefly *bela* oil, were prepared. Besides, there were numerous local industries at different places. Lucknow, now famous for its embroidered cloth and pottery, was then renowned for its excellent bows and good sweet-meets ; but the former industry had begun to decline in the beginning of the second-half of the 18th century. The town of Gorakhpur abounded in rice, *ghi* (clarified butter), fowl for meat, glass vessels and other things of every day use. Living was so cheap there that it was proverbially believed that “whoever comes to Gorakhpur seldom goes out of it.” Mirzapur was a first rate vegetable market and did also a roaring trade in fruits. Bahraich was a famous mart for the products of the hilly region of Nepal. The people of the hills brought there for

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\* Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, 127-128.

† Hadiq, 154.

sale gold, glass ornaments, honey, wax, muskpod, pomegranates, grapes, chillies, turmeric, wet and dry ginger, tasteful sauces, hunting birds like falcon and hawks and numerous other things.\*

The upper class, forming only a fringe of the population, was wealthy and extravagant. Big landlords and high officials lived in comfort and enjoyed most luxuries of the time, spending huge sums on them. There was a small middle class comprising merchants, small zamindars, clerks and well-paid troops. Merchants and petty landlords were frugal and thrifty, but clerks and troops, except those who came from villages, led extravagant lives. The usual rate of monthly pay per trooper was Rs. 30 and probably Rs. 8 or Rs. 10 per foot soldier in the time of Saadat Khan. But Safdar Jang raised it to Rs. 35 for a Hindustani horseman, Rs. 50 for a Mughal trooper and Rs. 10 for a foot soldier. Troops in the service of Rajput chiefs and Muslim landlords and officials must have had lower salaries. Lack of contemporary material does not enable the student to form an accurate idea of the economic condition of the masses. There is, however, reason to believe that then as now they dwelt in low, insanitary mud-huts, roofed with thatches of straw, and contented themselves with coarse bread and minimum clothing. Writing of them in 1626 Francisco Pelsart, the chief of the Dutch Factory at Agra says:—"Their houses are built of mud, with thatched roof. Furniture there is little or none, some earthen-ware pots to hold water and for cooking, and two beds, for here man and wife do not sleep together. Their bed clothes are scanty, merely a sheet, or perhaps two, serving both as under and over-sheet; this suffices in the hot weather, but the bitter cold nights are miserable indeed, and they try to keep warm over a little cow-dung fire, which is lit out-side the door, because the houses have no fire-place or chimneys; the smoke from these fires all over the city is so great that the eyes run, and the throat seems to be choked."\* The above description and those left by Bernier who spent in this country the years from 1656 to 1658 and Tavernier who remained here from

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\* Hadiq, pp. 152-153 and 668-679.

† Quoted in Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 199.

1640 to 1660 are in all essential points applicable to the northern Indian peasant and labourer of the 20th century. Hence it may be accepted that the economic life of the mass of the people of Awadh and Allahabad of the first half of the 18th century did not materially differ from that of their ancestors of the 17th century. But corn was then extremely cheap and hence the tradition that the people did not suffer for want of food in the early days of the Nawabi rule.

#### 4.—RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Since the permanent settlement of the Indo-Aryans in them Awadh and Allahabad have been principal centres of Hindu culture and orthodoxy, During the 18th century, as throughout the Mughal period, streams of pilgrims from all parts of the country flowed to this land to pay homage to Prayag (Allahabad), the King of the Holy Places, and to Ayodhya (Faizabad) and Kashi (Banaras), the two of the seven holy cities of Hindu-India. Naimisar and Misrikh in the Sitapur district were also important places of pilgrimage and were visited by thousands of persons every year.\* Kashi was still the most important seat of Sanskrit learning and culture and was thronged by eager pupils and pious hermits from all over the land. But as these provinces naturally suffered most from the degeneration of Hinduism, caste and guru-worship became the religion of the people and their holy places became also the resorts of parasite class of beggars, ignorant priests and licentious hypocrites.† Rai Chhartarman, author of the *Chahar Gulshan*, completed in 1759 A.D., gives a graphic account of the numerous Hindu sects, their queer beliefs and showy practices and of the ignoble life of the Hindu beggars of his time.‡ The Musalmans were no better. In spite of their simple and definite creed, they worshipped relics, revered tombs, and adored saints and illiterate religious medicants. Thousands of Muhammadans flocked every year to the town of Bahraich, their most important place of pilgrimage in Awadh,

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\* *Chahar Gulshan*, 43; *Hadiq*, 153--154.

† *Hadiq*, 675.

‡ *Chahar Gulshan*; 80a-85b.

to make their offerings to the tomb of of Salar Masud\* and to invoke the deceased soldier's aid in the fulfilment of their worldly objects.

The first half of the 18th century was a period of great degeneration for Awadh and Allahabad and more so for the rest of India. No genius in any branch of human activity was born. Nor was any lasting contribution made to literature or art. The people were sunk in ignorance and superstition. High and low, Hindus and Muhammadans, all believed in omens, palmistry and astrology. Safdar Jang, who set the tone to the society, would wait for days for an auspicious hour to start on a journey or begin a campaign † Besides the common vices of drink, debauchery, plurality of wives and the keeping of concubines among the upper and middle classes, the society was further tainted by the evil of slavery. Male and female slaves were purchased like ordinary commodities, and they were very cheap at Gorakhpur.‡ Political morality was at its lowest. Mean intrigues and treacherous conspiracies were the very breath of the life of the nobles and officers, and violation of plighted word, perfidy and assassination were common occurrences with our rulers of the first half of the 18th century. In flagrant violation of his word, Saadat Khan could dispossess a Hindu Singh Chandel, take an active part in the conspiracy to assassinate a great patron like Husain Ali Khan and instigate a foreign invader to carry on the work of spoliation at Delhi, while his successor Safdar Jang would never shrink from getting his invited guest like a Prathipati or a Javed Khan murdered in his own camp. The Rajput chiefs would fight with the lord of Faizabad and submit and enter into an agreement to pay a tribute, when defeated, but would rebel again at a suitable opportunity and cause much disturbance in the province. At the time of a political crisis, a change of government at Faizabad or an invasion of the subas by a neighbouring ruler some of them would be quick in turning the

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\* Hadiq, 153.

† Siyar, III, 850.

