

## 22.6 MURSHIDABAD

---

Samhita Sen

Eighteenth century Bengal observed some interesting political activities, which changed the course of history of Bengal as well as of India. With the gradual decline of the Mughal authority Bengal witnessed the ups and downs of the *Nizamat* and the rise of the English East India Company, first as an economic and later as a political force in the mid-18th century CE. The Mughal nobles played a crucial role in the decline of the Mughal Empire by carving out sub-imperial kingdoms of their own, like Bengal, Awadh and Hyderabad. Bengal appeared as independent regional kingdom under the leadership of Murshid Quli Khan, first as *diwan* and then as *subahdar*. He and his successors set up an independent *Nizamat* in Bengal and Mukhsudabad, which later became Murshidabad and emerged as the capital of Bengal *Nizamat* from the first half of 18th century. In Bengal, the evolution of the *Nizamat* seemed to be a natural political development. But with the weakening of the *Nizamat*, after the battle of Palashi, the East India Company emerged as the overlord of Bengal and gradually of India.

Murshidabad city was rich in its heydays and was compared to the city of London by Lord Clive.<sup>1</sup> Murshidabad retained its glory as an important trade centre along with being the administrative headquarters of Bengal *subah*. The strategic location was an important factor which led to the growth of this city as a commercial centre in the second half of 17th century along with Qasimbazar, around six miles south of Murshidabad. As a matter of fact, Qasimbazar was a prominent trade centre from the 17th century onwards. It was famous as Masumabazar and Qasim Khan after driving out the Portuguese from Hugli in 1632 came to stay at Masumabazar and renamed it Qasimbazar.<sup>2</sup> During the *subahdarship* of Mir Jumla, this place was his *jagir* and during the struggle with Shah Suja this was the military post for both parties.<sup>3</sup> Though from the French documents of 1704 CE it can be assumed that a mint was established in Qasimbazar in October, but from the coins it is clear that before 1705 the mint was closed and a new one was founded at Mukhsudabad.<sup>4</sup> Thus it is quite evident that, though Qasimbazar and Mukhsudabad evolved as twin trade centres almost at the same time, Mukhsudabad soon became a thriving cosmopolitan capital city, whereas Qasimbazar remained a strong hold of the foreign traders.

Mukhsudabad became the heartland of eastern India during the first half of 18th century. In *Ain-i-Akbari*, Abul Fazl mentions about someone named Makhsus Khan who, as a nobleman, had served in Bengal and Bihar during the last decades of the 16th century. He built a rest house, around which a market place grew and he named it Makhsusabad or Makhsudabad after him.<sup>5</sup> Ghulam Hussain Salim mentions that a merchant named Makhsus Khan built a *serai* or inn there and called the place Makhsusabad.<sup>6</sup> It is seen from an unpublished French letter that after 1690 CE *Diwan* Kafayet Khan was residing at Murshidabad and the evidence of *Subahdar* Ibrahim Khan staying at Murshidabad also exists.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is clear from the French documents that the *diwan* and the *subahdar* were staying at least ten years earlier than the appearance of Murshid Quli Khan at the city of Murshidabad. A sketchy image of this town can also be procured from the writings of James Forbes.<sup>8</sup> Thus it can be asserted that Murshidabad was an important administrative and trading centre from late-17th century onwards. With the transfer of capital from Jahangirnagar (Dhaka) to Mukhsusabad (Murshidabad) in 1704 CE,<sup>9</sup> it not only became the capital of Bengal *subah* but also the centre of business, art and culture in the eastern zone.

Today the city of Murshidabad is situated in lat. 24°18' N and long. 88°27' E, about 39 m above mean sea level, spread over an area of 12.95 square kilometres.<sup>10</sup> On the east of the city is Lalgola, on the west flows the river Bhagirathi, on the southern side is Qasimbazar and on the northern side is Jiaganj. To study the urbanisation of Murshidabad, apart from the primary and secondary sources, an essential part is the structural remains which are still extant in and around the town of Murshidabad. Unfortunately, none of the previous sources has traced the process of urbanisation that took place in Murshidabad in a detailed manner.

