CHAPTER II.

The Fall of the Saiyid Brothers.

Assassination of Husain Ali Khan.

Nizamul Mulk's defeat of Dilawar Ali Khan and Alam Ali Khan was a heavy blow to the prestige and power of the ministers. It raised Nizamul Mulk in the estimation of the people as a general and a skilful schemer. Arrogant and over-confident, Dilawar Ali Khan and Alam Ali Khan had underestimated the power of the adversary. The rank and file of Dilawar's army, already discontented on account of the arrears of their salaries, were seized with panic at the fall of their commander and dispersed in all directions. Inspite of the liberal grants of money and rewards bestowed on the Afghan chiefs and their followers, desertion had started in Alam Ali Khan's army even before the battle had begun.

The news of these tragic reverses caused profound grief in the camp of the Saiyid brothers, and put them in a state of dilemma. At this juncture, Muhammad Amin Khan suggested that Nizamul Mulk should be appointed as governor of Deccan, and the Amirul Umra's family, now in Daulatabad should be brought to the north by his own son, Qamruddin Khan, if he was allowed to go there. Though the real motive of Muhammad Amin Khan was to protect Nizamul Mulk from the punishment, Saiyids might inflict on him, yet it was the demand of expediency, that

reconciliation should be made with the powerful foe. The Saiyid brothers rejected the proposal and resolved to fight out the issue. Husain Ali Khan decided to go to the Deccan in company with Muhammad Shah, while his brother Saiyid Abdullah would proceed to Delhi. Military preparations were started and a huge army of fifty thousand men representing mainly the Saiyids of Barha and the Afghans was raised. But before marching towards south, Husain Ali Khan decided to deal first with Muhammad Amin Khan, a traitor in the camp, and a dangerous centre of intrigue. The Saiyid brothers regarded Muhammad Amin Khan as the cause of all this trouble, and twice they had attempted to put an end to his activities but every time for fear of revolt of the Mughuls, they desisted from carrying out their plan. His presence in the camp and in the capital was fraught with serious dangers. If he accompanied Amirul Umra, it was feared that he would desert with his retainers and join his cousin. If left behind, he would certainly conspire against the brothers and keep them apart.

Under such circumstances self-restrain, and a policy of appeasement seemed the only possible course. Husain Ali Khan would bluff him and his Mughuls by flattering and seducing

   K.K. p. 896.
   Kamwar, f. 178(b)
   Qasim, pp. 143 and 147.
   Shah Nama Deccan, p. 125.
   Ahwal, f. 171(b)
2. Shiv Das, p. 99
   K.K. pp. 897-900
   T.M. p. 214.
   Tarik-i-Hind, p. 479. According to him one lakh foot soldiers and three thousand horsemen had been enlist
   Qasim, p. 142.
them by giving promotions in the army. Muhammad Amin Khan could be done away with after the liquidation of Nizamul Mulk. One day Muhammad Amin Khan was entertained at a banquet, and addressed as "respected uncle". Liberal payments of salaries in advance were made to his soldiers. Haider Quli Khan, another leader of note, was promoted to the post of Mir Atash, on 6th September, 1720, the post having been held by Ghulam Ali Khan. His relations and comrades protested against this policy of appeasement, but Husain Ali Khan rebuffed them by replying that he was befriending the Mughuls in order to promote unity in the government.

Muhammad Amin Khan was too shrewd to be caught in the trap. He understood their real motives and knew how to get out of the awkward situation. As Khafi Khan writes, "Itemad-u-Daulah Muhammad Amin Khan Bahadur was convinced that notwithstanding his covenants and protestations, Husain Ali Khan would, whenever, it suited his designs, perform his engagements in the same way as he had kept them with the late Martyr, Farrukh-Siyar."

Muhammad Amin Khan was afraid that it would be difficult for Nizamul Mulk to defeat Husain Ali Khan, who had a force of fifty thousand with him. And in case Nizamul Mulk emerged successful out of the ordeal, Muhammad Shah would hail him (the Nizam) as his saviour, and bestow upon him most magnificent rewards, as he had promised in his letters addressed to him.

   Qasim. p. 149.
2. Qasim. p. 142.
   Tarikh-i-Hind. p. 479.
He might even get the coveted post of Wizarat. In that case his own fortunes, would suffer a set-back. If on the other hand he exerted himself to bring about the fall of Amirul-Umra he would become the absolute master of the government. If this could not be accomplished in an open contest, the assassin's hand was sure to succeed. The circumstances were also favourabl for the execution of the plan. The two brothers were to proceed in different directions, and it was easy to knock out each of 2 them separately. If Husain Ali Khan could be murdered, the Saiyid party would be shattered. Muhammad Amin Khan now engaged himself in hatching a plot against Husain Ali Khan life.

