

**DHAKA IN DISTRESS: POLITICAL CRISIS AND POWER STRUGGLES
ON THE EVE OF THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY (1754-1757)****Mahjuba Hoque***

Department of History, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka.

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***Corresponding Author Mahjuba Hoque**

Department of History, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka.

Email Id: mahjubaju@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the political instability and power struggles that affected Dhaka in the years before the Battle of Plassey (1754–1757). This period highlighted the disintegration of Nawabi authority in Bengal. Using primary and secondary sources, this study examines how military coups, assassinations, and palace conspiracies in Dhaka exposed the decline of centralized authority under Alivardi Khan and his successor, Siraj-ud-Daulah. Special attention is given to the assassination of Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Uddin Khan. His death, rooted in the conspiratorial politics of the Murshidabad palace, caused administrative disorder. This assassination highlighted the fragile connection between Dhaka's provincial governance and the Murshidabad Nawabi court. The resulting disorder exaggerated factional rivalries, particularly between the supporters of Ghaseti Begum and Siraj-ud-Daulah. At the same time, it empowered local elites, such as Rajballabh, to broaden their political and economic influence. The weakening of Nawabi control also allowed for increased British intervention through commercial and investment networks. This paper argues that the internal crises in Dhaka were not isolated incidents but were part of a larger process of political fragmentation that undermined Bengal's sovereignty. Ultimately, the study concludes that the destabilization of Dhaka between 1754 and 1757 was a critical prelude to the consolidation of British colonial dominance following the Battle of Plassey.

KEYWORDS: Dhaka, Siraj-ud-Daulah, Murshidabad, Political crisis, Conspiracy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The mid-18th century was a period of considerable political instability in Bengal. During this period, the Nawabi authority declined, and factional rivalries increased, which weakened provincial governance. Dhaka, a key provincial capital under the Nawabs, became a center for these power struggles. Between 1754 and 1757, Dhaka experienced a series of political disturbances, including assassinations, military takeovers, and palace conspiracies, which revealed the fragility of the centralized authority of Alivardi Khan and his successor, Siraj-ud-Daulah [1]. Such events not only destabilized Dhaka but also revealed the broader weaknesses in the Nawabi system. Personal ambition, family rivalries, and corruption led to a breakdown of political power [2]. A significant incident in this period was the murder of Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Uddin Khan. This incident highlighted the growing tension between Dhaka's local administration and the Nawabi court in Murshidabad. It illustrated how provincial governance operated independently of, and often in conflict with, central control. At the same time, the decline of Nawabi control opened doors for the British East India Company to expand its influence in Dhaka. The Company used trade networks, patronage, and partnerships with local elites to establish its presence. These changes marked the British consolidation of power in Bengal after the Battle of Plassey in 1757.

This study looks at the political instability of Dhaka during the late Nawabi period, focusing on the links between dynastic conspiracy, administrative failures, and foreign intervention. By examining the assassination of Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Uddin Khan and the changes in local power that followed, this paper shows how internal crises in Dhaka weakened Nawabi authority and set the groundwork for the British takeover of Bengal [3].

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

2.1 Aim of the Study

This study aims to explore the political crisis and power struggles in Dhaka between 1754 and 1757. It examines how weak administration, internal conflicts, and the decline of Nawabi authority led to political disorder in Bengal and created conditions that helped the British establish control after the Battle of Plassey.

2.2 Objectives

- To examine the political instability in Dhaka during the late Nawabi period and the weakening of central authority under Alivardi Khan and Siraj-ud-Daulah.

- To study the assassination of Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Uddin Khan and its effects on the Dhaka administration.
- To evaluate how the breakdown of Nawabi authority in Dhaka permitted British influence through trade and local allegiances.

3.0 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study uses a qualitative historical approach, based on both primary and secondary sources.

