

centre that shifting scenes in a just as
and he burst out saying, "we
(from Sylhet to Sonargān) between villages
if we were going through a bazar. On its banks there are water
wheels, orchards and villages to right and left, like those of the Nile
in Egypt." Thus while the abundance of the necessities of life and
its soothing scenery made it a very attractive country to live in, the
"vapour bath," particularly the steaming exhalation from the creeks
and inlets during the summer, were so oppressive that westerners
called it *dozaki-i-pur niamat* (a hell crammed with blessings).

IV. SULTAN SHAMSUDDIN ILYĀS SHAH

1342-1357 A.D. (743-758 A.H.)

A new chapter was opened in the history of Bengal, with the accession of Ilyās Shah to the throne of Lakhnawati, under the title of Shamsuddin Ilyās Shah, in 743 A.H. (1342 A.D.).

The whole of northern India was at that time in a state of turmoil owing to the violence and caprices of the Delhi Emperor Muhammad bin Tughluq. The Hindu chiefs to the east of Allahabad and Bahraich, e.g., the Rajas of Gorakhpur, Champaran and Tirhut, had thrown off their allegiance and become practically independent. But there was no unity among them. The extinction of the Delhi Sultan's authority and the absence of union among the Hindu Rajas encouraged Ilyas Shah to turn his arms against the west.

The first kingdom to feel the weight of his arm was Tirhut, then torn by internal discord. If Bendall and Grierson are to be relied upon, this kingdom was divided between two rival kings, Sakti Sinh, grandson of Harisinh Deva, holding court at Simraon, (26. 10 N. 85. 53 E.) and Kamesvara, the nominee of Sultan Ghiyā-

¹ Gibb's *Ibn Batuta*, p. 271.

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suddin Tughluq, at Sugaon, near Madhubani, in Darbhanga district.¹ Ilyās had not therefore much difficulty in conquering this kingdom. The subjugation of Tirhut was followed by a very daring incursion into Nepal in 1346 A.D. What incentives led him to this expedition and by what routes the Bengal army climbed into the valley of Katmandu, are not known. It is a fact, however, that when the Bengal Sultan burst into this kingdom, he encountered little opposition ; neither the king Jayrājdeva nor his minister Jayasthitimāla, came out with their forces, to defend the sanctity of their temple. Ilyās therefore marched to the city of Katmandu, burnt and destroyed the holy Swayambhunāth Stupa and the sacred standard of Śākyamuni.² He did not stay long in the capital, though Dr. Jayaswal holds that he did, on the very weak ground that there was a draw upon the treasury of Lord Pashupati in 1347 A.D., which in his opinion was necessitated by the long-drawn hostilities with Ilyās Shah. Katmandu, however, with its hills, crags and stocky population could not certainly be an inducement to the soldiers of the plains, to make a prolonged stay for the display of their fighting qualities.

These dazzling successes emboldened Illyās Shah to make another spectacular display of his arms. To the south-west of Bengal there extends along the sea-board from the Suvarnarekhā to the Godāvari, a long stretch of flat alluvial plain, with a hinterland of undulating tract. This country had grown into a highly prosperous kingdom during the 13th and 14th centuries. Its wealth and pyramids of temples, e.g., of Meghesvara Balarām, Krishna and Gaṇḍadra at Ekamra, (modern Bhuvanesvara), Catesvara at Kishanpur in the Padamtalā taluk of the Cuttack district, of the Sun-god at Konarak and of Jagannath at Puri, had long excited the cupidity of the Muslim sultans of Bengal. But the arms of its rulers, especially Arangabhima III, Narasinha I and Narasinha II gave it security against invasion for a century and a quarter.⁹

About the middle of the 14th century A.D., however, the gateway into this kingdom of fabled prosperity which had not been previously pierced by any Turkish war-lord of Bengal, was burst open by Ilyas Khan. He swept away all opposition, marched across the country

Bengali's History of Nepal and Surrounding Kingdoms, JASB. vol. LXXII,
pp. 200-202. Gifford's Notes on Medieval Poets and Kings of Mithila. Ind.
Ant., 1895, p. 162 and ff. vide also *History of Tirhut*, by Bhyancharan
Sarkar, Calcutta, 1895, pp. 124-125.

to the Lake Chilka where the terror of his arms had driven the aristocracy of Orissa, and came back with immense booty including 44 elephants. These conquests emboldened him to extend his arms beyond Tirhut to Champaran and Gorakhpur, whose Rajas transferred their allegiance to him. His authority in this region was established by two successive visits to the shrine of Sipahsalar Shaikh Masud Ghazi at Bahraich, while to the south of these territories, the Sultan's dominion was extended as far as Benares.

These sweeping conquests effected with startling rapidity fired the imagination of the Bengal Sultan and visions of imperial suzerainty hovered before his eyes. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, a contemporary chronicle, represents the exultant mood of the Sultan (on his return to Lakhnawati from Bahraich and Benares) in these vivid words : "Ah ! Ah ! what a fine thing it would have been if with such plenitude of strength and resources, army and fleet, I had pushed to the city of Delhi (instead of going to Bahraich) and paid my respects to Shaikh-ul-Islam Nizamuddin. Who could then have dared to oppose me and my forces ?" (P. 36).

In 1353 A.D. he further strengthened his position by the overthrow of the son of Fakhrudin Mubarak Shāh, the rival Sultan of Sonargānw. But hardly had a year elapsed when these high aspirations proved not only to be a vain illusion but even his very conquests melted away. This unexpected turn in his fortune was caused by the rise of a new master in Delhi, Sultan Firuz who quickly set his kingdom in order and got ready by the close of November, 1353 A.D.¹ to measure swords with Sultan Ilyās.

