The Eighteenth Century India is sometime described as the dark age of Indian history. It witnessed the virtual collapse of the imperial authority at Delhi. For the time being it also marred all hopes of a progressive and peaceful Government and led to the destruction of a political and social order which was prevalent for two centuries and a half. Dreadful political turmoils, acute social anarchy and serious economic disorders make this century a 'period of unparalleled, confusion, an incoherent formless epoch. No century of Indian history records such intrigues, such crimes and such horrors as distracted the country during this period.' But in spite of this, the period was a landmark and epoch-making in the history of India and its people.

The Eighteenth Century witnessed the breakup of the gigantic Mughal empire, the rise of a number of independent and petty states. It is also important because of the struggles among the European trading companies who wanted to establish their political supremacy over different parts.

of the country. This century is marked by political disorder, administrative breakdown, economic chaos and social and cultural degradation." During this period of turmoil, India was drawn into the currents and cross-currents of world politics. As soon as the powerful emperor Aurangzeb left this world of toil or Friday, March 3, A.D. 1707, the elephentine structure of the Mughal empire underwent fast disintegration and its provinces became the centre of foreign politics and a hunting ground for foreign invaders. The unity that had been preserved for about three centuries by the mighty Mughal empire disappeared following the death of their last king Aurangzeb. "Within a very short time, after the death of this great 'muritan monarch', India was convulsed by a series of fratricidal wars," and "offered an opportunity to the rising Sikhs and the Marathas to become powerful."

"The war of succession soon started because, a struggle for obtaining the throne was in the tradition of the Chughatai Turks in India since the time of Humayun."

---
5. Bhimsen: op. cit., p. 161
6. Sarkar, J. N.: A Study of 18th Century India, p. 6
At the time of Aurangzeb's death, his three sons i.e., Mua'azzam, A'zam and Kam Bakhsh were alive but none was worthy of becoming a king. So the Emperor was worried about war of succession as he had already had a bitter experience in his early days. So he distributed his empire among his sons in accordance with Mughal principle and tried his best to avoid a horrible war of succession. Regarding the last will of Aurangzeb it is said to have been written in his own hand and left beneath the pillow on the death-bed. According to this will, the provinces of Bijapur and Hyderabad were assigned to Kam Bakhsh, while the rest of the empire was equally divided between Mua'azaam and A'zam. Having observed the situation of the empire, the Emperor desired to handover the capital Delhi to Mua'azzam and Agra to A'zam. In this way, both acquired provinces fetching an annual total revenue of about 500 crore dams while Kam Bakhsh had a less amount of annual revenue i.e., 200 crore dams. But the sons were not happy the way the empire was divided and distributed among them. They disregarded the will of Aurangzeb and prepared for the war of succession.

Aa'zam crowned himself on Zil-hijja 8 A.H.1115/ March 15 A.D.1707 and issued coins in his own name but his

7. Sarkar, J.N.: History of Aurangzeb based on Original Sources, p. 212
8. Pande, A.B.: Later Medieval India, p. 287
policies antagonised Turani nobles. Azam wanted to occupy Agra and accordingly instructed his son Bedar Bakht to proceed jointly towards Agra. Bedar Bakht could not act with a required spirit and urgency. Meanwhile Mua'azzam attained considerable power in the Northern India. He also rushed to Delhi in collusion with his son's forces. Mua'azzam reached Lahore in Safar A.H.1119/ May A.D.1707 and crowned himself as Bahadur Shah also as Shah Alam I. On 12th June he entered Agra and received army and wealth. Four crores of rupees were distributed among the nobles and the soldiers. Many Rajputs also joined hands with him who finally warned A'zam to respect the wishes of their deceased father and content himself with Gujarat. A'zam was advised to avoid unwanted bloodshed but he refused to listen to the advices of Bahadur Shah. Consequently, both met at Jajau near Agra in the month of Rabi'l A.H.1119/ June 10, A.D.1707 in which A'zam lost his life. Kam Bakhsh who took the title of 'Din panah' at the death of his father was not a threat to Mua'azzam in the beginning but in the later stages he tried to liquidate ambitious design and did not accept the suzerainty of Mua'azzam and started to wage a war but the

people were deadly against him and therefore, no serious
damage was caused to Mua'azzam and thus the war of succession
came to an end.

