CHAPTER 3
FOREIGN INVASIONS

Section A
NADIR SHAH'S INVASION, 1739
I. CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE INVASION

Conditions in Persia

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century the Safavi dynasty in Persia and the Mughal empire in India were both experiencing the same agonies of death. In both countries power had shifted from an incapable ruler to mutually quarrelling but unwarlike nobles. Shah Ismail and his able successors had created an expansive, strong and prosperous empire. But the dynasty began to decline from mid-seventeenth century owing to decline in monarchy. The dissolution came with Shah Husain Safavi (1694-1722), whose bigotry and subservience to the orthodox priests, and persecution of Sufi philosophers alienated the intellectuals and the traditionally martial nobles. Since the Persian occupation of Qandahar in the seventeenth century the Safavis had wisely granted autonomy to the turbulent and independence-loving Ghilzai and Abdali tribes in the wild country of Southern Afghanistan. But in the beginning of the eighteenth century (1708-9) the unwise attempt of the governor of Qandahar to rule the unruly tribes caused the Ghilzai Afghans to rebel and organise their power under their leader Mir Wais. His son, Mahmud Khan, successively conquered Qandahar (1717), Herat, Khorasan and Ispahan and gave the final blow to the Safavis.

Persia came under Afghan rule with the surrender of Shah Husain in 1722 and the accession of Mahmud.
The victory of Mahmud gave the signal for Russia and Turkey to expand at the cost of Iran, thereby adding to her misery. But after Mahmud the Ghilzai Afghans became split up under two rival chiefs. This helped Shah Tahmasp, son of the deposed ruler, Shah Husain, in assuming royal title and establishing his power in Mazandaran.

But Shah Tahmasp was not the person to save Persia. That credit goes to an obscure Turk who rose to be the greatest general in Asia. Nadir Quli (b. 1688) was the son of a poor coat and cap maker, Imam Quli, a Turk of a Khorasani Afshar tribe. Schooled in adversity, he developed an indomitable energy, valour, ability and a genius for war and diplomacy, all sharpened by a life of brigandage and robbery in Khorasan. Gathering round himself a band of faithful followers he became a reputed leader of men and gradually built up a position for himself. By defeating the Afghan ruler of Khorasan, and entering on the service of Shah Tahmasp in 1727, he became the leader of a Persian war of national resistance against all foreigners. By 1729-30 he expelled the Ghilzais from Persia and restored the lawful ruler, Shah Tahmasp, who gratefully gave him half of the kingdom, a crown and the right of coining.

Soon Shah Tahmasp proved incompetent in his western expeditions. Urged by the army officers to assume the crown, Nadir wisely restrained himself. He, however, forced the shah to abdicate in favour of his infant son, Abbas III in August 1732 with himself as regent. It was after the latter's death that he threw all disguise aside and himself ascended the throne in February 1736 as Nadir Shah.

Next he subdued the Turks and the Russians. Occupying Armenia and Georgia he drove the Turks from the empire. He recovered the areas near the Caspian (by making peace with Russia), and Bahrein from the Arabs. By defeating the plundering Bakhtiari tribe of Shuster mountains, he enlisted them in his army.
In northern Afghanistan, he first captured Balkh and Herat. Then Nadir turned towards Qandahar (1737). In Afghan hands it would be a thorn to Khorasan and a standing menace to Persia. With it he would not only gain the full Safavi heritage, but also the Afghan fighting personnel to assist him in his further eastern conquests like those of Mahmud of Ghazni. Qandahar fell after full one year’s siege (March 1737-38). Nadir’s victory and the future arrangements displayed his generalship, wise statesmanship and diplomacy. Near the old fort and city now dismantled, a new city and military centre was built at Nadirabad (modern Qandahar). The vanquished Afghans were sought to be conciliated by amercement,—releasing the prisoners, pensioning the chiefs, enlisting them in service, transplanting the Ghilzais and appointing Abdali chiefs as governors in Afghanistan. He was now free to turn to India.

Conditions in the Mughal Empire

India was, indeed, waiting as it were to be invaded. Her proverbial wealth excited the cupidity of foreigners especially when it could not be defended. The Mughal empire, as explained before, was already in a state of decline and disintegration. Anarchy was stalking the land in place of order. The decline in monarchy, illustrated by a succession of weak rulers after 1707, the decadence of the aristocracy reflected in the Irani and Turani party conflicts in the court, selfish scramble for power, wealth and land, without any sense of loyalty to the rulers and patriotism and the rise of independent dynasties in provinces like the Punjab, Oudh, the Deccan and Bengal and the activities of the Hindu nationalities,—the Marathas, the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Jats and the Bundelas, all served to reduce the empire into shambles. Jat depredations caused insecurity on the roads even near the capital and disturbed traffic and trade. The annual raids of the
Marathas, followed by their permanent expansion in Gujrat, Malwa and Bundelkhand, proved to be a great economic loss. Productive activity ceased directly through extortions and plunder and indirectly on account of general insecurity which discouraged industry and trade. A feeling of insecurity also grew up on account of repeated civil wars for the throne among princes, for power among nobles and armed conflicts between the government and rebellious subjects. Government income fell as raiyats withheld land revenue and tahsildars collections.

The Mughal government unable to maintain internal order was hardly likely to command respect abroad. In fact this had already been lost long ago ever since the time of Jahangir and Shahjahan. It was in the fringe areas of the empire like Malwa and Afghanistan that the effects of the weakness of the Central government were actually felt. The strategically important Afghanistan was a costly and precarious possession. The Great Mughals had continuously kept a watch on the north-western frontier by trying to prevent a hostile combination of powers in western and central Asia, to maintain a strong administration in Kabul and to secure Qandahar, its gateway, if possible and to keep the tribal elements in Afghanistan satisfied. The final loss of Qandahar to Persia in 1649 exposed the failure of the Mughal military machine. From 1667-76 the tribes were in a turmoil. Aurangzeb’s concentration in Rajputana and the Deccan encouraged the frontier tribes to defy the Mughals and endanger communication with Kabul. But Amir Khan (1676-1698), Shah Alam (1699-1707) and Nasir Khan (1709-19) maintained order fairly well. The persecution of the Sikhs and the Jats left the Punjab in a state of discontent. The Maratha advance towards the North from 1714 also engaged the attention of the Mughal empire. Even in the reign of Aurangzeb the Persian menace hung like a black cloud but the inevitable Persian invasion could not take place because of the internal revolutions in Persia and Western Afghanistan (1721-36).
For some time past the Mughals failed to take adequate steps to guard the north-western front. The reigning emperor, Muhammad Shah, was then sunk in pleasure. Afghanistan was virtually defenceless. Its Turani governor, Nasir Khan II (from 1719), though born of an Afghan mother, could not check the Afghans from making the roads unsafe and aggravating disorder. He was indolent and his army was 'ill-fed, ill-equipped, ill-armed,' and hence inefficient. His repeated calls for money to redeem the arrear pay of the soldiers were left unheeded at Delhi on account of personal and party rivalry. Khan-i-Dauran, belonging to the Hindustani party was against him. His patron at Delhi, Roshan-ud-Daula Zafar Khan, through whom the subsidy money meant for frontier tribes used to come, was accused of embezzlement by the latter's rival, Khan-i-Dauran, who induced the emperor to stop the payment. To Nasir's importunate agent Khan-i-Dauran derisively replied that money would be sent when received from Bengal. The frontier tribes became dissatisfied. Thus the passes became unsafe.

