CHAPTER IV.

NIZAMUL MULK IN THE DECCAN, 1724-1732.

Nizamul Mulk's victory over Mubariz Khan.

When Nizamul Mulk reached Aurangabad, Mubariz Khan was engaged in the reduction of Phulchari near Machhlibander. Availing himself of his absence, the Nizam with his usual promptitude, occupied the capital of the south, where Iwaz Khan joined him. Mubariz Khan thus lost the first round of the game. He wasted much time in conquering some petty fortress, unmindful of the strength his adversary had acquired. As was his habit, he attempted to compromise with the foe before commencing hostilities. In his letter Nizamul Mulk pointed out to him that the surrender of the only place he now possessed would be disastrous for him; Mubariz Khan should wait till he secured another appointment, which he expected very soon, from the Emperor.

But ambition and the pressure of his hot-headed Afghans,

M.U. III. p. 737.  
Hadiqat. p. 129.  
The Emperor upbraided Mubariz Khan for his negligence in the defence of Aurangabad. At the time of issuing the first Farman, Nizamul Mulk was in Moradabad, and Mubariz Khan was somewhere near Deogarh.  
Shah Namah Deccan. pp. 159-60.  
Ashob. p. 162.  
K.K.p. 952. (According to him several notes were exchanged between them).  
T.M. p. 280.  
Ahwal. f. 186(b).  
The author of Mirat-ul-Hadaia, Aitmad Ali Khan(f.34,b) mentions no such correspondence; but, on the other hand writes that, Mubariz Khan sent the Imperial Farman to him and sought his advice in the matter. The Nizam replied, "Well, accept my congratulations, send your deputy, and come yourself to take the charge." Mubariz Khan thus deluded, came to Aurangabad without making any preparations for battle. This statement is not supported by other writers.
made Mubariz Khan to ignore the proposals. The Afghan military leaders with their war bands joined him and for their own self-aggrandizement incited Mubariz Khan to mobolise his strength. They told him that the service of crown and God were identical and that loyalty to anyone else was a sin. Mubariz had no alternative but prepare for the armed conflict which was inevitable. The Nizam at the end of Zilqad 1136 H, (3rd September, 1724) set out from Aurabgabad, in the midst of lightning, thunder, wind and rain. From the side of Zafarnagar came Mubariz Khan, and, when his army was at a distance of 24 miles from that of the Nizam, he marched off to Aurangabad which was defenceless. His evident avoidance of battle when he was actually inffront of the enemy was reckoned by the Mughal army as cowardice and a sure sign of his weakness. He had left a detachment to harass the Nizam's flanks and hamper his further progress. Nizamul Mulk with great difficulty crossed

1. Ahwal. f. 186(b).
   M.U. p. 737.
   Warid. p. 578.
   K.K. p. 952.
2. Ahwal. f. 187(a), 188(b).
   Hadiqat. p. 129.
   M.U. p. 740.
5. Ahwal. f. 190(a).
   M.U. p. 741.

Nizamul Mulk could not believe the report of his flight in the beginning, although he ordered the drums of victory to be beaten. He for long pondered over the event, and never relaxed his vigilence.
the river and advanced to Shakar Khera, where he overtook Mubariz Khan and encamped there on 23rd of Muharram.

Nizamul Mulk had an army of nearly seventy thousand horse and foot, and including ten thousand Marathas led by Baji Rao. The army of Mubariz Khan numbered fifty thousand. In the afternoon of 23rd Muharram 1137 H. (11th October, 1724) Mubariz Khan's vanguard started the battle which soon became hard and hot. Iwaz Khan was the first to bear the brunt of the furious assault made by the Khan's army. Mubariz Khan's two sons, Asad Khan and Masaud Khan were killed and an hour before sunset, after fighting with undaunted gallantry he was also killed. His two sons Mahmud Khan and Hamidullah Khan were wounded and made prisoners.

