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The Mughal Administrative Structure and the Roles of Its Administrators in Dhaka Nizamat and Niabat

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ABSTRACT

The Mughal administration in the province was fundamentally divided into two: the Nizamat and the Diwani. The office of the Nazim of a province is called Nizamat, headed by the Nazim (in charge of the province), and the Diwani office was headed by the Diwan (in charge of revenue and finance administration). Both Nazim (also called Nazim) and Diwan directly report to the central government. Broadly, the Nazim was the chief of military and civil authority. The Nazim was responsible for maintaining law and order, alongside implementing royal decrees, and defending the province. The Diwan was the head of the revenue department, responsible for assessing and collecting revenue, managing accounts, and overseeing financial matters. There were several officials under the Nazim and the Diwan, who assisted the Nazim and Diwan, such as; Military officer (Bakhshi); Head of religious, donations and grants (Sadar), Judge (Qazi), Head of city police (Kotwal), Chief of the navy (Mir-i-Bahar), Revenue collector (Amil or Amalgujar), Land revenue registrar (Kanungo), News reporter (Wakeyanbish) etc. In 1610, Islam Khan moved the Nazim's office from Rajmahal to Dhaka, which then became the capital of the Bengal province, known as Dhaka Nizamat. However, when the Nazim's office and the administrative center were transferred to Murshidabad, Dhaka lost its significance and became the administrative office for the Naib Nazim (deputy governor). Consequently, it was referred to as Dhaka Niabat (the office of the Deputy Nazim). The head of this administration of Niabat was the Naib Nazim, responsible for revenue collection, military affairs, justice, and general administration in Dhaka. When Dhaka became a Niabat at around eight Naib Nazim ruled Dhaka, appointed from Murshidabad. The administrative structure of the Naib Nazim in Bengal closely resembled the Mughal system and remained in place until the Battle of Plassey.

Key Words: Nizamat, Niabat, Nazim, Naib Nazim, Diwan

1. Introduction:

In 1608, Islam Khan, the Subadar of Bengal, discovered that a major rebellion had emerged in East Bengal, and he could not control it from Rajmahal, so he headed to Dhaka in 1609 (Haque, 2024). In July 1610, Islam Khan arrived in Dhaka (Karim, 1999). He stationed his navy at Chadnighat and took residence in the Dhaka Fort (Karim, 1992). Following his arrival, Islam Khan moved the capital from Rajmahal to Dhaka to control the Baro Bhuiyans and the Afghan rebellion. In fact, the capital was officially established in Dhaka only after Islam Khan's arrival, as many government officials, including Diwans, Bakhshis, and others, accompanied him to Dhaka. With the establishment of the Subadari and Diwani offices in Dhaka, the city quickly gained the status of a provincial capital. The establishment of this capital was a turning point in the political history of Dhaka. From the establishment of Mughal rule in Bengal until the last days of Mughal rule, Bengal was governed as a separate internal and political unit. This also marked the beginning of a new era in the socio-cultural and economic fields of East Bengal.

When Dhaka emerged as a provincial capital during the Mughal era, it underscored the significance of well-structured administrative institutions. The administrative framework of the Bengal province, particularly in Dhaka, largely mirrored the broader Mughal system. In practice, the provincial administration followed the organizational model of the central

government, while retaining certain distinctive features. Notably, the Emperor directly appointed the provincial Subadar, whereas the provincial Diwan was appointed by the Diwan-i-Ala (Kaur, 2016). The Subadar, also referred to as the Nazim, exercised overarching authority in matters of civil and criminal justice, ensuring the enforcement of law and order. Complementing this role, the Diwan-i-Subah headed the provincial exchequer and managed revenue affairs (Akhtar, 1973). Within the Mughal Empire, the central administration was headed by the Emperor, while provincial governance was entrusted to the Nazim or Subadar or governor. Supporting this system, the provincial bureaucracy comprised the Diwan regarded as the second most powerful position along with officials such as the Bakshi and the Daroga. At the local level, administration was further divided among Sarkars and Parganas, while in urban centers, key positions such as the Kotwal (city administrator), Qil'adar (fort commander), and port officials managed security affairs. This hierarchical framework illustrates the intricate and multi-tiered nature of Mughal administration in Dhaka and Bengal.

