

CHAPTER V

ARYA SAMAJ AND ITS ACTIVITIES

Arya Samaj, founded in 1875 at Bombay by Maharishi Dayanand Saraswathi, has been hailed as one of the most potential and dynamic socio-religious movements of the day. It had a great impact on the life and thinking of the people particularly of the Hindus in the 19th and 20th centuries. According to Dr.K.P.Jaiswal,

"The foundation of the Arya Samaj marked the beginning of vital changes in the social, religious, educational and national life of the vast majority of the people of India, as well as among the followers of the various faiths of the world."¹

Speaking on the role of Arya Samaj, Yogi Arvind Ghosh of Pondichery said,

"Dayanand was the real harbinger of the Indian Renaissance which opened up new directions and fresh hopes for millions of people who were groaning under the worst kind of slavery resulting from social, religious, cultural and political decadence."

In the light of the above statements the role of the Arya Samaj during the latter part of the reign of the last Nizam, Osman Ali Khan becomes very clear. The Arya Samaj in Hyderabad gave an impetus to the political awakening and paved the way for political emancipation at Hyderabad.

The political problems in Hyderabad related mainly to injustice of the minority rule over the majority. The minority of the ruler's community aspired to grow in strength through religious planks. Proselytizing the members of the majority community was one of the easy means to add to their own numbers. This was quite justified as long as the means are fair and merely persuasive. But when unfair means were employed the situation became quite explosive.

D.Vable, *The Arya Samaj The Most Revolutionary Movement of India*, New Delhi.p.4.

The Arya Samaj in Hyderabad state was founded in 1880 in Dharur Taluk of Beed district which acted as head office to guide its activities. In 1892, the Arya Samaj of Hyderabad was started in Residency area, later renamed as Sultan Bazar. The first President here was Pandit **Kamata** Prasadji Misra.²

The teachings of the Arya Samaj had penetrated long ago into Hyderabad even before the dawn of the 20th century. But its impact was felt from the time Pandit Keshava Rao Koratkar, a great patriot and lawyer was elected the President of Arya Samaj in Hyderabad and he continued to remain at its helm 1932. He infused great vigour into the activities of Arya Samaj. He established many branches of Arya Samaj throughout the state and helped the spread of education through libraries and schools. The *Satyarth Prakash* of Arya Samaj was rendered into Telugu in 1921. They even rendered financial help to movements outside Hyderabad like the Moplah rebellion in Malabar.³ Their activities attracted an enthusiastic band of workers who vowed to protect the interests of the majority.

The Ganesh Utsav, to celebrate the birthday of the popular Hindu God, Ganesh was started in Maharashtra by the great Revolutionary leader, Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It served as an effective means of public awakening through the media of songs, lectures and melas.

In 1895, for the first time in Hyderabad, Ganesh festival was held at Shah Ali Banda and Chaderghat and it evoked a good response. The festival at Chadharghat was

M.L.Nigam, *Romance of Indian Culture*, Hyderabad 1991 p.58
Moplah uprising which started as a cultivator-landlord riot turned communal in Malabar.

organized entirely by students. This greatly helped in rousing public opinion. They also provided a training ground for workers in constructive social action.

Due to the influence of the Razakkars on the Nizam, a number of restrictions were brought on the Hindus by the government. L.B.Phatak the editor of Maratha weekly, *Nizam Vijay*, had brought out a brochure in 1931 in English under the title "Religious Disabilities of Hindus in the Hyderabad State". The facts below are from that brochure. A circular was issued by the government regarding religious celebrations,

"...The Dasara is a great festival for the Hindus in which music processions form a leading part. Its character is jubilant, but it may synchronise with Moharrum which has a melancholy character. Therefore the government issues the following circular dated 13th Aban, 1326F, 1916 By Order of HEH the Nizam's government according to which All Hindus of Hyderabad city and of the districts should perform their worship without any sort of music. Batkamma (goddess) should not be brought out and Hindus should not play music even in their household temples".⁴

As a result of such restrictions, tempers rose on the side of the majority community. Often it led to riots between the two communities. One of the earliest riots during Osman Ali Khan's reign was the riots at Gulbarga, and this incident was conveyed to the Secretary of State in London by the Viceroy (Foreign and Political department) in Simla through a Telegram. The subject of the Telegram read 'Hindu Mohamadan Riots at Gulbarga in the Nizam's dominions'.

"On 11th August, a Hindu procession passed a mosque during prayers. The Mohammedans objected and the

From a document written by late Shri M.N.Joshi in the unpublished collections of V.H.Desai.

procession was turned back by magistrates' orders. The mob was dispersed by Police after some stone throwing. The next day the Mohammedan religious is said to have been insulted while a Mohamedan procession was passing a Hindu temple... Riots got out of hand. Police Superintendent was shot and in the end police dispersed the mob by fire, killing one and wounding seven. Nizam on 19th issued a *firman* appointing a commission of enquiry. It is alleged that tense atmosphere had been created by Muslim proselytism.... Accounts in Times of India allege Mohameddians to have been aggressors and to have deliberately damaged their mosques with a view of exciting Mohammedan feeling against Hindus. Apparently practically all the temples in the town were raided and damaged and idols destroyed... The government is undertaking repairs to temples and mosques."⁵

There was strange religious activity started by a Muslim by name Siddiq Dindar in 1929. He declared himself to be as the Avtar of Chenna Basweshwar held in high regard by Lingayats. Siddiq Dindar said that Islam was the modern form of the preachings of Chenna Basweshwar. He delivered speeches belittling the Avtars of Rama and Krishna and irritated the feelings of the Hindus. Sri Mangala Dev, a preacher of the Arya Samaj was invited to counteract the harangues of Siddiq Dindar. Another learned scholar, Pandit Ramachandra Dehlavi who had read the original Quran and its commentaries also came to Hyderabad.' This propaganda on both the sides

⁵ Telegram Rno, 1350-8 dated 28* August 1924, dispatched at 3-30 p.m. in F.No. 84(2) poll. 1924 (Foreign Political)