On the side of Nizamul Mulk only three persons of note were reported to have died, Reyat Khan, Nizam's cousin being one

2. Miratul Haqiaq. f. 290(b) Nizam's army was divided in the following order. The army of Mubariz Khan was divided in this order.
   Mughul Horse 20 thousand. Horse 22 thousand.
   Foot soldiers 40 thousand. Infantry 27 thousand.
   Maratha 10 thousand.
   According to Ahwal (f.193,a) Nizam's army was nearly one lak while that of Mubariz Khan was only fourteen thousand.
of them. On the following day the dead were buried and the wounded attended to. Mubariz Khan was buried in the plain outside the town of Shakar Khera. Nizam's victory over Mubariz Khan was the beginning of the establishment of his dynasty's rule over the south. He expressed his feelings of gratification by naming the place as "Fath Khelda or Village of Victory." Shortly afterwards Nizamul Mulk returned in triumph to Aurahgabad. There he bestowed rewards and honours in a sovereign like fashion on comrades in arms, Mansabs ranging from four thousands to seven thousands were given to veterans of his army. Some of them got titles and the privilege of a standard and kettle drum; while others, for their treachery, felt the full vigour of justice. But intelligence of the revolt in Hyderabad distracted his attention from completing the administrative arrangements. Khwaja Ahmad Khan was known to have energetically prepared for resistance in Hyderabad where his father Mubariz Khan had left him incharge. He called upon the shattered remanants of his father's army to join him, and instructed the Faujdars and zamindars to keep on resisting the usurper. At the head of a powerful faction, and in possession of the Golcanda fort, with the hope of succession to the Subedar of Deccan, Ahmad Khan had regarded his success as certain. He made provisions for the garrison and strengthened the fortifications of the fort.

5. Ibid. p.
Fully aware of the danger, Nizamul Mulk set out to crush hostility. During the course of the journey to Hyderabad he secured the submission of Kazim Ali Khan and his partisans including Appa Rao. In Hyderabad he asked Ahmad Khan to give up his intention and make submission to him.

Ahmad Khan, according to Aitmad Ali Khan, held out for long. The Nizam soon left the scene and repaired for Karnatik. It was on his return from that quarter that Ahmad Khan, finding no succour from any side, submitted to the victor, through Dilawar Khan, his father-in-law.

The country which Nizamul Mulk had made his home and to which he applied his energy and resources to make/afforded a gloomy spectacle. The war-worn Alamgir had left it in a state of utter desolation and anarchy. Political revolutions at Delhi and the rapid changes of governors that followed the death of Aurangazeb militated against hopes of restoring the land to normal life. The five viceroys, all men of outstanding merits were compelled to take active interest in the court factions. Their time in Deccan was occupied in curbing the Maratha marauders who had spread like ants during the last years of Alamgir's reign, plundering and devastating the surrounding villages and towns. The Marathas had become supreme all over the country, and the imperial governor's deputies, too weak to check their encroachments, were content to purchase immunity by allowing them to collect black-mail.

1. Ahwal. f. 197(a).
3. Ahwal. f. 197(b).
M.U.p. 745.
Haqiqat. p.137.
in the province. On all sides confusion was rampant; fields lay uncultivated; irrigation system was destroyed; roads were infested with robbers; trade and industry came to standstill; and all signs of peace and order disappeared. Inspite of all that "the six Deccan provinces had a standard revenue of 160 million rupees against 170 million from the other 12 provinces of the Indian Empire; and though the actual collection have had fallen to 130 million or even less, it was still larger than what came to the impoverished exchequer of Delhi."

His interference in the affairs of Gujrat.