The weakening of the central Mughal power resulted in the rise of regional sub-imperial dynasties of Bengal, Awadh and Hyderabad. Murshid Quli Khan was the first Nawab Nazim of Bengal *subah*, who established the Nasiri dynasty and *Nizamat* of Murshidabad ushered in thereafter. An accomplished administrator, Murshid Quli Khan, is credited with building the first Jami mosque of Murshidabad in 1723-24 CE, Sujauddin Muhammad Khan (son-in-law of Murshid Quli Khan) became the next ruler of Nasiri dynasty (1727 CE), because Murshid Quli had no male heir.<sup>11</sup> Sujauddin was also a just and benevolent ruler according to the contemporary historians. He is credited with the erection of the Tripaulia gate, situated in the heart of the city, marking the existence of Qilla *Nizamat* which has been swept away by the river Bhagirathi. Sarfaraz Khan, son of Sujauddin Muhammad Khan, was the last ruler of the said dynasty. He had a very brief rule of a few months before he died in the battle field against Alivardi Khan in 1740 CE, in the

battle of Giria.<sup>12</sup> Futi mosque was patronised by him, which is one of the most beautiful specimens of architecture in Murshidabad.

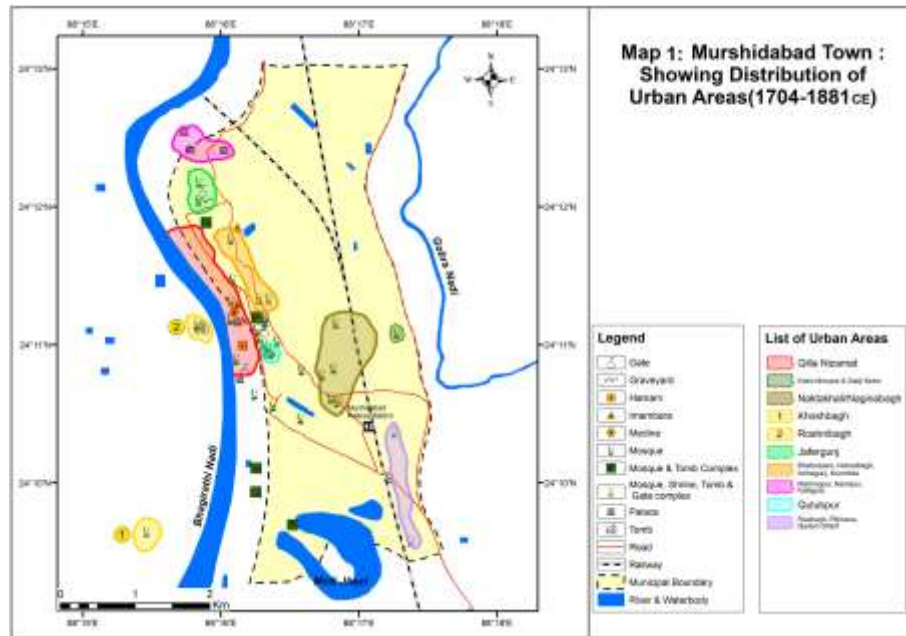
Afsar dynasty ruled for a very brief period of seventeen years only. Alivardi Khan after defeating Sarfaraz Khan ascended the throne of Bengal *subah* in 1740 CE. He had to face continual attack of the Afghans and the Marathas. In the end he had to buy peace from the notorious Maratha *bargi* troops having agreed to pay them *chauth* (one-fourth of gross revenue).<sup>13</sup> After the demise of Alivardi Khan in 1756 CE, his favourite grandson Siraj-ud-Daullah was enthroned. The conflict between the British East India Company and Nawab Siraj-ud-Daullah changed the fate of Bengal as well as of India. Siraj-ud-Daullah lost the battle of Palashi in 1757 and was killed shortly thereafter.

