



**HJRS Link:** [Journal of Academic Research for Humanities \(HEC-Recognized for 2022-2023\)](#)

**Edition Link:** [Journal of Academic Research for Humanities, 3\(1\) January-March 2023](#)

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**Link of the Paper:** <https://jar.bwo.org>

## Historical Study of the Nahar Dynasty of Seetpur: A Case of Political Autonomy

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### Paper Information

#### **Citation of the paper:**

(APA) Akhtar. Sohail, Nazeer. Iqra and Bibi. Iqra, (2023). Historical Study of the Nahar Dynasty of Seetpur: A Case of Political Autonomy. Journal of Academic Research for Humanities, 3(1), 112-118

#### **Subject Areas:**

1 History  
2 Politics

#### **Timeline of the Paper:**

Received on:  
Reviews Completed on:  
Accepted on:  
Online on:

#### **License:**



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#### **Published by:**



### Abstract

The paper primarily deals with and explores a small regional dynasty of Seetpur, which was governed by a family called Nahar Lodhi of Seetpur located as a small town at Seetpur in the current Muzaffargarh District. The Nahar dynasty was parallel to the Langah Dynasty of Multan. Nahar Dynasty was established by Lodhi Family during the Syed Dynasty of Delhi in the southern part of Muzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan. It was a strong regional government and they maintained and protected their political identity against other strong regional powers i.e. Langah and Miranis Dynasties of Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan respectively. The question is how they formed and recognized their political autonomy for centuries. Nahar Dynasty marinated its political supremacy before the expeditions of the Kalhoras of Sindh and the Durani rulers of Afghanistan. In the early 18th century Makhdom Rajan Shah defeated Nahar rulers in Rajanpur and the Baloch tribes especially Gurchani and Mazari also have become powerful and pushed the Nahars towards Seetpur. The expedition of Merani also forced the Nahars to surrender before the Mirani government. At last, this powerful regional government lost the glorious time and faced a downfall. This an analytical study based on the qualitative method of research and the main objective of this research article is to highlight the historical background of the Nahar Family This research article also explores how Nahar's tribe formed their government in this area and maintained their territorial sovereignty against the Langah Dynasty of Multan and Mirani of Dera Ghazi Khan. The major characteristics of their political autonomy and the nature of this Nahar Dynasty.

**Keywords:** Seetpur, Nahar, Islam Khan, Tahir Khan, Langah

## Introduction

This research article is mainly about the canal Lodhi family of Seetpur State. Some interesting facts have been covered in light of the views of historians. There are different opinions about the word Nahar. But the term is related to the animal which is called the wolf. In the early time due to the strict administration, they were called Nahar. There are lots of opinions about this family. Some people call them "Nahar Loe" and the majority consider them Afghan Lodhi while they also claim as Afghan Lodhi. And the fact is that they are Afghan Lodhis and they came to Multan during the Tughlaq era. Although the Saitpur canal government considers it to be an Afghan Lodhi, and the canals themselves claim the same, Raverty considers them to be a corrupted form of Naghar. According to it, Naghars are only canals. Raverty has described his genealogy as follows: Naghar son of Darghai son of Ismail son of Qais Abdul Rasheed, who is the ancestor of the Afghans. When Bahlol Lodhi became the ruler of the Delhi Empire, his uncle Islam Khan also laid the foundation of the independent state of Seetpur, which was later considered a strong regional government parallel to the Langah government of Multan. The state lasted for a long time consisting of the southern part of Dera Ghazi Khan and Muzaffargarh.

Among the famous rulers of the Nahar Dynasty, Islam Khan, Muhammad Khan, Tahir Khan, and Qasim Khan are remarkable. There are also interesting sayings about the word canal. There is a saying that the ruler of this state once heard the cries of wolves in winter. The minister replied that they had a cold and that they were asking for warm clothes, so the king ordered them to provide warm clothes. That was the reason it was called Nahar in the local language. The second tradition is the opposite of this because of the strict temperament of Islam Khan and because of

the oppression of the people. This article is the first regular and detailed discussion on their government, state governance, people, and their social and economic condition.