"Bahadur Shah or Shah Alam I ruled from A.D.1708 to
A.D.1712." He was then sixty four years old and because of
his inefficiency he was generally known as 'Shah-i-Bikhār'
or 'Headless King'. Though he was a liberal Emperor, yet he
could not create complete peace and tranquility in the empire
as the Sikhs and the Rajputs rocked the empire. Religious
differences between the Sunnis and the Shias also polluted
the atmosphere. Though he could settle the political differences
with Ajit Singh of Marwar, he could not suppress the Sikhs
due to his mild temper, dignified behaviour and generous
disposition. The Sikh leader Bunda Bahadur was an eyesore to
Bahadur Shah but his death served as a great relief to the
Emperor and saved him from an embarrassing situation. In
Muharram 19 A.H.1124/ February 28 A.D.1712, Bahadur Shah
breathed his last and was succeeded by his fourth son
Jahandar Shah.

Jahandar Shah ascended the throne on Rabi'1 14, A.H. 1124/
13 April 20, A.D.1712 and ruled for about ten months
only. During his weak rule the two brothers Hussain 'Ali,
the Governor of Bihar and Abdullah Khan, the Governor of

13. Burgess, : op. cit., p. 154
Allahabad, who were generally known as Sayyed brothers and whose ancestors migrated from Wesit, (in Mesopotamia) became much powerful. At the time of Bahadur Shah's death, Azim-ush-Shan's son Farrukh-Siyar, who was the Governor of Bengal, rebelled in Rabi A.H.1124/ April A.D.1712. The organised disunity among the nobles benefitted Farrukh-Siyar and he planned to occupy the throne. Many ambitious groups also joined Farrukh-Siyar to dethrone the Emperor. With connivance of the Sayyed brothers, Jahandar Shah was murdered after a grim battle fought near Agra in Muharram 17 A.H.1125/ February 13 A.D. 1713 and it led Farrukh-Siyar, the nephew of Jahandar Shah to ascend the throne who appointed many of his loyal people as officers. Besides, to pacify the non-Muslims, he exempted Jizia. 

Farrukh-Siyar reigned from A.H.1125/ A.D.1713 to A.H.1132/ A.D.1719 but like his uncle, he was also a weak and incapable king. He also became a puppet in the hands of the Sayyed brothers and the actual administration was run by them. The Emperor made frequent attempts to assert his independence but the Sayyed brothers were determined to retain the effective management of the affairs. Irvine writes," It is not too much to say that Farrukh-Siyar prepared for himself the fate which

16. Burgess : op.cit., p. 154
17. Shari : op.cit., p. 67
finally overtook him. Feeble, false, cowardly, contemptible. It is impossible to admire or regret him. It was at this time that the downfall of the Mughal empire took a great stride. He lost his control not only over the remote provinces but also over the whole administrative machinery. The whole reign of Farrukh-Siyar was a tussle between him and the two Sayyed brothers for power and position.” Consequently, taking the advantage of his weaknesses, they dragged him out, blinded and tortured him for two months and finally murdered him on Rajab 9 A.H.1131/ May 26 A.D. 1719.

After the murder of Farrukh-Siyar, the Sayyed brothers began ruling over the country through the imperial puppets. Rafi-ud-Darjat, the youngest son of Rafi-ush-Shan was crowned by them but soon he was dethroned and succeeded by his elder brother Rafi-ud-Daula who sat on the throne with the title of Shahjahan II. He died of diarrhea and was succeeded by Muhammad Shah on September 28 A.D.1719. Muhammad Shah was the last ruler from the line of Babur because, after him the kingship remained in the name only. It was during the time of his reign that the two Sayyed brothers lost their power and control over the kingship. Like his predecessors, Muhammad

18. Irvine : op. cit., p. 5
20. Bhimsen : Nuskha-i-Dilkusha, fol. 161
Shah was also not a good administrator. He proved himself a cypher in administration. It is said that, "he reigned but did not rule." Excessive devotion to the pleasure of the Harem imperilled the energies of rulers like Farrukh-Siyar or Muhammad Shah. They could not develop intelligence, manly spirit without which no ruler can pilot the ship of the state."