1. Insha-i-Wala-Jahi, pp.50-58.
2. According to the author of Sahifa Iqbal (f.4) this separation was the result of a previous plan made by the supporters of the Emperor. They had thought that only by separation they could be destroyed one by one. Muhammad Shah had agreed to this plan. Saiyid Abdullah Khan, after the murder of his brother also blamed the Emperor for separating them from each other. "Although, separation from my brother was dis-tasteful to me, still in obedience to the exalted one, we made no objection, and of the two brothers one set out for the capital, the other for the Deccan, in attendance of your Majesty." But facts belie these statements. We have seen that just after the death of Dilawar Ali Khan, Husain Ali Khan had decided to march towards the Deccan, but was dissuaded by his brother. But after the death of Alam Ali Khan, it had become clear that either of the brothers would go to the south, and under the existing situation there was no alternative. Moreover, the Emperor had no initiative in this matter to give orders or make suggestions, all powers being in the hands of the ministers. If it is accepted that the Emperor had proposed the expedition, and the Saiyid brothers simply agreed to it, then there could be no limit to their stupidity, over-weening - pride and self confidence. What may be concluded in the light of above-mentioned facts, is that the ministers should have suggested their march against Nizamul Mulk, and the Emperor agreed to it, as was his usual habit.
In accordance with the plan Husain Ali Khan and the Emperor started on 11th September, 1720, for the Deccan. They went by way of Ajmer as Husain Ali Khan had to meet Raja Ajit Singh and discuss with him the problem of Nizamul Mulk. At Karoli, a village 10 miles from Agra, Saiyid Abdullah left for Delhi with his staff and officers. After a journey of less than a month the imperial camp reached a place between Jiund and Biund, about two kos to the east of Toda Bhon, a place 75 miles northwest of Agra and 60 miles east of Jaipur, on 8th October, 1720.

By this time the conspiracy had matured. In Mir Haider Beg Kashghari, they had found an assassin. He was promised rich rewards if he survived in the attempt on Husain’s life, and financial support to his family if killed in the attempt. The Emperor was informed of the plot by Muhammad Amin Khan who had opened negotiations with Qudsia Begam through Sadrun Nisa, the wife of Raza Quli Khan Bahadur Jahandar Shahi, the intermediary being one Shah Abdul Ghafoor, a faqir from Thatta in Sindh who went to and fro disguised in women’s attire as a seller of milk. Muhammad Shah was found to be favourably inclined to

   T.M. p. 215.  
   Sahifa Iqbal. f. 4(a)  
   Qasim. p. 151.  
3. K.K. p. 900  
   T.M. p. 218.  
   T.M. p. 212.  
   Ma’sir Asafi. p. 126.  
   Shiv Das. p. 99.  
   Tarikh-i-Ali. f. 69(a)  
   Ahwal./f. 175(a). The would-be assassin is reported to have said "I am a Saiyid and he is also a Saiyid; if brother kills brother that matters little."
the scheme. Muhammad Amin Khan sought the assistance of Saadat Khan, a Saiyid of Nishapur, Haider Quli Khan, a Mughul, and Samsamu Daulah, the would be leader of the Indian party in the imperial court. "All these three were agreed upon assassinating and bound themselves together to effect their purpose and keep their design secret to themselves. Husain Ali Khan moved in a ring of heartless conspirators, but his overweening pride blinded him to the danger to his person. And even when informed of the fact he remarked, "Who is there who could raise a hand against me, what plot is there, what reason for any assassination."

It was decided at first between Muhammad Amin Khan and Saadat Khan that attack should be made on his life by encircling him with their respective forces. But unexpectedly on the next day the Amirul Umra was on the elephant instead of horse. In such condition no such wild venture could be prosecuted.