## Literature Review

The primary discussion is about the Nahar Dynasty of Sitpur which was formed by Islam Khan and different stories are famous about the dynasty. In the past, Sitpur was a very important region, and once it was the capital of the parallel dynasty of Multan the famous Nahar dynasty. The dynasty was located and identified by the rulers of the Nahar race. They ruled the area lying between the Indus, where it conjoined the Chenab at Uch, and the Sulaiman range, south of a line drawn from Harand to Uch and north of Shikarpur in Sindh. The kingdom was founded in 1455 AD during the reign of Emperor Bahlol Khan Lodhi of Delhi. He granted this region to his relation Islam Khan Lodhi (Raverty, 1878). Tahir Khan Nahar was one of Islam Khan's grandsons who ruled Sitpur in the 16th century. Similarly, Abul Fazal has also written that across the Indus River, there are Afghans who have two hundred horsemen and two thousand armed infantry who can help. Tahir Khan built his mausoleum before his death in around 1530 AD. If it is discussed in the context of the great Delhi Sultanate. Hukam Chand explained the reason for the word Nahar in his own words and said that in the local language, Nahar means wolf. And it is a bloodthirsty animal that kills or rips weak animals to pieces, so when the Nahars occupied this area, they also looted a lot while establishing their rule in this area in the beginning and did persecution. The market heated up. So people got fed up and started calling them Nahars based on their behavior. Since these people are not human beings, they gradually became known as Nahars.

The Nahar family of Dajal is said to be separate from Sitpur, and it was a separate family. The Nahars of Dajal declare themselves as the successors of Abul Fatih and the people of Sitpur regard Islam Khan as their successor. The origin of the Nahras in Punjab is unknown and he describes them as local people as Rajputs or Jats. Similarly, Hakam Chand describes them as the descendants of Bahadur Khan and Aisan Khan, the rivers of Dajal and the rivers of Sitpur respectively. (District gazetteer Muzaffargarh, 1908), Similarly, it has been said that Abul Fatih was the brother of Bahadur Khan and was the ruler of Multan at the time of Sultan Mahmud's accession. Mahmud was arrested and taken away while Bahadur Khan escaped. After the departure of Mahmud, Bahadur Khan took control of Dajal from Barkhan and his descendants ruled for a long time. The gazetteer of Dera Ghazi Khan describes Abul Fatih Dawood as the grandson of Shaykh Hameed who was the ruler of Multan and this is the era of Subkatgin. If you look at it like this, Abul Fatah Dawud bin Nasr bin Sheikh Hameed. (Khan, 1998) The ruler of Multan is not a Lodhi and many historians wrote it as a Lodhi based on the fallacy. Abul Fatih himself was the ruler of Multan at the time of Mahmud's attack on Multan and he was a follower of the Qaramta faith. Mahmud arrested him and took him to Ghor fort and imprisoned him and died there.

From the records in the Finance Department report, it is known that Abul Fatih was the ruler of Harand and Dajal whom the rulers of Khorasan appointed as their representative in this region and he rebuilt the fort of Harand. He ruled this region for many years. Lala Hattu Ram's view is that when Delhi was ruled by the Sadat dynasty, Multan came under the influence of the Langahs. And they retained their semi-autonomy in some form. And the territory of Multan came under the control of Islam Khan,

who was in charge of its southern part (Lahori, 1886). The important thing Islam Khan did was that he laid the foundation of his autonomous government over the region from Sitpur to Kashmore and the whole region became known as the Nahar State. And he also established his rule in the southern part of Dera Ghazi Khan. Even during the Alohda period, this area remained under the control of the canals and they did not pay any tax or tribute to the ruler of Delhi. They are also called Baloch in Gul Bihar (Changwani, 2008).