From 1610 to 1717, Dhaka was the capital of the Mughals' large eastern province (Suba). It was between 1639 and 1659 that Shah Shuja shifted his office to Rajmahal for personal or political reasons. It is true that even though the office of the subadar was shifted to Rajmahal, the capital remained Dhaka, and all work was carried out from Dhaka. The expansion and prestige of Dhaka did not diminish at all. In 1660, when Shah Shuja fell, Mir Jumla brought the Subadar back to Dhaka, and the capital regained its former status. From 1610 to 1717, Dhaka functioned as the office of the Subadar and the associate. Then it is called the Dhaka Nizamat. The Nizamat, headed by the Nazim or viceroy, represented the imperial authority in Bengal. The Nazim was entrusted with maintaining law and order, supervising revenue collection, overseeing military arrangements, and ensuring loyalty to the emperor. In early 1702, the Diwani office moved from Dhaka to Murshidabad, and later that year, the absence of the Nazim further diminished Dhaka's significance. Despite this, Dhaka remained the capital of the Bengal province for a time. However, in 1717, during the rule of Murshid Quli Khan, the capital was officially transferred to Murshidabad (Haque 2023), and Dhaka became the office of the Deputy Nazim. The office of the deputy Nazim called the Dhaka Niabat. Eventually, the Deputy Nazim relocated to Murshidabad, leaving Dhaka under the influence of the Deputy of the Deputy Nazim, who became the most powerful figure in the city. This article seeks to examine the Mughal administrative structure in Dhaka with particular emphasis on the Nizamat and Niabat, analyzing their organization, functions, and the roles of the administrators.

2. Aim and Objective of the Study:

The primary aim of this study is to conduct a comprehensive historical analysis of the administrative hierarchy and functions of the Mughal officials in Dhaka, with a particular focus on the offices of the Nazim, Diwan, and Naib Nazim. It seeks to highlight how Dhaka, first as a provincial capital under the Mughal Nizamat and later as a Niabat under the Murshidabad Nazims, developed its distinct administrative structure.

To achieve the stated aim, this study will pursue the following specific objectives:

- To identify and describe the administrative hierarchy of the Dhaka Nizamat, focusing on the roles and responsibilities of the chief provincial officials and other key officials
- To identify and describe the administrative hierarchy of the Dhaka Niabat following the capital's transfer
- To present a chronological list of the Mughal Naib Nazim who governed Dhaka

3. Methodology of the Study

This study uses a qualitative historical approach, based on both primary and secondary sources.

- **Primary Sources:** Contemporary Mughal chronicles, travel diary, and administrative records.
- **Secondary Sources:** Scholarly works, books, and journal articles.