‡ Hadiq, 152.



occasion to their advantage, and would go over to the side of the Nawab's enemy. Such a conduct could be justified on one ground only, namely, that the Nawabs were of foreign extraction and birth and it was legitimate for the children of the soil to aspire for freedom. A vast majority of the Hindu officers in the services of the Nawabs were, however, faithful to their salt.

The common people, however, were free from most of the above vices. They were frank, honest, trustworthy and conscientious. The village was still one self-sufficient social unit, and all classes of people inhabiting it lived like the members of one great family or brotherhood. All high or low stood together in the face of a common danger and each shared the other's joy or sorrow. Here there were no caste barriers, except for diet, marriage or ceremonial purity. High caste Brahmins and Rajputs addressed the Chamars or Pasis and their wives 'Kaka' or 'Dada', 'Kaki' or 'Dadi', not by their names, and their sons and daughters played together on equal terms. Women folk even of the house of the zamindar observed no *parda* except as a mark of respect before the older men of their village. The disputes of the people were decided by caste or village panchayats or by the zamindar who was the centre of the village-life. The village-brotherhood in Awadh began to break towards the end of the 19th century, when the zamindars were reduced to the status of mere rent-collectors and when the absence of a common danger from outside, and the introduction of British courts made the inter-dependence of the people a thing of the past. The breakdown was complete in the early years of the 20th century and today village life in Awadh has lost much of its charm and is the life of mutual jealousy, misunderstanding, dispute, litigation and poverty.\*

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\* The author is the resident of a village (Andhana, Dist. Sitapur) in Awadh and has carefully studied the village life in the province for years together.

## APPENDIX

### Maharaja Nawal Rai

A Kayastha of the Saxena sub-caste, Nawal Rai belonged, according to the local tradition, to a hereditary *Qanungo* family of village Chakwa Parasana of pargana Etawa. He was, as it is said, first brought to notice by Ratan Chand, diwan of Sayyid Abdullah Khan. On entering Nawab Safdar Jang's service he was given an ordinary post, probably of a clerk, but as he possessed uncommon business capacity, military talents, honesty and winning manners, he rose gradually from office to office till he was appointed Bakhshi (manager-cum-commander) of the Awadh army. He rendered valuable services to his master in recognition of which Safdar Jang elevated him to the post of Deputy Governor of his suba in October 1743 (Siyar III, 850 and 875), and obtained for him a grant of some villages in pargana Firozabad of Bahraich district from Emperor Muhammad Shah.\* So successful was his administration that when, towards the end of 1748, his master got Allahabad in addition to Awadh he placed that province too under Nawal Rai's control. In 1749 Safdar Jang secured for him another grant of Sarai Daulat and a few other villages in pargana Mohan in Lucknow district of the value of Rs. 2086 from Emperor Ahmad Shah†. In January 1750 the dominion of the Bangash Nawab of Farrukhabad, which comprised thirty three parganas, was added to his charge (Imad, 45). First he received the title of 'Raja', but afterwards he was ennobled as 'Maharaja Bahadur' (Maktubat, 183). He died fighting in the cause of his master on 13th August, 1750.

Highly educated and cultured, the Maharaja possessed some knowledge of Hindu Shastras also. He was so religious that he would not go out without saying his morning prayers. His

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\* The grant was given by a *parwana* of wazir Qamruddin Khan, dated 11th Muharram of 30th regnal year of Muhammad Shah.

† Ahmad Shah's *farman*, dated 17 Shaban 1162 H.

devotion to Hinduism found expression in the construction by him of two famous temples at Ayodhya—the Nageshwar Nath and Lakshmiji's temples. Both as Bakhshi and Deputy-governor he had fierce unmanageable Pathans and proud Barha Sayyids as well as Hindu soldiers under his command and kept them contented by his solicitude for their welfare and tact in managing with them. He was an able and just revenue officer, and in administering even-handed justice he had no regard for persons or rank. He made an example of one Chaudhari Salam-Ullah of Sandi in Hardoi district for tyrannising over the people (U.P. Historical Society Journal, 1934). As an administrator he was skilful and independent-minded; he would not allow Safdar Jang's son or relations to interfere with the administration and would not carry out any-body's orders except those of the Nawab-wazir, incurring thereby Shuja-ud-daula's implacable displeasure (Hadiq, 156). All the officers in Awadh and Allahabad were definitely subordinate to him. When in October, 1743 Sayyid Hidayat Ali Khan, father of the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, who was appointed Faujdar of the Khairabad sarkar, did not choose to be placed under the Maharaja's orders, Safdar Jang, anxious to maintain his Naib's prestige, discreetly took the Sayyid with him to Delhi. In fact the Nawab held Nawal Rai in high regard, and gave him his full confidence and support. On the news of the latter's death, he was plunged into great grief and felt his loss as that of a dear friend or relation.

Nawal Rai's chief fault appears to have been his addiction to wine, which was responsible for the Bangash lady, Bibi Sahiba's escape from his camp. But it seems that he usually drank during the night only.

Nawal Rai was fond of buildings and other works of public utility. He built for himself two houses—one at Ayodhya and another at Khush-halganj (now Dara Ganj) in Allahabad and excavated a tank at the latter place. He founded the town of Nawalganj, situated 13 miles south-west of Lucknow, and adorned it with stately buildings and pleasant gardens, protecting it

by a strong brick wall with four gates in the four directions and by a deep ditch round it. He connected it with Lucknow and Mohan (2 miles west of Nawalganj) by roads on both sides of which he planted shady trees. He made this town the principal residence of his family and populated it by rich merchants and artisans. He built another town, four miles east of Nawalganj and named it Khush-halganj after the name of his son, Khush-hal Rai, filling it with lofty buildings and beautiful gardens. Nawalganj has experienced many ups and downs of fortune. On the founder's death it was plundered by the neighbouring zamindars, but it soon regained its prosperity when order was restored after the Pathan disturbances. After his accession in 1754 Shuja-ud-daula, who bore a grudge against the Maharaja, demolished Nawalganj and out of its material built Wazirganj, between that town and Lucknow. But Nawab Asafud-daula, realising Nawal Rai's loyal services to his house, razed Wazirganj to the ground and re-built and re-populated Nawalganj. It was a prosperous town during 1780-1781 A. D. when Murtaza Husain was writing his *Hadiqat-ul-aqalim*. It stands even now as one of the many memorials of Maharaja Nawal Rai.