According to Chingwani, when Bahlul Lodhi became the ruler of the Delhi kingdom, he gave Salam Khan the southern part of Dera Ghazi Khan and extended from Jampur to Kashmore as a fief. Salam Khan collected taxes from the people and established his government. On his death, his son Muhammad Khan became the ruler Muhammad Khan had three sons Qasim Khan, Salam Khan and Tahir Khan and after the death of his father, wanted to divide and divided the kingdom. And Qasim Khan's territory was given to him, Boxer's and Sindh's territory was given to Islam Khan, while Jampur to Seetpur came under Tahir Khan's share. They used to receive tribute from etc. Khan treated them well during his tenure. But when Mahmud Khan took possession in the same way, Rojhan and Kashmir were under the rule of Ibrahim Khan at that time.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Mazaris attacked Ibrahim Khan and expelled the Nahars from Rojhan, and thus the entire area from Kashmore to Rojhan was freed from the possession of the Nahars. And this glorious empire came to an end. According to Leghari, Nader Shah's arrival weakened the existing governments in the region. Qasim Mahmood Khan gave the title of Jan Nisar Khan to Gujar and made him Suby-e-dar of this area. Al Makhdoom Rajan Shah was made Subedar of Sitpur. Due to change, the eastern bank is now inhabited. Rajan Shah belonged

to the Gilani family of H.K. Rajan Shah was the minister of Nahar government and he was making himself strong by taking advantage of the situation. Therefore, when Nadir Shah came, seeing his strength, he made him a governor. And during the reign of Nadir Shah, Rajan Shah succeeded in replacing the road. Rajan Shah did not completely oust the Nahrans from power but allowed them to stay in the area in one way or another, but later the Mazari tribe occupied the area and completely ousted them from there (Leghari, 1987).

In the last phase of the Delhi Sultanate, which consisted of the rule of the Lodhi dynasty, their weak rule provided an opportunity for the birth of small local-level states, and in these states, the southern belt of the Dera Jat Nahar dynasty paralleled the Langah rule of Multan. The government was established. Similarly, the Mirani rule of Dera Ghazi Khan in the west and Ismail Khan in the north succeeded in establishing the Hutt Baloch rule in Dera Ismail Khan. Among these small but organized and strong regional governments, the Nahar government was important. It was going south of Dera Ghazi Khan to Dajal and the same state was also known as Sitpur. Sitpur was the seat of the Nahar government.

There are several theories about the foundation and establishment of this state and similar theories are found about the Lodhis as to which ethnic group they belonged to. Some people call them Afghans, some people think they are Arabs and according to others they are Nahar Lodhis and this is true (Siraj, 2019). In the existing city of Dera Ghazi Khan, there are also some people called Nahar caste who call themselves Pathans and they claim that their family ruled in Sitpur. But the general opinion is that parallel to the Langah dynasty there was a state of Sitpur in the south of Multan and its ruler was the Nahar dynasty. The general belief is that the Nahar

dynasty is mainly Islam Khan was a descendant of Lodhi. Islam Khan was the uncle of Bahlul Lodhi, the king of the subcontinent, and according to some people, Islam Khan was the nephew of Bahlul Lodhi. However, it should be clear that the Nahar family of Sitpur was related to the Lodhi family. Which was an Afghan tribe (Ram, 1982).

