

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

PRE-HISTORY

BELLARY district is one of those regions in India where man has lived since the earliest period. The archaeological explorations carried on in places like Bellary, Kappagallu, Sangankallu and Gadiganur, have shown that the early man in this region has passed through all the stages of culture—palaeolithic, microlithic, neolithic and iron age. In the palaeolithic age, his only achievements were roughly chipped stone implements; in the microlithic and neolithic stages, the implements were more varied, better-formed and polished, and pottery first came into use; and in the iron age, during which the discovery of the superiority of iron drove stone out of the field, wheel-made pottery ousted the hand-made variety. The neolithic period and the iron-age appear almost overlapped, and the people of the iron-age were probably the direct descendants of the neolithic inhabitants. Further, the pre-historic dolmens, cromlechs, menhirs and stone circles that are found abundantly in the Bellary region, it is held, show that the megalithic cultures of this part had strong affinities with similar cultures in South Africa and the Far-Eastern countries, perhaps at a time when the southern Indian peninsula formed a continuous land-mass with Africa called the 'Gondawana land'. The district is one of the richest areas from the point of view of pre-history. According to the Imperial Gezetteer of India, 1908, more palaeolithic and neolithic settlements and implements were found in Bellary district than in other districts of the Madras Presidency and some of them were of great interest (Vol. VII, p. 162). Bruce Foote, who was one of the pioneer workers in the field of pre-history of India, describes this district as "the richest in pre-historic remains of all those surveyed by me". ("The Foote Collection of Indian Pre-historic and Proto-historic activities", 1909, p. 77). His note-book showed as many as 77 pre-historic sites in this district; but at least 36 of them are important.

Palaeolithic finds.—These were discovered in the shingle fans along the foot of the 'Copper Mountain', south of Bellary. Most of these were found on the surface level. About 30 specimens were also found from the shingle fans, south-west of Halakundi village. All these were of true quartzite. In addition to these, palaeoliths of quartzite-haematite were found at Bedar-Belagallu, Gadiganur hill, Joga, Daroji, Badanahatti hill and Angur. The fort hill at Bellary yielded some palaeoliths of trap stone and the site at Hire-Kuruvatti some of quartzite.

Neolithic finds.—The neolithic remains in this district were first noticed by W. Fraser who was the District Engineer in 1872. It was he who first declared that the Face Hill at Bellary was occupied by the neolithic man. V. R. R. Dikshitar in his "Pre-Historic South India" (p. 75 and p. 96) says that though the Face Hill at Bellary is considered to be a neolithic site, still from the presence of iron slag and fragment of haematite, one has to conclude that this site legitimately belongs to the Iron Age rather than to the Neolithic. The Peacock Hill near Kappagallu has also yielded some celts, chisels and other implements of stone.

**Numerous
finds**

Bruce Foote, who started a systematic survey of the neolithic settlements from December 1884 found on the Face Hill, in addition to a neolithic settlement, a few traces of pre-historic iron-smelting industry. He also found some neolithic artifacts on the Fort Hill. But of all the sites explored by him, Kappagallu was "the most important neolithic settlement in the country", being the most prolific in implements of all kinds and in all stages of manufacture. According to Bruce Foote, it was "the site of the largest neolithic manufacturing industry as yet met with in any part of India". The Kappagallu hill is about four-and-a-half miles north-east of Bellary. The top of the hill yielded few finds; but numerous finds were discovered lower on the working grounds. The castellated summit of the hill offered its inhabitants in those days several fine rock-shelters. The site of the celt-factory was on the north-east slope of the hill, just below the outcrop of the great dyke. Different stones were used here for different purposes. Thus, for mealing stones and crushers, granite, gneiss, haematite, jasper, grit stones, etc., were used. For small tools, the neolithic man made use of siliceous stones like chert, agate, chalcedony, bloodstone, lydian stone and rock crystal. Out of these raw materials were manufactured flakes, scrapers and strike-a-lights. The flakes thus made were used for various purposes; they were used like knives, saws, drills, lancets, etc. Pigmy flakes were made of agate and chalcedony. On the north side of the hill, a few pre-historic sketches of human beings in groups and figures of birds, beasts, etc., were discovered. One of the sketches found at the Kappagallu hill was of a bull lying very near that of a *linga*. This perhaps shows that the neolithic people worshipped the *linga*.

Another important neolithic site reported by Bruce Foote was at Gadiganur, about 17 miles north of Bellary. Here, at the foot of a hill he noticed the remains of a cinder camp and fine well-polished celts and a few specimens of pottery. Beads were met with for the first time in the district at the pre-historic site on the Kurikuppi hill. These were made of shells. With them were found a few pieces of broken antique pottery and a number of broken bangles made of chank shells.

In 1948, excavations were conducted by B. Subba Rao at Sangankallu and a report on the excavations at the site was published under the title "Stone Age Cultures of Bellary, 1948". A study of the large number of stone implements and pottery from Sangankallu showed that this area had passed through not only the stages through which Brahmagiri in Chitradurga district had passed, but also through some earlier stages. An additional feature of Sangankallu was the location of a neolithic factory and the finding of a large number of patinated tools and flakes on the surface. The main phases of the Sangankallu culture may be put in brief as follows: On the top was a phase (called Phase III by Subba Rao) representing the beginning of the megalithic culture, interlocked with a late phase of the stone-axe culture, confirming the evidence of overlapping of both noticed earlier at Brahmagiri. The finds included highly polished red and black and pure black pottery, associated with a coarse brown and black and burnished hand-made pottery and polished stone-axes and flakes. Below this megalithic layer was a stratified deposit representing the neolithic axe culture associated with coarse brown and black and pale grey pottery, chipped and polished axe heads and a microlithic industry of chert, jasper and quartz (Phase II of Subba Rao). Still lower and separated by a thin barren layer, was the earliest culture level (called Phase I by Subba Rao). The finds consisted of heavily patinated flakes of trap and sand-stone, associated with a crude microlithic industry of quartz. There was no definite evidence of association of pottery with this early phase.

Sangankallu was a huge factory site. The Phase II mentioned above represented the most highly developed phase of the neolithic culture of Bellary. Subba Rao suggested that this whole group might be called the Bellary Neolithic Industry. A large variety of axes and other tools were found here. The main types of finds were axes, chisels, picks, fabricators, rounders, grooved hammerstones, sling-stones, slick-stones, discs and pounders. The axes were found in all stages of manufacture. The technique of their manufacture has been described by Subba Rao on pages 31 and 32 of his report. According to Subba Rao, the microlithic industry of Phase II, mentioned above, included long and short parallel-sided blades, lunates and fluted cores. An interesting confirmation of the character of the microlithic industry comes from the north-east corner of the district, wherein an area of about 30 square

**Neolithic
Industry**

miles along the bank of the Tungabhadra, a rich microlithic industry, characterised by the presence of short blades and fluted cores, was noticed on the surface from the sites.

Later excavations

In 1964-65, excavations were undertaken at the same place (Sangankallu) by Z. D. Ansari and M. S. Nagaraja Rao and by H. D. Sankalia. Their findings were published by them in two booklets in 1969 entitled "Excavation at Sangankallu, 1964-65 (Early Neolithic House at Bellary)", and "Mesolithic and Pre-Mesolithic Industries from the excavations at Sangankallu, Bellary, 1965" respectively. Four different periods of culture were deduced from the findings of these excavations, *viz.*, Period I: Pre-Mesolithic (prepared core, flake and large blade culture); Period II: Mesolithic (microliths in quartz, agate, carmelian, etc.); Period III: Neolithic (polished axe, lithic blade, pale grey pottery and painted black-on-red pottery); Period IV: Megalithic (black-and-red ware and objects made of iron).

It was inferred that man lived in the first two periods in the rock shelters and on the banks of the stream at the foot of the hill. The third period was divided into three occupational phases, the Phase I being marked by the "arrival of the neolithic man" who set up circular ("and also perhaps rectangular?") structures. The remains of what is stated to be the first complete one-room circular house of an early neolithic phase in South India were discovered here. Besides stone, bones of animals were ground and used as tools in the neolithic period. Terracotta figurines of bulls and birds were also found here. Mostly hand-made pottery and a few specimens of pottery of the second phase of the third period and of the fourth period, in which wheel was used for making pottery, were discovered at the site. H. D. Sankalia calls the microlithic industry as found here as mesolithic, "for the preceding industry is, both stratigraphically and typologically and even in the raw materials used, different from it" (p. 39 of his booklet referred to earlier). This evidence is stated to have been obtained for the first time in India. The microlithic industry is dated to at least 3,000 B.C. (For excavation at Tekkalakota, please see Chapter XIX under Tekkalakota).

Pre-historic drawings

On the rocks near the northern end of the Kappagallu hill, were a large number of rough figures or pictures, made apparently by bruising the surface of the rocks with pieces of harder stone. Fawcett described them in detail in his paper read before the Congress of Orientalists and published in the Asiatic Quarterly Review in 1892. The figures of oxen were found to have prominent humps and very long horns, quite different in type from the existing breeds. Other figures were those of men and women (always naked), dogs, antelopes, deer, leopards, elephants and peacocks. Some of these might be modern; but the majority are

certainly old and were most probably connected with the pre-historic settlement on the hill. The style of drawing is very unusual and archaic. Moreover, they are at a spot which is away from the ordinary paths about the hill and among confused piles of very bare boulders which are not ordinarily traversed by cowherds or wood-cutters. Just below them is the pre-historic settlement.

It is equally interesting to note that they represent animals not now commonly found in the locality. Some of them are upside down; this, of course, might have been so due to the rocks themselves having been overturned after the figures were executed on them. From the fact that some of the pictures are in places, which are now extremely inaccessible, it also appears that the rocks have moved from their original positions. Bruce Foote wrote that he knew only another place (a hill in Raichur district) where similar drawings occurred in large numbers.

Curious ash mounds were found at some places in this district, such as Kudatini, about 12 miles west north-west of Bellary; Nimbapura, north-east of the Hampi ruins; Halakundi on the Bellary-Hirehalu Road; Sanavasapuram, about half way on the road from Bellary to Siruguppa; Kurikuppi hill, three miles north-west of Tornagallu; the hill near Kakabalu, about three miles north north-west of Joga; and in the fields immediately south of the Kappagallu hill. The most imposing among the mounds found, were however, those of Kudatini and Nimbapura, the Kudatini mound being dome-shaped, and about 45 feet in height. The mound gave a hollow sound, when struck with any heavy substance.

Curious
mounds

Newbold was the first to call attention to such mounds (Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. V, p. 670 and Madras Journal of Literature and Science, Vol. VIII, p. 130). Various theories have since been advanced to explain their formation. Newbold himself first thought that these mounds consisted of the remains of some ancient furnaces; but he changed his opinion later on. When he cut into one of the mounds near the Kappagallu hill, he found that it was not homogeneous, but was composed of different layers of ashy earth, scoriae, dark earth and so on. This disposed of the theory of their volcanic origin, held by some persons. Newbold further made a detailed examination of the mounds and thought them to be of animal origin rather than due to lime-burning, brick-making, iron-smelting or any other similar manufacturing process. In view of this and the mention made in the old local records, of women burning themselves in large numbers when their husbands were killed in battles, he came to the conclusion that the mounds consisted of remains of either the persons who were killed in some battle or their wives who became *satis*, or of sacrificial holocausts of early days.

Bruce Foote, who examined the Kudatini mound in 1887, found, in the little gullies washed by rain in its sides, a celt, some fragments of pottery and some mealing-stones and corn-crushers such as those found in other pre-historic settlements, with numerous bones mostly bovine. On the basis of these discoveries, he connected the mound with the neolithic settlements which are scattered all over the district and held that it was formed by a holocaust of animals at some religious celebration. He later found more pre-historic implements comprising celts, chisels, mealing-stones, corn-crushers and broken pottery in the mounds, at Sanavasapuram and near the foot of the 'Copper Mountain'. Later in 1899, Sewell suggested other explanations of the occurrence of these mounds. He was not prepared to accept that all of them were as old as the neolithic times. He considered it more probable that at least those of Kudatini and Nimbapura were either the remains of persons slain in some of the many bloody battles that took place round about Vijayanagara between the forces of that empire and the Bahmanis or that they were caused by the collective performance of *satis* which are known to have taken place in those days. He pointed out that most of the mounds occurred along the main roads towards Vijayanagara and further showed that the descriptions left by Duarte Barbosa and Ceasar Frederic of the place near that city where the great *satis* took place corresponded more or less exactly with the position of the Nimbapura mound. Later in 1912, A.H. Longhurst examined the Kudatini and Nimbapura ash mounds. On cutting a hole into the Kudatini mound, he found it composed of layers of 'slag-like cinders' and ashy earth mixed up with small fragments of calcinated bone without any trace of implements or pottery. In respect of the mound at Nimbapura, he says that originally it was similar to the mound at Kudatini and that its origin and date were probably the same. He agreed with R. Sewell and assigned these two mounds to the Vijayanagara period (Arch. Survey of India, An. Rept. 1912-13, pp. 145-47). For latest excavation, see Chapter XIX under Kappagallu).

Traditions and legends

Of all the districts of the State, Bellary is perhaps the most closely associated with the epic, Ramayana. The district, which figures prominently in that epic, was inhabited during those days, by a people who have been called the *Vanaras* in Sanskrit. *Vanara* means a monkey; perhaps, they were a people having the monkey as their totem or emblem. In fact, one work, the Jaina Ramayana, calls them *Vanaradhwas* or people having a monkey flag. As for the culture level of the *Vanaras*, it is clear from the Ramayana that the *Vanaras* were quite a civilised people with well developed social, ethical and political ideas. Sugreeva, later driven out by his brother Vali, was the *Vanara* king at that time, and Kishkindha, which has been generally acknowledged to have been near the present Hampi in Hospet taluk, was his capital. All accounts of the Ramayana agree in stating that it was here that

Rama, the Prince of Ayodhya, who was in exile in the south, first received the news that Ravana, the king of Lanka, had carried off his wife Seeta and that it was with the invaluable help of Hanuman, the *Vanara* chief under Sugreeva, that he accomplished his expedition to Lanka and recovered Seeta. It is interesting to note that the present names of several localities in and around Hampi are indential with those mentioned in the epic. (For more details, please see Hampi in Chapter XIX—Places of Interest).

Hampi, a village in Hospet taluk, was formerly called Pampakshetra. According to the *sthalapurana* of the place, Pampadevi, the daughter of Brahma, did penance on the bank of the Pampa lake, as the result of which she was able to marry Shiva, who was also called Virupaksheshwara to whom the celebrated ancient temple of the place is dedicated. A legend says that a saint by name Matanga did *tapas* on a hill near Hampi to win the grace of Vishnu and that the Matanga hill was named after that saint. In the midst of the Tungabhadra river near Hampi, there is a stone *mantapa* which is said to have been the spot where the sage Vashishtha meditated. Ramachandra, with his wife Seeta and his brother Lakshmana, is said to have camped near the Kodandarama temple at Hampi, during their exile. When Seeta was being carried away by Ravana, she is said to have tied all her ornaments in a portion of her saree and thrown them down on a rock here from the *Pushpaka Vimana*. On the other side of the Tungabhadra river, there is the Pampa lake by the side of which there is a spot which is known as the one where Shabari of the Ramayana fame had her hermitage. A hill near Hampi has been called Anjanadri, indicating thereby the birth-place of Anjaneya (Hanuman). The river Tungabhadra is one of the sacred rivers of India and its ancient name Pampa finds mention in the epics and the *puranas* (See also Chapter I under the Tungabhadra). Pampa, as a *teertha* (holy place), is also mentioned in the Sanskrit drama, *Kaumudi Mahotsava* and in the Kannada work, *Harishchandra Kavya* of Raghavanka. In the latter, it is identified with the *ashrama* of Vishvamitra. The earliest mention of this place is found in an inscription dated in the year 1013-14 A.D. belonging to the reign of the Chalukyan king Vikramaditya which records a gift to the temple of Mahakaladeva of Pampa. This epigraph mentions also Iriva Nolambadhiraja and his queen.

EARLY HISTORY

There is some indirect indication of the Nandas (4th century B.C.) having ruled over this region. According to puranic accounts, the Nandas conquered all rival monarchs and became the sole emperors of the whole of India. But this is too vague a statement, as it does not give the exact limits of their territories, particularly in the south. Some late Kannada inscriptions, ranging

Nandas and
Mauryas

from the 10th to the 13th century A.D., however, seem to preserve some faint memories of the rule of the Nandas in the Kuntala country, which included almost the northern two-thirds of the present Mysore State. Thus, while one such inscription¹ states that Kuntala was ruled by the 'renowned Nandas', another² derives the descent of the Kadambas from the Nandas.

But it is only with the Mauryas that we come to the dawn of recorded history, and thenceforward, we have more definite evidence about the importance of this region. The Bellary district was undoubtedly a part of the Mauryan empire, as is evident from the discovery of the Ashokan inscriptions in the areas surrounding the district. Minor edicts of Ashoka have been found, for example, at Maski, Gavimatha and Palkigundu in the Raichur district in the north, at Erragudi in Kurnool district in the east, and at Siddapur, Jatinga-Rameshvara and Brahmagiri in Chitradurga district in the south. The three last-mentioned edicts, in particular, are very near to Bellary district. The Molakalmuru taluk, wherein the last three inscriptions were found, all within a circle with a radius of about one and a half miles, though administratively forming a part of the Chitradurga district, belongs more to the Bellary district than to the Chitradurga district from the natural point of view, for, the taluk, which is a long strip of land, looking like an out-growth from the main body of the Chitradurga district and projecting itself into the Bellary region, is surrounded on the west and north-west by the Kudligi and Sandur taluks of the Bellary district and on the east and north-east by the Rayadurg taluk which also was formerly a part of the Bellary district. The find-spot of the edicts is, in fact, hardly 30 miles south-west of Bellary.

During the Mauryan times, there was a prince as the viceroy at Suvarnagiri and he passed on the orders of Ashoka to the officer designated as the Mahamatra who was in charge of Isila. Suvarnagiri has been identified by some scholars with Maski in Raichur district and by others with Jonnagiri, near Erragudi in Kurnool district. The excavations³ at Brahmagiri in the Molakalmuru taluk have revealed the existence of a town of the Mauryan times and recently more Mauryan vestiges have been revealed at Turuvanur. It is generally held that Isila was near Brahmagiri. So far as the Deccan is concerned, the Mauryan rule came to an end soon after Ashoka's death. Even in the north, not long after his death, his empire appears to have fallen to pieces.

Satavahanas

After the fall of the Mauryas, two powers became predominant in India south of the Vindhyas. Those were the Chedis and the Satavahanas. The former never came south of the Godavari. The Satavahanas continued in power for about four and a half centuries, from about 220 B.C. to approximately 230 A.D. There are

differences of opinion among the scholars about the origin of the Satavahanas. Dr. Sukuthankar⁴ suggested that the Satavahana family hailed from the Kannada region, pointing out some of their Prakrit inscriptions, which mention 'Satahanihara' and 'Satavani-rattha', *i.e.*, Satavahani province ('hara' being a form of *Pada-vada-para*, connoting territory; *rattha* derived from Sanskrit *rashtra*, also meant territory) which was identified by him with the Bellary area.

Those two terms occur in Myakadoni and Hirehadagalli plates which were found in Bellary region. Two other areas, in addition to Bellary, namely the Aurangabad district in Maharashtra and the Andhrapatha region round about the mouth of the Krishna river, were alternatively suggested by scholars as the original home of the Satavahanas. Pratishtana, identified with modern Paithan, on the Godavari in what is now Aurangabad district of Maharashtra, was the capital of the Satavahanas for a considerable time. Some scholars say that the Bellary region did not form a part of the empire of the early Satavahanas and that the southern districts were annexed to the empire about the middle of the second century A.D., while others are of the view that the Bellary region and also the Andhrapatha were not, however, parts of the Satavahana empire at the time of Gautami-putra. From the Hathigumpha inscription, it appears that the kingdom of the Satavahana ruler who was the contemporary of Kharavela (second half of the first century B.C.) was to the west of Kalinga. S. Srikantha Sastry, who says that the Kolhapur, Banavasi, Malavalli and the Nagarjunikonda inscriptions show that Kuntala in Karnataka was the original home of the Satavahana family, further observes that it was only after Gautami-putra (*c.* A.D. 80-104) that his son Vasisthiputra established a new city (Navanagara) at Paithan (Pratishtana) and conquered the Telugu country⁵. The *puranas* seem to have called the Satavahanas as Andhras or Andhrabhrityas in the sense that they were rulers of Andhra or feudatories of Andhra kings at some time or other.

