

Diplomacy of Tipu Sultan

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Abstract: *Tipu Sultan wanted to cultivate economically and politically viable relations with Indian and foreign rulers to make Mysore state prosperous. The military victories of Tipu over the Maratha-Nizam combination changed the views of French and they wanted an alliance with Tipu. Tipu viewed the expansion of the British in the East as a threat to Indian sovereignty. Tipu was a great diplomat and his diplomacy could well be seen in his relations with the foreign powers. Tipu Sultan's intense diplomatic activity with Oman, Persia and others, which had essentially political, economic and military considerations, not only showed his desire to keep up contacts with influential rulers but also to seek allies against the British. A close examination of Tipu's rule reveals that Tipu had fought against the colonial forces as a valiant warrior. He pursued diplomatic efforts in India and abroad mainly to defeat the British who were the most formidable adversary of India.*

1. PREAMBLE

After the death of Haidar Ali, his son Tipu returned from the conquest of Malabar. He said that his father would have rested only after banishing the British from Indian soil. Tipu commanded respect from the people and military forces for his brave and patriotic ventures. Haidar Ali had cautioned Tipu about the outstanding military power of the British but instructed his son not to end the war without a logical conclusion. By the time of Haider's death, it may be clearly said, the state-run laboratories and factories had achieved and even surpassed what the industrial revolution fetched the colonialists in the sphere of war. The diplomacy of Tipu Sultan is analyzed in this article on the basis of qualitative research methodology.

2. PIONEERING EFFORTS OF TIPU

An outstanding contribution made by Haidar and Tipu was the invention and manufacture of the first missiles in the history of the world (Saki, 1998).¹ Tipu formally took charge of his state on December 27, 1782 when the second Anglo-Mysore War was in full force. Tipu ably concentrated on the ongoing battle by obtaining the support of the French and recaptured Bednur in 1783 which had been captured by the British. Tipu proceeded to Mangalore, which was regarded as one of the most important geo-strategic ports of India. However, the British succeeded in winning because of their superior military power and manipulative tactics.

Tipu Sultan's success on the Malabar Coast made the English settle for peace with in 1783. Brigadier-General Macleod expressed his desire to see Tipu Sultan in a letter to Major Campbell, saying, "I rejoice in the idea of a general peace as I shall get home happily to my little family. It would make me proud to see the warlike prince I once had the honor of fighting." He also wrote to Tipu Sultan for

¹Saki (1998) Making History: Karnataka's People and their Past, Vol. I-II, Vimukthi Prakashana, Shimoga, India, p.382.

permission to land to interview him. He left an interesting record of his conversation with the Sultan which took place on 20-21 August 1783 (Husain, 2001).²

Tipu responded positively saying: “I am sincere in my desire for peace with the English. I respect them and if they act fairly with me I will be their friend. I should be glad if the General would go to the King of England from me and tell him about me. I want to be a friend to him and his people and will send presents through the General to the King. I will be glad to see the General at my durbar tomorrow and to hear all he has to say. I will open my heart to him and he must act fairly with me and I have a great opinion of him and Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell. They have showed themselves good warriors and I wish to raise their name. I will see them tomorrow (Foreign and Secret Department, 1783).³

Tipu’s efforts to secure French aid and his appeals to the Turkish Sultan, Zaman Shah of Kabul, the Peshwa, the Nizam and even to the Mughal Emperor were not entirely for defending his country. He was regarded in his time as unquestionably the most powerful of all the native princes of Hindustan (Rennell, 1793).⁴ Tipu Sultan was admired by the historians since he ruled Mysore state which was the best cultivated and its population the most flourishing in India. The avenues of opportunities were still open to him. In 1784 he had sent his first embassy to Constantinople under Usman Khan, an experienced diplomat (Secret and Political Department (Diaries, 1786).⁵

3. MISSION TO TURKEY

Tipu Sultan wanted to cultivate economically and politically viable relations with Ottomans because of their supremacy. In 1784, he had sent an exploratory mission to the Sublime Porte to examine the feasibility of rapport building between Turkey and Mysore. A large mission consisting of 900 people were sent to Turkey on November 17, 1785 under the leadership of Ghulam Ali Khan. Tipu Sultan designated the Ottoman ruler as *Khundkar* or *Sultan* and persuaded him to accord independent status to him since the Caliph at Istanbul was regarded by Muslims worldwide as their political and religious head.

