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HYDERABAD-KARNATAKA LIBERATION MOVEMENT

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Abstract:

Hyderabad-Karnataka area was located in North Karnataka and constitutes six districts and was part of Hyderabad State before independence. Even though Indian Union was got independence in 1947, due to the Nizam's resistance and Razakar's atrocities, the region was not become independent. The present paper highlighted the political administration of the Nizam and activities of Razakars in the region. The actions of the freedom fighters and action taken by the Indian Union in 1948 are also discussed briefly.

KEY WORDS:

Liberation Movement , Independent Political Unit ,Political Administration .

INTRODUCTION:

Nizam of Hyderabad with British army attacked Hyder Ali and in 1768 as per Machlipatna agreement the war was concluded. Then British were started involving in administration of Hyderabad region. The Hyderabad-Karnataka region, ruled by Nizam belonged to the third category of native states. As per the Treaty of 12th October 1800 A.D, concluded between the Nizam and the East India Company altered the status of Hyderabad from an Independent Political Unit to that of a State in subordinate co-operation with the British, while the troops of the East India Company known as the Subsidiary Forces were to be stationed in perpetuity in the State of Hyderabad¹. The Nizam took for granted that Hyderabad state was his personal property. In 1803, war was declared between Marathas and British and during which, Nizam have not helped British. British not beared such behaviour from Nizam and as such they were attacked Nizam. Nizam was gained help from French, but in the war Nizam was defeated and made Subsidiary Army agreement. As a result, as per the agreement in 1800, a part of British Army was permanently settled in Hyderabad region. The control of British on Hyderabad-region was become more stronger². Nizam was to pay for the British Subsidiary army during this period. Hence, it can be generalized that even though Nawab Nizam Ali Khan wish to become independent, due to the strong power of British, he was unable to fight with British and British were started control in the administration of Hyderabad-Karnataka region.

After the death of Nawab Nizam Ali Khan in 1803, his elder son Mir-Akbar Ali Khan, Foulad Jung, Sikandar Jahan and Asaf Jahan-III were administered Hyderabad kingdom. In 1809, Governor Lord Wellesley reported that "In a very less expense, we have saved the Hyderabad Nizam's kingdom and destroyed all the enemies of Nizam. It is effect of our mutual friendship and co-operation"³.

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POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE NIZAMS:

Due to the poor administration of Nijams in the last three decades, many difficulties were faced. Financial situation of the kingdom was become critical, as Nizam was looking after the British army expenses. As a result, Chandulal, Minister of Nizams (also called Maharaja) borrowed loan of Rs. 60 lakhs from William Palmer Organization and agreed to give Rs. 8 lakhs commission and 18% interest on the loan. Due to their loans, William Palmer Organization started interfering administration of Hyderabad. British Government was become alert from such interference and refunded loan to William Palmer Organization on behalf of Nizams. Further, Nizams were pledged Berar and Raichur to British in exchange of the huge amount of refund of loans made by them. Later British were returned the places to Nizam except Berar.

In 1911, Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahaddur becomes seventh and last Nizam of Hyderabad-Karnataka region. The Nizam was wealthy and even though expressed communal harmony between Hindu and Muslims, in reality, he was far with such good nature with Hindus. During this time Muslim Razakars become stronger and started Muslim conversion in the region.

After 1926, "Mazlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen" a communal organization, aimed to convert Hindus to Muslims founded by Muslim fundamentalists and thereby reduce the population of Hindus was begun to function in Hyderabad kingdom. Nizam became unable to control the organization and during this situation his Major General Syed Ahmed El Edroods writes that "... The Razakars had openly declared that they will dispose of the Nizam if he did not comply with their wishes and this made His Exalted Highness more afraid and he accepted the Razvi Government, the head of which was Laik Ali"⁴.

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During those times, there was freedom movement all over India and there was also movement in Hyderabad State including Hyderabad-Karnataka against the rule of the Nizam and atrocities of Razakars.

With Kasim Razvi taking over the Presidentship of Majlis-I-Ittehad-ul-Muslimee, a Muslim Organization in 1946, this organization began to take more and more the features of a private militant body. "The decision to give regular military training to the volunteers known as Razakars was taken in July 1947. They were given firearms, uniforms and were made to parade in the streets to bow down the people. All these activities were in violation of the Rule No. 57 and 58 of the Defense of Hyderabad Rules⁵.