- **Primary Sources:** Contemporary Mughal chronicles, travel diary, and administrative records.
- **Secondary Sources:** Scholarly works, books, and journal articles.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Assassination in Dhaka and Its Impact on Dhaka's Politics

In 1740, Alivardi Khan appointed his son-in-law, Nawazesh Khan, as the Naib Nazim of Dhaka. This influential Naib Nazim did not come to Dhaka and sent the Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Quli Khan to Dhaka. Alivardi Khan was dissatisfied with Hussain Quli Khan. According to the narrations of Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin [4] and Tarikh-e-Bangala [5], Hussain Quli Khan had an illegal and very close relationship with Alivardi Khan's eldest daughter, Badrunnesa Ghaseti Begum. Not only that, Hussain Quli Khan was also attracted to Amina Begum, the third daughter of Alivardi Khan and the mother of Siraj-ud-Daulah [6]. Syed Ghulam Hossain Khan mentions the relationship between Hussain Quli Khan and Amina Begum and Ghaseti Begum in his book Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin and according to his commentary.

Hussain Quli khan, who was, what they call in English, a handsome, stout, black man, had quitted this princess, for her younger sister, Amna-begum of amorous memory, mother to seraj-ud-doula. But there was another subject of discontent between her and the handsome stout man, although it looked somewhat ludicrous. The stout man had the talent of fencing with either hand; and whilst actually in intrigue with Gahassity biby, the wife, he had a great deal of business to transact with the husband, who was an important man, addicted to feminine joys. This husband was Newazish Mahmed khan, eldest nephew as well as son-in-law, to Aalyverdy khan; and he had more than one serious quarrel with his consort about the ambidexter nobleman. There are at Murshidabad to this day, several persons who remember

of sharp dialogues that happened on that very strange subject between the husband and the wife; but although they are exceedingly curious, and not quite uncommon in this country, they prove, however, to be of such a nature as English paper would not admit [7].

However, there is no mention of this relationship (the relationship of Amina Begum and Ghaseti Begum with Hussain Quli Khan) in any contemporary book except the Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin. All contemporary books and modern books are written based on this information mentioned in the Siyar-ul-Mutakhkhirin. Therefore, it is difficult to find the truth of this information. However, it is very likely that Siraj-ud-Daulah had the intention to kill Hussain Quli Khan due to Amina Begum's relationship with Hussain Quli Khan. On the other hand, Alivardi Khan also had the intention to kill Hussain Quli Khan. However, Alivardi Khan wanted to kill Hussain Quli Khan to smooth the path for the future Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula. Nawab Alivardi Khan indeed took direct and indirect action against some members of the elite class to ensure the future of the state and the successor Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula [8]. Hussain Quli Khan and his nephew Ahsan Uddin Khan were among the elite class. However, on the other hand, Naib Nazim Nawazesh Muhammad Khan had a good eye on these two individuals. As Hussain Quli Khan was Nawazesh Muhammad Khan's assistant and Nawazesh Muhammad Khan appointed Hussain Quli Khan as Deputy Naib Nazim in Dhaka. But, Hussain Quli Khan did not come to Dhaka; but sent his nephew Ahsan Uddin Khan as the Deputy Naib Nazim. He also sent Gokulchandra as an assistant. After Ahsan Uddin Khan arrived in Dhaka, a conflict began between him and Agha Sadeq (the courtier of Dhaka). Agha Sadeq went to Murshidabad to complain against Ahsan Uddin Khan to Naib Nazim Nawazesh Muhammad Khan. It has been mentioned earlier that Nawazesh Muhammad Khan had a good eye on Ahsan Uddin Khan and his uncle Hussain Quli Khan. Therefore, Naib Nazim Nawazesh Khan did not accept Agha Sadeq's complaint and instead arrested him. Although it is mentioned in many books that Agha Baker's son Agha Sadeq, was a senior official in Dhaka. As per the order of Naib Nazim, Hussain Quli Khan owed Agha Sadeq 3 lakhs of rupees and imprisoned Agha Sadeq in Murshidabad for a few months. However, in this helpless state, Agha Sadiq sought the help of Prince Siraj-ud-Daula and returned to Dhaka after being freed. Although other accounts stated that Agha Sadeq sought the help of Alivardi Khan, and Alivardi Khan helped him escape from prison. Although many researchers believe that this act was done at the behest of Siraj-ud-Daula. However, this is mentioned in the Siyar ul Mutakhkhirin, Mirza Aga Muhammad Baker, who was a powerful landlord of Umedpur and Salimabad parganas in Barisal. He was a man of immense wealth

and the East India Company named Bakerganj district after him. He had two sons, Aga Sadeq and Aga Mehedi, and a daughter, Katasina Begum. The famous Majumdar family of Chakhar is descended from Katasina Begum. There is doubt that the Aga Baker of the time of Nawab Murshid Quli Khan II and this Aga Baker was the same person or not. And it is after this Aga Baker that the famous Bakarkhani bread of Dhaka is named [11].