⁶ Pandit **Ramachandra** Dehlavi was considered the Prince among Preachers. Since his speeches made a great impact there was great pressure on the State authorities to somehow implicate the Pundit and curtail his influence on the Hindu and Muslim population of the State. On the third day of his meeting, he was served summons at 9.30 p.m. signed by the Subjudge at Bidar requiring him to answer a charge of insult to Islam on the basis of a lecture delivered at **Halikhed** in September 1933. The news of his prosecution created a great sensation all over India. A telegram was sent by Sri Narayan Swamiji, President of the league to HEH the Nizam of Hyderabad and **another letter on the same subject was addressed to Professor. M.Sudhakar**, Secretary of the League. Because of

began to embitter mutual relations. The followers of Siddiq believed to be five hundred strong wore the green turban of Muslim divines, the saffron robe of Hindu Sadhus and beard in the style of the Sikhs. When the situation in a village grew tense, they led the Muslims against the Hindus. Siddiq increased his proselytizing activities unchecked⁷. The Hindus on January 10th 1932, submitted a petition to the Nizam to check his activities. When the opposition became too strong, the Nizam's government imposed some kind of restriction on Siddiq's activities but he continued to function till 1948. Though the Razakkars looked upon the Deendars with contempt, they tolerated them as convenient allies for the terrorization of the Hindus⁸. Another circular issued requires that no processions even those organized in connection with religious ceremonies; could be conducted without the previous sanction of the Ecclesiastical Department. Circulars were issued to ban music to be played in front of a mosque. Another circular denies Hindus the right of constructing new temples and of repairing the old ones, whereas the states funds principally drawn from the Hindu population are made available for the erection, maintenance and upkeep of mosques, both in Hyderabad and outside. The Hindus were also not allowed to look after their educational and cultural interests.

"The state controls the entire education of its people and neglects the cultural interest of the Hindus as against those of the Muslims which it fostered with special care and religious zeal."⁹

the agitation launched against the prosecution, the Nizam's government dropped the case proposed to be filed against him. But the Pandit was deported.

⁷ According to Pandit Narendraji in his book, *Jeevan Ki Doop Chav*, Hyderabad 1998, "Deendar wrote a book, *SarvaareAallaam* in which he ridiculed Yogeshwar Krishna and the goddesses.

⁸ K.M.Munshi, *The End of An Era*, Bombay 1990, p.41

All the rules regarding private schools, public meetings were published by the Standing Committee in the Hyderabad Peoples Educational Conference.

There was glaring injustice in representation of different communities in legislatures and civil services. They were not based on size of the population. In the Indian States Journal of 6th May 1931, there appeared a note on recruitment to civil services. The note gave a picture of the pattern of application, nomination and selection of candidates. 441 Muslims had applied as against 91 Hindus. From among them, 275 Muslims and 54 Hindus were nominated. Ultimately 34 Muslims and four Hindus were selected¹⁰

The lopsided policy of the Nizam's government and their efforts to increase the number of minority at the expense of majority was questioned and checked by the Arya Samaj. Thus, the Nizam's government changed their attitude towards Arya Samaj and began to place a number of impediments before it. It grew so much that even the normal functioning of Arya Samaj had become impossible. They failed to secure the legitimate rights of religious worship and practice."

The Nizam's government began to impose restriction on the Arya Samaj preachers. One of the first victims was Pandit Chandra Bhanu. He was served a deportation order by the State on 17th September 1932. Due to such injustice they began the constitutional fight with the Nizam's government. It was a fight between patience on one side and persecution on the other. They lodged their protests initially through

Extract from the minutes of Hyderabad Civil Service Committee meeting held on 17th Khurdad, 1341 in A.P. State Archives.

" According to V. Yashoda Devi in her article, "Social and Religious reform Movements in A.P. in the 19th and 20th century" in *Social and Reform Movements in the 19th and 20th Century*, edited by S.P. Sen, Calcutta 1979.

"Unlike the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj was revivalist in nature. They also undertook earnestly the work of social reform. The missionaries of Arya Samaj like Adipudi Somanatha Rao were engaged in receiving converted Christians and Muslims into the fold of Hinduism through a purification ceremony. p365 This probably irked the Nizam's government.

resolutions, memorials and representations. They were finally driven to utter helplessness and desperation.¹²

The Nizam's government would often bring a last minute ban on the anniversary celebration planned by the Arya Samaj much in advance. They were not allowed on most occasions to go on a procession. When the grievances of the Aryas increased, the President Mahatma Narayan Swami submitted a memorial dated 9th August 1934, to his Exalted Highness seeking his personal and gracious intervention for the redressing of Arya Samaj grievances. He explained in detail the role of the Arya Samaj as a universal organization and the decades of its service in the Nizam's government. He cited the services of some of them who worked as loyal and distinguished subjects of the Nizam. He lamented that a highly respected and renowned person like Pandit Ramachandra Dehlavi was treated so badly. He also pointed out that on the death of Pandit Keshava Rao, a judge of Hyderabad High Court of Judicature and pioneer of Arya Samaj, the Kotwal had served a notice that only a resolution on the occasion could be passed but no speeches were to be delivered. Therefore it was quite natural that such an order should provoke resentment, foster discontent and produce needless heart burning. He urged the government not to make any restriction on entry of Arya Samaj preachers in the state. No discrimination be made, their religion and their logical literature may not be forfeited without proper enquiry¹³. After a long wait, a reply from the Political Member of HEH Nizam's government was sent. He wrote

¹² The case of Arya Samaj in Hyderabad from the Collections of *Harishchandra Heda Gyanakumari Heda Samvai Seva Trust*. D.A. p6. Pandit Narendraji along with other distinguished addressed a gathering in Halikhed. He said "paap se daro paapi se nahi"(fear sin, not the sinner) This had a great impact on the youth who were determined to fight the atrocities of the Nizam's .from , Narendraji,opcit,p.p.32,33.

An intimation regarding this memorial along with the copy of the same was also sent to the Political Secretary , Foreign and Political Department , Government of India. The memorial submitted by the president was not even acknowledged by the Nizam in *The Case Of Arya Samaj* opcit,p.8.