There are several references in Indian literary tradition to a branch of the Satavahana family ruling in Kuntala in Karnataka. Rajashekhara's *Kavyamimamsa* refers to a king of Kuntala named Satavahana. The *puranas* as well as the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana mention a king named Kuntala Satakarni; the puranic lists make him a predecessor of Gautami-putra Satakarni, and a commentator of the *Kamasutra* explains the name as being due to the king's birth in the Kuntala country. Another king named Hala is called 'Lord of Kuntala' and his name is associated with the celebrated Prakrit anthology called *Gathasaptashati*.

An inscription belonging to Pulumayi, one of the last Satavahana rulers, also has been found in the Bellary district. After

the fall of the Satavahanas, their empire was partitioned among the Abhiras in the north-west, the Chutus in the south and the Ikshvakus in the Andhra region. Thus, the successors of the Satavahanas in this region were the Chutus, of whom, however, we know very little. The names of certain kings of the Chutu line, are, however, known from the coins found in the North Kanara and Chitradurga districts and from the inscriptions found at Kanheri near Bombay, Banavasi and Malavalli. Lead coins with the horse device and inscribed with the name Hariti (which is a part of the name of Chutus) have come from the Anantapur and Cuddapah districts. Some historians consider the Chutus to be a branch of the Satavahanas. They were later supplanted by the Kadambas.⁶

Kadambas

Under the Kadambas of Banavasi, the territory from the western sea upto Uchchangidurga in the Bellary district constituted the Banavasi-12,000 territory. Uchchangidurga was the capital of an eastern branch of the Kadambas. The Kadamba king Mayurasharma, in his Chandravalli inscription,⁷ says that he ruled over Sendraka-vishaya in Satahani-Rashtra. The hillfort of Uchchangi is of great antiquity. The Sandur area also, with its famous temple of Kartikeya, appears to have been an important region even in the days of the Kadambas and the Chalukyas. It was called Swami-malai or Savi-malai. The Kadambas were ultimately overthrown by the Chalukyas of Badami who were their successors in this region. The Kadambas and the Chalukyas were both of Kannada origin.

Chalukyas of Badami

The first noteworthy ruler of the Chalukyan line was Pulikeshi I. He fortified the hill near Badami in Bijapur district into a fortress in 543-544 A.D. and declared his independence by performing a horse-sacrifice. His son was Kirtivarma (566-597), who is said to have subdued the Mauryas of Konkan, the Kadambas of Banavasi, and the Nalas whose territory is not well identified. The most powerful Chalukya king was Pulikeshi II (610-642). From an inscription found at Kurugodu in Bellary taluk, it is obvious that Pulikeshi II was in possession of this region. Later, he is known to have established his sons as the viceroys in the Bellary and Kurnool districts. Adityavarma and Chandraditya ruled here for some time, after the capture of Badami by the Pallavas. Adityavarma made a grant of the villages of Mundakal and Paragere. A grant of Abhinavaditya, son of Adityavarma, mentions Netkunda in the Uchchangivishaya. Later still, a grant of Vinayaditya (681-692), dated in about 689, refers to a gift of land made when his victorious camp was at Pampa-teertha which is the present Hampi in Hospet taluk.⁸

Rashtrakutas

The rule of the Chalukyas of Badami came to an end in about 753, when the Rashtrakuta prince Dantidurga defeated the Chalukya king Kirtivarma II. Manyakheta (modern Malkhed

in the Gulbarga district) was the capital of the Rashtrakutas. The Rashtrakutas, who were probably an ancient people and who were of Kannada origin as has been proved by Dr. Altekar, held the field for well over two centuries. Dantidurga had under his control northern areas of the present Mysore State, the whole of the present Maharashtra and parts of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. His family originally belonged to Lattalura (Latur in the present Osmanabad district of Maharashtra). He was succeeded by his uncle Krishna I whose exploits brought him into conflict with the Gangas of Talakad. The latter became feudatories of the Rashtrakutas. Krishna I defeated also the Chalukyas of Vengi. During the regime of his son Dhruva, the Rashtrakuta supremacy was so great that none in the north or south could challenge them. Dhruva's son Govinda III overran Nolambavadi which consisted of Chitradurga and Tumkur districts and portions of Bellary, Anantapur, Kolar and Bangalore districts. It is stated that in 809 A.D. there was a combined onslaught on the Rashtrakutas by the Gangas, Pallavas, Pandyas and Keralas and that Govinda III defeated all of them. Amoghavarsha I, Krishna II, Indra III, Amoghavarsha III and Krishna III were other illustrious kings of the line. The last named king had advanced as far as Rameshwaram in the course of his victorious career, whereas his predecessors Dhruva, Govinda III and Indra III had carried their successful arms right into northern India. No other ruling power of the Deccan, except the Marathas in a later period, had played such a dominant part in the history of India.

The Rashtrakutas were in power until 973, when the last Rashtrakuta king Karka II was dethroned by Taila II, a member of the Chalukya family. An inscription in the Bagali temple in Harapanahalli taluk states that in the year 944-45, a Chalukya feudatory of the Rashtrakuta king, Krishna III (939-67) was governing the Kogali-500, which roughly corresponded to the present Hadagalli and Harapanahalli taluks. The same temple contains a record, dated 972-73 A.D., belonging to the king Khottiga (967-72) of the same line. These two Rashtrakuta kings are also mentioned in the inscriptions found at Kudatini in the Bellary taluk. Butugadeva was the governor of Kogali under Khottiga in 972-73. But Panchaladeva, probably a feudatory of the Gangas, drove him out of Kogali. Later, Taila II Chalukya, assisted by Butugadeva, defeated Panchaladeva and brought the Bellary region under Chalukyan control. Taila II conferred the title of Ahavamalla upon Butugadeva and appointed him governor of Toragale (Toragal in Dharwar district). Later, Kadamba Aryavarman and Kadamba Adityavarman seem to have been governors of Kogali.

Of the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas in this region, the most important were the Nolambas (or Nolamba-Pallavas as they were also called) and the Gangas of Talakad. Previously the Nolambas

Nolambas

were perhaps feudatories or a branch of the Pallavas who had probably established a province in these parts about the middle of the eighth century A.D. This kingdom, called Nolambavadi-32,000, continued for about three centuries. Parts of Bellary district also were included in it. Its capitals were Uchchangi or Uchchangi-durga in the Harapanahalli taluk, Henjeru or modern Hemavati in the Madakshira taluk in Anantapur district (Andhra Pradesh), and Kampili⁹ in the Hospet taluk of this district, during different periods. Two of the divisions of this kingdom, namely, Kogali and Kaniyakal have been identified with the present Hadagalli and Harapanahalli taluks of this district and the Rayadurg taluk which also was a part of this district till recently. The Nolambas were subordinate to the Chalukyas of Badami and the Gangas of Talakad. They had a matrimonial alliance with the latter. After the defeat of the Gangas by the Rashtrakuta king Govinda III (793-814 A.D.), the Nolambas acknowledged the suzerainty of the Rashtrakutas. Mahendra Nolambadhiraja was an eminent ruler of the dynasty in the latter part of the ninth century. He tried to make himself a sovereign ruler. He defeated the Banas and also took over some areas in Salem district which had been under the control of the Cholas. He came into conflict with the Gangas and was killed in a battle waged against them. His son and successor Nanniga Ayyappadeva also fell in a battle. Nanniga's son Anniga had succeeded his father probably between 923 and 929 A.D. and was on the throne in 929 A.D.¹⁰ He was also in constant conflict with the Gangas and Rashtrakutas. Krishna III, the Rashtrakuta king, vanquished him in a battle and seems to have then put him in charge of an expedition against the Cholas. Later, the Nolambas became feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, with their capital at Kampili. The Chalukyas of Kalyana appointed the princes of their own family as viceroys of Nolambavadi. In about 1064 A.D., the Cholas sacked the Kampili area and appointed the Pandyas of Uchchangi as governors of Nolambavadi.

Gangas

The Gangas of Talakad were also in possession of parts of this district. Durvinita (c. 529-79) and Sreepurusha (725-88) had extended the Ganga kingdom upto the Hagari river in this district. From the beginning of his rule, Sreepurusha had to face gradual encroachments by the Rashtrakutas. He was defeated by the Rashtrakuta king Krishna I (756-74) and was made to acknowledge his suzerainty. Shivamara-II (788-812?) succeeded Sreepurusha about the year 788 A.D. During his reign, the prosperity of the Gangas declined. The Rashtrakuta king Dhruva seized and imprisoned the Ganga king. Dhruva's son, Kambarasa, is mentioned in an inscription as governing the 96,000 (a common designation of the Ganga territory) under his father. After Dhruva, when his younger brother, Govinda Prabhutavarsha Rashtrakuta, was on the throne, Ganga Mandala was under his occupation. However, on the death of his elder brother, moved

by reasons of compassion or policy, released the Ganga king from his "long and painful confinement". But the Ganga king, during the period of his release, seems to have attacked the Rashtrakuta army encamped at Mudugundur in the present Mandya district. He was again defeated and consigned to prison. Eventually, however, Govinda reinstated him in his kingdom. After the death of Shivamara II, the Ganga kingdom seems to have been virtually divided between his son Marasimha and the latter's uncle named Vijayaditya. Both were subordinate to the Rashtrakutas. Marasimha and his three successors ruled over Kolar and north-eastern portions of Gangavadi. But after a few years, this collateral line came to an end. Rachamalla I Satyavakya, the son of Vijayaditya, was the successor in the main line.

By this time, the Ganga kingdom had much shrunk in size owing to annexations of large portions of Gangavadi by the Rashtrakutas. Rachamalla entered into matrimonial alliance with the Nolambas and taking advantage of the disturbed conditions and confusion in the Rashtrakuta dominions, he recovered most of the areas that had been lost previously. During the reign of his son Neetimarga I, who ruled from about 843 to 870 A.D., the Rashtrakutas and Gangas were reconciled to each other and the Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha gave his daughter in marriage to the Ganga prince Butuga who was a great warrior. Butuga's son Ereyappa or Neetimarga II defeated and killed the Nolamba ruler Mahendra in a battle and was hence called Mahendrantaka. During the reign of Ereyappa's son Rachamalla III (c. 933-36?), wars with the Nolambas and the Rashtrakutas were continued. His successor Butuga II (936-961), who was his brother-in-law, followed a policy of friendship with the Rashtrakutas and he assisted the Rashtrakuta king Krishna III in his campaign against the Cholas. It is stated that as a reward for his services, Butuga II was granted Banavasi and Nolambavadi provinces.

The Ganga king Marasimha II (963-74), who had the title Nolambakulantaka on account of having ended the rule of the Nolambas, and his general Chamundaraya are said to have captured the fort of Uchchangi.¹¹ Marasimha II helped the Rashtrakuta king Khottiga to regain his capital Manyakheta from the Malava ruler who had captured it. A Ganga copper plate grant dated in the year 968 A.D. discovered recently at Kuknur shows that by that year the Raichur area also was under the control of the Ganga king. Khottiga's son Karka II was dethroned by Taila II Chalukya. Marasimha II made a futile attempt to revive the Rashtrakuta power by setting on the throne Indra IV. The temple of Kartikeya near Sandur and the shrine of Yellamma at Manchale (now called Mantralaya which is in Adoni taluk of Kurnool district), appear to have been famous pilgrim centres even in those days. The Rashtrakuta king, Krishna II, at the request of his feudatory, Kanna, made a grant in 893 A.D.

to the goddess Yellamma at Manchale which was in the Sindavadi-1,000.¹² The Sandur inscriptions¹³, found in the Parvati temple on the Kumaraswami hill, says that the Rashtrakuta king Krishna had given a village named Tataka (Kereyapalli) to the temple of Shanmukha.

Chalukyas of Kalyana

Taila II revived the Chalukyan supremacy over the Deccan. The glory of the Chalukyas, restored by Taila II in 973 A.D., lasted till about 1200, with a short Kalachuri interregnum for about 22 years from c. 1162 to 1184. Inscriptions of the Chalukyas of Kalyana have been found in this district right since the period of Taila II. We have inscriptions of this ruler in the Bagali temple and in the Jaina temple at Kogali in the Harapanahalli taluk. The Chalukyas of Kalyana seem to have quickly extended their hold almost over the whole of the district, for in 1010-11, one of their kings Vikramaditya V (1008-15) is found to be governing the Nolambavadi-32,000, the Kogali-500, the Ballakunda-300 (the chief town of which was Kurugodu) and other areas through the Nolamba-Pallava feudatory Iriya Nolambadhira-ja. Two inscriptions belonging to this ruler have also been found in the Bagali temple. In 1022, Jagadekamalla Nolamba-Pallava is stated to have been ruling from 'Kapili' which is taken to be an error for 'Kampili'¹⁴. At Kogali, there are three records of Someshvara I (1044-68). In 1054, he is said to have ruled from Kampili. In 1064, a Chalukya prince, Vishnuvardhana-Vijayaditya, son of Someshvara I, was ruling Nolambavadi with Kampili as his 'Nelevidu' ('fixed place of abode', *i.e.*, his capital). In 1068, Someshvara I drowned himself in the Tungabhadra at Kuruvatti in the Harapanahalli taluk to end an incurable disease from which he was suffering. In 1072, Jayasimha, also a son of Someshvara I, was in charge of Kogali, Ballakunde and Nolambavadi.¹⁵ At Bagali, there are more than a dozen inscriptions of Vikramaditya VI (1076-1127) ranging from 1079 to 1126, and other records of his occur at Kudatini, Ambali, and at Gooty (Gutti) in the Anantapur district.¹⁶

Jagadekamalla II (1139-49), another Chalukya king, appears in inscriptions dating from 1143 to 1148 found at Ambali, Kudatini and Oruvayi near Kurugodu. From the early period of revival of the Western Chalukyas, there were frequent conflicts between them and the Cholas for almost a century. The Vengi kingdom of Andhra Pradesh, which was being ruled by a branch of the Western Chalukyas since the days of Pulikeshi II, was also now a bone of contention for supremacy between the Western Chalukyas and the Cholas. Taila II subdued the Cholas in 992 A.D. But during the reign of his son, Irivabedanga Satyashraya (997-1008), a Chola force advanced right into Bijapur district and was driven out. There was a Chola invasion again about 1014 A.D. when Chalukya Vikramaditya V was ruling. The Chola king Rajaraja I (985-1016 A.D.) says that he

conquered Nulambapadi, which is undoubtedly the same as Nolumbavadi.¹⁷ According to a Tamil record, later Rajendra Chola I (1012-44) once "burnt down" Manyakhetta. During the period of Chalukya Someshvara I (1044-68), there were fierce battles between the two powers and at this time, the Tungabhadra doab also seems to have become a bone of contention besides Vengi. Rajadhiraja Chola is stated to have ravaged Kollipake, a provincial capital of the Western Chalukyas, after a victory. The Chalukya king Someshvara I was camping at Huvina-Hadagalli (in Bellary district) in 1045 A. D. About this time, Rajadhiraja Chola invaded Nolumbavadi and is stated to have 'destroyed' Kampili, which was a provincial capital of the Chalukyas (in the present Bellary district), and advanced into the Belvola region and also raided Kalyana. Rajadhiraja Chola and his younger brother Rajendra II together again encroached upon the Chalukyan territory after some years and crossed the Tungabhadra. A fierce battle was fought in 1054 A. D. at Koppam in which Rajadhiraja was killed. Someshvara pursued the Chola army and put it to flight. After a few years, he seems to have taken further steps against the Chola menace, for according to an inscription found at Sudi and dated in the year 1060 A. D., he was camping at Puli (identified with Huli in Belgaum district) after a successful campaign in the southern region and vanquishing the Cholas. According to Tamil records, Virarajendra Chola (1063-69) invaded the Chalukyan territory and fought a battle with the Chalukyan forces in 1064.

About five years later, it was the turn of the Chalukya prince Vikramaditya VI to retaliate. He was assisted in this by the Kadamba ruler of Goa. Obviously, his expedition was successful, for we find that Virarajendra Chola gave his daughter in marriage to this Chalukyan prince. Soon after this, Virarajendra Chola died and Vikramaditya VI had to rush to Gangaikonda-Cholapuram where he overpowered the rebels and helped his brother-in-law Adhirajendra to ascend the throne. But shortly after this, the Eastern Chalukya prince Rajendra II of Vengi, who was related to the Chola royal family, succeeded to the Chola throne in 1070 A. D. under the name Kulottunga Chola I and Vengi was merged in the Chola kingdom. It is noteworthy that during all this period, the Chalukyas had a firm hold over the Tungabhadra region despite the frequent incursions of the Cholas and the latter did not succeed in their attempts at conquest of the Chalukyan territory.

The Kartikeya temple near Sandur was famous during this Pandyas period also. It appears that this area was a part of what was known as Doravadi. The Oruvayi inscription of 1148 refers to Doravadi-nadu.¹⁸ The Pandyas of Uchchangi had become the chiefs of Nolumbavadi by this time and were subordinate to the Chalukyas. Veera Pandya was an eminent ruler of this dynasty who conquered 'Malai' for his suzerain (the Chalukyan king).¹⁹ A Hoysala

inscription of 1136 A.D. states that king Vishnuvardhana captured Uchchangi.²⁰ But it was retaken by the Chalukyan forces. An epigraph found at Harihar belonging to the reign of Jagadekamalla Chalukya (1139-49 A.D.) states that Veera Pandya, who was ruling Nolambavadi, was a subordinate of Bijjala.²¹

Kalachuris

Reference has been made above to the growing strength of the Cholas during this period. But it was not to the attacks of the Cholas that the Chalukyas of Kalyana eventually succumbed, but to the forces of three dynasties which were originally their own feudatories. One of these was the line of the Kalachuris, the head of which, Bijjala, threw off his allegiance, captured parts of the Chalukyan dominions and established himself at the capital about 1155 A.D. In his series of campaigns in the south, Bijjala is said to have laid siege to the fort of Gooty (Gutti) in Anantapur district which was destroyed. The Hoysala king Narasimha I is stated to have suffered a reverse at his hands on the banks of the Tungabhadra. The then Pandya chief of Uchchangi, named Vijaya Pandya, also known as Kamadeva, who refused to acknowledge his supremacy, was brought under control. The Kalachuri monarch claims to have won a victory over the king of Kuntala, and amongst his feudatories were Kesapayya Nayaka of Banavasi, Vijaya Pandya of Nolambavadi and Bammidevarasa of Sindavadi. During his ascendancy, the Chalukyan kings retired to the south of their territories, but eventually in 1184 temporarily regained their possessions. The last Chalukya king, Someshvara IV, is said to have lived for some time at Kurugodu. He ultimately succumbed to the other two of his three feudatories, namely the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra in the south and the Sevunas of Devagiri in the north. An inscription from Kurugodu, dated 1181-82, states that Someshvara IV (1158-98?) was on the throne of Kalyana and that under him one Sinda Rachamalla ruled over Ballakunde from the fort of Kurugodu.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY

Hoysalas and Sevunas

Inscriptions connecting this district with the Hoysalas and the Sevunas are few. The Hoysalas had their origin in the Mudigere taluk of the Chikmagalur district about the beginning of the 11th century A.D. For more than a century, the Hoysalas were the feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. Vishnuvardhana, who ruled from about 1108 to about 1152, was a great ruler. He drove out the Cholas from Talakad and was in possession of the whole of Gangavadi-96,000 and a good portion of Nolambavadi-32,000. Inscriptions of a later period mention Kummata, Ballare (Bellary) and Rachavoor among the forts he captured and state that Perddore (the Krishna river) was the northern boundary of his kingdom (See Chapter I under origin of name). Ballala II or Veera Ballala (1173-1220) was the first fully independent Hoysala

king. But even the earlier kings had created a kingdom of considerable dimensions, while acknowledging the suzerainty of the Chalukyas.