Nawal Rai's son Khush-hal Rai had no male issue. He had only one daughter who was married to Rai Ishwari Prasad. The latter's descendants reside in Nawal Rai's Allahabad residence, situated in Dara Ganj mohalla of that city.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. Persian

1. *The Waqa-i-Shab Alam Sani*—(Sarkar MS ) The work is a diary of events and news of Delhi and the Empire between 1739 and 1799 A.D., kept by a resident of the imperial city. The only copy of this diary known to exist belongs to Sir Jadunath Sarkar who procured it from a Kayastha family of Patna. Although in its present form it has many gaps, yet it may be regarded as the chief source of history of this period. Sir Jadunath gives it the appropriate name of the "Delhi Chronicle during the Anarchy" and describes it in these words :—"It is of priceless importance and constitutes a record of supreme value to the critical historian of this period. Here we have an absolutely contemporary chronicle of the events and rumours of Delhi, written down immediately afterwards by an inhabitant of the city, without any embellishment, garbling or artificial arrangement of a later date....." The Delhi Chronicle has enabled me to fix correct dates of many of the events, e.g., the Id-day plot, the first and second Jat expeditions and many incidents during the Civil War, and so on.

2. *Mansur-ul-Maktubat or Maktubat-i-Mansuria*—(Jalsa-i-Tahzib Library, Lucknow, MS.) It consists of letters of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang to Emperor Muhd. Shah, Nizam-ul-Mulk, Qamrud-din-Khan, Khan-i-Dauran and to other nobles and notables of the time, and *Parwanajat* (orders) to the Nawab's agents and officers in Awadh. These number several hundreds and were collected and arranged in book form in 1201 H. by Munshi Awadhi Lal, son of Santukh Rai, Secretary to Safdar Jang. Santukh Rai was also responsible for drafting many of the letters. They are the very raw materials of history and hence the most valuable source of information for our period. A few of the important sections of my book, e.g., Safdar Jang's expedition against Tiloi in 1739 and the defeat of the chief of Katesar are entirely based on them. These are altogether un-

known to scholars and it was only by a lucky chance that I discovered them in an unimportant library. Their destruction would have meant an irreparable loss to the historian of this period.

3. *Insha-i-Roshan Kalam*—(Sarkar MS.) This is a collection of letters written by Bbupat Rai, Munshi to Nawab Rad-andaz Khan, Faujdar of Baiswara in Awadh during the early years of the 18th century. The letters give a graphic account of the condition of Awadh before Saadat Khan, of lawlessness and dacoities in Baiswara and other parganas of the province. The work is extremely valuable and was used by Charles Alfred Elliot in his "Chronicles of Oonao," published in 1862 A.D.

4. *Gulshan-i-Babar*—(Sarkar MS.) This is also a collection of letters by Har Sewak Das, a writer in the service of Nawab Hakeem Khan who was a contemporary of Safdar Jang. They were collected and arranged in book form in 1199 H. by Ganga Bishan Bhatnagar. Among other things they describe the marauding activity of Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela, his escape from Sar-hind and his plunder of Deoband, Saharanpur, Bareilly and other places. They also give an account of Jeta Gujar's rebellious acts and the measures which Safdar Jang adopted to suppress both.

5. *Taz-Kirat-us-Salatin Chaghatai or Tarikh-i-Chaghatai* :-(V. L. Udaipur MS.) of Muhammad Hadi alias Kamwar Khan. The author held various offices under Farrukh-siyar, Rafi ud-darjat, Rafi-ud-daula and Muhammad Shah and was thus an eye witness of many of the things described in this history. The work is a history of the Mughal dynasty in two bulky volumes. The Second volume begins with Shah Jahan and ends with the 6th year of the reign of Muhammad Shah. Although towards the end it assumes the character of a brief diary of events, chiefly appointment and dismissal of officers, it is exact in dates and occurrences, and is extremely valuable for Saadat Khan's early career at the Mughal court. But for it we would not have been able to fix the correct dates of Saadat Khan's appointment to

Hindaun and Bayana, his joining the imperial army bound for the Deccan, his appointment to Agra, transfer to Awadh and similar other incidents of his early life.

6. *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*—(Per Text published by A. S. B., Calcutta) of Khafi Khan. The work consists of two big volumes, of which the second deals with our period. It is second in importance to Kamwar Khan's *Tarikh i-Chaghtai*. Khafi Khan was a contemporary of Saadat Khan. He gives a correct but summary account of Saadat Khan's early career at court upto the time of his appointment to Awadh.

7. *Tazkira-i-Anand Ram*—(Sarkar MS.) of Anand Ram Mukhlis. A highly learned man, the author was secretary to wazir Qamr-ud-din Khan and had unique opportunities of getting first-hand information about things and important personalities of the time. He was an eye witness of most of the events described by him. Anand Ram writes in a simple, easy and yet graceful style. The *Tazkira* is divided into three parts—Nadir Shah's invasion, expedition to Bangarh and the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali, each written immediately after the occurrence of the events described, and is easily the best authority on the subject. It is quite accurate in dates and is rich in graphic details.

8. *Mirat-ul-waridat*, also known as *Tarikh-i-Chaghtai* or *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shabi*—(V.L.U. MS.) of Muhammad Shafi Tehrani whose pen-name was Warid. The author was born on 26th Zil Hijjah 1087 H. near Sambhal Muradabad. From his boyhood he had interest in literature and from the age of nine began composing verses. On his father's death in 1117 H. he took service under Prince Azim-us-shan. A few years after he quitted service and turned a darvesh. He began this work in 1142 H. and completed it in 1147 H. He says that from the time of Babadur Shah to that of Muhammad Shah he saw every thing with his own eyes. The author's treatment is original, but he has ignored the chronological order and has introduced anecdotes in the middle. He has given some very important details

about Bhagwant's rebellion which are not found in any other work. He mentions Saadat Khan's name only twice—once in the preface and the second time in connection with Husain Ali Khan's murder.

9. *Shahnama-i-Munawwar Kalam*—(A.S.B. MS.) of Shiva Das Lucknawi. It is a history of the reigns of Farrukh-siyar, Rafi-ud-darjat and Rafi-ud-daula and ends with the fourth regnal year of Muhammad Shah. It is a reliable and accurate work and is chiefly useful for a detailed account of Nil Kanth's defeat and death and Saadat Khan's fruitless struggle against the Jats. The date of the composition is not given, but as the author belonged to Lucknow I presume that he must have completed the work before September 1722, the date of Saadat Khan's appointment to Awadh, or else he must have given some account of the Khan.