¹ It has been accepted by all writers on the history of Bengal that the Sultan started on the expedition against Lakhnawati, in Shawwal, 754 A.H. (Nov. 1353 A.D.) and returned to Delhi in Shaban 755 A.H. (June 1354 A.D.). This chronology is furnished by Zia Barani whose account was reproduced by all later chroniclers e.g. Yahiya Sarhindi, Nizamuddin Ahmad and Firishta. According to them, the entire campaign covered only ten months or so. The other contemporary authority Afif, on the other hand says, (*TFS*, p. 134) that the outward march to Lakhnawati and Ekdala, took eleven months ; the return journey too occupying an equivalent period. Afif's statement is more trustworthy for this was not merely a campaign against Lakhnawati, but a reconquest of the Gangetic Doab and the territory extending from Oudh to the Kusi. In course of the outward march, the chiefs of Gorakhpur, Karusha and Tirhut were subjugated ; arrangements were made for the administration of the territory, stretching from the Sarju to the Kusi ; and operations were carried on against the fort of Ekdala. The return journey of Firuz was equally eventful ; he consolidated his authority in the Doab, by marching through Kara-Manikpur, Koil, Jhajar and Qubulpur. How could so many enterprises in the course of such a distant campaign, be undertaken in ten months or so ? That the campaign covered a period of more than two years is also indirectly supported by

CHAPTER VII.

THE HUSAIN SHĀHI DYNASTY : 1493-1538

I. ALAUDDIN HUSAIN : 1493-1519

The death of Muzaffar closed a dark chapter of Bengal's history. The Habshi interregnum had violently arrested her social progress and weakened her military prestige. Frequent changes on the throne threatened to destroy the monarchy itself so that Bengal became the target of contemporary satire.¹

The situation demanded a man who could command the unflinching loyalty of all classes of the people and had capacity enough to restore peace. Such a man was found in the foreigner, Sayyid Husain, whom as we have seen, Habshi misgovernment had driven to the opposition. Most of the accounts agree in calling him a born Arab,² who with his father, Sayyid Ashraf, had recently settled in Bengal. His early life is the theme of many legends and folktales,—the majority of whom centre on a village now called *Ekani Chandpara*, in the Jangipur subdivision of the Murshidabad district. The village contains ruins of considerable antiquity, associated traditionally and epigraphically, with Husain Shāh.³ On the authority of an unnamed pamphlet, Salim records a story, which is still current in the locality, of how Sayyid Ashraf with his two sons stopped, on his way to Gaur, at the house of the local

¹ *Tab.* III, 268, see also *Firishta*, II, 584.

² *Riyāz*, 129-31, calls him Sayyid Sharif Makki, for which statement no earlier or more dependable source than *Firishta*, II, 585 can be cited. Salim, however, thought that his father Ashraf-ul-Husaini might have been the Sheriff but had long been resident of Tirmiz. Joao de Barros's description of the Arab merchant who landed at Chittagong and ultimately captured the throne of Bengal refers to Husain; quoted by Blochmann, *JASB*, 1873, 287. Buchanan Hamilton-Martin's *Eastern India*, iii, 448—however noticed traditions current in the northern part of Rangpur district, according to which Husain was a native of the place and was born in Devnagar, 16 miles from Govindgunge, and was, according to the unnamed manuscript history which he found at Pandua, the grandson of Sultan Ibrahim, a reigning king of Gaur who was dispossessed by the converted Hindu king, Jalaluddin. Thereafter the family found refuge in the kingdom of Kamatapur until 76 years later Husain found an opportunity to recover his ancestral throne.

³ *JASB*, 1917, 143-51. Not less than four inscriptions of Husain Shah's early reign have been discovered in the adjoining villages, *JASB*, 1917, 148-150; 1921, 1949.

Qazi, in a *Rādh* village, named Chāndpara, who discovering his noble lineage married his daughter to the younger son, Husain, and how, after completing his education, the latter went to Gaur and obtained a minor post in Muzaffar Habshi's government. The story of the boy Husain once serving as a shepherd to a local Brahmin who, discovering in him supernatural signs of future greatness, sent him to Gaur and whom the king Husain later rewarded with the *zamindari* of the village on the nominal revenue of one *anna* (*Ekāni Chāndpārā*) is too much like the story of Hasan Gāngū Bahmani's early life to merit unqualified acceptance, but his association in early life with this part of Murshidabad seems well-established. According to an early Vaishnava account he was once severely whipped for some fault during the excavation of a tank, by one Subuddhi Rāi, his superior in the revenue department, and on whom, at the instigation of his wife he avenged himself in later life by desecrating his caste.¹ How he rose in the service to become the chief minister of the tyrant we shall never know, but energy and intelligence, tact and learning must have played a considerable part. No scion of the Ilyās Shāhi house had probably survived the Habshi tyranny, and the accession of the popular wazir was almost a foregone conclusion. The conditional election described in the *Riyāz* (130) could therefore mean nothing more than a formal ratification of an earlier agreement.

There is no means of ascertaining the exact date of his accession, but it appears to have been signalised by the issue of a gold coin, dated 1493, which bears not only his regal titles but also an emphatic declaration of his noble descent.² In the Mandaran inscription of 1494, his title was further expanded, and next year, on an inscription found in Malda he appears with the supreme dignity of *Khalifatullah*, doubtless in conformity with the practice started by Jalāluddin Muhammad.

Thus was a new dynasty established under whose enlightened rule the creative genius of the Bengali people reached its zenith, it was a period in which the vernacular found its due recognition as the literary medium through which the repressed intellect of Bengal was to find its release. It was a period of unparalleled architectural activity, peace and prosperity, and of great military

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conquests. Finally, it was a period which witnessed an efflorescence of the Bengali mind symbolised by the Lord Gauranga, by whose message of love and forgiveness the whole of Eastern India was carried off its feet. The Bengali mind burst its bonds and found its voice in the sweet lyricism of the cult of *Radha* and *Krishna*, in the emotional intensity of a resurgent Vaishnavism, and in poetry and song, social toleration and religious fervour, the exuberance of life continued unabated for the next hundred and fifty years. With this renaissance, the rulers of the house of Husain Shah are inseparably connected. It is almost impossible to conceive of the rise and progress of Vaishnavism or the development of Bengali literature at this period without recalling to mind the tolerant and enlightened rule of the Muslim Lord of Gaur.