Kasim Razvi the then president of Anjuman-Majlis-I-Ittehad-ul-Muslimee delivered a highly inflammatory speech at a public meeting held in Hyderabad city on 25th November, 1946 accused the Congress Government of Bihar for plotting the massacre of Muslims, stated that the Bihar Government disarmed the Muslims and provided the Congress Committee of the province with arms compared the Muslim population of Bihar with that of Hyderabad and warned the Muslims here to get themselves armed immediately. This speech produced considerable impact on the Muslim audience⁶.

At an Anjuman-Majlis-I-Ittehad-ul-Muslimee meeting at Chilkulguda on 15th March 1947, Kasim Razvi said that the kind in Hyderabad personified the sovereignty of the Muslims and as long as Muslims were sovereign the king would remain on his throne but the moment Muslims lost their sovereignty there would be nobody to shoulder funeral pyre of the Asaf Jahi Dynasty. As a Milad-un-Nabi, meeting held at Yakutpura (locality) in Hyderabad on 18th March 1947 he said that the Muslims of Hyderabad were on the crossroads and they would soon have to decide whether they wanted the throne or the coffin. He further reiterated his determination to convert Hyderabad into a Pakistan⁷.

Razvi opposed to join Indian Union movement and announced in a public speech on 19th June, 1947 that, "it is the natural right of Hyderabad to declare independence and paramountcy rests with the Muslims". Further he threatened direct action on the Nizam's Government if it acceded to India. The Nizam did not accede to India on 15th August 1947 the appointed date for accession. On the other hand, he issued a 'Firman' on 27th August 1947 stating that he had assumed the status of an independent sovereign on 15th August 1947. At the same time the Nizam sent to Delhi a delegation consisting of Walter Monokton, Nawab of Chattari and Sultan Ahmad for talks with Lord Mount Batten. The Nizam made it clear that unlike the other princes he is not going to sign the instrument of Accession. The negotiations dragged on till the end of September. Finally the Nizam agreed to enter into a Stand Still Agreement for one year on 22nd October 1947 the Hyderabad Delegation returned home with the draft of the Stand Still Agreement for the signature of the Nizam. The Nizam after much deliberation with his Executive Council agreed to sign the Agreement on 27th October 1947. This news incensed the Razakars. At 3.00 A.M. on 27th October, a huge crowd of about 25,000 Razakars surrounded the house of Nawab of Chattari and other members of the delegation and compelled them to announce that they would not leave for Delhi. Later Razvi met the Nizam and succeeded in countermanding the Delegation.

Meanwhile, the new delegation under Moin Nawaz Jung met Lord Mount Batten on the 22nd

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November. The Nizam also threatened on 31st October 1947 to accede to Pakistan if the negotiations with India Government failed. Kasim Razvi mounted his propaganda against Sardar Patel who was greatly instrumental in bringing about the accession of the Indian States with the Indian Union. Finally on 29th November 1947 the Nizam entered into a Stand Still Agreement with the Government of India, under the Agreement Defence and External Affairs came under the control of the Indian Government. Before the conclusion of the Stand Still Agreement all the Congress leaders who were in jail, including Swamy Ramananda Teerth, were set free as token of goodwill. Soon after his release he went to Madras, where the Central Action Committee of the Hyderabad State Congress was shifted from Bombay to contact the members of the Action Committee. After his visit of Madras he proceeded to Delhi where he met Indian National Leaders like Mahatma Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Secretary of State V. P. Menon. When he met Gandhiji, he explained to him that perhaps in view of the extraordinary situation prevailing in Hyderabad in the shape of the para-military force of the Razakars and also the violent methods adopted by the communists it might be necessary for the state Congress also to resort sometimes to violence in self-defence. From Delhi, he came to Bombay where he met Sardar Patel and K. M. Munshi was very shortly to take over the office of the Agent General in Hyderabad. In consultation with Munshi, Swamiji addressed a letter to the Nizam exhorting him to grant full Responsible Government to the people and to accede to the Indian Union. He also said that the Nizam should not allow the Ittehad-ul-Muslimee to dominate the state, for which he did not, received any reply from the Nizam and he decided to launch the Satyagraha movement once again in Hyderabad State⁸.