The province of Gujrat lay adjacent to the north-west frontier of Nizam's dominions, and had served for the Mughul Emperors as a strong military base and a shore-house of supplies to the fighting forces in the south. Besides this strategical importance, the province had flourishing in commerce and trade. Moreover the revenues of Surat had been earmarked to meet the expenses of the Deccan government. Nizamul Mulk had some of richest jagirs in Gujrat. His interest in the province was political as well as economic. Its control by enemies meant a standing threat to his dominions. He remembered how the Saiyid brothers had asked Nahir Khan to furnish a force of two thousand horse and finance it with the treasure of Ahmadabad, to help Alam Ali Khan, and lately Shujaat Khan Bahadur had been instructed by

1. Sarkar's Article on Hyderabad, Cambridge History Vol.IV.
with him. On the suggestion of Shujaat Khan, the Emperor put at his disposal three lakhs of rupees from the treasury of Surat for building up a force of twenty thousand horse in order to lead an expedition against Nizamul Mulk and his partisans. Frightened by the new danger, he had no alternative but to checkmate the Emperor by asking Hamid Ali Khan to hold on with the assistance of the Marathas. His idea was to make ineffective the activities of his enemies in the frontier province, while in the meantime consolidate his resources in his own kingdom.

Hamid Ali Khan invited Kanthaji Kadon Bande, an officer of Shahu, then in Khandesh, to come and join him on promise of allowing him Chauth.

Reinforced by the Maratha contingents under the command of Kanthaji, Hamid Ali Khan succeeded in defeating and killing Shaujaat Khan in a hard combat fought at a distance of 8 miles from Ahmedabad in December, 1724. Hamid Ali Khan's authority was re-established in the capital. Apprised of his brother's death, Ibrahim Quli Khan, followed with fifty brave youths, went to the house of Hamid Ali Khan in order to kill him. Putting the guards of the house to sword, they got into the

Ibid. p. 59.
Ashob says that Nizamul Mulk had asked Hamid Ali Khan not to fight with Shujaat Khan and come to Deccan. Ashob. p. 167.
Ashob. p. 167.
3. S.P.D. No. 312.
Mirat-ul-Haqaiq. f. 36(b).
Ashob. p. 167.
Warid. p. 581.
K.K. 966.
house and made a thorough search of Hamid Ali Khan. Hamid Ali Khan taken by surprise, hid himself in a room. Ibrahim Quli Khan put to death a large number of persons, went inside the private apartments, and being disappointed came back, but was attacked and killed by Hamid Ali Khan and his men who by that time had come out of their hidden places. Rustum Ali Khan, the deceased's brother, in a spirit of revenge, took desperate measure in inviting Pilaji to his aid on the same terms on which Kantaji had fought on the side of his adversary. But in the thick of contest waged between two forces in the village of Aras in Pargana Pitald, about 25 miles from Ahmadabad, on 8th February, 1725, Pilaji, who had already confided himself with Hamid Ali Khan, betrayed Rustum Ali Khan and remained passive spectator watching an opportunity for plunder. Nevertheless, Rustum Ali Khan triumphed, as Hamid Ali Khan's ally Knathaji was also indifferent to fighting

   K.K. p. 966.
   Mirat-i-Ahmedi. p. 65.
   Mirat-ul-Haqaiq. f. 37(b).
   K.K. p. 969.
   Ashob. p. 168.
   According to Mirat-i-Ahmedi, Rustum Ali Khan had been advised by his friends to await the approach of the rainy season when Hamid Ali Khan's Maratha allies would be out. But his heart being afire for revenge, he paid no heed to the advice (p.69). He had with him a force of 15,000 horsemen and 30,000 matchlockmen and bowman and sufficient artillery.
   Ashob. p. 168.
   Hamid Ali Khan sent Nizam's letter to Pilaji, calling upon him to help his uncle. Pilaji visited Hamid Khan's camp. Terms were agreed on, robes of honour were conferred upon him, and he returned to his own camp. Rustum Ali was reported of this interview, but he remained indifferent regarding the war as nothing more than a gamble,
   Mirat-i-Ahmedi. p.70.
Hamid Ali Khan effected his escape from the battle field and sought refuge in the camp of Knathaji. Both Maratha generals threw their masks of alliance to their respective pay-masters, and plundered their camps with perfect impartiality in a most reckless manner. Hamid Ali Khan reprimanded Knataji for his culpable indifference and asked him to resume the offensive against the enemy. In the meantime, they were joined by a Maratha force from the Deccan sent by the Peshwa under the command of Pawar and Baji Bhivrao to take share in the general plunder of the province. The confederates with added strength and confidence started attacking ceaselessly Rustum Ali Khan's army. The supplies of provisions were cut off, his numbers diminished, and successive skirmishes disheartened him. In the village of Basu, in Pargana Pitald, on 21st February, 1725, a decisive action took place, in which Rustum Ali Khan was killed and his whole army destroyed.