Husain's first recorded act showed clearly the firmness that was to characterise the next twenty-six years of his reign. The victorious soldiery who had commenced pillaging the capital city, was ordered to desist, and on its failure to obey promptly, Husain ordered the execution of, it is said, twelve thousand of them. The palace-guards composed of the *Paiks*, who, ever since their part in the murder of Fath Shah, had grown insolent and faithless, were next disbanded and dispersed. He finally banished the infamous Abyssinians, one and all from his dominions and recalled the old Muslim and Hindu nobles to high offices. According to Salim, he transferred his seat of government to Ekdala, a measure which, unless it meant a mere transfer of his own residence, was most probably prompted by strategic and climatic considerations.¹ We have no information as

¹ The One... R.S., 132.

to the details of his political settlement, but we are told that efficient district officers were sent to different places and all disloyal elements were suppressed.

(i) *Treaty with Sikandar Lodi and occupation of North Bihar.*

The work of internal consolidation was still in progress when political developments compelled him to turn his attention westwards. In 1494 the Sharqī-Lodī war reached a climax and in a battle near Benares (*Tab. I*, 319), Sikandar completely defeated Husain of Jaunpur and sent him flying for refuge to Bengal. The Jaunpur kingdom was swallowed up in the Lodī empire which now extended up to the border of Bihar. This was a situation which no ruler of Bengal could view with equanimity, for an aggressive power established in a province which controlled the entrance to Bihar and Bengal would constitute a dire threat to her security. Whether the Sharqīs received any material assistance from Bengal in their struggle with the Lodīs is difficult to say, but the kind treatment which she now accorded to the fugitive king was undoubtedly the demonstration of a political friendship that may have originated earlier in a desire to preserve this counterpoise to Delhi. Husain not only allowed his Sharqī namesake to cross the frontier into Kahlgaon (Colgong in Bhagalpur) but received him with all honour and provided means for his comfort (*R.S.* 135). Sikandar Lodī was not slow to grasp the political motive underlying this seemingly humanitarian act, and decided on taking immediate action. From his camp at Darweshpur early in 1495 he moved upto Tughluqpur on the Bengal frontier and prepared for invasion. Husain had foreseen such a contingency. Instead of waiting at his capital for the invaders, he sent an army under his son Dāniyāl to intercept them and the two armies stood facing each other at Barh. Whether it was out of fear of the Bengali army or because of the exhaustion of their own troops, the Lodī generals, Mahmūd Lodī and Mubārak Lohānī, hesitated to attack, and finally on Sikandar's instructions opened negotiations for peace. A non-aggression agreement was entered into, followed by a delimitation of the frontiers. On behalf of his father, Dāniyāl undertook not to give shelter to Sikandar's enemies, but from the sequel this clause does not appear to have affected Husain Sharqī's continued resi-

dence at Kahlgaon, where he died. At what line the two frontiers met is nowhere mentioned beyond the fact that Sikandar subsequently conferred the district round Tughluqpur on A'zam Humāyūn while Bihar became the *iqta'* of Daryā Khān Lohānī (*Tab.* I, 319-20, *Badauni*, I, 319). Inscriptions found in Monghyr and Bihar, however, prove that in South Bihar Husain's control extended to within a few miles of Patna. The occupation of the whole of North Bihar including the trans-Gandak area, which is proved by his inscription at Saran¹ appears to have followed soon after, either in accordance with the terms of the treaty or as a result of military operations started immediately on Sikandar's withdrawal.

(ii) *Conquest of Kāmrup and invasion of Assam.*

The threat from the west having been thus averted, Husain could now turn to the north-east, the frontier towards Kāmrup. The indecisive war fought by Barbak with the ruler of Kamtapur was followed by the loss of considerable territory on the eastern bank of the Karatoya. Nilāmbar, the third Khen king of Kamtapur whose dominions extended in the east as far as the Barnadi, consolidated his conquests by building a military road from his capital to his frontier fortress of Ghoraghat on the Karatoya, traces of which were still to be seen when Buchanan-Hamilton visited Dinajpur.² The Abyssinian anarchy must in any case have facilitated Nilāmbar's operations who, from all accounts, appears to have been an ambitious prince. In 1498, Husain launched a vigorous campaign with a view to recovering the lost territory and putting a permanent stop to Khen aggression. This war is popularly believed to have been instigated by Nilāmbar's Brahman minister whose licentious son had been brutally murdered by that Raja. The attack was opened with an overwhelming army led, according to traditions, by Ismā'il Ghāzi, who marched straight to besiege the Khen capital.³ The city was strongly fortified and the siege dragged on, according to one tradition, for 12 years. Buchanan noticed traces of what he believed to have been the invading army's camp. The Bengali forces finally gained entrance into the fortress, it is said, by means of treachery and captured Nilāmbar, who was taken to Gaur but subsequently escaped (*B. Hamilton*, ii, 458-9). The city was eventually destroyed and the whole kingdom as far as Hajo was permanently annexed. A colony of Afghans was left in Kāmrup who

1500] *Husain's son conq.*

dispossessed the Hindu zamindars and took over the civil and military administration under the viceroyalty of Husain's son,¹ The Buranjis call him Dulal Ghazi possibly a corruption of Prince Daniyal who was in Monghyr till at least 1498.² The Kāmrup expedition, therefore, should be placed after this year, but before 1502, the year in which Husain recorded this victory in an inscription at Malda.

Salim's account of the conquest of Kāmrup appears to contain a confused description of a subsequent advance eastwards along the Brahmaputra valley, a campaign whose fuller details are to be found only in the *Buranjis*, but which Gait is not prepared to ascribe to Husain Shah. That there is little scope for doubting the occurrence of this event is, however, proved by the categorical statement of Shihabuddin Talish (in Blochmann, *JASB*, 1872, 79) according to whom the invasion army consisted of 24,000 soldiers and a powerful fleet. Unable to withstand the Muslim forces, led, according to the *Buranjis*, by the 'Bara Wazir', the Ahom king withdrew to the hills and allowed the plains to be occupied. The occupation at the end proved untenable, for on the appearance of the rainy season, the Ahoms descended from the hills, blocked the roads already rendered impassable by the floods and finally surrounded the Muslim army and cut them down to the last man. It was thus an unmitigated disaster, but was limited in its territorial extent, for Bengal's hold on Kāmrup remained unaffected.