Taking the advantages of the weaknesses of Muhammad Shah, Ali Wardi Khan in Bengal, Sha'adat Ali Khan in Oudh and Nizam-ul-Mulk (who acted as the Viceroy of Deccan from A.D.1713 to A.D.1714 and from A.D.1720 to A.D.1722 and had tried to reform the abuses prevalent in the Mughal) declared themselves as independent. Kali Kinkar Datta in his article, 'India in the Eighteenth Century' writes:

Thus when the rulers or the nobles did not know how to look after real interests of the state others were bound to come in. Just as an individual without strength of body or tenacity of character easily falls prostrate before a hostile force so a society or a state without lofty ideals or inspiring examples gradually loses its vitality and falls an easy prey to alien influences or aggressive attacks from outside.

22. Sarkar : op. cit., p. 21  
The year A.H.1151/ A.D.1739 proved to be inauspicious for the Mughal empire. It was because it received a shock in the form of Nadir Shah's invasion on India. The Persian country which once helped Babur in laying the foundation of the great Mughal empire in India, had in course of time one of his kings plundered India. Nadir Shah came to India as a storm sweeping off all the opposition and entered Delhi on 25 Zi-l-hijja 8 A.H.1151/ March 20 A.D.1139 and stayed there for 59 days. At first Nadir behaved with courtesy towards his captives and appeared inclined to spare the vanquished people, but enraged by some rising of the inhabitants of Delhi in which many Persians were slain, he at length gave orders for an indiscriminate massacre which lasted for nearly a whole day. "Delhi witnessed scene the like of which no eyes had seen, no ear had heard of." Its streets became varitable shameless. After the brutal massacre in which neither the age relented nor sex respected, he sat on sympathetic plunder of the princesses and peasants, irrespec-
27 tive of their rank and religion." According to the author of Later Mughals, "many respectable householders slew their own wives and daughters to save them from molestation by the

25. Burgess, J. : op. cit., p. 177
27. Lethbridge, E.: Easy Introduction to the History of India, p. 132
Qizilbash soldiers and then rushed on the enemies' swords or cut their own throats. Many women drowned themselves into the wells of their houses to escape ashame worse then death." However, at about noon the massacre seized and a general pardon was proclaimed by the invaders to the peaceful citizens of Delhi. On his way to Iran, he took all the wealth that was found in the imperial repositories and annexed to his empire of Iran the provinces of Sindh, Kabul and some districts of Punjab but restored the rest of the empire to Muhammad Shah. It is estimated that Nadir Shah carried a heavy indemnity amounting to fifteen crores of rupees in cash. Besides, jewellery, gold and silver utensils and other valuable articles worth about fifty crores, thousand elephants, seven thousand horses and ten thousand camels went also as booty. The famous diamond 'Kohinoor' and 'Pea-Cock throne' were also carried away by him. "The accumulated wealth of 348 years changed masters in a moment." He also took from the Seraglio a virgin Mughal princess and married her to his son Nasrullah Khan on April 6 A.D.1739.

After the death of Muhammad Shah on Rabi'lll 27 A.H. 1161/ April 27 A.D.1748, his only son Ahmad Shah 'Abdul Nasr ascended the throne of Delhi. At that time he was 22 years old and he made Safdar Jang of Oudh as his Minister. He