Ghulam Husain, commenting on the slothful negligence and inefficiency of the then Mughal government, observes: 'The Government was rotten, the emperor was powerless'. Again, '... None cared for anyone else, none feared, none sought instructions from any ...'. Roads and passes were neglected and unguarded. Every one passed and repassed, unobserved or unquestioned. No news came to Delhi court. Neither the emperor nor the minister (Amir-ul-Umara) was anxious to know the reason of this black-out of intelligence.

The condition of the Punjab was equally defenceless and wretched. Zakariya Khan (son of Abdus Samad Khan), the Turani governor of Lahore and Multan, was a good general and an able administrator. But party rivalry was responsible for misgovernment and neglect. He belonged to the Turani party. So his efforts to protect the province against internal disorders caused by rebels
and robbers and impending invasion were set at naught by the Hindusthani party under Khan-i-Dauran, who enjoyed the emperor's confidence then. Personal and party rierly proved stronger than the interest of the state. The emperor did not scrutinise the matter. In this way the invader's task became easy. The collapse of the two gateways of India, Afghanistan and the Punjab, was inevitable.

II. Nadir's Objectives

The invasion of India was not a sudden development for Nadir. For him it was a logical sequel to the developments in Persia,—the expulsion of the Ghilzais and the Abdalis from Persia and the stagnation in the war with the Turks. It was, again, a natural corollary of the weakness of the Mughal empire. India could supply the necessary sinews of war to fill his exhausted treasury for renewing the war against the Turks. He was prompted by the precedents of Mahmud of Ghazni, Timur and Babur. The weakness of the Mughal empire left India, the source of land, wealth and glory without a protector. It was a very favourable opportunity.

But Nadir was too shrewd a diplomat to allow his invasion of India to be condemned as mere aggression. He found a necessary pretext in Delhi's violation of normal diplomatic procedure. While the Mughal court had sought to establish friendly relations with the Ghilzai usurper of Persia, Muhammad Shah had failed to felicitate Shah Tahmasp II on his accession and success over the Ghilzais. This was construed not merely as negligence but even as 'unfriendly indifference'. In fact the imbecile Delhi court acted most unwisely for it tended to support the allegation that Delhi was not merely unable but reluctant to prevent the influx of the Ghilzai refugees from across the border. In 1730 Nadir requested Delhi (through Ali Mardan Shamlu) to close the entire frontier.
to all Afghan refugees after his operations in Qandahar began. Muhammad Shah replied that the governors of Kabul and Sind were being instructed accordingly. But the Kabul army was too inefficient to do anything. In 1732 Nadir requested Delhi (through Muhammad Ali Khan) for the second time for preventing the influx of the Ghilzai refugees. Delhi expressed its inability, because of preoccupations with 'the Deccan infidels' (Md. Bakhsh Ashob). In April 1737 Nadir advanced against Qandahar and sent a third (personal) envoy (Muhammad Khan Turkoman), repeating the earlier requests for deputing a force on the frontier and enquiring why the Afghan refugees were flocking to Kabul. Delhi neither sent any reply nor the ambassador back even for a year. These circumstances hardened Nadir's resolve to invade India. In 1738 he accused Muhammad Shah of violation of promise, but the messenger was murdered before reaching the Mughal court.

But all this was a mere pretence. The real causes of the invasion were political and economic. He professed as his object the destruction of the Afghans, a common enemy of Persia and India. Before coming to India he declared that his major objective was to have the Mughal empire from the Marathas. Some contemporary writers including Frazer believed that Nadir was invited to invade India by the 'Mughal' party, particularly by the Nizam and Saadat Khan of Oudh, against the Marathas. It is very difficult to prove this in the absence of any documentary evidence of any such invitation. But such an invitation can be easily understood. Nadir told Muhammad Shah that he had been invited by all nobles except three (Nasir Khan, Khan-i-Dauran and Muhammad Khan), that these were faithful and all the rest were traitors. However, Nadir did not want any invitation. After the defeat of the Nizam at Bhopal there was no power in India capable of checking the Marathas and some elements in the court might have favoured an invasion by Nadir hoping that.
after destroying the power of the Marathas Nadir would leave the field clear for them.

From Qandahar it was a sort of triumphal march for conquest of Northern Afghanistan for Nadir,—Ghazni (May), Kabul (June), Jalalabad (Sept.), Peshawar (November) fell one by one. After crossing the Indus at Attock (Dec.) he defeated the governor of Lahore (Jan. 1739). Nadir now strongly protested to Muhammad Shah, referring to their common Turkish origin, expressing surprise at not receiving expected help against the Afghans, the common enemy (who had expelled Humayun), complaining of the discourtesy shown to himself and declaring his intention of coming to India to punish the emperor's evil advisers. Nadir's objectives become clear when we find that all important and rich cities in the Punjab were plundered on the way. Then he marched from Lahore via Sirhind to Karnal (Feb.) which had been selected by the Mughals. Entrenchments were thrown up and the guns were chained. The site, protected by an almost impenetrable forest in the north and Ali Mardan Khan's canal, was, however, more suitable for defence than offensive. Nadir Shah, avoiding the jungle, swayed a little to the right and encamped near the town, while his scouts and patrols scoured the country to its south. Here, at the battle of Karnal, 13 February 1739, the Indian army was defeated within three hours only.

III. Causes of Nadir's success

Political Factors: Nadir's success over the Indian army at Karnal was of course due to military factors,—his superior military generalship, equipment and tactics. But the ground was long ago prepared by political factors,—the 'disgraceful inefficiency amounting to imbecility' of the Delhi court including the emperor and his nobles, reflected in utter lack of foresight, want of diplomatic wisdom and absence of a sense of alertness and of urgency
of the situation. The Delhi court remained a silent spectator of the Ghilzai usurpation of Persia and failed to realise the possible danger to Kabul from this new independent state on its border. For the ruler of Kabul, Qandahar was the first line of defence. Nizam-ul-Mulk, coming from the Deccan, had long ago suggested an expedition to restore the rightful heir, Tahmasp Safavi, to Ispahan. But the Mughal court ignored this sane advice. It had neither the desire nor the power to do so. There were again, other diplomatic lapses of the Mughals.

There were other factors contributing to Nadir's success viz., inefficient espionage, neglect of frontier, party divisions in Mughal court, weakening the power of resistance of the Mughals. Owing to the decline of the monarchy the real fighting had to be done by nobles and they displayed lack of courage, imagination and unity in their fight against the greatest general of that age in Asia. No assistance of any kind was given to the supplicating governor of Kabul to check Nadir. The passes into India were undefended. Delhi court believed that Nadir would go away after conquering Kabul. Khan-i-Dauran did not anticipate the invasion. The initial incredulity about Nadir's invasion yielded place to increasing panic in Delhi court circles. The Mughal court was watching the result of the conflict between the Nizam and Marathas, expecting the Nizam to come to Delhi from the Deccan. But the Nizam's defeat by the Marathas under Baji Rao reduced his prestige and there was no accepted leader in the Mughal court. One by one the nobles declined the profound honour of opposing the invader,—Khan-i-Dauran, Nizam-ul-Mulk, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk. Neither the Marathas nor the Rajputs, whose assistance was solicited by Khan-i-Dauran, came forward to help the Mughals. The former were engaged in the Bassein campaign. The latter did not respond. And there was no sense of loyalty to the throne to inspire them. Saadat Khan, the governor of Oudh, the only noble with prestige and a large army,
was called to the court on the advice of the Nizam. But he was not enthused over the matter. He did not come by forced marches, as he should have, on account of party rivalry with Khan-i-Dauran. Nobles failed to agree on a common plan regarding command, precedence, etc. There was also difference between the Nizam and Khan-i-Dauran even at this moment of peril of the empire. The principal nobles did not lay the personal quarrels aside. Everybody tried to steal a march over the other or to assure their future.

