

Indo-Iran relations with special reference to Hyderabad in the glimpses of archives

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Abstract

Archives being a treasure house of the past material (documents) Sir Hilary Jenkenson defines a "Document" as a manuscript (hand written), type script, printed matter with any other material evidence, which forms part of it as annexed to it. Archives is the gold mine in which historian digs for the material for his narrative to which the administrator turns for precedence for any action he contemplates in the past. In fact that in any aspect of the history, nothing can be more than the documentary evidence. Hence the present day have come to recognize the extreme importance of rare and Historical documents for reconstructing the history of the past. Owing to growing tendency to unearth original material facts from the original documents of State Archives, to bring to the light, the lakhs of known handmade documents available in the repositories of Andhradesa State Archives for providing service material to Government and General public, scholarly world.

As per the topic of the paper it would not be out place to say a few words about the history of Indo Iranian relationship which is centuries old. Trade Relations, Political Connections, Cultural contacts and with the religious affinity or spiritual attraction in the shape of matrimony marriages between the peoples of Iran and India right from the olden days of the Achaemenian dynasty in Iran to the end of Mughal rule in India. During the excavation in Poona* under the able directorship Dr. Sankalia at Navadatelli on the southern bank of the Narbada in Central India, have provided many evidences of contacts of India with Central Iran in 1500 B.C.

The Iranians and Indians belong to the same Aryan stock and spoke a kindred language-old Persian and Vedic Sanskrit. In this way, basically there was racial kinship and lingual affinity between them. The contacts which were initiated in ancient times were renewed by the Ghaznavids and continued

in various forms down to the 18th century coinciding the fall of the Mughal Empire in India. Apart from the Ghaznavids to the Mughals in the North, the Bahmani, the Adil Shahi, the Qutb Shahi and the Asaf Jahi dynasties in the Deccan had relations with Iran on various planes.

In this paper attempt is made to highlight some of the documents preserved in A.P. State Archives and Research Institute, Hyderabad which through light on the relations of Hyderabad with Iran during the last 400 years before. Before discussing the archival documents it is advisable to write a few words about the political status of the Qutb Shahi Kingdom and the Asaf Jahi State that ruled Hyderabad for four hundred years i.e. up to 1948, i.e. till merger of Hyderabad in Indian Union.

The documents of archives have been appreciated and clearly shown the relationship of the Qutb Shahi kingdom and Asaf Jahi State with Iran and concerned. In the absence of a strong Central Government of India from the end of the Tughluq period down to the rise of the emperor Akbar, the rulers of the Deccan were practically left autonomous. Akbar after making his position strong in the North, then he diverted his attention towards the South. During the period of Shah Jahan, the Deed of Submission (Inqiyad-nama) was concluded in the month of May, 1636 A.D. which rendered Abdulla Qutb Shah absolutely subservient to the Mughals was very important.

But in spite of the Mughal domination, the close political and diplomatic correspondence and matrimony relations existed between Golconda and Iran. The Elchis (Envoys) were played a vital role in respect of maintaining of political and diplomatic correspondence between them almost till the fall of the Golconda Kingdom in 1687 A.D. Qutbuddin Aibak founded the first Muslim Kingdom in India in 1206 A.D., and Persian became the court language in India and gradually it got the status of the common medium of expression between various communities of this country.

The Persian language was the court and official language in India for more than seven centuries. Actually the foundation of Mughal empire in India by Babur in A.D. 1526, his empire gradually expanded all over the country swallowing the smaller states including the kingdom of Golconda in A.D. 1687. The next significant turn for being preceding the time is the collapse of the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan that paved the way for the emergence of five kingdoms "Adil Shahis at Bijapur", "the Nizam. Shahis at Ahmednagar", "the Barid Shahis at Bidar" Imad shahis at Berar and the Qutb Shahis at Golconda.

It should be borne in mind that the official language of the Bahmani was also Persian which had the influence on the language, idiom, and vocabulary that were in use in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and North Afghanistan. The language of all these kingdoms and the Mughal empire was Persian. The inter-relations of these kingdoms and again their relation with the expanding Mughal empire and the Safawi Iran are great responsible not only for moulding the political contact of the Decca kingdoms, but also in shaping their ideological, linguistic and literary atmosphere.

Though Persian was replaced by Urdu as the official language the entire Asaf Jahi State in 1887 during the period of Salar Jung (Mir Laiq Ali Khan), yet all possible encouragement and patron were accorded for the promotion of Persian language. The cultural missions from Iran used to visit Hyderabad though they were arranged by the British Government. It is true that there were no political and diplomatic relations between Hyderabad and Iran during the Asaf Jahi period, but some of the following lines highlights the relationship with Indo-Iran continued. After the wars with Tipu Sultan and the role played by the Marathas Wellesley felt that a strong alliance was necessary for the protection from the Marathas owing to that many of the treaties were concluded among them. The treaty of 12th October,

1800 A.D. was concluded between Nizam Ali Khan and the British. By this treaty, the Nizam got British protection against any power in India at a high cost, as he was made a subservient ally and he lost his external sovereignty.