30. Bada-i-Waqai : fol. 186
31. According to Ashub, she was the daughter of Mirza Yazdan, grandson of Murad Bakhsh, son of Shah Jahan. See Tarikh-i-Shahadat-i-Farrukh-Siyar, fol.295, Patna MS.
remained in the throne till A.H.1168/ A.D.1754. He was a mere pageant prince set up by the court nobles. His mother Udambai in concert with Nawab Jawid Khan took all administrative powers out of Ahmad Shah's hand. After the accession of Ahmad Shah into the throne, instead of giving attention towards the duties of the Government or looking after the administration, he plunged himself into sensual pleasures. He practically assigned his Royal function to the superintendent of his harem, Jawid Khan and almost all decisions were given by him. Jawid Khan usurped the entire control of the state and Government according to his poor capacity. The near collapse situation in the north attracted the hawk-eyes of Afghan invaders and Ahmad Shah Abdali lost no time to attack the Delhi empire. After the accession of Ahmad Shah to the throne of Delhi, his namesake came back and obtained the formal cession of the Punjab from the helpless Indian government which was distracted by civil war. The cruelties inflicted upon the people of Delhi and the northern India during the expedition form an appalling tale of bloodshed and wanton destruction. The Afghan bid for supremacy was a potent faction in the history of India during the considerable part of the eighteenth century and they accelerated the dismemberment of the Mughal empire.

32. Burgess, J. : The Chronology of Modern India, p. 188
33. Ibid
34. Smith, V.A. : The Oxford History of India, p. 460
seriously opposed the ambition of the north, pushing the Marathas into the field of Panipat in Jumada, A.H. 1175/ January, A.D. 1761 and left the East India Company in Bengal in constant anxiety for several years. The two invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali demonstrated the fact that, the imperial dynasty had completely lost its hold on the country.

"Asaf Jah, the founder of the Nizam's dynasty, having died at a great age in A.H. 1161/ A.D. 1748, his grand son and son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, Ghazi-ud-Din became Vizier at Delhi. Delhi faced a civil war between Safdar Jang and Ghazi-ud-Din and the son of Asaf Jah and there was no peace in the city. For six months the battle cries of Persian and Mughal, Sheikh and Sunni responded through the city. Holker and Marathas fought for the Mughal leader against their Hindu country men, the Jat Raja Surajmal had espoused the cause of Safdar Jang." In this civil war Ghazi-ud-Din came out victorious and being defeated, Safdar Jang retired to Oudh. That nobleman blinded and deposed Ahmad Shah in Zil-hijja A.H. 1167/ September A.D. 1754 replacing him by a relative who was styled Alamgir II. He was dominated by his Vizier Imad-ul-Mulk in the administration of the empire. The new Emperor was intelligent, sober and

35. J.I.H. : op. cit., p. 692
36. Tretter, L.J. : History of India, p. 201
37. Smith, V.A. : The Oxford History of India, p. 460
decorous in life but utterly wanting in strength of character and capacity for leadership." It was, therefore, that he became a puppet in the hands of the Vizier, without any power to guide the Government. In A.H.1173/ A.D.1759, the Emperor Alamgir II was put to death and his son 'Ali Gauhar fled to Bihar where he had himself proclaimed as Shah Alam II. He was at this time tall, portly man, forty years old or thereabouts, with the constitutional character of his race, and some peculiarities of his own like his ancestors, he was brave, patient, dignified and merciful but all contemporary accounts support the view suggested by his whole history, and debit him with defects which more than balanced these great virtues. "His courage was rather of the nature of fortitude than that of enterprising boldness which was absolutely necessary in this situation." He reigned for a long period of about forty seven years but could not get due support from the nobles and after being blinded ruthlessly by Ghulam Qadir in A.H.1203/ A.D.1788, he passed a miserable life. During the last days of his rule, the position of the Emperor had become so much indignified and uninfluential that

39. Ibid, p. 65
The territory under the direct control of Delhi had shrunk to a comparatively small dominion around the capital itself and the people used to say "контроль за всем здесь падает". The result was that the local Mughal officials, taking advantage of the near collapse position of the central Government, established personal power over their principalities in Bengal, Oudh, Rohilkhand and Hyderabad. The picture of the empire towards the middle and in the late Eighteenth century was somewhat blurred in comparison to the earlier Mughal rule. Among the indigenous non-Muslim factors competing for regional power at this time, the most important were the Sikhs, The Rajputs, the Jats and the Marathas.