Mir Jafar (1757–60 and 1763–65 CE), became the next ruler of Bengal. He established the last dynasty of Murshidabad, i.e. the Najafi dynasty. The British replaced him with his son-in-law Mir Qasim in 1760 CE on account of non-payment of taxes.<sup>14</sup> Mir Qasim paid the dues but started to show signs of independence which led to the battle of Buxar in 1764 CE. Mir Qasim was defeated along with his alliances Nawab Suja-ud-Daullah of Awadh and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II. After the battle of Buxar, a number of rulers ascended the throne of Bengal according to the free-will of the British East India Company. In 1765 CE the system of Dual Government was established, in which the Nawabs ruled on behalf of the British and were merely their puppets. In 1772 the system was abolished and Bengal was brought under direct control of the British. In 1793, when the *Nizamat* (governorship) of the Nawab was also taken away from them, they remained as the mere pensioners of the British East India Company almost for next hundred years. The last Nawab of Bengal, Feradun Jah abdicated in 1881 in favour of his eldest son, Hassan Ali Mirza.<sup>15</sup>

From 1704 CE Murshidabad was the centre of trade and commerce and therefore, a class of businessman flourished in this part of the province as well as a distinctive middle class emerged. The nobles belonged to the upper echelon of the society and they came predominantly from the Hindu, Muslim and Jain communities. The Hindus were bankers, money lenders and enjoyed the royal patronage as well. The Jains were also very powerful and enjoyed much wealth and prestige. A number of palaces and temples were patronised by wealthy Jains. The Muslims of Murshidabad were predominantly of Shi'a sect and for that we can find a number of *imambaras*, *karbalas* along with one Medina. The Shi'a art and culture played an important role in the society. The position of women also was quite modest in this period. The women patronised as many as ten mosques in Murshidabad, which proves that women of the Muslim society had their freedom of expressing piety. The

people of the lower strata also patronised mosque, namely Felu Mihtar, who happened to be a sweeper, as the word '*mihtar*' was used for the 'sweeper'.<sup>16</sup> So, one can say that in general the society was tolerant.

Murshidabad, the city of the Nawabs of Bengal was no doubt a rich, cosmopolitan city of late medieval India. Up to the middle of the 18th century, Bengal's two industries, cotton and silk, earned much reputation and they provided employment to a considerable section of the local people. It was a flourishing city in trade, commerce, art and craft. It was one of the most prosperous cities of India. The flourishing silk industry made it even more wealthy and desirable city to live in. The city was thriving with opulent Jain bankers like Jagat Seth. The palaces like Kathgola and Nashipur still bear the signs of grandeur these wealthy bankers and nobles once enjoyed.



Generally, whenever the Muslim rulers conquered any region they issued commemorative coins and sometimes established a new mint in that place. This establishment of mints often resulted in the development of towns, known as mint towns or *Shahr-i-Tankshal*. Murshidabad was an important mint town during 17th-18th century.<sup>17</sup> Thomas Bowrey narrated that the mint was set up at Murshidabad around 1675 CE.<sup>18</sup> One of the coins of this mint was dated 6 October 1679 CE.<sup>19</sup> Murshid Quli Khan changed the name of the city to Murshidabad and introduced the *Zarb-e-Murshidabad* coins.<sup>20</sup> The coins initially were issued from Makhsudabad mint with the name of Aurangzeb in the year 1115 AH/1703 CE and 1116 AH/1704 CE and the *Zarb-*

*e-Murshidabad* first appeared on the coins in the year 1117 AH/1705 CE.<sup>21</sup> A large number of coins in the name of Shah Alam II were issued in Persian script from *zarb* (mint/tankshal) Murshidabad during the rule of the East India Company, but they were actually struck from the Calcutta mint and not from Murshidabad.

The establishment of *karkhana* or craftsmen's workshop in Murshidabad furthered the process of urbanisation significantly. In the Bengali texts like the Vaishnava literature and Mangalkavyas of the 15th-17th century the urban life and craft production got lot of importance.<sup>22</sup> To meet the demands of the increasing population of this thriving city, many craftsmen, shopkeepers came and settled in this city. The luxury items which were in high demand due to the existence of the Nawabs, their family and the noble men of this city, many experienced craftsmen settled in this part of Bengal.

If we consider the morphological aspect, it seems that the late medieval city of Murshidabad was divided into several residential zones. The religious affiliation might not have been a deciding factor for this division as evident from the names of the localities. On the other hand, different professional groups were probably the element which led to the naming of various 'para' or locality in Murshidabad. While walking around Murshidabad today, localities like Kumarpara (locality of the potters), Tantipara (locality of the weavers), Dahapara (locality reserved for the people who came from Dhaka) can be found. Different suburban areas ('*gunjes*') also existed in and around Murshidabad city, like Jaffragunj, Amanigunj, Ichhagunj, etc. Places like Raisbagh, Gulabbagh indicates that there were a number of gardens all around this Nawabi city.