When reports of this disaster reached Delhi, the Emperor urged Surbuland Khan to march in person and save the province. He was given a sum of 50 lakhs of rupees and a well-equipped force was put at his service. The news of his approach caused defection in the ranks of Hamid Ali Khan. His forces melted out, and even the Marathas turned deaf ears to his entreaties.

3. S.P.D. XXX. No.312.
   Warid. p. 583.
   Ashob. p. 168.
   Grant Duff is of the opinion that Rustum Ali Khan stabbed himself to the heart, in order to avoid the ignominious treatment after his imprisonment. Vol.II.p.399.
   K.K.p.970.
Thinking that he could no longer reckon on any support, he gave up the idea of further resistance, and left the province.

Though Hamid Ali Khan did not succeed in retaining his mastery over Gujrat, Nizamul Mulk's aim was achieved. His enemies, were kept at bay for a long time. The Imperial authority collapsed in the province, giving place to anarchy and confusion.

Asaf Jah had humbled the Emperor and crippled the power of his rivals. The whole of the Imperial Deccan lay at his feet. He enjoyed the undivided allegiance of his subjects, and posed as their leader. "In a short time the country was brought under the control of Muslim authorities - it was scoured from the abominations of infidelity and tyranny. Under former Subedars, the roads had been infested with ruffianism of highway robbers and rapacity of the Marathas and rebellious Zamindars, so that traffic and travelling were stopped, but now the high ways were safe and secure."

His dominions extended from the river Tapti, to Mysore and from the Carnatic right down to as far as Trichonopoly, and on the eastern coast, from Chicacole right down to the south.

His relations with the Marathas upto 1732.

During his first viceroyalty of the Deccan (May 1713-June 1715) Nizamul Mulk had come in contact with the Marathas. The two years of his office were passed in keeping them within limits and strengthening the Imperial power in the province.

He repudiated the Maratha claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the whole of Deccan agreed by Daud Khan, and followed a firm and strong policy in dealing with them. The Marathas met the challenge by creating disturbances in the country and black-mailing the towns and villages. Nizamul Mulk had to fight several contests with them in order to maintain the Imperial rule. Along with these military operations he took recourse to diplomatic machinations. He exploited to his own advantage dissensions between Tara Bai and Shahu, and inveterate jealousy between Balaji and Chandrasen Jadav. The latter at a very critical moment of his life sought protection with Nizamul Mulk who bestowed on him a mansab of 7,000/7,000, and a large jagir with a revenue of 25 lakhs a year. Henceforward, Jadav continued to be an ally of the Nizam, and the enemy of Shahu and his Peshwa.

During his absence from the Deccan Husain Ali Khan granted the Marathas Chauth and Sardeshmukhi.