During that period, the Nizam of Hyderabad had no political contacts and diplomatic relations with any power within or outside India. But the relations with Indo-Iran continued. Many of the Iranian scholars who were in Hyderabad State were honoured with titles and hand some grants in the form of Mansabs. The descendants of deceased Iranian scholars were sanctioned handsome monthly salaries to help them in their financial crises and distress. The Mughal documents paper manuscripts and the document the Asaf Jahi period preserved in the Andhra Pradesh State Archives and Research Institute.

These categories of the document provide as valuable primary source material and historical information for the purpose of systematic research. The same following categories of documents furnish significant information knowledge on the bygone relations with Hyderabad-Iran during the medieval as well as in the modern period¹The Mughal Waqai Nawis (spys) which is an important functioning in Mughal administration were posted appointed (important function in Mughal administration) at various places in the Mughal Empire, and also at tributary States like Golconda, as revealed from the Mughal records of the Andhra Pradesh State Archives.

The following news reports dispatched by the Mughal Waqainawis (news reporter) from Hyderabad contain information pertaining to the Ambassador of Iran in the Court of Abdulla Qutb Shah and other matters².The Roznamcha-i-Waqai the daily news report dated: 2nd Muharram, 1072 H., 18th August, 1661 A.D.(Sunday), 4th Regnal year, SI.No. 449 Abdulla Qutb Shah sent a letter and twenty-five rolls of chintz to Sayyid Iliyas, a servant of Adil Shah II, and two trays of fruits to Shah Muhammad Muqim, the Wakil of Shah of Persia Iran.Mir Kamal, Abdulla Qutb Shah's servant, presented fourteen volumes of manuscripts to him and in return received a robe of honour. The Roznamcha-i-Waqai the daily news report dated 6th Muharrum, 1072 H/22nd August, 1661 A.D. contains the information that Abdulla Qutb Shah sent customary mourning robes to Mir Ahmad, his son in law, Muhammad Muqim, Ambassador of Shah of Iran and others on the occasion of 19th Muharram³.

The Roznamcha-i-Waqai, dated 11th Muharrum, 1072 H/27th August, 1661 A.D. the news reporter informs that Muhammad Muqim, Ambassador of Iran sent Murtaza Quli and Ilah Quli to Budagh Sultan, the Elchi/envoy and requested the news reporter to issue orders to the Harkaras/couriers of the postal stations to arrange for their safe conduct from station to station. The Roznamcha-i-Waqai, dated 15th Safar, 1072 H/30th September, 1661 A.D.⁴. (Monday), 4th Regnal year, SI.No.568, Muhammad Muqim, the Wakil of the Shah of Persia, sent twenty five trays of fruits from Persia to Qutb-ul-Mulk.Qutb-ul-Mulk ordered to Ibrahim Beg, the Sar-Naubat to send for Muhammad Muqim who was entertained in the Hawel's at Hyderabad (baiz). The Roznamcha-i-Waqai, dated 23rd Safar, 1072 H/8th October, 1661 A.D., mentions that men of Muhammad Muqim, Ambassador of Iran came to Hyderabad by way of Masulipatam. Muhammad Muqim sent 25 trays of foreign fruits to Abdulla Qutb Shah. The latter directed Irbrahim Beg, a court official to invite Muhammad Muqim, Muhammad Muqim was received and entertained in the palace at Hyderabad.

The oznamcha-i-Waqai, dated 29th Shawwal 1072, H/7th June, 1662 A.D., the news reporter furnishes information that Qutbul Mulk (Abdulla Qutb Shah) has sent for Syed Sultan Najafi S/o Syed Durraj Najafi with a view to giving his daughter to him in marriage which is fixed on 25th Zilhijja, 1072 H.The Asaf Jahi records cover practically every aspect of life of that period, i.e., from 1724 to 1948 A.D.

This category of records contains valuable material on Hyderabad-Iran relations during the Asaf Jahi period. The following documents will substantiate this statement. The Nawab Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, Nizam the VI (1869-1911) declared the holiday to all the Government offices for one day on hearing the tragic news of murder of Nasiruddin Shah Qub char, the great Emperor of Iran, as a mark of respect and act of condolence. The royal orders were published in the Extra Ordinary Gazette⁵.

One of the eminent scholars of Iran Agha Syed Ali Shustari, was awarded the title of Sultan-ul-Ulama, Adib-ud-Daula, Sinad-ul-Mull along with a mansab of 3,500 Zat and 2,500 Sawars. His son Sye Abdulla was also awarded the title of Naiyar Jung. These titles were granted by Nawab Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, Nizam the VI, on the occasion of his birthday celebrations on 17th Jamadi I, 1316 H/October, 1898 A.D.⁶. When Agha Syed Ali Shustari passed away, his two sons Naiyar Jung and Akhtar Jung submitted a petition for granting them financial aid as they were in acute financial distress. Nizam, the VI issued orders for releasing them monthly salary of Rs.500/- each⁷.