A young man, who, having had mighty disputes with the officers employed by Hussain Quli Khan, Deputy Governor of the province of Dacca, had come over to Murshidabad to complain of them and had found means to lay his case before Nawazesh Muhammad Khan, who concerned himself in his behalf. His name was Aga-sadeq, and his title, was Sadakat Mahmed Khan, son to Aga Baker, a considerable Zemindar of those parts. Seraj-ud-dualah engaged him to return to Dacca in order to kill Hussain-ud-din Khan, nephew to Hussain Quli Khan, and the latter's Deputy to Dacca a young man, who for some reasons, had fallen into a melancholy that had disordered his sense [9].

Aga Sadeq, upon reaching Dhaka, met his father Aga Baker and, with some new and old retainers, went to Dhaka Fort or Lalbagh Fort to kill Hussain Uddin Khan, the nephew of Hussain Quli Khan. That night, Akbar Ali Khan and his son were guarding the Lalbagh Fort, and Aga Baker's former friendship with them led them to open the gates of the fort [10]. Aga Sadeq entered the fort without any hindrance, pounced on the unarmed sleeping Hussain Uddin and killed him. The murder was so brutal that a panic spread in the minds of all the inhabitants of the city. The inhabitants of the city initially assumed that this murder was never committed without the orders of the Nawab and that some high-ranking officials of the first rank were involved in it. Later, they came to know that the Nawab had no permission to commit this murder or crime. When the news spread throughout the city within a moment, civil officials, employees and the public surrounded the entire fort in excitement. Agha Sadeq's men closed the gates of the fort and fired arrows and bullets at the agitated crowd until noon. Finally, the war stopped when Hussain Quli's trusted general, Mirza Ali Nakir's royal soldiers, killed Agha Baker's son Mehedi. Agha Sadeq left the fort in the guise of a dervish [12]. Ghulam Hossain Salim, writing about the reaction of the people of the city after this murder, mentions.

Such a murder committed so bluntly struck terror and consternation in the minds of all the inhabitants of that great city, who concluded that an action of that high nature would have never been perpetrated, had not some person of the first rank afforded it countenance. So that

everyone remained silent and thoughtful until it became known that the perpetrator had no order and no voucher in his hand. He was therefore set upon by the inhabitants and by the friends of Hussein Coly Khan, who missed the murderer, but by mistake killed his father, Aga Baker. The son, having escaped so great a danger, fled to Murshidabad and by such a step threw away both his peace of mind and the safety of his person [13].