2. His original name was Mir Muhammad Amin and he was the son of Mir Muhammad Naseer, who traced his origin to Musa Kazim. After the death of Alamgir, Muhammad Amin Khan came to Patna, where his father had already settled down, and got a subsistence allowance from the kind favour of Murshid Quli Khan, the Diwan of Bengal. After a short time, Mir Muhammad Amin and his brother Mir Muhammad Baqar left Patna and went to Delhi in search of employment. There Muhammad Amin Khan found service under Sarbuland Khan, Faujdar of Kara Manikpur, as Mir Manzil, camp superintendent. After two years he resigne his post and came to Delhi where he got a mansab of 1,000 hors. After the deposition of Farrukh-Siyar, he joined the Saiyids who appointed him Faujdar of Hinduan and Bayan on 6th October, 1719. When the Emperor Muhammad Shah came to this place, Muhammad Amin Khan, in the capacity of Faujdar attended the court. It was here that conspiracy was formed with the Mughuls against the Saiyids. Srivastava, pp. 1-13.
4. Qasim. p. 150.
5. Sahifa-i-Iqbal. ff. 4(b); 5(a).
On the fateful mid-day of 8th October, 1720, when Husain Ali Khan was returning from the imperial enclosure in palanquin, he heard shouts of complaint raised by Mir Haider Beg, who with two others was standing at respectable distance from the former's position. When allowed to approach close to him, the would-be assassin accused Muhammad Amin Khan under whom they had served, of embezzlement in the distribution of salaries, and requested the Amirul Umra to do justice. He had a petition purporting to contain these complaints in his hand which he wanted to give to the Mir Bakshi by himself. Husain Ali Khan took the paper in and began to read it with one hand holding the paper and the other a mouthpiece of the pipe. Finding him unaware and off his guard, Haider Beg, in the twinkling of an eye, took out the

1. According to the custom, known as Jauher, at the end of every march, first the Emperor followed by great nobles would come to his tent, and making all arrangements would return, the nobles also to their respective places. On that morning, Husain Ali Khan, followed with chief ministers, escorted Muhammad Shah as far as the imperial gateway. The Emperor entered within the private apartments leaving the party outside. At that time Muhammad Amin Khan vomited by putting his fingers in mouth, fainted and laid down on the ground. Rose water and Beadmushk were brought by the orders of the Amirul Umra and administered on him. On recovering he was taken to Haider Quli Khan's tent, adjacent to the imperial camp, on his own request. Husain Ali Khan then went inside the enclosure and waited the coming of the Emperor; as Muhammad Shah could not come, betel leave was sent to him from within, which he took, and got in his litter and advanced towards his own tent. Muhammad Amin Khan was present at that time in the Mir Itash's tent, only to be absent from the scene. Fathiya. f. 3(b). Shiv Das. p. 99. Qasim. p. 152. The author of Mirat-ul-Haqaiq f.(182,a) says that Muhammad Amin Khan was sitting in the Diwan Kas, and the Amirul Umra in the private apartments with the Emperor. There he feigned stomach-ache and on this pretext came out and went to the tent of Haider Quli Khan.
dagger and plunged it in his side. The criminal, though thrown down on the ground by the bleeding man, soon got up and cut his head off from the body. But he was shot down and then killed by Nurullah Khan, who also was despatched off by the other Mughul soldiers. Husain Ali Khan's head was brought out to the tent of Haider Quli Khan who with Muhammad Amin Khan had come out bare-footed after hearing the noise.

Muhammad Amin Khan's first concern was now to get the royal approval; for without that the Saiyid party could not be silenced. The horrible spectacle frightened the weak monarch, and his mother; and he quailed and effected cold neutrality. A competition now began as to which party was to have the royal support and under the cloak of royal favour win the aid of the soldiery as well as of masses. Muhammad Amin Khan was alone for the officers and the chiefs of the army, consisted mostly of Saiyids, Afghans and Rajputs, did not respond to his appeal of assistance in the cause of the Mughuls. But the crime was

Kamwar. f. 181(a)
Warid. p. 551.
Ahwal. f. 175(b)
K.K. p. 903.
T.M. p. 220.
Fathiya f. 3(a)
Risala-i-Khan-i-Dauran. f. 76(a)
Qasim. (p.153). According to him his attendants wanted to take the petition from his hands, but Amirul Umra refused and extended his hands. According to the author of Tarikh-i-Ali (f.69) two petitions had been drawn, one was to be presented by Haider Beg, and the second by his nephew. When allowed to approach near, Amirul Umra first took the petition of Haider Beg in his hand. On this his nephew said, "Nawab Saheb, I hope you will first pay your attention on me." Then the Nawab turned his face towards him, Haider Beg struck his dagger in his side. The author Sahifa Iqbal (f.5.b) does not speak of this story.
Tarikh-i-Ali, f. 71(a).
Majma-ul-Insha. p. 61.
Ahwal. f. 175(b)
committed so suddenly and secretly, that these forces of the late Amirul Umra's army could not rally together and thereby thwart the further execution of the enemy's pre-planned project. Their attempts to seize the person of His Majesty that followed, the murder suffered from one fatal mistake, that is, disunity and lack of cooperation among the Saiyids of Barha. The leaders of the Barha clique could not organise themselves, but each of them unsheathed the sword in his own interest and fought single-handed. Though they fought with gallantry, but were overcome by the Mughuls who had organised and united themselves under the leadership of Muhammad Amin Khan. Those heroic efforts of the Saiyids, if guided by an able leader with common programme, might have changed the course of events, and again restored the fortunes of the Saiyids.

