

Chapter V

RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN POWERS



The unprovoked war of the Marathas and the Nizam on Tipu disappointed him in his expectation of support from his Indian neighbours for his main objective to reduce the English. Therefore, he turned his attention towards outside powers such as France, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. If the French authorities in India failed to help him, he would approach the French King himself. If the French too were to disappoint him, he would knock at the door of the Asian powers, Turkey, Afghanistan and Iran. It was nothing unusual from medieval times for Turkish, Afghan and Persian troops to enter India and change the political picture of the country. Tipu thought that such an inflow might again help him to remove the English menace. Even Haidar had sent missions twice to Persia and had once obtained aid in 1775. But what makes Tipu's efforts extraordinary is his consistent and courageous bid in the face of bitter



Hyder Ali

British opposition at every place of his approach, indicating his firm resolve or even a desperate move to distress the English.

His efforts had the effect of linking his State with the outside world. His name became well known in the different chanceries of the world. The advent of Europeans in India with political designs and superior military skill called for a change in the traditional political outlook. The inherent weakness of the Indian rulers and their failure to unite even at the hour of national danger prompted Tipu to seek outside help. Haidar had as his natural allies the French with whom Tipu also continued to have friendly relations, but they were not in a position despite their best efforts to offset the English designs. Moreover, their policy

was not consistent, as it became evident in the late Maratha-Mysore War, when they were inclined to support the Marathas rather than Tipu. This made him look for allies elsewhere. By appealing to the religious sentiments of the West Asian powers, although his State was secular, he hoped to form a formidable front against the English.

Even if such contacts did not bear political results, he would at least gain the satisfaction of promoting trade, commerce and industry of his State. Karnataka, situated as it was with good harbours, commanded the monopoly of certain valuable commodities like pepper, cardamom, sandalwood, ivory, silk, tobacco and elephants, which were in great demand outside. Tipu developed commercial contacts with a number of foreign countries such as the Ottoman Empire, China, Muscat, Pegu, Armenia, Jiddah, Ormuz and Iran. But more important than commercial contacts were the political objectives which prompted Tipu to pursue a vigorous foreign policy.

Contact with Turkey

During the last quarter of the 18th century Turkey was still the biggest and the foremost political power of the Muslim world. Despite its decay which had already



Pepper



Cardamom



Ivory



Sandalwood



Tobacco

set in, it was still a force that had arrested the further expansion of Russia in the south. Tipu had great respect for the Sultan of Turkey and he viewed the expansion of the British influence in the near east as a threat to Islam. He called the English "the enemies of the faith", and identified his struggle with the general cause of the entire Islamic world¹. He thought it his duty to warn the Islamic countries of the dangers of western advance on their territories. He desired the Turkish Sultan to join him in his crusade against the Europeans.

The first embassy was sent to Constantinople in the year 1784, hardly a few weeks after the conclusion of the Treaty of Mangalore². It was headed by Usman Khan, an experienced diplomat, who had been Haidar's *vakil* at Madras. The main purpose of this embassy was to sound the Turkish Sultan whether he was willing to receive a more formal embassy³. The response being favourable Tipu sent his second and principal embassy in 1785, consisting of four persons, Ghulam Ali Khan, Lutf Ali Baig, Shah Nurullah and Muhammad Haniff. They were instructed first to finish their task at Constantinople, and then proceed to France seeking an alliance. But on

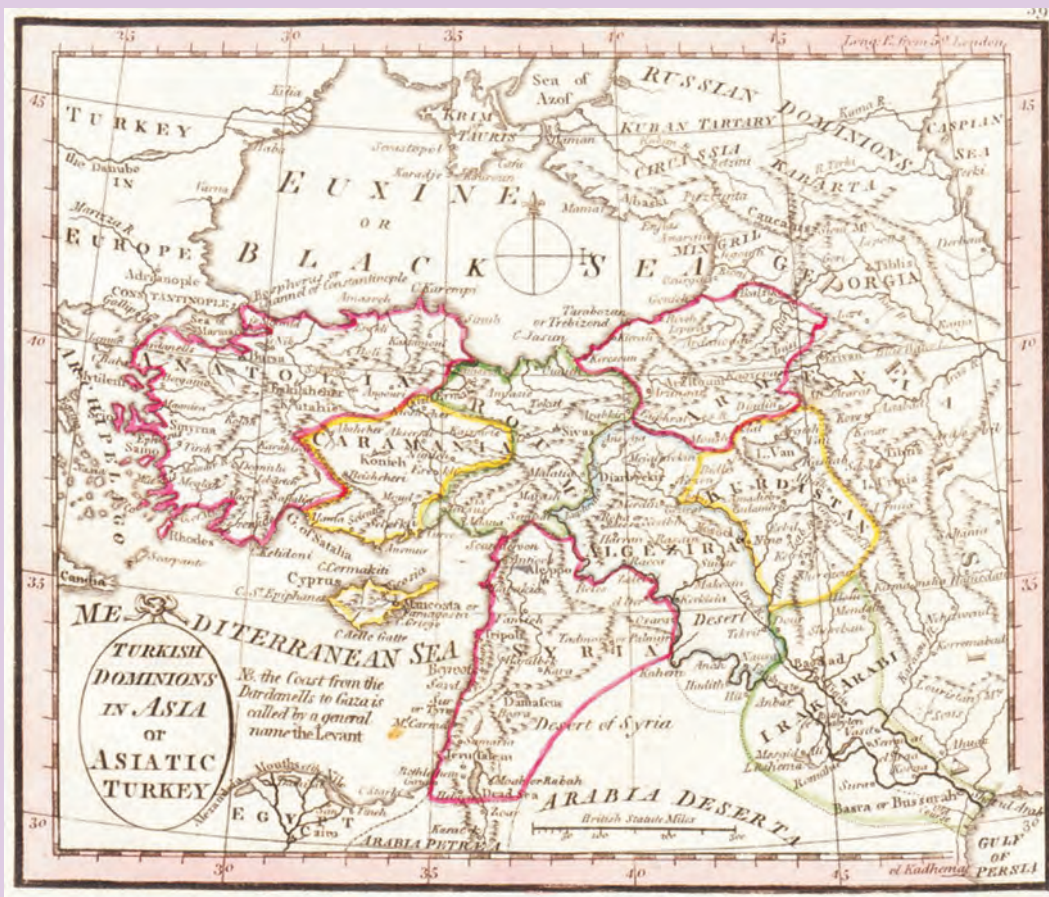
1 Krikpatrick, Appendix I, No. LXXI

2CPC, VI, No. 118.

3 Wilks, Vol. II, p. 147.

hearing the personal report of Usman Khan, the further journey of the envoys to Paris was cancelled. In 1787 he deputed to France a more direct and expeditious embassy by sea-route from Pondicherry, consisting of three persons, Muhammad Darvesh Khan, Akbar Ali Khan and Usman Khan.

Various motives have been attributed to the dispatch of the embassy to the Turkish Sultan. Ostensibly the mission was undertaken to secure commercial privileges in the Ottoman Empire. The English agent at Basra wrote, "We have reasons to believe that the embassy to the Porte is for the purpose of obtaining firmans to establish factories in the Turkish dominions"⁴. But this might have been only a secondary intention of the Sultan. It could not have been purely commercial, although Tipu was keen to bring about a radical change in the economic sector as



4 Sec. Proc. 5 Jan. 1787.

well. He appears to have had a clear perception of the immense political, economic and military advantages of closer relations with the West Asian countries like Oman, Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan. Even though Europe and the Atlantic Ocean had become the center of gravity for global trade, West Asia still remained a significant center of the political and economic activity in the 18th Century, and no wonder Tipu paid special attention to building ties with that area.