Through Farman of Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, Nizam the VI, dated 21 Safar, 1325 H/25 March, 1908 A.D Syed Muhammad Ali Shirazi who belonged to one of the respectable sadat families of Shiraz sent his Persian poem written in praise of Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, Nizam the VI, to the peshi to be submitted for the royal perusal. Nizam the VI was pleased to grant the poet an amount of Rs.200/-⁸,

A Notification communicated by Seghai Kotwali, it was notified to all that according to the rules and regulations issued by the Government of Iran for issuing passports to the citizens of foreign countries who wished to enter the boundaries of Iran should follow to the rules and regulations issued for obtaining passports. It was further notified that the persons of Hyderabad State who desired to stay in Iran should keep the written documents relating to their nationality with them so that they should register their names in the nearest office of the British Embassy within a month of their arrival in Iran as per the rules enforced in the Government Gazette of the Hyderabad State⁹. The Hyderabad Residency addressed to Maharaj Sir Kishen Pershad, the then Madar-ul-Maham, on 20th October, 1908 A.D., stated that the Government of India was intimated by His Britanic Majesty's

Minister at Tehran that during the two months, three robberies of Indian pilgrims visiting to Mashad had been reported at the British Consulate at Shiraz and that the roads between Persian gulf ports and Mashad were very insecure. The Government of India had taken immediate action regarding the insecurity of the roads matter, to warn intending pilgrims of the dangers to which they were likely to be exposed. At the last the Maharaja was requested to convey this warning to all those who intended proceeding on pilgrimage to Mashad¹⁰.

The Government of India invited a Cultural Mission from Iran in 1944 for touring in India. The Government of India through the Hyderabad Residency informed the Government of the Nizam Hyderabad State, that the proposed tour of the Persian Mission included a visit to Hyderabad and requested it to extend such assistance and cooperation as they should require while they were in Hyderabad. The Persian cultural mission visited Hyderabad on March, 1944, at that time the members of the Persian Mission expressed their desire to see and meet to Mir Osman Ali Khan Nizam the VII, they were permitted by the Nizam. After returning from Hyderabad,

Ali Asghar Hikmat, the Head of the Persian Mission, sent a telegram expressing his gratefulness to the Nizam for the great hospitality provided to the Mission during their unforgettable stay at Hyderabad State¹¹. The same Persian Cultural Mission expressed its desire to confer the gold medal of the

1st Class of the Iranian order of Nishan-i-Ilmi on Nawab Mehdi Yar Jung Bahadur and Nawab Zain Yar Jung Bahadur and to admit Muhammad Nizamuddin and Qazi Talammuz Husain, both of the Osmania University to honorary associate membership of the Iran Academy, Tehran. Regarding this the Hyderabad Residency got no objection and favourable conferment from the Nizam, the VII¹².

Therefore, the Hyderabad Residency was requested that the above information may be obtained from the Government of Iran through the Government of India and communicate the same to the Nizam's Government, is concerned. The letter dated 15th March, 1947 received from the British Embassy, Tehran, stated therein that on the enquiry made from the Tehran University it was informed that the University could accommodate each year 20 to 30 students who wished to go to Iran to study Persian literature. The average expenses per month excluding clothes and amusement would amount to Rs.300/- per head. The expenses for journey from Bombay to Khorramshahr by ship and from Khorramshahr to Theran by train would be about Rs.700/- per head¹³.

A thorough study of the Archival records show that all possible patronage and financial aid was granted in recognition of the services of the Persian, Historians, Writers and Scholars as far as the development of the Persian language by the Nizam Government. Mir Osman Ali Khan and his State was eager for preparation and getting the Persian dictionary compiled by Aqa Syed Muhammad Ali, an Iranian Professor of Persian at Nizam College. The detailed summery mentioned in the respective Archival file.

Aqa Syed Muhammad Ali, Professor Persian of Nizam College. was sanctioned leave for a period of two years with full pay of Rs.300/pius 200-personal allowance with travelling expenses to go to Iran in connection with the compilation of the Persian dictionary. When this period of leave expired Prof Aqa Muhammad Ali requested to sanction leave for a further period of one year. His request was granted with half pay leave. After availing himself of the leave he came back to Hyderabad and joined duty at Nizam College.

An assistant and a clerk were provided for a period of six years, and in addition a peon and certain amount for stationery were also sanctioned for this work. Moreover, he was exempted from the duty of Nizam College. When he could not complete the compilation of the dictionary in the stipulated period extension was granted to him. When Aqa Muhammad Ali completed the compilation of the dictionary he was awarded Rs. 7,500/- as the remuneration for the work. This dictionary was later published by the Government of Hyderabad with the name of "Farhung-i-Nizam" in five volumes and 200 copies of each volume were given to the compiler of the dictionary¹⁴,

Conclusion

All the documents and paper manuscripts discussed above are only a few of a large number available in the records preserved in the Andhra Pradesh State Archives and Research Institute. For a complete and comprehensive study of the whole gamut of the relations between Hyderabad and Iran, a complete survey and analysis of the records preserved in this Archives will be of immense use

Andhra Pradesh State Archives & Research Institute, (Hereafter in this paper APSA & RI) Roznamacha-i-Waqai dated 2nd Muharram, 1072 H., 18th August, 1661 A.D., (Sunday) 4th Regnal year, SI No.449 Document No.IV/476, pertaining to the reign of Andhra Pradesh.

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