The process of urbanisation in Murshidabad was manifested by numerous beautiful palaces, residential buildings of the nobles, gardens scattered on both sides of the river Bhagirathi. There were *khanqahs*, mosques, *madrasas*, *imambaras*, *bimaristans* (hospitals), stable, broad streets, *hamams* and so on. Unfortunately, not many of the structures are extant today, primarily because of the tropical humid climate of Bengal and use of burnt bricks for structures due to non-availability of stones in this part of India.

Murshid Quli Khan started to build the city from 1710 CE onwards.<sup>23</sup> A huge section of Shi'a Muslims, Jain bankers and Hindu merchants came along with him to this new administrative centre. Shortly before August 1717 Murshid Quli formally became the *subahdar* of Bengal and renamed the city from Mukhsudabad to Murshidabad.<sup>24</sup> Murshid Quli Khan established the new Nasiri dynasty. Gradually, Murshidabad started to become a cosmopolitan city. The nobles had their grand palaces situated here. Many *zamindars* also built rest houses in or around Murshidabad. The family of

Jagat Seths, the famous Jain bankers, also had their grand palaces built on the northern part of Murshidabad city, at a place named Mahimapur. Murshid Quli Khan built the Qilla *Nizamat* or the main fort palace and the Jami mosque at Sabzikatra area (Figure 1). The most attractive piece of architecture in this area was the *Chehelsatun* or the ‘palace of forty pillars’.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, the fort and the palace have been swept away by the river Bhagirathi. The eastern boundary of the Nawabi capital city was marked by the Katra mosque constructed by Murshid Quli Khan.



Fig. 1: Katra Mosque ( Photo: Sudipta Mallick).

Sujauddin Muhammad Khan, son-in-law of Murshid Quli Khan, ascended the throne after him. He constructed edifices like Tripaulia gate, *naubatkhana*, rest houses, stables, etc.<sup>26</sup> He demolished many old buildings and erected some magnificent edifices in Murshidabad such as a palace, an arsenal, revenue court (*diwan-khana*), a public audience-hall, a private chamber (*khilawat-khana*), a *farman-bari* and a court of exchequer (*khalsa kachhari*).<sup>27</sup> A mosque constructed by Nawab Sujauddin also found near Naktakhali or Naginabagh,<sup>28</sup> once where his son's palace was situated near Murshidabad railway station. Though the mosque today has been completely reconstructed, but the inscription once attached to it, claims its antiquity. Thus, the urbanisation process spread to the Naktakhali area as can be perceived from the establishment of the mosque in this area. Mosque of Tabassum, found within the close proximity of the mosque of Suja-ud-Din, was also built during the Nasiri period.<sup>29</sup> The existence of so many mosques within such a small area suggests high density of population in this part of the city.

The tomb of Sujauddin Muhammad Khan is located on the western bank of the Bhagirathi, at a place famous as Roshnibagh, an area constructed

during Nasiri period. As already mentioned Sarfaraz Khan, the third Nawab of Murshidabad (1739–1740 CE), after Sujauddin Muhammad Khan, had his palace at Naktakhali, his tomb is also found here. A mosque very near the tomb, known as the Begum Mosque,<sup>30</sup> was patronised by either his mother or wife. It should be mentioned here that Sarfaraz Khan started to build a beautiful mosque near Kumarpur, quite near to the Naktakhali area, famous as the Futi mosque. This suggests that this Naktakhali area flourished during the reign of Sarfaraz Khan.

After defeating Sarfaraz Khan in the battle of Giria (1740 CE), Alivardi Khan ascended the throne of Murshidabad. Due to recurrent Maratha *Bargi* invasion and rebellion of the Afghans, Alivardi Khan could not devote much time and energy in building activity. A mosque at Roshnibagh, on the northern side of the tomb of Sujauddin Muhammad Khan, is the only architectural remain attributed to Nawab Alivardi Khan (Figure 2). The Marathas ravaged large tract of his kingdom. But before they could attack the capital Murshidabad, Alivardi Khan drove them out. After the treaty with the Marathas in 1751 CE Alivardi started to reconstruct his capital. He then turned his attention towards repairing the towns and villages, which had suffered from the ravages of the Marathas.<sup>31</sup>



Fig. 2: Mosque of Alivardi Khan, Roshnibagh (Photo: Author).