It should be presumed that Tipu was aware of the changing politico-economic scene of the Gulf area. The tribal elites had initiated strong local resistance to meet European political and economic hegemony. Some of the most significant developments had taken place in the region. They are first, the emergence of Muscat as a regional commercial center; secondly, the separation of Aden and Hadharmaut from Zaidi Yemen; thirdly, the efforts of Nadir Shah to unify Persia; fourthly, the founding of Kuwait as a great trading centre; fifthly, the founding of Bahrain as a commercial centre; sixthly the rise of Wahhabi movement under the Saudis; and lastly, the shift from Basra to Kuwait as the mercantile port of call. Tipu's great interest in all these Gulf areas is really astonishing. No wonder through the good offices of the Porte he desired to gain a firm hold in this nerve center of world trade. His desire to establish factories at Muscat, Jiddah, Ormuz, Basra and a number of other places explains the pressing need for contact with the Sultan of Turkey, who was the overlord of all this region. The English too were as active in this region to extend their economic influence as they were in India expanding their political influence. Tipu was, therefore as much anxious to warn the authorities there of the impending threat to their interest as he was to advance commercial interests of his State in that region.

But the dominating motive was political, to conclude an offensive alliance with the Turkish Sultan against the English. In his letter to Sultan Abdul Hameed I of Turkey, Tipu wrote:

"Thirty five years ago as a result of the weakening of the Timurid Sultanate and the short-sightedness of some officials, the ill-behaved Christians acquired some coastal territory in the *iqlim* of Hindustan on the excuse of trade and acquired detailed knowledge about the condition of this land. Gradually a large number of Europeans came by ship and by means of fraud and deception brought under control many towns and territories such as Bengal, yielding thirty five crores annually and displaced and overthrew the unsuspecting officials ... on account of religious enmity and their innate weakness the evil minded Christians are still entertaining mischievous ideas and the impropriety of these adversaries following the dark path is

boundless. Consequently ambassadors are sent to you to explain the situation and happenings (in this country) and to seek the restoration and strengthening of the luminous faith and the destruction of the villainous army”⁵.

Tipu was so sure of an alliance with Turkey that he had sent a draft treaty to be signed by the Porte. The fourth article of this proposed treaty referred to the military co-operation between Mysore and Turkey. It stated, "... whatever forces the Sultan of Turkey is prepared to dispatch through the ships, Tipu engages to bear all their expenses. Whenever the Sultan of Turkey wants these forces back, Tipu undertakes to send them at his own cost by the sea"⁶. To impress the Caliph of the urgency of the demand, the envoys were instructed to excite religious sentiments of the Caliph by informing him of the excesses of the English, their capture of Bengal, Bihar and the Carnatic belonging to the Mughals, and future danger which the country would be subjected to by their advance. Accordingly the ambassadors submitted a memorandum to the Ottoman Court.

"As a result of the revolution of fortunes and chances of events, the Timurid Empire in Hindustan has become very weak since long; and no powerful or resolute scion of the family had sat on the throne (for some time past). Consequently, villainous Christians who were in the ports of India in the garb of traders are intent upon creating trouble and chaos with the connivance of some of the commanders who were unmindful of their duty and were engrossed with falsehood, brought under their dominion the vast territories of Bengal and half of the territories of the Deccan.



Ottoman Court

5 Hikmet Bayur, *Mysore Sultani Tipu ile Osmanli Padishah Larindan Abdul Hamid III*, Series I, Document No.2

6 Hukum Namah (Mutaffariqah), R.A.S.B. Mss. No.1671 f114.

They let loose floods of tyranny over the masses of the people in general and began attacking the honour of the followers of Islam in particular⁷.

The purpose of recounting the history of British conquest of India since the time of the battle of Plassey was to impress upon the Turkish Sultan the need to do something to restore the lost Mughal authority in India, to prevent the rise of Christian power in the country, and to protect the mass of people who were subject to great distress under foreign rule. The ambassadors then related the campaigns of the Second Mysore War. They expressed the desire of Tipu to conclude a military alliance with Turkey by

which the Ottoman Government was to send a body of troops to Tipu, the expenses of which would be borne by him and they would be sent back whenever required at his cost. They proposed a treaty of five articles which were:

- Clause I:** Let friendship and harmony increase between the two States as the sun and moon endure.
- Clause II:** Basra along with its country and officials be ceded for the exclusive use of the Sarkar (Mysore) by the Sultan of Turkey.
- Clause III:** Any port which the Sultan of Turkey desires from the Sarkar (Mysore) would be ceded for his exclusive use along with its country and officials. Let the system of communication between the people of Islam be continued for ever so that the religion of Islam (Dine-e-Ahmedi) may always flourish.



7 Hikmet Bayur, Series I, December No. I.



Sultan of Turkey



Ottoman Sultan

Clause IV: Whatever forces the Sultan of Turkey would send through the ships, the Sarkar would bear all their expenses. Whenever the Sultan of Turkey wants these forces back, Tipu would dispatch them at his own cost through the sea.

Clause V: Among the available technicians and craftsmen in Turkey, the Ottoman Sultan was to send a few who knew gun and cannon making. Any technicians whom the Turkish Sultan wants from the Sarkar (Mysore) would be sent to him. These artisans and workers along with their families were to be sent through the sea. Two persons well-versed in making gun-powder were to be brought personally by the ambassadors.

(Written on 15th Haidari of the year Julu corresponding to Thursday the 14th Muharram 1200 A.H. (17th November 1785) near Zafarabad (Srirangapatna)⁸.

This draft treaty is significant in suggesting some innovative and even impracticable propositions. Tipu was asking the Turkish Sultan to surrender Basra in exchange for some port of Turkish choice

8. Hukum Namah, R.A.S.B. No.1677 f.11a, 11b.

in Karnataka. Has such a thing ever happened in history where a territory is obtained through correspondence or diplomacy? The inference is that the legal suzerainty is not meant by such proposition but only exclusive commercial facilities. Perhaps, it was in Tipu's mind what the Europeans, whether the English, the French or the Dutch, had always demanded of Indian powers prior to the conversion of their commercial concerns into political venture. Even Haidar had given to Bombay exclusive right of pepper trade at his port of Honavar. Tipu desired that Basra should be some such major depot or factory for pushing Karnataka products into the West Asian markets. He did not want this facility to be given him free, for he was willing to accord similar facility to Turkey in his kingdom. That would be to the mutual advantage of both. Not only commercial contacts would be built up between the two countries but also social, political and cultural. Tipu was a restless soul with an ingenious mind which would suggest schemes that might seem apparently ridiculous - to surrender Basra for asking - but its implications would be as great as that of Elizabeth I granting a few London merchants the exclusive monopoly of the trade in the east or Charles II getting Bombay as dowry gift of his wife, Catherine of Braganza.

The political implication of the fourth article is also interesting, although not difficult to believe. Tipu is proposing an



Elizabeth I



Charles II

offensive and defensive alliance with a far off power. It occurred to him that if France and England could shape the destiny of millions across the seas in far off countries, why not involve an Asian power as well in such a game particularly when that power bore cultural affinity with the Indians? Where Tipu went wrong was in estimating the strength and situation of Turkey. Whereas the western European powers were rising stars in world politics, Turkey was down-hill, herself being a victim of Russian aggression. Tipu miscalculated a situation that a country which was herself seeking the British support to resist Russian expansion would be willing to join him to destroy its own protector, the British, in India.