Whatever the motive behind this murder, whether it was Siraj-ud-Daulah, Alivardi Khan or personal enmity, the city people did not accept this murder. The influence of the Deputy Naib Nazim and his cronies in Dhaka is evidenced when the civil servants, employees, and the public expressed their anger and surrounded the fort after this murder. However, according to many historians, Ghaseti Begum knew about this murder in Dhaka in advance, and Alivardi Khan carried out this murder with her permission. Many have mentioned this as a reason because Hussain Quli abandoned Ghaseti Begum at that time and started having an affair with his sister, Amena Begum. It is very likely that Ghaseti Begum accepted Alivardi Khan's offer in revenge[14]. However, this is a completely wrong idea. The first reason is that if Ghaseti Begum had ordered the killing in revenge, it was of Hussain Quli Khan, not of his nephew Hussain Uddin Khan. The second reason is that after Hussain Quli Khan's nephew was killed in Dhaka, Ghaseti Begum ordered her servants to go to Dhaka with Hussain Quli Khan. If she had consented to the murder, she would not have disobeyed Alivardi Khan's ordered and sent her servants to Dhaka with Hussain Quli Khan. Therefore, it can be completely assumed that Ghaseti Begum had no hand in this murder. From this it is evident that Siraj-ud-Daula had direct involvement in this murder. This murder was part of the palace conspiracy of Murshidabad. The murder of Hussain Uddin, the nephew of the Deputy Naib Nazim in Dhaka, further increased the political crisis in Dhaka, Murshidabad. Hussain Quli Khan and his nephew Hussain Uddin were basically followers of Ghaseti Begum. Among them, Hussain Quli Khan was directly a servant of Ghaseti Begum. Their representatives and closest colleagues in Dhaka were Hussain Uddin and the Dhaka bench clerk Rajballab. In view of this, a strong circle of opposition to Siraj-ud-Daula was formed in Dhaka. From the beginning, Nawazesh Muhammad Khan and his wife, Ghaseti Begum, created a supportive and loyal group in Dhaka. Outside the Murshidabad Palace, Ghaseti Begum and her husband, Nawazesh Muhammad Khan, created a Dhaka-based strong ally against Siraj-ud-Daula. This was a threat to the next Nawab, Siraj-ud-Daula, and this assassination was carried out with the aim of completely uprooting it. However, there was also an economic reason. Hussain Quli Khan used to send a large amount of money from Dhaka to Nawazesh Khan's Motijheel

palace instead of sending revenue to the Murshidabad treasury. This matter angered the future Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula. Later, in 1754, Hussain Quli Khan was also killed along with his brother in a conspiracy by Siraj-ud-Daula in Murshidabad. Both the Deputy Naib-Nazims, Hussain Quli Khan and Hussain Uddin, were victims of the internal politics of Dhaka and Murshidabad. Thus, towards the end of Alivardi's reign, there was a power struggle between the supporters of Ghaseti Begum and the future Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula in Dhaka and Murshidabad [16]. In 1754, Nawazesh Khan sent Murad Daulat to Dhaka as his representative. Although Murad Daulat was appointed ruler, Rajballabh held all the powers of the Dhaka Niabat at that time.

Rajballabh was a physician from Bikrampur who demonstrated administrative and financial skills as the Superintendent of the Bengal Fleet. The Bengal Fleet was then allocated 14 lakh rupees annually for its maintenance [17].

Haider Ali Khan was the elder brother of Hussain Quli Khan, although many say that he was his own cousin. However, Haider Ali Khan was blind, who was the head of the Jinsi artillery. He had become blind some time ago and was working as a servant and lived in the same house with his brother Hussain Quli Khan. Siraj, with the permission of his aunt Ghaseti Begum, arrested Hussain Quli Khan and Haider Ali Khan from their house and killed them immediately. Hussain Quli Khan was employed as an assistant to Nawazesh Khan until his death [15].

4.2. The Impact of the Assassination in Dhaka on the Future Politics of Dhaka

The impact of the military coup in Dhaka on the future politics of Dhaka was indescribable, because through this military coup, two rival dynastic powers centered in Dhaka and Murshidabad emerged. The local people saw this incident as an attack on their cultural, historical, and heritage. The assassination caused anger and dissatisfaction among the civil society of Dhaka and Murshidabad. Although there had been many conflicts and crises between Dhaka and Murshidabad regarding political, economic, and military influence, this was the first time that a dynastic crisis had begun between Dhaka and Murshidabad. On one side were the future Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula and his companions, and on the other side were the Naib Nazim Nawazesh Khan, his wife Ghaseti Begum, their deputy Naib Nazim, and Rajballab, who were posted in Dhaka. The assassination of the Naib Nazim weakened the power and influence of the Murshidabad Nawab family. The assassination of the Naib Nazim