The Marathas were very closely watching the political situation of the time. They were also trying to prove their supremacy as a powerful dynasty. Taking the advantage of the political disturbances and disorder of the time, they established themselves in the southern and western provinces of the Mughal empire. “In A.D. 1700, they first crossed the Narmada and raided Malwa. This was the first of their raids in Malwa until in A.D. 1741 the province finally passed into their hands.” As by that time the Mughals had grown so weak and disintegrated that they could not check their growing ambitions. Under the Peshwa they made a gigantic bid to establish a Hindu kingdom in India knowing the helplessness of the central Government. They began to make intermittent

raids on Orissa, south eastern Bihar and Bengal. The Deccan, the central India, Bengal, Delhi and Punjab came under the influence of Mughal empire, initiated by the last Peshwa Balaji Biswanath and received an impetus from the journey of the Marathas to Delhi in A.D. 1719 when they saw with their own eyes the utterly rotten condition of the Delhi empire and it encouraged them in subduing Delhi.” It was a grand struggle of Hindu and Muslim for the sovereignty of India,” and “all the efforts made by Shuja-ud-Daula to bring reconciliation failed.” But during that time Marathas were not the only contenders to vie for the supremacy, there were the Afghans who were also competing for the supremacy over the mighty mughals. Hence clashes between the Marathas and the Afghans were inevitable. They met at the historical battlefield of Panipat on the 14th January A.D. 1761 where the fate of India was already decided twice. The Afghans proved more powerful than that of the Marathas. The defeat had shattered the Maratha’s ambition of north-western expansion. The Peshwa could not tolerate the humiliation and died heart broken five months later on the 23rd June A.D. 1761. Although the Afghans were victorious yet the mutiny among the soldiers forced Ahmad Shah Abdali to leave India. Then

41. J.I.M. ; p. 687
42. J.I.H. ; op. cit., p. 694
43. Ibid
44. Bhagi, H.L. : Medieval India: Culture and Thought, p. 72
45. J.I.H.; op. cit., p. 694
He turned the rule of Delhi over to Shah Alam II who was living in East Bengal under the protection of the British. The third battle of Panipat closed the history of the Mughal empire. The destruction of Maratha power did nothing to weld together the various states into which it had been broken, or to restore the power and authority of the Emperor. The eminent scholar K.K. Dutta writes:

_Perverse destiny drove Shah Alam II from one extremity to another and he was subjected to acute miseries in the metropolis of an Empire, which his ancestors had ruled, but of which nothing but a shadow then lingered to his great mortification. He had given to bear patiently severe bodily tortures, including blinding of his eye by the Ruhela chief, Ghulam Qadir, who also heaped indignities on the members of the imperial family, including women and children, from 18th July to 2nd October A.D. 1788._

The Afghans for quite sometime succeeded in checking the activities of the Marathas. They became a threat to the Marathas but also left the East India Company in Bengal in constant anxiety for years together. But for the Marathas Panipat was not the Waterloo of their ambition. They again

46. Dutta, K.K.: _A Survey of Recent Studies on Modern Indian History_, p. 60. Also see, Sarkar, J.N.: _Fall of the Mughal Empire_, Vol. III, pp. 302-324

47. _J.I.H._ : _op. cit._, p. 695
started their campaign under the young Peshwa Madho Rao I to whose efforts the exiled Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II was restored to the throne of his forefathers. Naturally the Delhi Emperor had become the pawn for both the English and the Marathas—the two active competitors for political supremacy over India during the last quarter of the Eighteenth century. But like the Afghans, the English also proved a mighty wall for the Marathas and ultimately they left the field for the supremacy. The treaty of Salbali on May 17 A.D. 1783 sealed the further ambition of the Marathas to rule the vast land. Their exodus from the Indian political scene was due to their selfishness, dissention and lack of planning and sound economic policy. The state of Maratha's grew hollow like a worm-eaten trunk and fell violently after repeated shocks from A.D. 1761 to 1883.