Yet another proposition that deserves notice is Tipu's anxiety to get artisans, craftsmen and technicians from Turkey, a concept of profound importance. He desired to lift his State to a higher plane of prosperity through changes in the economic sector, particularly by modernizing and industrializing his country, so as to improve the conditions of his people. He could well see the technological advance and skill of the Europeans, particularly in armament, which enabled their small armies to defeat large Indian armies, and impose their supremacy over the Asians. Tipu wanted to catch up the west in this sector as well, and hence his request for technicians and artisans. He realized that the neglect of commerce and industry was the cause of the misfortunes of the eastern countries. Tipu in his instructions to the ambassadors had observed:

"The Christian nations who have dominated the world today have been able to do so only because of their mastery over trade and industry. The good Kings of Islam could promote their religion by paying attention to these factors"⁹.

It should be remembered that Tipu was stressing here religious vocabulary because he was addressing the Caliph, the religious and political head of the Islamic world, hoping at least a reference to the religious sentiments of the Porte would stir his imagination. Just as no one could be more Catholic than the Pope, no one was supposed to be greater defender of Islam than the Caliph. To impress the Caliph of the urgency of the demand for military aid, the envoys were asked to rouse the religious feelings of the Caliph by narrating the excesses of the English, their capture of Bengal, Bihar and the Carnatic belonging to the Mughals, and the future danger to which the country would be subjected by their advance. Fully aware that the Ottoman Sultan would be sympathetic to the plight of the Muslims in India, Tipu highlighted the atrocities of the English on Indian Muslims especially the forcible conversion of the Indians to Christianity.

9. Ibid., f. 17a.



Shah Alam II

from the Mughals, and the English too had obtained from the Mughals the *Diwani* and the *Nizamat* for the administration of the area under their control. The Rajas of Mysore had been the tributaries of the Mughals, and thus nominally under the Nizam. Thus everyone except the new Mysore chief had his definite place in the legal setup of the country. Haidar and Tipu, having newly risen to power, had not been legally assimilated in this system. Haidar never had any pretensions to sovereignty, being content to be a "*dalvoy*" or servant of the Raja, who was still maintained in the palace, and who had still retained the royal paraphernalia. But Tipu desired to end even this fiction of his dependence on the Raja, which made his legal right weak. The Nizam and the Marathas justified their schemes to

Another important purpose which I.H. Qureshi considers as the main object of the embassy was Tipu's anxiety to secure confirmation of his legal right to the throne of Mysore, and to get recognized as an independent monarch at the hands of the Caliph of the Muslim world¹⁰. The legal position of Tipu was very insecure. Among all the princes of India, his was the weakest claim to royalty. The Nizam was the Viceroy of the Deccan appointed by the Mughals, the Nawab of Carnatic was the deputy of the area further south under the Nizam; Clive's treaty with Shah Alam II in 1765 exempted Muhammad Ali from his dependence on the Nizam; the Marathas had the legal *sanads*

Mohamed Ali Khan Wallajah, (1717 - 1795)
Nawab of Carnatic

10. I.H. Qureshi, "The Purpose of Tipu Sultan's Embassy to Constantinople", *JIH*, XXIV, 1945, pp.77-84.

overthrow Tipu because they considered him to be a mere usurper with no right to his territory. The English were conscious of this weakness of Tipu, and exploited it to their advantage by instigating his neighbors to treat him as an usurper. Besides, they fomented internal plots and conspiracy of the Queen Mother of Mysore to subvert his government. He did not like to be recognized by the Mughal emperor, because that would make him legally subordinate to the Nizam, or the Nawab of Carnatic, a position which he hated as they were virtually puppets of the English. Moreover, Shah Alam himself was a prisoner in the hands of the English.

The only solution to this difficulty lay in proclaiming his independence, which he did by dethroning the Raja of Mysore. In the treaty of Gajendragad with the Marathas and the Nizam he insisted on being recognized as "*Padsháh*", a new title on which he laid great emphasis¹¹. They agreed to the compromise of calling him a *Nawab* which did not satisfy him. The recognition he failed to obtain in India, he tried to secure from abroad. He was fond of cultivating cordial relations with countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and France with the intention of gaining recognition to his newly acquired legal right of sovereignty.

He was successful in this object, as Sultan Abdul Hameed of Turkey addressed him as an independent monarch, despite British machinations at Constantinople¹². The Sultan of Turkey had better authority to grant such recognition than any other political power. He was the Caliph of the entire Islamic world, and legally the supreme authority. It had been the custom in the past to seek recognition only at his hands, and even the most despotic Sultans of Delhi had sought recognition. Mahmud of Ghazni, Iltutmish, Muhammad-bin-Tughluq and Firoze Shah had sought their investiture from the Caliph. The idea as such was nothing novel, as Tipu only followed the traditions of the past. No doubt it had been given up by the Mughals, who ruled India by virtue of their own right, but Tipu could display to the Nizam and the Nawab of Carnatic that he had a superior and more secure claim to his authority, as it had not emanated from a defunct power like the Mughals.

Tipu sent a large embassy consisting of 1000 persons under the leadership of Mir Ghulam Ali Khan who sailed from Mangalore on March 10th, 1786 with four ships carrying valuable presents to the Sublime Porte and samples of Karnataka products to be sold at the ports of call. They carried pepper, cloth, turmeric, ginger, cardamom, sandalwood, scent, gold and silver coins of Haidar and Tipu, besides four

11. Sec. Cons. 23 May 1787.

12. Mahmood Khan, Bangalori, Sultanat-e-Khudad, p. 554.

elephants, three silver *hawdas* and two palanquins. The merchandise was meant for sale to cover journey expenses, and also as an advertisement of Mysore products. The elephants were meant for the Turkish Sultan. The embassy reached Muscat on 24th June 1786, where the Imam of Muscat named Sayeed came to see them. The diary of Abdul Qadir, one of the Secretaries of the embassy, gives us a graphic account of the geography, climate, flora, fauna, political and social conditions, revenue, price structure, rates of exchange and other details of the places visited¹³.

After staying for six days in Muscat, the embassy sailed for Basra. One of the boats, Fakhr-ul-Marakhib was damaged, and a hired boat was taken. They came to Bushire on 22nd July 1786, where they negotiated for the establishment of a factory. From the port of Dilam they informed the Governor of Basra, Ibrahim Agha, of their visit to the place. One of the ambassadors, Muhammad Haneef died at Bushire. The Governor of Bushire, Shaikh Nasir, enquired whether Tipu would give him permission to build a factory at Mangalore. Mons. Rousseau and Mons. Edoward, the agents of the French factory at Basra, called on the ambassadors and said that Basra could be taken by Tipu for trade¹⁴. Ghulam Ali Khan sanctioned Rs.1200/- for offerings to holy places like Najaf, Karbala, Baghdad and Kazimain. There was considerable trouble in Basra, as Jafar Khan, nephew of Karim Khan of Iran, had arrived and gunfire could be heard¹⁵. Two of the boats *Fath Shahi* and *Gharb-i-Sharati* had sunk due to the storm at Basra with only 103 survival out of 400 on board.