I always had a great respect for the Nabob and his family. His father was a great warrior and a great prince and every soldier admires him. The Nabob himself has great renown as a warrior and he has come to great power and fame at a much earlier time of life than his father. I know the wise means that he is taking to strengthen his army and discipline them. I wish him great increase of power and glory and if he will be a friend to our nation I should rejoice to see the House of Haidar as great as ever that of Temur was. The Nabob is too wise not to see that he can gain nothing by the war. The powers most likely to interfere with these possessions are the Marathas and the Nizam. The English would always wish him for their natural ally because it would be his policy to keep a watchful eye on those neighbors. I beg him to open his heart to me and tell me if I can be of any use to him by telling his mind to any of the governments in India. I will be rejoiced to be of service to so famous a prince (Macleod, 1783).⁶ Tipu replied: “Why cannot the Sardars make peace? They are the proper persons to do it (Rao, 1946).⁷

From his accession Tipu treated himself as an independent sovereign, not needing any diploma of inferior office from the Mughal court at Delhi. He thus dropped the name and title of the Mughal emperor from his coins, and, according to Wilks, began using the title *Padshah* for himself from

²Husain, I (2001) The diplomatic vision of Tipu Sultan: Briefs for embassies to Turkey and France, 1785-86, In I. Habib (Ed.), State and diplomacy under Tipu Sultan: Documents and essays, p.587.

³Foreign and Secret Department (1783) Secret Consultation, No.1-C, dt.16th Dec, Tipu’s Letter to General Macleod, National Archives of India.

⁴Rennell, James (1793) Memoirs of a Map of the Peninsula of India, London, p.CXXXIX.

⁵Secret and Political Department. Diaries (1786) No.34,Dt. Sep. pp.815-6,Maharashtra State Archives ,Bombay

⁶Macleod, General (1783) Letter to Tipu Sultan, dated 19 Aug.1783,from Morning Star of Mangalore ,See Secret Cns., 14th Nov.,

⁷Rao, Hayavadana C (1946) History of Mysore (1766-1799 AD), Vol.I-III, Government Press, Bangalore, India, p.587

January 1786 (Barun, 1992).⁸ Tipu could now claim parity with full-fledged sovereigns, like the Sultan of Turkey. Tipu had tried to forge an international alliance against British by enlisting the active support of France, Egypt, Turkey and other nations. He firmly believed in the ideals of French Revolution.

4. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OF TIPU

Tipu defeated the Marathas in 1787, but he gave them generous terms because he did not want them to join forces with the British in the impending war. This act clearly reveals the diplomatic vision of Tipu but the Marathas ditched him subsequently by aligning with the British in the Third Mysore War. The invasion of Mysore by Travancore in 1790 was an unwarranted act of hostility since Travancore had loomed large in the political settlement of the area. Tipu realized that peaceful accommodation of the differences between himself and the Raja of Travancore was not possible since he continued to assist the Malabar chieftains against Mysore. The threatening attitude of Tipu towards the Raja of Travancore cost him diplomatically.

Tipu wanted to develop diplomatic relations between France and Mysore State. He had appealed to the French General to send a strong army of 10000 to be under the Tipu's authority within India. Tipu Sultan had strongly persuaded the French to assist him in the Third Mysore War against the British but they remained neutral because Tipu had initiated a war against the English at the wrong moment. Cossigny wrote to de Fresne, "The Prince is badly counseled but he will take profit to good advice that we will give him." The French had advised Tipu to win over the Marathas and the Nizam at all costs. The French governor at the Isle of France had urged him neither to spare money nor energy in dissolving the Confederacy. Tipu had to accept this position and agree to the general sentiments of friendship with France.

Tipu sent an embassy to Constantinople in 1787 which had both diplomatic and commercial objectives. He wanted to act like the European Companies by establishing an overseas settlement of his own. Tipu succeeded in gaining recognition of his independence in spite of British machinations at Constantinople. Tipu made an attempt to cultivate diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Sultan and French King and assured them that they could share the British possessions in South India with him. Turkey did not have either the wish or the capacity to respond to Tipu's diplomatic initiatives and France incurred severe loss in the war with Britain.

Tipu sent emissaries with stringent instructions to work in consultation with each other and obtain the status of 'independent monarch' for him. The delegation after a long and difficult sea and land journey via Muscat, Bushier, Basra, Baghdad and other places reached Constantinople on September 25, 1787. The Sultan Salim-III received the delegation on November 5, 1787 honorably. The Sultan accorded permission to Tipu to assume the title of an independent monarch and the right to strike coins and to have the Khutbha read in his name. The envoys were also given for Tipu friendly letters, Khillats, a sword and a shield studded with precious stones by the Caliph and his Grand Wazir. With this, one of the major objectives of the mission had been accomplished.