The Nizam's Government began to violate the Stand Still Agreement even before the ink was dry on the paper on which it signed by declaring the Indian currency as not legal tender. The Nizam notified that the Indian currency was not legal tender in his state and also banned the export of gold. It also sent a high official to Karachi, as a result of which the Finance Minister of Pakistan, Ghulam Mohammad paid a visit to Hyderabad on the pretext of congratulating the Nizam on his escape from a bomb that was thrown at his car. During his visit Hyderabad Government secretly agreed to give away rupees twenty crores worth of Indian Securities to Pakistan by way of loan at 3% at such higher rate as the Pakistan Government might fix for the loans. This type of relation with other countries was also opposed to that of the Stand Still Agreement. It also appointed a trade Agent in England also. It also tried to buy arms and ammunition by directly negotiating with the trade representatives of United Kingdom and United States of America and Portugal and also tried to acquire port facilities at Goa. The Hyderabad Government actively helped the Pakistan Government with money. Further, the Nizam's Government insisted on acquiring the Hakimpet airport, which according to the Stand Still Agreement, came under the Union Property, as communications were treated as a Union subject. It smuggled arms into Hyderabad through the ports of Goa, Bombay and the state of Savanur. It also made huge purchases of military equipment in the form of trucks, motorcycles and petrol tankers from the Atlas Trading Corporation and Mahindra and Mahindra. For manufacturing arms and rifles, certain factories were set up. Through the press and ammunition factories were set up at Khadirbagh and Motimahal near Golconda fort for manufacturing of 303 rifles, hand grenades etc.

Hyderabad Government also employed the services of Sydney Cotton, on a false pretext for smuggling arms and ammunition into the state. Sydney cotton made flights from Karachi to Bidar and Mananoor. Sydney Cotton of Australia was engaged to procure arms and ammunition from the different parts of the world and smuggle them into the Hyderabad. Gunrunning from Karachi to Hyderabad became regular feature. Vande Mataram Ramachandra Rao and A. Rama Rao brought this to the notice of the Indian government. The Indian High Commissioner Sri Prakash also took up the matter with the Pakistan Government, which formally cancelled the flight permit granted to Sydney Cotton in June 1948. All these acts of the Hyderabad government amply prove that it entered the Stand Still Agreement only to gain time till it was sufficiently strong to take up a stand against India diplomatically and if necessary militarily also.

The Razakar activities also began to increase day by day and there were several border incidents between the Razakar forces and the Nizam's police on the one side and the villagers on the other as well as in the camps set up by the Hyderabad State Congress where the trained Kisan Dal workers resisted the Razakars.

During this period Swami Ramananda Teerth was arrived to Hyderabad from Bombay and declared in a press conference that the Nizam should also take measure to introduce popular Government in the state. He declared, "If accession is postponed according to the stand Still Agreement, there must be an unequivocal declaration that the issue would be decided by plebiscite before the expiry of the agreement and there must be a declaration also of the establishment of responsible Government and the setting up of a constitution making body to frame a constitution on the basis of responsible Government within either or ten months". His declaration was in line with the original stand taken by the Government of India in August 1947. He also said that the Congress would participate in the Interim Government of Laik Ali only if these demands were met. For this speech Swami Ramananda Teerth once again exhorted. Munshi, soon after his

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arrival in Hyderabad, began to take stock of the situation. He repeatedly drew the attention of the India Government to the gravity of the situation and the urgency of getting the Razakar Organization disbanded.

Swami Ramananda Teerth began to mobilize the people for freedom struggle. Therefore, the First All Hyderabad State Congress Session was held at Nanal Nagar on 16th, 17th and 18th of August 1946 under the Presidentship of Swamiji. Then he was elected as the first president of the Hyderabad State Congress. Janardhanarao Desai and Jagannathrao Chandraki of Nutana Vidyalaya were elected as executive members of the State Congress. Then Janardhanarao Desai became the president of the Hyderabad Karnataka Congress Committee, whereas, Hanumanthrao Kakkeri was made the president of the Gulbarga District Congress Committee. Bahusaheb Deulgaonkar was made the General Secretary of the Gulbarga District Congress Committee. Owing to the propagation of Congress workers, few youths of Nutana Vidyalaya left their jobs and joined the Congress to take the organizational work in the area. They were Dattatrayarao Awaradi, Bahusaheb Deulgaonkar, Narayan Rao Kanihal, Sitaram Joshi and others. Dattatrayarao Awaradi and S. Hanumanthrao started newspaper entitled "Nagarika", a Kannada weekly for the propagation of the Congress activities in the area. Ragu Jagirdar also started publishing journals entitled "Ajanta" and "Sarati" for the same purpose⁹.