in Dhaka set a negative precedent for the future economic status and political independence of Dhaka. Political stability in Dhaka was destroyed after the assassination. The assassination in Dhaka and its subsequent events had a long-term impact on the politics of Dhaka, which served as the basis for future British rule. This created an opportunity for the British, which later strengthened their influence and control. As a result of this assassination, the Diwani power in Dhaka passed into the hands of Rajballabh, and Rajballabh became very powerful by embezzling all the resources of the rebels. Basically, after the death of Hussain Quli Khan, Alivardi Khan appointed Sabarat Khan as the administrator of Dhaka and sent Rajballabh as the Diwan and ordered him to confiscate the assets of Aga Baker. Rajballabh confiscated the assets of Aga Baker, including cash and goods, which amounted to one crore taka. Rajballabh embezzled this money instead of depositing it in the government treasury. Later, Rajballabh was arrested by Siraj-ud-Daula for this money. With this money, Rajballabh's son, Krishna Chandra, took refuge in the British Calcutta Fort. This forced Siraj-ud-Daula to conduct one expedition after another against the British. Although there was another reason for Siraj's anger towards the English merchants, during Alivardi's time, Siraj had intended to go to the English's factory in Kasimbazar, and the British did not allow him to go there, most likely thinking that Siraj would damage it. However, when Rajballabh's son Krishna Chandra took refuge in the Calcutta Fort and the British refused to return him, the previous anger increased further. Later, which led to the fictional dungeon murder of Siraj-ud-Daulah [18].

After Siraj's troops captured the fort, some Englishmen were drinking and causing a disturbance at night, and they were locked up in an 18ft x 14ft room. This room was originally built by the English, and more than forty but less than sixty people were locked up in this room that night, and about 20 died in the morning. Later, Hollowell exaggerated this incident and called it the 'Black Hole Tragedy' and according to him, the number of people arrested and killed that day was 146 and 26 respectively. The Hollowell Monument was built in Calcutta (which was later demolished) [19].

4.3. Death of Alivardi Khan and the Rise of Forces against Siraj-ud-Daulah

Alivardi Khan spent his last days suffering from physical and mental illness. Alivardi Khan was deeply saddened by the deaths of his close family members and friends, Ikram-ud-Daulah, Nawazesh Khan, and Sawlat Jung. Sawlat Jung was the Faujdar of Rangamati and was a very close friend of the Nawab. Realizing his imminent death, Alivardi Khan called Siraj-ud-Daulah and spoke of the importance of suppressing enemies, friendship, as well as

the progress of the people of the country, and the maintenance of law and order. He also said that Siraj should never engage in war with the British on anyone's advice. Alivardi Khan died in 1756, and Siraj-ud-Daula ascended the throne on 15 April 1756, assuming the title of Mansur-ul-Mulk. Sitting in the palace of Murshidabad, Siraj decided to do two things. First, to suppress the English merchants and secondly, to punish those in his own family who had opposed him so far. On the other hand, Ghaseti Begum was afraid from the beginning. Ghaseti Begum did not accept the nomination of Siraj-ud-Daula as the next Nawab by her father. Therefore, she created a central power circle in Dhaka. Since Ghaseti Begum had no children, she always cherished Siraj's younger brother Ikram-ud-Daula as a son and considered him the rightful heir to the throne [20]. But when Ikram-ud-Daula died of illness in the spring and her husband Nawazesh Khan died a year later, her existence was in crisis. However, her loyal Rajballabh was still in remission as the Diwan of Dhaka. It is said that after the death of Hussain Quli Khan, Ghaseti Begum was attracted to Rajballabh [21]. Both Ghaseti Begum and Rajballabh were cautious of Siraj's power. After the death of Nawazesh Khan, Ghaseti Begum did not give up hope of seizing the throne. She wanted to seize the throne of Bengal by putting Murad-ud-Daula, the infant son of Ikram-ud-Daula, and Ghaseti Begum failed in this too [22]. Later, he invited Shaukat Jung (the eldest son of her second sister) of Purnia to sit on the throne of Bengal. Ghaseti Begum had a strong resentment towards Siraj, mainly because of the murder of Ghaseti's beloved Hussain Quli Khan (Naib Nazim of Dhaka) [23]. After the death of her husband, Nawazesh Khan, Ghaseti Begum took her wealth and settled in Motijheel Palace, a few kilometers from Murshidabad Palace. Fearing Siraj, he paid a large sum of money to appoint a guard of two thousand soldiers to protect Motijheel Palace. Siraj allowed Ghaseti Begum to stay in the Murshidabad Palace without causing any trouble. After the death of Alivardi Khan, Siraj's heart softened somewhat towards his own aunt. On the other hand, Ghaseti Begum probably misunderstood Siraj's intention and refused permission to stay in Murshidabad. Ghaseti Begum informed Siraj that her husband was dead and that she was living an ascetic life in Motijheel Palace [25]. This made Siraj think that Ghaseti Begum would declare a rebellion at any time. Basically, this incident proves the intensity of distrust and suspicion between Siraj and Ghaseti Begum towards each other. Basically, no one wanted to get involved in any conflict with anyone at that time. However, suspecting Ghaseti Begum's behavior, Siraj attacked Motijheel Palace and conquered it without any hindrance. Siraj collected a huge amount of money and wealth from Motijheel Palace and deposited it in the royal treasury [26]. This made Ghaseti Begum extremely angry with Siraj. Then, due to Ghaseti Begum's conspiracy,