After the fall of the Saiyid Brothers, Nizamul Mulk, whose

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Hadiqat.pp.70,74,75.
In one of the battles fought at Purandhar, Balaji sustained a crushing defeat at the hands of Nizam. After this peace was patched up between them, and Balaji for some time engaged himself in conflicts with Siddis and other Maratha rivals. But other Maratha leaders continued fighting with the Nizam who defeated them.
3. Jadav was envious of Balaji for the esteem and confidence in which he was held by Shahu. A trivial incident deepened the enmity into an armed conflict in which Jadav got the upper hand over his rival. Shahu was asked by Jadav to hand over Balaji who had fled to his court. This haughty demand was met by sending an expedition under Haibat Rao Nimblakar against him. At Adarki he was defeated. He shook off his allegiance to Shahu and joined Tara Bai.
successful revolt had largely contributed to the triumph of Muhammad Shah, was again the master of the Deccan, and in a more commanding position than during his previous viceroyalty. Though he had been opposed by Baji Rao in the battle of Balupur, Nizamul Mulk did not give vent to his resentment and conciliated the Raja by promising to give up all what the royal grants had conceded. Now when his power was established on firm grounds, he began to raise objection to the collection of Chauth by Shahu’s officers within his dominions. As disputed between Sambaji of Kolahpur and Raja Shahu had yet not been settled, Nizamul Mulk made it an excuse for evading the payment of the dues; he declared that he would pay the money to only one legitimate claimant. Unmindful of Nizam’s refusal, the Marathas were collecting their dues in the region between the Godvari and Aurangabad.

In order to repel them from his territory he sent Chandersen, Rao Rambha, and Mukham Singh, who defeated the Mughuls in a battle on 15th December, 1720. Elevated by this success Baji Rao advocated an aggressive policy against the enemy, while Shahu pressed him to adopt peaceful methods to adjust the differences. Accordingly on 4th January, 1721.

3. Ibid.
4. Sardesai. p. 73. Vol.II.
5. Sardesai. p. 74. Vol.II.
there took place the first meeting between the Peshwa and Nizamul Mulk near Chikhalthan, but without any decisive results. Soon afterwards Nizamul Mulk was again sent for by the king to assume the office of vizaratship. He left Deccan in 1721 leaving Mubariz Khan behind him as deputy-governor who made no secret of his hostility towards Marathas. He rejected their claims and put obstacles in the way of collecting dues. Nizamul Mulk perceiving that he stood on slippery ground quitted service in dudgeon and returned to Deccan. Confronted with this formidable array of opposition, Nizamul Mulk decided to end his discord with the Marathas and envisage a scheme of cooperative action in achieving his goal with them. At Malcha in Malwa a meeting between Nizamul Mulk and Baji Rao took place on 18th May, 1724. He not only recognised the Imperial grants of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, but also encouraged their pretentions over Malwa and Gujrat. The Emperor had issued letters to Mughul officers and Rajas in the province to help Mubariz Khan in the impending battle against Nizamul Mulk. Mubariz Khan acting on this advice also opened negotiations with the Marathas for their alliance. The demands made by them being staggering, were rejected by the Khan. The Marathas clung to Nizamul Mulk and helped him materially in defeating his rival.

In Aurangabad, after his victory over Mubariz Khan, Nizamul
Mulk conferred on Baji Rao a mansab of 7,000 horse and robes of honour, as a mark of his gratitude and friendship. He assigned a jagir near Indapur to Raja Shahu; and a fief in Berar was also given to Pratandhi. To get rid of obnoxious tribute collectors, Nizamul Mulk agreed to make cash payment from his own treasury equivalent to Chauth in the Subah of Haiderabad. This Raja Shahu accepted. It was also agreed that a joint tour of the Carnatic would be made with Baji Rao to adjust their claims over the country. Nizamul Mulk had realised the futility of resisting Maratha claims. Having cut himself off from the centre, he had now to live with his neighbours. Raja Shahu on his part involved in domestic dissensions was content with these agreements, but the Peshwa advocated an aggressive policy against the Nizam and ravage the rich provinces of Malwa and Gujrat. The Empire was tottering to its fall and they should "strike at the trunk of the withering tree, the branches must fall off themselves."

Having insinuated himself into the confidence of his master, Baji Rao kindled ambition in the feeble mind of Raja Shahu, and prevailed upon him not to heed the cowardly suggestions of Pratandhi.