By 1189 A.D., Ballala II had taken into his possession a considerable portion of the Chalukyan territory. In a memorable battle fought with the Sevunas in 1190 A.D. near Soratur in Dharwar district, the Hoysala won well whereafter he entrenched himself in Belvola and extended his way upto the Malaprabha and also subdued the Kadambas. It is interesting to note that one of Ballala's queens, Umadevi, led an expedition against the Sinda chief of Belagutti who had put up a stubborn fight. The Sevuna king Jaitugi I attempted again to take over Belvola, but Ballala emerged victorious again as is clear from an inscription from Koligunda dated 1195 A.D. Ballala II was camping frequently at Lakkundi and other places in the northern parts in order to ward off the influence of the Sevunas. Ballala II was at Madhuvana near Sandur for some time and renewed an old Rashtrakuta grant²². One of his queens, Padumala, was ruling at Posavadangile. He had his camp at Hallavura and Lokkigundi in 1212.²³ Uchchangi was an important fort during those days and the conquest of that fort was one of the major events of Veera-Ballala's life, and finds reference in several of his inscriptions. At an earlier time, the Cholas had laid siege to it for a long time without success. The ruling Pandya chief at the time was Kamadeva and on his craving for mercy, Ballala is stated to have restored him to his kingdom.²⁴ According to another inscription, Ballala had even made Uchchangi his provincial capital and ruled from there for some time. Another inscription of his found in this district mentions Kurugodu and Kampilasthala in 1217. In 1219, Ballala gave a grant to Swami Kartikeya Tapovana and established Telligi.²⁵ His other inscriptions in this district have been found at Bagali, Kudatini, Oruvayi, and also at Hemavati in Anantapur district.

Later, the Sevuna king Singhana launched an expedition and overran the Banavasi and Santalige regions and is stated to have penetrated even upto Srirangapatna. There was stiff resistance by the Hoysala forces and the Sevuna army had eventually to withdraw. Sevuna inscriptions have been found in Bellary and some other northern districts of Karnataka. Singhana's successor Krishna also sent an expedition under his general Chamunda when Hoysala Someshvara was ruling and Chamunda was able to take over for sometime only the Kogali Division which comprised Hadagalli taluk of Bellary district and Davangere taluk of Chitradurga district.

Krishna's successors Mahadeva and Ramachandra also made unsuccessful efforts to wrest as much of the northern areas as possible from the Hoysalas. The Sevuna attack launched in

1276 A.D. ended in their disastrous rout. By about 1253 A.D. there were two Hoysala rulers, Narasimha III at Dorasamudra and Ramanatha at Kannanur in Tamil Nadu, and there were mutual fights between them. The Hoysala influence, however, persisted in the Tungabhadra region and there is record of a Hoysala grant (dated in the year 1276) given to one Channa Parshvadeva of Kogali.

Ballala III came to the throne in 1291 A.D. About 1301 A.D. the southern Hoysala areas were united to the ancestral kingdom and Ballala III became the sole ruler. When he had been away from the capital leading an expedition in the south, he heard of the advance of the Muslim army into his kingdom from the north and hurried back with some of his forces for the defence of Dorasamudra. The first Muslim invasion of the Hoysala territory took place in 1311 A.D. under the leadership of Malik Kafur, the general of Ala-ud-din Khilji. The vanquished Sevuna ruler Ramachandra had sent his general Parashurama to guide Malik Kafur's army to Dorasamudra. The latter in his long march to the Hoysala capital laid the country waste and also sacked Dorasamudra. From epigraphs of the period, it can be gathered that there were fierce fights; Ballala, who was defeated, was forced to surrender enormous wealth of his kingdom. The aggressor left literally laden with riches and also extorted the assistance of Ballala to march to the far south where the rival Pandya princes were fighting among themselves for succession to the throne.

**Kampili
Principality**

Jagadekamalla Nolamba-Pallava is said to have ruled from Kampili about 1022 A.D. as a subordinate of the Chalukyas. Kampili had become a provincial capital of the Chalukyas and had been attacked and ravaged by Rajaraja, the Chola king, in 1046 A.D. Later, by about 1064, Chalukya Vijayaditya was ruling the area of Nolambavadi, from his capital at Kampili. The great Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana had conquered Kummata, a strong fort of the area, according to a stone inscription dated in the year 1178 A.D. A lithic record dated 1280 A.D. informs us that Chaundarasa, a general of the Sevuna King Ramachandra was killed in a battle fought with Mummadi Singeya Nayaka who was the ruler of the principality of Kampili. A stone inscription found at Harihar in Chitradurga district, which is dated 1300 A.D., states that during the reign of the Sevuna King Ramachandra, Khandeya Raya of Kampili, son of Mummadi Singeya Nayaka, regranted the village of Harihar to a temple. This shows that the principality of Kampili at this time recognised the suzerainty of the Sevuna ruler. This was causing repeated conflicts between the Kampili principality and the Hoysalas.

By 1313 A.D., Devagiri and Warangal were already under the effective control of the Delhi Sultanate and a viceroy was appointed in Ma'bar in the far south with the purpose of consolidating the

new conquests. But Kampili still continued to enjoy independence. The principality of Kummata or Kampili comprised parts of the present Bellary, Raichur, Dharwar, Chitradurga and Anantapur districts. It seems to have been for some time a sort of buffer State between the Sevuna and Hoysala kingdoms.

The story of Kampili is an account of great heroism. Malik Kafur led one indecisive expedition against Kampili in about 1314-15 and before he could make another attempt, he was recalled to Delhi, where he was killed in the political revolution which followed the death of Ala-ud-din (1316). The ruler of Kampili was a staunch opponent of the growing alien power in the south and he firmly turned down a demand for tribute from the officers of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak. The principality had a steady progress for about ten years before the final onslaught by the forces of the Delhi Sultan.

Baha-ud-din Gurshasp, a cousin of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak, was at that time the Governor of Sagar, in the neighbourhood of Gulbarga. He had some personal grievance against his cousin, the emperor. He laid claim to the Delhi throne and revolted. The Sultan ordered Malik Zada, Governor of Gujarat, and Majir-aburija, Governor of Devagiri, to deal with this rebel. A battle took place between the two parties on the banks of the Godavari which ended disastrously for Gurshasp. He fled back to Sagar and then leaving Sagar with his women and children, took refuge with Kampilideva (the chief of Kampili). Meanwhile, the Sultan had taken the field in person and had come to Devagiri, and hearing the news of the defeat of Gurshasp and his flight to Kampili, he ordered the destruction of the defiant Hindu ruler. But the task was not so easy as he expected it to be.

The first two expeditions failed to take the strong fort of Kummata ; but the third attempt made by Malik Zada ended in success. Kummata was seized and Kampilideva was forced to shut himself up in Hosadurga (Anegondi), which was soon surrounded by the Sultan's troops²⁶. Lack of provisions made it impossible for the invaders to hold out longer than a month ; meanwhile, Kampilideva succeeded in sending Gurshasp and his family to Dorasamudra. A battle ensued in which Kampilideva met his end with courage and determination (1327). He announced to his women that he had made up his mind to die fighting and advised them to burn themselves in advance to escape falling into the hands of the enemies. They did so cheerfully and their example was followed by the wives and children of the ministers and nobles of the kingdom. Kampilideva and his son Ramanatha and their followers thereupon fell upon the invaders and wrought havoc in their ranks before they fell in the fight. (Ramanatha is a celebrated hero in Kannada folk songs and poetry for his sterling character, patriotism and sacrifice).

**Courage and
sacrifice**

It is said that Kampilideva's head was stuffed and sent to the Sultan. The kingdom was immediately annexed to the empire and constituted into a separate province with one Malik Muhammad as its governor. There was also a garrison posted at Hosadurga to hold the country round about. A view held by some scholars²⁷ is that among those taken prisoners of war here were the two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, the future founders of the kingdom of Vijayanagara. The unique sacrifice made by Kampilideva, his son and their followers did not go in vain, for, it may be said that in a way from the very ruins of the kingdom of Kampili rose the mighty Hindu empire of Vijayanagara in the south. An inscription at Hampi on a deserted temple pillar, behind the Prasanna-Anjaneya temple, mentions Veera Kampilideva, son of Mummadi Singeya Nayaka, as having constructed a Shivalaya and installed a *linga* in memory of his mother Mahanayakiti, father Singeya Nayaka and a certain Perumeya Nayaka.

**Vijayanagara
Kingdom**

For some time after the fall of Kampili, Muhammad-bin-Tughlak remained at Devagiri, and returned to the north in about 1329. His power in the south, it may be said, was nowhere firmly established except at Devagiri, and as soon as he left for the north, there were movements for the liberation of the Deccan from the alien rule. It is stated that one Somadeva claiming descent from the ancient family of the Chalukyas, who had his centre of power in the neighbourhood of Kurnool, seized for some time the forts of Anegondi, Raichur and Mudgal. At the same time, the Hoysala Ballala III marched to the province of Kampili to strengthen the Hoysala position in the area. Malik Muhammad, Governor of Kampili, was now completely helpless. Nuniz records that he told the Sultan that "the land was risen against him, every one was the lord of what he pleased, and no one was on his side, the people came to besiege him in the fortress, allowing no provisions to go into him, nor paying him the taxes that had been forced on them". On the advice of his councillors that order could be restored only by some one connected with the old Raja of Kampili, the Sultan, it is said, sent the brothers, Harihara and Bukka, to govern the province of Kampili. Before sending them, he is stated to have taken pledges of loyalty from them.

Harihara and Bukka belonged to a family of five brothers, all sons of Sangama. According to one version, they are said to have been first in the services of the Kakatiya king Pratapa Rudra II and come to Kampili after the Muslim conquest of the Kakatiya kingdom in 1323 and become officers of Kampilideva. But this, again, is not accepted by all scholars.²⁸ There are conflicting versions of Muslim historians and Hindu traditions as to what happened at this time in the south. It is said that they soon gave up the Muslim religion that had been forced on them and the cause of Delhi and proceeded to set up an independent Hindu State, which soon grew into a powerful empire. The Bellary

district is particularly identified with the rise and growth of this empire. They followed a policy of conciliation and used force only where it was absolutely necessary. The great sage Vidyaratana inspired them with the mission of defending the Hindu religion and culture, which were facing perilous times.

In this context let us turn our attention to the events that had taken place in the Hoyalala kingdom. During the year 1313 A.D., an assembly of the feudatories and ministers of Ballala III was held at Huliyera (*E.C. Vol. XI, Hr. 87*) to devise ways and means to meet the situation. The Hoyalala ruler went to the help of Sundara Pandya of Madurai and strengthened the Hoyalala position in the Kannanur region, and also subdued several defiant local chiefs in other tracts. There was again a second Muslim invasion in 1327 A.D., this time organised by Muhammad-bin-Tughlak, the new Sultan of Delhi. The rebuilt city of Dorasamudra was almost completely destroyed by the invading army. The Tughlak's forces then marched to Madurai and occupied it and placed it under a governor who later became practically an independent Sultan about 1335 A.D.

Ballala at first shifted his residence to Tonnur, a provincial capital (in present Mandya district), and then to Arunasamudra-Ballalapatna or Annamale (identified with Tiruvannamalai in North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu) where he could conveniently conduct his affairs in the eastern regions and also plan his operations²⁹ against the newly established Sultanate at Madurai. It appears that it was at this place (Annamale) that Ballala held, in 1328 A.D., the conclave of his kinsmen, which has been referred to by Ferishta who further says that it was after this assembly that a strong new city on the frontier of Ballala's kingdom which came to be called 'Bejannuggur' was built. As already stated, there was a rebellion in the Kampili area as a result of which the Sultan's governor stationed there had fled and Ballala III had also marched in there. In order to secure this northern strategic area, Ballala seems to have appointed Harihara (Hariyappa Odeya), son of Sangama, as its provincial governor (Mahamandalshwara) with its headquarters at Hampi, which later served as the nucleus of the Vijayanagara kingdom. Harihara's daughter was married to Ballappa Dannayaka who was a nephew (sister's son) of Ballappa III who looked upon Ballappa as his own son. Ballappa Dannayaka who had been entrusted with high positions like that of a Mahapradhana and a general, wielded great power and influence and enjoyed close confidence of the king. Harihara was thus a near relative of the Hoyalala ruler and had a pre-eminence position in the Hoyalala kingdom.

It is gathered from Ferishta that with the help of a force sent by Ballala, Krishna Nayaka who lived near Warangal, reduced

Warangal, as a result of which its governor, Immad-ul-Mulq fled to Dowlatabad (Devagiri). Macheya, a general, who was a son-in-law of Ballala was appointed as the Governor of Penugonda (in the present Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh) which was an important strategic tract. Ballala established residences at various vital points in his kingdom for himself and his feudatories and generals.³⁰ According to William Coelho, the most important step taken by Ballala in the direction of mobilising his forces was to give greater rights and sometimes even partial independence to his ministers, generals and feudatories as long as they did not abuse their powers. This is well indicated by several inscriptions of the period in which the name of the king appears with the names of his ministers and generals as ruling the kingdom; in some other epigraphs, names of only the latter appear which would mean that those officers authorised them without referring the matter to the king.³¹ Dr. P. B. Desai has pointed out that these are unique instances of the king sharing his authority with subordinate officers which must have been necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances of the period. In 1338 A.D., Ballala visited Barakur on the western coast (in the present South Kanara) and strengthened his defensive establishment there.

**Sagacity and
statesmanship
of Ballala III**

Having thus consolidated the position in other quarters, the Hoysala ruler now turned his attention to the far south from where by now the new Sultan of Madurai had started attacking the Hoysala possessions. In 1342, Ballala marched towards Kannanur, which was a part of the Hoysala territory formerly, and after winning a battle fought near it, he laid siege to its fort which had become a stronghold of the Sultan. The latter's force sued for peace and Ballala permitted it to enter into consultations with the Sultan of Madurai. Utilising the breathing time thus gained, the Sultan made preparations and marched with large reinforcements and took the Hoysala troops by surprise. It is stated that Ballala's soldiers at the time had sent their horses for grazing. The eighty-year old Ballala was captured while mounting a horse and was treacherously slain on 8th September 1342. Ibn Batuta, who visited Madurai a little later, informs us that Ballala's skin was stuffed with straw and hung from the top of the walls of Madurai "where I have seen it in the same position". Thus ended the long and eventful career of this great Hoysala monarch who handled the affairs of South India with considerable statesmanship and wisdom in a very crucial period of its history.

Ballala IV, also known as Hampeya Odeya, son of Ballala III, who crowned himself king nearly a year later in August 1343 A.D., was not an able person and could not rise to meet the grim needs of the extraordinary times through which South India was passing and nothing is heard of him after 1346 A.D. and the kingly leadership passed into the hands of Harihara and his valiant brothers who had by now proved themselves equal to the task.

The transition from the Hoysala rule to the Vijayanagara rule was smooth. It is significant that many Vijayanagara inscriptions of the early period mention that Harihara and Bukka were ruling the Hoysala kingdom. As has already been mentioned, Harihara was closely connected with the Hoysala family. Ballappa Dannayaka, a nephew of Ballala III and son-in-law of Harihara, who has been referred to earlier, was a leading participant in the grand function held in 1346 A.D. at Sringeri to celebrate the festival of victory. The Hoysala generals and feudatories now owed allegiance to Vijayanagara. Harihara and his brothers soon established full control over all the parts of the former Hoysala kingdom. There was much controversy about the nativity and earlier career of Harihara and his brothers. From fuller investigations and studies made recently,³² it appears well established that Sangama, the father of the founders of Vijayanagara, was a local chief in the Hampi-Anegondi region and his son Harihara who was also a close relative of the Hoysala ruler Ballala III, rose to power as his loyal subordinate.

It appears that by 1336 A.D., Harihara became the master of the region extending from Nellore in the east to Dharwar and Badami in northern Karnataka. The first task of the Sangama brothers was to consolidate their position and to organise the kingdom for effective defence. They developed Hampi which was already a strongly fortified place on the bank of the Tungabhadra river, as the capital of the new kingdom; this place is surrounded by the Hemakuta, Matanga and Malyavanta hills, which were linked together by strong walls. They called this Vijayanagara city as also Vidyanagara, perhaps to commemorate the help they had received from Vidyaranya. It is said that it took full seven years to complete the first constructions of this capital. Harihara strengthened also the fortifications of Badami, the old Chalukyan capital, in the west, and made the famous fort of Udayagiri (in the Nellore district) the headquarters of his eastern province. Bukka, who was the Yuvaraja, was appointed governor of Dorasamudra. Harihara placed his other younger brothers Kampana and Muddapa in charge of Udayagiri and Mulbagal regions respectively. Marapa, another younger brother who had defeated the Kadamba ruler in the west, was put in charge of Male-rajya, the western region. The reign of Harihara is rightly said to mark the beginning of a great era of conquest and expansion. The small region with which he started had developed into a large kingdom by the last years of his reign.

The latest known date of Harihara is 1357 A.D. He perhaps **Bukka I** died in the course of the same year. As he had no issue, Bukka I (1357-77) succeeded him as the sovereign of the kingdom. The first step which Bukka took after assuming the control of the State was to unify the kingdom and strengthen the position. Bukka appointed his sons as governors in different parts and made

them responsible for maintenance of the royal authority. Meanwhile, Ala-ud-din Hasan Gangu, the ruler of the newly founded Bahmani kingdom at Gulbarga, who was hostile to Vijayanagara from the very beginning, claimed some sort of suzerainty over Vijayanagara, which claim was naturally rejected outright and the relations between the two kingdoms continued to be strained from the beginning. Bukka was involved in a war with the Bahmanis. He claimed that the forts of Raichur and Mudgal, with their dependent territory extending as far as the river Krishna, should be returned to him. Muhammad Shah, the then Bahmani ruler, not agreeing with this, declared war on Bukka. The account of the war given by Ferishta, who says that Muhammad Shah defeated Bukka on every battle-field and in the end dictated to him the terms of peace which the latter had no option but to accept, is now considered to be inaccurate and one-sided. Actually, the Bahmani Sultan had to sign a treaty which left Bukka the master of the whole of the Raichur doab, excepting some small areas on the southern bank of the Krishna which were to be covered jointly. This war came to an end in 1365.

Shortly after this, Bukka was engaged in a war with Kondavidu. Little is known about the causes and incidents of this war, as a result of which the Reddy territories of Ahobalam and Vinukonda with their dependent area were annexed to the kingdom of Vijayanagara. After these two victories, Bukka turned his attention to the far south. Sambavaraya, who was ruling in north-eastern region of Tamilnadu, was also subdued and made a vassal of Vijayanagara. The Hindus were in a miserable condition under the Sultan of Madurai and Bukka, with the help of Sambavaraya, launched an attack on Madurai some time about 1370. The expedition organised under the leadership of Kumara Kampana against the Sultan of Madurai ended in a great success. Severe engagement took place near Srirangam and somewhere between Tiruchirapalli and Madurai, in which the Sultan was utterly defeated and ultimately killed. This ended the hostile island in South India and fulfilled the strategic plan of Ballala III in pursuit of which he had died. With the conquest of Madurai, the whole of South India extending up to Rameshvaram came under the sway of Vijayanagara. The conquered territory was placed under Kumara Kampana who had led the victorious campaign. He was a great soldier and an able administrator. Unfortunately, he died prematurely in about 1374 and his death brought the question of succession to the fore-front. Bukka chose Harihara II as his crown prince, ignoring the claims of his more distinguished sons and grandsons, the reasons for this being not quite apparent.

Bukka I died in 1377. He has been rightly described as one of the greatest monarchs of the age and as the co-architect of the Vijayanagara empire. He was a great statesman and promoter

of religious harmony. Once, he personally brought a reconciliation between the Vaishnavas and Jainas in his kingdom and taking the hand of representatives of one community and placing it in the hand of those of the other he declared that there was no difference between the two and they were one (body) and must not be viewed as different. He issued an edict to this effect, the copies of which were set up in important centres. All religious communities in his empire including the Jews, Christians and Muslims looked upon the Raya as the guardian of their religious rights. Personally he seems to have taken an active interest in the Vedic *dharma* and was called the Vedamarga-Pratisthapaka (the establisher of the path of the Vedas).