The tumult began to range round the private enclosure, when Saiyid Ghulam Ali Khan, cousin of the ministers, appeared with Islam Khan, and his gunners, to obtain the person of the Emperor, but all were beaten back and captured by Muhammad Amin Khan. The Emperor still seemed undecided as to which way he should go for establishing his own authority now put at naught by the contestants in his own presence. His weakness and indifference were potential dangers to the successful end of their plot, and to avert them, the Mughul leaders cast off all kinds of formalities and themselves secured His Majesty's person, much against his will and the wish of his mother. Saadat Khan with his face covered entered the harem, and forcibly mounted the Emperor on Qamaruddin Khan's elephant. Muhammad Amin Khan sat behind him in the hujada. They advanced forward and stood at the entrance of a public market, where thousands saw the gory head of Husain Ali Khan fastened to the end of a long pole with amazement and

awe. The change thus pronounced, plundering was then ordered by them. Husain Ali Khan's baggage and the treasures were looted recklessly by the Mughul soldiery.

While plundering was going on, fighting ensued between the Mughuls and the Saiyids. In the desperate attempts to enter the private enclosure and seize the person of His Majesty, Saiyid Ghairat Khan, Izzat Khan, Saiyid Karimullah Khan, Sheikh Najmuddin were killed. All of them had attacked separately, and though they fought heroically, fortune did not favour them. It was after great difficulty that the strife could be put down.

Raja Mukham Singh stood inactive, and like him, Rai Sirat Singh Multani, his son Lala Nand Singh, Lala Jaswant Rao, son of Sahib Rai Munshi, Rai Saroman Das Kyasth, and Muazzam Khan remained passive spectators. Among others who were killed were Umar Khan, Saiyid Jan Ali Khan and Mir Ali Khan. Several thousands perished under the swords and spears of the Mughuls; Raja Ratan Chand was arrested, put to much indignity and abused by the low men of the camp, and brought before Muhammad Amin Khan. Clothes were supplied, and he was asked to give information about the secret treasure of his late paymaster. Despite torture inflicted on him, he remained silent. He was then cast into prison. Rai Saroman Das in disguise of a faqir fled away.

1. Ahwal. f. 176(b)
   Kamwar. f. 181(b)
   Fathiya. f. 4(a)
   K.K. p. 908.
   Sahifa-i-Iqbal. f. 6(b)
2. Irvine. pp. 62-64.
   Shiv Das. p. 106.
   Qasim. pp. 159-160.
   Risala-i-Khan-i-Dauran. f. 77(b).
   Ahwal. f. 176(a)
Now all signs of turbulence had disappeared, and complete calm reigned. Muhammad Shah held a formal darbar, in which Raja Gopal Singh Bhadoria and twenty one other nobles, all won over by Muhammad Amin Khan, offered homage to the Emperor and secured promotions in return; the first-named noble was raised to the mansab of 6,000 zat with the privilege of beating the drums. Muhammad Amin Khan was made the wazir with the title of Wazirul-Mumalik and a mansab of 8,000 zat 8,000 Sawar (two aspa) was conferred on him; one Karor and fifty laks of Dam were given to him in cash as Inam; and the pompous title of Zafar Jang Salar Yar-i-Wafadar was added to his former one, i.e. I'timad-ud-Daulah Samsam-ud-Daulah was appointed Mir Bakshi, and the title of Amirul Umra with the rank of 8,000/8,000 was bestowed on him. He received one Karor Dam as reward. Haider Quli Khan was promoted to 6,000/3,000 with the title of Nasir Jang. Qamaruddin Khan, son of the new wazir, was made second Bakshi and appointed Darogha of Ghusal Khana. Mir Muhammad Amin was granted a mansab of 5,000/3,000 with the title of Saadat Khan Bahadur, and the privilege of beating kettle drums was also given to him.

The corpses of Husain All Khan, Ghairat Khan, Izzat Khan and Nurullah Khan were placed in the coffins covered with gold brocade and after due funeral service despatched to Ajmer, where they were buried near the tomb of Saiyid Abdullah Khan, the father of the two ministers.