Balgana and Khandesh lay at the gateway to Gujrat and Malwa and without possessing them or controlling the road.

through them northward advance could never be made, and this was bound to bring the Marathas in conflict with the Nizam. Thus there "began the inevitable clash between legitimate but static authority and the dynamic spirit of expansion of a new people trying to find its place in the sun." The two expeditions despatched by Shahu under Baji Rao in the years 1725-26 in the Carnatic opened his eyes to the new danger. It was an act of perjury and deliberate attempt to deprive him of the country west and south of Aurangabad which Shahu wanted to distribute among his feudatories.

During the course of their invasion of Carnatic the Marathas had collected Chauth, and made it sure that future payment would be made regularly by punishing those who opposed them. Nizamul Mulk ordered Iwaz Khan to prevent them from molesting the poor peasantry, and chastise them ruthlessly. They suffered heavy losses and retreated back to their homeland.

Unable to curb them by force, he had recourse to diplomacy. Raja Shahu's authority was not acknowledged by his own family members, and his excessive favour for Baji Rao had driven many officials into open revolt. They went to the side of Nizamul Mulk and induced him to espouse the cause of Sambalighi of Kolapur, Shahu's rival to the throne, Chandrasen Jadv and Rao Nimbalkar already in his camp, Udaiji Chauan, Kanbaji Bhosle and Sar-Lashkar Sultanji Ninubalkar, also joined him when Sambalighi himself fled to

   Ahwal.f. 199(a).
   Hadiqat-ul-Alam.p.139.
to his court in October, 1726.

The confederates now concerted measures to invade Satara and install Sambhaji on Shivaji's throne. With a grand army the Nizam started in November, 1727 towards Maharastra. But he was out manoeuvred and exhausted by the guerilla tactics of Baji Rao who avoiding pitched battles overran Baispur, Aurangabad, Jalna and Sindhked districts, and then crossing Tapti proceeded through eastern Gujrat in January, 1728, to Aimoban. Nizamul Mulk encumbered with his heavy artillery and mail-clad cavalry could not keep pace with the Marathas, and, he wisely "turned rein from the pursuit and set his face towards Poona," which he entered without encountering resistance and proclaimed Sambhaji as sovereign of the Maratha kingdom. Raja Shahu and Chimaji, Peshwa's brother and agent in the court, took refuge in the fort of Purandar. When Baji Rao learnt of his disaster, he at once swooped down on Aurangabad, compelling Nizamul Mulk to quit Poona. Leaving his baggage in Ahmednagar on 22nd February, 1728, the Nizam by the Kasar Bari route proceeded to face Baji Rao. At Palkhed about 20 miles west of Aurangabad an indecisive conflict was fought, in which Nizamul Mulk agreed to withdraw his protection from Sambhaji and allow Maratha officers to collect Chauth in the

5. S.P.D. X.50.
six Subas of the Deccan.

The treaty signed at Mughri Shevgaon between Nizamul Mulk and Baji Rao formed a new basis of their relations. The Nizam's abortive attempts to thwart Maratha expansion had been abortive. Baji Rao's position was strengthened and Sambhaji was ruined. His grief at this mortification was profound. Muhammad Qasim Aurahgabadi writes that for some days he gave up taking meals. Though smarting under a sense of humiliating failure he was anxious to preserve the integrity and independence of his kingdom.

With this view he had concluded alliance with Raja Shahu by recognising his right to Chauth and Sardeshmukhi as embodied in the Imperial grants. But the Maratha warlords, finding the Mughul Empire an easy prey, were already well along on the road to militant imperialism. Baji Rao was the symbol of the expansionist movement. Big concessions wrested from Nizamul Mulk had not satisfied his ambition. He was dreaming to bring the whole of the sub-continent under his sway. His insistence on collecting money through Maratha officials implied indirect control over Nizam's territories. The dual system had led to administrative chaos, and distress of the peasantry.

