



Chapter 3

● Military, Police and Revenue under Purnaiah

“For the maintenance of public authority, a small but selective body of Cavalry, Infantry and peons was collected from the ruins of the Sultan’s army by Purnaiah” says Rice¹. The Department had already established two sections – the Infantry and the Cavalry. The Infantry or *Bar sepoy*s were drilled and trained and were disciplined like the sepoy of the East India Company. They fought in the Company’s campaigns on an equal footing with the Company’s *sepoy*s. According to 1804 figures, this establishment had 2,000 horses and 4,000 Bar sepoy s. The Cavalry had 500 stable horses in reserve and 500 horses in regular Cavalry. The stable horses were engaged according to the requirements. “The State,” says Shama Rao, “maintained approximately a force totaling 10,500.”²



Mysore Army - Cavalry & Infantry

The Police Department consisted of *Kandachar* peons, a work force which was a creation of Purnaiah. “Engaged in services of the State, at least one individual from each family was engaged in the military, with advantages,” points out Rice. Waste lands in the villages were assigned to such peons,

1. Rice, p.603.

2. Shama Rao, p.341.

in lieu of half of their pay. This was an already existing practice, which was further extended by Purnaiah. Their local duties were defined to function as guards to forts and undertake watch and ward duties. Carrying apprehension of criminals, protection of prisons, construction of roads and bridges, etc. were the other duties assigned to them. Keeping themselves ready at all times to obey the calls of police officers was expected of them. Their half pay in cash varied from place to place – Rs.2 or Rs.3 per month. If they were called to places away from their district, Rs. 3.5 per month was paid as *bhatta*. They also worked as postal runners or worked with the Company's army. During the first two years, 20,027 members were enrolled as *Kandachar* peons. In the third year, their number was reduced to 15,247 persons and the annual expense was 148,778 Pagodas as against the first year's expenditure of 2,25,862 Pagodas³.

“The duty of *Kandachar* peons was partly military and partly civil in nature,” says Shama Rao. They were armed with spikes or matchlocks. Though they were trained from their boyhood for military exercise, they were also cultivators. When the agricultural operations were over, in the off-season, they would engage themselves in other operations. The Dewan thought of restraining them from this useless practice and creating a sense of belonging to the State and a feeling of partnership in the stability of the State. “Purnaiah's scheme was to engage one individual from each family in some kind of active service of the State with due regard and at the same time to the obligation resting on the family to render military service whenever so required”, says Shama Rao⁴.

The word *Kandachar* was used to distinguish them from *Attavane* peons who were employed by the revenue and other departments and who were subject to the duties assigned by the respective department. Hayavadana Rao points out that in the capital, police authority was aided by Bar or Infantry, a large body of which was stationed in the town for the purpose⁵.

Administration of Justice

There was no separate department for administration of justice. The executive officers of the various departments undertook the work of their departmental disputes. In certain important towns, *Khazis* existed, whose duty was limited to settling religious matters among the Muslim community. Such matters among the Hindus were settled by the elders of the society, based on Dharma Shashtra laws. The Amildar at the sub-division level attended to minor personal complaints. Important criminal and civil cases were heard by the Subedars. Persons accused of criminal offences were tried in the presence of the Panchayats by the Amildar or Subedar. Complicated issues whether civil or criminal were sent to the Dewan with a report by the Amildar or the Subedar. The Dewan pronounced judgment in serious offences after consulting the Resident. Only

3. Shama Rao, p.342.

4. C. Hayavadana Rao, IV p.254 (C.H).

5. Karnataka State Archives, Judicial Records, No 1 of 1835.

in cases of murder or plunder on the frontier, death sentence was pronounced; for robbers, imprisonment with hard labour was the punishment. Fine was commonly used as a method of penalty. Corporal punishment such as cutting of nose or ear, cutting of hand, shaving of head and drumming round the village or town, flogging, lashing, hanging etc., (according to a report dated 1835) practiced earlier, was banned.⁶ The Panchayat, when summoned, heard the cases in an open assembly or *cutchery*. People not connected with the case were permitted to assemble and give a hearing. The report sent to the Dewan included the statement of petitioners, the defendant, the witnesses and the views of the Panchayat.

In civil matters, the Amildar was authorized to hear any case, not exceeding five Pagodas. If the cases involved more than that amount, Panchayats, comprising of respectable men were invited. If there was a dispute among the Hindus or if the parties belonged to two different sects, two members each from each of the sects, and the fifth person from a separate sect were invited as the Panchayat. If the Panchayat's decision was unanimous, the same was forwarded by the Amildar or Subedar to the Dewan. As the Amildar decided both civil and criminal suits, high-handedness on their part was common. Therefore in 1805, an Adalat Court was founded with one Hindu (*Pandit*) and one Muslim (*Khazi*) to assist the two Judges heading the Adalat. They had a Sheristedar each under them. Six persons were also provided to serve as Panchayats. Of them, one was Hindu and another a Muslim scholar. "The Amil of each taluk superintends the department of police and determines in the minor cases of personal wrongs; the establishment of *Kandachar* peons gives great efficiency to this department" says Rice⁷. Dewan was the final court of appeal.