anti-Siraj forces arose. Just as Alivardi Khan was invited to fight against Sarfaraz Khan in 1739, Ghaseti Begum, led by Haji Ahmad, requested a conspiring party to fight against Siraj. She also assured them that several commanders and nobles of Murshidabad would cooperate with him against Siraj's persecution and daily brutality. Although Sarfaraz Khan failed to win against Alivardi in 1740, Siraj achieved good success in 1756 against Haji Ahmad.

Originally, towards the end of Alivardi Khan's rule, Fakhr-ut-Tujar told Alivardi Khan that if you can expel the British from this country, then I will give you 3 crores of taka. Alivardi Khan did not agree to this temptation, in reply Alivardi Khan said, I have extinguished the fire on the land in 12 years by shedding the blood of thousands of Muslims and non-Muslims. Now you want me to create a riot by lighting the fire of the sea so that all the wealth of land and water of the entire Hindustan will be destroyed. However, later Siraj-ud-Daula, agreed to this temptation of Fakhr-ut-Tujar and attacked and looted Calcutta. Although the Nawab could not earn this money, he only earned a bad name, and in anger, the Nawab dismissed Muzaffar Jung from the post of Faujdar. This Muzaffar Jung is Reza Khan who was later appointed as the Diwan of Dhaka during the Company's rule [24].

4.4. Dhaka-Centric Politics and Conspiracies on the Eve of the Battle of Plassey

In the second half of the 18th century, the politics of Dhaka and Murshidabad were in an extreme crisis under the influence of the British. Extreme uncertainty, distrust, conflict and suspicion, and above all stagnation prevailed in the Nawabi politics of Bengal. There was also a rapid change of power in the politics of Murshidabad. Jesarat Khan served as the Naib Nazim of Dhaka throughout this critical period. Nawab Alivardi probably appointed Jesarat Khan as the Naib Nazim of Dhaka to keep the path of the future Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula free from fear. Jesarat Khan was not only a witness to many events but also the originator of many events. After 1754, the British East India Company began to establish its dominance in Dhaka, and as a result, British influence began to be felt in the politics of Murshidabad and Dhaka. The British tried to establish their rights in Dhaka's trade by establishing relations with the Naib Nazim and also formed alliances with opponents of the Nawab of Murshidabad to protect their interests. As a result, the inter-political relations between Murshidabad and Dhaka became more complicated. As the British East India Company expanded its commercial activities in Dhaka, its influence over the local administration of Dhaka increased. Although the Murshidabad administration tried to limit this influence, the Faujdars of Dhaka and some influential merchants did not allow it because they received large sums of