Nadir had an excellent intelligence system but in the Mughal camp no attempt was made to get information.

Military Factors: Sir Jadunath remarks that the defeat of the Mughals at Karnal was due 'as much to their being outclassed in their weapons of war and method of fighting as to their bad generalship'. (1) Nadir Shah was a Turk. His Qizibashi (Red Caps) troops were men of the same race and method of warfare as the Turko-Afghan and Mughal conquerors of India. They could make long and rapid marches, and bear every hardship on the way. (2) Strict discipline was maintained in Nadir's army largely consisting of jazairchis, men equipped with firearms (swivel guns) fixed on the ground in rows. Their fire-control was of the European type. By reserving their fire till the required moment they could inflict deadly and disconcerting volleys on the enemy. The Indians were lured by Nadir's skirmishers and devastated by rapid fire. (3) Cavalry war in India was like a theatrical show, priding on swordsmanship and sword play and detesting missile weapons and their users. (4) The use of fire arms was very imperfectly developed among the Indian Mussalmans and Rajputs, except the Baksariyas, the Bundelas and Karnatakis, and Bahelias (of Allahabad Subah). The majority of Indians did not fight with muskets or carry light portable artillery (jazair). The Indian ordnances were not only heavy and cumbersome,
but more antiquated than those of Persia and Turkey, and so very slow and inaccurate in action. In conformity to their training the Indians relied more on shock charge of heavy cavalry and hand to hand fight. They had little mobility on account of the large numerical strength and presence of non-combatants. On the other hand, Nadir's gizilbashes, like their fellow tribesmen of Central Asia or the armies of Ottoman Sultans, constituted the best cavalry in Asia, —hardy and fast horsemen, trained to the saddle from childhood and riding strongest and swiftest horses. At the same time they were very good archers. Using the saddle they could shoot while fleeing. So in fighting with their missiles the Persians had a decisive advantage over the Indians with only side arms. With better mobility Nadir’s army could assume the offensive from the very beginning and so out-maneuvered the Indians. The ‘crowning folly’ of the Indians was the use of elephants in an age of muskets and long-range artillery mounted on camels. At Karnal, as in the time of Alexander and Babur, the Indian elephants proved to be a ‘sure engine of self-destruction’.

IV. Effects of Nadir’s Invasion

It is a fashion to hold Nadir’s invasion to be a cause of the dissolution of the Mughal empire. But really speaking it was not a cause but only ‘one of the clearest symptoms’ of its decline. However, it undoubtedly did involve the empire ‘in disgrace, spoliation and dismemberment.’ (J. N. Sarkar)

It involved the empire in disgrace and humiliation because it shattered the prestige and power of the empire. The emperor and his nobles completely failed to resist the Persians. It was too late when they realised the danger. After Karnal, Nadir, briefed by Saadat Khan, asked the emperor to send the Nizam, ‘the key of the state of India’ for settling the terms of peace.
defeated emperor had to send him. As a result of the Nizam’s negotiations, the victor agreed to return to Persia on getting a war indemnity of Rs. 50 lakhs in 4 different instalments i.e., 20 lakhs immediately and 3 other instalments (of Rs. 10 lakhs each) at Lahore, Attock and Kabul. The emperor visited the victor’s camp, was received graciously, dined with him and returned safely. But the selfish Saadat Khan of Oudh, jealous of the Nizam’s appointment as Bakhshi in succession to the deceased Khan-i-Dauran, incited the invader to raise his demand to Rs. 20 crores besides 20,000 troopers, when there was famine in the imperial camp. Nadir called the Nizam but detained him and made him write to the emperor, who had again to go to Nadir. This time he was very shabbily treated and imprisoned with his nobles. ‘The Key for opening the whole Empire of Hindustan’ now fell to Nadir’s hands. After this virtual coup, the victor, who had already sent Saadat Khan and his own agent to Delhi in advance for making preparations and for guarding imperial property, entered Delhi (9 March) and occupied Shah Jahan’s palace-chambers near the Diwan-i-Khas, while the emperor had to shift for himself elsewhere. That treacherous black sheep, Saadat Khan, was sharply rebuked by Nadir for his inability to raise the stipulated ransom. Nadir became King (Shahān Shah) of Delhi with full sovereign power; new coins were issued and the Khutbah was read in his name (10 March). Muhammad Shah remained a prisoner of state, though assured of a double gift,—of life as well as a crown. Nadir continued to issue farmans even after his departure.

At first events were comparatively peaceful. But then came a tumult. It has sometimes been represented as a rising of Delhi populace against the Persian soldiers plundering their property and dishonouring their women. But on account of Nadir’s strict discipline this does not seem to be probable. It was the work of the mob
unsupported by the upper and saner sections of the citizens. A truer explanation seems to be the fracas over the forcible opening of granaries of the Paharganj ward and fixation of the price of corn by the Persian mounted police (nasaqchi) which was not agreeable to the dealers. Then came the rumour of Nadir’s death which aggravated the tumult in which about 3000 Persians were killed. In revenge Nadir ordered a general massacre of inhabitants of the affected areas. Twenty thousand people were slain in five hours (9 A.M. to 2 P.M., 11 March). Houses were burnt and looted and all men killed irrespective of age and creed and women were enslaved. The people were locked within the besieged city which was suffering from famine and subjected to innumerable cruelties by soldiers. Granaries were sealed up and guarded. Villages were plundered by soldiers within a radius of 30-40 miles.

At the end of two months (57 days to be exact) Nadir Shah left Delhi on 5 May 1739, after having formally reinstated Muhammad Shah in a court (1 May). But with resources exhausted, territories surrendered and factious and unpatriotic nobles, Muhammad Shah’s prestige sank very low. To fill the cup of humiliation, Muhammad Shah was forced to agree to a marriage of a Mughal princess, a daughter of Dawar Bakhsh (grandson of Murad) to Nasrullah Mirza, the youngest son of Nadir, who also carried away a large number of ladies.

Effect on the Court: The blow of the invasion produced a stupefying effect on the emperor and its courtiers. There was stagnation for two months. Nothing was done or proposed with regard to state affairs and yet even this invasion failed to awaken the persons in authority from the sleep of lethargy, indolence, inaction and mutual ill-will. The nobles continued their old game of mutual distrust and ill-will. Before leaving Nadir gave some advice to Muhammad Shah. He warned the emperor against the Nizam, who was over-ambitious and cunning. He:
also advised the emperor to resume all assignments and pay officers direct, permitting none to maintain troops. But the emperor had neither the sense nor the moral courage to follow it. He came now to have some suspicion of the Nizam and the Turani nobles.

The Mughal parties in the court were also deeply affected by the invasion. Among the old leaders, Saadat Khan and Khan-i-Dauran had died. Nizam-ul-Mulk and Qamaruddin lost the confidence of the emperor for their sorry part in the battle of Karnal. The Nizam again decided to leave the court and sought an agreement with the Marathas in order to maintain his position in the Deccan. In imperial circles Safdar Jang of Oudh and Muhammad Amin Khan rose to prominence. The decline in the imperial prestige caused a renewal of the old struggle for the Wizarat with the object of preventing the domination of the empire by one of the powers in Northern India and not for reviving the empire by internal reform and policies as before. In the field of diplomacy there were attempts to establish an anti-Nadir front on the part of Muhammad Shah and the Nizam with the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud I but without any tangible result.