On 9th December 1786 they embarked for Baghdad, but had to return back to Basra as the river was not safe for travel. Having been in Basra nearly for three days they set out again for Baghdad, where it's Governor, Sulaimn Pasha, secured the required permission to proceed to Constantinople. From Baghdad they travelled over land via Mosul and Diarbakar to Constantinople.

The envoys were treated with great courtesy and respect at the capital. They had pleasant time visiting highest dignitaries and officials. They were publicly entertained as a proof of the sincerity and friendship of the Ottoman power towards Tipu. Some months elapsed before an audience was arranged with the Supreme Porte. He received them with honour, but evaded the main issue of the Offensive and Defensive alliance with Turkey. In reply to Tipu's letter, Sultan Abdul Hameed I wrote a letter expressing his great satisfaction over the successful conclusion of the Second Mysore War by Tipu. He felt very happy over the intention of Tipu to build a

13. Waqai-e-Manzil Room, R.A.S.B. Mss. No.1678, f.13a.

14. Ibid., f.35b..

15. Ibid., f.42a-b.

canal in Najaf. He addressed Tipu as *Nasirul-Islam-wal-Muslimin*, the defender of Islam and Muslims¹⁶. Regarding the main purpose of the embassy, the Sultan wrote:

"This friend also adopted with supreme courage the path of holy war and the traditions of his forefathers. The black-faced Russians who have turned away their face from the qualities of faith and have adopted fraud as their profession, are night and day intending to humiliate the Muslims ... we are amassing troops in the territories of these infidels of evil ways. As regards the other matters which were orally explained by the honourable ambassadors, the image of their replies have been drawn in the book of minds of these honourable persons on behalf of the vakils of this Majestic State. From their (ambassador's) speech these will become clarified before the mind (of Tipu Sultan)"¹⁷.

Thus the Turkish Sultan gave an evasive reply and avoided concluding a military alliance. The reasons why he did not like to offend Britain were the internal difficulties of Turkey. Russia was following a relentless policy of aggression to secure an outlet to the sea at the cost of its neighbours. The control of Bosphorus and Dardanelles with the priceless city of Constantinople had become the historic mission of the Czarist Russia. With the accession of Catherine II, a German woman of insatiable ambition, the integrity of Turkey was greatly endangered. She had already completed the first partition of Poland in 1772, and was contemplating seriously in 1787 the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. In her designs she had secured the willingness of the Austrian Emperor, Joseph II, who wanted Russian support for his own aggression on Central Germany.

Thus Turkey found herself at this time in the midst of great national danger. She was at war with Russia and Austria. Her traditional ally, France, was on the eve of catastrophic upheaval, the Revolution of 1789, and was not in a position to render any assistance to her. It gave an unprecedented opportunity to Britain to further her cause in the Ottoman Empire by appearing to be helpful to her. The apprehension of the Russian expansion was the factor that compelled Britain to adopt the doctrine of "the inviolability of the Turkish integrity". Therefore, the Caliph could not afford to alienate British support by concluding a hostile alliance with Tipu against them. The British ambassador, Sir Robert Ainslie, was closely watching the events and would not allow the British interests to suffer. Tipu was conscious of such efforts, for he wrote to Gulam Ali Khan, "We have lately received a letter containing an

16. Hikmet Bayur, Series A, Document No.III.

17. Ibid.

account of the conferences or negotiations going on between the Sultan of Rome and the English ambassador. Consider well the contents and hasten to accomplish the business upon which you have been deputed"¹⁸. Thus the political objectives of securing the Turkish alliance were defeated by the peculiar difficulties of the Ottoman Empire and the vigilance of the British ambassador.

But another very important purpose was served, namely the confirmation of Tipu as an independent ruler. This recognition at the head of the supreme head of the Islamic world was the greatest achievement. The ambassadors brought a *firman* from Turkey, despite the British machinations. Tipu secured the title of King, the right to mint coins, and to have the *Khutba* (sermon) read in his name¹⁹. The Turkish Sultan addressed him as an independent monarch. The other political and commercial objectives were not fulfilled, and the outbreak of the Third Mysore War did not permit him to pursue those objectives with zeal.

The embassy returned nearly four years later and landed at Calicut on 29th December 1789. They took the return journey via Alexandria, Cairo, Suez, Jiddah, Mecca and Medina, having performed the pilgrimage on the way. Out of the 1000 who had set out only 68 returned, the rest having perished in pestilence, hostile weather, sinking of boats and other calamities. All the four elephants which were meant as gifts to the Porte died before they reached their destination. The entire mission cost Tipu more than 20 lakhs of rupees²⁰.

Despite the failure of the mission in its main political objective, it brought out the extent to which Tipu would go to distress the English. It also indicated his anxiety to improve the economy of his State by opening of trade contacts with the help of outer world and by building up a strong industrial base with the help of foreign artisans and craftsmen. No prince either before or later had launched such a big project, which seemed at first fanciful, but if successful would have altered the course of history.

Relations with the French

France was the natural ally of Mysore in the eighteenth century. Ever since the fraud of Muhammad Ali on the issue of Trichinopoly in 1752, the French and the Mysoreans were tied into inseparable units of political identities. This does not mean that they did not have different or conflicting perception of situations they had to

18. Kirkpatrick, L. No.CXCL.

19. CPC, VII, 21 June 1787.

20. Birendra Varma, "Tipu Sultan's Embassies to Constantinople and Kabul", Journal of Historical Research



Trichinopoly Fort

face. For instance Haidar went to war against the English in 1780 mainly because of the English capture of Mahe, a French possession, and yet the French took nearly four years to dispatch a respectable force to him, and even that, when it appeared in India, would not co-operate with him. When peace was made in Europe in 1783, the French hastened to cease hostilities in India disregarding the interests of their ally. In spite of all their differences both Haidar and Tipu regarded the French as their closest ally. In fact Haidar died in Piveron's arms.

They were attracted towards each other because there was one very strong common bond between the two, namely the bitter opposition of both towards the English. If the Mysorean hostility towards the English could be traced to 1752, the French animosity went back to the Middle Ages of Crecy and Agnicourt, and their rivalry lasted for centuries until the First World War. This identity of purpose had brought them closer together, and each regarded the other as useful and effective instrument to strike at its rival. Even though Tipu was disappointed with the French conduct in his first two wars, he retained the French friendship, being conscious that he could turn to his advantage the Anglo-French rivalry at a later date. The French had helped the Americans in their War of Independence, and Tipu knew that it was equally their policy to eliminate their rivals from India as well. But the French authorities followed a misguided and inconsistent policy in India and Tipu resolved to make certain that the French would not fail him again.

Tipu was not very happy with their conduct in the Second Mysore War. Their conclusion of a separate peace without consulting him was a great shock to him. They pursued a policy of self-interest which would give them a safe place in the affairs of the Carnatic by appearing to be arbiters between the English and Tipu, and thus to accomplish by diplomacy what they had failed to achieve by war. But in the end they offended Tipu who was their only faithful and powerful ally. Both Haidar and Tipu had conferred on them special favours. Despite his bitter experience in the Second Mysore War Tipu retained his cordial relations with them hoping they would revise their policy.

When the war with the Marathas broke out, Tipu expected that the French would support him. He had been practically isolated from all sides, and the English had secretly pledged support to the Marathas. But the French once again failed him. Their policy was inconsistent with their friendship. Far from coming to his aid, they adopted a policy of neutrality, which Tipu interpreted as definite hostility. A little later they went a step further. They tried to join the Marathas.