4. The Mughal Administrative Structure and the Roles of Its Administrators

4.1 Administrative Hierarchy of Dhaka Nizamat and Dhaka Niabat

The office of the provincial Nazim/ Subadar/ Governor/ Viceroy is known as Nizamat. Starting from Emperor Akbar, and then other Mughal Emperors introduced a specific and planned administrative system for the Nizamat. Various books, such as *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnama*, provide information about the functions and titles of provincial officials and employees. Where the Governor or Nazim or Nazim was the head of the province, but he was also called *Sahib-i-Province*, *Faujdar-i-Province*, etc. However, the Nazim was more often addressed as Nazim (Sarkar, 1924). During the reign of Emperor Akbar, the head of the Province was known as *Sipahsala* (Saran, 1941), But during the reign of Emperor Jahangir and Emperor Shah Jahan, the head of the Province was addressed as Nazim. During the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb and afterward, the province chief was more commonly referred to as the Nazim (Salim, 1788). However, during the Nawabi period, they were also known as the Nawab, as indicated in some British documents and the writings of travelers (Karim, 1994). The Nawab was responsible for overseeing provincial affairs, defense, criminal justice, and the overall administration of the province. The provincial Diwan operated independently of the Nazim, as it was directly accountable to the central government, specifically overseeing revenue administration (Saran, 1941). The Nazim and the Diwan were the two main officials responsible for the province. They were supported by several other officials, including: *Bakhshi* (military officer), *Sadar* (head of religious, donations, grants), *Qazi* (judge), *Kotwal* (head of city police), *Mir-i-Bahar* (chief of the navy), *Amil* or *Amalgujar* (revenue collector), *Kanungo* (land revenue registrar) and, *Wakeyanbish* (news reporter), *Amin* (sometimes appointed in some provinces. With the capital's transfer from Dhaka to Murshidabad, the Dhaka Niabat was established, marking a shift in the administrative center to Murshidabad. As a result, Dhaka's significance began to decline. Unfortunately, the history of the administrative structure in Dhaka Niabat is not well-documented. However, we can gain some insights from English documents listing officials who received gifts. The administrative hierarchy of Dhaka Niabat resembled that of the Mughal structure, with a few additions. Abdul Karim, in his book "*Mughal Rajdhani Dhaka*" (Karim, 1994), provides a clear overview of the administrative structure of Dhaka Niabat. It included several officials such as: a *Naib-Nazim* (Deputy Administrator, a *Diwan* (Revenue Officer), a *Qazi* (Judge), a *Mufti* (Religious Advisor), a *Waqianbish* (News Reporter), a *Daroga* of *Nawara* (Land Officer), a *Daroga* of *Tantkhana* and *Malbus Khas*, and a *Shahr-Amin* (Land and Revenue Officer).

4.2 Scope of work of Nazim, Diwan, and other officials working in Dhaka

For the convenience of administration, the Mughal Empire was divided into several Provinces (provinces). The two main branches of the province or provincial administration were the Nizamat and the Diwani. The Mughal provincial administrator (Nazim) was in charge of the province. On the other hand, the Diwan was in charge of the Diwani (revenue administration). Broadly speaking, Nizamat refers to civil administration and Diwani refers to revenue administration. The Nazim was the governor who performed the functions of administration and suppression of rebellions. The Nazim had the power to punish rebellious landlords and all lawless people, but did not have the power to take anything from anyone and release them. According to the Mughal administrative structure, the finance department was under the jurisdiction of the Diwan. The Diwan had the power and responsibility to send revenue to the central government in consultation with the Nazim. The Diwan was responsible for assessing revenue, collecting revenue, sending revenue to the headquarters, and determining the accounts of income and expenditure. The Nazim could not make any financial transactions other than his own *jagir*, *mansab*, and *upadhaukan*. The provincial administrative responsibility was on the *Shikdar* of the *pargana*, the *Faujdar* of the government, and above all, the Nazim (Karim, 1994). The revenue administrative system was on the *Patwari*, *Kanungo*, and *Amin* of the *pargana*, the *Bitikchi*, *Amil*, and above all, the Diwan. The Mughal emperor directly appointed these two main officers, the Nazim and the Diwan. However, among them, the Nazim held a very important position as he was the civil and military head of the provincial administration.

4.2.1 Roles of the Provincial Nazim:

The Nazim worked as the chief executive officer of the province. He supervised all the administrative functions within his jurisdiction. The Nazim was responsible for the effective implementation of the policies of the Mughal Empire at the

regional level and maintained the stability of the empire by taking charge of both military and civil affairs. The Nazim was also the supervisor of the other provincial officials, such as the Diwan, Faujdar, Qazi, and Kotwal. Specifically, the main responsibilities of the Nazim were;

- To maintain law and order
- To facilitate smooth and efficient collection of revenue
- To protect the province against external and internal threats
- To report to the central Mughal authorities about administrative activities
- To carry out the royal decrees and orders sent to him

At the time of the appointment of the Nazim, a directive was issued by the emperor regarding the scope of the Nazim's duties and the appointment of his assistants. Jadunath Sarkar, in his book *Mughal Administration* (Sarkar, 1924) quotes the *Ain-i-Akbar* (Fazl-I-Allami, 1590), regarding the instructions for the appointment of the Nazim's assistants;