(iii) War with Orissa.

The *Riyāz-us-Salātin* as well as the unnamed 16th century manuscript history of Bengal found by Buchanan Hamilton at Pandua, credits Husain with the conquest of all territories upto

¹ Rs., 134. It mentions the names of some of these rajas, as Mal Kunwar, Rup Narain, Gosa Lakhan, Lachmi Narain, etc. They were either feudatories of the Khen ruler or Koch names of the Kamta kings from Niladhawaj to Nilambar. The Ms. account quoted by Buchanan makes Rup Narain son of Mal Kunwar son of Sada Lakhman; *op. cit.* III, 412. The fourth name is that of the third king of Kuch Bihar.

² *Assam Buranji*, by Huliram Dhaikiyal Phukon, quoted by Prinsep, *Useful Tables*, and thence reproduced by Blochmann, *JASB*, 1874, 79 and 335. The same source mentions the name of two other Muslim viceroys or commanders, Musundar Ghazi and Sultan Ghiyasuddin, who may have been sent to hold Kamrup and Hajo after the abortive invasion of the Ahom kingdom. Sultan Ghiyasuddin is apparently identical with the person whose tomb, on a hill near Hajo, is still venerated by Hindus and Muslims and who is reported to propagate Islam. The first Muslim

Orissa.¹ The biographies of Chaitanya also make casual reference to this war in course of which he is said to have destroyed many temples.² No Orissan evidence has so far been discovered to confirm this account beyond the chronicle of the Jagannath temple at Puri, known as the *Madla Panjika* which contains details of a war fought with the Muslims of Bengal in 1509. According to this last named source, taking advantage of Prataprudra's absence from his capital, a commander of the king of Gaur, named Ismā'il Ghāzi advanced as far as Puri, and destroyed a large number of temples. The invasion, however, did not lead to any territorial acquisition, for on the return of Prataprudra, the Muslim forces, we are told, fell back on the frontier fortress of Mandāran on which the fighting eventually centred. Prataprudra invested the fort, but owing to the treachery of one of his officers, *Govinda Vidyādhar*, the siege had to be raised and the Hindu forces withdrawn. Beyond a possible recovery of Mandāran the campaign could not have produced any tangible result.

The date of this event is a matter of some doubt. The *Madla Panjika*, as noted above, puts it in 1509, whereas the date established by the chronology of Chaitanya's travels would be some time between 1509 and 1516.³ Numismatic evidence, however, tends to place it still earlier, for the year in which the legend describing Husain's conquest of Kāmrup-Kāmtah and Jajnagar-Orissa appears for the first time on his coins is 910/1504-5.⁴ Unless the three dates can be proved to be wrong or to refer to three separate expeditions, they might be taken as indicative of the protracted nature of the war.

(iv) War with Tipperah.

A state of war with Tipperah seems to have already existed when Husain came to the throne. When exactly he felt himself free to

¹ Martin, *op. cit.* II. 620.

² Brindaban Das; *Chaitanya Bhāgabata*, quoted in Banerji's *Banglar Itihasa*, II. 246; see also p. 298. *JASB*, 1900, 186.

³ Chaitanya's renunciation is said to have occurred in 1509; Banerji, *op. cit.* II. 295. On his way from Navadwip to Puri he was told of the hostilities in progress on the frontier and had to accept the help of the frontier officer, Ramchandra Khan to cross the Ganges at Chatrabhog;—Ghosh, Sisirkumar: *Amiya Nimāi Charit*, III, 77-79. About the year 1513 he returned to Bengal and found the frontier still closed because of the war; Ghosh, S;—*op. cit.* IV. 233-37. At Gaur he met Sanatan who was later imprisoned for his refusal to accompany Husain in his Orissan campaign; *ibid.* V, 46-8; Chaitanya later visited Brindaban and on his way back, at Benares, sometime in 1516, Sanatan finally joined him; *ibid.* V, 52-58 no. 18. See also Sarkar, Sir J. N. *Chaitanya's life and teachings*, 205-206, 219-221.

⁴ Botham, A. W., : *Catalogue of the provincial coin-cabinet*, Assam, p. 170,

intensify the war in this region it is difficult to say, but it could not have been later than 1513, the year in which the conquest of a part of Tipperah is indicated in an inscription found in Sonārgānw. Details of the war are found only in the Tipperah chronicle, the *Rājmālā*, according to which the first attack on Tipperah possessions west of the Gomti was repulsed with heavy losses. The second expedition was commanded by Gaur Mallik, who obtained an initial victory near Comilla and occupied the inland fortress of Meherkul. As the Tipperah general, Rai Chaichag, fell back on the Sonāmātiā fort, Gaur Mallik advanced towards the capital, Rāngāmāti, but on the way suffered a terrible reverse. While crossing the dry bed of the Gomti, most of his army was drowned when Chaichag suddenly released the waters which had been held back by an artificial dam a few miles up the river. Only a remnant withdrew to the Chandigarh fort but it was surprised in the night and the whole expedition ended in the hasty flight of a few miserable survivors. It was probably after this disaster that the Tipperah king occupied Chittagong and expelled the Bengali garrison. The third expedition, we are told, was led by one Hatian Khan—a curious name, who also suffered an exactly similar fate. An initial success in a pitched battle near Comilla was followed by the invading army finding its grave in the Gomti waters—an operational blunder on the part of the Bengal general whom Husain rightly punished by relieving him of his command. The fourth expedition, perhaps commanded by Husain in person, was, however more successful. The chronicle does not record the result of the battle fought near the Kailargarh fort,¹ in which Dhanya Mānikya himself appears to have taken part, but from the inclusion of a tract of Tipperah within the administrative charge of one of Husain's officers in the inscription mentioned above (*JASB*, 1872, 333), the annexation of at least a part appears fairly well-established. A recovery of Chittagong is also indicated by the *Rājmālā* referring to its capture by the king of Arakan from Husain's forces during the progress of this war.