Beside the Marathas and the Afghans, the eighteenth century India was also profoundly influenced by the Sikhs who fought against the mighty Mughals for their independence and safety. During the life time of Aurangzeb, the Sikhs dared not to come on the political horizon of India but just after his death, they started the war of independence and came out victorious with flying colours. By the end of A.D. 1716, they established a state of their own. "The 18th century," says the eminent historian J.M. Sarkar, "marks a formative epoch in the history of the Sikhs who grew to be one of the finest nations in arms."
The European sea power and commercialism in their organised strength swept the Indian shores and seriously disturbed her domestic politics. Their bold operation gave a rude set back to the most cherished ideals of India. Indians had never known that sea power and commercialism could effectively paved the way for the establishment of an empire. Empire building, according to the Indian tradition, was the work of great conquerors at the head of a vast armies like Muhammad Ghuri, Chengiz Khan or Babur. Hence no statemen of India viewed with alarm the advent of Europeans into India. She went in her own way, proud of her wealth and proud of her traditions, heedless of what was going on outside, like her ancient sages indifferent to the clamours of mankind. The European trading companies particularly the English, the Dutches and the French played a vital role in the political history of India. These companies were watching the political situation of India very closely. The chaotic political situation inspired them to build a political base in the country.

By A.D.1760, the settlement of the Portugese, the Dutches and the Danish trading companies in India were almost negligible. The two major trading companies were those of the British and the French. The English East India Company established themselves at three important and strategic places, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. In A.D.1748, the British
got a golden opportunity by taking sides in the quarrel between the Indian princes. In their first interference, they failed to assist their ally and soon made common cause with their enemy. Duplex, the Governor of Chandernagor framed a grand plan of establishing the supramacy in India. The British Governor of Madras decided upon a counter stroke of his own. As a result the French got hold of Hyderabad, while the British extended their help to Muhammad Ali of Karnatak. But suddenly the British expulsion from Calcutta came in A.D. 1756 which made the Madras council send Clive and Welson to Bengal, the centre of Indian politics. "The cause of the English did not appear to be bright till a young man named Clive appeared on the scene." The path that Clive followed at least made him a fellow conspirator with other Indians conspiring for the downfall of Siraj-ud-Daula who after the death of Aliwardi Khan on April 9 A.D. 1756, had ascended the throne of Bengal. Before the suppression of Nawwab Siraj-ud-Daula, Clive attacked Chandernagor, the seat of the French in Bengal and captured it in March A.D. 1757. Then very cleverly he brought Mir Ja'afar to his own side. Mir Ja'afar who was the commander of Nawwab Siraj-ud-Daula, kept his three thousand two hundred soldiers aloof from the battle field and thus helped Clive in giving a crushing defeat to the Nawwab in the famous battle of Plassey on 23rd June A.D. 1757. It helped the British to influence the political situation in the eastern provinces. "The battle

51. Bhagi, W.L.: Medieval India: Culture and Thought, p. 75
52. Bengal: Past and Present, 1924, p. 29
indeed was the turning point in the history of British supremacy in India specially in Bengal." The Mughal Prince Ali Gauhar or Shah Alam II was helplessly watching the complex political changes taking place so rapidly with a view to capturing Bengal and Bihar. He with the cooperation of Shuja-ud-Daula invaded Bihar in A.D.1759 but he was defeated at Patna by Clive and forced him to retreat. On his defeat, Mir Ja'afar who had become the Nawab of Bengal after Siraj-ud-Daula's death, was very pleasant. The Emperor again invaded the province of Bihar. Though he was joined by M.Jean Law and his men and also by Bihar Zamindars like Pahalwan Singh and Kamgar Khan and Golan Shah in this expedition but victory was not in his favour. He was defeated by Capt.Knox on June 19 A.D.1760. In Bengal also the political situation was not satisfactory. Mir Ja'afar was deposed and his son-in-law Mir Muhammad Qasim was made the Nawab of Bengal in October A.D.1760. Shah Alam II was watching the political changes. He attacked Bihar for the third time early in A.D.1761 with the help of M.Law again, but ill-luck would have it, this time also he was defeated by Carnac at the battle of Gaya Manpur on January 15 A.D. 1761. Shah Alam II along with M.Law were taken prisoners and were lodged in Patna fort.  