The young Prince Siraj-ud-Daullah ascended the throne of Bengal in April 1757 CE after the demise of his grandfather, Alivardi Khan.<sup>32</sup> Motijheel, the palace and mosque complex of Nawajesh Muhammad Khan and Ghaseti Begum lying on the south-eastern side of the Murshidabad city today marks the southern limit of the city. Siraj spent much of his energy and wealth in building activity. He built one of the biggest and most magnificent wooden imambara of this world. Unfortunately it was burnt, but only the Medina remained, as part of the older wooden *imambara* (Fig. 3). The Medina is also a beautiful structure, highly influenced by the Mughal style of architecture. On the eastern bank of river Bhagirathi, he built two of the most beautiful mosques, namely Safed mosque and Zarad mosque. On the western bank of Bhagirathi, Siraj-ud-Daullah was the patron of a beautiful palace with lake. He named it Heerajheel, but unfortunately no trace of it is found today. Siraj, for his passion for architecture, was often compared to the great

Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, who had a fine taste for architecture. During this period, Khoshbagh was built on the western bank of the Bhagirathi, where the burial ground of the Afsar dynasty can be found. The fairs and festivals organised during the reign of Nawab Siraj-ud-Daullah also epitomises the opulence of this Nawabi capital and urban centre of Murshidabad.<sup>33</sup>



Fig. 3: Medina, part of the old *imambara*,  
(Photo: Author).

After the battle of Palashi in 1757 the Nawabs of Najafi dynasty became mere puppets in the hands of the East India Company. Thus during this period lesser number of monuments are found in Murshidabad which were patronised by the Nawabs of Bengal. The mosque of Munni Begum, Hazarduari palace and the *Nizamat* Imambara, mosque of Dulhani Begum (Fig. 4), mosque of Umda Begum, mosque of Badr-un-Nisa Begum are some of the monuments in the heart of the city which were constructed under the Nawabi patronage during this time. But in the various parts of the existing city of Murshidabad, construction of mosques under private patronage



Fig. 4: Mosque of Dulhani Begum  
(Photo: Sudipta Mallick).

suggest that the Muslim population was increasing in number and the rich and powerful people of the society were making marks by constructing such edifices. Areas like Bhattolipara, Nishadbagh, Ichhagunj, Kurmitola on the eastern side of the city were being populated as we find mosques in these areas. Apart from that, Ghulabbagh, Raisbagh,

Pilkhana areas on the south-eastern part of the city also got into the limelight. Darab Ali Khan built a mosque in Qutubpur area. Another mosque established by Felu Mihtar is also found nearby.

Thus, it can be summarised that, the Nawabi city of Murshidabad was developed in parts (Map 1). During Nasiri period the majority of the population was concentrated in Qilla *Nizamat* and Naktakhali area. At the

time of Afsar period, Roshnibagh on the western bank of the Bhagirathi was established. The southern side of the city got extended up to Motijheel. But the most important part remained the Qilla *Nizamat* area. The Najafi period witnessed the major expansion of the city. The city extended to the Jafargunj area on the north, where the palace of Mir Jafar was situated and the burial ground of the Najafi family is also found there. On the east, the Katra mosque still marked the boundary. On the western bank of the Bhagirathi, Khoshbagh and Roshnibagh, two of the burial complexes were situated. Motijheel complex (Fig. 5) remained the southern-most point. But during the last dynasty, i.e. the Najafi dynasty, the major urbanisation took place within the city itself. A number of gates were constructed within the new palace area which is near the mosque of Munni Begum.



Fig. 5: Mosque and Tombs inside Motijheel Complex (Photo: Sudipta Mallick).