money from the British. This became a matter of great concern for the Nawab of Murshidabad, and as a result, a new type of political conflict began between Dhaka and Murshidabad. During the time of Alivardi Khan, the power, wealth, and financial stability of the British increased. The British based in Dhaka established a factory and established a financial bond with the local people of Dhaka. The economic groups of Dhaka, such as traders, lawyers, brokers, and wholesalers, used to earn their living under the umbrella of the British company, so they always sided with the British. Later, the traders of Dhaka who enjoyed benefits from the British got involved in conspiracies against the Nawab. The British believed that they would not be able to survive in Dhaka if they did not get the help and cooperation of the locals. Therefore, they increased the help and benefits to the traders of Dhaka. The British, having lived in Dhaka for a long time, became involved in the political activities of Dhaka as well as in the economic activities [27]. The Nawab's commanders, generals, and high-ranking officials realized that they would benefit financially by being with the British, so they took the opportunity and started betraying the Nawab. Evidence of this is found in the fact that Krishna Roy, son of Rajballabh, took refuge in the British fort in Calcutta with his father's entire wealth. Krishna Roy accepted the British as his guardian. Hindu leaders named Umichand, Jagatsheth, Raydurlav, and Nabkishan also kept secret contact with the British. At that time, the elite Hindu community of Bengal and Dhaka, and Hindu traders, went against the Nawab and helped the British. Hindu traders mainly helped the British for two reasons. The two reasons are: They were never satisfied with the Muslim rulers, they considered Muslims as heretics and foreign invaders. Secondly, they were profiting financially by trading with the British; on the other hand, they were getting shelter from the British by opposing the Nawab [28]. Besides, there was another reason: they thought that the British were more powerful than the Nawab, and for this reason, the Hindu traders were much more loyal to the British than to the Nawab. The Nawab's generals were also included in this list, who always stayed with the Nawab and maintained secret relations with the British. The loyalty of General Manik Chand to the Nawab was unquestionable. This Manik Chand also betrayed Siraj. Manik Chand worked for the British in exchange for gifts. In a letter from Lord Clive, Manik Chand was hailed as an ally of the British. All these courtiers, military leaders, and administrative officials of Siraj had huge transactions with the British, and if the British left this country, they would suffer huge losses. Therefore, they always supported the British. After ascending to the throne, Siraj first attacked the Kasim Bazar factory in 1756. Later, he attacked the Company's main headquarters, the Calcutta factory. After conquering the Calcutta factory, Siraj put Manik Chand in power and went to

Murshidabad [29]. Later, when Lord Clive attacked to recover Calcutta, Manik Chand fled from Calcutta to Hooghly, and Lord Clive captured Calcutta. Although Siraj had not attacked the British at the Dhaka factory till then. At that time, the Council in Dhaka was asked by the Calcutta Council to pack up the Company's belongings and to be ready to flee if danger approached. The Council in Dhaka was shocked by this news they could not believe it at first. They thought it was just a trick to accept submission to the Nawab. A member of the Council in Dhaka (Crofton) sent a letter to the French factory in Dhaka to prove the truth of this information. After receiving the truth of the news, the British who were stationed in the Dhaka factory prepared to flee with their families. The British also arranged for a ship near Lakshmipur on the Meghna River for their escape [31]. At this time, the British company officials and their families who were staying in the small British settlement, The factory located in Dhaka was little better than an ordinary house. Half of the thin brick wall was not more than nine feet high [35]. in Dhaka were going through a tense time. The fate of the British company officials and their families depended on the mercy of the local Muslim rulers [32]. In this situation, Siraj issued a farman and ordered the Naib Nazim of Dhaka, Jesarat Khan, to imprison the British. If he wanted, the Naib Nazim of Dhaka could have overthrown a handful of British just because of the number of soldiers, but Naib Nazim Jesarat Khan did not do so. Due to the conflict between the Nawab and the British in Dhaka, the British took refuge in the French settlement, their eternal enemy and rival. Although the French were still on good terms with Siraj. M. Courtin, the head of the French colony in Dhaka, extended his hand to the British in this difficult time, despite knowing that they would have problems with Siraj and the British. He wrote in gratitude to the British Council and the French, "Our nation is indebted to them for the treatment they have shown us in every way at this painful moment." The French in Dhaka treated the British very well. Even the head of the French colony, M. Courtin, persuaded the Nawab to refrain from taking active measures against the British. M. Courtin himself became the guarantor of the British and supplied them with all their supplies. But the head of the French colony, M. Courtin, may have had no idea of the crookedness and treachery of the British. The French, who had extended their hand of sympathy to them (the British), took over their colony before the year was out and expelled them from there [33]. However, Nawab Siraj was already aware of the treachery, cunning, intrigue, and political ambitions of the British, so he sent Jesarat Khan to punish the British. However, the Naib Nazim of Dhaka helped them escape from Dhaka without arresting or detaining them [34]. This was a suicidal decision of the short-sighted Naib Nazim. These cowardly British later returned to the wilderness of Plassey. Robert Clive understood one