Though Bukka I was immediately followed by Harihara II, **Harihara II** the authority of the latter does not seem to have been acknowledged in all parts of the kingdom at once. There were revolts in the Konkan and other provinces. It is not unlikely that the sons and some of the officers of Kumara Kampana, who were dissatisfied with the old king's arrangement about succession, made a common cause with the rebels. Harihara II, however, succeeded in putting down all the rebellions and in enforcing his authority. A greater danger than these internal disturbances threatened the stability of the kingdom and that was from the Bahmani side. The Bahmani Sultan invaded his kingdom with a large force. Muhammad Shah I died in 1375 and was succeeded by his warlike son Mujahid Shah. The latter sent an envoy to the Vijayanagara court demanding the abrogation of the treaty of 1365 and the recognition of the Tungabhadra river as the southern boundary of his dominion. Harihara naturally turned down this demand and Mujahid invaded the Vijayanagara kingdom by way of reply in 1377. According to Ferishta, who has given an elaborate account of this war, the Raya of Vijayanagara collected his troops on the bank of the Tungabhadra, but "took to flight at the approach of the Sultan's army; Mujahid then laid siege to Vijayanagara and though he achieved some success at first, he was obliged to raise the siege ultimately". On his way back, he attempted to capture the fort of Adoni but failed to take it; while returning to his capital, having achieved nothing in the war he was assassinated in his tent (1378). As a result, there were dissensions in the Bahmani royal family. Harihara II sent an expedition to Konkan and northern Karnataka. Madhava Mantrin, who was in charge of the Banavasi country, is said to have defeated the Turushkas, captured the port of Goa and reduced the "seven Konkans" (1380).

There was another conflict between Harihara II and the Bahmanis in 1398, when he planned an attack on the Velamas and their allies, the Bahmanis. He obviously took advantage of the confusion which followed the usurpation of the Bahmani throne by Feroz Shah, and captured the fort of Sagar. According to **Defeat of Velamas and Bahmanis**

Ferishta, Feroz crossed the Krishna, looted the camp of his adversary, besieged Vijayanagara and compelled Harihara to buy peace by payment of a large sum of money. Other Muslim authorities do not refer to the invasion of the doab or the siege of Vijayanagara. The Muslim accounts of the sweeping victories of Feroz Shah are contradicted by certain Hindu sources. An inscription at Pangal, in the Nalgonda district, for example, clearly proves that an expedition sent by Harihara against the Velamas defeated them as well as their Bahmani allies near that place almost at the same time when Feroz, according to Ferishta, was dictating the terms of a humiliating treaty to Vijayanagara. On the whole the fact seems to be that in spite of some initial success, Feroz Shah was ultimately forced to retreat and lost some territory to the north of the Krishna.

The last years of the reign of Harihara II were peaceful and undisturbed. He died in 1404. During his reign of nearly three decades (1377-1404), the kingdom extended in all directions and assumed the proportions of a mighty empire. His conquest of the east and west coast made him the master of many ports through which there was brisk trade with Europe and countries of Asia. On the death of Harihara II, the succession to the throne was disputed. His three sons, Bukka II, Virupaksha II and Devaraya I, seem to have laid claims to the throne and attempted to gain forcible accession to it. Though the details of the struggle, which lasted for two years, are not known, Virupaksha II appears to have crowned himself king immediately after the death of his father; he was, shortly after this, overthrown by his elder brother Bukka II who ruled for a short time and was, in his turn, succeeded in 1406 by Devaraya I.

Devaraya I

Devaraya's reign (1406-22) was a period of almost incessant military activities. Immediately after his accession, his kingdom was invaded by Feroz, and this time, besides the Velamas, who were his allies, the Sultan also secured the friendship of Peda Komati Vema, the Reddy ruler of Kondavidu. The Kondavidu chief attacked Udayagiri and captured some Vijayanagara territory belonging to that province from which they were not expelled until 1413.

Bahmani invasion repulsed again

Some ten years later, there was another conflict between Devaraya I and the Bahmani Sultan. The fort of Pangal was in possession of the Vijayanagara kings since the time of its conquest in 1398. Feroz Shah, who realised the strategic importance of the fort, resolved to wrest it from Devaraya and accordingly launched an attack in 1417 to capture it. The siege lasted for two years but the fort defied all attempts to take it. The besiegers were subjected to great hardships on account of famine and pestilence. Meanwhile, Devaraya gathered fresh forces and surrounded the besieging forces. The garrison, which had bravely held out for

two years, now, encouraged by the distressed condition of the Bahmani army on the one side and the arrival of the reinforcements from Vijayanagara on the other, sallied out of the fort and fell upon the camp of the enemy. Thus caught between the two armies, the Bahmani forces were cut to pieces and the Sultan fled from the field. Devaraya I re-established his authority on the Raichur doab.

Devaraya I was a great organiser of armies. He was connected with the administration of the kingdom for a period of more than fifty years; first as the governor of the 'Udayagiri Raja' and then as the ruler of the whole empire. Throughout this period, he endeavoured to increase the efficiency of his armed forces. He was the first Vijayanagara king to realise the great need to increase the efficiency of the cavalry. By purchasing horses from Arabia and Persia on a large scale and recruiting suitable troopers to man them he greatly enhanced the fighting capacity of his forces. He was also the first ruler in the family to employ in his services Turkish bowmen whom he attracted to his kingdom by liberal grants of land and money.

Other
achievements of
Devaraya I

Devaraya I was also noted for his learning and his association with the learned. He was an ardent Shaivite, especially devoted to the worship of the goddess Pampa. He built several temples at Vijayanagara, some of which still remain in various stages of ruin. According to the Portuguese Chronicler Nuniz, Bukka II and Devaraya I greatly extended the city of Vijayanagara, raising fresh walls and towers and built further lines of fortifications. But, as Sewell says: "their great work was the construction of a huge dam across the Tungabhadra river, and the formation of an aqueduct, 15 miles long, from the river into the city. If this be the same channel that, to the present day, supplies the fields which occupy so much of the site of the old city, it is a most extraordinary work. For several miles, this channel is cut out of solid rock at the base of the hills and is one of the most remarkable irrigation works to be seen in India". Towards the close of the reign of Devaraya I, the Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, visited Vijayanagara and his description of the city has survived to this date.

Devaraya I died in 1422 and was succeeded for a few months by Ramachandra, a younger son of his, who was governor of Udayagiri. He had to yield place to his elder brother Veera Vijayaraya, also known as Vijaya Bhupati and Vijaya Bukka III. The latter's rule also ended in 1424. He appears to have been a weak monarch who took little or no active part in the government of the kingdom, leaving the administration entirely in the abler hands of his son and crown-prince Devaraya II who successfully faced the invasion by the Bahmani ruler Ahmed Shah I in 1422-23. Sultan Ahmed Shah, immediately after his accession to the throne in 1422, invaded the Vijayanagara kingdom. In the initial stages

of their counter-offensive, the Vijayanagara forces penetrated as far as Etgir (Yadgir) in the Gulbarga district. It is perhaps after this that the Bahmani Sultan changed his capital in 1423 from Gulbarga to Bidar.

Devaraya II

Devaraya II (Immadi Devaraya, also known as Praudha Devaraya, Pratapa Devaraya and Abhinava-Veera-Devaraya) ascended the throne in 1424. Bhanudeva IV, the then king of Orissa, invaded the coastal regions of Andhra and defeated the chiefs of Rajamahendry and Kondavidu between 1424 and 1427. Ferishta states that Ahmed Shah, obviously taking advantage of this unexpected happening, "marched towards Vijayanagara, approached the capital and forced Devaraya to appeal for peace." This appears to be improbable. An inscription from South Kanara district, dated 1429-30, refers to the defeat of a large Turushka cavalry by Devaraya II. Two other victories against the chiefs of Andhra (*i.e.*, Velamas) and Orissa are also mentioned in this inscription. Devaraya II launched a counter-attack on the Gajapati king of Orissa and the Velamas, both of whom he defeated. He restored the chief of Rajamahendry to power and reconquered the old Reddy kingdom of Kondavidu and incorporated it in the empire of Vijayanagara. The king of Ceylon is stated to have paid tribute to Devaraya II after a successful Vijayanagara naval expedition sent under the command of Lakkanna Dandesha. This victorious general was honoured by Devaraya II with the title of "Lord of the Southern Ocean".

For about seven years after the conclusion of the war with the Gajapati king, the Vijayanagara kingdom enjoyed peace; but with the death of the Bahmani Sultan Ahmed Shah, and the accession to the throne of his son Ala-ud-din II, the tranquillity of the kingdom was again broken. Two wars during this period are recorded by the Muslim historians, one in 1435-36 and another in 1443-44. Both of them were confined to the Raichur doab and centred round the forts of Raichur and Mudgal. The conflicting accounts of the Muslim historians are hard to reconcile. Taking all facts into consideration, however, it appears that the Sultan's invasion of Vijayanagara was a failure. The second war broke out in 1443; it is held by some, on the basis of the evidence from other sources, that the reason for this war was not determination of Devaraya II to conquer the Bahmani kingdom but was the desire of the Sultan to take advantage of a misfortune that befell Devaraya II and to exact from him a large sum of money.

Treachery by brother

Abdur Razak, the Persian ambassador, who was sojourning in Calicut in 1443, says that one of the brothers of Devaraya II, having invited the king and the nobles to a feast in a palace, which he had built, "massacred all who attended the function"; though Devaraya II did not accept the invitation the treacherous brother attacked him in the royal palace and, finding him alone,

stabbed him in several places; believing that the king was dead, he immediately appeared on the portico of the palace and proclaimed himself king; but Devaraya II recovering consciousness, dragged himself on to the portico and commanded the people not to recognise the traitor; the crowd of people, who had assembled in the palace, then fell upon the treacherous prince and slew him on the spot. This unfortunate incident naturally created confusion. It is at this juncture that the Bahmani Sultan demanded the payment of seven lakhs of Varahas and threatened to invade Vijayanagara in case his demand was not met with. Devaraya II refused to comply with the Sultan's demand and in consequence, war broke out between the two kingdoms. According to Ferishta, Devaraya II "invaded the doab, captured Mudgal and plundered the Sultan's territory." The Sultan met him with an army of 50,000 horse and 60,000 foot. Three severe engagements took place between them near Mudgal. In the first battle, Devaraya II was victorious, but in the last his eldest son was killed and the forces of Vijayanagara fled into the fort (of Mudgal), and a treaty was concluded.

Devaraya II died in 1446 (?), after a rule of about 25 years. He was a great monarch, a courageous military leader and the master of an extensive empire which extended from the Krishna river to Ceylon and from the west coast to the Bay of Bengal. During his reign, the kingdom reached the zenith of its prosperity. He appears to have been personally inclined towards Veerashaiva faith and philosophy. He built also a mosque at Vijayanagara for the benefit of his Muslim subjects and had kept a copy of the Koran near his throne to honour the sentiments of his Muslim brethren and recruited Muslims into the armed forces. He was a liberal patron of poets and scholars. Chamarasa, among Kannada poets, and Srinatha, among Telugu poets, were most renowned literary figures of the time of Devaraya II. The king was ably assisted in his military campaigns by generals like Lakkanna Dandasha, Jakkanna, who were also Kannada poets, and Madanna (who was a brother of Lakkanna).

**Greatness of
Devaraya II**

The political situation at Vijayanagara immediately after the death of Devaraya II is, again, not clear.

Vijayaraya II, also called Pratapadeva, who seems to have been a younger brother of Devaraya II, appeared to have laid claim to the throne and attempted to assume kingly power, but he had to withdraw very shortly. Mallikarjuna (also called Devaraya III and Praudha Devaraya III) was crowned in 1446. He was a weak prince and his succession to the throne marks the beginning of a period of dissension, decline and confusion in the fortunes of the Sangama dynasty. At the start of his reign, the Velamas made a new home for themselves in Velugodu in the Kurnool district, when their capital Rajakonda was seized by the

Mallikarjuna

Bahmanis. Also the neighbouring princelings disturbed the peace and weakened the realm—a situation of which both the Bahmani Sultan and the Gajapati king took advantage. They laid siege to Vijayanagara; but fortunately, the city defied all their efforts and the invading armies had to retire without achieving much. The Gajapati invasion of Vijayanagara kingdom began, however, in right earnest four years later.

Between 1450 and 1454, Kapilendra, the Gajapati king, reduced the Reddy kingdom of Rajamahendry and sent an army under his cousin, Ganadeva, into the Kondavidu province of the Vijayanagara empire. The expedition was completely successful: the Vijayanagara army was defeated and driven out of Kondavidu. The important forts of Kondavidu, Vinukonda and Addanki, together with the areas depending on them, passed into Ganadeva's hands. Kumara Hamvira, one of Kapilendra's sons, was appointed the Governor of Kondavidu and was commissioned to invade and conquer Vijayanagara territories. Hamvira, a great warrior and capable general, led a huge army in 1463 into the southern provinces of the empire. Strangely enough, the Orissan army appears to have met with little opposition and it captured all the important forts of the east coast. Kapilendra is said to have intended to annex the whole territory; but the Orissan forces were later obliged to retrace their foot-steps. They lost all the forts which they had conquered with the exception of Udayagiri in the Nellore district. This invasion weakened the Vijayanagara empire and lowered the prestige of the Vijayanagara king.

Virupaksha III

After this grave humiliation, Mallikarjuna lost his power and his cousin brother Virupaksha III usurped the throne in 1465. This Virupaksha was the son of Pratapa-Devaraya, younger brother of Devaraya II, and had been the Governor of Penugonda for several years before assuming the imperial crown. He was not a capable ruler. Nuniz records that he was given over to vices. It is not surprising that large tracts of land including Goa, Chaul and Dahol were taken over by Bahmanis during his reign. The authority of the Central Government continued to decline; but the total disruption was, however, prevented by the initiative of powerful provincial governors, the most prominent among whom was Saluva Narasimha of Chandragiri-rajya. His inscriptions begin to appear from as early as 1456. This Saluva Narasimha was the eldest son of Saluva Gunda, the chief of Chandragiri. He recovered some of the lost territories and put down rebels and was assisted in this task by his general Tuluva Narasa Nayaka. These achievements made him the most powerful man in the empire.

The profligate king Virupaksha III continued to be the nominal ruler till 1485 when he was murdered by his eldest son. The latter, however, declined the throne and had his younger brother, Praudha Devaraya, crowned. This new king also is

stated to have plunged into vices, entirely neglecting the affairs of the State. Saluva Narasimha now clearly saw that the only way to save the kingdom from destruction was to put an end to the rule of the old dynasty and assume the royal title himself. He, accordingly, commanded his general, Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, to march on Vijayanagara and capture it in his name. From the writings of Nuniz, who has given a graphic account of the scenes at Vijayanagara at this time, it is clear that this general met with no opposition. The king fled from the capital and with the taking over of the administration by Saluva Narasimha, who immediately followed Tuluva Narasa Nayaka to the capital, the rule of the Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagara came to an end, and the Saluva dynasty was ushered into being. Saluva Narasimha was crowned king about the close of 1485.

This, however, should not be taken to mean that everything was clear-sailing, for Saluva Narasimha found that it was easier to capture the throne than to enforce authority in the kingdom. There was much opposition to Narasimha's elevation to kingship and he had to spend much time and energy in fighting and subduing recalcitrant chiefs on all sides. It must be said to his credit that he overcame all his internal troubles; but at the same time, it should also be remembered that these internal difficulties greatly affected his capacity to resist the foes of Vijayanagara. Purushottama Gajapati, the ruler of Orissa, invaded the coastal Andhra region and attacked the fort of Udayagiri. The attack was completely successful, the attempt made by Narasimha to raise the siege proving disastrous. According to some scholars, Narasimha was not only defeated but also taken prisoner and he had to secure his release by agreeing to surrender the fort and the surrounding territory.

The weakness of the empire during the reign of Virupaksha III had affected it in still another manner; the loss of the western ports had completely dislocated the horse trade of the Arabs, on which the Vijayanagara army had depended to a certain extent for its cavalry. Narasimha saw to it that the trade was revived, by recovering the areas of the present North and South Kanaras and utilising the ports of Honavar, Bhatkal, Mangalore, etc., for the purpose. He also took all possible steps to increase the efficiency of his troops. According to one author, he "transformed the peace-loving farmers of Vijayanagara into a nation of warriors, and taught them how to contend on equal terms with the Muslims and the Oriyas on the field of battle." On the whole, there is little doubt that by his act of 'usurpation', Narasimha saved the empire from disruption and ruin.

Saluva Narasimha died in 1490 or 1491. He had two sons, both of whom were still very young. Hence he had appointed, at the time of his death, his minister, Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, as their guardian and as the regent of the kingdom. He had

Saluva
Narasimha

Immadi Saluva
Narasimha
(Saluva
Narasimha II)

instructed him to hand over the kingdom, after they had attained majority, to the one whom he would consider fit. But Tuluva Narasa Nayaka immediately placed Timma, the elder prince, on the throne. But one Timmarasa, a rival of Narasa Nayaka, had him murdered and proclaimed that he was killed at the instance of Narasa Nayaka himself, thinking that the latter would be put to death for that act of treason. Narasa Nayaka, in order to get himself out of the accusation, made the younger son of Saluva Narasimha, called Immadi Narasimha, the king. The new king, instead of being grateful to his protector, began to show marked favour to Timmarasa, his rival. This was too much for Narasa Nayaka to tolerate. Immadi Narasimha ultimately abandoned Timmarasa who was punished with death, and accepted Narasa Nayaka as his own guardian and the protector of the empire. With a view to preventing any further mischief on the part of the young king, Narasa Nayaka kept him under custody at Penugonda and began to rule like a sovereign. This was indeed a second usurpation which necessarily led to a crop of fresh internal troubles.

**Tuluva Narasa
Nayaka**

Thus the task devolved upon the shoulders of Tuluva Narasa Nayaka was by no means easy. Saluva Narasimha, who had spent all his time in fighting, obviously had no time to consolidate the position and establish royal power firmly at the capital and elsewhere; though, of course, most of the nobles and subordinate chiefs had outwardly submitted to his authority, they had been reluctant to accept the supremacy of his sons and also allow themselves to be governed by the protector; in addition to this, he had to face the Bahmani Sultan and the Gajapati of Orissa. But by numerous successful military campaigns, Narasa Nayaka now restored the integrity of the kingdom, and the enemies whom he had conquered during his rule as regent from 1491 to 1503 are enumerated in all the records of his descendants. From these records, we learn that he not only subdued all the chiefs in South India but also defeated the Gajapati of Orissa and took Adil Khan a prisoner. Of these, only the last two victories which obviously are his major achievements, may be dealt with here. In 1492-93 Kasim Barid, the Bahmani Prime Minister, who was jealous of the growing power of Yusuf Adil Khan of Bijapur, who had declared his independence from the Bahmani overlordship, entered into an alliance with Bahadur Gilani, the ruler of Konkan, and Narasa Nayaka of Vijayanagara. He offered Narasa Nayaka the forts of Raichur and Mudgal in return for an attack on Yusuf Adil Khan. Narasa Nayaka accepted the terms and sent into the Raichur doab an army. Yusuf Adil Khan was not in a position to resist the invader immediately, as he had to face the other enemies whom Kasim Barid had set up against him at the same time. As soon as he succeeded in repelling these forces, he tried to recover the forts of Raichur and Mudgal, but met with little success. He was defeated and forced to seek refuge in the fortress of Manvi. He then pretended submission and invited Narasa

Nayaka to a peace conference where he treacherously attacked the Nayaka and his followers and put several persons of rank to death as the result of which the Vijayanagara army is stated to have fled and given Adil Khan the victory. But the doab continued to remain a part of the Vijayanagara empire till as late as 1503.

The Gajapati king, Prataparudra, also led an expedition against Vijayanagara in about 1499 and advanced up to the Pennar; but he was defeated and driven back. Narasa Nayaka is credited with victory over the Gajapati in all Tuluva records; and as there was no change in the boundaries after this incident, it appears that Prataparudra's invasion produced no material results.

At the time of his death, in 1503, it may be said, Tuluva Narasa Nayaka had established authority effectively all over the empire and had reorganised its army. He was the *de facto* sovereign of Vijayanagara during the nominal rule of the sons of Saluva Narasimha. He was called the 'Rakshakarta' or the protector and 'Swami' or the lord; he held offices of the 'Senadhipati' (commander-in-chief), the 'Mahapradhana' (prime minister) and the 'Karyakarta' (the agent of the king). By his ability and service to the empire, it may be said that he also fully justified the act of usurpation as in the case of Saluva Narasimha.

