

TERRITORIAL REORGANIZATION OF HYDERABAD STATE UNDER NIZAMS-1724 CE TO 1948 CE (REASONS AND IMPACT)

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Abstract

This paper tries to study the changes that occurred in the territorial organization and reorganization of the Hyderabad State under the rule of Nizams from 1724 CE to 1948 CE. The foundation of Asaf Jahi dynasty in 1724 CE has reshaped the history of Deccan. The Mughal subah of Deccan, now emerged as the center of south politics, constantly engaging in war with the Marathas, Mysore, and Arcot. The Nizam signing treaty of subsidiary alliance in 1789 had a great impact on the region. The demand of the British and maintenance of subsidiary alliance forces was a reason for the change in the territorial reorganization of the Hyderabad state. Later, the famous Diwan of Nizams Salar Jung- I reforms brought more changes in the territory's reorganization. These reorganizations had an impact on the revenue generation, land tenure systems, Agriculture, and socio-economic conditions of the region. In this paper, the factors for reorganizing at every stage and their impact will be studied.

Key Words: *Asaf Jahi, Deccan, Hyderabad State, Salar Jung - I, Territorial Reorganization*

Introduction

The origins of Hyderabad can be traced back to the late 16th century, when it was founded by the Qutb Shahi dynasty. Before the arrival of the Qutb Shahis, the region was ruled by various dynasties, including the Satavahanas, Vishnukundins, Chalukyas, and the Kakatiyas. In the late 16th century, Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, the fifth ruler of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, decided to establish a new capital city on the banks of the Musi River¹.

According to a famous legend, Nizam UlMulkh was hunting in a forest in North India when he felt hungry. He encountered a holy man who gave him Kulchas to eat. Nizam could only eat seven Kulchas, and as a result, he was blessed with his descendants becoming rulers of Deccan for seven generations. The Asaf Jahis dynasty ruled Hyderabad State from 1724 to 1948, with a total of seven recognized rulers who held the title of Nizam by both the Mughals and British².

¹. Sayed Hussain Bilgrami and C Willmot's, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of His Highness - The Nizam's Dominions*, Times of India Press, 1883, . pp.1-3

². Bawa V.K, *The Nizam Between Mughals & British*, Hyderabad under Salar Jung - 1 1853-1883, Center for Deccan Studies, Hyderabad, 2016.p.3

Nizam UIMulkh declared his independence in 1724, with Aurangabad as the capital city. The area that came to be known as Nizam's Dominions or later Hyderabad State was actually the Deccan subedari of the Mughals. During the viceroyalty of Nizam UIMulkh, the area was divided into six subahs, which were Khandesh, Aurangabad, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, and Hyderabad (Golkonda)³.

Due to continuous trouble with the Marathas the Mir Nizam Ali Khan Asaf Jha II, shifted capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad in 1763⁴. The city was picked up as capital, because of its legacy as Qutubshahi capital, central location. However the succession wars and intervention of the British changed the fate of Hyderabad State.

The territories initially were classified under various criteria like Geographical, Ethnological, Agricultural and based on type of Land Revenue. On geography or linguistic basis Hyderabad State was divided into 3 areas viz., Mahrattwari, Telingana and Kanara⁵. Agriculturally it was divided into two main Agricultural divisions, comprising Wheat producing districts called dry cultivation districts and Rice producing districts called Wet cultivation districts⁶. The main territorial divisions were based on type of Land Tenures. Based on Land Tenure system there existed two divisions, they are 1) Jagir land i.e land not paying revenue, quit-rent or Peishkash to the government and 2) Khalisa land i.e. land paying government revenue in the shape of rent, Pan Makta, and Sarbasta (quit- rent), and Peishkhas; also Khalisa Inam lands⁷.

There were five types of Jagir based on the kind of assignment viz., a) Al- Tamlugha Jagir or Inam- Al- Tamlugha: the permanent or hereditary jagirs. b) Zat jagirs: mainly for personal maintenance of grantees, c) Jagir NigehdashtJamait or Paigah: granted to meet the expenses of the forces to be maintained. d) TankhahiMahalat: these are more or less similar to the Paigah lands, they had their origin when the state was involved in pecuniary difficulties. e) Sarfkhas (or Crown) Jagirs: these were assigned to the Nizam in lieu of cash payments from public treasury, also included some personal jagirs⁸.