Whether the Tipperah war was followed by or coincident with, operations against Arakan is a point on which our available sources are not sufficiently explicit. Nor do they furnish a consistent account of the territorial result of the war. According to the *Rājmālā*, (545-6) the Arakanese king took advantage of Husain's pre-occupation with Tipperah and occupied Chittagong. It was evidently to deal with this Arakanese aggression that the military operations, mentioned by Parameswar and Srikara Nandi were started, possibly

under the command of the crown-prince Nusrat, to whom local traditions of Chittagong ascribe the first Muslim conquest of the district.¹ He was assisted by Parāgal Khan, the patron of Parameswar and later the military governor of the newly conquered territory. Operations were probably continued for some years, even after Nusrat's return, and from his head-quarters on the Feni river, Parāgal, and after him his son Chhuti, steadily pushed the Arakanese southwards and also maintained a vigilant watch on the Tipperah king. The date of the expedition cannot be ascertained, but perhaps it was practically over by 1517, in which year the Portuguese emissary, Joao de Silveiro landed at Chittagong and found the port in possession of 'the king of Bangala.' De Barros adds that at that time the king of Arakan was also a vassal of Bengal, which, if true, would mean the reassertion of a suzerainty established earlier, and which, in any case, proved temporary.²

II. ALĀUDDIN HUSAIN SHAH'S CHARACTER AND ACHIEVEMENTS

With the exception of the Assam campaign all the military projects of Husain were crowned with success. Before he died in 1519,³ he had not only restored Bengal's old frontiers but had considerably extended them by the annexation of Kāmrup, Saran and a part of Tipperah. No rebellion disturbed the security and peace which reigned throughout his extensive and well-knit dominions comprising all the territories bounded by Saran and Bihar on the north-west, Sylhet and Chittagong on the south-east, and Hajo on

¹ Hamidullah : *Ahadis-ul-Khwatin*, 17-18. A rich Arab merchant, named Alfa Husaini is stated to have helped the king of Gaur in the conquest of Chittagong with ships and money and as a consequence to have become very influential in Bengal. He is perhaps to be identified with the merchant Alfa Khani n whom Martim Jusarte found a friend in 1533 ; Campos, 34.

² *Parāgall Mahābhārata*. quoted in Sen, *Bangabhāsā O Sāhitya* ; De Barros : *Da Asia*. quoted in Campos, 28.30. Cf. Phayre, *JASB*, 1873, 1, 127, who obviously -ing to Campos 'very unfortunate.' See "Arakan in the Pre-Mughal History of Bengal," *Bengal Past and Present*, 1944.

³ *Riyāz*, 135 ; Salim's statement that Husain ruled for 27 years nearly agrees with the date established by inscriptions of his reign, the latest of which is dated 15th Shaban, 925/12th August, 1519 ; *JASB*, 1873, 295, no. 31. Husain's coins so far published, however, cease with the year 924/1518, Botham, *op. cit.* 169, no. 16. Cf. Banerji, *op. cit.* ii, 253, CCIM, 137, who accept 1518 as the year of Husain's death.

the north-east, Mandāran and the 24-parganahs on the south-west.¹ It is a pity, no details are known of his administration to which, considering his rise from a humble position in the state he must have made valuable contributions. A learned man himself, his interest in the diffusion of learning was natural, and the college whose establishment is recorded in the Malda inscription of 1502 (*JASB*, 1874, 303), must have been only one of many such foundations. The tomb of the saint Qutb-ul-'Alam at Pandua received large endowments from him, and he is said to have journeyed every year on foot from Ekdala to pay his respects at the shrine (*R.S.*, 135) Alāuddīn Husain Shah was unquestionably the best, if not the greatest, of the medieval rulers of Bengal. With the true insight of a statesman, he realised that the Ilyās Shāhi dynasty, whom he supplanted represented Bengal's hopes and aspirations and had almost become a national institution. With these aspirations he identified himself so whole-heartedly that his alien origin was forgotten and his Hindu subjects compared him to the incarnation of Krishna. By recalling the old aristocracy to power and position he showed that though a new dynasty had come to power, the old traditions were to continue. His courtesy and affable temper, his modesty and unfailing kindness won the hearts of his people who in gratitude called him the 'Crown of king' (*Nripati Tilak*) and 'Adornment of the universe' (*Jagat Bhusana*). To a country groaning under tyranny, encroached upon on all sides, and rent by racial and religious factiousness he gave peace, justice and political glory which she had not witnessed since the days of Ilyās. Posterity remembers him not only for the material advantages he conferred on the people, but for his liberalism and catholicity of mind of which it is hard to find a parallel in Muslim India until the age of the great Akbar. In appointing Hindus to high offices he was of course only continuing the traditional practice of his predecessors, but to put them in charge of highly confidential work was certainly something more than mere diplomatic expediency. His wazir (Gopinath Basu, entitled Purandar Khan), private physician (Mukunda Das), his chief of the body-guards (Kesava Chhatri), master of the mint (Anup) were all Hindus; the *Rājmālā* adds the name of Gaur Mallik, his

¹ His inscriptions in Bihar have been noted above; for the Sylhet inscription of his general Rukn Khan dated 918/1512, see *JASB*, 1922, 413 plate. That the whole of modern 24-Parganahs was included in his dominions is proved by the reference in the *Chaitanya Bhāgabata* of Brindaban Das, to Chatrabhog on the Ganges (Diamond Harbour sub-division), under the *Lashkar*, Ram Chandra Khan, beyond which on account of the hostilities then in progress with Orissa, no traveller was allowed to proceed; quoted in Banerji, *op. cit.* ii, 298.

general in charge of the second Tipperah expedition. The names of the two brothers Rūp and Sanātan, one of whom held the highly important office of the private secretary (*Dabir-i-Khas*) are well-known. His literary appreciation was not confined to Arabic and Persian only, but was extended in an increasing degree to the vernacular literature. Most of the works produced in his reign have however perished, but among the Bengali writers Mālādhar Basu, Bipradas, Bijay Gupta (Chhota Vidyāpati), and Jasorāj Khan mention his name with gratitude.¹ Indeed his enthusiasm for Bengali literature was infectious and his governor of Chittagong, Parāgal, has been immortalised by his patronage of Parameswar, the earliest translator of the *Mahābhārat*. A devout Muslim himself, he was yet free from that rank intolerance which mars the annals of many Muslim kings of Northern India. Some of the Vaishnava writers ascribe to him a belief in the incarnation of Chaitanya, to whom he undoubtedly showed great consideration. During the latter's visit to Gaur, Husain issued orders to all his officers to show respect to that *Sannyasi* and to provide facilities for his journey.²