Next, spoliation. The invasion of Nadir Shah subjected the country to stupendous economic impoverishment and colossal ruin. In the Punjab swift cavalry raids (turk tazi) were made. Cities and big (and rich) villages like Wazirabad, Yaminabad, Gujrat, were plundered and burnt to ‘black ashes’. ‘All over the country property was plundered and women outraged’. (Anandram)

Besides, the invader extorted wealth not only from Muhammad Shah but also from his nobles, merchants and the people of Delhi. It was a big drain on the resources of the country. Deprived of the accumulated treasures of generations, Muhammad Shah was left with no cash reserve. This affected the position of Delhi as one of the commercial marts of Northern India. The
general impoverishment of the nobles sharpened the struggle for possession of jagirs and the tendency towards rack-renting of the peasantry became marked. With the devastation of villages and massacre of peasants, it became difficult to realise land revenue without military help and the internal problems of the empire came to be aggravated.

Undoubtedly Nadir Shah plundered the treasure of the richest empire in Asia,—in cash, jewels and goods. It is, however, difficult to correctly assess the total amount of the plunder as it has been variously estimated by different writers. Nadir’s Secretary estimated the cash indemnity at 15 crores of rupees including what was taken from nobles, gold and silver plates, clothing, furniture and goods from imperial karkhanas. There are other estimates amounting to 52 crores approximately (as by Anandram) and 70 crores (as by Frazer). The crown-jewels, including the Kohinur and Shahjahan’s Peacock Throne (costing 2 crores) had to be surrendered. To build a city like Delhi in Persia, Nadir carried with him experienced writers and accountants (numbering 130), artisans of various categories (200 carpenters, 200 blacksmiths, 100 stone-cutters, goldsmiths and boat-builders), eunuchs as well as numerous transport animals (300 elephants, 10,000 horses and 10,000 camels and mules).

The squeezing of the emperor and the nobles did not save the starving people. The well-to-do citizens had to pay half of their property as their contribution, yielding about two to four crores of rupees. Historian Anandram Mukhlis was assessed 5 lakhs. He has left a graphic account of the method of extortion. Delhi was divided into five sections with lists of different mahallas and names of persons and the respective amounts to be collected from each. The task of collection was entrusted to five nobles of both the governments as collectors. The assessment was made in the law court in the presence of the people. After assessment pressure was put to pay.
Persons delaying or objecting to payment were insulted and tortured. Houses had their floors dug in search of buried treasure. Many families were ruined. No barbarities were spared; many committed suicide. Thus Nadir Shah came to possess huge wealth from India. Even the spoliation of Rajputana and an invasion of the Deccan were apprehended. The impoverished Emperor had to pay 25 lakhs of rupees to Nadir's two officers (pansad-bashis) deputed to apprehend Persian deserters staying behind.

Persia shared the prosperity of her King. By a decree issued from Delhi, Nadir remitted all taxes for 3 years in Persia. The army chieftains were rewarded. Each soldier got 18 months' pay together, each camp-followers a bounty besides Rs. 60/-as pay. But this immense booty of Nadir did not last long. After his murder, it was plundered.

_Territorial dismemberment_: This brings us to the permanent political result of Nadir's invasion, which accelerated the process of disintegration and aggravated the prevailing chaos and confusion. Nadir's invasion was similar to Timur's. But there were some differences. Timur left the Sultanate of Delhi impoverished but not truncated. Nadir not only impoverished but also amputated the Mughal empire. There were two geographical and strategic barriers of India in the North-West,—Afghanistan and the Punjab. Both these were lost to India. In return for Nadir's generous gift of the crown and throne of Delhi, i.e., by what was virtually a forced treaty (Treaty of Shalimar, 1740), Muhammad Shah offered as his tribute the trans-Indus territories from Kashmir to Sind down to the sea, subah of Kabul i.e., Afghanistan; Baluchistan, North-Western Frontier areas, as well as Lower Sind or Tatta (with its ports and fortresses) were now ceded to Persia and finally lost to the Mughal empire. The loss of Kabul and the area west of the Indus deprived India
of an advanced post for the country's defence and a very important strategic point. India's western frontier became exposed to a newly implanted strong foreign state, master of the Khyber Pass and Peshawar. Timur had no successor to repeat his invasion. But Nadir's destructive work in India came to be repeated by his Durruani successor (and his dynasty) for nearly twenty-five years.

Further, the second defensive barrier of Delhi, the Punjab also came to be lost to India and it became the spring-board for launching expeditions to India. Nadir got the perpetual assignment of the revenues of the four Cis-Indus districts of the Punjab which continued under Mughal rule i.e., Gujrat, Aurangabad, Pasur and Sialkot, known as the Chahar Mahals (Four Mahals), reserved so long to feed the deficit Mughal province of Afghanistan. The governor of Lahore signed an agreement to send to him 20 lakhs of rupees a year for these areas. The Durruani master of Kabul and Lahore, who could easily make a sudden swoop from Lahore with the hardy Turkish and Afghan veterans, became a constant threat to the peace not only of Delhi but of the eastern provinces of the empire (i.e. Bihar and Bengal) as well. The danger was present (under Zaman Shah) even during early British rule.

Such a direct and drastic territorial dismemberment produced in its train some indirect but none the less significant internal dismemberment also. As a result of Nadir's invasion, a new political situation was created in Northern India. The work of establishing peace in the Punjab by able governors like Zakariya Khan was all undone. 'The whole province was in complete revolution. Every person put forth his hand of plunder and pillage and some thousands of robbers beset the public roads...' (Ali Hazin). Taking advantage of the situation the Sikhs began to assert themselves increasingly. By the end of Muhammad Shah's reign they became a constant thorn by the side of the empire. In the second half of the
eighteenth century, they made annual raids eastwards near Delhi and destroyed all traces of cultivation and population. Sirhind, Meerut, Hardwar and Shahranpur suffered. Within fifty years the Sikhs gained possession of the Punjab. The Marathas established themselves after Nadir’s return in Southern and Western provinces of the empire. They could not be resisted. They penetrated into Orissa, Bengal and South-East Bihar. The local governors were unable to check their depredations. The emperor tried, in vain, to set the Peshwa against the Bhonsle. Thus the invasion exposed the real weakness of the Mughal empire to the entire world, particularly to European adventurers.

Effects on the Marathas: According to Sardesai the Mughal nobles invited Nadir Shah to suppress the Marathas and to save the Mughal empire from their aggressions. When Nadir approached Delhi, Babu Rao Malhar, the Maratha representative at the Mughal court, fled to Jaipur. Peshwa Baji Rao became alarmed lest Nadir would establish his own sovereignty at Delhi and shatter the Maratha dream of establishing their hold. All Indian powers including the Marathas realised that a new power had arisen in Western Asia threatening the security of the N.W. regions. The danger of another invasion from the North-West led Baji Rao to conceive the need of developing a new attitude towards the Mughal empire, viz., to form a united front of all Indian powers under the Mughal empire, but under Maratha leadership. He even instructed his brother Chimnaji to make peace with the Portuguese so as to keep the army ready for an emergent action against the invader. The Peshwa also began to form a coalition with the Rajputs against Nadir Shah. It was rumoured that after Nadir’s departure the Marathas would establish a Hindu monarchy at Delhi. But Shahu was against any such idea as his instructions to the Peshwa (dated 31 May 1739) would show. He
preferred to buttress the empire as an aggressive policy would cause an anti-Maratha reaction among Indian powers and hence would be impolitic. The Marathas would, therefore, only be the administrative manager of the empire, collecting the revenue and pay the balance to the treasury after meeting the cost of the army. The departure of Nadir gave the Peshwa considerable relief.