But the Sultan of Turkey had a better right to recognize the position of Tipu, because the Empire of Turkey still enjoyed great prestige as the foremost political power of Islam in spite of its decay. The Sultan claimed to be the Caliph of the Muslim world. The Nizam could no longer harp on his legal superiority, because the Sultan of Mysore now had a better title to his kingdom than the Nizam of Hyderabad who had the viceroyalty of Deccan. In the light of these factors one understands the jubilation over the fall of Tipu Sultan and the systematic propaganda against the brave, pious and high-souled martyr which English historians employ to hide British iniquity and intrigue (Qureshi, 1787).⁹ Qureshi writes about Tipu Sultan's embassy to Constantinople.

⁸Barun, De (1992) Some Socio-Political Implications of the Cognomen "Tipu Sultan", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 52nd session, Delhi, India, pp.700-707.

⁹Qureshi, Ishtiaq Husain (1787) Tipu Sultan's Embassy to Constantinople, , In. Habib, Irfan (ed.) Preface to Confronting Colonialism-Resistance and Modernization under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, Indian History Congress, Tulika, New Delhi, India, 1999, pp.69-78.

5. MILITARY VICTORIES OF TIPU

Sheik Ali refers to the Cossigny's letter to Tipu Sultan which reveals thus: "The French are making big preparations of war since one year. I cannot now tell you everything about it but be sure that they (the French) have understood what you told me." Cossigny felt that Tipu knew the French position well and that he had nevertheless made a request for help only to frighten the Marathas and the Nizam. The military victories of Tipu over the Maratha, Nizam combination changed the views of the French administrators. In 1788, Tipu had rejected the commercial proposal of the French and wanted only military help to effectively counter the British imperialism. Tipu had greater contempt for the British than his father. It could be inferred that Tipu committed a diplomatic blunder by ignoring the French advice and creating certain circumstances which forced the Third Mysore War against the English. Tipu had rightly considered the British as the principal enemy of India and of his state. He was above all his contemporary sovereigns in resisting the British colonialism.

Tipu wished, through his ambassadors, to propose to Turkey that a Turkish expeditionary force be sent to India. Tipu wanted to create alternative markets for the products of Mysore State. The Turkish court, however, had no interest in Tipu Sultan's main proposal of a fight against the English and saw no particular profit in developing the kinds of commercial ties Tipu wanted. Tipu could not achieve the desired success from the point of view of diplomacy due to several constraints (Husain, 2001).¹⁰

The military victories of Tipu over the Maratha-Nizam combination changed the views of French and they wanted an alliance with Tipu. The Third Mysore War (1790-92) resulted in the defeat of Tipu and the French were at peace with the English. The French thinking on India was rather defensive, seeing its potential as a diversion to keep the English fleet occupied in the Indian Ocean and to prevent them from attacking the French ports. The French remained basically a European power and more concerned with their territorial interest in Europe than with their colonial interest in India (Ray, 2001).¹¹

6. RESISTENCE TO BRITISH COLONIALISM

Tipu viewed the expansion of the British in the 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 world. He tried his best to enter into a political and military treaty with the Sultan of Turkey because Turkey was still the biggest and foremost political power of the Muslim world during the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century. Tipu's ambassadors were instructed to seek the Sultan's confirmation, in his role as Caliph, of legitimacy of Tipu's claims and his rule of Mysore (Brittlebank, 1997).¹²

Haidar Ali and Tipu were both men of deep acumen and possessed a sound political instinct; they soon came to foresee that if the Indian powers did not unite against the British, the whole of South India would pass into British hands. It did not require a prophet to see that the power which was the protector of Carnatic as well as Hyderabad was on its way to claiming full over lordship of South India. English diplomacy was, however, too strong for them. Whenever they attempted to induce the Marathas and the Nizam to join hands with Mysore, they failed in securing the sincere co-operation of the two powers against the English. The relations of the rulers of Mysore with their Muslim neighbors were further complicated by legal cobwebs (Qureshi, 1999).¹³

Subsequent events, however, took a different shape from what is suggested by the very cordial tone of the foregoing conversations between Tipu Sultan and Brigadier-General Macleod. While suspending

¹⁰Husain, I (2001) The diplomatic vision of Tipu Sultan: Briefs for embassies to Turkey and France, 1785-86, In I. Habib (Ed.), State and diplomacy under Tipu Sultan: Documents and essays, p.438.