The Khalisa land i.e under direct control of Nizam slowly went into the hands of the British with Subsidiary Alliance signed in 1789 and further treaties in 1800⁹. The territories lost were Berar, Raichur Doab, and Naldurg or Assigned Districts, the leftover territories under the direct management of the Then Diwan Salar Jung I was very inconsiderable in 1263 F(1853

³. Ibid.p.7

⁴. *Comprehensive History and Culture of Andhra Pradesh*, Volume VI, 'EARLY MODERN ANDHRA HYDERABAD AND COMPANY RULE AD 1724- 1857', Edited by: Adapa Satyanarayana- Andhra Pradesh History Congress and Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University- EMESCO publishers, 2015,Hyderabad, p.55

⁵. Moulvi Chirag Ali., *Hyderabad (Deccan) Under Sir Salar Jung*, Bombay, 1886, p.2

⁶. *Ibid.*

⁷. *Ibid.p.4*

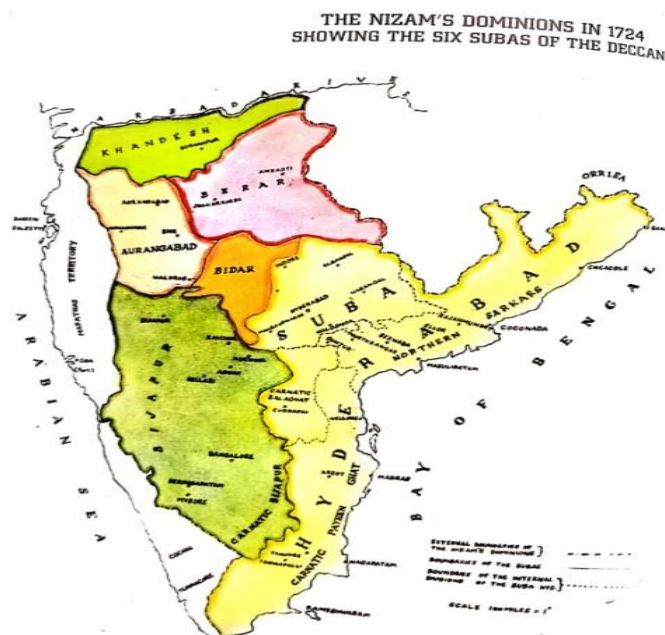
⁸. *Ibid.p.5*

⁹. Bawa,V.K., *The Nizam Between Mughals & British, Hyderabad under Salar Jung - 1 1853-1883*, Center for Deccan Studies, Hyderabad, 2016, pp.12-14

AD). The rest of the Khalisa Territory was under the control of Military chiefs in lieu of the payments for the troops to a considerable extent¹⁰.

This led to loss of revenue for the Hyderabad State, adding to the burden of the payments to be made to the British for maintenance of subsidiary forces stationed in Nizam Dominion. These conditions made Sir Salar Jung I to go for substantial reforms to bring back the wealth of Hyderabad state.

As per 1271 Fasli (1861 AD), a considerable portion of the Assigned Districts were restored to the Nizam, consisted of Raichur Doab and districts on the western frontier, in exchange of Surf-i-khas and Jagir Taluks of Berar that were not transferred in 1263 Fasli (1853AD) to the British Resident at Hyderabad. These exchanges have resulted in confusion of authority and difficulty in administration.



Civil Divisions of Diwani Territory:

The dominions of Nizam were formerly organized into 'Subhas' (Provinces), further which were divided into a number of Circars (Districts), further divided into Mahals or Sub-Divisions of a district. At the beginning of the Nizam rule in 1724 AD (1134 Fasli) there were six Subhas¹¹, gradually losing some territories and Kandhesh was lost completely, as a matter of political conditions of the period. The 5 Subhas left under the Nizam dominion were viz., Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Bidar, Bijapur and Berar. In these Subhas there were problems of maladministration, some parts of circars being allotted to British and lacuna in collection of land revenue, led to inconvenience in administration of the country and led to

¹⁰. Moulvi Chirag Ali., *Hyderabad (Deccan) Under Sir Salar Jung*, Bombay, 1886, p.14

¹¹. Bawa V K, *The Nizam Between Mughals & British, Hyderabad under Salar Jung - 1 1853-1883*, Center for Deccan Studies, 2016, p.7

reforms in the year 1274 Fasli (1865 AD), altering the former divisions and heralded new era of administration¹².

With these new reforms in place, the largest territory of land i.e Diwani Lands and some small detached portions of Surf-i-khas and Jagirs were reorganized into ' Five' Simts or Divisions, each having three or four Zilas (Districts) and each Zila further divided into Tahsils of talukas. The five divisions are : I. North - West Division, comprising 3 districts, namely, Aurangabad, Birth and Parbhani, II. Western Division, comprising 3 districts, namely, Bidar, Nander and Naldurg, III. Southern Division comprising 4 districts, namely, Gulbarga, Shorapur, Raichur and Linsugur, IV. Northern Division comprising 3 districts and 1 subdistrict, namely, Medak, Indur and Elgandal and SarpurTandur, and V. Eastern Division comprising 3 districts Khammam, Nalgunda and Nagar Karnul.