"I am now desired to inform you that there is no question of putting any restrictions in the way of the followers of any religion or sect in Hyderabad state. HEH, the Nizam's government is and always has been impartial in the treatment it accords to its subjects, of whatever religion or sect or denomination they may be ... I am to add therefore that there has been no idea of putting the Arya Samajists in particular under any special disabilities."¹⁴

But the debate between the Aryas and the Nizam's government continued as there were many misgivings on the part of the government. Shri Narayana Swami, Swami Swatantranand and Acharya Ramadev came in a deputation to see for themselves the conditions in the state. They were allowed to move freely and address meetings. But the moment they left the state all the restrictions were revived with greater vigour.¹⁵

In 1935, the first Taluqdar of Bidar ruthlessly dealt with Arya Samaj at Nilanga. in Bidar district. Havan Kund and Samaj Mandir were desecrated and destroyed. The Samaj registered its protest against this sacrilegious action of the Taluqdar. Nawab Zuloader Jung, the Police Secretary of the State ordered the Taluqdar to reconstruct the Mandir and the Havan Kund, spending money from his own pocket.¹⁶

But the attitude of the government was very stiffened. The Samaj could not celebrate any functions, meetings relating to death anniversary and birth anniversaries dates of great personalities, religious ceremonies, fairs, Nagar kirtans, literary activities, conduct schools or have Havan Kund or unfurl 'OM' flags. After intensified endeavors, the Samaj was permitted to start an under weekly, *Vaidic Adarsh* in 1934.

¹⁴ Letter No. 212 dated 11th September 1934 in Case of Arya Samaj in Hyderabad State, p.p 25 - 26

⁵ Narandra, *Arya Samaj in Hyderabad*, Delhi, 1975. P.4

¹⁶ *Ibid* p.5

But the fearless and frank tone of Pandit Narendraji in it displeased the government and its publication was stopped by a government order in 1935.¹⁷

In 1936, at Humnabad - Manik Nagar, the Arya Samaj workers had commenced their preaching work. A few muslims picked up a quarrel with a 'Nagar Kirtan' party and there was a scuffle and a clash. The police appeared on the scene encouraging the muslims to chastise the Aryans. The two famous brothers Bansilal and Shamlal and Pandit Narendra were arrested. At Umerga, a worker by name Ramachandra was found to have a copy of Satyartha Prakash. It was seized by the police as a seditious book. A Great agitation had to be made after which the Satyartha Prakash was returned to Ramachandra.

When the circular No.53 which forbade all meetings of every character was issued in 1937, the Arya Samaj protested against it by holding celebration without any prior sanction. That year, an Arya Samajist, Veda Prakash, was persuaded to accept Islam but on his stubborn rejection to do so he was murdered at Gunjoti.

An All India Aryan Conference was held from 25th to 29th December 1938 in Sholapur now in Maharashtra. The president of the session Sri Madhav Sri Hari Annay addressed the Nawabs and Rajahs saying that

"in today's world they need the help of the people to govern and to hand over responsibility to them",¹⁸.

¹⁷ According to Rajendra in his book *Asaf Jahis of Hyderabad*, Delhi 1984, The Arya Samaj, which was basically a movement of religious reform, inevitably strayed into political territory to take the cause of the majority community in Hyderabad which was living under unspeakable disabilities.

Brahmadutt, snathak op cit p9

The Arya Samaj defied the order of the government in 1938 that their permission be sought before a Havan Kund was constructed anywhere.¹⁹

The resentment in the majority community and the high-handedness of the government led to a number of communal riots in the year 1938.

- At Gulbarga, in 1938 riots burst out because a few drops of colored water soiled the dress of a Musalman during Holi celebration. Prominent Hindu local leaders were arrested and sentenced.
- The notorious Dhulpet communal riot took place in Hyderabad in 1938 when 21 active workers of Arya Samaj were arrested.
- A serious riot took place at Vidigir during the Dasara celebration in 1938 in which Shiv Shyamlal was arrested along with 20 colleagues. He died in Bidar jail. It is reported that some foul play was the cause of his death.
- To stop the activities of Pandit Narendra, the government arrested and sent him to Mannanoor.

During this period an open letter was written to Sir Akbar Hydari, the Premier of Hyderabad. Though initially he was very broad minded and benevolent he played into reactionary hands and thus had disappointed the people of Hyderabad. Excerpts from the letter which was published and printed are given below.

“ Your Excellency, pardon me for the liberty but I believe even great men need sometime be told some plain home truths... you have an eye for merit and appreciate good work done by others, Although prejudiced against Arya Samajists, your sincere regard for the service rendered by them in plague and in influenza is well known ...You have never lost any opportunity to exercise your influence to utilize your position for the good of the Muslims... The yeomen

Narendra *Arya Samaj in Hyderabad*, Delhi 1975p.5

contribution you have made to the perpetuation of Muslim stewardship of Hyderabad by the inauguration of the Osmania University cannot be equaled by any one before or after you...By the acquisition of the Railway you have opened fresh avenues of services for Muslims, who were in microscopic minority in the Railway services before acquisition by the Government ... The reasons for your change in attitude, Sir Akbar, can I think be traced to the last communal riots in Hyderabad. It is an open secret that you were surrounded by reactionaries during these riots. The whole blame for the riots was piled on the poor Arya Samajists and the Hindus by the Information Bureau. In trying to placate a small but loud section of the Muslim reactionaries, you did not do fair justice to a large section of the oppressed citizens. It would shatter the faith of any people in an administration which could tolerate the members of its militia to go about as Goondas rioting in the streets. In spite of the repeated demands of the Hindu leaders for an impartial enquiry into the riots, and may I ask you a plain question, why did the Government shirk this inquiry? The Government only hauled up the leaders of Arya Samaj and prosecuted them for murder and rioting. The fair plea of the accused for an impartial jury was turned down and all the twenty-four arrested were sentenced to life imprisonment... I hope you are not unaware, Sir Akbar that the shattering of people's faith in its administration leads to the overthrow of the latter... It is a pity you should have rejected the conciliatory proposals of Mr. Bhulabhai Desai for withdrawing these cases together with cases against Muslims. You did not also pay any heed to the very reasonable demand of the people for the liberal modification of the rules regarding public meetings. If these two things were done, I am sure people would have patiently waited for the promised reforms and any agitation for an accelerated pace of the reforms would have been only constitutional.