54. Diwakar,R.R.: Bihar Through the Ages, p. 581  
55. Ibid.  
56. Ibid.  
57. Ali,Karam : Mir Zaffar Namah, fol. 72  
58. J.B.O.R.S.: 1917, p. 130; Burgess,op.cit.,p. 216
As soon as Clive left for England in A.D.1760, all the disruptive forces began to work in Bengal and thus an era of corruption, anarchy and misgovernance began. Henry Vansittart, the successor of Clive, tried his best to check this mismanagement and with a view to this, he made a treaty with Mir Qasim by which firmed friendship was to be established between Mir Qasim and the English. According to this treaty, the Nawwab assigned to the company the zamindari of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong by chanads. After being satisfied by the British, Mir Qasim turned his attention towards internal affairs and within a very short time, he completely established his authority on Bihar. He transferred his capital from Murshidabad to Monghyer, away from British influence. But the friendship between the two did not linger on. The relation became strained on the question of transit duties on inland trade. Heavy sums were demanded by the company from him which he could not afford to pay. To top this all, the company's servants claimed an unauthorised exemption of transit duties and thus a confusion was created. Mir Qasim did not tolerate this and took severe steps against this demand. He abolished superfluous posts and dismissed every English officers from service. Not only this, he also raised an army of his own and prepared himself for any eventuality.

As soon as the council came to know these developments, it subsequently declared war against him and deposed Mir Qasim from the Nawwabship in A.D.1763. Hence the administration

59. Dayal & Barrow: An Outline of Indian History and Culture, Vol II, p. 131
of Bengal was once again entrusted to Mir Ja'afar in his stead on Zilhijja 18 A.H.1176/ July 10 A.D.1763. Mir Qasim did not lose heart and he captured Qasim Bazar but the British troops overpowered his army. In despair, the Nawwab fled to Uudh to seek the help of Shuja-ud-Daula who promised to give him support. The combined forces of Shah Alam II, Shuja-ud-Daula of Oudh and Mir Qasim came to Patna which was under the possession of English. But due to heavy rain their combined forces returned to Buxar on May 30 A.D.1764. But, suddenly the relation between Shuja-ud-Daula and Mir Qasim became strained, resulting the confinement of Nawwab Mir Qasim. Now Shah Alam II and Shuja-ud-Daula proceeded against the English and fought the famous battle of Buxar on October 23 A.D.1764. Mir Qasim somehow managed to escape from the imprisonment but he died on June 6 A.D.1777 near Delhi. Shah Alam II submitted to the British. Nawwab Shuja-ud-Daula of Oudh who retreated to Rohilkhand, submitted only in the following year when the British forces overran Oudh. The battle of Buxar brought misfortune to the Indian cause resulting the defeat of the important rulers of northern and eastern India. The battle had closed the history of the military

60. Misra, G. : History of Bihar, p.72
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid. Also see Burgess, op. cit., p. 221; Diwakar, op. cit., p. 584
63. Proceeding of I.H.R.C., 1930, p. 28
conquest of Bengal and Bihar which from that date were substantially British territory. Clive signed the treaty of Allahabad in A.D. 1765 by which Dudh was returned back to Shuja-ud-Daula. In this way Clive made a buffer state between the English and the Marathas. He entered into negotiation with them through Shitab Roy father of Kalyan Singh Ashiq and Munirud Daula which, after the return of Clive to India in May A.D. 1765, led to the grant of Diwani right to Bihar and Bengal in return of 32 lakhs of rupees as annual pension to Shah Alam II. The grant of Diwani made the English the de facto authority in Bengal. Thus ended the famous battle of Buxar on which depended the fate of India and which was as gallantly disputed as it was important in its result. The verdict of the battle was, in a sense, more decisive than that of Plassey. If Plassey saw the defeat of the Nawwab of Bengal, Buxar proclaimed the defeat of the great power of Oudh and the submission of the Delhi Emperor. In this way the East India Company became the virtual ruler of Bengal. As Najm-ud-Daula, the then Nawwab of Bengal, was a minor, two Naib Nazims were appointed to assist him in the Government's affairs. Muhammad Reza Khan, the Naib Nazim of Murshidabad, continued to make

64. Smith, V.A. : The Oxford History of India, p. 503
65. Ibid.
66. Dutta, K.K. : A Survey of Recent Studies on Modern Indian History, p. 66
68. Broome, A. : Rise and Progress of Indian Army, p. 163
revenue in Bengal while Shitab Roy, the Naib Nazim of Bihar continued to be the incharge of revenue there.