10. *Jauhar-i-Samsam*—(A.S.B. MS.) of Muhammad Muhsin Bijnori. The author was a protege of Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daula. He composed this work in 1153 H. and named it after his deceased patron. It is primarily a history of Nadir Shah's invasion, but it also gives a brief account of the Mughal Empire from Bahadur Shah to Muhammad Shah. It gives a summary account, though partly incorrect, of Saadat Khan's life to his death. It is written in a difficult and flowery language and is highly eulogistic to Khan Dauran, while it vehemently criticises the conduct of the Nizam, Qamr-ud-din Khan and Saadat Khan during the Persian invasion.

*Hikayat-Fatab Nadir Shah*—(A.S.B. MS.) This anonymous work is a criticism of the conduct of Mubammad Shah and his nobles during the time of Nadir Shah's invasion, the chief object of attack being Khan Dauran and Saadat Khan. Though inspired by a spirit of vindictive fault-finding and though full of errors, the book amply repays perusal. The date of its composition is not given, but it seems to have been written soon after the Persian invasion. It is highly probable that it may be a refutation of the *Jauhar-i-Samsam*, for it praises the Nizam who is the chief object of attack in the latter work.



12. *Jaban Kusba-i-Nadiri*—(V.L.U. MS. and Per. Text litho. at Bombay) of Mirza Muhammad Mahdi Khan, Mir Munshi to Nadir Shah. The MS. in the V. L. Udaipur was transcribed on 15th Rabi. I. 1240 H., while the text was lithographed on 8th jamada I. 1245 H. The text has some misprints and has omitted a word here and there. The work is a biography of Nadir Shah. Though written in a difficult style, it is the most important source of our information on Nadir's invasion of India.

13. *Tarikh Ahmad Shahi*—(British Museum Persian MS. Or 2005) rotographed for Sir Jadunath Sarkar who kindly lent his copy to me. It is an anonymous history of the reign of Emperor Ahmad Shah, written by a courtier of his, who was present at Delhi almost throughout the reign. It is the best and most detailed contemporary work on the period, chiefly on the war between Safdar Jang and his master. Barring some minor errors in some of the dates of the early years of Ahmad's life, no other work can be compared to it in point of accuracy of facts, and the wealth of details of the information supplied by it. The leaves of the British Museum MS. are wrongly arranged.

14. *Hadiqat-ul-Alam*—(Per. text lithographed at Haidrabad, Deccan) of Mir Alam. It was composed in 1799 A.D., and is very valuable for an account of the Nizams of Haidrabad, their relations with Delhi and of the activities of Firoz Jang and Imad-ul-mulk.

15. *Ibratnama*—(Sarkar MS.) of Muhammad Qasim Lahori. It is an important and accurate work and commences from the death of Aurangzeb and comes down to 1157 H. (1743 A.D.) The author was a contemporary of both Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang and was an eye-witness of many of the occurrences described by him. His account of Saadat Khan's active part in the conspiracy against Husain Ali Khan's life, his fight with Ghairat Khan, his entertainment of Persian envoys, struggle with the Marathas, and diplomatic conversation with Nadir Shah are particularly important.

16. *Chabar Gulzar-i-Shujai*—(Sarkar MS.) of Haricharan Das. This rare work was completed on 1st Ramzan 1198 H.

(1784 A. D.) The author belonged to a Qanungo family of pargana Meerut and was in the employment of Nawab Qasim Ali Khan of Delhi, a relation of Ishaq Khan Najmud-daula. In the 1st year of Alamgir 2nd's reign he migrated to Awadh with his master's family and remained in the service of Khanam Sahiba, daughter of N. Qasim Khan, who lived at Faizabad. The author was granted a *madad-i-mansab* by Shuja-ud-daula. He began his history when he was 80 years of age and named it after his deceased patron. As the work was compiled at the Lucknow court, Hari Charan adopted a partisan attitude on some topics connected with the life of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang. Sometimes he has confused dates *e. g.*, he gives 1141 H, as the date of Saadat Khan's appointment to Awadh, while the correct one is 1134 H. Most of his dates connected with our period are wrong.

17. *Ibratnama*—( A.S.B.MS. ) of Khair-ud-din Muhd. Allahabadi, who is also the author of *Balwant-nama* and *Tarikh-i-Jaunpur*. The *Ibratnama* (or the book of warning) was composed during the first decade of the 19th century. It begins from Shah Alam I and gives a mere summary accounts of the reigns of Muhammad Shah and Ahmad Shah and hence is of little value for our period. But as the author was an important officer in the service of Jahandar Shah, son of Shah Alam II, the work is useful for the reign of the latter monarch, and the activities of Shuja-ud-daula.

18. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani* alias *Tazkira-i-Shakir Khan*—(Sarkar MS.). The author, Shakir Khan, belonged to a distinguished Shaikh family of Panipat, which migrated to Patna during the anarchy of Shah Alam II's reign. His father, Lutf-ullah Khan held a mansab of 7,000 and was governor of Delhi at the time of Nadir's invasion. Shakir Khan at that time was a Bakhshi in the *Risala-i-Sultani*. He rose to be a diwan in the time of Alamgir II. He says that from the accession of Muhammad Shah to that of Shah Alam II he observed things with his own eyes and recorded them in his book. Although not a regular history of any monarch or time, it is a very valuable work and throws a flood of light on our period. Its main defect is that the author

has ignored chronological order of events, *e. g.*, he makes the Id-day plot to have taken place after the murder of Javed Khan.

19. *Bayan-i-waqia*, also known as *Tarikh-i-Nadir Shahi*—(Imp. L. C. MS) of Abdul Karim Kashmiri. The author was a learned man of wide experience and accurate observation, and had travelled abroad in Arabia, Persia and Afghanistan. The first part of his work deals with the biography of Nadir Shah and his invasion of India, while the second gives the history of the Indian Timurides down to 1191 H. (1793 A. D.). It is a very valuable and accurate work and is particularly useful for the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali and the reign of Ahmad Shah Timuri. His details about Awadh, Ruhelkhand and the Panjab are valuable and correct. The last few pages of the Imp. L. MS. are missing, for these I have consulted, and given reference to Sir Jadunath's MS.