“When you are appointed, you should engage a good diwan, a trustworthy and experienced man who has already done work in the service of some high grandee, and a munshi (secretary) with similar ability and experience. You should secure a trustworthy mediator or friend (wasilah) at court to report promptly to the emperor and take his orders on any affair of the province, on which you may write to his majesty. To this mediator, you will have to give presents, for such is the usage of our times. When people visit the tombs of dead saints, they offer flowers and sweetmeats to gain their favor. How much more are presents necessary for gaining the favor of living men”

The role and responsibilities of the Mughal provincial Nazims were multifaceted, including balancing governance, military, judicial, and cultural responsibilities. Their trust and loyalty to the emperor were essential to the stability and success of the Mughal Empire, especially given the vast size and diversity of the Mughal territories. The Nazims helped to unify the provinces of the empire. The Mughal provincial Nazims only ensured that the central administration and local administration were strong through a unified autonomy. After the Nazim, the most important position in the Nazim's department was the assistant Nazim. However, it is true that the names of the assistant Nazims working in Dhaka are not mentioned much in history. Although some English documents mention the names of three individuals: Khan Muhammad Ali Khan (1717-1723), Itisam Khan (1723-1726), and Itisam Khan's son (name unknown) (1726-1728) (Karim, 1989).

4.2.2 Functions of the Provincial Diwan:

The Provincial Diwan was the second officer of the province and was a rival of the Nazim. Both kept an eye on each other's work. The Diwan of the province was appointed by the Emperor's Hasb-ul-Hukum, and the Diwan carried the seal of the Wazir-ul-Mulook or royal Diwan (Khan, 1760). The Provincial Diwan supervised the collection of the revenue of the province and kept accounts of the salaries and other expenses of the provincial officers and subordinates. The Diwan could also take steps to increase the area under cultivation. In many cases, his office had the power to advance loans to the farmers. But specifically, the Diwan was responsible for;

- To supervise the collection of revenue
- To supervise the judicial and legal matters related to land and revenue
- To advise the emperor on financial matters
- To secure funds for military operations

Along with the Nazim, the office of Diwan was also the most important in the province. The Diwan of the province was selected by the Diwan of the empire and was directly appointed from the royal court. The Diwan was in no way subordinate to the Nazim. He worked directly under the orders of the Diwan of the empire and was responsible to the emperor. The functions of the Diwan, as described in the book *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Khan, 1760), were;

“Diwan’s duties are: collection of revenues of the crown lands and dues on charitable endowments; payment, under his signature, of salaries according to services rendered; and of the jagirs having Royal sanads issued in the sarkars paying tribute; and similar other duties in connection with taxation, receipts, and expenditure.”

Although Abdul Karim, in his book *Murshid Quli Khan and his time*, narrated from P. Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals* (Karim, 1989). books about the following duties of the provincial Diwan,

“The duties of the Diwan were to collect revenue from the Khalisa Mahals (reserved lands), keep accounts of income and expenditure, manage the salaries of provincial officials, donations, manage financial matters related to jagirs (transferred lands), supervise property or money given for religious purposes, distribute money to various departments, submit reports against subordinate officials like amils, encourage the development of agriculture, keep an eye on the treasury, see that no money is withdrawn from the treasury without proper authorization, and prevent any illegal collection of money from the farmers. In short, the duties of the provincial Diwan extended to all matters related to the royal revenue in the province.”