I must end this arduous task, Sir Akbar by a summary review of the latest events. Whereas the banning of the government servants from communal organization both Muslim and Hindu was a broad gesture of impartiality on the part of your government its practical application lacked honesty when it could allow government servants like Bahadur Yar Jung and Moulvi Abdul Haq to continue their open communal and political agitation inside and outside Hyderabad... The ban on the Congress by accusing it of communalism inspite of its avowed non-communal character in outlook and practice manifested how deeply you have played into the hands of reactionaries. The government can put down an agitation but how can it suppress the burning discontentment which is raging in and is bound to increase day by day among the masses!...Have the lessons of History been lost on a statesman like you?...Lastly may I plead that it is not too late still and there are men who have yet faith in your personal statesmanship and who will willingly respond to the call for friendly reconciliation if a sufficient practical gesture is made from Government. May I trust this will be forthcoming?"²⁰

Obviously, no damage control was done on the part of the government and the 1938 Satyagraha by Arya Samajists was inevitable. The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Delhi also wrote several times inviting the attention of the government but of no avail. As a last resort it was decided by them that a strong fight should be put up with the Hyderabad government without which the matters could not improve. The words of the Nizam and his actions hardly matched as far as his impartial rule over all subjects of his dominion were concerned.

²⁰ *An Open Letter to Sir Akbar Hydari, Sd . a Hyderabad.* This was published by Mr.Ragavendra Rao Sharma, at the Vaidik Ashram, Poona in 1938.

The year 1937 was the silver jubilee year of the Nizam's accession and one of the most jubilant gatherings seen for many years was the Jubilee Darbar held on the first night of the Jubilee celebrations, attended by Hyderabad princes and princesses, members of the Executive Council, noblemen, prominent citizens and many state guest among whom were a number Indian Ruling princes. At the Darbar, HEH the Nizam received an address from the 14 million subjects, tender, sincere and loyal felicitations on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his reign. The address read by Sir Kishan Pershad expressed the allegiance and loyalty of the subjects to the Nizam. The Nizam in his reply assured that his life was dedicated to the welfare of his beloved subjects. He said, "To be their servant is a source of pride and distinction to me".(He also added,

"Nothing can give me greater pleasure than to see as I see today that addresses on this occasion have been presented by subjects unitedly without distinction of class, sect or religion. This is a blessing which seldom falls to the lot of any ruler."²¹

The good intentions of the ruler remained only on paper and speeches. Meanwhile the League of the Arya Samaj took stock of the situation and opined that it could no longer can be ignored or disregarded. They demanded an early settlement of a number of grievances. Some of them are mentioned below.

- 1) Circular no.53 prohibiting public meeting should be cancelled.
- 2) Restrictions regarding religious ceremonies should be removed.
- 3) Circular prohibiting the opening of "Akharas" and private schools should be cancelled.
- 4) Cases relating to communal disturbances should be investigated by an impartial tribunal.

- 5) There should be complete freedom for the observance of Hindu and Arya festivals when these coincide with Muslim festivals.
- 6) No victimization of Aryas in state service should be allowed and they should have complete freedom for hoisting and flying OM flags on their houses and Arya Samaj temples.

Prohibitory orders were issued on Barrister N.F.Nariman, the well-known criminal lawyer of Bombay, who was called to defend the accused from the Aryas. His entry was banned on the extraordinary grounds of his political views.²²

When there was a spate of uncalled for murders of Aryas by Muslim fanatics, an open letter was written to Sir Akbar Hydari by the Secretary of Arya Samaj, Prof. Sudhakar. Extracts are given below.

"Dear Sir Akbar Hyderi,

Disquieting news of the murders of Arya Samajists by Muslim fanatics have created sensation all over Hindu-India. Ved Prakash was martyred at Gunjati, Dharam Prakash at Kalyani and Maha Deva at village Akolaga ... You have recently delivered your convocational sermon to Dacca university students, preaching against communalism. But have not the news of these murders the result of Muslim communalism and fanaticism-reached your ears? ...An astute administrator like yourself is hardly expected to allow things to drift in the manner they are drifting. Please take steps to stop this drift so that it may not become too late."

²¹ The *Eastern Times, Hyderabad* 19th Feb 1937 special Jubilee Number, p.20

The *Case Of The Arya Samaj in Hyderabad State* from the collection of H. **Gyan Samvai Sevak**. p.60

²³ *Ibid* p.p 65, 66

The Arya Samaj could not and would not also tolerate the Tabligh propaganda organized and strengthened by the government.²⁴ The Arya Samaj in their meeting on 9th October 1938 declared Mahatma Narayan Swami as the First Dictator and his orders would be final. He was to be entrusted with the task of starting a mass movement of Satyagraha to redress their grievances in Hyderabad. He entered Hyderabad on 31st January 1939. But the police arrested him and drove him to Sholapur. But he offered Satyagraha again in 1939 at Gulbarga. He and his followers were arrested and sentenced to one years' rigorous imprisonment.²⁵

The second dictator was Shri Kanwar Chanda Kurana Sharada, who, with his batch, offered Satyagraha on 5th March, 1939, and later Shri Khushal Chand who assumed the name "Anand Swamy". He went with a batch of 154. The fourth dictator was Rajguru Dhurendra Shastri later it was Swami Dhruva Nand who led with a large following. Dhurendra Sastri and his 530 followers were sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. The fifth dictator was Pt. Vedvrata later Swami Abhedha Nand and the sixth was Mahashaya Krishan. The seventh was Gyanendra. In addition to these leaders of the Satyagraha movement who were all well-known all-India figures, there were other dictators and volunteers from Hyderabad itself. The names of the dictators are Shesha Rao, Dattatraya Prasad, Digambar Rao Shivangeerkar; Shanker Rao Patel, Andhori Nivrithi Reddy, Ahmadpur, Digamber Rao Latkar, Ganpat Roa Kethle, Kalam. About 12,000 Satyagrahis were arrested of which 5,000 were Hyderabadis. Pandit Vinayak Rao Vidyalkar was nominated as the eighth dictator. He was about to offer

They were freely allowed to, both forcibly and conciliatorily, convert people in prisons and schools, into Islam.