1. K.K.911.
   Kamwar f. 182
   Sahif-i-Iqbal ff. 8(b); 9(a)
   Qasim pp. 162-164.
   T.M. pp. 227-228.
   Hadiqat. p.110.
   Hadiqat p.111.
Battle of Hasanpur.

The death of Husain Ali Khan was the triumph of the Mughul clique and the Emperor was to some extent relieved of the pressure and the fear of the all powerful Saiyid brothers. The Emperor set out towards Delhi with his nobles and the army on 9th Zulhij (11th October, 1720). Several chiefs of note joined the imperial standard, such as Saiyid Nusrat Yar Khan Bahadur, Sabit Khan, Muhammad Khan Bangash, Sher Afghan Khan Panipati, Aziz Khan Bahadur Chagta, and Bayazid Khan Mewati. After nearly one and half months, the party reached the bank of the Jumna, and encamped on 12th November, 1720, at a place called Hasanpur, on the right bank of the river, in Pargana Patawal.

Saiyid Abdullah Qutbul Mulk was at Sarai Chath, on his way from Kauroli to Delhi, when on the night of 9th October, 1720, a camel dārbar sent by Ratan Chand reached him and gave him the letter containing information of Amirul-Umra's assassination. This distressing news left him two alternatives - either to resign and surrender or to make a desperate bid to recover the lost position by having recourse to arms. Self-respect as well as the fear of treachery forbade him to submit and he determined to fight with the Mughuls who had come into power by killing his brother. He announced this decision to the nobles who had

   Qasim. p. 174.  
   Shiv Das. p. 109.  
   Kamwar. f. 185(a).  
   Sahifa-i-Iqbal. f. 11(b).  
2. Fathiya. f.7(b).  
   Qasim. p. 175.  
5. Siyar. p. 56.  
   Hadiqat. p. 112.  
   Shiv Das. p. 107.
assembled to console him. He sought their cooperation in the coming contest. The nobles advised him to march speedily against the Emperor before he was joined by the provincial troops or the forces of Husain Ali Khan were won over by him. Rejecting the advice, he argued that without some royal Prince as his puppet, fighting against the legitimate Emperor was futile and inexpedient.

It was thus decided to secure a Prince who could be elevated to the Mughul throne, and an army enlisted in his name. Shujatullah Khan, son-in-law of Abdullah Khan, Murtaza Khan, and Hafizullah Khan were sent in advance to Delhi where they were to select a Prince and get him crowned in consultation with Saiyid Najmuddin Ali Khan, Nazim of Delhi.

Simultaneously with these preparations he opened correspondence with the Emperor. In his first letter Saiyid Abdullah Khan complained of the frightful acts perpetrated by the miscreants outside His Majesty's camp, and strongly appealed that justice should be done to vindicate the majesty of law. He gave an indirect hint of his march against him (Emperor) writing that he was coming to punish the murderers whom/Abdullah) expected to be kept in prison by the Emperor. Muhammad Shah, in reply, expressed his utmost grief over the fatal tragedy, and added that the arch-culprit, Haider Beg Khan, was done away with on the spot; about the accomplices he knew nothing, nor their names were supplied by him (S.Abdullah) in the letter.

2. Ibid.
He informed him of his own march to meet him and proposed to settle the matter in his presence, "in the most perfect and satisfactory manner according to the Holy Law and Justice. Both Muhammad Shah and Saiyid Abdullah Khan understood each other's motives, and were busy in preparing to checkmate the other's designs. The thin cover of courtesy could not hide their mutual hostility.

The imperial metropolis was horror-struck to hear the news of Husain Ali Khan's murder. To beguile the citizens Najmuddin Ali Khan gave a quite contrary report to what had actually happened two days before at a distance of 128 miles from the capital. He ordered the house of Muhammad Amin Khan to be plundered. But neither the inmates of the house, nor the people of the city could be deceived by such a demonstration. The custodians of the house encouraged by the happy news threw up defences, and prevented the Subedar from carrying his designs into execution. Now truth became as clear as daylight, and spread everywhere.

After Id prayers, (10th Zul Hij, 12th October, 1720) Najmuddin, accompanied by Murtaza Khan and Shujaastullah Khan, visited the royal prison house and brought out Prince Ibrahim, aged 23 year, the eldest son of Rafi-ush-Shan, the third son of Bahadur Shah, and crowned him on 15th October under the title of Abul Fath Zahiruddin Muhammad Ibrahim. The Khutba was read in his name and coins were issued.