20.—*Tabsirat ul-Nazirin* (A. S. B. MS.) of Sayyid Muhammad. The author, born in 1101 H., belonged to a distinguished Shaikh family of Bilgram, the home of Islamic learning in Awadh during medieval times. The *Tabsir*, completed in 1182 H. (1768 A. D.), gives biographical accounts of the Muslim gentlemen of Bilgram from 1101 H. to 1182 H. with the precise date for each important event connected with their lives. It incidently refers to matters connected with Delhi and Awadh and is very accurate and useful. It is our sole authority for the Rajput rebellion headed by Nawal Singh of Tiloi in 1737 A.D. It also gives useful details about the defeat and death of Qaim Khan, defeat and death of Nawal Rai and Safdar Jang's war with the Emperor.

21. *Hadiqat-ul-aqalim*—(Per. Text, litho. N.K. Press, Lucknow) by Murtaza Husain of Bilgram. He was a Munshi (secretary) to Captain Jonathan Scott, (Persian Secretary to Warren Hastings) and composed the work at his request between 1780—1781 A.D. Born in 1133 H., the author had for sometime been in the service of Sarbuland Khan, Saadat Khan, Nawal Rai, Safdar Jang, Ahmad Khan Bangash, etc., and finally entered that of Jonathan Scott on Jamada. I. 1190 H. Although the work is primarily a topographical account of the world as the

author understood it to be, it gives an extremely valuable account of the careers of Saadat Khan, Safdar Jang, Nawal Rai and Ahmad Khan Bangash all of whom Murtaza Husain knew well. The author has noticed small but important incidents and has recorded useful anecdotes about the personages which we miss in other works.

22. *Gulistan-i-Rahmat* of Nawab Mustajab Khan, son of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, tr. by Sir Charles Elliot. The work is a biography of Hafiz Rahmat Khan and is the most important source of our information on the affairs of Rubelkhand from Daud to the end of the time of Hafiz Rahmat Khan. Although, like all other Pathan works, it is partial to the author's race, it is useful for the history of Bangash Nawabs, Ahmad Shah Abdali and Awadh Nawabs. Some errors have crept into this work. The following will serve as a typical example: Mustjab Khan says that Bibi Sahiba was rescued by Sahib Rai at *Lucknow*. When this news reached Delhi, Safdar Jang ordered Raja Nawal Rai to go to Farrukhabad and re-arrest her. So he set out for that town. When Ahmad Khan heard this, he decided to way-lay him. Ahmad Khan and Rustam Khan attacked Nawal Rai at three *kos* from Mau, drove his men away and cut him to pieces. For correct details see the text.

23. *Siyar-ul-mutakbirin* —(Per. Text, litho. N.K. Press, Lucknow) of Sayyid Ghulam Husain Khan Taba-Tabai. It is a comprehensive history of India from the earliest times to 1195 H. (1780 A D), the year of its completion. The 2nd volume begins from the death of Aurangzeb and the narration is carried on in the III Vol. down to Warren Hastings. Born in 1140 H. the author was a contemporary of Safdar Jang. He and his father, Hidayat Ali Khan, accompanied the Nawab to Delhi. Hidayat Ali Khan entered Safdar Jang's service and was present with him in the 1st Pathan War. The historian's uncle, Abdul Ali Khan, fought in Safdar Jang's army in the 2nd Pathan War, while Hidayat Ali took an active part in the Civil War against his ex-master. The author himself was intimately acquainted with Safdar Jang and other nobles and had thus unique opportunities

to obtain first-hand information about men and things of the time. Hence the *Siyar* is a primary authority on Ahmad Shah's reign. The English translation by Mustafa is not everywhere quite accurate. For example, he wrongly renders the phrase *فشہ مردی و سروت داشت* as he was "zealous assertor of his religion." The translator very often omits days and dates given in the Persian Text.

24. *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari*—(V.L.U. MS.) of Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, son of Hidayat Ullah Khan, son of Lutf Ullah Khan. The author left Panipat, his ancestral home, in search of employment and became *darogha* of the Faujdari Adalat of Tirhut and Hajipur through the patronage of Muhammad Raza Khan Muzaffar Jang, the Naib-Nazim of Bangal. The *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* was composed about 1800 A.D. and named after the patron of the author. It is a general history of the Mughal Empire and comes down to 1212 H. (1779 A. D.) Upto the end of Muhammad Shah's reign the author appears to have borrowed his material from the *Siyar*. His chapters on Bangal and Bihar are a mere summary of Ghulam Husain's book. But it is important and original on Ahmad Shah's reign.

25. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*—(V. L. U. MS.) of Ali Muhammad Khan. The author was a diwan of the province of Gujarat and completed the work in 1175 H. (1761 A.D.) It is a general history of Gujarat from the beginning of the Muslim rule to 1761 A.D., and is divided into three volumes. Incidentally it gives an account of Delhi affairs also. In it we come across some important facts which are not found in other works, e.g., the duration of Sarbuland Khan's first governorship of Gujarat and the exact date of Safdar Jang's landing at Surat.

26. *Masir-ul-Umra Vol. I-III*—(Per. Text, published by A.S.B.) of Shah Nawaz Khan Samsam-ud-Daula. The author was an important officer of the Nizam of Haidrabad. His father Samsam-ud-Daula was appointed Vakil-i-Mutlaq in 1167 H. and murdered in 1171 H. The author began this work on the basis of the contemporary Persian MSS. in 1182 H. (1768 A. D.) and

completed it in 1780 A.D. It is a biographical dictionary of the Mughal peerage and is useful.

27. *Masir-i-Asafi*—(A.S.B. MS.) of Lachhimi Narayan. The author was a poet and historian and was in the service of the Nizam. His pen name was 'Shafiq.' He composed this work in 1793 A.D. It is a general history of the ruling house of Haidrabad from the first Nizam to 1793. It is a valuable work and gives much reliable information about the Nizam's relations with Awadh.