Immediately after the death of Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, his place as regent was taken by his eldest son Tuluva Veera Narasimha (Immadi Tuluva Narasa Nayaka). Though the king, Immadi Saluva Narasimha (Saluva Narasimha II), was now a grown-up prince, the new regent showed no inclination to lay down his office or retire. He kept him under tutelage until the latter was finally assassinated early in 1505. Shortly after this, Tuluva Veera Narasimha actually succeeded to the throne, thus inaugurating the third or the Tuluva dynasty of the Vijayanagara kingdom. According to Nuniz, after Tuluva Narasa Nayaka's death in 1503, the whole land revolted under its captains and obviously, the murder of the king and the following usurpation should have made the position of Tuluva Veera Narasimha much worse. His six-year reign (from 1503 to 1509) was almost wholly spent in fighting and success was not always on his side. Immediately after his coming to the throne, Yusuf Adil Khan again tried to extend his dominion beyond the Tungabhadra. Rama Raja of the Aravidu family and his son Timma stood by Veera Narasimha and inflicted a defeat on the Khan. Veera Narasimha next turned his attention to the rebel chiefs in the south including Tulu province of the empire. At first, he besieged the fort of Ummattur, but failed to take it. He then proceeded against Srirangapatna where also he did not succeed. Veera Narasimha's attempt to force these rebels to submit to his authority thus ended in failure.

**Tuluva Veera
Narasimha**

Tuluva Veera Narasimha was, however, completely successful in dealing with the rebels on the west coast. He also tried to recover Goa. The Italian traveller, Varthema, records that the Muslim governor of that place was at war with the king of Vijayanagara round about 1506; but the details of the campaign are not known. Though, thus, Veera Narasimha was continuously engaged in warfare throughout the short period of his reign, he found time to improve the efficiency of his army by introducing certain changes in the methods of recruitment and training of forces. To improve the condition of the cavalry, he offered tempting prices to the horse-dealers and attracted them to the Tuluva ports. He infused a warlike spirit by encouraging various kinds of military exercises. He also took a keen interest in the welfare of the agriculturists. It is said that he was always ready to listen to their complaints and to redress their grievances as far as possible.

**Krishnadeva
Raya**

Tuluva Veera Narasimha died in 1509 and he was succeeded by his half-brother, Krishnadeva Raya. Though the earliest inscription belonging to Krishnadeva Raya is dated 26th July 1509, his coronation took place in all probability on Krishna Jayanti day of the same year, corresponding to the 8th August 1509. The reign of Krishnadeva Raya was "the period of Vijayanagara's greatest success, when its armies were everywhere victorious and the city was the most prosperous". Paes, who saw Krishnadeva Raya about ten years later, describes him as a man of medium height and of fair complexion, rather fat than thin and with signs of small-pox on the face. He is further described as the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and the one 'that seeks to honour foreigners'.

At the time of Krishnadeva Raya's succession, the position of the kingdom was in no way satisfactory. The authority of the Central Government was not an established fact in all parts of the kingdom. The Gajapati of Orissa was still in possession of the eastern districts of the empire; Yusuf Adil Khan, the founder of the new Adil Shahi dynasty at Bijapur, had been persistently attempting to expand the boundaries of his kingdom, thus proving himself a source of danger to the Vijayanagara kingdom.

**Battles in the
north**

Immediately after the succession of Krishnadeva Raya, war broke out between Vijayanagara and the Bahmani Sultan Mahmud Shah. The latter, in pursuance of the policy of the annual *jihads*, started an attack on the Vijayanagara territories and he was joined by all chiefs and nobles who nominally acknowledged his supremacy. When, however, the Bahmani army arrived at Doni on the Vijayanagara frontier, its progress was checked by the Vijayanagara forces. A fierce battle took place in which the Bahmani forces suffered a crushing defeat. The Sultan himself

was wounded and his followers made a hasty retreat towards Kovilkonda.

Krishnadeva Raya, instead of stopping the war, pursued the retreating Bahmani army and forced it to fight another battle near Kovilkonda, which also resulted in a victory to Vijayanagara. In fact, the battle of Kovilkonda was more disastrous than the previous one for the invaders. In the course of this fight Yusuf Adil Khan of Bijapur lost his life, plunging the infant State of Bijapur into chaos. Soon after this war was over, Yusuf Adil Khan was succeeded by his young son Ismail Adil Shah. Krishnadeva Raya now invaded the Raichur doab and captured the fort of Raichur. He further advanced to Gulbarga, defeated Amir Barid, the minister and gaoler of Mahmud II, and took the city. From there, he marched on Bidar, captured it after a short siege and restored Sultan Mahmud Shah to power, thereby assuming the title of 'Yavanarajya-sthapanacharya' (the establisher of the Yavana (Muslim) kingdom).

At the same time, Krishnadeva Raya was also fighting the rebellious chieftain of Ummattur and the Gajapati ruler of Orissa. The Palayagar of Ummattur had defied his predecessor, being in possession of the strong forts of Srirangapatna and Shivanasamudra. Krishnadeva Raya's campaign against him lasted for nearly two years. He first laid siege to Srirangapatna and next he proceeded against Shivanasamudra and invested it for more than a year. During the course of the conflict, Gangaraya fled and was drowned in the Kaveri. The reconquered territory was formed into a new province with Srirangapatna as its capital and one Saluva Govindaraya as its first governor. **Rebel put down**

The third front was opened against the Orissa ruler, who had been in occupation of the coastal districts of Vijayanagara, namely, Udayagiri and Kondavidu, since the days of Saluva Narasimha. The war opened with an attack by Krishnadeva Raya upon the fort of Udayagiri early in 1513. Prataparudra of Orissa sent a large army to relieve it, but it was easily defeated by the Vijayanagara forces which pursued it as far as Kondavidu. The Raya now tried to capture the fort of Udayagiri by escalade but failed on account of its inaccessibility. It was ultimately taken after the siege lasted for a year-and-a-half during which Krishnadeva Raya cut a number of new paths up the rocky hills to enable his troops to reach the walls of the fort. After the fall of Udayagiri, he returned to Vijayanagara while the army was ordered to march into the Kondavidu province. **Third front**

The garrisons of Prataparudra stationed in various places along the road abandoned their posts, and the forts of Kandukur, Addanki, Vinukonda, Bellamkonda, Nagarjunikonda, Tangeda and Ketavaram fell one after another into the hands of the Raya.

The victorious army then proceeded against Kondavidu and laid siege to it. Kondavidu was a strong fortress perched on the top of a hill and could not be taken even after three months' siege. At this stage, the Raya arrived at the place and directed the operations personally. The fort was ultimately captured and a large number of Oriya noblemen, including Prince Veerabhadra, were captured and carried away as prisoners to Vijayanagara. The army next advanced to Vijayawada on the Krishna and laid siege to the fort which was easily taken and made the base for further operations. A few miles to the northwest was Kondapalli, a strong and well defended fort with lofty walls. Krishnadeva Raya laid siege to it, and an army sent for its relief by Prataparudra of Orissa was thoroughly defeated on the banks of the Krishna. The fort then surrendered.

The capture of Vijayawada and Kondapalli, it may be said, was a prelude to the conquest of Telangana and Vengi, both of which had, for some time, formed part of the kingdom of Gajapati. A few feeble attempts were no doubt made to stop the progress of the Vijayanagara army; but the latter continued its triumphant march. When Krishnadeva Raya reached Potnur-Simhadri, he set up a pillar of victory there and returned to his capital by way of Rajamahendry. His victorious army, which had been ordered to march further, reached Cuttack, the capital of Orissa. At last, reduced to extremity, Prataparudra sued for peace and offered the emperor the hand of his daughter which was accepted. Krishnadeva Raya, magnanimous that he was, returned all the territories north of the Krishna to the Gajapati king. This war has been aptly described as one of the most brilliant episodes in the military history of India in the 16th century.

**Battle of
Raichur**

While Krishnadeva Raya was busy with his Orissa campaign, Ismail Adil Khan recaptured Raichur. Enraged at this and determined to try conclusions once for all with Adil Shah, the Raya marched against him with an army which, according to Nuniz, consisted of "about a million men." He pitched his camp to the east of Raichur and laid a regular siege to the fortress. Ismail came to its relief, also with a huge army. The decisive battle took place on the 19th of May 1520. It opened with an attack by the Vijayanagara troops which drove the Adil Shah's forces back to their trenches; but the latter started their artillery attack at this stage, which played much havoc among the Vijayanagara troops who fell back and were charged by the enemy. Krishnadeva Raya then mounted his horse and ordered a forward movement of the remaining divisions. Their impetuous onslaughts finally overcame the ranks of the Adil Shah's forces, which were relentlessly pursued up to the river and the threatened defeat was thus converted into a brilliant victory. The Adil Shah's camp was seized and he himself barely escaped with his life on

an elephant. Krishnadeva Raya returned to Raichur and shortly afterwards recaptured it.

In 1523, the Raya had another war with Bijapur, which was due to the machinations of one Asad Khan Lari, a wily ambassador of Ismail Shah, who had been sent to Vijayanagara to conclude a treaty. According to the ambassador's undertaking, the Shah or his mother was to meet the Raya at a certain place on the northern frontier of the kingdom. Krishnadeva Raya, who went there, did not find either Ismail Shah or his mother. Determined to teach the Sultan a lesson, the Raya marched on Gulbarga and razed the fort to the ground. He further captured the forts of Ferozabad and Sagar and led his army finally upto Bijapur which he occupied for a time.

**Another war
with Adil Shah**

According to Nuniz, Krishnadeva Raya, towards the end of his reign, made his six-year old son (Tirumala) king and himself became the minister. The young prince, however, died after a short reign of eight months. (Nuniz says that the prince was poisoned by Timma, son of Saluva Timmarasa, who was a minister. This story is not believed by some scholars). However, the enthronement of the boy-king seems to have led to certain internal troubles and taking advantage of this situation, the Adil Shah of Bijapur made an attempt to retrieve his broken fortunes; but when the Raya took the field against him, he retreated in haste. Krishnadeva Raya died soon after this, in about 1529, when his younger son was an infant of about 18 months. He nominated his half-brother Achyutaraya to be his successor.

Krishnadeva Raya was not only a great warrior and military organiser, but also an equally great statesman, administrator and patron of arts and letters. He promoted Sanskrit, Kannada and Telugu learning. Authorship of some Sanskrit and Telugu books is ascribed to him. There were eight renowned Telugu poets in his court. The Kannada poet Timmanna Kavi completed the great epic 'Bharata' of Kumara Vyasa and dedicated it to Krishnadeva Raya. The Raya was known as *Kannada-rajya-rama-rama*. The grandeur of his court excited the admiration of many foreign visitors and their descriptions of the greatness of Vijayanagara made eloquent reading. Krishnadeva Raya was also a great builder and added much to the beauty of his capital. In 1513, he erected the temple of Krishnaswami to house the image of Balakrishna he had brought from Udayagiri. He improved the irrigation of the dry lands round about Vijayanagara. He also built a beautiful suburb and called it Nagalapura in memory of his mother Nagaladevi. The famous temple of Vijaya-Vitthala on the bank of the river was also embellished by him. The enormous monolithic statue of Narasimha was one of the monuments of his reign. Some of the many-pillared *mantapas* and the *Raya-gopuras* of the South seem to have been constructed during

**Other
achievements**

this period. The two decades of Krishnadeva Raya's rule marked a significant epoch in the history of South India.

Achyuta Raya

Krishnadeva Raya was succeeded by his half-brother Achyuta Raya. According to Nuniz, who actually spent some time in Achyuta Raya's court, the latter "had given himself to vices and tyranny and both the people and the officers were fed up with him". But according to some modern writers, Achyuta Raya, who was chosen by Krishnadeva Raya himself, was not such a bad king. Whatever this may be, Achyuta Raya's position was difficult at the time of his succession. Aliya Rama Raya of the Aravidu family, who was one of the two sons-in-law of Krishnadeva Raya and who was steadily growing in importance, took the side of Krishnadeva Raya's infant son and proclaimed him king. It appears that he even made a futile attempt to seize power in the name of the boy-king. This quarrel for succession naturally led to some confusion at the capital. At the same time, the enemies of Vijayanagara took Krishnadeva Raya's death as a welcome signal and renewed their attacks on the kingdom. Thus, for instance, Ismail Adil Shah invaded the Raichur doab and captured the forts of Raichur and Mudgal, before something could be done by Vijayanagara to stop him. The Gajapati ruler also led an expedition at the same time; but he was defeated and turned back. Similarly, the attempt of the Sultan of Golkonda to seize Kondavidu was also foiled.

In order to avoid further differences between himself and Rama Raya, Achyuta Raya came to terms with Rama Raya and agreed to share power with him. This greatly displeased Saluva Veera Narasimha who was another leading man in Vijayanagara; he retired from the court, joined the chieftains of Ummattur and Tiruvadi-rajya and set up the standard of revolt in the south; but Achyuta Raya marched against him with an army led by his brother-in-law Salakaraju Tirumala and put down the revolt. With the death of Krishnadeva Raya's infant son soon after this, the position of Rama Raya became rather shaky. It also brought about a change in the attitude of Achyuta Raya who advanced his own powers further. He marched to the Raichur doab and consolidated his authority up to the Krishna. The history of the subsequent years of Achyuta Raya's reign is rather obscure. It appears that a rebellion broke out in Gutti in 1536-37 which was, however, suppressed immediately. The Adil Shah of Bijapur also made a fresh attack against Vijayanagara and is stated to have entered Nagalapura and razed it to the ground. In short, the whole of Achyuta Raya's reign was spent in a struggle against adverse conditions created both by internal intrigues and revolts, and aggressions.

Aliya Rama Raya seizes power

Achyuta Raya died in the year 1542 and was succeeded by his son Venkata I. But as the latter was still a boy, his maternal uncle Salakaraju Tirumala became the regent. The queen-mother,

suspecting her brother's motives, is said to have sought the assistance of the Adil Shah, who, however, was bought off by Tirumala even before he reached Vijayanagara. As a counter move, Rama Raya liberated Sadashiva, a nephew of Achyuta Raya, from the prison at Gutti, proclaimed him king and appealed to the Adil Shah of Bijapur for aid. The Shah responded to this call also, but Tirumala inflicted a severe defeat on him. The boy-king Venkata I and his supporters were killed by Tirumala. The tussle between Tirumala and Rama Raya continued until at last Rama Raya moved to seize the kingdom in the name of Sadashiva; he captured Penugonda, defeated Tirumala in series of battles and at last put him to the sword in a final engagement and then proceeded to Vijayanagara to perform the coronation of Sadashiva. This was in 1543.

Sadashiva was only a nominal ruler and the real power was wielded by Aliya Rama Raya who later assumed also royal titles. Sadashiva was kept under close guard, although Rama Raya and his two brothers, Tirumala and Venkatadri, went on one day every year and prostrated themselves before their lawful sovereign in token of his rights. With this usurpation of the Vijayanagara throne by Rama Raya, ends the Tuluva dynasty and begins the Aravidu which was the fourth and last ruling family of Vijayanagara.

According to Ferishta, Rama Raya struck departure from some ancient customs. He appointed his own relatives to the highest ranks, a point which is confirmed by other writers and inscriptions also. He recruited a large number of Muslims into the armed forces and also appointed them to high positions as commanders. Besides, he started "interfering" in the relations between the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan. In 1543, he joined with the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Golkonda to attack Bijapur; in 1551, he sided with Ahmadnagar against Bijapur; about the same time, he persuaded the king of Golkonda to help him reduce Adoni, which had been seized by his two brothers who had revolted against his authority; in 1555, he assisted Bijapur against a rebellious vassal and also helped him against the Portuguese. By following this policy, Rama Raya perhaps hoped to forestall the usual attacks on Vijayanagara by the Sultans; but it proved a grave mis-calculation. At this time, there was close alliance between Ali Adil Shah and Vijayanagara and it is stated that when the former paid a visit to Vijayanagara to offer his condolence to Rama Raya, who had lost his son, he was received and honoured as the 'adopted son' of Rama Raya's family.

For want of space, the train of events that led to the decisive and destructive battle of Rakkasa-Tangadgi (formerly known to historians as the battle of Talikota) cannot be dealt with here in detail. Suffice it to say that for some reason or the other, the

Sultans of the Deccan were eagerly waiting for an opportunity to humble the Hindu king. They were fully aware of the fact that none of them could challenge him single-handedly; they had also realised that it was the disunity among them that gave advantage to Rama Raya. Therefore, they finally decided to lead an invasion on Vijayanagara unitedly. According to one view, Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur took the lead in the formation of the Muslim confederacy against Vijayanagara; according to another, Ibrahim Qutb Shah and Hussain Nizam Shah took the initiative. Whoever may be the originator, the confederacy was formed. Embassies passed from one Sultan to another; their differences were made up and steps were taken to form a general league of the "faithful" against the infidel, the Hindu monarch. Dynastic marriages were contracted in order to cement the political relations. Thus, Ali Adil Shah married Chand Bibi, the daughter of Hussain Nizam, and the latter's son married one of Ali's sisters. Soon after these marriages were over, preparations began for the 'holy war'. According to the Hindu sources, all the five Sultans of the Deccan joined hands against Rama Raya. But the Muslim historians leave the Sultan of Berar out of account. In this struggle, Ali Adil Shah undoubtedly played a double game, professing friendship with both the parties. The Muslim armies met on the plains of Bijapur and started their march to the south towards the end of 1564. Reaching the vicinity of the village of Talikote, which was within the confines of Bijapur kingdom, the confederate forces pitched their tents there. The Bijapur Sultan entertained the allied armies and the parties entered into fresh pacts and treaties and promised each other to remain firm and indomitable at all hazards. They now marched against Vijayanagara.

**Decisive battle
of Rakkasa-
Tangadgi**

Rama Raya, on the other side, knew quite well that the decisive battle was to begin soon and on the ensuing Vijayadashami day (which fell on the 15th September 1564), he kept all the nobles informed about it. He ordered them to gather together their available strength without delay. Personally, however, he remained undaunted; he faced the situation with utmost confidence. At the outset, he sent his brother Tirumala with a considerable force to guard the banks of the Krishna and prevent the enemy from crossing it. Then followed his other brother, Venkatadri, and finally himself started with the rest of the forces. Though little reliance can be placed on the figures given by different writers, it is said that the three divisions of the Vijayanagara forces together numbered one lakh of cavalry, five lakhs of infantry which set up their camps on the south side of the Krishna. As to the exact course of events of this campaign, several partisan accounts have come down to us. The actual field of battle was on the south bank of the Krishna. The nearest villages to the battle-field appear to be the present Rakkasgi and Tangadgi which

have been called together as Rakshasa-Tangadi or Rakkasa-Tangadi in some old records.

The rival armies were opposing each other for well over a month. When everything was ready, the main body of the Muslim armies crossed the river and proceeded to attack the Vijayanagara camp. Rama Raya commanded the centre and was opposed by Hussain Nizam Shah; his left, under Tirumala, was opposed by the Bijapur Sultan; and his right, under Venkatadri, was opposed by the combined forces of Golkonda and Bidar. In the first round, the Nizam Shah and Qutb Shah were compelled to retreat by the onslaught of the Vijayanagara army which proved too strong. At this stage, the Adil Shah of Bijapur is stated to have kept neutral. The Sultans pretended to petition Rama Raya for peace. He believed that they were really suing for peace and hence did not take precautions to safeguard his army and camp. When the Sultans found that their plan was working successfully, they delivered a concerted attack. Though taken by surprise, Rama Raya boldly faced them and his army fought so vigorously that victory appeared to favour him. But the issue was finally decided by the timely desertion of two Muslim generals of Rama Raya's army, each of whom was in charge of seventy to eighty thousand men. Treacherously, they joined the side of the Sultans. As Ceaser Frederick puts it, "when the armies were joined, the battle lasted but a while, not the space of four hours, because the two traitorous captains in the chiefest of the fight, with their companies turned their faces against their king, and made such disorder in his army, that, astonished, they set themselves to flight". It was Tuesday, 23rd January 1565 A.D. Rama Raya, who was directing the operations, moving about in a palanquin, was captured and beheaded. His head was raised on a spear for demonstration to the Hindu troops.

Not less than a hundred thousand were killed in the battle and in the pursuit that followed. There was such great confusion on the Vijayanagara side that no attempt whatsoever was made to take up a fresh position or even to organise the defence of the capital. The road to the great city of Vijayanagara thus lay open. First to enter it were the dejected and dying soldiers and notes from the battle-field bringing the worst news. Tirumala escaped in the confusion with the treasure of the emperor loaded on to elephants. He left the city and its inhabitants to their fate, taking with him only the nominal king, Sadashiva, and the women of the royal family. Robbers and wandering gipsies looted as much as they could before the arrival of the victorious Muslim armies which stormed Vijayanagara city on the third day and they set themselves to deliberate destruction and plunderings which went on continuously for about five months. How thorough their work was can be gathered from the account given under

Hampi in Chapter XIX—Places of Interest. In short, Vijayanagara as a city was suddenly blotted out ; it never recovered from the deadly blow.