   Ahwal.f. 199(a).
   Hadiqat.p.140.
2. Ahwal.f.199.
3. "The Peshwa is reported to have addressed Raja Shahu in these words: "Now is our time to drive strangers from the land of Hindus, and to require immortal renown. By directing our efforts to Hindustan, the Maratha flag in your reign shall fly from the Krishna to Attock."
   Grant Duff. p. 396. Vol.II.
Nizamul Mulk desisted the system and its author, and wanted to free himself from both. He regarded Baji Rao inordinately arrogant, extremely ambitious, and most untrustworthy leader in the whole of Maharashtra. Though his prestige was markedly reduced after Palkhad, Nizamul Mulk continued his efforts to oust the Peshwa from the power he enjoyed. For this purpose he intrigued with Trimback Rao Dabhade and other Maratha chiefs. But Peshwa's alertness made it difficult to make an effective concerted action. In an engagement fought near Dabhoi on 12th April, 1731, Dabhade was defeated and slain by the Peshwa. The outcome of the war terminated internal rebellion and all hopes of Nizam he had centred in the fall of the Peshwa.

His Secret Pact With the Peshwa.

In his dealings with the Marathas as well as the trans-action of domestic business Asaf Jah had been acting independentl of the Emperor. He had fought, conciliated and entered into alliance with them, and granted to his officers ranks, titles and honours, without seeking the permission of the Central Government. Since the battle of Sakharkhedla 1724 he had deposited no money out of the revenues of his provinces in the Imperial treasury. He exercised full powers in regard to appointments and dismissals of government employees. Inspite of this he had shown a subject's deference to Muhammad Shah.

He never assumed royalty and styled himself as King nor used the imperial umbrella. Khutba was continued to be read and coins struck in the Emperor's name. He also kept the Emperor informed of his designs and activities against Marathas, although he did not seek his permission in these matters.

By throwing the weight of his influence into the Imperial scale, Nizam was sincerely desirious of paralysing the overwhelming power of the Marathas and prevent the fall of a declining Empire. He knew that his interests were identical with those of the Emperor; with the fall of the trunk of the withering tree he would meet the fate of the falling branches. But the crafty politician was not insensible to the mortal danger in the case he was put off guard while entangled in clash with the Marathas. He had no willingness to step down into the arena of a bloody war without being assisted by the central government. His policy was directed almost exclusively towards the security of his possessions.

In his letters to Muhammad Shah he invariably referred to the conditions in Malwa and Gujrat, warned him of the seething tide of Maratha invasions, and requested assistance in men and money to ward off the danger. His hold over Deccan demanded the destruction of Marathas, and any step in that direction required immense treasury and vast army. If one Karor of rupees as subsidy, fifty lakhs from jagirs in Hindustan for official salaries, and revenues of Surat for the Deccan government expenses, were granted to him, he was ready to

1. Mosvi Khan, f. 144(b).
2. Ibid. f. (49)(a).
undertake expeditions against the enemies. Another important suggestion he made in one of his letters to Muhammad Shah was that nobles and Rajas should come to close quarters with the invaders in central India, while he, if supported, would advance northward, and effect junction with Imperial armies.

Unfortunately his proposals were unheeded by the Emperor. Muhammad Shah still believed Nizamul Mulk to be root cause of all political troubles in the regions; he still feared that he might not bring new revolution in the Empire. He compared these demands with the proposal of helping the Persian monarch against Afghans Nizamul Mulk had made eight years before in Delhi and concluded that he was bent upon dethroning him.