Husain was unlucky in not having had an Abul Fazl to record his sayings and glorify his actions, and no contemporary chronicle has survived. But the few facts known of his reign are sufficient clues to the greatness of a ruler who may well be compared with Akbar. Of all the Muslim sovereigns Bengal had had, he captured most the imagination of the people and "the name of Husain Shāh, the good, is still remembered from the frontiers of Orissa to the Brahmaputra." (Blochmann, *JASB*, 1873, 291).

II. NASIRUDDIN ABUL MUZAFFAR NUSRAT SHAH 1519-1532

According to the *Riyāz-us-Salātin* Nuṣrat was the eldest of his father's eighteen children and so was unanimously raised to the throne. He appears to have already been nominated for succession when he was allowed in 1515 to issue coins in his own name, (CCIM. Bengal, No. 211), a privilege usually reserved for the crown-prince.

১৬ মাঘ ১৪২৩

Sunday || 29

09.00 am

What is permanent settlement.

10.00 am

10 The Permanent Settlement also

11.00 am

known as the permanent settle-

12.00 pm

ment of Bengal was an agree-

02.00 pm

ment between the East India

03.00 pm

Company and Bengali Landlords

04.00 pm

to fix revenues to be raised from

05.00 pm

১৭ মাঘ ১৪২৩

Monday || 30

Land, with far reaching

consequences for both agricultural

cultural methods and productiv-

ity in the entire Empire

and the political realities

of the Indian countryside.

It was concluded in

1793 by the Company

31

Tuesday

18 मार्च 1820

09.00 am administration headed by Charles Earl Cornwallis - who
 10.00 am also known as Lord Cornwallis,
 11.00 am formed one part
 12.00 pm of a larger body of legislation
 02.00 pm enacted, known as the Cornwallis
 03.00 pm code.

01

Wednesday

19 मार्च 1820

09.00 am The Cornwallis code 1793
 10.00 am divided the east india
 11.00 am company's service personnel
 12.00 pm into three branches
 02.00 pm 1. Revenue
 03.00 pm 2. Judicial
 04.00 pm 3. Commercial.
 05.00 pm

FEBRUARY	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

माघ १८२३
0 am

Thursday || 02

Revenues were collected by Zamindars, native Indians who were treated as landowners. This division created an Indian landed class that supported British authority.

04.00 pm

permanent settlement

05.00 pm

21 माघ १८२३
09.00 am Friday || 03
introduced first in Bengal and Bihar and then to North District of Madras and district of Varanasi.
The system eventually spread all over the Northern India by a series of regulations.
Remained dated 1 May 1793

Notes

According to Wikipedia

4 Saturday

These regulations remained in place until the Charter Act of 1833.

Background :- Earlier Zamindars in Bengal, Bihar and Odisha had been functionaries who held the right to collect revenue on behalf of the Mughal Emperor and his representative, the Diwan, in Bengal.

05 Sunday

23 मार्च 1829

The Diwan supervised the Zamindars to ensure they were neither lax nor unfair.

2017

Monday

06

28 मार्च 1823

09.00 am

overly Stringent.
কঠোর

10.00 am

when the
East India company wasawarded the diwani or

over lord ship of Bengal

by the empire following

the Battle of Buxar in

1764, it found itself

25 मार्च 1823

09.00 am

Short of trained adminis-

trators, especially those

familiar with local custom

and law.

As a result

Landholders were unsuper-

vised or re-posted to

05.00 pm

Notes

6 || Wednesday

09.00 am ~~or reported to corrupt~~ and indolent officials.

10.00 am যোস্যা

11.00 am The result was that

12.00 pm revenues were extracted

02.00 pm without regard for future

03.00 pm income or local welfare

04.00 pm following the devastating

09 || Thursday

seventeen seventy

২৭ মাঘ ১৪২৩

09.00 am famine of 1770 which was

10.00 am partially caused by the

11.00 am shortsightedness, company

12.00 pm officials in calcutta better

02.00 pm understood the importance

03.00 pm of oversight ~~the~~ of revenue

04.00 pm officials.

05.00 pm

FEBRUARY	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Friday ||

माघ १८२३
0 am The failed to consider the
0 am question of incentivisation
0 am hence Warren Hastings -
0 pm then governor general intro-
0 pm duced a system of five
.00 pm yearly inspections and tem-
4.00 pm porary tax farmers.

5.00 pm

माघ १८२३
09.00 am Many appointed on tax
10.00 am farmers absconded with as
11.00 am much revenue as they could
12.00 pm during the time period
02.00 pm between inspections.

Saturday || 11

03.00 pm The British parliament
04.00 pm took note of the disastrous
05.00 pm

FEBRUARY

৩০ মাঘ ১৪২৭

12 Sunday

consequences of the System
09.00 am
10.00 am
11.00 am
12.00 pm
02.00 pm
03.00 pm
and in 1784, British prime minister William Pitt the younger directed the Calcutta administration to alter it immediately.

In 1786 Charles Cornwallis was sent out to India

13 Monday

১ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৭

to reform the Company's practices.

In 1786, the East India Company court of Directors first proposed a permanent settlement for Bengal, changing the policy then

FEBRUARY	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

0.00 am

0.00 am

0.00 am

0.00 pm

0.00 pm

0.00 pm

0.00 pm

0.00 pm

ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

0.00 am

0.00 am

0.00 am

2.00 pm

2.00 pm

3.00 pm

4.00 pm

5.00 pm

Tuesday || 14

being followed by calcutta

which was attempting to
increase taxation of zamindars.

