

## The Battle of Buxar, 1764

(1) *Causes.* This battle was fought between the English on the one hand and Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Oudh and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam all on the other hand. When English deposed Mir Qasim (in 1763) he fled towards Oudh and with great ability and statesmanship he won over Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Oudh and Shah Alam to his side. A number of French mercenaries (soldiers hired on pay) also joined them. Soon the combined forces of Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam invaded Bengal and reached as far as Buxar.

(2) *Events.* The English under Major Munro opposed the advancing forces of the Indian princes. To begin with, there were some indecisive engagements. However, in October 1764 there was fought the famous Battle of Buxar in which the English gave a crushing defeat to the Indian princes. Mir Qasim fled from the battlefield and died as a wanderer some time later (1777). Both Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam ultimately surrendered to the English.

(3) *Results and Importance.* By the Treaty of Allahabad which was signed in 1765 between the English (Clive) on the one hand, and Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam on the other, the Battle of Buxar came to a conclusion. (1) The province of Oudh was returned to Shuja-ud-Daulah but he was asked to cede the districts of Kara and Allahabad and pay a heavy war-indemnity of 50 lakhs of rupees. He was also forced to maintain English troops for the defence of his state and to pay for them. (2) Shah Alam, on his part granted the Diwani (or rights of collecting revenue) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the English agreed to pay him a pension of 26 lakhs of rupees a year. The districts of Kara and Allahabad were also ceded to him.

In its importance, this Battle of Buxar was in no way insignificant to that of the Battle of Plassey. It not only completed what Plassey had begun but also contributed a lot in making the English Company a sovereign power in India. According to **Sir James Stephenson**, "*The battle of Buxar serves far more credit than the battle of Plassey as the origin of the British power in*



*India.*" Now not only the Nawab of Bengal but also the Emperor of India and his so-called Prime-Minister (Shuja-ud-Daulah) were defeated. The English also got the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

## SECTION 4

### **British Conquest of Bengal**

The British conquest of Bengal is an important event in the history of India. The English conquered it in various stages, which have been fully discussed in the last three sections. The main points are once again given below for the benefit of the students. They are : (1) Circumstances leading to the conflict between Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah and the English. (2) Conquest of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-Daulah and its recovery by the English. (3) The Battle of Plassey, 1757. (4) Mir Jafar and his relations with the English. (5) Mir Qasim and his relations with the English. (6) The Battle of Buxar and the establishment of the British rule in Bengal.