In 1263Fasli (1853 AD), Berar along with Raichur Doab and Naldurg Districts were assigned to the management in trust called Talukdari Amani of the British Resident for the maintenance of the Hyderabad Contingent and debt incurred by Nizam to East India Company and other expenses. The Nasir-ud-Dowlah and Afzal -ud- Dowla tried to ascertain their claims back on Berar, but were of no use. As a Diwan Salar Jung - I , constantly had the desire of getting Berar back to the Nizam's control, could not achieve.



Map- Dominions of Nizam in 1853

Source- Chowmahalla Palace Display

The division of territories and exchange between the British and Nizam's government created a kind of administrative confusion in the exchanged areas. To reduce the confusion and increase efficiency of the administrative system by making it uniform throughout the Dominions of Nizam, definite measures through reforms were adopted between the years 1274 Fasli (1864 AD) and 1290 Fasli (1880 AD).

¹². Moulvi Chirag Ali., Hyderabad (*Deccan*) Under Sir Salar Jung, Bombay, 1886, p.81

A Board of Revenue was established to supervise, direct and control affairs connected with the revenue administration of the entire Diwani territory including the restored districts in the year 1274 Fasli (1864 AD). The system was named as Zilabandi. Different offices established to manage Diwani lands and restored districts separately are now abolished. The Board was entrusted to create uniform civil divisions of Diwani Territory. The Districts were classified into three grades based on the revenue generation. Based on these grades the Diwani territory was divided into 14 districts comprising 74 *Talukas*. Having settled territorial divisions, the administrative authority of division was made accordingly. The offices of *Munsifs* and *Mir-Adls*, which were established for the administration of justice in the *mufassil* were abolished. A *tahsildar* was appointed to each *taluka*, having well defined judicial as well as executive powers. This resulted in streamlining of the administration in the dominions.

Subsequently in Eastern division a new district Nagarkarnul and in southern division Gulbarga district was added. And a subdistrict Sarpur Tandur was added in the Northern Division. Making a total 15 Districts in the Nizam Dominions and two sub districts as per 1290 Fasli (1880 AD). This reorganization helped to streamline Revenue, Civil and Criminal Administration in the Dominions and Police was separated from revenue and the system was reorganized as per new districts¹³.

In 1905 again certain changes were made in reorganizing the territories. Though the number of divisions remained the same i.e five, Lingsugur was broken into sub-districts and Amaldari has been made a district keeping the total districts 15. Each Subah (division) was kept under a Subahdar (commissioner) and each District under a first Talukdar (Collector)¹⁴.



Map- Dominions of Nizam, 1911
Source- Chowmahalla Palace Display

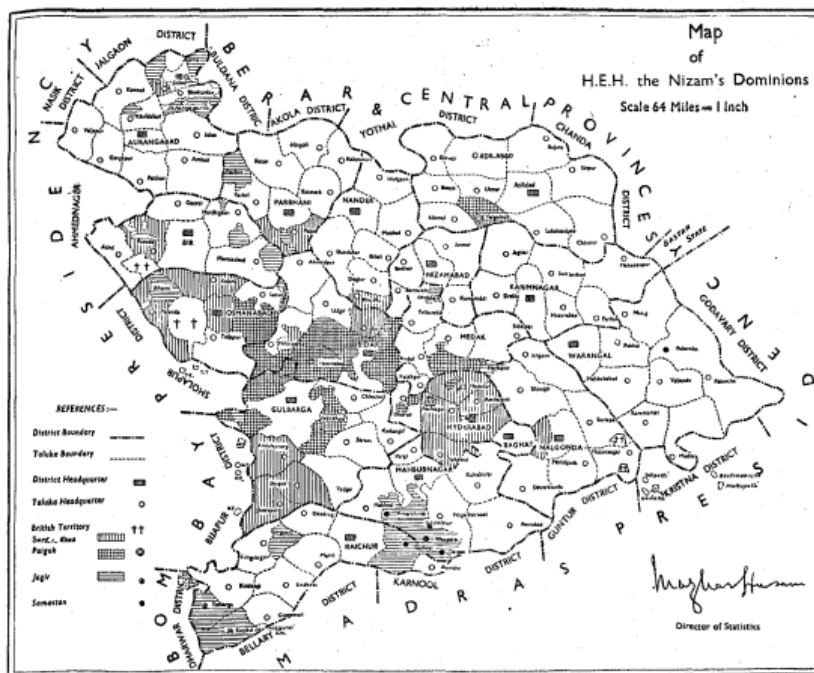
A general reconstitution of divisions and districts was effected between 1905 to 1911. The district of Lingsugur was abolished, its four Khalsa and three Jagir talukas being transferred to the Raichur District and two Khalsa talukas to the Gulbarga District.