Anarchy followed throughout the dominions of the empire and the Nayakas and Palayagars, for the most part, threw off their allegiance to the Vijayanagara king and proclaimed themselves independent. Tirumala took up his abode at Penugonda in the present Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Though the family continued in existence at Penugonda and Chandragiri for about a century more, we may stop here so far as the history of Vijayanagara with regard to Bellary is concerned.

**Marathas,
Mughals and
the Nizam**

The area comprising the Bellary district was occupied by several Palayagars. Though these were usually nominally subject to the Adil Shah of Bijapur for about a century, each of them assumed almost independent powers in his territory during the period. (See Minor ruling families later in the chapter).

By about 1677, the Maratha chief, Shivaji, took a good deal of the possessions held by Bijapur in Karnataka and next year he visited Bellary district. He besieged the fort of Bellary and took it. Shortly afterwards, one of his generals reduced to submission the Palayagars in the neighbourhood, who had, for some time, refused to pay tribute to Bijapur. In about 1680, all this tract was formally ceded to him by the Adil Shah of Bijapur and all the Palayagars paid him the usual Maratha tribute called the *chauth*. In 1687, Aurangzeb marched southwards to reduce Bijapur and Golkonda to submission and in the course of these actions, he acquired the Bellary region and added it to the Mughal Suba of Bijapur. The Palayagars, however, continued in a position of semi-independence. By 1723, the power of Asaf Jah, the Mughal governor of the Deccan at Hyderabad, over Bellary was only partial and the Marathas continued to collect tribute from its Palayagars.

**Haidar Ali and
Tipu Sultan**

Meanwhile, the kingdom of Mysore had been rising into prominence in the south and in 1761, Haidar Ali usurped absolute powers and thereafter began to encroach upon the possessions of the various chiefs. In the course of his military campaigns, he moved through the Bellary region and received the submission of the Palayagars, chief among whom were those of Bellary, Harapanahalli and Rayadurga. In 1768, he again marched through this district. The Palayagar of Bellary, who was now a dependent of Basalat Jung, a brother of the Subedar of the Deccan, and Jagirdar of Adoni, refused to give him any tribute, and Haidar Ali attempted to take his fort, but was driven off with great loss. In 1775, however, this Palayagar refused to pay tribute to Basalat Jung also whereupon the latter attacked him together with his French general, Lally. The Palayagar now

requested Haidar Ali for help. The latter arrived on the spot, fell upon the besieging army and routed it, and then turned upon the Palayagar himself and demanded the immediate surrender of the fort. Being now helpless, the Palayagar yielded. Haidar extracted a huge amount from Basalat Jung, and all the Palayagars of the district were forced to acknowledge his supremacy and to pay heavy "contributions" towards the cost of the campaign. In 1786, Tipu Sultan attacked Adoni and after many days' siege, captured it and destroyed the fortifications. The same year he returned to Mysore by a route lying between Rayadurga and Harapanahalli and while professing friendship towards the Palayagars of these two places, treacherously sent out two brigades to capture their forts and at the same time imprisoned the Palayagars themselves, who were in his camp, and looted their towns.

In 1790, Lord Cornwallis entered into an alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam with a view to reducing Tipu Sultan, and it was agreed that whatever territories would be acquired by them from him should be equally divided amongst them. Certain specified Palayagars, among whom were the chiefs of Bellary, Rayadurga and Harapanahalli, were, however, to be left in possession of their territories. Tipu was reduced to submission in 1792 and according to the terms of the treaty of that year, he ceded half of the territories of the Mysore kingdom to the allies. A part of the Bellary district was allotted to the Nizam.

The Palayagars, however, still retained their virtual independence, the Nizam's officers being unable to control them. In 1799, war was again declared against Mysore by the British and their allies; this time, Srirangapatna was taken and Tipu was killed in the battle. In the partition treaty which followed, the Marathas were allotted, among other tracts, Harapanahalli and the six taluks attached to it, while the rest of the district was given over to the Nizam. But owing to some differences, the Peshwa refused to accept the share given to him, and in accordance with one of the articles of the treaty, it was divided between the Nizam and the English. The Nizam received Harapanahalli. Next, in 1800, he agreed to cede to the English all the territories (*i.e.*, Bellary, Anantapur, Cuddapah and a part of Kurnool) he received under these two treaties, in return for a subsidiary force to be stationed in his dominions. As some of these territories were north of the Tungabhadra river, they were exchanged for the taluk of Adoni so that the river might form a boundary between the two territories. Bellary thus passed into the hands of the British. The districts which were given to the British under this treaty were till recently known as the "Ceded Districts."

Several Palayagar families, like those of Bellary, Harapanahalli, Jaramali, rose immediately after the fall of the Vijayanagara **Minor ruling families:**

**Bellary
Palayagars**

empire. The origins of the Bellary Palayagar family are lost in obscurity. The first man of the family appears to have been a Kuruba (*i.e.*, of the shepherd caste), named Hanumappa Nayaka. He seems to have an office under Vijayanagara and, after its downfall, to have acquired the areas of Bellary, Kurugodu and Tekkalakota, from the Adil Shah of Bijapur, subject to payment of a tribute and performance of military services with three thousand peons. He lived at Bellary and put the rocky hill there into some state of defence. Hanumappa Nayaka was succeeded by his lineal descendants, Hire-Malatappa, Siddappa and Hire-Ramappa, who ruled until 1631. Thereafter, the Muslims appear to have taken over the areas and ruled over them for some time, though two more of the Palayagar family, namely Chikka-Malatappa and Chikka-Nayaka Saheb, are mentioned as having some authority. About 1678, the Maratha chief, Shivaji, had become the master of this fort for a short time. As he was passing through the place, some of his foragers were killed by the retainers of a widow of one of the Palayagars, who was then in possession of the fort. Shivaji asked the widow to make amends which she refused and defended herself stoutly, but surrendered after a siege of 27 days. The fort, however, was restored to her on her agreeing to pay tribute. Ten years later, Aurangzeb overran the Maratha conquests in the south and gained suzerainty over the areas.

About 1692, the Palayagar family again obtained authority over the Bellary fort and Devappa Nayaka, son of the above-mentioned Chikka-Nayaka Saheb, was its chief from 1692 to 1707. Devappa Nayaka was followed by his eldest son Hanumappa (1708-17) who was succeeded by his brother Hire-Ramappa (1718-24). The next chief was Hire-Ramappa's brother Chikka-Ramappa who ruled from 1725 to 1729. He died without issue and, as none of his brothers had any children either, his father's younger widow, Neelamma, who was a courageous lady, succeeded. She too had no children and, therefore, adopted a boy of a collateral family, called Doddatala-Ramappa. As the latter was only ten years of age at that time, she ruled during his minority. Finding that the boy's uncle and father opposed her in certain matters, she is said to have had both of them beheaded. After her, Doddatala-Ramappa came to the throne and ruled until 1764. During his time, the area became a tributary to Adoni which had been granted as a *jagir* to Basalat Jung. Ramappa was succeeded by his brother Hanumappa who ruled till 1769. In 1768, Haidar made a futile attempt to take the fort. Hanumappa having no children, had adopted Devappa, who was the son of his brother-in-law; but some persons objected to this and murdered the boy and appointed another named Doddappa as the chief. Doddappa held the area from 1769 to 1774. In 1775, he refused to pay tribute to Basalat Jung, declaring that he had transferred his allegiance to Haidar Ali. Basalat Jung sent Bhojaraj, his

minister, had Lally, the French officer under him, to deal with him. Doddappa appealed to Haidar for help. Haidar marched towards Bellary in the incredibly short space of five days, fell upon the besiegers and completely reduced them; the commander was killed and Lally escaped with difficulty. But Haidar promptly took their place in the batteries and forced the Palayagar chief also to surrender the fort to himself. Doddappa ultimately fled. Haidar kept under his control the places which he had won in so characteristic a manner. He built the upper and lower forts of Bellary as they are found now.

The Harapanahalli family was the most powerful of all the Palayagar families of the district and has a long history. The first of its chiefs was a Beda named Dadayya who was a native of a village situated near Harapanahalli. After the overthrow of Vijayanagara in 1565, Dadayya collected some followers and made himself master of Bagali and Nilagunda and the areas around them. Shortly afterwards, a relation of his, Jakkanna Nayaka, the Palayagar of Chitradurga, being besieged in his fort by his neighbour Kenganna Nayaka of Basavapatna applied to Dadayya for help. Dadayya attacked and defeated Kenganna Nayaka and raised the siege, and, as his reward, was given Jakkanna's daughter, Honnai Nayaki, in marriage, and by way of dowry, certain portions of the Chitradurga area. Not long afterwards, he was also given the hill fort of Uchchangidurga which was then under the control of the Chitradurga Palayagar.

**Harapanahalli
Palayagars**

Later, Dadayya and his father-in-law fell out and the latter attacked Uchchangidurga, but was beaten off. Dadayya's wife, Honnai, seems to have sided with her father rather than her husband, and the latter is said to have thrown her off the top of the steep side of the hill into a tank at the bottom. The cliff and tank are still called after her 'Honnai-gere' and 'Honnai-honda' respectively, and ballads are even now sung about her. Dadayya afterwards married Jampa Nagati, the daughter of the Palayagar of Jaramali in Kudligi taluk, Barma Nagati, daughter of the neighbouring Gudekota Palayagar, and Hanuma Nagati, daughter of the chief of Bilichodu in the Chitradurga district. He died in 1592.

Dadayya cannot be said to have been an independent ruler, as, in common with most of the petty chiefs who came into prominence at the time, he was forced to submit to the Adil Shah of Bijapur, pay him tribute and render him military service. On the decline of the power of Bijapur, Dadayya's successors considerably extended their possessions. Now the Harapanahalli principality consisted of 460 villages, which brought in a revenue of over eight lakhs of rupees. In 1680, on the confirmation of the Maratha conquests in the south of Bijapur, the then Palayagar of Harapanahalli acknowledged the Maratha suzerainty and paid

the customary tribute. Dadayya's successors were as follows :— Ranga Nayaka, his son by Jampa Nagati (1592 to 1616) ; Barmanna Nayaka, son of the foregoing (1616 to 1650) ; Obanna Nayaka, son of Barmanna (1650 to 1655) ; Veera Mummadi Nayaka, son of his predecessor (1655 to 1667) ; Mummadi Nayaka, son of Veera Mummadi Nayaka (1667 to 1687) ; and Basavanta Nayaka, brother of Mummadi Nayaka (1687 to 1705). Basavanta adopted the Veerashaiva faith. His another name was Kotrappa Nayaka. He was followed by his son Mari Kotrappa (1705 to 1715), who was, in turn, succeeded by his son, another Basavanta, who ruled from 1715 to 1721. This Basavanta had no children and direct descent from the original Dadayya thus ceased. A collateral named Gonappa was adopted and made the chief under the name of Mudi-Basappa Nayaka. He ruled until 1741, and was succeeded by Veera-Basappa Nayaka, the eldest of his four sons, who died in the next year.

**Somashekhar
Nayaka**

Somashekhar Nayaka, son of Veera Basappa Nayaka, followed and ruled for 24 years until 1766, when he died without issue. He was a capable chief. In 1748, with the Palayagar of Rayadurga, he joined the forces of the Nayaka of Bidanur in an attack against Chitradurga. At the battle of Mayakonda (in the present Chitradurga district), he engaged in a single combat on an elephant with the Chitradurga Palayagar and slew him. Haidar Ali marched against him in 1762 and the Palayagar seems to have submitted to Haidar's authority and is said to have been of much service to him later. During his time, Harapanahalli reached the height of its prosperity. His name is still remembered throughout the western taluks. Munro states that he paid a *peshkash* of 12,000 pagodas to the Nizam, 6,000 to Murarrao of Gooty, and from two to three lakhs of pagodas to the Peshwa.

On his death, his widow, Somammaji, adopted Adavi Bcmmanna, a collateral of her husband, who lived in Vadachinahal. As Palayagar, he became known as Veera-Basappa Nayaka and was a devout Veerashaiva. He died in 1768 and Somashekhar's widow then adopted another collateral from the same village. This man was the son of one Chinna-Giriyappa and was also known as Basappa Nayaka. In 1775, after taking the fort at Bellary, Haidar marched against Harapanahalli for the second time, compelled the Palayagar to acknowledge his authority and exacted from him a tribute of over two lakhs of rupees. In 1787, Tipu treacherously seized Basappa Nayaka who was with him in his camp, as he was marching through this part of the region and at the same time took Harapanahalli against which he had secretly despatched a brigade.

Basappa Nayaka was sent with his three wives to Srirangapatna where he died without issue. Many of his relations and followers were also imprisoned and among these were the wife

and a young son named Somashekhara, of Ayyappa of Vada-chinahalu, who is said to have been a brother of Basappa Nayaka. They were confined at Chitradurga.

In 1792, at the close of the second Mysore War, Somashekhara and his mother joined Parashuram Bhau, the Maratha general, who was then on his return march. The hereditary Dewan of Harapanahalli presented the lad to the general as the Palayagar of Harapanahalli. Encouraged, apparently by Parashuram Bhau, the Dewan took Harapanahalli, but he was almost immediately expelled by a detachment sent by Tipu. He, however, retaken Harapanahalli and held it until peace was made with Tipu in the same year.

On the fall of Srirangapatna and the death of Tipu in 1799, the Dewan brought Somashekhara back from the Maratha region and again captured Harapanahalli, which had been left defenceless. General Harris of the East India Company, in May of the same year, marched northwards to reduce that part of the region which had not yet acknowledged British supremacy. The Dewan, who was the real master of Harapanahalli (Somashekhara being only sixteen years of age), made overtures to him and went with Somashekhara to his camp at Harihar, where an agreement was concluded by which a *jagir* of Rs. 60,000 in the district of Bellary was given to the Palayagar and his principal servants on condition that they quietly disbanded their troops and resided at Mysore. This agreement was confirmed by the Governor-General. But Somashekhara seems to have resented the action of the Dewan in surrendering the principality to the British and is said to have refused to give him any share in the *jagir*. The Dewan appealed to the East India Company and in 1806, on Munro's recommendation and in consideration of the "signal service he had rendered to the Company in bringing about the surrender of Harapanahalli," he was given for his separate enjoyment a portion of the *jagir* worth, according to Tipu's assessment of 1788-89, about Rs. 4,000.

Somashekhara Nayaka was the last of the Harapanahalli Palayagars. It is said that he had four wives, namely, Basammaji and Nilammaji of Gudekota and Hire-Basammaji and Somammaji of two other villages in the Kudligi taluk. He died in 1825 leaving three widows, two of whom Somammaji and Basammaji, put in claims to his estate. The East India Company refused to recognise the rights of the widows in the property and resumed the estate, making some allowances for the maintenance of the claimants and the other immediate relatives and dependents of the Palayagar. The Dewan was succeeded in his estate by his adopted son Virupakshappa who died in 1833 without issue. This estate was also then resumed by the East India Company and a pension was given to three ladies of his family.

**Jaramali
Palayagars**

The Palayagar chiefs of Jaramali, which is now a small village in Kudligi taluk, ruled over much of the region around. The founder of the Jaramali family of chiefs was one Pennappa Nayaka. Originally, he is said to have received Jaramali by way of reward from the Vijayanagara king, Achyuta Raya, for his services in seizing a rebellious chief. After the fall of Vijayanagara, he seems to have taken over a considerable area round about and consolidated his position. But later, the Adil Shah of Bijapur seized much of the territory, leaving a part of the principality to him. In 1742, the Palayagars of Chitradurga and Harapanahalli stripped the Palayagar of Jaramali of all his possessions except a few villages around the fort. He was further reduced to entire dependency, ten years later, by the chief of Chitradurga. When Haidar Ali took Chitradurga in 1777, the Jaramali Palayagar complained to him of the way in which the Chitradurga Palayagar had treated him. Consequently, the latter put him to death and his son fled to Sholapur, who was, however, reinstated in his estate by Haidar Ali in 1777.

In 1787, Tipu resumed the estate and carried away the chief to Srirangapatna. But the Palayagar hearing the rumour that Tipu meant to convert him to the Muslim faith, fled to Sholapur again. During the Second Mysore War, he regained his estate and paid a tribute to the Marathas; but after the peace of 1792 with Tipu, he was again expelled. When later, Jaramali was made over to the Nizam under the Partition Treaty of 1799, the Palayagar was allowed to rent the villages around it "at their full value". But he fell into arrears and when Bellary was ceded to the East India Company in 1800, he is said to have taken refuge in Mysore. (See Chapter XIX for Gudekota Palayapattu).

**Ghorpade
rulers of
Sandur**

The Ghorpades are stated to have been cousins of the Bhonsles from whom the famous Maratha ruler, Shivaji the great, was descended. According to a tradition, a progenitor of the Ghorpades scaled the wall of a hill-fort about 1469 A. D. by means of a rope tied to a 'ghorpad' which means in Marathi the common monitor lizard, and won victory, and this daring feat of his, it is said, gave his descendants the surname 'Ghorpade'. They adopted as their 'colours' a black and white standard with the 'ghorpad' embroidered on it. The armed forces of the Ghorpades played an important role in several military campaigns that preceded and followed the advent of Chhatrapati Shivaji. Early in 18th century, the Sandur valley was conquered by Siddojirao Ghorpade from the Palayagar of Jaramali.

This Siddojirao was the ancestor of the Rajas of Sandur and, except for two short intervals, his descendants held it until 1st April 1949, when its administration was transferred to Dominion Government. Siddojirao was succeeded by his eldest son Murarao who became famous as chief of Gooty (Gutti now in Andhra

Pradesh). Murarrao was granted by the Peshwa the hereditary title of Senapati which was borne by the succeeding rulers of Sandur. 'Mamlakatmadar' has been another hereditary title of the family. Haidar Ali, in his campaign of 1775-76, after getting possession of Bellary, seized Gutti from Murarrao and sent him to Koppaldurga where he died soon afterwards as the prisoner of Haidar Ali. Haidar annexed the whole of his territory, including Sandur, and began construction of the fort of Krishnanagar which was completed and garrisoned by his son Tipu Sultan.

Murarrao had two sons, both of whom had died early and before his death, he had adopted Shivarao, the son of a cousin named Yeshwantarao. This Shivarao was killed about 1785 in an unsuccessful attempt made to turn Tipu's troops out of the area and was succeeded by his son, Siddojirao, then two years of age. Siddojirao was put under the guardianship of his uncle Venkatarao, who in 1790, on his ward's behalf, attacked and drove out Tipu's garrison and gained possession of Sandur.

After the peace treaty between the East India Company and Tipu in 1792, the Ghorpades were allowed to retain Sandur as part of the inheritance of the family. Siddojirao died in 1796, aged 13, and at the suggestion of Venkatarao, his widow adopted Shivarao, the eldest son of Khanderao, a relative of the family. This Shivarao was the ruler at Sandur when Bellary district was ceded to the East India Company in 1800.

The Peshwa Bajirao regarded Shivarao as a rebellious vassal, and in 1815 endeavoured to gain possession of Sandur by marching on it with troops, saying that he was on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Kumaraswami. Shivarao blocked the passes and Bajirao was allowed to go to the temple only with a few attendants by the footpaths over the hills. Under the Treaty of Bassein, the East India Company was required to assist the Peshwa in reducing his refractory vassals and Bajirao is said to have asked the British to take over Sandur on his behalf. Munro marched to Sandur with a force to demand the surrender of the valley. On the 18th October 1817, he wrote to Shivarao informing him of the object of his march. Sandur was taken over and Shivarao was given as his *jagir* Hirehalu and eight other villages. In the next year, there was war between the Peshwa and the English, which ended in the downfall of his power. Munro then recommended that Sandur should be restored to Shivarao. The Company agreed and on 1st July 1818, he was reinstated. **Munro's march**

In 1826, a formal *sanad* for the State was granted to Shivarao by the East India Company, subject to conditions that he should at all times maintain faith and allegiance to the British Government, treating their enemies as his enemies and their friends as his friends, and assisting them to the utmost of his power against

foreign and domestic foes, that he should maintain a strict watch over the public peace of the State, etc., and the *sanad* finally stipulated that he should be answerable for good government and provided for "interposition of the Company, should mismanagement occur."