   Qasim. p.169.
   Kamwar. p.f. 186.
   Sahifa-i-Iqbal. f. 10(a)
   Warid. p. 556.
   Zafara Deccan p. 69.
Two days after the enthronement Saiyid Abdullah Khan arrived in the city and forthwith busied himself in raising an army on a grand scale. The imperial treasures, found in the palace, withal his own and Raja Ratan’s riches were recklessly spent in enlisting soldiers. To a man with one horse the pay offered was 80 rupees while one with two horses got hundred and fifty rupees a month; one or two months salary was paid in advance at the time of registration. Thousands of them representing all colours, creeds and occupations with no interest in the struggle flocked to his standard, to relieve themselves from economic distress. No rules and regulations of military discipline were observed, and no distinction was made between bazar loungers, butchers, cooks or cotton-carders and old veterans, with the result that resentment grew apace among the latter. According to Khafi Khan 90 thousand horsemen were enlisted and perhaps 14 or 15 thousand of them, after getting the advance disappeared. It is said that one karor of rupees was disbursed in these days.

Ghaziuddin Khan Ghalib Jang, Hamid Khan, Itiqad Khan and Saifullah Khan were won over. The first got a mansab of 8,000 horse (du Aspa) with the title of Amirul Umra, and the office of Mir Bakshi, Saiyid Najmuddin Ali Khan, Saiyid Salabat Khan, and Bâfrám Khan were made second, third and fourth paymasters respectively. Abdullah was much worried as he was

   Qasim. p. 169. According to him the number was 6,000.
   Ahwal. f. 177(a) " " 1,20,000
   Warid. p. 556. " " 1,25,000
   Shiv Das. pp. 107-8 " " 1,80,000
   Kamwar. f. 187(A)
   Shah Nama Deccan. p. 133.
4. Ibid.
soon afterwards started firing his guns; he displayed great courage and zeal in this matter, and infused enthusiasm among his co-workers by liberal distribution of money. As Abdullah Khan had not brought his heavy artillery with him he failed to silence the enemies' guns with the result that the new levies lost heart feeling that before this storm they could not stand. They began to desert in thousands and the road running to Delhi was thronged with deserters. Saiyid Abdullah remained firm till the fall of the night. Muhammad Shah passed the night on the elephant without taking his dinner. When the day dawned on 14th November, Abdullah Khan found his army reduced to a few of his relations and his veteran troops. They resumed fighting to the best of their power.

Abdullah Khan, joined by Najmuddin Ali Khan and many Barha chiefs, again delivered an attack. Shahamat Khan and many other were slain on his side. When surrounded on all sides by the Mughals, he dismounted to fight on foot. This resulted in the desertion of more prominent persons including Saifuddin Ali Khan with Prince Ibrahim. Saiyid Abdullah Khan and Najmuddin Ali Khan, both wounded, fought like lions, till Haider Quli Khan reached the spot, and throwing a sheet of cloth (shwal) on the head of Abdullah Khan mounted on his elephant, and took Najmuddin Ali Khan too with him. "His

Shiv Das. pp. 114-117. 
Qasim. pp. 177-195. 
Namvar. f. 190(a) 
Warid. p. 556. 
Sahifa-i-Iqbal. f. 117(a) 
Fathiya. f. 8(a) 
Shah Nama Deccan pp. 134-135.
the haram had already made off with whatever they could lay their hands upon, Saiyid Ghulam Ali Khan, collected all the gold and jewels and in the confusion got away. Only Saiyid Nijabat Ali Khan, nephew and adopted son of the wazir, a boy of 13 or 14 years, and ten years old daughter of Najmuddin Ali Khan, were seized. The boy was sent to share the prison of his uncle, and the girl was given to the charge of Nawab Qudisia who wanted to marry her to the Emperor, but through the intercession and persuasion of Haider Quli Khan, was later on restored to Najmuddin Ali Khan. It is said that Saiyid Abdullah Khan had protested against this unprecedented insult to the Saiyids of Barha.

The Character of the Saiyid Brothers.

Saiyid Abdullah Qutbul Mulk after living for three years in prison died of poison on the 1st Muharram (11th October, 1722). It was through the pressure of the Mughuls who were constantly plotting against his life that Muhammad Shah gave his consent to his being poisoned. First he was taken away from the charge of Haider Quli Khan, and then put in the imperial apartments, being treated well in both the places; but the Mughuls never stopped their attempts to poison the Emperor's mind by circulating news that he was in conspiracy with Raja Ajit Singh, and one day would effect his escape, and create new trouble.