¹³.Moulvi Chirag Ali., *Hyderabad (Deccan) Under Sir Salar Jung*, Bombay, 1886, pp.178-179

¹⁴.*Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Hyderabad State*, Calcutta, 1909, pp..18-20

The small district of Sirpur-Tandur was raised to the standard of other districts by the addition of two talukas from the Nizama-bad (Indur) District and two talukas from the Karimnagar (Elgandal) District.

The district of Nalgonda was transferred from Warangal to Medak Division and the districts of Sirpur-Tandur and Bidar from Medak Division to Warangal and Gulbarga divisions respectively. The old districts of Sirpur-Tandur, Elgandal and Indur were renamed Adilabad, Karimnagar and Nizamabad, Several talukas were also transferred from one district to another. Eighteen talukas were abolished altogether and their villages distributed amongst the adjoining talukas. Thus the Nizam Dominions were constituted into Four Subahs and 16 Districts¹⁵.



Source: Census of India, 1911, Volume XIX, Hyderabad State, Part I, Report

In 1331 Fasli (1922 AD), the four *Subahs* that had been divided within the State were abolished, and the district administration was entrusted to Talukdars who were in charge of it directly under the Revenue Secretariat. Two Inspecting Officers, one for each natural division, were also functioning. However, as they lacked executive powers, this arrangement was eliminated.

In 1334 Fasli (1925 AD), the two natural divisions, Marathwara and Telangana, were considered convenient units and were put under two Directors-General of Revenue. Nevertheless, they were found to be unwieldy and not suitable for efficient administration. As a result, the four *Subahs* were reconstituted in 1338 Fasli (1929 AD). The new *Subahs* were Aurangabad, Gulbarga, Medak, and Warangal. Under this new arrangement, Nizamabad,

¹⁵. *Census of India, 1911, Volume XIX, Hyderabad State, Part I, Report, p.2*

which had formerly been a part of the Medak division, was transferred to Warangal. Warangal Subah had the largest area, covering 24,225 square miles, followed by Gulbarga at 21,956 square miles and Aurangabad at 19,240 square miles. Medak was the smallest Subah, covering 14,573 square miles¹⁶.

No changes of importance in the administrative division took place during the decade 1931 AD to 1941 AD, except that Nizamabad District was retransferred from Warangal Subah to Medak Subah. A new district, Baghat, was constituted under Medak Subah; it was formerly a taluq round about the city of Hyderabad in Medak district. Banswara was formed in Nizamabad District with some of the villages from Bodhan and Yellareddy taluqs. The rest of the taluq of Yeilareddi was transferred from Nizamabad to Medak district¹⁷.

Though initially these measures yielded results of streamlining of Administration and Revenue generation for Hyderabad State, the wealth was limited to certain sections of the society. The peasants and agricultural labour were exploited by Deshmukhs, Deshpandes, Doras and Officials. The emergence of militant organization 'Razzakakars' further worsened the conditions of rural people¹⁸.

The Hyderabad State under Nizam's rule came under the influence of ongoing Indian Independence Movement, and was impacted by the rise of Socialist Ideas across the world. The organizations like Andhra Mahasabha, Hyderabad State Congress led the movement called "Join Indian Union Movement", led by Swami Ramananda teertha. Though The Seventh Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan tried to remain independent, the Central Government of India and the then Prime Minister and Minister of States considered it as a threat to newly Independent India. With 'Operation polo', Hyderabad State was merged into the Indian union on 18th September 1948, thus ending the rule of Asaf Jahis¹⁹.

¹⁶. *Census of India, 1931, Volume XXIII, H. E. H The Nizam's Dominions, Hyderabad State, Part I, Report, p.1*

¹⁷. *Ibid.*, pp.1-2

¹⁸. InukondaThirumali, *Against Dora and Nizam People's Movement in Telangana 1939-1948*. Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, pp.153-183

¹⁹. Bawa, V. K. *The Last Nizam: The Life and Times of Mir Osman Ali Khan*. Center for Deccan Studies, Hyderabad, 2010, pp.356-381.