The above description gives a good idea of the work of the provincial Diwan. The employees of the Diwan's office are; Peshkar (The Peshkar usually works as a Mansabdar (secretary) and is appointed by the Emperor), Daroga (he works as a superintendent or controller and is appointed under the Diwan), Mushrif (the Mushrif is a treasurer and is appointed by the Diwan), Fundraiser (the Fundraiser is a cashier who is appointed by the Diwan), and Munshi (the Munshi is the chief clerk, he is also known as huzoor kerani, provincial kerani, royal kerani, etc. depending on the place) (Khan, 1760). These officials helped the Diwan in carrying out the royal orders. Besides, these officials were responsible for the smooth running of Diwani activities. They worked to assist the higher officials or departments and to facilitate the daily work of the Diwan. However, during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, in order to counter the power and authority of the provincial Diwan, a post called Sadar Kanungo was created. Ghulam Hossain Salim mentions in his *Riaz-us-Salatin* that the accounts of the provincial Diwan were not acceptable to the imperial court without the signature of the Sadar Kanungo (Salim, 1788). In this regard, Abdul Karim mentions in his book *Murshid Quli Khan and his time* (Karim, 1989). that in 1703, Diwan Murshid Quli Khan, sent a report containing the income and expenditure of the province to the Sadar Kanungo for his signature when he met Emperor Aurangzeb. At that time, the Sadar Kanungo was Darpanarayan who demanded three lakhs of taka as a commission. But Diwan Murshid Quli Khan agreed to pay one lakh taka, but Darpanarayan refused to sign unless he received the advance money. This angered Murshid Quli Khan but he did not dare to say anything to Darpanarayan, because he knew that Sadar Kanungo was a high-ranking official appointed by the emperor.

4.2.3 Responsibilities of the Fauzdar (Military Commander):

The Fauzdar was responsible for maintaining law and order in a particular area. This officer was in charge of a military subdivision. The Fauzdar was responsible for suppressing small rebellions, dispersing or arresting bandits, and all crimes and those opposing the revenue. Specifically, the Fauzdar was engaged in the following tasks;

- Commander of the provincial military forces
- Suppressing rebellions
- Protecting trade routes
- Implementing the orders of the Nazim

However, in short, the Fauzdar was the assistant of the Nazim in maintaining peace and generally performing executive functions (Sarkar, 1924). As a faujdar, he was the first of the loyal servants of the Nazim (Fazl-I-Allami, 1590). In Jadunath Sarkar's Mughal Administration book, he mentioned that when a new faujdar was appointed, he was given the following advice on his principles and conduct;

"A faujdar should be brave and courteous in dealing with his soldiers, and should include in his armed guard only men of known bravery and good family. As soon as you (faujdar) reach your place of service, seek out those people who know the past administration of the area, such as the kanungo and win their hearts and learn from them which of the soldiers assigned to your subdivision have secretly entered into secret agreements with lawless zamindars, taking advantage of the weakness of the commander or the difficulties of administration." (Sarkar, 1924).

After the Nazim in Dhaka, the Assistant Nazim and the Faujdar were important posts, who would perform the duties of the Nazim in his absence.

4.2.4 Duties of the Kotwal (City Administrator):

The Kotwal supervised the administration of Dhaka city. The Kotwal was mainly engaged in the work of public safety and protecting the lives and property of the city residents. He was the head of the city officers. He can be compared to the city police officer of today. The Kotwal had a register through which he kept a record of the people coming and going in the city. The other duties of the Kotwal included;

- City planning and maintenance
- Market and price control
- Crime prevention and policing
- Ensuring public welfare

According to the book Mughal Administration, the Kotwal, with the help of his clerks, would prepare a list of houses and buildings in the area under his jurisdiction (Sarkar, 1924). Entering each house, he kept a record of the names of the inhabitants, what kind of people they were, how many of them were merchants, craftsmen, soldiers, and dervishes. The Kotwal had the power to appoint sergeants under him, who guarded their respective areas. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the emperor himself appointed the Kotwali, but sometimes they were also appointed by the Nazim (Khan, 1760). Describing what an ideal Kotwali would be like, Jadunath Sarkar in his book Mughal Administration states,

"The ideal KOTWAL is described as a man who follows the regulations in his outward actions and fears God inwardly. He should attend when the sovereign or provincial viceroy holds a court of justice or grants public audience." (Sarkar, 1924).

