Although the principality was finally transferred to the Hyderabad State by 28th February 1861 in full sovereignty a few questions concerning it continued to crop up during the following decade and the British Government was required to deal with them.

After the takeover the Nizam appointed one Chidambar Rao as taluqdar of Surapur. Chidambar Rao demanded in June 1862 from the Collector of Sholapur rupees amounting to Rs.2400 per year as Surapur's share of revenue from Bagewadi parzana of that collectorate. It was Taylor who had originally revived the claim and got it accepted by the Bombay Government during his first administration. The Collector of Sholapur had been paying it regularly till the principality was confiscated. The claim was based on the fact that first the Peshwa and then the British Government as his successor owed this amount to Surapur. But even at that time the Government of India had rejected further similar claims on Bombay Government put forth and argued out by Taylor on the ground that the British Government was not and had never been deemed subject to any of the liabilities of the Peshwa in regard to foreign states.

Chidambar Rao's claim was now rejected on the same principle. "Where the sovereignty of a state passes to the British Government by an act of power, whether that act be conquest or confiscation the British Government is not bound by the feudal or other relation which the conquered or extinguished dynasty was under". When Surapur was ceded in perpetuity to the Nizam it was done so as a reward and the British
Government's title to the territory was proved to be absolute. The Nizam could not levy any tribute from the Bombay Government thereafter. Consequently the taluqdar derived no right to it either from the Nizam or the British Government. It may be noted that while enunciating this principle the Government of India was only asserting its paramountcy and not discussing the subtle, intricate, legal implications to which it would have been compelled were the case to be pleaded before a higher, impartial and international tribunal.

Similarly, when Resident Davidson pointed out that the cession of Surapur was not regarded by the Nizam as "an act of unequivocal liberality on our part" he was duly snubbed by the Government of India. The Resident was stung by criticism in the press that he had failed to acquire the cotton-rich districts of Berar in perpetuity by the Anglo-Nizam treaty of 1860. He thought it fit to answer this criticism by indicating the respective bargaining positions of the two Governments while submitting administration reports of Hyderabad Assigned Districts for 1861-62. This post-mortem analysis was of sheer academic interest but the Government of India took strong exception to it. They reproved him, "... the introduction into the report of references to bygone political transactions [viz. transfer of Surapur] was wholly unnecessary and at any rate if he thought it right to do so he ought not to have omitted to state the reason which led the Government of India to disallow that pretence " [viz. Nizam's better claim to Surapur].
One of the problems were the petitions which continued to be sent to the British Government, despite the principality's transfer to the Nizam. When Krishtappa Naik whose jagir had been restored in lieu of stipend sent another petition regarding adjustment of villages in it the British Government had no hesitation in agreeing with the Resident that after the cession it was for the Nizam to settle the questions arising out of such rent-free subordinate tenures. But it could not deal in a similar manner with the repeated petitions of Rani Rangamma, eldest widow of the last Raja, for restoration of the raj to her. She had entertained vain hopes of regaining it through persuasive appeals and had started submitting them while the samasthan was under British sequestration. Sitaram Rao, Taylor, Resident Davidson, Salar Jang were all approached. Since Taylor had already arranged for cash allowances to all the Ranis in lieu of their jagirs and their private jewels had been returned to them the arrangement was regarded as conclusive and final. Taylor had reported that though the Ranis were somewhat sore at the loss of their rank and importance they were contented and practically better off than before as their creditors too were being paid off in instalments. As her petitions show Rani Rangamma at least was certainly not satisfied with these arrangements. As the ultimate decision regarding the region was yet to be taken it was then possible to consider her petitions were the government so inclined. But it was not and the Rani was only shunted from authority to authority. Sitaram Rao informed her that her application was sent to the Bengal Government. The Governor General asked her to
submit it to the Resident at Hyderabad. The latter did not care to respond. On 5th January 1861 she again sent her petition to the Governor General for onward transmission to the Secretary of State recapitulating the history of the principality, trying to prove the innocence of her husband, and requesting for restoration on that ground. The Government of India passed it on to the Secretary of State with the remark that "As the Shoranpoor Territory has since been transferred in Sovereignty to His Highness the Nizam, the prayer is not one to which the British Government can listen". On 23 September 1861 she submitted yet another piteous appeal to the Secretary of State through the Resident at Hyderabad and the Government of India. The Resident as usual observed that the prayer of the petitioner was untenable. The Rani banked upon the fact of the Queen belonging to her sex and possessing a merciful nature. "The ear of British justice is closed against all my complaints, representations and remonstrances" she wailed. But her sentimental appeal met the same fate as her previous petitions. The Secretary of State satisfied himself that the Rani's allowances were being punctually paid by the Nizam, that her private jewels had been restored to her and dismissed her application. The Rani made her last bid on 25 June 1867, presumably by then having come to know that the Raja of Jamkhandi had been restored, which stoked the embers of her vain hope. In this last petition she prayed that if the raj could not be restored to her she might be at least given some additional fitting relief her allowance being inadequate. The Government of India
did not think so and her application was turned down in toto with the curt remark, "the petitioner be informed that the Governor General in Council is unable to comply with her prayer".

As noticed earlier the Prise Committee had not been able to close its accounts before the transfer. Particularly the jewelry of the Gopalswami temple had been held in deposit till proper priestly claimants came forward to reclaim it. Maj. Wyndham, President of the Prise Committee reported that after its desecration the temple was no longer used as a place of worship and no claimants for its jewelry had been coming forth. The Government of India therefore, allowed its sale, which fetched the Committee (at Lingsugar) more than Rs.4000, although the Code of Military Regulations compiled by Maj. Jameson had placed temple jewelry beyond the pale of property which could be treated as prise. It would appear that the temple jewelry being held in deposit was not given due publicity by the Prise Committee on account of its greed. The Government of India had asked it to ascertain public opinion in Surapur in this respect. It is hard to believe that the most famous temple in Surapur whose jagir endowments had been particularly continued by Taylor was no longer used as a place of worship. The priests to whom the idols in the temple and a fraction of the ornaments decorating them had been returned earlier would have certainly claimed the rest had they known that it was with the Prise Committee.

Prominent personalities who do not die in natural circumstances often times give rise to pretenders
and the last Raja of Surapur who had committed suicide was an apt subject for impostors. The British Government had no cause to take note of the disturbances in Surapur created by an impersonator in 1864, except to express satisfaction at successful suppression. But on 19th September 1868 one Govinda Hanumanta bearing close physical resemblance to the late Raja and having intimate knowledge of the royal household sought recognition by a petition. The Resident at Hyderabad found after investigation his claim to be false and the Hyderabad State sentenced him to 5 years imprisonment. The sol-distant Raja in a prison again petitioned and though the Government of India considered the story most improbable it remarked that it ought to be inquired into. When the Resident informed that this had already been done and the pretender imprisoned the Government of India ordered that security for future good conduct be taken from the prisoner after release.

Thereafter Surapur completely ceased to figure in the British Government's papers. Occasional British visitors might have visited the picturesque principality with its bracing climate but the finale had been struck in official British relations with Surapur.

Notes and References:

1. FPC, 9 May 1851, No.54.
2. FPC, 15 Oct.1852, No.52.
3. FDP, Revenue A, July 1862, Nos.20-23.
Those also contradict Taylor's contention that 'Ranamma was very grateful; she did not expect half so much. I often paid her a visit and she was gradually growing more cheerful and resigned". Story, p.419.

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