¹¹Ray, Aniruddha (2001) France and Mysore: A History of Diverse French Strategies, In: Irfan Habib (Ed) State and Diplomacy under Tipu Sultan, Documents and Essays, Indian History Congress, Tulika, New Delhi, India, pp.120-139, pp.120-139.

¹²Brittlebank, K (1997) Tipu Sultan's search for legitimacy: Islam and kingship in a Hindu domain, New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, p.70.

¹³Qureshi, Ishtiaq Husain (1999) Tipu Sultan's Embassy to Constantinople, 1787, In: Irfan Habib (ed.), Confronting Colonialism: Resistance and Modernization under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, Indian History Congress, Tulika Publishers, p.72.

hostilities Colonel Cambell had accepted very disadvantageous terms. Thus the question of sending provisions to the garrison became the chief point of dispute between Tipu Sultan and the English army officers. A lengthy correspondence between Tipu Sultan and General Macleod took place which is characterized by Wilks as among the most remarkable in the history of diplomacy (Baqai, 1999).¹⁴ Irshad Husain Baqai refers to Wilks's comments on the conference between Tipu Sultan and Brigadier-General Macleod.

7. RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN NATIONS

Tipu Sultan was very much eager to develop friendly relations with foreign powers. He appointed trade agents and diplomatic missions to accomplish this goal of diplomacy. He was the only prince of that period who tried to secure foreign assistance for his design of defeating the English and made earnest efforts toward linking the history of Mysore State with the outside world. He tried to enlist the support of France, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, hoping to form a formidable front against the English by appealing to their religious sentiments. Tipu had sent his emissaries to Istanbul and Paris, finds no direct reference to Tipu's search for legitimacy (Husain, 2001).¹⁵

Tipu was a great diplomat and his diplomacy could well be seen in his relations with the foreign powers. Tipu was greatly disappointed when he realized that local powers in India lacked national consciousness. It was this factor which compelled him to turn to the foreigners. Tipu counted on the help of the French because, like him, the French were the bitter enemies of the English. Tipu tried his best to enlist the cooperation of both the Marathas and the Nizam, but none of them recognized the political sagacity and foresightedness of Tipu. Tipu wanted to establish military alliance and trade relations with the Ottoman Empire. He also tried to obtain the support of Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan. Tipu's diplomacy was responsible for the growth of Mysore state as an international power. Tipu deserves an honored place in the galaxy of great diplomats of India (Muddachari, 1989).¹⁶

To understand Tipu Sultan's diplomacy in the Gulf region one should note the imperial struggle throughout the 18th Century which gave ample scope to the Gulf's tribal elites to initiate strong local resistance to contain European imperialism and economic hegemony, after it had been regarded initially as a mere annoyance which would disappear as time passed. Tipu Sultan sent embassies abroad as he believed in close cooperation with the Gulf countries to contain the British as also for trade purposes.

8. INTENSE DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES OF TIPU

The historical documents clearly reveal that diplomatic connection existed between the Government of Tipu Sultan in India and that of Fat-h Ali Shah of Persia. The last envoy which was sent by Tipu Sultan to Persia arrived in the Gulf in the summer of 1799. This mission which brought three elephants and other costly gifts for the Shah rendered futile by the overthrow and death of Tipu Sultan at the hands of British in Mysore. It clearly proves beyond all reasonable doubts that Tipu Sultan had been seriously preoccupied with diplomatic relations and economic transactions which primarily intended to promote the prosperity of Mysore State against several odds.

Tipu Sultan's intense diplomatic activity with Oman, Persia and others, which had essentially political, economic and military considerations, not only showed his desire to keep up contacts with influential rulers but also to seek allies against the British. Tipu Sultan urged the Muslim Gulf rulers to have trade relations, establishment of factories, and development of new weapons and enhance naval power. *An independent live centre of Islamic renaissance in India could not have suited British interests*. Thus, the British decided to contain Tipu Sultan first and directed all their energies towards

¹⁴Baqai, Irshad Husain (1999) A Conference between Tipu Sultan and Brigadier-General Macleod, In. Irfan Habib (ed.), *Confronting Colonialism: Resistance and Modernization under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan*, Indian History Congress, p.62.

¹⁵Husain, I (2001) The diplomatic vision of Tipu Sultan: Briefs for embassies to Turkey and France, 1785-86, In I. Habib (Ed.), *State and diplomacy under Tipu Sultan: Documents and essays*, pp.19-65.