Thus ended the supremacy of the Saiyids who had dominated the political stage of India for an unbroken period of seven years, full of changes and disturbances. The appellation of

of King-makers they earned during life-time, bespeaks itself of the power and fortune the ministers have attained in the government. Warriors of renown, they possessed valor and the daring spirit of a hero, who courts danger and fame, dislikes tricks in fighting and boldly challenges the rival, indifferent of consequences. Their ambitions were well supported by determination and courage which won for them glorious victories, and the regard and admiration of the public. Supporting the cause of a destitute like Farrukh-Siyar and raising him to the throne by defeating the defacto Emperor was a prodigious feat of their diplomacy, resourcefulness and courage.

The younger brother, Husain Ali Khan, was a judicious mixture of bravery, liberality and mercy, though rashness, arrogance and impatience in pursuing the ends neutralised these qualities. Nevertheless, to his military prowess was due the suppression and submission of Raja Ajit Singh, and the alliance with Marathas. He was perhaps the first man who foresaw the necessity of redressing the grievances of the Hindus by the abolition of Jiziya. He realized the futility of sticking to the polities and traditions that had failed Alamgir and now could render no useful service to the general interests of the Empire as well of the nation. Kind-hearted and generous, Husain Ali Khan, was patron of arts, helper of the poor and considerate towards theologians and mystics of every creed. Azad Bilgrami informs us that during his stay in Aurangabad poeple did not prepare food in their houses, as all were free to eat at his

2. Risalaia-Khan-i-Daurah. f. 90(b)
house. On the 11th and 12th of every month, people received cooked and uncooked food nearly in all the big cities of Hindustan and Deccan from his kitchens. "In the heyday of their supremacy," writes Shiv Das, "people got employment, and few remained without means of livelihood; the pay of the soldier was fixed as Rs. 50 per month. As his fate favoured him, every individual became happy and prosperous. The law of the government was operated in such a way that no one felt aggrieved at their hands; and in a short time they impressed the stamp of their authority on all the departments of the government."

Husain Ali Khan's impartiality in deciding cases and doing justice to the oppressed was well-known. During his campaign against Raja Ajit Singh, it was reported that a soldier had abducted the young daughter of a poor widow. He swore that he would not sleep or take food unless the girl was discovered. She was restored to her mother, a certain amount of money in cash was given to her, and monthly stipend was fixed for them.

Once Sa'adat Khan had to give fifty buffaloes to a peasant against one he had forcibly seized in order to escape the wrath of Husain Ali Khan. He is credited to have built up a canal in Ajmer, a reservoir in Aurangabad, a Sarai and bridge and other works for public benefits in the native town of Barha.

4. Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shah. f. 24.(a,b)
5. Tarikh-i-Hind. p. 446.
6. Miratul Haqaiq. f. 83(b).
Saiyid Abdullah Qutbul Mulk was prudent, for-bearing and patient, qualities wanting in his younger brother. A voluptuary, he had become heedless of the state business which he handed over to Raja Ratan Chand. His was a life of ease and princely pomp.

None of those brothers were a constructive genius and they did not come up to the level of Nizamul-Mulk. No administrative reform and no attempt to remove abuses from the departments are recorded to have made by them. All their energies were devoted to the attainment of personal ends by intriguing against the Emperor. They possessed valour without cool and sound judgement. Here was the soldier subdued by the statesman. The outstanding defects of their character were their arrogance, overweening pride, too much self-confidence, lust of power and money. "The day before his assassination Husain Ali Khan uttered a foolish speech about making an Emperor of any one on whom he chose to cast his shoe."

Alamgir's remark about the character of the Saiyids of Barha is very characteristic. He once wrote to Zulfiquar Khan about the punishment and promotion of the Saiyids of Barha. "For whom promoted or exalted they say: 'I am and there is none other! and stray from the path of duty. They lift their gaze too high and begin to cause trouble."

1. Khazana-i-Amra. p. 154. The writer has composed a poem in the praise of the minister. Two verses are quoted.


3. Irvine p. 97. (Ahkam-i-Alamgir)
However, their one act of infidelity, as Shiv Das puts it, destroyed the harvest of their whole life, and left their name to be remembered by posterity with reproaches. The contemporary, as well as the non-contemporary writers are sharply divided in blaming them for or exonerating them from the degrading act of killing the king. Kam Baksh Ashob, Qasim Lahori, Qasim Aurangabadi, author of Sahifa-i-Iqbal and so many others, themselves Mughuls or patronised by Muhammad Amin Khan and Nizamul Mulk call them faithless, untrue to the salt, cruel, hard-hearted, wicked uncultured etc, who disgraced Mughul throne, dishonoured Timuride dynasty and wrought havoc in the Empire; while Tabatabai, Rustum Ali Khan, Azad Bilgrami and others have nothing but admiration for them, and regard them innocent of the misdeeds ascribed to them.