There are no exact figures on the population of Murshidabad in the 18th century. From the available sources it can be estimated to around two lakhs. During 1750s, Murshidabad was the most populous city of Bengal.<sup>34</sup> From the beginning of 18th century as the transfer of the capital took place the city grew in size and importance as well. In the most glorious period of Murshidabad, during the middle of the 18th century, the population of the city can be estimated to be six to seven lakhs approximately. Diversity in population also can be perceived during this time. During 1730s in the reign of Nawab Suja-ud-Din, a Jain poet named Neehal Singh came to Bengal and from his poem '*Bangal Deshki Gazal*' a clear pen picture of the various trading and business classes can be gathered.<sup>35</sup> He names of the traders from different country as well as regions like, Gujarati, Arabian, Armenian, English, Habshi, Hurmeez or Parsees, Dutch, Siddi, French and Pathan-Mughals. Here the Iranians also should be mentioned who came in a huge number in different period of time and settled down in Murshidabad. They still form a large group in the population of the Murshidabad city.

The landed aristocrats and traders played a crucial role in the growth of the city. The wealthy *zamindars* maintained their establishments and private *naibs*, *wakils*, messengers and other servants they required for the daily office works. Important merchants and traders also did the same. The name of Jain banker group Jagat Seth should be mentioned here. The foreign

companies, such as British, Dutch, French and Portuguese also had individual factories which indicate the huge number of officials, servants, workers, brokers and agents they hired. Hence, it is clear that Murshidabad served not only as a capital city and administrative headquarter, but also a manufacturing centre and a huge market. Although Murshidabad was not a walled city like Gaur or Pandua, but it had its own security system. The Katra mosque on the east had bastions, which were probably used to keep a close watch on the intruders. Apart from that the Bhagirathi served as a natural barrier on the west. The Maratha rampart constructed during 1740s by Alivardi Khan to defend the *Bargis* played a crucial role in the defensive measures. The streets of Murshidabad today exhibit a well-planned city model. Chowk was the centre point from where four roads ran to four sides of the city. On the east was the Jami mosque, which was connected through the Bakhrigully road. On the west was the river Bhagirathi and on the side of the river Khoshbagh and Roshnibagh were situated. On the northern side Qilla *Nizamat* and *Chehel Setun* was situated. Later on within this Qilla *Nizamat* area Chowk mosque of Munni Begum and Hazarduari palace were built as a major part of the Qilla was blown away by the changing course of the river Bhagirathi. On the northern side of the city, the palaces of Jagat Seth, Nashipur (Fig. 6) and Kathgola are situated. On the southern side is the Motijheel, Naginabagh area and the new palace today. The main road is intersected by narrow streets which were used by common people. In these areas a density of population increased in course of time.



Fig. 6: Nashipur Palace (Photo: Author).

Murshidabad started to lose its glory from the second half of 18th century. Many factors led to the decline of this city. After 1757, East India Company became powerful and started to interfere in the administrative and economic policies of Bengal. The situation worsened after the acquisition of *Diwani* in 1765 by East India Company. The weakening of rule resulted in a gradual decay of economic activity. The trade and commerce were completely captured and controlled by the British East India Company. The *karkhanas* and other industries also were perishing steadily. The great famine of 1769-70 CE was another major cause for the decadence of this Nawabi capital. Law and order also was seriously affected due to this dislocation of economic life. The policies of Warren Hastings gave impetus to the growth of Calcutta, which directly affected the administrative and commercial value of Murshidabad. As the power and prestige of the Nawabs of Murshidabad was reduced, the city also lost its significance as a centre of consumption and trade. The nobles, officials, bankers, merchants, painters, artisans all started to move towards Calcutta and Lucknow.

Within less than hundred years from a thriving capital city, Murshidabad was transformed to a mere regional town. It became a neglected city after the shift of the capital to Calcutta by the East India Company in the year 1772 CE. This urban centre was never fully abandoned by the descendant Nawab families and by the families of Jain traders, but their power and glory was substantially decreased. The affluent among them gradually started shifting to the new capital, Calcutta. With passing of time, this Nawabi Capital city completely lost its erstwhile grandeur. Today it has become a mere tourist spot with the skeletal remains of the old city.