The arrival of the Lodhis in the subcontinent took place during the period when a man, Bahram Lodhi, left Afghanistan and settled in Multan, where he got a government job under the governor of Multan, Malik Mardan. Similarly, Malik Sultan, the son of Bahram, got employment during the reign of Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan, and as a result of his services, he got the position of Mansabdari in Multan. And at the same time he was given the title of Islam Khand during the Langah period, the Nahar dynasty ruled in the south. The capital of the Nahar dynasty's rule was Set, which was formerly known as Basthanpur. And their rule was from Harand, Dajal, Jampur, Rajanpur, and Kot Mithan to Sitpur. And most of the areas were settled during their time, while Mari and others were already settled. Around 1755, when Mahmud Khan When captured Rajanpur, they ended their rule-

Bahlul Lodhi is considered the founder of the Lodhi Empire of Delhi and it was Bahlul Lodhi who was made his successor by Islam Khan. Islam Khan Lodhi captured Delhi due to the weakening of the Sadat family and with the capture of Delhi, Bahlul Lodhi re-appointed Islam Khan as the governor of Multan. But the government of the Nahar dynasty was established. Saidpur was situated to the south of the present world. When Islam Khan created a separate state in Sitpur, he made Sitpur its capital, and its boundaries were as follows. That middle region of the Indus River joined the Chenab River from the point of Josh and included the range from

Harand to Ouch south to Mount Sulaiman and the region from Sindh to Shikarpur (Munshi, 1992).

Due to the harshness of the Islamic rule, persecution, and oppression imposed on Jabri Aya, then the oppressed people gave Islam Khan the title of Nahar. Because he was also a letterer and did not use the slightest Tamil to be harsh on his subjects. While in another place, there is a tradition that the south of Dera Ghazi Khan and the southern region of Muzaffargarh, and the entire northern Sindh were included in the government of the Nahar dynasty and it was given by Bahlul Lodhi under Islam Khan. Islam Khan Multan was the governor of the Sirhind region. The rule of the Nahar family, who were mainly Lodhis, was established in the entire region. Mazari and Gurchani also started settling in this area with the kindness of Nawab Muhammad Qaim Khan Nahar. But when the Nahar government became weak, they started occupying this area. After that Makhdoom Sheikh Mahmud has become powerful, and they took over many areas of the declining Nahar State (Fazal, 1973).

Then the Mazaris started settling in the south. So the Mazari clan also expelled Ibrahim Khan Nahar from this area and Nahar Dynasty had come to an end. Nahar ruled in Sitpur, Qila of Kin, and Dajal. There was also a war between the Mirani government and Nahar and demarcation. Meanwhile, Dajal and Harand were occupied by Mirani. Similarly, after the rule of Shah Khorasan was established, some areas were taken away from the rivers. The nation remained from Kashmore to Sitpur. Sitpur is an important village in the Alipur Tehsil, and Sitpur is situated on the main road of the district 11 miles south of Alipur and 3 miles from the Chenab. The country around muniton is cut, off by floods every year with the north, but everywhere testifies to the violent action of the floods. Com-In the winter months, the

ground is only for a short time. These parts are damp. The houses are built on irregular eminences of accumulated debris, which by their extent testify to their antiquity. It is the only place of antiquity in Sheikhani and built irregularly, and has a dilapidated. It is divided into two parts-Khanani and this district interest at the west end there are also the buildings of the antiquarian mosque and tomb of Tahir Khan Nahar, the bazaar, both being protected monuments. Shrine of the Makhdoom of Sitpur (Chand, 1992).

The present Makhdoom, Khan Sahib Sheikh Muhammad Hassan, is an Honorary Magistrate, 1st class, Judge and Provincial Darbari. There are Police Station, a middle school, 2 girls' schools, a district board dispensary, a police rest-house, and a post office. It was once a municipality, constituted in 1874, but was abolished in 1886. It is now proposed to constitute a small town of Alipur and Jatoi. The short kingdom of the Seetpur was established by the Nahar in 1455, when Bahlol Khan Lodhi, who had been Governor of Multan, became the King of Delhi, he granted the country lying between the Indus, which then joined the Chenab at Uch, and the Suleiman range, south of a line drawn from Harand to Uch and north of Shikarpur in Sindh, to his relation Islam Khan Lodhi. This tract comprised what is now the southern part of the Tehsil Alipur, the southern part of the District Dera Ghazi Khan, and the northern part of Sindh. Islam Khan or his descendants took the title of Nahar. Islam Khan's grandsons, Qasim Khan, Salam Khan, and Tahir Khan, quarreled and divided the country among themselves (Griffin, n.d.).