Military results: Nadir's invasion pricked the bubble of India's military efficiency and illustrated the weakness of India's army at the battle of Karnal where the heavy artillery proved to be unsuitable in the face of lighter mobile weapons of the invader. It led to introduction of quick-firing musket and improved light artillery in India. The first to adopt these were the Rohilla Afghans. But the Marathas continued to cling to their traditional method of light cavalry warfare, an omission for which they had to pay dearly.

Cultural effects: The rise of Nadir and his invasion ended the cultural connection between India and Persia, which had lasted for two centuries. The flow of adventurers from Iran and Turan stopped. The Irani and Turani immigrants and settlers in India found it difficult to adopt an attitude of superiority or remain aloof as a separate group, making it easier for a composite culture to develop. The invasion of Nadir set an example and it was followed soon by Ahmad Shah Abdali, his faithful servant.
Section B

AHMAD SHAH DURRANI'S INVASIONS
1748-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invasions</th>
<th>Mughal Emperors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First : December 1747-March 1748</td>
<td>Muhammad Shah, 1719-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second : November 1748-early 1750</td>
<td>Ahmad Shah, 1748-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third : October 1751-April 1752</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth : November 1756-April 1757</td>
<td>Alamgir II, 1754-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth : September-October, 1759-</td>
<td>Shah Jahan III, Nov. 1759-Oct. 1760,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth : February-December, 1762</td>
<td>Shah Alam II, 1759-1806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh : October 1764-March 1765</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth : November 1766-March 1767</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth : December 1768-January 1769</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth : 1769-70 ( up to Peshawar only : Indus not crossed )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ahmad Shah Abdali ( c.1722-72 )

Nadir invaded India only once but his work was not only continued but repeated nine times by Ahmad Shah Durrani (Abdali) during nearly quarter of a century. He was the father of modern Afghanistan, the first Afghan king who founded the kingdom of Afghanistan and became famous as Ahmad Shah Baba. Belonging to the Sadduzai clan of the Abdali tribe of the Afghans of Herat and Qandahar, he was born at Multan (or Herat) in A. H. 1135 or c. A. D. 1722. He was eighteenth in descent from 'Abdal' (lit. a man free from worldly desires), founder of the tribe, so named by his preceptor, the Chishti saint Khwajah Abu Ahmad Abdal. The Abdalis gradually rose to power in the background of the Ghilzai-Safavi and Ghilzai-Nadir contests in the beginning of the eighteenth-century. Ahmad Khan was in Qandahar when Nadir
expelled the Ghilzais (1737) therefrom. Nadir employed him in his personal staff (Yasawal) and made the Abdalis move wholesale from Herat and Khorasan to Qandahar district. The young Afghan gradually rose to power by dint of his qualities, bravery and generalship to be the chief commander of the Abdali contingent of the ‘Persian Napoleon’. His participation in the latter’s Turkish and Indian campaigns fired him with a spirit of emulation. Nadir found him to be unequalled in capacity and character in ‘Iran, Turan or Hind’. Nadir’s murder in June 1747 left the path open for Abdali. He was elected supreme leader of all the Afghans as Ahmad Shah. Subsequently he was seated on an earthen mound and symbolically crowned by his religious guide, Sabir Shah (Shah Muhammad Sabir) with the title Badshah Durr-i-Dauran (Pearl of the Age). But Ahmad Shah preferred the title Durr-i-Durran (Pearl among Pearls or Best Pearl). Henceforth the name of the tribe was changed to Durrani and their Padshah came to be known as Durrani Padshah.

Ahmad Durrani’s Indian Invasions: Circumstances And Effects

Announcing his independence of Persia he formally crowned himself at Qandahar (July 1747). By skilful and statesmanlike compromise between the claims of the independence-loving tribes, conscious of their feudal rights and the supreme need of centralisation, he soon consolidated his authority in the eastern parts of Nadir’s dominions, with an ever-increasing soldiery consisting of Afghans and Nadir’s qizilbashies. He also established an efficient government with the help of a band of a few able officers like Shah Wali Khan (Chief minister) and Jahan Khan (Commander-in-chief). But there was lack of ready cash. To replenish his treasury he came to acquire the revenue of Kabul, Peshawar and Sind of 30
Iakhs coming to Nadir Shah, which enabled him to give financial stability to his new kingdom and strike coins.

But the best means to knit the Afghan tribes in a homogeneous whole was foreign conquests. The conditions in the neighbouring countries were favourable. Persia after Nadir was anarchical. The Indian and Uzbek empires were prostrate. The Baluchis would be willing to join the Afghans. Ahmad Durrani claimed the provinces conquered by Nadir from Muhammad Shah,—Ghazni, Kabul, Hazara, Peshawar, Multan and Sind. He offered to confirm Nasir Khan, who had been governor of Kabul under Muhammad Shah and Nadir Shah, on condition of paying an annual tribute of five lakhs. But the Khan, without acknowledging him, retired to Peshawar and fortified the passes leading to India. Ahmad Shah then marched from Qandahar and, after occupying Ghazni and Kabul, he advanced to Peshawar, whose governor escaped to join the Durrani, who was now acclaimed as a national hero. The capture of Peshawar gave him a suitable base for invading India. He became supreme in the area between Herat and the Indus. He had sufficient manpower and hardly met any physical resistance. But he yearned for acquiring gold and slaves from India. With the help of the Khyber Afghans who rallied round him, the first invasion was organised in 1747-48.

As regards the objectives of the first invasion, one was the desire to keep the turbulent and mutually quarrelling Afghans usefully employed in order to prevent them from disrupting the new kingdom. Though a national king he was regarded as an upstart by the old nobles. So he wanted to strengthen his position at home by winning military renown outside. He wanted to win over Afghan chieftains and satisfy the people by distributing the gold of India, as gold in Afghanistan, more than anywhere else, was the god of the people. In fact the hardy Afghan tribes of Central Asia regarded India as a productive field for conquest and plunder. Lastly, he was invited to...
invade India by Shah Nawaz Khan, the usurping governor of the Punjab, so as to escape punishment by Delhi. He left Peshawar in December 1747 for the Punjab, but without any cannon.

First Invasion (1747-48): Capture of Lahore and Sirhind

The Punjab was in a bad shape. The death of the able Turani governor, Zakariya Khan (1726 - July 1745) was followed by a civil war. The elder son, Yahya Khan, was appointed deputy (1746) of Wazir Qamaruddin, the absentee governor. But the second son, Hayatullah Khan (Hizarb Jang II Shah Nawaz Khan), governor of Multan, usurped the government of Lahore, requesting to be appointed deputy governor. Next he appealed to the emperor for reinforcements against the Durrani in vain. So he invited the invader.