4.2.5 Tasks of the Qazi (Judicial Authority):

The Qazi was the chief judicial officer of the province. As an interpreter of Islamic law (Sharia), the Qazi tried civil and criminal cases and worked with other local officials and scholars. The Qazi also played a role in certifying legal documents and administering endowments (waqf). The provincial and city Qazis were originally appointed by the Sadr-us-Sudur (Chief Judicial Officer), who received their charter from the Sadr's office (Khan, 1760). An important minister in the Mughal administration was Sadr-us-Sudur, who was also known as Sadr-i-Kul or Sadr-i-Jahan (Khan, 2008).

4.2.6 Wakeyanabish (News Reporter):

The word Wakeyanabish means news or incident writer. During the Mughal period, the emperors created the post of Wakeyanabish to collect news and information from the province. The main purpose was to collect information secretly so that action could be taken against any officials involved in any illegal activity (Islam, 1933). The agencies through which

the central government received news from the province included; Wakiyanabish, Sawanih-nigar, Khufianabish. They used to report in writing to the central government (Sarkar, 1924). During the Sultani period, these news collectors existed, but they were not known as Sayanihanbish. On the other hand, Harkarah is a courier (literally) a carrier, but in reality a spy, who brought oral news and also carried written news. Wakiyanabish is a writer or surveyor of events. He is a regular reporter, while Sawanih-nigar is an important secret reporter. The functions of Wakeyanabish are;

- Recording daily events
- Recording information about military campaigns
- Writing and maintaining royal edicts and proclamations
- Maintaining official records

Wakiyanabish was an important position in the Mughal administrative system, entrusted with the task of recording and reporting important events both in the royal court and in the wider empire. These historians worked as news reporters of the Mughal era, ensuring that the history of the empire was accurately recorded for future generations.

4.2.7 Activities of Trade and Revenue Administration (Amalgujar, Amin, Patwari, and Customs House):

Dhaka's prominence as a trading center influenced its administrative priorities at that time. As a result, the city became an attractive center for global trade, especially the trade in Dhaka's fine muslin. In the Mughal administration, the Amalgujar was the tax collector who handled administrative duties related to the functioning of the empire (Fazl-I-Allami 1590). The Amalgujar played a vital role in maintaining the economic stability and efficiency of the Mughal Empire. Since the Mughal economy was largely dependent on agriculture, the role of the Amalgujar was fundamental in managing revenue from land. The Amalgujar efficiently collected revenue and contributed significantly to the functioning of the empire by ensuring that resource allocation. In addition, the Amin (tax assessor) and Patwari (village accountant) officials ensured efficient trade activities. The Customs House handled the collection of duties on goods entering and leaving the city.

4.2.8 Description of the work of Local Elites and Zamindars:

Local elites, including zamindars, played an important role in the administrative structure of Dhaka. While the Mughal authorities exercised direct control through appointed officials, the zamindars acted as intermediaries, responsible for collecting land revenue and managing local affairs. Their loyalty and efficiency were key to the stability of the administration.

4.3 Administrative duties of the Naib Nazims of Dhaka sent by Murshidabad during the Nawabi period:

The Nawabi period in Bengal represents a crucial transitional era (Hossain, 2025). Although Murshidabad was the capital of Bengal during the Nawabi period, Dhaka was of great importance. Since Dhaka was a major commercial center, the Nawabs created the post of Naib-Nazim and appointed responsible persons to manage administrative activities here. The administrative system in this region was improved since the Mughal Empire, and its scope was further expanded during the Nawabi period. The Naib Nazim was mainly responsible for the collection of revenue, military and naval affairs, and the administration of justice. As well as the administrator of the administration of Dhaka and the adjacent areas. The Naib Nazim often supervised the activities of the chowkis and patwaris (village accountants). Maintaining law and order in Dhaka and developing the judicial system during the Nawabi period were among the responsibilities of the Naib Nazim. The judicial system was of two types: Diwani (civil) and Faujdari (criminal). Naib Nazims were responsible for trailing criminals and had the power to punish them. They acted as higher judges and determined the punishment for various minor and major crimes. Naib Nazims were also responsible for collecting and supervising revenue. In the peripheral areas of Dhaka, the zamindars collected revenue from the farmers and it was deposited in the treasury of the Nawab through the Naib Nazim. The Naib Nazims of Dhaka played a huge role in regulating trade. The Naib Nazims played an important role in the urban development and construction of infrastructure in Dhaka.

