

# 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Operation Polo A Tale How Hyderabad Was Liberated

## Why In The News?

- Recently Marked The **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Operation Polo**, The Military Action Launched By The Indian Army On **September 13, 1948**, To Integrate The Princely State Of Hyderabad. The **Nizam Of Hyderabad** Was Dithering On Joining India Ever Since Independence On August 15, 1947.
- The Military Offensive In Hyderabad State Was Termed As 'Police Action' At The Time By The Then Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel And The **Nizam's Forces Surrendered To The Indian Army By September 18.**



## Why Hyderabad Was So Crucial?

- Situated In The Deccan, Hyderabad Was One Of The Most Populous And Richest States And Had **17 Districts** Including **Aurangabad** (Now In Maharashtra) And **Gulbarga** (Now In Karnataka).
- The Landlocked State Had A **Majority Hindu Population** With The State Administration Almost Entirely Run By Its Muslim Rulers. **There Was No Common Border With Pakistan** But The Nizam Had Every Intention To Have Fraternal Relations With That Country.



## Why Operation Polo Was Launched?

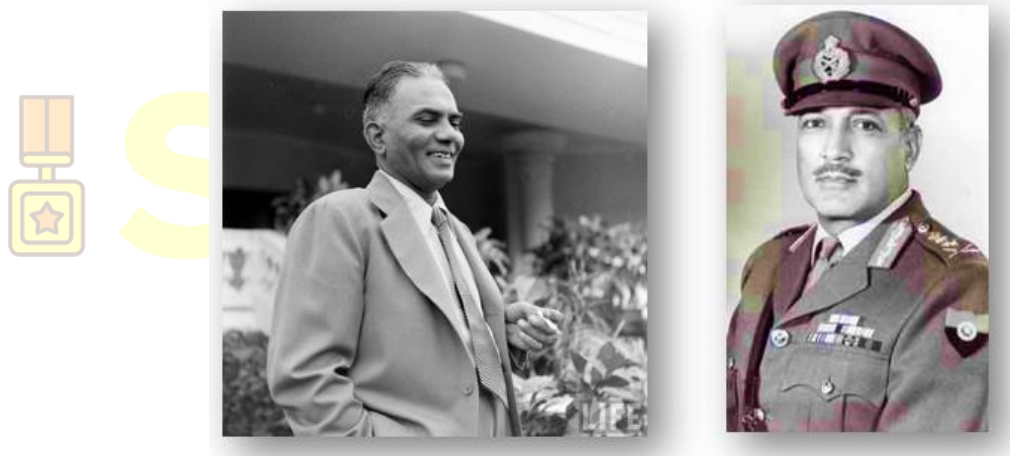
- The Nizam Of Hyderabad State, **Mir Osman Ali Shah**, Had The Intention Of Keeping His State As An **Independent Entity** And Did **Not Join India Or Pakistan** After Independence.
- The Nizam Took Advantage Of The Fact That **The Indian Government Got Preoccupied With The Kashmir War** Soon After Independence And All Focus And Resources Were Diverted Toward Tackling The Pakistani Threat To Jammu And Kashmir.
- The Nizam Signed **A Standstill Agreement** With India In November 1947 That A Status Quo Would Be Maintained For A Period Of One Year During Which The **Indian Government Would Not Exercise Any Authority** Over Hyderabad And All Conditions Prevalent At The Time Of Signing The Agreement Would Continue.
- The Nizam's Administration In Hyderabad Had Taken Advantage Of The Standstill Agreement And Increased The Number Of **Its Irregular Force Called Razakars** Which Was Led By **Maj Gen SA El Edroos**, The Arab Commander In Chief Of The Hyderabad State Forces.



- The **Excesses Of The Razakars** On The Predominantly Hindu Population Of The State, **Cross-Border Raids**, The Overtures Being Made To **Pakistan** And The Intention To Establish An **Independent Country** In The Heart Of India Were The Reasons Why The Indian Government Decided To Act Against Hyderabad.

## Nizam Forces Vs Indian Army

- Hyderabad State Forces Numbered **Little Less Than 25,000** And **Only A Fraction Was Well-Trained**. By One Estimate, There Were Not More Than Two Brigades Worth Of Opposition. Substantial Number Of **Razakars** Who Were **Ill-Trained Volunteers** Became Nuisance Rather Than Particular Military Opposition.
- Despite Big Claims By PM Of Hyderabad, **Mir Laik Ali**, Opposition To The Indian Army Crumbled Within The First Two Days Of The Offensive.
- The Indian Forces Were Led By **Maj Gen Jayanto Nath Chaudhuri**, Who Later Went On To Become The Chief Of Army Staff.



## When Did Hyderabad Forces Surrender?

- The Nizam Of Hyderabad Announced A **Ceasefire On September 17**. On September 18, Maj Gen Chaudhuri Entered Hyderabad City With His Forces And Maj Gen El Edroos Surrendered To Him. Maj Gen Chaudhuri Was Later Appointed The Military Governor Of Hyderabad.
- **Havildar Bachhitar Singh** Of 2 Sikh Was Awarded The **First Ashoka Chakra Of Independent India** Posthumously For His Role In Operation Polo. He Laid Down His Life On September 13, 1948, While Advancing To Naldurg, Which Is Now In Maharashtra But At The Time Was Part Of Hyderabad State.