28. *Tubfa-i-Taza* alias *Balwant-nama* (A.S.B. MS.) of Khair-ud-din Muhammad. Khair-ud-din is also the author of a few other historical works. The present work is a detailed and accurate history of the ruling house of Banaras from Mansa Ram to 1195 H. (1780 A.D.) It gives an extremely valuable account of the relations between Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang on the one hand and Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh of Banaras on the other. The author originally planned to write five *babs* (chapters), that is, to the end of the time of Udit Narayan, the fifth ruler of the dynasty. But either he could not carry out his plans or the latter pages of the MS. are missing. The British Museum and the India office copies also have three chapters as the A.S.B. copy.

29. *Maadan-us-Saadat*—(A.S.B. MS.) of Sayyid Sultan Ali Khan Safawi. The author composed the work between 1798 and 1802 A.D. at the Lucknow court and dedicated it to his patron, Saadat Ali Khan, the fifth ruler of Awadh. It is a general history of the Mughal dynasty in four bulky vols. The fourth volume commences with the reign of Bahadur Shah I and ends with 1217 H. (1802 A.D.), the seventh year of Saadat Ali Khan's rule. The Maadan is a mere para-phrase of the Siyar and in many places the author has copied verbatim from the latter work, its only special feature being a detailed account of Saadat Ali's rule at the end. Like a court-writer Sultan Ali has adopted a partisan view on many topics, such as, Saadat Khan's death, Safdar Jang's expedition to Patna, his appointment to wizarat and so on.

30. *Imad-us-Saadat*—(Per-text, Litho., N.K. Press, Lucknow) of Mir Ghulam Ali of Lucknow. The work is a regular history of the Nawabs of Awadh from Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk to Saadat Ali Khan, the fifth ruler of the dynasty. The author, who belonged to Delhi, had migrated to Lucknow towards the end of 1202 H. He composed the present work at the request of Colonel Baillie, Resident at Lucknow, in 1808 A.D. and named it after his patron, Saadat Ali Khan. Although Ghulam Ali was a court-writer and tried to shield the Awadh Nawabs from as much blame as he could, his book is a very valuable source for our period. Besides much new information on many topics, it gives the ancestry and early careers of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang—things not found in any other history of that time.

31. *Tarikh-i-Kharoj Nadir Shah ba-Hindustan* alias *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shabi*, Vol. II.—(Sarkar MS.) of Muhammad Bakhsh Ashob. This is the most elaborate work on Nadir Shah's invasion and was composed in 1785 A. D. It also gives a brief account of Muhammad Shah's campaign against Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela and of the first Abdali invasion. Ashob's style is verbose and pedantic, and it seems that his book is based on Anand Ram's Tazkira, although he assures us that he was present at Karnal, Bangarh and Sarhind.

32. *Umra-i-Haidrabad wa Awadh*—(O. P. L.-Patna-MS.) of Ghulam Ali Azad. The above work gives a connected account of the careers of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang and is made up of extracts from the author's voluminous work, the *Khazana-i-Amira*. Ghulam Ali Azad was a poet and scholar and seems to have used the same sources as his contemporary Ghulam Husain Khan Taba-Tabai. His work is accurate and useful.

33. *Tarikh-i-Banaras*—(O.P.L.-Patna-MS.) of Ghulam Husain Khan, son of Himmat Khan. Like Khair-ud-din, the author traces the history of Mansa Ram's family from Ghitu Misra of village Damria and brings it down to near the end of the 12th century A.H. It is written in a florid and laudatory style and is highly eulogistic to Mansa Ram and Balwant Singh.

34. *Hadi-qat-us Safa*—(A.S.B. MS.) of Yusuf Ali. It is a general history of Islamic lands down to 1173 H. (1759 A.D.). The second and third Vols. deal with the Indian Timurides. It is useful for the period, but the author does not give any thing more than what we find in other works.

35. *Tarikh-i-Aali*—(O. P. L. Patna MS.) of Shaikh Muhammad Saleh, entitled Qudrat. The author was in the service of an English officer, named James Brown. He composed the work at Brown's request in the time of Shah Alam II. It begins from Babadur Shah I and comes down to Shah Alam II. It gives useful details about the Id-day Plot and the Civil War.

36. *Chabar-i-Gulshan*—(V. L. U. MS) of Rai Chhatraman Raizada. It was composed in 1173 H. (1759 A.D.). The work is extremely useful for topographical details of the Mughal provinces and the history of religious sects in the first half of the 18th century.

37. *Husain Shahi*, also known as *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shah Durrani*—(A.S.B. MS) of Imam-ud-din Husaini. In 1796 A. D. the author, an Indian Muhammadan, had the opportunity of making a journey to Afghanistan, where he learnt the history of the Durrani family. He returned to Lucknow and composed the work in 1798, dedicating it to his spiritual preceptor Abu Muhsin Husaini. As the title indicates, it is a biography of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The early career is fair and accurate, but the later portions are defective and full of half truths and mis-statements. The whole work is a panegyric, and yet it does not give as many details as a general history like the Siyar.

38. *Majmal-ul tarikh bad az Nadiria*—(Per. text in Sir J. Sarkar's Library) by Muhammad Amin Abdul Hasan Gulistane. The author was a Persian who had migrated to Murshidabad ten years after the death of Nadir Shah. The work is a biography of Ahmad Shah Abdali and deals with his invasions of India in detail. As Gulistane was a Shia and a warm admirer of Safdar Jang, he ascribes the Indian victory over the Abdali near Sarhind solely to that Nawab's Persian troops, and makes the false state-



ment that the Turanis and Hindustanis did nothing. It is merely a secondary source for our period.

39. *Tarikh-i-Imad-ul-mulk*—(O. P. L. Patna MS.) of Abdul Qadir alias Ghulam Qadir Khan Jaisi. The author's father was the chief Qazi at Banaras. The work was composed in 1250 H. at the request of Thersi, an English officer in Banaras. It is a biography of Imad-ul-mulk, and though not a contemporary work, it repays perusal.

40. *Tafzih-ul-Ghafilan*—(Tr. by W. Hoey and published in 1885) of Abu Talib Londoni. The work was composed in 1211 H. (1797 A. D.) at the request of Captain Richardson of Calcutta. The author was a revenue officer in Asaf-ud-daula's service. It is a history of the time of that Nawab-Wazir, but it also gives some important facts about Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang.

41. *Gul-i-Rahmat*—(O. P. L. Patna MS.) of Saadat Yar Khan, a grandson of Hafiz Rahmat Khan. The work, composed in 1249 H. is divided into four chapters and is based on *Gulistan-i-Rahmat*. It covers the same ground as the former work and gives nothing new. At some places the author suppresses inconvenient truth, e. g., he does not give the original caste and parentage of Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela. See page 6b.