thing well: that the Hindu traders and landlords of Calcutta and Dhaka were dissatisfied with the Nawab, so if the English fought against the Nawab, the Hindu traders and landlords would help them instead of the Nawab. The rest who remained loyal to the Nawab could be drawn into their party with cash and gifts. This assumption of the British was completely correct, but the Nawab of Bengal could never have guessed that his loyalists could betray him. This was the reality before the Battle of Plassey; unfortunately, Nawab Siraj ud Daula could not understand this real picture. Clive, with the help of Umichand, secretly contacted the Nawab's chief commander, Mir Jafar Ali Khan, and promised to remove Siraj and put him in power. In April 1757, the British held a secret meeting with Mir Jafar at Jagatsheth's house. Many of the Nawab's favorites, including Mir Jafar, Jagatsheth, Rajballabh, Raydurlabh, Umichand, Krishnachandra, etc., were present at this meeting [37]. The decision of this meeting brought Bengal under British rule for almost two hundred years. Although Siraj came to know about Mir Jafar's conspiracy, he was hesitant to take action against Mir Jafar [38]. Siraj's main fault was that he failed to understand the growing power of the British and instead treated them as mere commercial agents [39]. As a result, despite having more soldiers than the British in the field of Plassey, he suffered a brutal defeat due to treachery. Siraj fled from the field of Plassey and was later captured by Mir Jafar's men. He was brought to Murshidabad and killed, calling him a tyrant, a traitor, and an enemy of the country. Thus ended the life of the last independent Nawab of Bengal and the five hundred years of Muslim rule in Bengal. After this rise and fall and change of fortune, a mystery descended on the life of the city, and the invasion of the Orient began. This began a new chapter of intrigue in the life of the city.

Lord Clive was a scoundrel. To escape his scoundrelship, his father sent him to India as a clerk in the East India Company. After arriving in India, he spent his time in a hostile environment and financial hardship. So he joined the army and that opened his fortune. At that time, almost all those who came to work for the company were scoundrels and criminals. When they came to India, they used various tricks to rob the simple people [30].

The number of officers and employees of the company was very small compared to the amount of business and commerce that the British had in Dhaka, among whom Richard Becher was the superintendent of the factory, under whom was William Sumner, among others were Luke Crafton, Thomas Higuman, Samuel Waller, John Carter and John Johnston

and Lieutenant Cudmore was in charge of the troops. Three women are known to have been present in Dhaka at that time, they were Mrs. Becher, Mrs. Warwick and Miss Hudding [36].

5. CONCLUSION

The political unrest in Dhaka between 1754 and 1757 was a significant event that helped us understand the weaknesses of the Murshidabad Nawab in the late Nawabi era. Personal ambition, family rivalry, and corruption in administration disrupted Dhaka's improvement. The murder of Deputy Naib Nazim Hussain Uddin Khan and the public unrest that followed revealed a deeper problem in the political system. These incidents in Dhaka were not isolated events but signs of the overall collapse of political stability in Bengal before the British took control. The brutal killing inside the fort changed the balance of power between Dhaka and Murshidabad. It created two opposing groups, one led by Siraj-ud-Daulah and the other by Ghaseti Begum and her allies, turning a local administrative problem into a wider dynastic conflict. This dynastic conflict also allowed the British East India Company to slowly increase its influence in Dhaka's trade and politics. By forming alliances with dissatisfied elites and using economic connections, the Company gained both information and support from local merchants and landlords. After the death of Alivardi Khan, the situation became worse. Siraj-ud-Daulah faced distrust and opposition from powerful groups in both Dhaka and Murshidabad. His failure to manage these rival interests, along with rising British power, led to his downfall. The conspiracies that ended in the Battle of Plassey began with the loss of discipline and trust within the Nawabi administration, something already visible in Dhaka years before 1757. In conclusion, the political conflicts and struggles in Dhaka were not minor local issues but key events that shaped Bengal's fall from independence to British rule. The city's growing division, corruption, and dependence on outsiders foreshadowed the final collapse of the Nawabi state and the beginning of British dominance in Bengal.

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