Shivarao died on the 2nd May 1840 without male issue and was succeeded by Venkatarao, the son of his brother Bhujangarao, whom he had adopted. Venkatarao was also given in 1841 a *sanad* by the East India Company, renewing the one previously given to Shivarao, but containing two additional stipulations prohibiting punishment of criminals by mutilation and restricting the passing or execution of capital sentences to cases in which the previous sanction of the Madras Government had been obtained. It was on all these terms that the State was held successively thereafter. It was during Venkatarao's time in 1847 that the sanatorium at Ramandurga was established.

Shivashan-
mukharao

Venkatarao died in 1861 and was succeeded by Shivashanmukharao, who was born in 1847 and was the eldest of the five sons who were then living. He was a minor at the time and on his coming of age in 1863, the *sanad* granted to his father was renewed in his favour. When Shivashanmukharao ascended the throne, he appointed Mr. J. Macartney, who had been connected with the London Mission in Bellary, to be his Agent and Adviser. For the next 22 years, this gentleman's name was associated with many progressive measures in the administration of the State, and in 1885, he retired and proceeded to England. Shivashanmukharao died on the 3rd May 1878. He had no sons, and was succeeded by his brother Vitthalarao, who was formally designated as Raja on the 5th February 1879, the *sanad* being again renewed in his favour. It was during his time in 1882 that 40,000 acres of the forests of the State were leased to the Madras Government. In September 1885, Mr. J. G. Firth, a retired Tahsildar of Bellary, succeeded Mr. Macartney as Agent to the Raja and he was styled Dewan.

Vitthalarao died in 1892, leaving one son, Venkatarao who was born on the 10th July 1892. This Venkatarao's mother was connected with the family of the Gaekwad of Baroda. Venkatarao was recognised as the Raja in 1893. For some years after Venkatarao's succession, his uncle Shrimant Malojirao Bala Saheb, his father's only surviving brother, managed the State under the designation of Administrator, with Mr. Firth as the Dewan. Mr. Firth vacated his office in April 1897 and was followed in June of the same year by Shri T. Kodandarama Naidu, a Tahsildar of Bellary district, whose services had been lent to the State. In 1901, under orders of the British Government Malojirao relinquished his control and the administration passed into the hands of the Dewan, subject to the general authority of the Collector of

Bellary, who was the *ex-officio* Political Agent for the State. The Dewan had the powers of a Divisional Officer, First-Class Magistrate, Additional Sessions Judge and District Munsiff, while the original appellate and revisional powers of a Collector, District Magistrate and District and Sessions Judge vested, in matters relating to the State, in the Political Agent. Then no legislation was undertaken in Sandur. Such of the Acts of the Legislative Councils of the Governments of India and Madras as appeared to the administration of the State to be suited to the State were brought into force by the simple process of publicly notifying that they had been adopted. Many of the executive powers exercised had no other legal basis than old custom and long practice which were held to have the force of law. In 1923, the State was placed in direct political relations with the British Government of India in pursuance of a decision applicable to "all important States possessing full powers of administration." ("Sandur State—1948", p. 8.)

Venkatarao was succeeded by Shri Yeshwantarao Hindurao Ghorpade who was born on 13th November 1908 and was educated at an European Public School in Bangalore and thereafter at the Holkar College at Indore. He ascended the *Gadi* of the State on 20th June 1928. He married Sushila Devi, daughter of Raj Rajendra Shri M. N. Shitole, a noble of Gwalior State. Shri Yeshwantarao assumed full ruling powers of the State on 5th February, 1930. The Yuvaraja, Murarrao Ghorpade, was born in 1931. This Sandur Ghorpade family has had matrimonial relations with the royal families of Baroda, Jath, Dewas Senior, etc.

Yeshwantarao
Hindurao
Ghorpade

The Raja introduced several important reforms in the administration of the State. In 1931, a Praja Mandal was constituted as the Lower House of the State Legislature and the Durbar consisting of eligible hereditary, nominated and elected members, was considered the Upper House. The Praja Mandal consisted of a majority of elected representatives of the people. In 1932, the Raja issued a Proclamation granting by statute equal right of worship to Harijans in all temples of the State, which helped removal of untouchability in the area. This progressive measure attracted the attention of Mahatma Gandhi who visited Sandur in 1934. In this context Mahatma Gandhi wrote in the "Harijan" thus: "The Ruler of a small State in South India has thrown open his temples to the Harijans. The Heavens have not fallen."

The year 1932 also saw the reorganisation of the judiciary in the State. An independent Chief Court with powers of a High Court was constituted under the Sandur Chief Court Act, 1932. By an agreement with the Government of Madras, the

District Judge of Bellary was made the *Nyayadhish* (Judge) of the Sandur Chief Court.

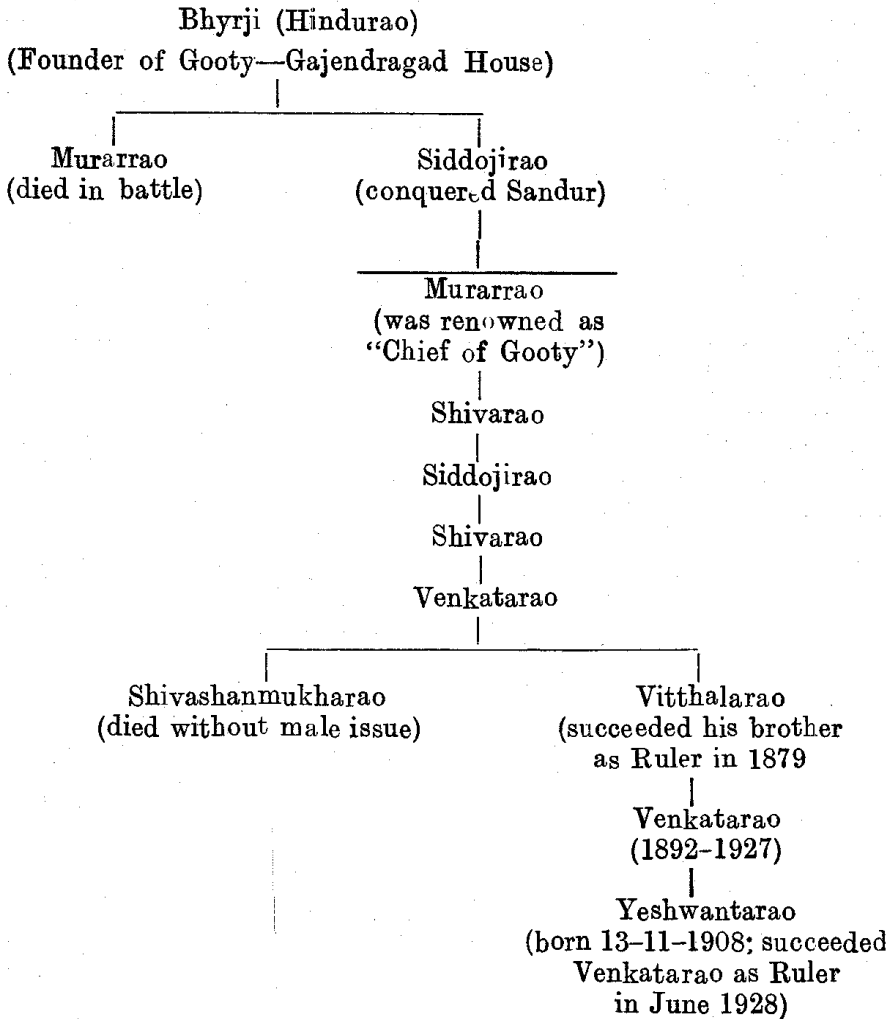
In 1934, the question of alleviating agricultural indebtedness was taken up, leading to the constitution of a Debt Conciliation Board and the passing of the Sandur Debt Conciliation Act, 1936. The Sandur Popular Ministry Act of 1945 provided for popularly elected Ministers in the Sandur Cabinet (Mantri Mandal). This Cabinet was responsible to the Legislature in all administrative subjects. Under the Sandur State Constitution Act of 1946 the Ruler reserved to himself powers of temporary emergency proclamation and any Bill had to pass through both Houses of the Legislature before it could receive the Ruler's assent. Under this Constitution Act, liberty and rights of the subjects were guaranteed by statute and equality of caste, sex and franchise on the basis of universal adult franchise was reiterated. Provision was also made for the distribution of a sum of money on the basis of Rs. 5 per head of population or one-fourth of the revenue of the State to the Panchayats and Municipalities to be spent by them for the welfare, education and safety of the people. The Ruler acceded to the Dominion of India by signing the Instrument of Accession on 10th August 1947. ("Sandur State—1948", pp. 11-12).

When the political movements were going on in the neighbouring areas, the leaders from British India were not permitted to enter the State. Under the leadership of Dr. S. B. Shroff, there was a popular agitation and he had been imprisoned for some time. Later, the struggle that was being waged in other princely States for democratic rights and betterment of the lot of the subjects had its impact on this State also. Shri M. Sharanayya of Ettinahatti who led an agitation, had been jailed. In 1948, he and others organised a Praja Parishat and its conference held at Ettinahatti demanded that the State be merged in the Dominion of India.

Merger of Sandur

After India became independent in 1947, there naturally arose the question of integration of more than 500 princely States that then existed. A Ministry of States was set up especially for this purpose at the Centre. Obviously, Sandur, which was a small State, covering an area of only 158 square miles and with a population of about 16,000 (1941 Census) and revenue of about nine lakhs of rupees, had no other alternative but to merge in the then Madras State. The transfer of administration of the State to the Dominion Government took place on the 1st April 1949, when the Ruler signed the merger agreement. The Raja was allowed a privy purse of Rs. 90,000 per year free of taxes. Next year, Sandur was made a separate taluk of the Bellary district and two more hoblies (firkas) were added to it, one each from the taluks of Kudligi and Hospet

GENEALOGY OF GHORPADE RAJAS OF SANDUR



As has already been mentioned earlier, what were called the **The British** 'ceded districts' had been handed over to the East India Company in 1800. Sir Thomas Munro was appointed their first 'Principal Collector' and General Dugald Campbell, the Commander of the force which was posted at Bellary. Under Munro, there were four 'Subordinate' or 'Divisional Collectors' of whom James Cochrane was in charge of the taluks of Bellary, Kampili (called Hospet since 1851), Hadagalli, Harapanahalli and Kudligi.

When Munro took over charge at the end of 1800, he had to face the turbulence of those who held the many forts and villages and lands in the district. They were well entrenched and it was difficult "to curb their power". They were of several ranks and classes. Some were government servants or renters of revenue who had revolted in times of disturbances or had become petty chiefs through the negligence or weakness of former governments;

others had originally obtained their villages as *jagirs* or *inams*; others again, are stated to have usurped their possessions; and yet others had held their lands on condition of rendering military service to former suzerains. Similarly, some were said to be descendants of officers of Vijayanagara; others were village officers who had profited by former periods of confusion and had collected a band of men and had seized a fort or two.

Munro adopted a stern policy in regard to them. He assessed them at the highest *peshkash* which they had paid either to the Nizam or to Haidar Ali. If they declined or neglected to pay, he sent Dugald Campbell's troops or his own military men to enforce regularity of payment. In the alternative, he captured their strongholds. One by one, they were reduced to submission or dispossessed by stern and quick measures. Within a year "there remained no force which was able to make any formidable opposition to Government".

The Directors of the East India Company in England (though Munro's biographers do not mention the fact) are said to have been 'shocked' at these decisive measures taken by Munro. "We would reconcile the poligars to our dominion and attach them to our interest", they wrote in April 1804, "by more gentle measures", and they urged that endeavour should be made gradually "to wean them from their feudal habits and principles". They called Munro's action as "disingenuous" and ordered that unless he could justify his proceedings, he should be removed. In his reply dated the 22nd February 1805, Munro defended the steps he had taken and stated that neither on the ground of their ancient rights nor of their later conduct were the "poligars entitled to gentle measures and that their feudal habits and principles consisted of crimes, oppressions and contumacies" which, if permitted to continue, would have "rendered good Government impossible". (For administrative history of the district from 1800 A.D. onwards until its merger in the old Mysore State in 1953, please see Chapter I).

Pindari menace

In 1818, a body of Pindaris, some 500 strong, crossed the Tungabhadra, plundered Bellahunisi and other riverside villages and then marched to Harapanahalli. The Amildar there could not resist and they looted the treasury of Rs. 24,000, destroyed all his records, tortured him, his *sheristadar* and others and pillaged the town. From Harapanahalli, the Pindaris went on to Kottur, which also they pillaged, and from there marched to Kudligi. Here the Tahsildar, though the fort was in a very weak condition and had only half-a-dozen matchlocks, is said to have defended himself in a most plucky manner and beat off his assailants and saved the treasury and the town. Government afterwards presented him with a pair of gold bangles worth Rs. 700 as a mark of their appreciation.

In 1858, a revolt was organised against the British by Bhimarao Nadagouda of Mundarigi. He had been Tahsildar of Harapanahalli and Bellary. He was no ordinary Tahsildar, but a man of some landed properties at Mundarigi in Dharwar district, a keen sportsman and marksman and a spirited man who wielded considerable influence in the region. He had been dismissed from service by the British for alleged misconduct. His rising is recounted in a ballad which is sung to this day in these parts. The unrest occasioned by the struggle for freedom in 1857 had spread to the region and the authorities of the Company had made vigorous searches for arms; this was resented by the leading men there. The Raja of Nargund and the Desais of Dambal, Hammigi and Toragal resolved with Bhimarao Nadagouda to bring about a general rising on the 27th May 1858. Bhimarao toured in Bellary district also about March 1858 and is stated to have recruited to his armed force about 150 patriotic-minded persons from this area. Bhimarao and Kenchana Gouda, the Desai of Hammigi, took up arms and captured the fort of Koppal (in Raichur district), some 26 miles from Hospet, and put up a resistance from there. A company of the 74th Highlanders, two companies of the 47th Native Infantry and a squadron of the 5th Light Cavalry, with two guns and some irregular Mysore horse, were sent from Bellary to Koppal and were joined there by other troops from across the river. On the 30th May, some shots were exchanged with the fort and the next day, the fort was surrounded and a brisk fire by musketry was opened which was answered by the rebels. The next day, the inmates gave a tough battle and did not yield to the enemy. Then a breach was effected and the brave Nadagouda and his associate Kenchana Gouda fell fighting between the gateway of the fort. Their followers were driven back towards the citadel at the top of the fort, about 1,000 of them being killed on the way. About 150 were taken prisoners and tried and seventy-seven of them were blown away by the guns and most of the rest were imprisoned. The properties of Bhimarao and his associates and followers were confiscated.

After the suppression of the freedom struggle in 1858 A.D., Political awakening a feeling of despondency had enveloped the country and the people for some time accepted the inevitable. Gradually with the spread of modern education, a fresh intellectual ferment began in India. The past glories and achievements of this ancient land were unfolded by the labours of scholars. This, on the one hand, instilled in the educated class a pride in their country and, on the other, set them thinking about the causes of its downfall. They were also now able to compare their country's condition with that of England and other western nations which were fast advancing. This position at first led to the attempts at removal of social evils and unwholesome religious practices and a number of reform bodies rose in the country. The establishment of the

Indian National Congress in 1885 and its championing of the causes of the Indian people began to influence the public opinion in the district of Bellary also. Several journals and social and literary and cultural associations in Karnataka began to create a new awareness among the people who desired to associate themselves more and more with the administration.

The stirring speeches of top political leaders like Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi awakened the people to bend their energies to the national cause. Lokamanya Tilak, who had come to Bellary to inaugurate a dramatic theatre in 1905, delivered a public lecture which instilled a fresh patriotic fervour among the people of the area. The All-Karnataka Political Conference held at Dharwar in 1920 gave a fillip to the political aspirations of the people. Mahatma Gandhi visited Bellary in 1921 and addressed a huge gathering, when the people of the area had a unique opportunity to listen to his exposition of the value of non-co-operation and *satyagraha* in the freedom movement. For participating in the non-co-operation movement (1920-21), Sriyuths Tekur Narayana Shastry, Kallur Subba Rao, and Lyangli Bhimasena Rao were sentenced to undergo six months' rigorous imprisonment and were lodged in the Central Jail at Bellary. The momentous Belgaum session of the Indian National Congress, held in the year 1924 under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi, gave a new orientation to the struggle for freedom. Then there was the Kelkar's award which allotted Bellary district, however, excluding the taluks of Alur, Adoni and Rayadurga, to the jurisdiction of the newly formed Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee.

In 1926, a Provincial Political Conference was held at Bellary which was presided over by Shri S. Srinivasa Iyengar who became the Congress President that year. The Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee met at Bellary in February 1930 and deliberated on the steps to be taken to organise the new *Satyagraha* movement launched by Gandhiji all over India. Shri Tekur Subrahmanyam of Bellary was one of those who were nominated to conduct the movement. Processions and demonstrations took place at Bellary, Hospet and Kottur which were largely attended by the public. The first *Satyagraha* centre of this movement in the district was opened at Harapanahalli in charge of Shriyuths T. B. Keshava Rao and Bankar Honnappa. Cutting of toddy trees and picketing of liquor shops were also resorted to. A committee was set up to organise picketing of liquor shops. A number of workers were arrested in this connection. A centre for training of volunteers was opened at Bellary. Shri Gangadhararao Deshpande, Shri R. R. Diwakar and other Karnataka leaders as also several eminent politicians from Andhra were visiting the district to give a fillip to the movement. Deposits were demanded from 'Karnataka-Kesari', the Kannada weekly

journal of Bellary, edited by Shri T. B. Keshava Rao, as a result of which the journal had to be closed down.

Gandhiji's visit

In February 1932, the political prisoners lodged in the Bellary Central Jail were lathi-charged severely for shouting slogans against the British Raj. In 1934, Gandhiji visited the region again. He came to Bellary district from Davangere and was accompanied by Shriyuths Thakkar Bappa, Gangadhararao Deshpande, V. V. Patil and others from Harapnaballi; he went to Kottur and addressed a gathering there and laid the foundation of an *ashram*. After speaking at a public meeting at Kudligi, he travelled to Sandur. He was much impressed by the natural surroundings of Sandur. He expressed his great joy over the fact that the Harijans were admitted to all the temples of the Sandur State. After reaching Bellary the next day, he visited Harijan colonies there and spoke at a huge public meeting. Next, he visited Hospet where he made a very short speech. This visit of Mahatma Gandhi gave much impetus to the nationalist movement and implementation of the constructive programme in the district.

In connection with the individual *Satyagraha* launched in 1940-41, Shriyuths Badanahatti Venkoba Rao, Ijari Vasupalappa, Bellada Channappa, Patikonda Gurnatha Shetty, Dr. R. Nagan Goud, B. Anantachar, Allum Karibasappa and several others were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Some individual *Satyagrahis*, who were not arrested, traversed the long distance to Wardha by walking. They were preaching the Gandhian ideals wherever they halted on the way. Later when they reached Nagpur, they were arrested and were brought to Bellary.

In August 1942, when the national leaders were arrested by the British and repression was let loose in the country, there was a spontaneous and vehement reaction of the people in the district as in other parts. About 300 political prisoners in the Allipur Jail were fiercely beaten up. About 65 detainees including Shriyuths T. Subramanyam of Bellary, B. Anantachar of Hospet and H. Sitaram Reddy from this district were sent to Vellore Jail. Lawyers and other influential men of the district and students took an active part in several centres to further the national cause. A few village officers also tendered resignation and joined the movement. There were brisk underground activities as in other parts of Karnataka. The epic struggle waged by the people of India convinced the alien rulers that it was no longer possible to hold this nation in bondage and consequently followed the transfer of power on the 15th August 1947. Six years later when the Andhra State was formed, the district of Bellary, excluding the taluks of Adoni, Alur and Rayadurg, was included in the old Mysore State. (See Chapter I under Administrative History of the district).

HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Architecture

Temples in this district belong to two main styles of architecture, namely, the Chalukyan and the Vijayanagara. The Chalukyan temples were built during the period of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyana and those in the Vijayanagara style between 1350 and 1564.

Chalukyan temples

The Chalukyan temples are concentrated mainly in Hadagalli and Harapanahalli taluks, there being only one or two examples outside these taluks. An account of them is given under the places of their occurrence in the Chapter on "Places of Interest". A few of the general features of the style are dealt with here. The Chalukyan school of temple-building originated about the middle of the 5th century A.D. round about Badami in the Bijapur district. In the Hadagalli taluk, temples built in this style occur at Hadagalli, Hire-Hadagalli and Magala and in the Harapanahalli taluk, at Bagali, Halavagalu, Kuruvatti and Nilagunda. All these lie within a circle with a radius of about 12 miles and they have been described in detail, with numerous plans and drawings, by Rea in his "Chalukyan Architecture".