The action of the French was strange. Soon after the Treaty of Mangalore they tried to bring about peace among the Indian powers. Bussy informed Marechal de Castries, the French minister, that he had done all he could to unite the three Indian powers, and that it was the Marathas and the Nizam, who were hostile to Tipu²¹. With Bussy still in India, the French policy though tilted towards neutrality was yet inclined towards Tipu, but they had realized their helplessness to play any active role. Bussy wrote to Comte de Vergennes, "Their [English] superiority is in contrast to our own feebleness and still more to the Asiatic princes to whom our negotiations would still be of some weight"²². In such a situation the only way to promote the French interests, they thought, would be to avert a war through their mediation. Hence, they did not see any propriety in concluding a separate alliance with Tipu. "As things stand we remain without establishments in any part of India and without hope of forming there any useful alliance"²³. Their state of affairs both in Europe and India precluded them from playing any effective part in Indian politics, and their primary aim at this time was to prevent the English from consolidating their hold. That was why the French were at first perturbed by the prospect of war among the Indians themselves. "The Marathas and the Subah of Deccan had made a league for destroying Tipu Sultan. This project suits marvellously the English"²⁴.

21. Vol.XVI, pp. 51-6.

22. P.A. Ms. No.442 (Pondicherry Archives).

23. Ibid., No. 437.

24. Ibid.

Bussy laboured hard to bring about an understanding among the Indian powers. "I have laboured and still labour to break it [the Maratha-Nizam alliance] and at the same time to unite the three Indian powers against the English without compromising ourselves"²⁵. Not only Bussy but also Vicomte de Souillac, the French Governor at the Isles, informed Nana, "The English would profit one day by the disunion of the princes of the country"²⁶. He urged the three powers to sink their difference and unite. The Pondicherry Governor, Cossigny, too urged Nana not to break with Tipu. When Nana remained adamant in his hostility towards Tipu, and was keen on securing the English support, Cossigny made it clear to him that if the English joined the Marathas the French would not remain inactive. Cossigny observed, "I do not at all view Tipu as the aggressor"²⁷. Tipu showed his inclination to accept the French mediation and make peace with the Marathas²⁸. Cossigny pressed Nana hard, "My opinion being always that you ought to seek peace"²⁹. When all efforts failed, Nana was informed frankly that the French might support Tipu.



A view of the ruins of Pondichery Citadel

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., No.894

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., No.456.

Cossigny gave clear warnings to Nana not to under-estimate the French strength, and that he commanded in Pondicherry a large number of troops always ready to march.

Thus in the beginning the French appeared well-disposed towards Tipu. But when the war actually broke out, they changed their policy. From the position of assisting Tipu in the hour of his need they move to the position of preventing the Marathas from receiving English aid. They invoked XVI Article of the Treaty of Paris by which neither the French nor the English were permitted to assist the Indian powers at war with each other³⁰. In their anxiety to disengage the English from the Marathas, they grew cold towards Tipu. They did not stop at that; they developed intimacy with the Marathas. There was a radical change in their policy.

Having failed to reconcile the Indian powers, the logical step for the French should have been to support the aggrieved party, or at least to remain strictly neutral, but they began to court the Maratha alliance by writing to them conciliatory letters. The same Cossigny, who had disapproved of Nana's intransigency, wrote to him, "I shall repeat to you always with pleasure that I desire nothing so much as the augmentation of your power, of your glory, and your prosperity"³¹. The French inconsistency and opportunism were quite apparent again when they desired to sacrifice the interest of their traditional ally. Marchel de Castries found that Tipu would not be so helpful to the French. He wrote, "The accounts which have been received do not permit of flattering ourselves that the son of Haidar Ali Khan conserves the power of his father and has inherited only his father's hate. His power is new and has not acquired real stability. The Marathas have stability, stronger and more proper to create a revolution in India"³².

Thus the French were more impressed by the extensive Maratha Empire than by Tipu. A shift in their stand was harmful not only to Tipu but also to their own interests. Their perception of the Indian situation was short-sighted. It defeated their main objective of reducing the English power. Far from that, they were enhancing it, and almost playing into the hands of their rivals. A question could be asked whether Tipu was wise in reposing unshaken confidence in them. Perhaps he thought that the French Company being a governmental agency displayed often bureaucratic inconsistency, and that would be soon corrected, as the Anglo-French rivalry was eternal, which was the sure meeting ground of Franco-Mysorean relations.

30. Ibid., No.952.

31. Ibid., No.951.

32. Ibid., No.951..

Nevertheless, it was Tipu's misfortune that even his traditional allies would not hesitate to ditch him.

The French policy was faulty. They pleased neither Tipu nor Nana. Nana did not encourage their advances as he was desirous of securing the English aid. He grew so cold towards them that Marchel de Castries bitterly complained of Nana's conduct³³. But Nana kept them in good humour by promises of alliance, and thus tactfully managed to isolate them from Tipu. But Tipu was greatly disappointed by the French conduct. He never expected that they would court Maratha friendship. Even after Nana categorically rejected the French overtures for alliance, they did not cease to persuade them³⁴. They sent a special envoy, Gudar to Poona to bring about an alliance³⁵. They tempted the Poona court with their offer to cede a small fort near Bombay, called Revadanda³⁶. But Nana was not prepared for such an alliance. He doubted the sincerity of the French, and believed that a secret treaty might be in existence between them and Tipu. Nana regarded English aid as more effective and reliable. The appointment of a permanent Resident, Malet, at Poona finally sealed all French hopes of an alliance with the Marathas.

Tipu thought that such defective French policy was due to the wrong calculations of the French authorities in India, and that it could yet be rectified by approaching their superiors in Europe. That was why he undertook to send an embassy to Louis XVI to ascertain what help he could hope to get in case his project of an attack on the English materialized³⁷.

Tipu was encouraged to send an embassy to Paris due to few more factors. Piveron, who was stationed in Pondicherry, and who was well disposed towards Mysore raised Tipu's hopes that France was inclined to reduce the English in India, just as they had done in America, and that an alliance for that purpose with Tipu was quite feasible. Cossigny had sent to Tipu an agent, Monneron, in July 1786 to obtain trade monopoly in Mysore. Monneron had a series of conferences with Tipu, in which he gained an impression that the French had about 4000 troops in Pondicherry, and that there was a much larger force at the Isle of France, which could be sent to India at the first notice of war. This made Tipu think that France had the ability to support him, and that, given some persuasive power, was willing to

33. Ibid., No.550.

34. Ibid., No.960.

35. C.P.C. VII, No.361, (Calendar of Persian correspondence)

36. P.R.C. II, No. 17 (Poona Residency Correspondence).

37. Ibid., I, No. 27.

support him as well. When the proposal to send an embassy was first mooted to Souillac, the Governor-General at the Isles, he received the news with great delight, and even offered to keep a ship at Tipu's disposal as a present, emphasizing that it would be the first Indian ship to appear in Europe and that "the flag of the greatest Indian prince should be the first to be displayed in the kingdom of the most powerful European monarch". Tipu was thus made to believe of some positive results if he approached the highest authorities in Europe.