¹⁶Muddachari, B (1989) Diplomacy of Tipu Sultan, In. B.Muddachari (Ed), *Souvenir, Seminar on National Integration with Special Reference to Tipu Sultan*, University of Mysore, Karnataka, India, pp.39-48.

bringing about his downfall. Tipu Sultan's skillful diplomacy pushed the British to redouble their efforts to neutralize his diplomatic initiatives, friendship and achievements. The success of Tipu Sultan's diplomacy, that brought name and fame from abroad especially from the Gulf region, ended his isolation throwing his enemies in confusion. He died a hero's death in May 4th 1799 at Srirangapatna near Mysore. In the ultimate analysis all of Tipu's intricate and complex maneuverings were primarily aimed at upliftment, and improving the life of the people of Mysore and in providing them security (Pasha, 2003).¹⁷

Further, the British envoy successfully persuaded the Sultan Saleem not to have any kind of connection with Tipu. Thus the Western diplomacy prevented Tipu from securing military aid from the Sultan. Then Tipu turned to Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan who assumed power in 1792. Tipu's plan was shattered to pieces just at a time when it seemed to yield fruits. Tipu had also established contact with Iran. But Iran was not as strong militarily as Afghanistan. Anyway Wellesley was successful in his diplomatic move to isolate Tipu. The foundation of the British Empire in India was firmly laid after the removal of Tipu. Thus Tipu conceived designs which were impossible to accomplish. His diplomacy consists in negotiating alliances with his neighbours and in seeking help from far-off countries. If his diplomacy had worked smoothly and successfully the history of English in India would have been different. Anyway, Tipu deserves an honored place in the galaxy of great diplomats of India (Muddachari, 1989).¹⁸

Tipu's intense diplomatic activity with Oman which had essentially political, economic and military consideration only showed his desire to keep up contacts with influential and powerful rulers but also to continuously seek allies in his ceaseless quest for partners to withstand the British challenge. Thus, the guiding principles of Tipu's diplomacy were to neutralize his enemies and maintain the integrity of his Kingdom and to contain British imperialism as also their expansionism. It is significant to note that the French also maintained close ties with the Ruler of Oman but Tipu's and the Omani ruler's relations with the French appear to have been complementary but independent (Pasha, 1992).¹⁹

Tipu Sultan obtained preferential treatment from the Ottoman Sultan. Tipu Sultan also tried to obtain exclusive trading rights in the ports of Basra, Muscat, and offer similar facilities at Mangalore or in other parts of his kingdom. The Sultan sent a letter in 1798 to Tipu, which mentioned that Tipu should look upon the French as enemies of Islam since France had invaded Egypt without any meaningful justification. The Ottoman Sultan could not oblige Tipu by providing any tangible military support because of his inability to lose British friendship and the internal turmoil in France leading to the revolution.

Tipu also tried to develop closer contact with the French and other powers during 1792 – 99. But, the faithless French did not come to the rescue of Tipu Sultan. Zaman Shah, the ruler of Afghanistan was urged to assist Tipu by undertaking an expedition to India as the situation was highly favorable. Zaman Shah responded: "We shall soon march with our conquering army to wage war so that the inhabitants of those regions may be restored to comfort and ease (Dirom, 1794).²⁰ But Tipu failed to secure Afghan aid because Zaman Shah was a capricious ruler.

Historians have observed that Tipu was accorded a special status by the Sultan of Ottoman which was a fruitful political gain for Tipu in his confrontation with the British in India. It was also noted that if Tipu succeeded in rousing the Muslims, the British would have to face much great difficult in

¹⁷Pasha, A.K (2003) South India and the Gulf - Trade and Diplomacy During the Late Eighteenth Century, in N.N. Vohra (ed.) History, Culture and Society in India and West Asia, Shipra, India International Centre, Delhi, India, pp.237-249

¹⁸Muddachari, B (1989) Diplomacy of Tipu Sultan, In. B.Muddachari (Ed), Souvenir, Seminar on National Integration with Special Reference to Tipu Sultan, University of Mysore, Karnataka, India, pp.39-48

¹⁹Pasha, A.K (1992) Tipu Sultan's Relations with Ottoman Empire, *Détente*, New Delhi, vol.X, nos.4 and 5, January-April, pp.6-11; I.H. Qureshi, The Purpose of Tipu Sultan's Embassy to Constantinople, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol.24, 1945, pp.77-85.