The sphere of activity of the Chalukyan builders lay, geographically, between the 'Dravidian' and the northern or the so-called Indo-Aryan styles. A study of these temples, particularly the earlier ones, reveals that the Chalukyan builders, in addition to drawing freely from both those schools, added a number of new features and details and a distinct new style was developed. In the details of the tower, for example, the Chalukyan builder took the idea of bilateral symmetry of the south and also that of the radial symmetry of the north. The Chalukyan tower ascends in steps as does its southern counterpart and is circular and pyramidal like its northern counterpart. The plan of the shrine was, in the earliest temples, square or oblong as in the Dravidian temples; but later on, it became more and more multi-cornered, finally becoming actually star-shaped. Several of the shrines open on to a common *mantapa* in the centre. This is in a manner which is quite distinct from that followed in the Dravidian style.

In the matter of size and the number of apartments, the Chalukyan artists seem to have leaned more towards the south than towards the north. Their pillars in earlier stage did not have brackets, so characteristic of the pillars in the south; they are different in detail, though corresponding pairs are similar in outlines. The pierced stone slabs, used for the windows, were also a feature peculiar to this style. But what strikes the observer as the most characteristic of these temples is the extraordinary richness, delicacy and finish of the stone carvings. Col. Meadows Taylor says: "No chased work in gold or silver could possibly be finer". Some of the pillars show signs of having been turned

on some sort of lathe. The material used is the pot-stone or steatite and this was probably obtained from the quarries which are still to be seen at Nilagunda and Anguru on the Tungabhadra, about five miles from Hire-Hadagalli. This is the most suitable medium for fine carving, for it is soft when quarried and hardens on exposure to the air. It weathers into varying beautiful shades of brown; yet, the details of carvings are little affected by exposure, and even to this day some of them are well preserved.

The finest work in the group of such temples in this district is to be found perhaps in the pillars of the big *mantapa* in the temple at Bagali, the ceilings in the temple at Magala and the doorways and the exterior of the Hirehadagalli temple. Rea considers that the temple at Bagali is the earliest of the type in this district. An inscription at Bagali shows that it was in existence before 1018. But most of these temples appear to have been constructed about the 12th century A.D. Some of them are unfinished; it is quite possible that the work of construction was interrupted by the decline and downfall of the Western Chalukyan dynasty in the latter part of the 12th century A.D. The Chalukyan style later developed into what is famous as the Hoysala style, with its world-famous examples at Belur, Halebid and Somanathapur.

A few temples and shrines in the district are said to be of **Another class of temples** Jaina origin. They are mostly to be found in two groups, one at Kurugodu and the other on the Hemakuta hill at Hampi. The rest are at Sindigeri, five miles east of Kurugodu, Koluru, nine miles from Bellary on the Siruguppa road, Tekkalakota, 27 miles north of Bellary on the same road, and Oruvayi, six miles west of Kurugodu. All these temples have been constructed of granite without the use of mortar. Those at Kurugodu, according to an inscription in one of them, dated 1175-76, were erected by a merchant. Almost all of them possess the stone-roof ascending in steps. Though they are supposed to be of Jaina origin, they now usually contain *lingas* in their inner shrines. They all follow the same general design, which consists of a single shrine with an open *mantapa* supported by stone pillars, bearing strong general resemblance to those in the Chalukyan temples. The size of the *mantapas*, however, differs in different temples. While some of them have only ten pillars, the *mantapa* in the Hinduli Sangameshvara temple at Kurugodu has as many as 36. (The latter temple, which is the largest of the class, also contains two stone elephants, six feet high, standing on each side of the steps leading upto it). Sometimes, the four central pillars are of polished black marble, excellently sculptured. Over the doorways leading to the shrines, are usually sculptured miniature pyramidal temple-towers. The doorways in these temples are usually more elaborately sculptured than the rest of the building and in several cases, the panels near them have been pierced, thus bringing to memory the elaborately

pierced stone windows occupying a similar position in the Chalukyan temples. Again, as in the Chalukyan temples, a series of bays and niches are carved on the outer walls of the shrines. The temples in Hampi were not built during any one century. Though, of course, most of them belong to the Vijayanagara period, we can say, on the evidence of an inscription in the Virupaksha temple, that there were, by the 12th century A.D., at least five temples in Hampi dedicated to Pampa, Virupaksha, Brahmesha, Bhairava and Immadi-Rachamalleshvara. The Bhuvaneshvari shrine in the present Virupaksha temple is also an older structure built in the Chalukyan style. Again, the group of temples said to be of Jaina origin on the Hemakuta hill, already referred to, were also built prior to the foundation of Vijayanagara. It was, in fact, around Hampi, treasuring already several temples, known both for their art and sanctity as the nucleus, that the city of Vijayanagara, which was probably the foremost city in the contemporary world, arose.

A famous architect of the later Chalukyan period, named Padmoja of Soge, is mentioned in an epigraph found at Holalu of this district. The inscription says, "He was an adept in directing the construction of temples and mansions in the four styles of Indian architecture, viz., Nagara, Kalinga, Dravida and Vesara. He had the titles of Kaliyuga-Vishvakarma (the master builder of the Kali age) Chatusshashthi-kalavida-pravina (expert in sity-four arts) Chatusshashthi-prasada-visharada (skilled in constructing temples and mansions of sixty-four kinds)." 33

**Temples of
Vijayanagara
period**

With the emergence of the Vijayanagara kingdom, there was a new resurgence and a revival of ideals, which expressed themselves in several fields of life. The temples constructed during this period were an eloquent testimony of this. A fresh inspiration can be noticed not only in the addition of new complements to the scheme of temples, but also in the unusual enrichment of all elements and features. The Vijayanagara style of temple-building was of a sumptuous character. Analysing the psychological factors, which were responsible for the rise of this splendid art of Vijayanagara period, Percy Brown says: "Beginning in the middle of the 14th century, the change came over the spirit as well as the substance of architecture in South India, when the country gradually became enriched with buildings in a style showing that the people had been aroused to the life of greater fulness and one which moved them to express with marked freedom and fluency their aesthetic aspirations". "Indian architecture," he further observes, "at all times remarkable for the profusion of its applied decoration, at this stage of its development reached the extreme limit of florid magnificence. It is a record in stone of a range of ideals, sensations, emotions, prodigalities, abnormalities, of forms and formlessness, and even eccentricities that only a

spirited and imaginative mind could conceive and only an inspired artist could reproduce”.

In respect of the art traditions of Vijayanagara, it may be said that they were obviously linked with the Dravidian form and style. But one can see in the Vijayanagara art, to some extent, also the features of other modes and styles which were current in the country then. Thus, for instance, the symmetry of the Chalukyan design and the plain serenity of the Saracenic structure have all combined in the Vijayanagara art. A few special features of the Vijayanagara school of architecture may be mentioned here. The temple enclosure had by this time come to be provided with a larger number of structures. At least two such structures appear to be distinctly the additions of this period. One of these was the Ammanavara-gudi which is a subsidiary temple for the enshrinement of the consort of the deity to whom the principal temple was dedicated. This subsidiary temple was built a little behind the principal one, to its north-west. The other additional structure was the *Kalyana Mantapa*, an open pillared pavilion on an elevated platform; this was situated a little to the front of the main shrine, slightly to the right of it and was meant for exhibition of the deities on ceremonial occasions. This structure was regarded as a very important part of the temple and was usually the most sumptuous structure in the entire scheme. Besides these two, another structure, designed in the form of a chariot, often formed an important annexe. There was also a general tendency to emphasise the external accessory features.

The pillar as usual constituted a major architectural feature in the temple complex. The design that is most frequently met with is the one in which the shaft becomes either a central core or a background for a group of statuary often of substantial proportions and carved practically in the round. There is also to be seen the less-complicated but equally impressive pattern of the monolithic pillar, consisting of a central column, with smaller and slender columnettes attached all round. Lastly, there is a still simpler pattern in which the shaft is divided into a number of zones, each being occupied by a miniature replica of the shrine itself and the whole pillar showing a succession of these, one above the other. Unlike the Chalukyan pillars, and in common with the Dravidian ones, the pillars in the Vijayanagara temples have brackets, which are very often elaborately carved, forming the capitals of the pillars. The usual type is that of a pendant bracket. **Pillars**

The external surfaces of the walls are covered with continuous panels of sculptures, illustrating the various myths and legends. The wide roll cornice with its double flexure also serves as a decorative motif and its undersides are richly treated. Tall and massive *gopuras* add to the picturesqueness of the Vijayanagara **Colossal Gopuras**

temples. The Vijayanagara sovereigns were zealous in raising up such colossal *gopuras* to display their power and pomp as much as their devotion to religion. Many of the tall *gopuras* that distinguish the famous South Indian temples were raised by the Vijayanagara rulers. Among these may be mentioned the southern *gopura* in the temple of Ekambaranatha at Kanchi, which was built by Krishnadeva Raya. It rises up in ten storeys to a height of 188 feet and is one of the most conspicuous among all buildings of this kind in the whole of South India. It may also be mentioned in this context that the Vijayanagara kings, in the days of their greatness, were responsible for large-scale additions to all the important religious establishments throughout their dominions. It is interesting, for example, to know that the *Kalyana Mantapas* in many of the South Indian temples appear, from their style, to owe their origin to the patronage of the Vijayanagara rulers. Among them, mention may be made of the one at Vellore, which has been described by Percy Brown to be "the richest and most beautiful structure of its kind".

A large number of temples were erected during this period in different parts of the kingdom. In fact, from the foreign accounts, Vijayanagara appears to have been as much a capital city as a city of grand temples, and ruins of several temples can still be seen. A reference would be made to some of them in the following paragraphs.

From the religious point of view, obviously the most notable temple is that of Virupaksha or Pampapati. As has been mentioned already, it has existed from pre-Vijayanagara times. The Bhuvaneshvari shrine in this temple is built in the Chalukyan style, as also the *Nandi Mantapa* attached to this temple. This structure is equally magnificent with its high towers. Additions were made to the original structure during the Vijayanagara regime and it was renovated from time to time. Its *Ranga Mantapa* (central hall) is said to have been built by Krishnadeva Raya to commemorate his coronation in 1509-10. The Portuguese traveller, Domingo Paes, who visited Vijayanagara in the reign of this king, remarks: "The gate has a very lofty tower all covered with rows of men and women and hunting scenes and many other representations, and as the tower goes narrowing towards the top, so the image is diminished in size. Many are the additions made by Krishnadeva Raya to his capital city and among them the Krishnaswami temple is one". It was built after his victory over the king of Orissa. According to an inscription in the temple, it was built by the king for the installation of the idol of Krishna which he had brought from Udayagiri in the Nellore district. Attractive scenes from the story of Lord Krishna have been carved on the walls and pillars of this temple.

Another beautiful temple is what is known as the Hazara Rama temple which appears to have been built prior to the time of Krishnadeva Raya. This shrine is believed to have been set apart for private worship by the members of the royal household. The temple is comparatively a smaller one and consists only of the main complex, *i.e.*, the sanctum, its *mantapa* and the Ammanavara-gudi. These are placed in a quadrangle enclosed by walls and entered through a *gopura* in the east. Despite its small size, its highly ornate character and its close proximity to the royal enclosure seem to confirm it as the private chapel of the Vijayanagara kings. The roof is supported by a group of richly carved and highly polished stone pillars. The brackets, beams, ceilings and cornices are all elaborately ornamented. The walls are carved with various sculptures depicting episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Some of the carvings pertain to the Mahanavami celebrations too.

Private chapel

The Vitthalaswami temple, which is a larger one, was of a more ambitious conception. Its construction, which was taken up by Krishnadeva Raya in 1513, continued during the reigns of his successors. Perhaps the temple was never completed owing to the downfall of the empire. With its various appurtenances, it is situated within a rectangular core, about 538 feet by 315 feet, and is nearly three times the size of the Hazara Rama temple. The entire structure is raised over an exquisitely ornamented stylobate, and is terminated by deep roll cornices topped by parapets and small pyramidal rooflets in brick and plaster. The *mantapa* has a projecting portico on each side, and this frontal adjunct, with its ranges of richly-carved pillars of varied designs, constitutes one of the chief attractions of this temple. Every feature in the interior is elaborately ornamented, and, according to the opinion of the scholars, if only a roof of the *mantapa* and the tower over the sanctum had been completed, it would have ranked as one of the most successful productions of South Indian architecture. The *Kalyana Mantapa* in this temple, with its bold and elegant design, and exuberant richness, seems to have excelled even the principal shrine. The most marvellous feature of its art is the style of the composite pillars, consisting of a central shaft with a cluster of miniature columns and conventional animals and tiny riders.

Vitthalaswami temple

The Achyuta Raya temple, as its name implies, was built by Achyuta Raya, in 1539. This is one of the largest temples in Hampi. Though designed on the model of the Vitthalaswami temple, its workmanship is of a lower order. The bas-reliefs in this temple consist of the incarnations of Vishnu, the legends of Krishna and arrays of elephants. The figures of the river-goddesses Ganga and Yamuna, carved on the door-jamps are of some interest; though they are commonly known in the early

Achyuta Raya temple

architecture of North India, they are of rare occurrence in the South.

Away from the main structures of Hampi stands a lonely temple known as the Ganigitti temple. It is a Jaina shrine and its peculiarity lies in its tower which is built in a series of steps. This is an old temple erected by one Irugappa in 1385 A.D.

**Remains of
secular
structures**

Glowing accounts of the magnificence and prosperity of Vijayanagara City have been left to us by several foreign visitors. According to the testimony of Abdur Razzak, the city of Vijayanagara occupied an area of 64 square miles and had seven concentric enclosures, each surmounted by strong fortifications. The three outer enclosures contained cultivable lands, while the four inner ones constituted the city proper. The royal palace and the buildings connected with it were in the innermost quadrangle, the citadel. According to Paes, the city was as large as Rome and very beautiful to look at; the palace of the king occupied a greater space than all the castles of Lisbon. He also refers to the strong and massive fortifications of the city, its imposing gateways, its elaborate and effective works of irrigation and water supply, its numerous orchards and groves, its temples, market places and other amenities suitable to a royal city.

Of the palace proper, nothing remains now except the disfigured basement of a few of its buildings. Out of these two masonry platforms, apparently of large and imposing structures, deserve a special mention here. One of these, known as the King's Audience Hall (described on pages 65 and 66 by A. H. Longhurst in his "Hampi Ruins") seems to have been a part of a building of considerable dimensions. The other is called the Throne Platform (*Ibid*, pp. 56 to 63) or the 'House of Victory' as Paes describes it, erected by Krishnadeva Raya in 1513 to commemorate his conquest of Orissa. Percy Brown suggests that these were the public and private audiences respectively in the manner of the palace designs in Persia and of the Mughals. The original building in each case appears to have been a pillared pavilion rising up in several storeys and terminating in a pyramidal roof. Abdur Razzak describes the King's Audience Hall as being elevated above all the rest of the lofty buildings in the citadel. The basement of this immense hall rises up in three spacious stages, diminishing as they go up, embellished by bolt mouldings and string-courses. Over the platform, which is reached by elaborate flights of steps, there may still be seen the sockets of six rows of pillars, ten in each, which supported the superstructure. The Throne Platform is similar in dimensions but more ornate in design. This also rises in three diminishing terraced stages and is approached by balustrated stairways. For more particulars of the Throne Platform (Mahanavami Dibba), see Chapter XIX under Hampi.

Of the other secular remains, mention may be made here of the Lotus Mahal, the Elephant Stables and the two tower-like structures called the Watch Towers. The Lotus Mahal is a square pavilion with doubly recessed corners and in two storeys. The upper storey is divided into several compartments, each of which is surmounted by a pyramidal roof. Except for the arches and their piers, every other feature of this structure is modelled on indigenous traditions. The building called the Elephant Stables is more markedly Saracenic in appearance and character. It is an elegant and dignified structure built in the best of proportions. Its fine ranges of arches in the facade, representing an entirely Saracenic convention, are suitably balanced by the projected balconies on brackets which are of typical indigenous pattern. The graceful domes over the roof, again, are similarly counterbalanced by the square turret-like superstructure in the centre. "Here", says S. K. Saraswati, "in this striking building, the Islamic and the indigenous conventions may be seen to have been blended in a harmonious and organic manner. The two traditions are found to have adapted themselves successfully to each other". (Chapter XIX on Art in "The Delhi Sultanate," p. 728). Each of the two so-called watch towers consists of a tall and plain base supporting an upper storey with projected balconies on each side.

Sculpture is so intimately connected with architecture in India, particularly in South India, that it is almost impossible to treat these two subjects independently of each other. Reference to Vijayanagara sculpture has already been made to some extent while describing the temples of Hampi in this chapter and in the chapter on the "Places of Interest". However, a special reference may be made here to a few individual items. The Throne Platform referred to above, for example, has been famous for its sculptural excellence. The series of carvings which run round are, perhaps with the exception of some of the smaller examples in the Hazara Rama temple, the most spirited in all the ruins. There are elephants, camels and horses alternating with wrestlers and boxers, scenes representing black-buck shooting and panther-spearing and girls dancing with gay abandon to the accompaniment of music, soldiers in procession, scenes from the Mahanavami and other festivals, etc.

These mural sculptures, it is said, are unique in Southern India, and they have been compared by Fergusson with some of Layard's discoveries in ancient Ninevah ("Architecture in Dharwar and Mysore", pp. 65-66). These bas-reliefs reflect the incidents of contemporary life and are highly interesting from the historical point of view also. On the whole, the variety offered by the sculptures in bas-relief at Hampi is said to be almost unlimited and unsurpassed in the whole range of South Indian sculptures. Among the free-standing sculptures of

astonishing proportions may be mentioned the monolithic statue of Narasimha, 22 feet in height. It may be noted that in spite of its hugeness, its details were meticulously worked out. It was carved out of a single boulder by one Arya Krishna Bhatta in 1528. Similarly, the two statues of Ganesha (Sasivekalu Ganesha and Kadalekalu Ganesha) are also notable not only from the point of view of their size but also on account of their sculptural details.

Paintings

Not much is known of Vijayanagara paintings. In Hampi proper, there is extremely little original painting that has come down to us and of whatever painting there is in the temple of Virupaksha, its exact date is not known since it has undergone renovations a number of times. There is independent testimony in the accounts of foreign visitors about the glorious days of Vijayanagara paintings. Paes, for instance, who visited the city of Vijayanagara during the days of Krishnadeva Raya, describing the palace of the king, says: "At the entrance to the door outside are two images painted like life and drawn in their manner which are these: the one on the right is of the father of this king, and the one to the left is of this king (Crisnarao); the father was dark and a gentleman of fine form, stouter than the son is; they stand with their apparel and such raiment as they wear or used to wear". He elsewhere observes: "On this side is designed in painting all the ways of life of the men who have been here even down to the Portuguese, from which the king's wives can understand the manner in which each one lives in his own country, even to the blind and the beggar".

Later, Father du Jarric testified to the fact that during the days of Venkata II (1584-1614), the art of painting had degenerated with the result that there was the importation of Portuguese painters, who were encouraged at his court. Some traces of paintings done during the Vijayanagara period have survived at some other places like Lepakshi in the present Anantapur district, in the Varadaraja temple at Kanchipuram, in the Vardhamana temple at Jinakanchi near Kanchipuram, in the Brihadeshvara temple at Tanjore, etc. (There are two articles on Vijayanagara painting in the Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume, Dharwar, 1936.) The technique adopted by the Vijayanagara artists at Tanjore was one of *fresco-secco* or painting in lime medium on plaster. It consisted in mixing the pigment with lime water and applying it to the dry plaster on the wall. This method stands in contrast to the Chola one, which consisted in mixing the pigments with water and applying it over wet plaster. This latter technique is called *fresco-buono* or true fresco. The entire Vijayanagara stucco is so thin that it measures only 2.4 mm. to 3 mm. in thickness. It is composed of three layers, the bottom one of rough lime plaster, about

1.5 mm. thick, the middle one of a smooth plaster, about 0.6 mm. in thickness and the upper one of a thin paint film.

NOTES

1. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, VII, Shikarpur, 225.
2. *Ibid*, Shikarpur, 236.
3. Mysore Archaeological Report, 1942, "Ancient India", IV.
4. Hirehadagalli Plates of Shivaskanda, *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII.
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