It was not very strange that Tipu took such an extraordinary step as to send an embassy to far off land. Sending embassies to the western courts on special missions was not uncommon for Indian powers. In 1767 Muhammad Ali had deputed John Macpherson to England, and had received Sir John Lindsay as an English ambassador to his court. Raghoba had sought to stabilize his power by deputing Mashiar Parsi to England. Even Nana had contemplated sending an embassy to secure English aid for reducing Tipu³⁸. There was nothing new in Tipu's contact with the west, excepting he wanted to use one western power to put down the authority of another western power.

The main purpose of sending an embassy to France was to secure military assistance, and to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance. Another object was to promote trade and industry of Mysore. Tipu wanted skilled French technicians of various crafts. He wrote to Louis XVI, "I frequently indulge in an inclination for arts ... if that friend out of his ancient regard would dispatch some persons skilled in every art, I should esteem it as a proof of the most perfect friendship"³⁹. Tipu desired cannon-founders, ship-builders, manufacturers of China-ware, glass and mirror makers, engineers, mechanics, gold-plating experts and a host of other technicians. The embassy was as much political as commercial and technical.

The political purpose was to secure French aid and conclude an alliance. The real purpose was stated in the instructions to the ambassadors⁴⁰. They were to inform the French of the English excesses in India, and to impress on them the dangers of English expansion; to indicate the wrong steps the French took in the Second Mysore War, to ask them to reverse that policy, to convince them of the urgency for concerted action, and to drive home the necessity of a definite treaty between the two. It was proposed that the French should dispatch 10,000 troops to India, and that they should act under Tipu's command. This alliance was to remain

38. Kirkpatrick, No. 108.

39. P.R.C. II, No. 54.

40. Kirkpatrick, No. 336.

in force for ten years during which period neither party should conclude a separate peace with the English. Peace was to be made only on the total surrender by the English of all their Indian possessions which should be equally divided between the French and Tipu⁴¹. He proposed the same terms later in 1797 soliciting French aid. In his turn he promised them all provisions and supplies. The proposed treaty consisted of five Articles, which were:⁴²

Let friendship and harmony increase between the two governments as long as the sun and moon endure.

Article First: A war against the English being considered advisable, war should be declared against them till the capture of Madras, the Carnatic, Bombay and Bengal, the two parties should never make peace, even if the war were to be continued for ten years. However greatly the English might desire and seek peace, their overtures were not to be accepted until the capture of the above forts and places.

Article Second: The French were to send ten thousand troops under able and experienced officers. If they land either in Pondicherry or Calicut or in any other port of Mysore, Tipu would provide them with bullocks for gun carriage, necessary provision, tents, gunpowder and cannon.

Article Three: The French chiefs and their forces should be under the command of Tipu in all matters of military direction. If anyone failed in his duty, he would be punished according to the laws of Tipu's government.

Article Fourth: After the conquest of the whole of the Carnatic, the fort of Madras and the adjoining country would be ceded to the French. The forts of Trichinopoly and Tanjore which belonged to the Muslims should be ceded to Tipu.

Article Fifth; After the conquest of Madras, the combined army should proceed by land and sea to the north for the subjugation of Bombay and Bengal. After the conquest of these places and forts both parties should divide them equally.

41. Hukumnamah, R.A.S.B. No.1676-7.

42. Ibid., No 1677.

This proposed treaty lends itself to a few criticisms in the light of subsequent events. First, how far was Tipu realistic in thinking that the French would join him in eliminating the British in all the three presidencies of Bombay, Bengal and Madras and that he would get 10,000 French troops, when he was aware of their performance in the previous wars? Second, was he pragmatic in the hope that they would agree to place him in command of their troops? Third, was he wise in proposing to substitute the French for the English, in case his dream of removing the English came true? Would he not perpetuate again colonialism, although of a different power?

The only answer to these questions would be his passion and the burning zeal to eliminate the English, for which he could go to any limits. The role of the French in the new World, America, was haunting in his mind again and again. If that could happen in one part of the world, when one Washington could perform such a miracle having no State or army of his own, why not in India where Tipu himself had beaten the English not in one but in two wars? His name had become a terror in the Leadenhall Street in London, and the resources of his State had become an envy of Hindustan. Secondly, when the English organized a triple alliance in the Third Mysore Wars, the allies kept their combined armies under the command of Cornwallis. Tipu was only far ahead of his time, and paved the way for others to reap the fruit of his thought. As for the substitution of one colonial power for the other, Tipu looked at the French in a different light, where concepts of liberty and equality were deeper. If the French too re-enacted the same drama as the English did, they too would be removed by some device. It was good, according to his scheme, if the most dangerous European element was first removed, and the less dangerous element could be managed within the ability he possessed. Therefore, we may not outright condemn the project Tipu had in view in dispatching a mission to Paris.

The embassy that was sent to France consisted of three principal ambassadors, Muhammad Darvesh Khan, Akbar Ali Khan and Usman Khan with an entourage of forty five men⁴³. It sailed from Pondicherry on 22nd July 1787 in a special ship called *Roy I' Auroro* with Pierre Monneron, a French from Pondicherry, as the guide. The voyage was a long one from July 1787 to June 1788, and they reached Toulon on 9th June. They were received with great honour. The French King had made special arrangements for their reception. He had sent even his carpets⁴⁴. Large crowds

43. Ibid., f.7b to 9a.

44. Michaud, *Histoire des Progres et la Chute de l'Empire de Mysore Sono le Regnes d'Hyder Ally et Tippoo Saheb*, 2 Vol. Paris, 1801, Vol. I, p. 387.

cheered the ambassadors on their way. They left Toulon on 25th June, and by way of Marseilles, St. Vallier, Lyons, and Moulins reached Paris on 16th July 1788.

But the chief purpose of the embassy remained as unaccomplished as that sent to Turkey. They were received by Louis XVI in a public audience on 3rd August 1788 with every mark of honour. They placed before Louis Tipu's proposal for an offensive alliance, and for the dispatch of military aid. While professing great friendship towards Tipu, Louis politely evaded the issue of concrete alliance with Mysore. The French conditions did not warrant anything better as the events were fast moving towards an upheaval which had become inevitable by the successive periods of misrule by the degenerate monarchy. Moreover, Marchel de Castries, the Minister for Marine, who had been Tipu's friend and had desired his co-operation, had retired by the time the ambassadors landed in France. Tipu had written him letters and had hopes that his influence would be helpful. With his retirement, the active forward policy was discarded in favour of appeasement of England. Comte de le Luzerene,



Louis XVI receives the ambassadors of Tipu Sultan in 1788

who succeeded believed in consolidating the French power at home before launching an expedition abroad. He followed a timid policy and was afraid of the growing power of the British in India. Moreover, Luzerene doubted the consistency of the Indian powers in their struggle against the English. He judged Tipu in the same scale as that for the Nizam or the Marathas. All these factors compelled Luzerene to contemplate the total withdrawal of all the French forces from India to be stationed in the Isle of France⁴⁵.

Thus Tipu was again disappointed in his main aim. The time he chose for the embassy was not propitious. France was in the grip of social and economic chaos, on the eve of that catastrophic Revolution. At such a time, a military pact with a foreign power involving the prospects of an endless war, harboured no chance of even a dispassionate look at it. Hence, the French evaded the issue and made vague promises. But there was a good deal of warmth, affection and friendship towards Tipu. The ambassadors were highly pleased with polished culture of the French court, and were so fascinated as to desire longer stay in France⁴⁶.