---

### Notes and References

- 1 P.C. Majumder, *The Musnud of Murshidabad*, Murshidabad, 1905: 7.
- 2 Aniruddha Ray, *Madhyajuger Bharatiya Shahar*, Kolkata, 1999: 352.
- 3 Jadunath Sircar, *History of Bengal*, vol. 2, Patna, 1977: 341-5.
- 4 Aniruddha Ray, *Madhyajuger Bharatiya Shahar*, 1999: 356.
- 5 Manmohan Chakrabarti, 'Notes on the Geography of Old Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, July 1909: 233.
- 6 Ghulam Hussain Salim, *Riyazu-S-Salatin*, Calcutta, 1902: 28.
- 7 Aniruddha Ray, *Madhyajuger Bharatiya Shahar*, 1999: 355.
- 8 James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs: A Narrative of Seventeen Years of Residence in India*, vol. II, London, 1834: 449-51.
- 9 Sushil Chaudhury, *From Prosperity to Decline: Eighteenth Century Bengal*, New Delhi, 1995: 11.
- 10 N. Seshagiri (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Cities and Towns in India*, New Delhi, 2009: 613.

- 11 Jadunath Sircar, *History of Bengal*, 1977: 400.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 K.K. Datta, *Alivardi and His Times*, 2nd edn., Calcutta, 1963: 90; Jadunath Sircar, *History of Bengal*, 1977: 481.
- 14 S.M. Reza Ali Khan, *Murshidabad o Banglar Nazim*, Kolkata, 2008: 27.
- 15 *Ibid.*: 39.
- 16 Samhita Sen, 'Forgotten Nobles of Murshidabad: A Study through Its Architectural Heritage', *Pratna Samiksha: A Journal of Archaeology*, New Series 5, Kolkata, 2014: 136-7.
- 17 Vijay Kumar Thakur, 'Trade and Towns in Early Medieval Bengal (c. AD 600–1200)', *The Journal of the Economic & Social History of the Orient*, vol. XXX, Leiden: 1987: 120.
- 18 Thomas Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-79*, Cambridge: 1905, R.C. Temple (ed.), New Delhi, 1997: 213-14.
- 19 L.S.S. O'Malley (ed.), *Bengal District Gazetteers: Murshidabad*, Calcutta, 1997 (reprint 1914): 31.
- 20 P.C. Majumder, *The Musnud of Murshidabad*, 1905: 21.
- 21 C.J. Brown, *Catalogue of Coins in the Provincial Museum Lucknow*, vol. 1, Oxford, 1920: 74.
- 22 Ratnabali Chatterjee, 'The Perception of the City in Medieval Bengali Literature', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 53rd session, Warangal, 1992-93, Indian History Congress, Delhi, 1993: 191-2.
- 23 Aniruddha Ray, *Madhyajuger Bharatiya Shahar*, 1999: 356.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 A.H. Dani, *Muslim Architecture in Bengal*, Dacca: 1961: 210-11.
- 26 *Ibid.*: 214-15.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 Prabhat Kumar Saha, *Murshidabad Jelar Masjid (13th-18th Century)*, Kolkata, 2002: 93.
- 29 Samhita Sen, 'Begum Mosques of Murshidabad', *Journal of Bengal Art*, vol. 20, 2015: 245.
- 30 Chinmoy Dutta, *Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Inscription in the Indian Museum*, Calcutta, 1967: 43.
- 31 K.K. Datta, *Alivardi and His Times*, 1963: 14-15.
- 32 Brijen K. Gupta, *Sirajuddaullah and the East India Company, 1756-57*, Leiden, 1962: 20-25.
- 33 *Ibid.*: 37.
- 34 K.M. Mohsin, *A Bengal District in Transition: Murshidabad 1765-1793*, Dacca, 1973: 1-2.
- 35 Sushil Chaudhury, *Nababi Amale Murshidabad*, Kolkata, 2008: 125.

**Acknowledgment:** This article would not have been possible without the guidance of Late Pratip Kumar Mitra and Professor Sutapa Sinha. I am ever grateful to both of them for being patient with my mistakes and enthusiastic about my achievements. The primary map was plotted by Ms. Monalisa Rakshit, which has been improvised further by Mr. Sudipta Mallick. I also want to thank Ms. Mithu Karmakar for helping me with the copy editing of this article.