The situation was, however, reversed, when on the approach of the invader towards the Punjab, Hayatullah (Shah Nawaz), under the influence of his maternal uncle, Wazir Qamaruddin, resisted him in an entrenched position on the Ravi, killing the invader's religious preceptor as a spy. But he was defeated at Lahore (January 1748) and escaped. Ahmad Shah's occupation of Lahore, the rich but undefended capital of the Punjab, the seizure of the property of the governor and imperial artillery, military stores, transport animals, horses and camels, the ransom of 30 lakhs as the price for sparing it of a sack, 'more than doubled' his strength. The Raja of Jammu and other hill chieftains and zamindars of the Punjab submitted. Coins were struck at Lahore.
Conduct of the Mughal Government

Successive reports of the invader's advance stage by stage and warnings found the emperor and his nobles suffering from the age-old sloth and inertia. All activity was merely oral, which did not lead to any definite resolution. Slackness and indecision reigned supreme in the court. After the death of Zakariya Khan no governor was immediately appointed for the Punjab. The emperor at first rejected the Wazir's suggestion to apportion Lahore and Multan to his two elder sons as setting up a hereditary Turani principality. The subsequent appointment of the Wazir as the absentee governor of this strategic province was extremely unwise and did not establish peace. The usurping Hayatullah (Shah Nawaz) held his elder brother Yahya Khan, the lawful deputy governor, in his grip. The court was in a dilemma. A show of force would either incite him to kill Yahya or throw him into the arms of the Abdali. So nothing was done. Even after the fall of Peshawar, the court did not realise the danger to Lahore. Divided counsels came from the nobles. While the veterans of war wanted the emperor to lead the army personally, the 'Carpet Knights' considered it unnecessary. The wiser Wazir suggested that the emperor should advance at least some distance to enthuse the ease-loving army. The indolent, opium-addict emperor agreed but put off the date for march to the Punjab. Such an irresolute and disgracefully dilatory army could hardly match the Durrani.

Then at last, when it was too late, in December 1747 an army was commissioned by the emperor under the command of Wazir Qamaruddin, assisted by Safdar Jang and Ishwari Singh of Jaipur, the chief Rajput feudatory and Nasir Khan. A sum of 60 lakhs, collected from Delhi state treasuries, was distributed among nobles. The army numbering two lakhs with non-combatants was
vast and slow-moving on account of heavy artillery. The Mughal nobles were guilty of criminal and incredible negligence in not collecting military intelligence and not guarding the line of communications (either with Delhi or Sirhind) or the route of provisions. Ever since its desertion by Ali Muhammad Ruhela, the imperial faujdar, Sirhind, the most important outpost between Lahore and Delhi, was left undefended (Feb. 1748). The direct Sirhind-Lahore route via Ludhiana left undefended by the imperialists (who used the upper Machhiwara route) was, however, used by the invader. The 12,000 strong, alert and mobile army, equipped with light camel-swivels, maintaining strict secrecy but keeping perfect intelligence, was thus able to cut into the rear of the Mughal army.

Finally, Sirhind was captured (2 March), the people were plundered and women reduced to slavery and surplus baggage and treasure sent to Lahore. The dispirited Mughals under Prince Ahmad returned and entrenched and gave battle to the Abdali at Manapur, 10 miles n. w. of Sirhind (11 March). The site was not safe for the Mughals. The unwieldy Indian army was crippled by logistical difficulties, natural lack of water and stoppage of food supply by the enemy. The Wazir's wrong tactics of inactive defensive and of overpowering the Abdali with starvation and cannonade failed before the latter's initiative, backed by efficient espionage. The Wazir was killed by cannon ball. The command of the army now passed to his capable son Muin-ul-Mulk.

The Durrani, realising his 1:5 numerical inferiority, avoided conventional warfare and concentrated on the imperial van and wings. The Rajputs under Ishwari Singh, unable to cope with the Afghan tactics, fled. The tide of the battle was, however, soon turned by the counter-charge of the Afghan centre by Muin, the bravery of Safdar Jang and an accident, the explosion of gunpowder of Afghan field artillery caused by recklessness of the Afghan plunderers. The invader was forced to retire towards
Qandahar where a rebellion had occurred. But the Mughals did not pursue him. Sirhind was recovered. Muin-ul-Mulk was appointed viceroy of the Punjab.

Second Invasion (1748-50) : Loss of Chahar Mahals

Ahmad Shah was determined to retrieve his honour and regain his lost areas in India. He also wanted to conquer Herat, then under Persia. But he first turned to India. Muin-ul-Mulk, the hero of Manupur, then governor of the Punjab (April 1748), might threaten Peshawar. He had promised help to Nasir Khan, the ex-governor of Kabul (now reappointed to his post), to regain Kabul. A combination of the two would easily endanger Kabul itself. The situation in Delhi and the Punjab was highly favourable. Muhammad Shah was dead. His successor, Ahmad Shah, was a puppet. Wazir Safdar Jang was a partisan, hostile to Muin-ul-Mulk. The basic factor was, of course, the party spirit in the Mughal court. Muin-ul-Mulk belonged to the Turani party and he was trying to evolve order out of chaos in the Punjab. The Delhi Wazir was Safdar Jang, of the Irani Shia faction, who regarded the victor of Manupur, the viceroy of the martial province of the Punjab, to be his formidable potential rival for the Wazirship. So he set up two instruments against Muin. The Wazir first incited Nasir Khan (appointed faujdar of Chahar Mahals by Muin), to wrest Lahore from him, but Nasir was routed. The next instrument was Hayatullah Shah Nawaz (a Turk but Shia). He was appointed subahdar of Multan as the first step towards the subahdari of Lahore. The position of Muin in the Punjab was still not firmly established. The rising power of the Sikhs also disturbed the peace of the Punjab. The expulsion of the Mughal deputy from Amritsar and the siege of their mud fortress Ram Rauni
distracted the attention of the governor. Taking advantage of these ‘intestine wars’ and disturbances Abdali crossed the Indus in A. H. 1162, December 1748. Muin sought reinforcements and money from Delhi. But no help was expected from there on account of the carelessness of the emperor and rivalry of the Mughal Wazir Safder Jang. The governor of the Punjab had to fight along. The invader asked him to surrender and give to him the revenues of the Chahar Mahals (Gujrat, Aurangabad, Pasrur and Sialkot) amounting to 14 lakhs which emperor Muhammad Shah had given to Nadir Shah. Muin-ul-Mulk sent this letter to the emperor for orders and help. But the emperor, instead of sending reinforcements, agreed to grant the revenues of the Chahar Mahals to Abdali, though these continued to be governed by Delhi officials. A treaty of peace was concluded by Muin accordingly (spring 1759). The Durrani invader got ‘the first slice of India proper’, flanking the hill chiefs of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus the second Abdali invasion caused a great territorial loss and humiliation for the Mughal empire. On his return (1750) the southern Afghanistan tribes of the Dehras surrendered. The chief of Kalat in Baluchistan also joined him.

Third Invasion: Conquest of the Punjab and Kashmir (1751-1752)

The weakness of Delhi spurred the ambition of the Durrani Shah to seize the fertile plains of India. Owing to recurring Sikh disturbances the distracted government of the Punjab failed to remit the promised revenues from the four Mahals to Kabul in time. So Abdali decided to invade India for the third time and sent two missions. The governor, Muin-ul-Mulk (also called Mir Munnu), pleaded the embezzlement of Nasir Khan, administrator of the mahals, as well as the disturbances as a cause of
delay and paid only one instalment of nine lakhs. Lahore was besieged after a turning movement of the invader. No reinforcements came from Delhi. Wazir Safdar Jang showed criminal negligence of duty at this crisis by taking no action. The Council of War at Lahore was also internally divided. The crafty Adina Beg Khan, thinking only of himself, coveting the governorship of Lahore and jealous of the diwan Kaura Mal, suggested recourse to war, however risky. Some others advocated peace. But the wise and experienced diwan advised to bide time on military grounds awaiting the advent of hot weather which would compel the invader to retreat. The youthful and impetuous governor decided on war. But in spite of heroic resistance he was defeated. The victor was, however, highly impressed by the ability, bravery and fearlessness of the governor, and a treaty was made between them, Muin-ul-Mulk paying 30 lakhs, for safety of lives of the people and peace of India. The victor appointed him his deputy in the viceroyalty of the Punjab (Lahore and Multan), now annexed to the Afghan empire; the administration was left as before but the revenues were to be sent to Kabul. An alarmed emperor (with his frightened court) quickly ratified the treaty (13 April 1752), thus losing the most important frontier province of the empire. Multan, believed to be the birth place of Ahmad Shah, became Durraniised (i.e., as an Afghan colony). Kashmir, *firdaus bar ru-i-zamin* (paradise on earth), which had become ‘a centre of highhandedness, intrigue and usurpation’, was also added to the Durrani empire after the defeat of its governor, Abdul (Abul) Qasim. An expedition was also launched against the Daudpotras of Bhawalpur. The Mughal government lost its ‘last shred of prestige’. The governor of the Punjab was constantly troubled by the Sikhs, who had caused ‘an epidemic of lawlessness’. The empire was thus further reduced in extent and power.