Muhammad Khan Bangash was appointed governor of Gujrat to make yet another desperate attempt to prevent an outright annexation of the province by the Marathas. But he had to face tremendous difficulties in the execution of his tasks. Lack of money, non-cooperation of local Rajput Princes, and lack of help from the centre rendered his case hopeless. He well understood the consequences of his failure specially when Samsan-ud-Daulah was watching every opportunity for poisoning the Emperor's ears against him. The fears of

1. f.49(b), 53(a). The revenues of Surat were at the disposal of the governor in Deccan in the days of Alamgir, and the rule was exercised in the reign of Farrukh Siyar, at this time no money comes from that direction.
2. 145(a) Minshat Mosvi Khan.
4. Ibid. (Arazdasht No.9,f.12(a).
5. Ibid. No.12,f.36(b).
dismissal and disgrace compelled him to fix his eyes on Nizamul Mulk with whom he was for long in correspondence before his appointment as Subedar of Malwa. Muhammad Khan had great regards for him, and called him the only defender of Islam in that age. He wrote to him that if no effective curb was put on Maratha army leaders, all bonds between north and south would break down.

Nizamul Mulk on the other side was repeatedly writing to Muhammad Khan to meet him on the bank of Narmada. He was at that time looking forward to the fall of Baji Rao in his tussle with Dabhade. He found it expedient to utilize the support of Muhammad Khan for the success of Dabhade with whom he was in league. The meeting between the nobles took place near the Akbarpur ferry on the Narmada about 17th March, 1731, and for twelve days they remained together. Presents were exchanged and discussions made in a most cordial atmosphere. No information is available as to what was decided between them except that Nizam persuaded Muhammad Khan to help the Peshwa's rivals. It can safely be inferred that Nizamul Mulk must have explained his policy that the overthrow of Peshwa should precede the general destruction of his nation. Muhammad Khan, who had come with the avowed object of securing his aid in driving them out of his province Malwa, seems to have been outwitted by him.

He not only failed in his mission but had to pay the price of befriending the rebel.

The rumours that Muhammad Khan had been secretly instructed

2. Ibid. Arazdasht. No.4.f.8(a).
3. Ahwal. f. 200(a).
by Muhammad Shah to launch a campaign against Nizamul Mulk as soon as he was free from dealing with the Marathas were now confirmed by his dismissal on the charge of treachery. Nizamul Mulk now decided to pursue the policy of self-defence rather than to try to save the Mughul Empire from inevitable dissolution. Muhammad Qasim Aurangabadi writes "God knows that I can destroy the race of these wretched people, root and branch, and wipe out all signs of their existence within one year, only if I am satisfied from the side of the Emperor. But what can be done? The earth is hard, and sky far off. When the Emperor himself is not serious in state business, what his subordinates can accomplish." The Emperor being ill-disposed towards him he could not deal with two enemies at one time, he now tried to conciliate the Marathas. In the words of the writer, "If your friend is bent upon taking your life, you should be friend with his enemy."

On the invitation of Nizamul Mulk, Baji Rao came to meet him and discuss terms of friendship with him. The two met on Wednesday, 27th December, 1732, at Rohe-Rameshwar in the neighbourhood of Alus, about 8 miles north of Latur. The Nizam presented Baji Rao 7 dresses, two beautiful pairs of costly pearls, two horses and one elephant. The outcome of this momentous meeting was a treaty according to which "Maratha Government promised to leave the Deccan unmolested and to levy nothing beyond Chauth and Sardeshmukhi from them, while the Nizam agreed to remain neutral during the projected Marathas invasions of

1. Ahwal f.200(a).
2. Ibid. f.199(b).
4. Ibid.
Hindustan provided they did not injure the province Khandesh in their northward march through it.

Hyderabad was no longer a bulwark against the Marathas, but a buffer state and a prime factor in the Maratha expansion in the north. By changing the course of Maratha floods from the south to north, Nizamul Mulk could now promote the well being of his subjects. For about six years Hyderabad enjoyed peace and prosperity till he was recalled to the court in 1738.

During this period too he did not sever his relations with the Emperor. There was nothing to prevent him from becoming King of his territories, but he always repudiated such suggestion if some one made to him. "May throne and umbrella bring good fortune to him who holds them. My business is to preserve my honour, and if this be mine what need have I of an Imperial throne."

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   Elphinston, p. 687.
   Grant Duff, p. 416.