4.4 List of Nazims working in Dhaka and the Naib Nazims of Dhaka sent by the Nazims of Murshidabad

4.4.1 List of Nazims working in Dhaka

Munim Khan was the first Mughal Nazim of Bengal, and after him, Bengal was ruled by 29 Mughal Nazims at various times (Khan, 2011). In 1608, Islam Khan was appointed as Nazim in Rajmahal, the capital of Bengal. Later, in 1610, Islam Khan arrived in Dhaka and shifted the capital and the office of the Nazim to Dhaka due to the favorable political, economic and communication system of Dhaka. After the death of Islam Khan in 1613, the following persons were appointed as the Nazims of Bengal for various terms during the reign of Emperor Jahangir; Qasim Khan Chishti (1613-1617), Ibrahim Khan Fatehjang (1617-1624), Mahabat Khan (1625-1626), Mukarram Khan (1626-1627), Fidai Khan (1627-1627). After the death of Emperor Jahangir in 1627, Bengal came under the control of Emperor Shah Jahan. The following persons were appointed as the Nazims of Bengal during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan; Qasim Khan Juyuni (1628-1632), Qasim Khan Azam Khan (1632-1635), Islam Khan Mashhadi (1636-1639) and Shah Shuja (1640-1660). In 1657, Emperor Shah Jahan fell ill and a war of succession broke out. In the war, Aurangzeb gained control of Delhi. During Aurangzeb's reign, Mir Jumla was appointed as the Nazim of Bengal; Mir Jumla (1660-1663), Daud Khan (1663-1664), Shayesta Khan (1664-1677 and second term 1679-1688), Azam Khan Koko (1677-1678), Shahzada Azam (1678), Khan Jahan Bahadur (1688-1689), Ibrahim Khan (1689-1697), Azim-us-Shan (1697-1712)

- **List of Naib Nazims of Dhaka sent by independent Nazims of Murshidabad:**

During the Nawabi period, Dhaka became a Niabat under the Murshidabad Nizamat. A deputy was appointed under the Nawab of Murshidabad to administer the Dhaka Niabat, his title was Naib Nazim. From then on Dhaka became known as the office of the Naib Nazim. The Naib Nazim of Dhaka, sent by the independent Nazim of Murshidabad, were; Khan Muhammad Ali Khan, Itisam Khan, Itisam Khan's son, Mirza Lutfullah, Sarfaraz Khan, Abdul Fattah Khan, Nawazis Muhammad Khan, Jesarat Khan (Bangladesh, 2012) (Banerjee, 1940).

- Khan Muhammad Ali Khan (1717-1723), the first Naib Nazim of Dhaka. He is known by the name Maundy in the papers, although his name is found in only one document, which is a warrant issued to him by Murshid Quli Khan on 23 July 1717 (Karim, 1994).
- Itisam Khan (1723-.....),
- Itisam Khan's son [name unknown] (1726-1727), after Itisam Khan's death, Murshid Quli Khan appointed his son as the Naib Nazim of Bengal, but the name of this Naib Nazim is not mentioned anywhere, although he probably held the position of Naib Nazim of Dhaka for the entire year until Murshid Quli Khan's death (June 1727) (Karim, 1994).
- Mirza Lutfullah (1728-1734), he was the son-in-law of Shujauddin Muhammad Khan and is known as the second Murshid Quli Khan. According to Ghulam Hossain Salim, Mirza Lutfullah was appointed by Murshid Quli Khan (Salim, 1788). . According to modern scholars, Mirza Lutfulah was the first Naib Nazim of Dhaka. James Taylor has mentioned the year of Mirza Lutfulah's appointment as 1713 (Dhani, 2005). However, according to the information obtained from the Diary and Consultation of the Dhaka Council of the English Company, this is completely wrong (Karim, 1994). In the book Naobahar-i-Murshidquli Khan written in honor of Mirza Lutfulah by Azad al-Husaini, it is mentioned that Mirza Lutfulah was appointed as Naib Nazim in Dhaka by Shujauddin Muhammad Khan (Sarker, 1985).
- Sarfaraz Khan(1734-1739) [He sent two of his deputies or representatives in succession without coming to Dhaka]
 - Ghalib Ali Khan (1734-1738)
 - Murad Ali Khan (1738-1739)