⁵ There were number of leaders and 'dictators' that emerged for the Aryas during this period, there was no dearth of Satya Grahis inspite of harsh repressive measure adopted by the government. In the book *Arya Samaj in Hyderabad*, by Narandra a graphic detail of the ill treatment of the Satyagrahi prisoners in Jails is given . Against the apprehensions of all leaders of Arya Samaj the Satyagrahis remain disciplined and exercised great moderation.

Satyagraha with 8,000 Hyderabad Satyagrahis on the 21st of July 1939. But the Nizam's Government announced certain administrative reforms and hence the Satyagraha was suspended.

This was followed by a number of arrests of Arya Samaj leaders. Some of them were

1) On 5th March 1939 Kuwar Chandkaran Sharada along with 100 satyagrahis was arrested in Gulbarga He was later sentenced to one-year rigorous imprisonment.

2) On 22nd March 1939, Kushalchand was arrested in the Gulbarga railway station along with 160 Satyagrahis. Hewas sentenced to 18 months imprisonment in Gulbarga prison.

3) On 4th April 1939, Dhurendra Shastry along with 501 satyagrahis was arrested.²⁶

More than 12,000 satyagrahis were actively involved in the struggle with the Nizam's government.²⁷Initially the Nizam's government was contemplating coming to some understanding. But the leaders of the 'Anjuman Ittehad –ul-Muslimeen' prevented the government from doing so and the government had to retrace some of its steps.²⁸

Due to tremendous pressure exerted by the satyagrahis, the government instructed the Aryan authorities to send a deputy with whom they would discuss and clarify the reforms to be introduced. Almost all the demands of Arya Samaj were conceded to. On 8th August 1939, the declaration was made that the Arya Satyagraha had been suspended. The years following the Satyagraha, the Arya Samaj decided to take up constructive work. They decided to set up educational institutions called Keshav

²⁶ Brahamadutt Snathak, Hyderabad Satyagraha par **pramanik** Dasthavez , Delhi, 1990 p.p 11 - 13.

²⁷ *Ibid* p. 33

²⁸ Pt. Narandra , *Op.cit.*, p.8

Memorial High School on 20th July, 1940 and the foundation stone was laid on 20th September in the same year by Sri Ghanashyam Singh Gupta. The organizers yearned to have Hindi as the medium of the instruction in the High school, but they could not achieve their objective till 1948.

Speaking in a radio broadcast on 21st August 1989, Shri Brahmatt Snathak on the Hyderabad Satyagraha he said, "The Satyagraha launched in 1939 was not against the Muslims but against the oppressive rule of the Nizam". He said in the Satyagrah, the Sikhs, Jains and even a few muslims participated. He said that even Sardar Patel admitted that the 1938-39 Satyagrah spearheaded by Arya Samaj prepared the way for the accession of Hyderabad ten years later. It was a test of fire and the Arya Samaj came out victoriously.

This satyagrah has been considered an important landmark in the history of Hyderabad freedom struggle and the government in recognition of it has been honouring those who bravely participated in it by granting pensions to them²⁹.

Reminiscing fifty one years later about the 1939 Satyagraha, Brahmatt Snathak in 1990, writes that a number of Satyagrahis came from outside Hyderabad also to join the Satyagraha. Leaders from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Hyderabad and Gujarat emerged as 'dictators' in different phases of the Satyagraha. They put forth fourteen major demands before the Nizam's Government

Initially, the State Congress and All India Congress were critical of the Satyagraha but when they saw the success it achieved the congratulatory messages poured in from all of them. Mahatma Gandhi also gave special commendation Brahmadatt concludes,

"I was only 20 years old then and the only child of my parents, it gives great pride that the Satyagraha has been recognized by the Indian Government as a part of the National Freedom Struggle"³⁰.

Regarding the reaction the of the Muslims in the state, the Muslims of Hyderabad in February, 1939 submitted a memorandum to Sir Akbar Hydari pointing out the indifference of state towards the agitation started by the Arya Samaj and warning that if the movement was not suppressed within a fortnight they would come forward to combat the agitation on behalf of the state, and the ruler who belonged to the Muslims and not bother about the consequences that might follow.³¹

The situation and attitude of the Nizam's government towards the Aryas had not improved and in a conference held at Udgir in 1942, 26 resolutions were adopted. They impressed upon the government that reforms were violated at every step and if the government did not try to retrieve these steps the Arya Samaj would not be held responsible for any of the consequences.³²

³⁰ *Ibid* pp 94 and 95

³¹ Department of Investigation Bureau (DIB) Report of Hyderabad agitation, 6th May 1939, Government of India, Home - Political, File No.42/3/39(NAI) in Basudev Chatterji's ed. *Documents on the movement for Independence in India*, 1938 . Part III., ICHR, New Delhi 1999. p . 3063.

³² The government did not take any heed to this and the houses and shops of Hindus were attacked and burnt, Peaceful processions were shot at in many places like Bidar, Humnabad, Nagar Karnool , and Hingoli, Jogipetha and Tarkheda according to Pt. Narandra in his book *Arya Samaj in Hyderabad*. p. 12

Between 1942 and 1945 five Aryan conferences were held in different parts of Nizam's dominions. It brought solidarity and unity among the Aryas.