Having stayed for three months the ambassadors left Paris on 9th October 1788 and reached Pondicherry on 10th May 1789. Though their political mission had failed, they succeeded in bringing a few technicians, a carpenter, a weaver, a blacksmith, a locksmith, a cutler, a watchmaker, a dyer, a physician and a surgeon⁴⁷. Tipu was at least happy about the treatment of the ambassadors. He wrote to Luzerene, "We have been singularly satisfied with the report which our ambassadors have submitted to us about your kindness and your noble behaviour"⁴⁸. Louis had sent in his turn his representative, Macnamara, to pay a courtesy call to Tipu.

When Tipu wrote back to Louis, he did not touch on the subject of his disappointment over political and military issues but expressed great concern on the French decision to withdraw their forces from India. He wrote, "To-day, above all, when he sees on the one hand the French troops retiring from Pondicherry to the Isle of France and on the other the embassies multiplying between our two countries, the unjust jealousy of our common enemy carries him to the path of action"⁴⁹. When war broke out with the English over the Travancoe dispute, Tipu wrote again to the French King seeking help. "We entreat you, therefore, to give at

45. Holden Furber, *John Company at Work*, p. 74.

46. *Ibid.*

47. Michaud, *Vól. I*, p. 140..

48. Tantet, *M.V. L' Ambassade de Tippoo Saheb a Paris in 1788*, Paris 1899, p. 28.

49. Ray, *Some India office Letters of Tipu Sultan*, p. 25.

once formal orders to your commanders of Pondicherry and the Isle of France that on our requisition they should send us 2000 soldiers, and to recommend to them not to allow themselves any cause or delay but move at the first signal, ready to obey our orders"⁵⁰. But by this time France was already in the throes of the revolutionary upheaval, and Tipu's request remained un-complied with.

While the French were reluctant to have political and military connections with Tipu, they were anxious to secure commercial privileges. Luzerne desired to convert the French Company in India into a purely commercial concern. As Mysore was well known for cash crops, the French longed to have closer commercial contacts. All the French settlements except Chandernagar were in the south quite close to Tipu's country, and hence well suited for a prosperous trade with Mysore. Tipu was anxious to promote trade and industry in his state.

With these objectives the French proposed a commercial treaty with Tipu in October 1788. They wrote, "The Company solicits from Tipu the monopoly of the exportation of pepper, sandalwood, cardamom, yarn, wood and all the products of his State and of the importation of merchandise from Europe"⁵¹. In return it offered to supply him cannon, musquets, and other materials of war. If there was any balance to be paid, it would pay in bullion or silver. The French promised neither to help the enemies of Tipu nor to shelter the rebellious chiefs of Malabar. They proposed a defensive alliance which would protect both on the seas. They were prepared to purchase commodities at prices fixed by Tipu. They needed permission to build warehouses on the coast and in other places, and tax exemption on goods. Gold and silver were also to be exempted from duties. The French proposed these terms to Tipu's ambassador, Muhammad Hussain Khan, who had been sent to France⁵².

These proposals would have given the French complete monopoly of Mysore trade. Tipu turned down these proposals. When they had rejected his proposal for an alliance on political and military issues, he would not yield to sacrifice his economic interests. But he would not alienate them either as a new war was brewing with the English, and hence he permitted them to export certain commodities like sandalwood, spices and rice at his own price. The French declined the offer of limited scope, and the negotiations broke off⁵³.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., p.26.

52. P.A. Ms. No. 1089.

53. Ibid., No.1090.

Thus Tipu was not happy with the French policy. Their commercial treaty was in the nature of total exploitation of Mysore resources. Moreover, a dispute arose over a small territory near Mahe belonging to Karangod Nair, which Tipu occupied as the Nair was in league with the English and the Raja of Travancore⁵⁴. The French claimed the Raja to be their tributary. When the matter caused concern to both, they agreed to appoint an arbiter, the Raja of Colastri, to settle the dispute and he gave the verdict against Tipu. Tipu gave orders for restoration, but his officers delayed, and the French thought that Tipu was reluctant to give up the place⁵⁵. Tipu levied taxes on the merchandise that passed through his territories, and they wanted exemption. Tipu objected to the supply of rice to the English from Mahe having bought it from Mysore. More than all, when they rejected his proposal of a counter alliance to the Triple Alliance which the English had formed against him, his relations with the French were further strained. They replied that they did not wish to interfere in the affairs of any power as long as it did not harm them⁵⁶.

Thus during the period 1784-90 the French did not co-operate with Tipu. They remained aloof during Tipu's contest with the Marathas and the Nizam. His embassy to France failed in its main purpose of securing military aid. The commercial treaty that was proposed displayed their excessive self-interest. Tipu's high hopes of French collaboration were dashed to the ground. The French policy had undergone a radical change after 1763. They had no will to revive their power, and were reconciled to play a very minor role. Certain factors compelled them to adopt a cautious policy. First, the memory of the Carnatic wars was still fresh in their mind, and they did not like to trust any Indian power. Secondly, they realized that they were no match to the growing power of the English with vast resources, with political authority in the presidencies, with support from home government, and with superior navy. Thirdly, the French Company was a state body at the mercy of bureaucratic whims and fancies at home, unlike the English Company, which was a private concern, and hence more pragmatic and more flexible. Fourthly, despite the fact that France had played a glorious part in the American war of independence, its results brought as such no benefit to France in the material sense except psychological satisfaction. The authorities wondered whether a similar venture in a far off land like India with dubious allies was worth the risk. English loss did not necessarily mean French gain. Therefore, France wanted the Indians to sort out their own problems. She was desirous of bringing about a revolution in India through the instrumentality of the

54. Ibid., No.4609.

55. Ibid., No.4565.

56. Ibid., No.4574.

Indian powers themselves. She tried to unite them, but when they failed to respond in a positive way, she kept himself aloof.

A strange drama took place at this time as a result of the French policy. Tipu desired French aid, but they were reluctant to give it. The Marathas desired English aid, but they were reluctant to give it. The French offered aid to the Marathas, but they were reluctant to receive it. The French hesitated to join Tipu, lest the English should join the Marathas. The English hesitated to join the Marathas, lest the French should join Tipu. Thus, a sort of balance of power was in operation which maintained an equilibrium. In short the colonials were fast to emerging as the decisive factor in Indian politics, whose aid was anxiously they sought by several of them. As long as the colonials kept themselves out of the internal dissensions of Indians, no major change in the affairs of the country was possible. But once they desired to intervene as they did in 1790 and 1799, disastrous consequences followed. The British were out to gain the hegemony of the land.

Relations with the Mughals

Tipu would not spare any stone unturned to achieve his objective to check the British expansion in India. The two Mysore wars had convinced him that the English possessed no ordinary military strength, and that they could be harassed and distressed only in surprise attacks, but not in a pitched battle. What he had achieved either against Baillie or Braithwaite was to defeat the detachment of their enemy, but not their main army, which was yet powerful. No Maratha leader, not even Sindhia, nor the combined strength of all the Maratha Sardars, could inflict a blow on the English in the First Maratha War. Knowing this realistic picture, Tipu was keen to get outside help, both military and political, so that a concerted, consistent and committed struggle could be carried on against the English. For this purpose he tried the Marathas and the Nizam, who miserably failed to remain constant in the venture. Without any difficulty Warren Hastings won them over to his side. Tipu then tried the Turks in Constantinople and the French in Paris. He found them wanting in the will to join him, and they too failed him in their response to his call.