In 1752 Wazir Safdar Jang, smarting at Muin-ul-Mulk’s treaty and retention as governor of the Punjab as his own
diplomatic defeat, intrigued to instigate a rebellion of Mirza Shah Rukh in the Afghan province of Khorasan with promises of help, by involving Muin-ul-Mulk and the emperor. When these two would fall a victim to the wrath of the Durrani Padshah Safdar Jang would gain more power. The Shah even planned to invade India but ultimately the plot did not succeed.

Fourth Invasion (1756-57): Annexation of Sirhind Province

On the death of Muin-ul-Mulk in November 1753, the Punjab and Kashmir became theatres for puppet-plays. In both these provinces the emperor at first appointed infants and minors as rulers. His 3-year old son (Prince Mahmud Shah) and the deceased Mannu's son (Md. Amin Khan) became governor and deputy governor of the Punjab respectively, with Mir Moman Khan exercising real authority. Another prince (Taleh Said Shah) and the 15 or 16 year-old son of the emperor's maternal aunt were similarly appointed governor and deputy governor of Kashmir. Four days after, Intizam-ud-Daula, succeeding Wazir Safdar Jang, became absentee governor of the Punjab with two deputies (Mir Moman Khan and Bhikari Khan) and Adina Beg as faujdar of Jalandhar doab.

But the fiat of the supreme Durrani Shah changed all this. He confirmed Mannu's son as governor with Mir Moman Khan as his deputy. Mannu's clever and profligate widow, Suraiya or Murad Begam, better known as Mughlani Begam, now became the regent of her son and later on the governor of the province. But her conduct and government caused various rebellions of nobles against her. She sought help from the Delhi Wazir Ghaziuddin Imad-ul-Mulk. The latter captured her in March 1756 and replaced her by Adina Beg in return for an annual tribute of 30 lakhs.
The news of the political upheavals in the Punjab and the pathetic appeals and invitation of Mughlani Begam, the invitation from Najib-ud-Daula and even emperor Alamgir II for saving the ladies of the royal harem from the tyranny and starvation at the hands of the Wazir made the Durrani Shah boil with anger. He conquered the Punjab (October 1756) and advanced to Delhi (January 1757).

The government had sunk to the lowest depth of wretchedness, without any army, without any treasure. The helpless Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk, failed to organise any defence. Shuja-ud-Daula of Oudh was not friendly. Intizam was sore at his displacement. Surajmal Jat wanted him to drive out Marathas, the Wazir’s ally. No neither could he agree to this nor could he afford to seek their help against the invader. Negotiations and counsels with nobles, Hindu or Muslim, were futile. Peace offers to the invader were fruitless. Even the Wazir requested Mughlani Begam to go as envoy. Najib Ruhela, the only ‘renowned commander with an army’ within the empire, had defected to the invader. No opposition was possible from the government. The undefended capital was occupied in January 1757. The Wazir surrendered. ‘Alamgir’ was suppressed, virtually deposed. The Khutba was read in the name of the invader (21 January). But after four days Alamgir was re-installed. Intizam-ud-Daula was appointed Wazir on a consideration of two crores. Imad, unable to give even one crore, was made a captive by Abdali. Peace and protection were granted to the terror-stricken and fleeing citizens of Delhi. Severe punishments were not only announced but also inflicted on all aggressors. Delhi, the richest capital in Asia, was now subjected to merciless, methodical and official spoliation (besides occasional unauthorised plunder by stray soldiers and brigands). Mughlani Begam acted as an informer of the sources of wealth as well as a procuress of ‘virgin tribute’ for the Shah. Formerly she was called his daughter. Now he liked her so much that she...
became a 'son', entitled 'Sultan Mirza'. No noble escaped plunder.

Ghaziuddin Imad-ul-Mulk, ex-Wazir, was, made, by chastisement and dishonour, to disgorge royal jewellery worth one crore (already misappropriated by him) besides 3 lakhs ashrafis (i.e., 48 lakhs of rupees). Khan-i-Khanan Intizam-ud-Daula, appointed Wazir on a promise of two crores, now delayed and publicly flogged and dishonoured. Even his old mother Sholapuri Begam, 'daughter-in-law of one grand Wazir, the widow of another and the mother of the third' was threatened to disclose the hidden treasure of 70 years. Finally were recovered cash and kind worth more than a crore and a half, 200 gold candle-sticks of the height of a man, besides 'invaluable diamonds, emeralds, pearls and rubies, matting and carpets of foreign make and gold-and-silver-covered maces'. Beautiful women were also carried away. The mansions of all rich people e.g., Sam Sam-ud-Daula, Kotwal Fulad Khan, and the absconding Khan-i-Saman, diwan-i-tan-o-khalsa (Raja Nagar Mal) and Hiranand Johri, 'prince of jewellers', were ransacked to yield their everything worth seizing.

Then came the turn of the common people. The methods used were reminiscent of those of Nadir. Delhi was divided into wards and officers were deputed to collect the forced house to house levy under the superintendship of Mir Yahya Khan (son of Zakariya Khan of Lahore) with the help of soldiers by extortion and beating. People sold their valuables but none would buy. Gold and silver became devalued. Sometimes double collection was made. Many died either of torture or of suicide. Coins were struck in the Shah's name at Delhi.

Whatever resistance the Afghan invader had to face came not from the imbecile Mughal court but from the Marathas and the Jats. Summoned by Wazir Ghaziuddin, Antaji Mankeshwar with a party of the Marathas came to oppose the Shah but they were defeated by the Afghans, assisted by the Ruhela chief Najib-ud-Daula (1756-57).
Suraj Mal, lord of the proud Jats, still unsubdued, who was unwilling at first to fight against the Shah on behalf of Ghaziuddin, refused to obey the Shah and pay him tribute, writing a diplomatic but bold letter. Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad now petitioned (February 1757) to the Shah for transfer of Oudh from Shuja-ud-Daula and Bengal in return for payment of two crores a year and five crores (for two years) respectively. But the expedition to Oudh failed.

The sack of Delhi was followed by the devastation of the Jat country to its south. The Shah’s attitude can be discerned in his reply to the petition of the Bangash chieftain. ‘I have come to this country only for the strengthening of Islam and for the extirpation of the infidels like the Marathas’, and also in his instructions to his general and Najib-ud-Daula: ‘Move into the boundaries of the accursed Jat and plunder and ravage every town and district held by him. The city of Mathura is a holy place of the Hindus. Let it be put entirely to the edge of the sword leaving nothing in the kingdom and country. Up to Akbarabad (Agra) leave nothing standing’. Accordingly his army carried ‘fire and sword wherever they went’. A free gift of the captured booty was allowed, while a sum of five rupees for every head was paid.