²⁰Dirom, Major (1794) A Narrative of the Campaign in India, which Terminated the War with Tipoo Sultan in 1792, 2nd edn., London, U.K., pp.249-250.

subjugating India (Mornington, 1800).²¹ Tipu also approached the Turkish Sultan for help but could not get any positive support because Turkey was weak and degenerate, this unable to help him to deprive the English of their Indian Empire. Tipu could not develop any fruitful diplomatic relations with Iran which was politically immature nation. All these factors saved the English from disaster and drove Tipu to his tragic doom.

Tipu was also warned not to harbor any hostile idea against the English and the Sultan of Turkey offered to act as the mediator in settling the disputes between the Tipu and the English. This letter clearly revealed that the Turkish Sultan was on the side of the English. Nevertheless, despite getting merely sympathetic words from him without any military help whatsoever, Tipu had not lost hope. Tipu was fully aware that there was no room for expecting support from the Turkish Caliph any more. Even then, Tipu sent another embassy in February 1799 to Turkey, to convince the Sultan about the Anglo-Mysore rivalry and the rise of British power in India.

Tipu Sultan's skillful diplomacy pushed the British to redouble their efforts to neutralize his diplomatic initiatives, friendship and achievements. Tipu Sultan's historical stature is guaranteed by two great qualities he showed through his statecraft; his ability to take innumerable diplomatic initiatives that transcended the force of circumstances and his ability to take the risks even in the face of setbacks. That Tipu Sultan could survive several wars and rule for so long was mainly due to his many shrewd diplomatic and astute military moves. The success of Tipu Sultan's diplomacy, that brought name and fame from abroad especially from the Gulf region, ended his isolation throwing his enemies in confusion. He died a hero's death in May 1799 at Srirangapatna near Mysore. In the ultimate analysis, all of Tipu's intricate and complex maneuverings were primarily aimed at upliftment, and improving the life of the people of Mysore and in providing them security (Pasha, 2003).²² The scholar has paid rich tribute to Tipu's diplomatic vision and mission.

Despite involvement in wars and the huge burden of war reparations, whenever his economic and military position improved, Tipu Sultan sent embassies abroad as he believed in close co-operation with the Gulf countries to contain the British as also for trade purposes. Tipu Sultan's intense diplomatic activity with Oman, Persia and others, which had essentially political, economic and military considerations, not only showed his desire to keep up contacts with influential rulers but also to seek allies against the British. Thus, the guiding principles of Tipu's diplomacy were to neutralize his enemies, maintain the integrity of his kingdom and also maintain his strong opposition to British imperialism and expansionism. Tipu Sultan urged the Muslim Gulf rulers to have trade relations, establishment of factories, and development of new weapons and enhance naval power. An independent live centre of Islamic renaissance in India could not have suited British interests (Pasha, 2003).²³ The scholar also strongly argues that Tipu Sultan should be seen as India's first serious freedom fighter that clearly saw the British evil intentions of subjugating India (Pasha, 2010).²⁴

9. CONCLUSION

Tipu was a great diplomat and master strategist in South India. A close examination of Tipu's rule reveals that Tipu had fought against the colonial forces as a valiant warrior. He pursued diplomatic efforts in India and abroad mainly to defeat the British who were the most formidable adversary of India. Tipu had persuaded the French to provide moral and material support to defeat the British. Tipu attempted to return the favour, as regards to getting Indians to fight with the Indians, by trying to get the Europeans to fight the Europeans. Tipu used meticulous diplomacy and enlightened vision as the key ingredients for a recipe to vanquish the British in India. He tried his best to solicit the cooperation

²¹Mornington (1800) Letter to the Hon'ble Court of Directors, Fort William, January 27,

²²Pasha, A.K (2003) South India and the Gulf - Trade and Diplomacy During the Late Eighteenth Century, in N.N. Vohra (ed.) History, Culture and Society in India and West Asia, Shipra, India International Centre, Delhi, India, pp.247-248.

²³Pasha, A.K (2003) South India and the Gulf - Trade and Diplomacy During the Late Eighteenth Century, in N.N. Vohra (ed.) History, Culture and Society in India and West Asia, Shipra, India International Centre, Delhi, India, pp.242-243.

²⁴Pasha, A.K (2010) Tipu Sultan's Diplomacy in the Gulf Region, In. R.Gopal (Ed) Tipu Sultan: The Tiger of Mysore, Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Mysore, p.110.

and support of friendly foreign states and Indian powers. The pivotal role played by diplomacy in the domestic governance and external policies of Tipu two hundred years ago is worthy of study, replication and emulation regardless of time and space.

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