It is in this context that he turned to the Mughals, knowing fully well that they were the weakest link in the power-struggle for supremacy in India, but they had one asset, and that was the highest legal authority they enjoyed in the country. His plan was far-fetched in design. It was to cut at the very root of the legal claim of the English to play any role in the Carnatic. They were supposed to be legally subordinate to the Nawab of Carnatic, who had engaged them to defend his country

in lieu of some concessions he had granted them. At least in Bengal Clive had obtained the *Diwani* from Shah Alam for those provinces in the north, but in the south the English were supposed to owe allegiance to Muhammad Ali.

Tipu desired to subvert this position by prevailing upon the Mughal Emperor to grant him Arcot *Sanads* by which sovereignty would shift from the Nawab of Carnatic to the Mysore Chief. Once this legal title was obtained, he would assert his claim over the Carnatic, and deny the English all their privileges and authority which they enjoyed by proxy. He was aware that he alone could not enforce this right, but would involve the French also in the game. It is here that the French were willing to help him, for with Tipu's legal claim to Carnatic, and with his military strength and vast resources, their ambition was roused, and they thought there was yet a chance to revive their power in India. This was the plan Tipu had in mind in cultivating very warm and cordial relations with the Mughal emperor.

For this reason Tipu became very respectful towards Shah Alam, and regarded him as the Supreme Head of the country⁵⁷. His diplomatic agents Bal Mukhand Rao, Mool Chand and Sajjan Rao, at the Mughal court kept him informed of all Delhi affairs. Tipu had two main objectives, one, to secure the confirmation of his title to the throne, and then to apply for the Sanads of Arcot; the other objective was to dissuade the Mughals from falling under foreign influence. In 1783 Tipu applied for the Nawabship of Carnatic⁵⁸. Muhammad Ali possessed neither superior claim nor greater capacity to administer the country. Only through intrigues and under the English protection, he had managed to hold his position, but he had bartered away his sovereignty to English, who had become the *defacto* rulers of the region. Tipu felt that if by peaceful means the transfer of the Nawabship of Carnatic to himself could be effected by persuading the Mughal Emperor, he could check the further expansion of the English.

The French also actively supported Tipu in this design. Montigny, their representative in Delhi, laboured hard to convince the Emperor that in the general interests of the country, Tipu should be encouraged⁵⁹. Bussy also wrote to Shah Alam and Colonel Demante was specially deputed to Delhi for the purpose⁶⁰. Tipu pleaded that he would remain within the legal limits, accepting the suzerainty of the Emperor, and paying him annual tribute. Besides, he would pay a large sum of money initially,

57. Ibid., No.894.

58. Kirkpatrick, I., No.71.

59. Original Records, Persian Records, No.86.

60. OR., No.88.

if the Arcot *Sanads* were conferred on him, and if he were to be elevated to the rank of 7000⁶¹. Tipu's *vakil*, Mukhand Rao and the French deputy tried their best to gain their point.

A serious attempt was made to convince the high dignitaries of Delhi that very happy consequences would follow in supporting Tipu. Nawab Amir-ul-Umra (Mohamed Shafi Khan) and other high officials were won over, and they wrote very pressing letters to Mahdi Ouli Khan and others to favour Tipu with the grant⁶². Their efforts were so far encouraging that the emperor seemed willing to form an alliance with the French and Tipu to expel the English from India, and to grant the *Sanads* to Tipu.

But this project too failed through superior British diplomacy, and also by the attitude of the Nawab Vazir of Delhi, who was well-disposed towards the English. Major Browne, British representative, successfully foiled French influence through the chief minister, Mujad-ud-Dowlah, the favourite of Shah Alam, and the staunch supporter of the English⁶³. He kept the matter at first in abeyance. On further pressure from the French, and Tipu's *vakils*, and also from his own officers like Amir-ul-Umra, the Nawab Vazir dismissed the Mysore *vakils*, and ended the affair⁶⁴. Tipu thus failed to secure the Arcot *Sanads*. Even the ordinary courtesy of a *killat* was denied to him. All that was done was to ask the *vakil* himself to present a *killat* to Tipu on the Emperor's behalf⁶⁵, The British defeated a measure of far reaching consequences, but the French sincerely exerted their utmost to win the point.

Denial of even a *killat* convinced Tipu that it was futile to attempt to secure from Delhi confirmation of his title to the throne of Mysore. Yet the cold treatment did not embarrass him much, for he knew the forces behind the rejection of his plea by the Emperor. He did not defy or slight the Imperial Authority. He maintained his diplomatic agents there and wrote to Shah Alam in most respectful way. He said, "Upon the receipt of the Imperial Mandate, my glorified head touched the summit of honour. The special gifts of ennobling quality which your Majesty in boundless favour graciously bestowed on me by the hands of Rao Bal Mukhand Dass also arrived in the most auspicious conjecture and put in possession of the wealth of distinction and pre-eminence. In acknowledgement of this magnificent donation, I respectfully offer many most humble obeisance"⁶⁶.

61. Ibid.

62. CPC (Calendar of Persian Correspondence) No.315 dated 15 Sept. 1785.

63. OR, No.84

64. Ibid.

65. OR, No.91.

66. OR, No.92.

It is not very clear whether Tipu was here sarcastic in his phraseology or was really sincere in his sentiments. Perhaps he was sincere, for he was interested in changing the mood and mind of those who really mattered in the country by making them realize how important they were and yet how they were degraded. What he wanted to emphasize was the point that people needed in this world strength and not weakness, resoluteness and not timidity, power and not expediency. He announced the Treaty of Mangalore to the Emperor in these words, "With the divine aid and blessing of God, it is now again my steady determination to set about the total extirpation and destruction of the enemies of faith"⁶⁷.

After the withdrawal of Bal Makhan Das as the *vakil* of Delhi, he appointed Mool Chand and Sajjan Rao to keep him informed of affairs at Delhi⁶⁸. He reiterated his favourite design "... that the manner in which we heretofore chastised the Nazarenes (the English) is too well known to require to be recapitulated"⁶⁹. He desired that the Emperor should direct the Nizam to co-operate with Mysore. As the Nizam was constitutionally subordinate to the Emperor, Tipu brought pressure on him from Delhi to cease hostilities, and join him in a common venture. He wrote to Mohamed



Mughal Court

67. Kirkpatrick, I, No.71.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., No.73.

Baig Hamdani, one of the dignitaries in Delhi, "It is requisite for the support of our religion that all Mussalmans should unite together ... within the kingdom of His Majesty"⁷⁰. Tipu was exciting here religious sentiments hoping that at least that would work for the national cause.

Thus Tipu's fertile mind and inexhaustible energy were exploring ever new channels to defeat the English, but everywhere he met with failure. It appears to us that he designed impossible schemes to defeat a major European power which was far superior to him both in political and military skill. But due credit should also be given to him that he left no stone unturned, and spared no efforts to expel the English from his kingdom and the Country. Despite his failures, one has to acknowledge the sincerity of his purpose and the boldness of his schemes. Like a drowning man catching at a straw, he resorted even to intrigues at the Mughal Court, to revive the Anglo-French rivalry. What might have happened if the Mughals had given the Arcot *Sanads* to Tipu at a time when the French had a large army in the south, is difficult to imagine. What cannot be denied is his perception of the imminent danger to the country from the colonial expansion, and his ceaseless and varied efforts to check that expansion.



Rocket Launching Yard

70. Ibid., No.334.