- Abdul Fattah Khan (1739-1740)
- Nawazis Muhammad Khan (1740-1754) [He sent three of his deputies or representatives in succession without coming to Dhaka]
 - Hussain Quli Khan (1740-1744)
 - Hussain Uddin Khan (1744-1754)
 - Murad Daulat (1754-1755)
- Jesarat Khan (1755-1762)

Among them, Khan Muhammad Ali Khan, Itisam Khan and Itisam Khan's son were appointed by Nawab Murshid Quli Khan. Mirza Lutfullah and Sarfaraz Khan were appointed by Nawab Shujauddin Khan. Later, Abdul Fattah Khan and Nawazis Muhammad Khan were appointed by Nawab Sarfaraz Khan, and both Nawab Alivardi Khan and Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah appointed Jesarat Khan as Naib Nazim of Dhaka. All these Naib Nazim lived in the fort or Shahi Durgo (Fort) established by the former Mughal Nazim Ibrahim Khan. After Jesarat Khan, Muhammad Ali (1762-1763), and later Reza Khan (1763-1765) were Naib Nazim of Dhaka, appointed by Mir Qasim Khan, but they were Naib Nazim chartered from Fort William instead of Murshidabad. While Muhammad Ali and Reza Khan were able to live in the Shahi Fort established by Nazim Ibrahim Khan, and when the English Company seized power in Dhaka in 1765, the Naib Nazim was expelled from this Shahibhaban, which was built 150 years ago.

5. Conclusion

The study of the Mughal administrative structure in Dhaka highlights how the city served as both a political and an economic center. Dhaka's strategic location, commercial strength, and demographic diversity necessitated a well-defined governance system that combined imperial directives with local adaptations. The Nazim, Diwan, Bakshi, Qazi, and other officials collectively represented the Mughal model of centralized authority balanced with delegated responsibility. Their roles went beyond merely enforcing imperial policies; they acted as intermediaries between the court and the local population, ensured revenue collection, protected trade, and maintained law and order in a city. At the same time, the administrative framework was not without limitations. Factional rivalries, personal ambitions of administrators, and the tension between imperial interests and local dynamics often weakened its efficiency. During the Nawabi period, while Dhaka served as a crucial commercial center. To manage administrative activities, the Nawabs established the post of Naib-Nazim. The Naib Nazim oversaw revenue collection, military affairs, and justice administration in Dhaka and the surrounding areas. They supervised village accountants, maintained law and order, and developed the judicial system. Naib Nazim played a significant role in trade regulation, urban development, and infrastructure construction in Dhaka. When Dhaka became the office of Naib Nazim and a city under the Murshidabad, it is called the Niabat or the subdivision of Murshidabad Nizamat. During this time, Dhaka's high authority was the Deputy Naib Nazim, commonly known as Deputy of Deputy Nazim. Although a large amount of revenue was sent from Dhaka to Murshidabad at that time, it is noteworthy that mainly the members of the Nawab family refused to stay in Dhaka. Under the Naib-Nazims, bribes were freely exchanged among the administrative officials of Dhaka. Due to the negligence of the central rulers towards Dhaka, the officials and employees of Dhaka became corrupt, and they promoted bribery as a business. The Naib-Nazims of Dhaka started oppressing the people of Dhaka. Dhaka was designated as a place for illegal money laundering. However, during the Nawabi period, this administrative situation of Dhaka did not cause much damage to Dhaka politically, economically, and socially; rather, Dhaka's progress as a commercial center of European companies was commendable.

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