Azad Bilgrami writes that after their fall people discussed their virtues and defects in meetings and gatherings, and quarrelled with each other. Two chronograms composed by two poets have come down to us which throw light on the discussions among the people on the subject. Mirza Abūl Qadīr Bedil wrote:-

"Didst thou see what they did to the mightly king? A hundred harsh and cruel deeds they did, un-thinkingly, I asked wisdom for the date. She answered: The Saiyids behaved disloyally to the king."

1. Shiv Das. p. 129.
2. Some of such abusive phrases are these:-
To this replied Mir Azmatullah Baikhabar Bilgrami in these lines:

"To the infirm monarch they did what they ought to have done. They did what a physician should do. By light of wisdom's lamp, this date was written. The Saiyid treated him as the case required."

Impartially judged self-defence and the instinct of self-preservation dictated such a policy which resulted in the desposition, blinding and death of Farrukh-Siyar. Their motives for the commission of the criminal act can be well described in the words of Gibbon. "In the tumult of civil discord the laws of society lose their force, and their place is seldom supplied by those of humanity. The ardour of contention, the pride of victory, the despair of success, the memory of past injuries, and the fear of future dangers all contribute to flame the mind and to silence the voice of pity."

Muhammad Shah after his victory at Hasanpur ordered that the Saiyid should be referred to after their death, the one as Namakharam, and the other as Haramnamak. Khafi Khan says that Nizamul Mulk had objected to it and never used these abusive terms for them.

   Shiv Das. p. 129.
The Wizarat of Muhammad Amin Khan.

The Emperor after his victory over Saiyid Abdullah Qutbul Mulk left Bilochpura on 16th November, 1720, and passing through Chhainsa (17th), Talpat, (18th), Talah Kishan Das (19th) at last reached on 20th the skirts of Delhi where he visited the shrine of Kh. Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, and the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya. On the last named shrine he gave one thousand rupees to the custodians. There he received in audience Muzaffar Khan, brother of Samsam-ud-Daulah Khan-i-Dauran, who offered one thousand gold coins, and got in return a Khilat. On the 22nd of November (22nd Muharram) he entered the city through Ajmeri Gate. When he came to the house of Muhammad Amin Khan, the wazir presented two trays full of jewels, five horses, and other presents. Afterwards, Muhammad Shah entered the fort.

On the 25th, a grand darbar was held in Diwan-Khas; Raja Jai Singh was introduced by Aitamad-ud-Daulah who presented one thousand gold coins, and one thousand rupees, and received special dress of honour, a wreath of pearls, one elephant and one horse. The wazir was made Subedar of Multan, and Faujdar of Muradabad.

The most important event of the year was the abolition of Jiziya by Muhammad Shah on the representation of Raja Girdhar Bahadur and Jai Singh who pleaded that the Hindus, the ancient inhabitants of the country and loyal to His Majesty, had prayed for the downfall of the Saiyid brothers.

   T.M. p. 251.
   Sahifa-i-Iqbal. f. 22(a)
   Kamwar. f. 194(a)
2. Ibid.
Muhammad Amin Khan, the wazir, after assuming this great office changed his attitude of high-handedness towards the people, to the amazement of all. He was notorious for his rash and furious temperament and in inflicting cruelties on the people for their petty offences; he was greedy, lustful and dishonest in his dealings. But now a remarkable change had overcome him, his passions were soothened by the thought of responsibilities he had taken up on himself. Shiv Das writes that his administration was efficient, just and pure; his authority had struck awe and terror in the hearts of the officials. He admonished and insulted Bhagwat Rai, his own Diwan in the open court; other secretaries, Rai Bag Chand, Rai Tond Rai Karori Chand and Lakshmi Chand, trembled while submitting papers before him. Yousuf Muhammad Khan the author of Fathiya, informs us that Muhammad Amin Khan during the days of his wizarat was keenly interested in the welfare of the people. Anyone who presented his case before him was satisfied by his just and prompt action the wazir would take the application, issue orders, and either on the same day or on the next, himself give the Sanad with his seal to the man concerned. In the transaction of business, he did not rely on clerks, officers and his secretaries, but himself examined the papers and issued orders. Strangely enough, as Warid says, he made no distinction between the Saiyids and non-Saiyids in doing justice; but they could not

3. Fathiya. f. 132(a).
get employments or jagirs as the Mughuls could.  

Muhammad Amin Khan died after three months on 27th January, 1721, and was buried within the school he had founded out near the Ajmeri Gate.