A conference was held at Udgir in 1942 under the Presidentship of Pandit Vinayak Rao Vidyalkar. Pandit Narendrajji was the Secretary. The conference was held on 12th and 13th of February, and 26 resolutions were adopted. It impressed upon the Government that the agreements reached and terms laid down in the Reforms were being violated at every step. If the Government did not try to retrieve these steps, the Arya Samaj shall have to gird up its loins to meet the situation and it would not be held responsible for any of the consequences. But the Government did not take any heed, as it was wont. At Aurad Shahjahni in Bidar district, the Muslims attacked the shops and houses of the Hindus and Aryans and burnt them when doors were closed. One person who showed some resistance was killed. Mahatma Gandhi ordered a sum of one thousand five hundred rupees to be sent to the aid of the sufferers. Even the Samaj collected Rs.2000/- for the same cause. Deshabandhu and other Aryan workers of the place were arrested and sentenced to long-term imprisonment. Permission was not granted for the annual celebrations at Chincholi and Gunjoti

On 3rd March 1942, when the Aryan procession was peacefully passing at Humnabad, Sri Shivachandra and his three colleagues were shot dead by the Musalmans. At Nagarkarnool and Hingoli, a cruel assault was made on Hindus by the Muslims and the culprits were discovered by the police only among the Aryans who

were later sentenced. The same miserable tragedies were enacted at Jogipetha and Tarakheda. On 10th December 1942, the shops of the Hindus were looted at Gulbarga to ensure they were paralysed financially so that they might not patronise the Samaj activities. No steps were taken by the Government to punish the real wrong doers or to root out such tendencies.

In 1943, the Arya Samaj celebrated the Aryan Conference at Nizamabad. Shri Ganapat Kashinath Shastri was elected to preside. The same resolutions as in the previous conference were reiterated. But one very significant resolution related to the establishment of one hundred *Pathashalas* and volunteer corps which numbered 25,000. Sri Dattatreya Prasad's speech at the conference was found by the police as quite objectionable and action was launched against him in the court. Pandit Naranderji was also found guilty of a speech delivered by him at Gulbarga. Pandit Naranderji was sentenced to one month's rigorous imprisonment. Unmindful of all these calamities, the Samaj established a Swadhyaya Mandal Study circle at Ghatkesar for training preachers and celebrated 26 annual functions at the branches in districts and held Vedic Saptahas at 29 places throughout the State.

The third annual conference of the Samaj was celebrated at Narayanpeth. Rai Suraj Chandji presided over the deliberations. The new feature of this conference was the celebration of Mahila Sammelan, Arya Kumar Sammelan, the Updeshak and Mantri Sammelan. This year the Sindh Muslim League had resolved to put a ban on the *Satyartha Prakash*. An All India agitation culminating in Satyagraha protected the book against this fate. Hyderabad State Arya Samaj fully supported the protest movement.

A communal clash took place at Nizamabad on the occasion of the Dasera. The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha demanded that an investigation should be made to find out the culprits but the Government did not give up its negligent attitude. In 1944, the strength of Aryan missionaries rose to three hundred; the Pathashalas and the number of pupils receiving education also showed a commendable increase and therefore a new edition of the Telugu *Satyartha Prakash* was brought out.

In 1945, a training centre called Upadeshak Vidyalaya was started at Nalgonda. The trainees received coaching for carrying on the preaching work. Sri Badradev and Pandit Narendraji toured several places and collected a fund of Rs.7,000/- with which the Vidyalaya made a beginning.

The fourth Aryan Conference took place at Gulbarga on 22nd, 23rd and 24th of April 1945, under the Presidentship of Rajha Narayan Lal Pitti. The police authorities were determined to create some disturbance. In the very presence of the Police authorities Pandit Vinayak Rao, Shri Ganapati Shastri, Pandit Narendarji and a worker, Sri Hiralal were severely beaten. Pandit Narendarji suffered from a fracture in the leg. Widespread resentment spread all over the State and the Police Department was compelled to degrade one Sub-Inspector of Police and four constables. Due to the illness of Narendarji, Sri Krishna Dutt worked as Secretary. Efforts were made to get the ban on entry into the state put on Arya Samaj leaders.

The fifth Aryan Conference was celebrated at Warangal in 1946. Pandit Vinayak Rao presided at the Conference and Shri Krishna Dutt was the secretary of the Conference. Pandit Narendarji was released and the ban put on his movements and speech was lifted.

Sir Mirza Ismail assumed the Prime Ministership of Hyderabad and a hope for a better situation was expected. Permission was granted to start a weekly, “*Aryabhandu*”. Many Arya Samajists languishing in jail for communal riots were released. A minister of such liberal views could not continue in Hyderabad. Circumstances so conspired that he had to submit his resignation and leave Hyderabad.³³

On 15th August 1947, when India attained Independence, Hyderabad, was trying to assert its independence. It was during this time that the sixth annual conference of Arya Samaj took place at Jalna. It passed a resolution that the Nizam should integrate his dominions with the Indian Union and immediately allow the formation of a responsible government.

During the period from 15th August 1947 to 17th September 1948, thousands of Hindus had left their houses and crossed into the Indian territory due to the Razakkars menace. Arya Samaj had set up camps for such refugees in places like Sholapur, Pandarpur, Barsi, Bijapur, Umaarkhade, Buldhana, Amaravathi and Vijayawada and every possible help was given to them.³⁴

Pandit Vinayak Rao was the president of the Lawyer's Protest Committee. He collected authentic information about the Razakar atrocities and sent a report to New Delhi and therefore was arrested. Swami Swathantra Nandji worked as Field Marshal

³³ Pt. **Narendra Aryasamaj** in *Hyderabad*, New Delhi 1975. p.p. 12-14

³⁴ V.H Desai in his book “*Vandemataram to Jana Gana Mana*”, Bombay 1990 gives the details of the Atrocities committed by the Razakkars. p .p 185 -189.

and accredited lieutenant of Mahatma Narayan Swamiji. He arranged and managed the Satyagraha camps most efficiently and with exemplary tact and perseverance.