Ballabhgarh fort, the weakest point of Jat fortifications, the sacred places of the Hindus,—Mathura (‘Braja’, ‘the Hindu Bethlehem’ with its Bairagis and Sannyasis), Vrindaban Gokul (with its sturdy Naga Sadhus), Agra (with the wealthy refugees from devastated areas) were all indiscriminately subjected to plunder of money, capture of girls, bloodshed, slaughter, burning and destruction of buildings.

Then ‘outraged nature’ came to the rescue of the people, government failing in duty. Cholera broke out in the Afghan camp from drinking Jamuna water polluted by dead bodies. One seer of tamarind, antedote of cholera, cost Rs. 100. The invader retreated on 16 March 1757,
laden with the plunder of towns like Delhi, Mathura, and Agra. Before his retreat he forcibly married emperor Alamgir II's daughter (Zuhra or Muhammadi Begam or Gauharunnisa). Numerous women of the Mughal harem were carried away by the invaders. The enormous booty was estimated differently by contemporary reporters between Rs. 3 and 12 crores. Enormous transport arrangements were necessary to carry this plunder which was occasionally intercepted by the Sikhs under Charhat Singh Sukkar-chakkia, grandfather of Ranjit Singh. The annexation of Sirhind was the permanent result of this invasion.

**Fifth Invasion (1759-61): Struggle with the Marathas**

The deep-seated causes of the fifth invasion lay inherent in the aftermath of the fourth. The administrative arrangements made by the Durrani Padshah in the Punjab lacked stability. Sirhind was placed under Abdus Samad Khan. Najib-ud-Daula, the Ruhela chieftain, was left as his plenipotentiary (mukhtar) at Delhi. Timur Shah his 11-year old eldest son was appointed viceroy of the Punjab (May 1757 - April 1758) along with the seasoned general Jahan Khan as his deputy and guardian. This dissatisfied Mughlani Begam who implored the Shah to restore to her the promised fief of Jalandhar doab, Jammu and Kashmir. But this would interpose a barrier between Lahore and Sirhind, while the Punjab could not safely be shorn of Jammu and Kashmir. So the Shah could not oblige her in the interest of having a strong government in the Punjab. Prince Timur sacked Kartarpur, hallowed by the memory of fifth and sixth Gurus, while Amritsar was sacked by the Shah. The government of the Punjab worked well for some time when the commander was able to deal with military problems. But Jahan Khan was a poor administrator and administration soon broke down.
He established military rule and was concerned with the collection of land revenue and other taxes from the people. He mistrusted the Sikhs as well as Adina Beg, the able governor (faujdar) of Jalandhar doab. It was difficult for the Afghans to resist the combined forces of the plundering Sikhs and Adina as at Mahilpur. The Sikhs ransacked the entire doab and created disorder throughout the country, even including the environs of Lahore. On the invitation of the imaginative and crafty Adina Beg the Marathas from Delhi invaded the Punjab for the first time in March 1758 under Raghunath Rao (brother of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao) and Malhar Holkar to expel the Afghans therefrom. But Adina played a double game by representing to Jahan Khan that the Maratha attack was a surprise move. Sirhind fell and its Afghan faujdar was captured (March). In the face of the triple combination of the Sikhs, Adina and the Marathas, Lahore was evacuated by Timur and Jahan Khan and captured by the Marathas (April). Ahmad Shah must regain his prestige and domination in the Punjab and punish the Marathas.

The second factor was the expansion of the Marathas. Adina Beg was appointed the Maratha viceroy of the Punjab (d. October 1758) on an annual tribute of 75 lakhs. Flushed with success the Marathas advanced beyond the Punjab, and crossing the Indus reached up to Peshawar. Some writers think that there is no evidence of Maratha occupation of the fort of Attock. But revenues of the Punjab including those of Attock came to the Maratha occupation army at Lahore. Maratha control over trans-Chenab regions lasted for four months. The loss to Maratha interests on account of the anarchy in the Punjab led the Peshwa to depute Dattaji Sindhia, who invaded the Punjab (April 1758) and Rohilkhand. The Ruhela Afghans escaped to Kumaon hills, and appealed to their tribesman, the Durrani Afghan. The latter did neither want to settle in India nor to govern Delhi. He wanted to restore
the Mughal empire to real power and wealth by recovering the lost provinces, Awadh, Hyderabad, Bengal-Bihar-Orissa from their independent governors and placing them under loyal officers. On the advice of Imad-ul-Mulk it was decided to transfer Awadh *cum* Allahabad and Bengal *cum* Bihar to two sons of the emperor, assisted by an Afghan force. The problem, however, was that they had no large army of their own and Abdali would not spare a large contingent. So alternative arrangements were made to occupy the places but these failed and the Marathas reappeared in the doab along with the Jats.

By 1759 the Maratha power had reached its zenith and become supreme in Northern India from the borders of Berar to the Indus. They had expelled Najib-ud-Daula, the Durrani *mukhtar*, from Delhi as early as September 1757, and besieged him at Shukartal (Muzaffarnagar dt. in U. P.). So, in the name of Islam, Najib appealed to his master as ‘the emperor of the Muslims’, to come, remedy the situation and subjugate the ‘infidel Marathas’. But Abdali was then busy at home on account of internal troubles, viz., Nasir’s rebellion in Kabul and Darwesh Ali Khan’s in Herat. These internal rebellions had first of all to be suppressed before Abdali could leave for India.

So intolerable was the dominance of the Marathas that even Hindu Rajas like Madho Singh of Jaipur and Bijay Singh of Marwar invited Ahmad Shah to protect their own dominions from the plundering Deccanis.

The third factor was the internal court politics of Delhi. Eclipsed by his ambitious, tyrannical and unscrupulous Wazir, Ghaziuddin Imad-ul-Mulk, emperor Alamgir II had no other alternative but to appeal secretly to Abdali to save his life and rescue himself from Imad-ul-Mulk and his own sons. While at Delhi Ahmad Shah also received an appeal from emperor Shah Alam II (then in Bihar) for conferring on him the crown and the throne of Delhi, otherwise ‘Imad-ul-Mulk and the Jat would nominally raise someone to kingship and render the-
kingdom a hundred times more desolate than before, and the Deccanis would multiply their power a thousand times and make the life of the people miserable in the country'. Here Shah Alam II was giving vent to his anti-Maratha feelings, though subsequently he was restored by the Marathas.

Fourthly, the attitude of the Indian muslim nobles: Najib-ud-Daula won over most of the Indian muslim nobles and sent their written undertakings for loyal support to Abdali. He was joined by the Rohillas and Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, who was jealous of Ghaziuddin and Maratha allies.

Thus Ahmad Shah came to India for the fifth time not only for his own sake but also on the appeals of some Muslim and Hindu powers alike. Abdali was determined 'to bring to a decisive issue the quarrel with the Hindu power which had crossed his track of conquest, ill-treated his allies, and made war on true believers'. He came to save Islam from the Marathas, promising to 'do what was due to Islam'. The objects of the Shah have been clearly mentioned in Najib-ud-Daula’s letter to Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh dated 10 December 1759: 'His Majesty has turned his attention to this side with the only object of settling the affairs of India, capturing the territories of the Deccan and chastising and exterminating the wicked infidels with the co-operation and advice of the chiefs and nobles here...'. In fine Abdali now came as India’s arbiter.