'Between 1786 and 1790

the new Governor General
Lord Cornwallis and Sir
John Shore entered a

Wednesday || 15

heated debate over whether
or not to introduce a
permanent settlement with
the zamindars.

Shore argued that

the native zamindars
would not trust the permanent
settlement to be permanent

Notes |

16 Thursday
 09.00 am and that it would take
 10.00 am time before they realised
 11.00 am it was genuine.

12.00 pm Cornwallis believed that
 02.00 pm they would immediately
 03.00 pm accept it and so began
 04.00 pm investing in improving their
 05.00 pm

17 Friday
 09.00 am Land. In 1790, the court of
 10.00 am Directors issued a ten-year
 11.00 am Settlement to the Zamindars
 12.00 pm which was made permanent
 02.00 pm in 1793.
 03.00 pm By the permanent
 04.00 pm Settlement Act of 1793
 05.00 pm

2017

Saturday || 18

৬ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

09.00 am their power of keeping the
10.00 am armed forces were taken
11.00 am back. They remained just
12.00 pm the tax collectors of the
02.00 pm land. There were considerably
03.00 pm ^{কুমারগঠ} weakened as they were now
04.00 pm banned from holding any
05.00 pm

Sunday || 19

৭ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

09.00 am court, as it was brought
10.00 am under the supervision of
11.00 am collector appointed by
12.00 pm the company. British officials
02.00 pm believed that investing in the
03.00 pm land would improve the
04.00 pm economy.

05.00 pm

FEBRUARY

20 || Monday

८ फाल्गुन १४२७

09.00 am They did not want to take
10.00 am direct control of local adminis-
11.00 am tration in villages for
12.00 pm several reasons. They did
02.00 pm not want to annoy those ^{विवरित करना}
03.00 pm people who had traditionally
04.00 pm enjoyed power and prestige
05.00 pm in the village. To keep powerful

21 || Tuesday

९ फाल्गुन १४२७

09.00 am people happy and collect
10.00 am better revenue. Cornwallis
11.00 am introduced the permanent
12.00 pm settlement.

As per permanent
02.00 pm system, rajas and talukdars
03.00 pm were recognised as zamindars
04.00 pm

05.00 pm

FEBRUARY	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
2017	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

2017

Wednesday || 22

10 फालून 1823

09.00 am

10.00 am

11.00 am

12.00 pm

02.00 pm

03.00 pm

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

who were supposed to collect
the land revenue from the
जमी / जमी देयक
peasants.

The rate of revenue
was never to be increased
The company officials believed
that would give some motivation
for land to be invested in as

Thursday || 23

11 फालून 1823

09.00 am Zamindars would be assured
of long term returns of
continuous flow of revenue.

10.00 am ~~provisions of permanent settlement~~

11.00 am

12.00 pm

13.00 pm 10 Basic Features :- The basic features
of the settlement were as follows:

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

FEBRUARY

24 Friday

१२ फाल्गुन १८२०

- 09.00 am 1. The Zamindars were made
10.00 am hereditary owners of the land
11.00 am under their possession. They
12.00 pm and their successors exer-
02.00 pm cised total control over lands.

- 03.00 pm
04.00 pm 2. The Zamindars could sell
05.00 pm and purchase lands.

25 Saturday

१३ फाल्गुन १८२०

- 09.00 am 3. The state had no direct
10.00 am contact with the peasants.

- 11.00 am
12.00 pm 4. The company's share in
02.00 pm the revenue was fixed perma-
03.00 pm nently with the zamindars.

04.00 pm

१४ फाल्गुन १४२३

09.00 am

Thus the permanent land

10.00 am

Revenue settlement involved

11.00 am three parties, the government
12.00 pm the zamindar and the ryot.

02.00 pm On the cultivation.

03.00 pm As per the's settlement

04.00 pm the role of the government

05.00 pm and the zamindar is fixed but

१५ फाल्गुन १४२३

Sunday || 26

09.00 am the role of the ryot is not at

10.00 am all defined and the ryot is

11.00 am ~~ब्रिटिश सरकार~~ put at the mercy of the

12.00 pm zamindar and thus ryot is

02.00 pm the worst effected due to this

03.00 pm Settlement

04.00 pm ~~X 10~~ Provision

05.00 pm

Sunday

26

Monday

|| 27

FEBRUARY-MARCH

28 || Tuesday

১৬ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

09.00 am **Merits of permanent Settlement:**

10.00 am 2. With the implementation of

11.00 am permanent settlement the condition

12.00 pm of the peasants improved a

02.00 pm lot and their fields began to

03.00 pm produce rich crops.

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

01 || Wednesday

১৭ ফাল্গুন ১৪২৩

09.00 am 2. The improvement in agriculture

10.00 am also influenced the trade and

11.00 am commerce of the country. As

12.00 pm a result of this all round

02.00 pm progress, the province of

03.00 pm Bengal became the most

04.00 pm prosperous one.

05.00 pm

2017

Thursday || 02

१८ फाल्गुन १४२३

09.00 am It was also believed from

10.00 am the famines, ^{ज़रूरी} Economics

11.00 am prosperity of Bengal helped

12.00 pm the rise of art and literature.

02.00 pm In this way the education

03.00 pm and culture developed in Bengal

04.00 pm

Q. The Government of the

05.00 pm

the company was benefited a

१९ फाल्गुन १४२३

09.00 am Lot by the permanent

10.00 am settlement.

All the Landlords

11.00 am who became the owners of the

12.00 pm Land felt obliged to the English

02.00 pm Government and became its true

03.00 pm supporters as the time of revolt.

04.00 pm

MARCH

04 Saturday

२० फाल्गुन १४२०

09.00 am owing to the liberal view of
10.00 am the Government their
11.00 am separate Cate gory was
12.00 pm formed and they began to
02.00 pm earn ample of money without
03.00 pm any effort on Labour.

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

05 Sunday

२१ फाल्गुन १४२०

09.00 am 3. with the passage of time
10.00 am the rich Landlords began to
11.00 am invest their wealth in trade
12.00 pm and commerce.