42. *Tarikh-i-Farrukhabad*—(A. S. B. MS.) of Muhammad-Wali-Ullah. The work was composed at the request of Col. Baillie of Lucknow. It is primarily a history of the Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad, but it also gives an account of the history of Delhi and Awadh. On Awadh affairs it is based entirely on *Imad-us-Saadat*, and the author has successfully imitated the latter's method of treatment.

43. *Tarikh i-Sawanihat-i-Salatin-i-Awadh*—(A. S. B. MS.) of Kamal-ud-din Haider of Lucknow. The work was composed at the request of Sir Henry Elliot in 1263 H. (1847 A. D.). Its importance lies in the geneological details about Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang's ancestors, their families and their descendants and in the preservation of traditions. For political history it is entirely based on *Imad*.

44. *Tarikh-i-Muhtasim*—(O. P. L. Patna MS.) of Mubammad Muhtashim, a grandson of Hafiz Rahmat Khan. The author was a pensioner of the Awadh court and composed this work in 1253 H. (1837 A. D.) with the object of writing an account of the reign of king Nasir-ud-din Haider of Awadh. As for the careers of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang, it is nothing but a paraphrase of Imad. At some places the author has copied it verbatim.

45. *Mirat-i Aftab-Numa*—(V. L. U. MS.) of Abdur-Rahman entitled Shah Nawaz Khan. The work was completed in the 45th year of Shah Alam II's reign and is divided into two volumes. The second deals with the history of the Mughal Empire. Upto Ahmad Shah's reign it is very sketchy. It is useful only for the reign of Shah Alam II.

46. *Abwal-i-Salatin-i-Mutakbirin*—(V. L. U. MS.). It is an anonymous work and begins abruptly with Aurangzeb on death-bed and comes down to the 30th year of Shah Alam II's reign. It has been copied through-out from other works. From Nadir Shah's invasion to the 30th year of Shah Alam II it has been copied verbatim without the change of a comma from the *Mirat-i-Aftab Numa* of Shah Nawaz Khan. Another copy of the same work written in the same hand, on exactly similar paper and in the same ink is preserved in the O. P. L. Patna.

47. *Tarikh-i-Farah Bakhsb*—(Tr. by W. Hoey under the title of *Memoris of Delhi and Faizabad*) of Muhammad Faiz Bakhsh. The work is not useful about Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang's times.

48. *Jam-i-Jahan-numa*—(M. B. L. MS.) of Muzaffar Husain. Though almost contemporary, it is not useful for our subject.

49. *Sultan-ul-Hikayat*—(M.B.L. MS.) of Lalji, son of Shital Prasad. It was composed in Ramzan, 1269 H. (June, 1853 A.D.). It gives a mere summary of the history of Awadh from Saadat Khan to Wajid Ali Shah and is only useful for the contemporary chronograms that it has given. Recently I came across another and a fuller edition of this work in the Rampur Library. It too does not throw a fresh light on the subject:

50. *Bostan-i-Awadh*—(Per. text printed at Lucknow) of Raja Shiva Prasad of Sandila. It is a history of Awadh from Saadat Khan to Wajid Ali Shah and is based on Imad.

51. *Yadgar-e-Bahaduri*—(Persian MS., Central Records office, Allahabad) of Bahadur Singh Bhatnagar, composed in 1833-34 A. D. (1249 A. H.). The author had in 1817 A. D. migrated to Lucknow from his original home in Delhi, and there undertaken to compile a voluminous work which he named after himself. The work is very rare and gives the reminiscences of the author. It is not a chronicle, but a memoir-cum-gazetteer. The historical narrative is based on Imad and Maadan; but the topographical account of the country, its products, industries and commerce and the description of Hindu religious sects and the lives of Persian and Hindi poets, etc are useful.

#### B. Marathi

1. *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, vols. 1-45* (published by the Government of Bombay and printed at the Government Central Press, Bombay). Hitherto scholars had no access to the above papers. The Government of Bombay has done a great service to the cause of scholarship by publishing them and making them available at a cheap price to the students of Indian history. The papers are valuable supplements to the contemporary Persian histories and much of our information about Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang's policy towards the Marathas and their doings at Delhi and Safdar Jang's wars with his enemies is derived from them. Without them our knowledge of this obscure period would not have been complete.

2. *Itihāsik Patren Yadi Wāgārā Lekh*, (Second Edition) edited by G. S. Sardesai, assisted by Y. M. Kale and V. S. Vakaskar, with a foreword by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Chitrasala Press, Poona. These letters and despatches cover the period from 1659 to 1850 A.D. and are very valuable for Safdar Jang's Second Pathan War and his relation with the Marathas.

3. *Marathānchya Itihāsa-chin Sadhanen*—Vols. 1-21, edited by Rajwade and others. The letters and documents collected in these volumes are extremely valuable except for hearsay news.

4. *Purandare Daftar*, 3 Vols. Very useful. Letter No. 154 of Volume I records an altercation between Safdar Jang and the Maratha Wakil Mahadeva Bhatt, and an open conflict which led to the death of the latter.

5. *Debli-Yethil Mara-Rajkaranen*, edited by D.B. Parasnis, 2 Vols.

6. *Hingne Daftar*, 2 Vols. These and the two volumes of No. 5 contain despatches of the Maratha wakils at Delhi and are valuable.

7. *Holkar Shahi Itibasachya Sadhanen*, 2 Vols, Edited by B.B. Thakur. Useful.

8. *Sindhe Shahi Itibasachya Sudhanen*, 2 Vols. Edited by A.B. Phalke. Useful.

9. *Marathi Riyasat* by G.S. Sardesai, Vol. II (1707-1740); Vol. III (1740-1760) and Vol. IV. (*Panipat Prakaran*). The above works give a connected history of the Marathas from the death of Aurangzeb to the 3rd battle of Panipat and are useful. But as the author has not used Persian sources in the original certain mistakes have crept into his work. These I have pointed out, wherever possible, in the foot notes of this book.

### C. Hindi

1. *A Poem on Nadir Shah and Muhammad Shah*—in the J.A.S.B., 1897. This Poem was composed by Tilok Das. It gives some interesting information about the subject it deals with.