The provocation speeches of Kasim Razvi made Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Lord Mount Batten, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel and other Indian leaders angry. Questions were raised even in the parliament. Due to provocation by such speeches of Kasim Razvi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spoke in stern manner saying that Hyderabad should try to make up its mind regarding the accession to the Indian union. The Government of India from now onwards kept a closer check on the goods and other material that were being imported into Hyderabad in the name of medical supplies and stores.

Looking to the rapid deterioration of law and order and the atrocities committed by the Razakars who reduced the state to a war camp and seemed to have held the Nizam at bay. The Hindu Ministers like J. V. Joshi, G. Ramachar, Mallikarjunappa, besides several Muslim officials also resigned their posts in protests against the deplorable state of things. Seeing the deplorable conditions in the state some of the prominent citizens of Hyderabad including eminent Muslim leaders appealed to the Nizam to give up his shortsighted policy and accede to the Indian Union.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a Press Conference held on 17th June, also declared, "We will pursue an open door policy as far as these proposals are concerned and the Nizam is welcome to accept them any time he chooses". The Nizam realizing the situation he appealed to Lord Attlee, the Prime Minister of England on 4th July 1948 to intercede between India and Hyderabad, which claimed was an Independent state. Attlee advised him that, to come to an understanding with India Government. The Nizam also requested to the president of United States of America to arbitrate between these two Governments, but received no fruitful result.

The Nizam's declaration of the independence invited severe condemnation and protests. Ramananda Teerth condemned the repressive acts of the Nizam and gave a call for a statewide agitation. The Gulbarga district witnessed large-scale protest meetings at several places. People from all walks of life participated in such meetings enthusiastically, particularly the peasant class. Women agitators like Yashodabai and Brijrani were taken into custody in connection with hoisting of the national flag at Hyderabad. Vimaladevi Melkote (Dr. Melkote's wife), Usha Pungrikar, Ahalyabai and others had to face tear gas fired by the police for violating prohibitory orders. Narayanarao Bhimmarao Deshpande had to undergo imprisonment for 40 days for hoisting the national flag inside the M.S.K. Mills in Gulbarga on 15 August 1947. Among the noteworthy Congress workers at Gulbarga at that time were Kakkeri Hanumantaraya, Kapatarala Krishnaraya, Dattatreya Auradi, Bhavurao Devulagaonkar, Aswatharao Vakil, Anirudha Desai and many others. The students had gathered on the grounds of the "Gulbarga Nutan Vidyalaya" under the pretence of playing football while the proclamation of India's independence was being made on the morning of 15 August 1947; they carried the national tricolour flag which has hoisted at 6 A.M. opposite the house of Kakkeri Hanumantarao near the Mehboob Gulshan Park. The group of 50-60 students who had taken part in the flag - hoisting ceremony, among which Anirudh Desai was one, took out a prabat pheri before the police could learn about it. When procession passed before the Jagat police station the police were surprised and the students escaped in the confusion arising there from.

Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen was mainly responsible for the widespread acts of brutalities perpetrated in the Hyderabad State from the midnight of August 15, 1947. Bahadur Yar Jung (Bahadur Khan), the president of Ittehad-ul-Muslimee was directing its activities and making provocative speeches to stir up communal passion. On the night India gained independence, all the trains passing through Gulbarga railway station were carrying national flag prominently displayed; the passengers were loudly shouting "Vande Mataram". It is said that the Razakars caused the trains to halt and permitted them to proceed only after tearing off the flags and ordering the passengers to shut their mouth. The Razakars moved from place to place; attacked unarmed and innocent people; murdered and looted. They killed

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Apparao Patil at Chincholi for daring to oppose them; peasants were attacked and looted at Mahagaon and Kamalapur. No one was safe from the raids of the Rajakars throughout the state of Hyderabad.

Razvi took over many departments in the government under his control. As Mir Ahmed Ali Khan the first Home Minister of Andhra Pradesh observed, "During the reign of Mir Osman Ali Khan most of the good people including the local nationalist Muslims were removed from office on the advice of Kasim Razvi and he created such a terror in the state that people never had the capacity or courage to speak truth of their mind. Kasim Razvi spread the branches of Ittehad all over the state. His troops were stationed in 52 centres in Hyderabad with about 2000 soldiers in each wing. The following were the chief centres of Razakars in Hyderabad Karnataka Bidar, Gulbarga, Aland, Yelasangi, Raichur, Gangawati, Surpur, Kuknoor, Kushtagi, Hanumasagar, Rajoor, Koppal, Tunghabhadra, etc¹⁰.