After settling the problems of Bengal and Bihar, the British turned their attention towards south. After the defeat of the French on January 22 A.D.1760 at the battle of Wandiwash, the English had established their power in Karnataka and placed Muhammad Ali upon the throne who was but a puppet in the hands of the English. But the rise of Hyder Ali, the bitterest foe of the English in Mysore, filled the Marathas and the British with terror. Hyder Ali came into contact with the British factories when he tried to extend his rule to the Malabar coast. To the north his expansion was blocked by the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad and by A.D.1766, these two powers allied to stand against Hyder Ali. Although it was the Marathas who were the first to attack the Mysore kingdom, Hyder Ali at once made peace. The force of the British and the Nizam invaded Mysore in A.D.1767. But to due to an intrigue involving the agent of Hyder Ali who was the elder brother of the Nawab of Karnataka, the Nizam abandoned the British and allied himself with Hyder Ali. In A.D.1768, after two British victories the Nizam switched sides again reaffirming his original alliances with the British by the treaty of Masulipatam. The British forces briefly held Mangalore but Hyder Ali retook the city and by March A.D.1769,

69. Smith, op. cit., p. 479; J.I.H., op. cit., p. 697
he had come within five miles of Madras. In April A.D.1769, Hyder Ali dictated peace terms to the British providing for a mutual restoration of conquests and stipulating a defensive alliance in accordance with which the British promised to help Hyder Ali at the time of his distress. But the relation strained due to the failure of the Madras Presidency to implement the provision of the treaty or to negotiate a new treaty. The relation further deteriorated in A.D.1778 when wars between the British and the French broke out in Europe. The British seized the French settlement at Mahe on March 15, A.D.1779 which was in possession of Hyder Ali. So Hyder Ali attacked Carnatak in A.D.1780 and overwhelmed the British and took Arcot and gained control of the whole territory. Hastings was able to detach the Raja of Berar, Sindia and the Nizam of Hyderabad from their alliances with Hyder Ali. But receiving of aids both in money and manpower from the French in A.D.1782 kept Hastings, the Governor, many a sleepless night. The coming of peace, however, between the British and the French in Europe, led the withdrawal of the French troops from India and weakened the position of Hyder Ali.

After the death of Hyder Ali in A.D.1782 at the age of eighty two, the war with the British was continued by his son and successor Tipu Sultan. A British attack on Tipu's capital at Seringapatam was about to be launched when the

---

70. Prasad, I.: India in the 18th Century, p. 131. But according to S.R. Bakhshi it is A.D.1781. See British Diplomacy and Administration in India, pp. 138-139
troops were called back by Lord Macartney who was the Governor of Madras (A.D. 1781- A.D. 1785) to negotiate peace with Tipu Sultan. It resulted the treaty of Mangalore which was signed on March 11 A.D. 1784 which temporarily ended the Anglo-Mysore war. But this one was also short lived and due to Tipu's desire for expansion of his territory, he waged wars with the British. Due to Cornwallis's determination Tipu had to come to truce and by the treaty of Seringapatam on March 19 A.D. 1792, Tipu paid an indemnity of £3 million and surrendered two of his sons to the British as hostages. Half of his territory was annexed and subsequently divided between the British, the Nizam and the Marathas. But this could not end the hope of Tipu and once again with the help of the French, he tried to regain his lost glory and fought the fourth Mysore war with the British. But this time also Tipu had no luck and finally he was subdued by the British troops and Tipu was killed while fighting on May 4 A.D. 1799. The British gave its ally the Nizam of Hyderabad the north-eastern boundaries of Tipu's state and the company annexed the land encircling Mysore and thus the actual power of Mysore passed on to the British.

Thus we see that in the closing period of the Eighteenth century, the British had deprived the Princes, the rulers and the people of India of their independents. The East India

71. Smith: op.cit., p. 561
72. Bakshi, S.R.: British Diplomacy and Administration in India, pp. 138-139
company which entered India with a view to trading here, enchained the people of India into slavery and established the British Raj which lasted till 14th August A.D.1947.