02.00 pm

03.00 pm Although the
04.00 pm government could not increase
05.00 pm the revenue in future yet the

MARCH	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	

2017

ବିଜୟନାନ୍ଦ ପାତ୍ର

୨୨ ଫାଇନ୍ ୧୯୨୩

Monday || 06

09.00 am flourishing trade enabled the
10.00 am English to impose some fresh
11.00 am taxes on the traders and
12.00 pm thus they earned a lot of ^{ଗୁରୁତବ}
02.00 pm wealth through new tax levied
03.00 pm on these landlords. Besides
04.00 pm this, the permanent settlement
05.00 pm led India towards modernisation.

Tuesday || 07

09.00 am in the sphere of revenue system
10.00 am 4.97 freed the English government
11.00 am of the problem of fixation of
12.00 pm revenue every year. Moreover
02.00 pm the income of the government was
03.00 pm fixed once for all which enable
04.00 pm it to make its planning according
05.00 pm

MARCH

२४ फाल्गुन १८२०

08 || Wednesday

to its resources of income
in case the landlords did
not make payment of their
tax, the loss was made
good by selling a part of
the land of the Zamin dar.

5. The implementation of the

05.00 pm

09 || Thursday

२५ फाल्गुन १८२०

permanent settlement also
benefited the peasants.
So far, they were forced
to pay more and more to
the landlords but now their
revenue and also fixed through
a party agreement deed which

MARCH	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F							
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2017

Friday 10

२६ फाल्गुन १४२७

09.00 am

Saved them from the harass-

10.00 am

ment from the Land lords.

11.00 am

6. It not only increased the agricultural produce but also enhanced the area under cultivation.

03.00 pm

7. So far a large number of employees were involved in the

२७ फाल्गुन १४२७

Saturday

11

Revenue administration of the company but the implementation of the permanent settlement enabled them to devote their services to the other department of the company as there was no work in this department now.

Notes

12 Sunday

09.00 am Demerits of the Permanent
 10.00 am Settlement :-

11.00 am 1. on the other hand there
 12.00 pm are some scholars who hold
 02.00 pm the opinion that the Permanent
 03.00 pm Settlement adversely affected
 04.00 pm the interests of the landlords
 05.00 pm अमिताय/अमित
 शास्त्री

13 Monday

२९ फाल्गुन १४२७

09.00 am Peasants and the Company
 10.00 am alike. Actually, this settlement
 11.00 am proved defective due to the
 12.00 pm following reasons —

02.00 pm 1. The Permanent Settlement
 03.00 pm adversely affected the income
 04.00 pm of the company as the revenue
 05.00 pm

MARCH	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F							
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2017

Tuesday || 14

30 फरवरी 1820

09.00 am was fixed quite on the low
10.00 am side due to lack of proper
11.00 am measurement.

12.00 pm

2. It benefited only the land

02.00 pm

lords and the condition of

03.00 pm

the farmers could not be improved

04.00 pm

as much as was expected. The

05.00 pm

Wednesday || 15

1 अप्रैल 1820

09.00 am poor farmers continued to be
10.00 am the victims of the harassments
11.00 am of the landlords who exploited
12.00 pm them for their own selfish
02.00 pm motives.

03.00 pm

3. The British Government
04.00 pm expected that with the implementation
05.00 pm

MARCH

२०१८ ३४२०

16 Thursday

of permanent settlement

09.00 am

The income of the Company

10.00 am

would increase tremendously

11.00 am

but their expectations were

12.00 pm

not fulfilled.

02.00 pm

4. This settlement also

03.00 pm

proved harmful for the

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

17

Friday

२०१८ ३४२०

Landlords who failed to deposit

the required revenue in

the royal treasury in time.

As a result their land

was sold off.

03.00 pm

5. The landlords became

indolent and led luxurious

04.00 pm

05.00 pm

MARCH	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F
2017	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	

2017

Saturday 18

8.00 am 1820

09.00 am

lives due to their richness.

10.00 am

They did not pay proper

11.00 am

attention to their lands

12.00 pm

and left them to their

02.00 pm

employees who made no seri-

03.00 pm

ous efforts for the improve-

04.00 pm

ment of agricultural produce.

05.00 pm

1820

Sunday 19

09.00 am

G. The peasants continued to

10.00 am

be at the receiving end of

11.00 am

the cruelties of the landlords

12.00 pm

They continued to realize

02.00 pm

the maximum revenue from

03.00 pm

the peasants and deposited

04.00 pm

only the minimum in the treasury

05.00 pm

of the company.

Notes |

MARCH

20

Monday

୬ ଜୟୋତି ୧୪୨୭

09.00 am 7. 9+ hurt the national
10.00 am feeling of the people because
11.00 am this system created special
12.00 pm class of zamindars in the
02.00 pm country who became the
03.00 pm true devotees of the English.
04.00 pm This class did not support
05.00 pm the people during the war of

21

Tuesday

09.00 am independence.

୭ ଜୟୋତି ୧୪୨୭

10.00 am

11.00 am

12.00 pm

02.00 pm

03.00 pm

Wednesday || 22

9.00 am 1820

Provisions

According to the

10.00 am

Permanent Land Revenue Settlement

11.00 am

the Zamindars were recognised

12.00 pm

as the permanent owners of the

02.00 pm

Land. They were given instructions

03.00 pm

to pay 89% of the annual revenue

04.00 pm

due to the state and were permitted

05.00 pm

Thursday || 23

9.00 am 1820

to enjoy 11% of the revenue as

10.00 am

their share. They were left

11.00 am

independent in the internal affairs

12.00 pm

of their respective districts.

02.00 pm

The Zamindars were required

03.00 pm

to issue patta and qabuliyaats

04.00 pm

to the cultivators mentioning

05.00 pm

the area of their land, and

Notes

ARCH

24 Friday

೧೦ ಡಿಂ ೧೯೨೭

00 am the amount of revenue to
00 am be paid by them to the
00 am State.

.00 pm

(Source: History
of Bd — Mil

2.00 pm

3.00 pm

4.00 pm

5.00 pm

25

Saturday

೧೧ ಡಿಂ ೧೯೨೭

09.00 am

10.00 am

11.00 am

12.00 pm

02.00 pm

03.00