The Razakars also infiltrated in various guises the territory of the Indian Union and established a network of agents to smuggle arms and recruit Muslim volunteers for the state police or the army. Some of the more adventurous spirits among them also spread out in, different parts of the country to rouse Muslim feelings against the union and to encourage an exodus to Hyderabad. It was hoped that in this way the communal ratio of the state would be substantially altered.

The Nizams government obligingly disarmed the Hindus in village after village. The arms so recovered were used by the Razakars. Later they were also found using old fire arms supplied by the Nizam's Government. Later still they used modern weapons smuggled into the state by Sydney Cotton the aerial gun runner¹¹.

On 31st March 1948 Kasim Razvi made a provocative speech on Hyderabad weapon's week. He said "Hyderabad is an Islamic state. The Indian Union is trying to wipe out the Muslim rule from the Deccan. Remember there are 4.5 crores of Muslim in the dominions looking to us raise the banner of the Islamic state ... we have been ruling the Deccan for the last 800 years and we shall rule it whether the Indian Union likes it or not"¹².

Many of the citizens were formed groups to resist the attacks of Razakars. Generally Razakars were targeted the remote areas and border areas to attack people and loot property. The people on the borders of Marathawada and Karnataka organized themselves into village civil guards to prevent the Nizam's officers from collecting customs. They even looted banks.

There was chaos in the Hyderabad state and it appeared that it was controlled by extremist and fundamentalist forces. Some of the reputed and responsible ministers in the Laik Ali cabinet like J.V. Joshi, Ramachar, Mallikarjunappa resigned¹³. Some Muslim officials also signed their posts in protest against the deplorable state of affairs in the state. Some prominent Muslim leaders, Baquer Ali Mirza, Nawab Mansoor Jung S.N.A. Jafri appealed to the Nizam on 13th August 1948 to disband the Laik Ali Ministry. But the Nizam did not respond to their appeals¹⁴.

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel noted the arms smuggling and military preparations going in Hyderabad. The Nizam's government continues to violate its series of agreements with central government. On February 21, Vallabh Bhai Patel reviewed the Hyderabad Situation and he discussed steps to stop from trespassing upon the union territory.

All these developments forced the government of India to take the step of military action. Nehru who was hesitant all these days also realized that use of force was inevitable. Consequently, on 9th September 1948, the government of India decided to take military action against Hyderabad in order to save Hyderabad and the neighbouring provinces from chaos. So an ultimatum was delivered to the Nizam on the evening of 10th September by V.P. Menon the secretary, Ministry of States in India. In the meanwhile Mohammed Ali Jinnah died on 11 September. Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to postpone the police action. But when he consulted Sardar Vallabha Bhai Patel, he informed the former the army had already been dispatched and the action could not be postponed¹⁵.

As per the plan of action, Police Action was commenced on 13th September 1948 to merge Hyderabad state into Indian union. The Nizam's army collapsed without offering substantial resistance. The Razakars ran for their lives. Kasim Razvi and those who had wreaked havoc on the people were arrested. Finally, Nizam agreed to accede Hyderabad to India. His position as ruler was not disturbed nor was there any damage to person or property by the armed forces from Indian Union. The Razakars who were still hiding were captured. Peace, Law and order was restored in the capital city and outside as well.

CONCLUSION:

For the people of Hyderabad, the police action and liberation meant the end of age old discrimination, atrocities and suppression. The problem of the people of Hyderabad Karnataka was different from the people of other parts. They were feeling insecure due to political instability and linguistic problems. Hence, the solution for their problems lay in the trifurcation of Hyderabad and in the formation of

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Vishala Karnataka for which they fought continuously for a long period. Their fight therefore included political freedom and cultural integrity while included linguistic union. Their main aim was to enrich and preserve the socio-political heritage of Kannadigas which completely neglected by the Nizam's government. As such, on the basis of linguistic majority, Bidar, Raichur and Gulbarga were joined into Mysore state, popularly known as Hyderabad-Karnataka region. But due to continuous anarchy, these regions in Karnataka were recognized as backward region in the state.

From the above discussion it is clear that Hyderabad-Karnataka region was faced worst administration from the Nizam on the one hand and atrocities from the Razakars on the other. As such, Hyderabad-Karnataka region was become backward. Consequently, recently it was proposed to get privileges under Article 371 (J) of the Indian Constitution.

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