When Hyderabad declared Independence, K.Joshi, printed a pamphlet making clear the intentions of the majority community in Hyderabad. The extracts are as follows,

"Hyderabad cannot suppress the democratic aspirations of the people any longer. In this age of democracy it is an admitted fact that sovereignty rests with the people. Hyderabad cannot be an exception to this rule... The people of Hyderabad cannot be politically isolated from the rest of India. Hyderabad groans under the heels of feudal bureaucracy today. It is politically backward and economically poor. The standard of literacy is very low. There is no freedom of speech in the state... Responsible government is the only panacea to these evils."³⁵

These are the people who laid down their lives fighting the oppressive rule of Nizam of Hyderabad.

1. Shyamlal
2. Ram
3. Mahdav Rao
4. Swami Kalyan Sen
5. Malkan Singh
6. Dharm Prakash
7. Pandurang
8. Shanthi Prakash
9. Lakhsman Rao
10. Bhakt Arora

11. Nandu Singh
12. Badan Singh
13. Chotelal
14. Fakhir Chand
15. Bheem Rao
16. Arjun Singh
17. Baidnath
18. Dayanand
19. Radhakrishna
20. Mahadev
21. Paramanand
22. Vishnu Bhagvad
23. Satyanand
24. Ved Prakash
25. Ramnath
26. Dharm Prakash
27. Purushotham
28. Venkat Rao
29. Mathu Ram
30. Govind Rao
31. Rathi Ram
32. Tarachand
33. Ashrafi Lal
34. Manick Rao
35. Mahadev

³⁵ Krishna Charya Joshi, *Hyderabad Today*, Hyderabad 1947

36. Satyanarayana

37. Brahmachary

38. Narasingh

Source : Brahmaddatt Snathak's *op.cit* p 6

For the first time after 48 years the Hyderabad Satyagrahis were honoured in an Aryan Conference in Ajmer. A long number of people gathered from different parts of India. Brahmaddatt Santhak speaking on this occasion said,

"2,500 Satyagrahis were nominated by him for awarding them pension as freedom fighters. But only 50 out of them have started receiving pensions"³⁶.

The account of Pandit Narendrji, one of the stalwarts of the Arya Samaj movement in his autobiography titled, "*Jeevan Ki Doop Chaav*" gives a vivid picture of the conditions in the Hyderabad state during Osman Ali Khan's rule.

Pandit Narendrji's association with Hyderabad government began from the time his father took up service in the Nizam's administration. His family served the Nizam faithfully and therefore they were given the rank of Mansabdar. But after the death of his father, he was not allowed to inherit this privilege on the grounds of some accusations made against him. Nawab Fakiyar Jung Bahadur representing the government wrote to him stating that even after warning he was working against the Nizam's rules and regulations. When he asked for the right of Mansabdari, the Nawab replied,

³⁶ Brahmaddatt Snathak *op.cit*. Pp 56-57

"Don't fight the Nizam but write an apology letter and then you will get it back".

But Narendra was not willing to beg. He decided to find a purpose in life. He said,

"Troubles always make you more experienced. For achieving every good work you need to take the path of thorns. You should not be worried about the sun and shade in life".

It was during this time that a man by name Siddiq Deendhar claiming to be a reincarnation of Lingayat sect addressed a number of meetings in Hubli, Darwar, Mysore, Gulbarga and Raichur. He met the lingayats and also other Hindus and was on the job of converting them to Muslims. He had the backing of the Nizam. Deendhar wrote a book "*Sarvare Aallaam* " in which he ridiculed Yogeshwara Krishna and the Hindu goddesses. He told the Muslims,

"The Muslims may be less in number but the ruler is a Muslim so don't worry, you will be on top. The Muslims will be ultimately successful".

To counter Deendhar, Pandit Ramachandra Dehalviji from Delhi came to Hyderabad in 1929. Chandulal the head of the Arya Samaj invited him as he was well versed in Quran. He spoke at length to large gatherings for five days. He exhorted "Don't get scared, be bold". He spoke on the topics like *Atma*, *Paramatma*, Materialism and Vedic Religion. He spoke vehemently against caste system.

Pandit Narendraji bought the *Satyarth Prakash* in Urdu and began to read it. He found the job in Sarfe Khas land administration office for a salary of Rs.

50/- per month. The first thing he did with his salary was to become a member of Arya Samaj by paying a membership fee of 25 paise.

He got so involved in the work of Arya Samaj and resolved to remain single. He was greatly influenced by the speeches of the great orator Pandit Chandra Banu, an expert in Vedic principles when he came to Hyderabad in 1930. With the initiative taken by him Narandraji was sent to study in an ashram in Lahore.

The first time Pandit Narendra participated in Satyagraha was in 1932 when Mahatma started his fast unto death in the Yeravada Jail against the 'Harijan Award' introduced by British which was intended to create rift between Hindus and Muslims. He came back to Hyderabad in 1933. When he was asked to address a gathering he spoke on "*Quran me Vaidon Ka Tej*". It caused a great impact on people. He along with the number of prominent Arya Samaj leaders of Hyderabad went to Halikhed to participate in a gathering addressed by Dehalviji. This gave a fresh lease of life to Hindus. The author also spoke on the topic, "*Paap se daro, paapi se nahee*" (fear sin not the sinner). It had a great impact on the youth especially to fight the atrocities of the Nizam's rule.

It was during the three day Nizam State Conference that the decision to start the Weekly Paper "*Vaidek Adarsh*" (Principles of Vedas) was taken. He was given the responsibility to bring out the first edition of the *Vaidek Adarsh*. It became very popular.

On 18th April 1935 a notice was given by the Nizam's Government to him asking him to show cause why no action should be taken against him. The *Vaidek Adarsh* had boldly exposed the atrocities of the Nizam's Government. The Muslim papers started propaganda against him. The Nizam slammed a ban on all his writings and speeches .

Pandit Narendra also worked as the President of Arya Samaj for four years. The Government was disturbed by the growing number of Arya Samaj followers, which reached 50,000 by 1935, and they started putting a lot of pressure on the Arya Samaj. Narendraji continued to address a number of meetings especially for the youth which greatly irked the Government. For this he was sentenced to six months imprisonment and a fine of Rs.200/-.