The southern part of the present Tehsil Alipur, the chief town of which was then Seetpur, fell to Tahir Khan, who established his rule there and died in due course of time. There were 27 generations of the Nahar family. The last of the Nahars was Bakhshan Khan, who was jamadar of chakras in Tehsil

Alipur, and who enjoyed a small allowance from the Government for looking after the family tombs. After him the incumbents of the office were widows. One of the Nahars built a fine tomb and a mosque in his lifetime, which still exist. His name was Tahir Khan, also known as Sakhi or the liberal. Another Nahar, named Ali Khan founded Alipur. No other memorial of the Nahars exists. The Nahars appear to have been indifferent rulers. They left no public works behind them except Tahir Khan's tomb and adjoining mosque.<sup>i</sup> One of the Nahar built a fine tomb in his lifetime, which still exists. His name was Tahir Khan, founded Alipur. This tomb is the only memory of this reign.

**Analysis:**

- During the last days of the Sadat dynasty, the Nahar dynasty of Afghan Lodhi descent in Sitpur founded the Nahar dynasty of Sitpur under the leadership of Islam Khan.
- Nahar Dynasty was Parallel to the Langah dynasty of Multan and the Mirani Dynasty of Dera Ghazi Khan was an autonomous government that lasted for about 300 years.
- The economy and economic system of the Niles state depended on agriculture.
- The settlement of Baloch tribes especially Mazaris in Rajanpur was due to Nahars and Mazaris played an important role in the decline of Nahars. When Mazari clan expelled them from the southern part of Rajanpur.
- The continuous attacks of the Miranis also weakened the state of Sitpur, which led to the end of the Nahar regime.
- The invasion of Nadir Shah and Kalhoras of Sindh with the nexus of Mahmud Khan Gujjar and Makhdoom Rajan Shah also played a key role in ending the Nahar state.

**Methodology**

This is an analytical study based on historical material. Therefore, the historic method of research along with a qualitative approach has been used to compile this

article with the help of secondary sources, i.e. books, articles, essays, and newspapers.

**Conclusion**

The discussion is concluded with the opinion that the Nahar Dynasty was established by Islam Khan during the last phase of the Sultanate of Delhi and it was an independent state of Sitpur in the South of Dera Ghazi Khan to Shikarpur Sindh. The powerful government of the Nahar Dynasty also remained in parallel with the Mirani State of Dera Ghazi Khan. The Nahar of Sitpur were a separate race rather than Nahar Loi of Dajal and Harand. During the era of Ghazi Khan-I Dajal and Harand were forcefully occupied by the Mirani ruler from Nahar Loi of Dajal. The Nahar Dynasty looks sound in socio-economic affairs. Nahar of Seetpur strongly tried to establish their sovereignty without the interference of all surrounding states. Their political autonomy remained to continue till the intervention of Nadir Shah and Kalhoras. In the end, the intervention from the all neighbors put back and weekends the Nahar Dynasty and it was the end of their 300 years of powerful rule in 1755 with the arrival of Mehmood Khan Gujjar from Kalhoras and Makhdoom Rajan Shah established Rajanpur.

***Rulers of the Nahar Dynasty of Seetpur***

Sr. #	Name of Nahar Rulers
1	Islam Khan-I Nahar
2	Eason Khan-I Nahar
3	Islam Khan-II Nahar
4	Ikram Khan Nahar
5	Muhammad Khan Nahar
6	Tahir Khan Nahar
7	Hassan Khan Nahar
8	Islam Khan-III
9	Qasim Khan
10	Islam Khan-IV
11	Tahir Khan-II
12	Sultan Khan
13	Ibrahim Khan

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