2. *Sujan Charitra*—of Sudan, (Second edition, 1980 Vikrami) published by Kashi Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Banaras. Sudan was a contemporary of Safdar Jang. He was a resident of Mathura and his present work is a long poem composed in praise of his patron, Surajmal of Bharatpur, well-known among his clansmen as Sujan Singh. Although a great admirer of his hero, Sudan has given the virtues of his patron's enemies side by side with the virtues of Surajmal. The work describes the battles that Surajmal fought either on his own account or on

behalf of his friends. It is written in a difficult and highly figurative style and the whole work is a panegyric ; yet most of the occurrences described by the author are accurate (as I found them by subjecting them to a comparison with the contemporary Persian and Marathi works). He has given month and year of each battle, which too are correct. It seems that Sudan was an eye witness of most of these battles and described each one of them soon after its conclusion.

3. *Rasa Bhagwant Singh*, by Sadanand poet, edited by Brij Ratan Das in the Kashi Nagri Pracharini Patrika, Vol. V (1981 V.S.). Though a panegyric in verse on Bhagwant's War with Saadat Khan and describes the Khichi Chief's exploits in poetic language, it is accurate in the narration of events and dates. Sadanand seems to have been an eye-witness of the battle and his description tallies with that given in Persian chronicles. He incidently, confirms the guess of 'William Hoey's anonymous contemporary' that Saadat Khan was sixty years of age at this time. It also gives some of the earlier achievements of Saadat Khan, which are not found in any other work.

4. *Vanshbhaskar*—(printed by Ram Shyam Press, Jodhpur) by Surajmal Charan of Bundi. It is a modern work and was composed about 1840 A.D. The author (born in 1872 and died in 1920 S. Vikrami) gives the history of the Rajput ruling houses of Rajputana, chiefly Bundi, and that of the Mughal Emperors also. The work is based primarily on tradition or semi-historical poems of court-bards of Rajputana. It is full of errors. The following will serve as a typical example:—The author says the wazir Qamr-ud-din Khan was treacherously shot dead near Sathind by Safdar Jang. This is not a historical fact.

#### D. Urdu

1. *Sawanibat-i-Salatin Awadh*—(N. K. Press Lucknow, 1879 A. D.) of Kamal-ud-din Haider. It is an Urdu edition of the author's work of the same name in Persian, and is useful for Wajid Ali Shah's reign.

2. *Guldasta-i-Awadh*—(Muir Press, Delhi) by Bulaqi Das. A worthless little booklet.

3. *Tarikh-i-Awadh*—( II Edition, N. K. Press, Lucknow ) by Najmul Ghani of Rampur. The work consists of five volumes and gives a connected account of the house of Saadat Khan upto the end of Wajid Ali Shah. The author does not possess any virtue or training of a historian except industry. He does not even know which is a first rate authority and which is a secondary or third-rate source for his period.

4. *Akhbar-ul-Sanadid in two Vols.*—(N. K. Press, Lucknow, 1918) by the same author. It is a history of the Nawabs of Rampur from Daud to the present day. It is written in the spirit of a court flatterer and is full of errors.

5. *Tarikh-i-Haiderabad Deccan*—( N. K. Press, Lucknow ) by the same author. A history of the Nizams of Haiderabad. Of little value except for the translation of a few Persian letters preserved at Rampur.

6. *Tarikh-i-Banaras*—( Sulemani Press, Banaras 1916 ) by Sayyid Mazhar Husain. Like Najmul Ghani the author is not a serious student of history. His work is of little value.

### E. English

1. *The History of India as told by its own Historians.*—Vol. VIII, Sir H. M. Elliot and Prof. Dowson. There are some errors of translation. Somewhere proper names have been mis-read, e. g., Ram Narayan read as Ram Husain and Raja Jugul Kishore as Raja Jagat Kishore ), (see Vol. VIII. p. 118).

2. *The Chronicles of Oonao* by Charles Alfred Elliot, -- published at Allahabad in 1862 A. D. Based on Persian sources and is useful.

3. *A. Comprehensive History of India Vol. I.* ( 1867 ), by H. Beveridge. Makes a bare mention of Saadat Khan ; half a page on Safdar Jang.

4. *Elphinstone, History of India,* --6th. ed. ( 1878 ) Requires revision.

5. *A Report on the family History of the Chief Clans of the Roy Bareilly District*—by W. C. Benett, C. S., printed at the Awadh Government Press, Lucknow in 1870 A. D. Useful.

6. *The Garden of India*—by H. C. Irwin, B. A. Oxon., (1880). Gives only a summary account of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang and has many mistakes.

7. *The Later Mughals*—by William Irvine and edited by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Valuable secondary authority except for Maratha affairs.

8. *The Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad*—by William Irvine in J. A. S. B. of 1878 and 1879. The fullest and the best on the subject. But at certain places based entirely on Pathan sources and hence one-sided.

9. *Articles on Oudh*—by Sir Henry Lawrence in the Calcutta Review of 1881—useful.

10. *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. I by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. It was first published when my book was still in the Press—best work on the subject.

In addition to the above works I have consulted Imperial and district gazetteers and Old Awadh gazetteers and have used the detailed *Empire Survey of India Maps*, scale 4 miles to an inch. All the dates in my work are in the New Style and I have followed the conversion-tables in Swami Kannu Pillai's Indian Ephemerics.

Abbreviations used in the Bibliography.

A. S. B..... Asiatic Society of Bangal.

M. B. L..... Library of Maharaja of Banaras.

O. P. L..... Oriental Public Library Bankipur, Patna.

V. L. U..... Victoria Hall Library, Udaipur.

Sarkar..... Sir Jadunath Sarkar's Library.

## Errata

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Correct</i>	<i>Misprint</i>
27	3. b.	fond	found
86	11. b.	vocations	avocations
91	20. a.	reported	eported
115	16. a.	having	heaving
134	1. a.	fought	fough
155	1. a.	followed	ollowed
155	1. b.	plundered	dlunderd
161	13. b.	began	hegan
173	7. b.	Fateh Garh	Fateh Gard
174	6. b.	promising	promisingn
216	5. b.	soldiers	solders
223	3. b.	by	dy
237	15. b.	his	hia
245	9. b.	Safdar Jang	Safdar ang.

a. read line from above.

b. read line from bottom, leaving foot-notes.



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*The Hindustan Times* (January 24, 1954)