In 1938, a procession was organised by the Arya Samaj on the occasion of **Holi**. At the instance of two lawyers, Pasha Miya and Mohammed Saheb, the Muslims started attacking the peaceful Arya Samaj procession. There were clashes and casualties on both sides. The Arya Samajists were sentenced to jail for abetting violence. According to Narendraji, while in jail one of them, Shyamalaji became very ill and the doctor prescribed medicine to which the assistant Jailor mixed poison and he died.

There were many times he escaped death narrowly in his valiant struggle against the Nizam's oppressive rule. While attending the conference in Jadcherla, there was an attempt on his life. Suddenly a youth from the back seat of his car tried to kill him with a revolver, but he escaped by the skin of his teeth.

The Nizam's Government had a strict surveillance on him and his activities. All the letters written by him from prison and also from his home were scrutinized by the Government. On another occasion while he was returning from Nizamsagar, during the night, two youths who were hiding fired at the vehicle he was traveling. Shri Ganga Ram, an Advocate who was traveling with him was hurt and was bleeding. But Narendra narrowly escaped as the bullet brushed the Gandhian Cap he was wearing.

Narendra was actively involved in the call for "Join India Movement" given by Swami Ramanand Thirtha in August 1947. When the Nizam refused to accede to the Indian Union. After integration, he contested in the first General Elections representing the Congress Party and became an M.L.A. His yeomen services to the State of Hyderabad can never be forgotten.³⁷

A special mention must be made of Narayan Rao Pawar who was called the daredevil of Hyderabad. Narayan Rao Pawar immortalized his name in the history of freedom struggle in Hyderabad by sending shock waves down the spine of the then mighty seventh Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan, by making an assassination bid. He was an Arya Samaj activist and was one of the suicide squad of three - Gangaram, Jagdish and Pawar. They were armed with four bombs, two revolvers and a bottle of poison each. They wanted to attack the Nizam when he went on his customary drive in the evening from King Kothi to Mecca Masjid. He positioned himself in the All-Saints lane and Gangaram at Boggulkunta and Jagdish a little further down.

³⁷ Summary of the Autobiography of Pandit Narendra, "*Jeevan Ki Doop Chaav*" in Hindi. This summary is translated by the present researcher into English

As the Nizam's car turned the corner he pulled a bomb and charged out of the lane pushing a police constable stationed there to make his way towards the speeding car. As a quirk of fate would have it, the bomb missed the target and hurt five others. The next moment the police constable pounced on him, held his arms while another kicked at his ribs, immobilizing him with pain. After that he could neither throw another bomb or consume poison. The Nizam returned to King Kothi, foiling even the attempts of his two other friends who were waiting for the convoy. Pawar was 21 then, and working as a lawyer at the High Court. He was greatly inspired by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose who said, "Give me blood and I will give you freedom ". Their plan was to eliminate Mir Osman Ali Khan and then bank on the prospect of pitting his two sons Azam Jah and Moazzam Jah against each other for the throne and hoped the resulting chaos would give an excuse to Sardar Patel to send the Indian army.

Pawar was charged under various laws including waging a war against the King and sentenced to imprisonment. The punishment was death and Gangaram was given life imprisonment. When questioned on how he faced the trial, he replied,

"It was an agonizing experience. The police tortured me, but the judiciary was polite. The sessions court itself appointed a lawyer for me, who asked me to change my statement that I threw the bomb only to bring the issue of levy to the Nizam and not to kill him. But I refused to do so."

About the story of his release he said,

"It is a long story. The Nizam was about to execute the death sentence on me in the second week of September 1948. But the Police Action stopped it and General Choudhary commuted it to life imprisonment. But it took the Congress regime a year to release me

unconditionally on August 10 1949. The Congress leaders were under tremendous public pressure. Swami Ramanand Thirtha reluctantly agreed to my release. It took them one more year to remove my name from the black list prepared by the Nizam." *

Asked about the treatment meted out to him after the fall of Nizam he said,

"The new government led by Congress leaders treated me as a militant and as one against 'ahimsa'. They had to release me unconditionally from jail only after Pandit Narendraji brought pressure on the government."

He says,

"It was only the visit of Sardar Patel to the city which brought light into my life. Following his initiative on August 10, 1949, I walked out into a free world and an independent country in my dreams."

In the article, "A Tryst With Destiny", V.H.Desai asks,

"How far have we fulfilled our pledge to take our country forward on the path of freedom and progress? Year after year we go out to welcome this day with crowded memories of our long struggle for freedom. But memory should not be a burden of the past but an inspiration for the future. Indeed India's struggle for independence was not just a negative movement but a rigorous course of spiritual education. This education which shaped the soul of our fighting patriot to the divine mould of Truth and Non-violence is the pathway to India's destiny... It is high time we awake to life and protect our hard won freedom as we have yet another tryst with destiny; to make our country the leading light of the world."³⁹

The above matter is collected from excerpts of the interview which was published in the *Deccan Chronicle*, August 15, 1997 p TV and an interview which appeared in *Indian Express*, September 12, 1998, Special Supplement, p.I.

³⁹ *The Hindustan Times* August 15th 1992 .p.7

Thus the role of Arya Samaj as a pressure group in Hyderabad state cannot be underestimated. They took active part in keeping up the ideals of the Arya Samaj till the end. They were not provocative but when intimidated they would not take it lying down. They were not going to meekly accept the growing injustice and oppressive rule of the Hyderabad state especially against the majority. At no stage could they be sidelined. They were able through their 1938 Satyagraha make the unjust highhanded rule public and national. They took active part in the politics as well as in religious and social revival of the society. The frustrations of the majority community had become so high that the leaders were willing to pay any price in order to change the existing order. Arya Samaj preached equality of all human beings and stressed in equal opportunities. They realized that this was lacking in Hyderabad. Though some scholars blamed the Arya Samaj for becoming militant and inciting communal passion, the Samajists justified their action by stating that they had no choice. Their initiative of setting up refugees camps in the face of Razakkar menace made them popular. Thus their part in helping the integration of Hyderabad into the Indian Union cannot be ignored.

The following Chapter deals with the Press and its Role in Hyderabad.