"Due regard was paid to the ancient institutions of the country and to the doctrines of Hindu Law," says Hayavadana Rao regarding administration of justice⁸. "The establishment of *Kandachar* peons provided efficiency to judicial administration." "Substantial objects of the administration of justice and protection of people in the enjoyment of their most important rights, are attained in a respectable degree by the provision of the Subsidiary Treaty", writes Wilks to the Governor General in 1804, paying rich tribute to the Dewan and the Resident. Quoting this letter, Hayavadana Rao says "That is certainly high testimony to the success attained by Purnaiah in the working of administration."⁹

Revenue Administration

The three Subedars were responsible for collection of revenues. Each sub-division or taluk was divided into hoblis headed by an official called Parpatti

6. Rice p.605

7. C.H p 2776

8. C.H p 2777

9. Ibid p 2761

who operated between the village Gauda or Patel, In case he was a Muslim, he was called Shekdar. The Parpatti visited every village to examine the state of cultivation and condition of tanks and collected land revenue from the Gaudas (Village Headmen) and sent it to the Amildar. A hobli which fetched a revenue of over 1,000 Pagodas had a Manigar to assist the Parupatti. All officials below the hobli were paid monthly. The revenue system was restored to the position that existed before Hyder's rule, and steps were taken to place the finances of the State on a sound basis. Lands irrigated by tanks paid the *varam* or payment in kind to the Government, being one-half of the yield.

Since these were wetlands, the yield was abundant. Alongside this, the Government also spent for the upkeep of the tanks. Purnaiah paid special attention for the maintenance of the irrigational facilities which had been totally neglected under Tipu. In the Cauvery basin region, payment in cash was introduced and it became popular. For the repair of tanks, etc. 1.38 lakh Pagodas were spent during Purnaiah's first year of administration.



Tank near Mysore

During the second year, an amount of 1.54 lakh Pagodas was spent. But, during the fourth and fifth year, it was 0.75 lakh and 0.65 lakh Pagodas respectively, and the expenditure being less, as extensive work had already been carried out in the initial years. This instilled confidence in the farmers that the new Government was interested in encouraging agriculture and helping them.

"The restoration of irrigation works systematically carried out by Purnaiah established that he had done more than the actual State of the population admitted. But utility of the work was so great that it made revenue from land certain, and popularized the Government as nothing else could have done" says Hayavadana Rao.¹⁰

As already observed, Resident Close had advised abolition of *Sayar*, especially that levied on food grain. There was no major item of State revenue, which could compensate the loss on this account. When it was restored in 1802-03, the income from this source was 2.57 lakh Pagodas, next only to the amount derived from land revenue. Close held it to be inconvenient to traders. But the commercial transactions due to various wars during the period, such as the war against Dhondji Wagh, against the Nayak of Balam and other campaigns caused a heavy impact on commercial transactions. These heavy transactions with the State did not create dissatisfaction over paying *Sayar*.

The system of revenue and finance organized by the restored Government of His Highness proved eminently successful from every point of view both, for the people and for the State as a whole. It enabled the people to obtain the much longed for peace that they had sought for in vain for over half a century

10. Ibid. p.2761.

or so and enabled them to enjoy the fruits of their labour unmolested,” say Hayavadana Rao.¹¹

Public Works

Having organized six departments including the Military and *Kandachar*, Purnaiah undertook several public works. In addition to repair and restoration of tanks and canals in the State, Purnaiah also took up the reconstruction of forts at Mysore, Bangalore and Channapatna. Tipu had ordered the destruction of many forts as those forts which had fallen into the hands of his enemies (the British), proved to be advantageous to them. For instance, Bangalore fort which was captured by Cornwallis in 1790 helped him to camp there during the rainy season and to attack Srirangapatna the following year. Further, the Bangalore fort helped regular supply of army, equipment and food grains.

To Purnaiah, the security of the Mysore State was important, as the Marathas were likely to attack the State any time. Thus the forts had to be repaired as Mysore had become the royal capital. This was an important move as the Marathas did reach the borders of Mysore .

“By paying the subsidy regularly, Purnaiah maintained treasury balance too. The balances were 6.40 lakh Pagodas in 1802-03 and 8.45 lakh Pagodas,” according to Hayavadana Rao¹².

The State prospered with an increase in inhabited villages and towns, which had earlier been deserted. If inhabited villages were 506 in 1801, their number increased to 25,303 in 1804. Families increased from 12,041 in 1801 to 4,82,612 in 1804. If only 640 looms were working in 1801, their number rose to 30,942 in 1804. The shops, which were only 195 in 1801, increased to 13,840 in 1804¹³. Though the figure might look exaggerated, yet it is important to recognize that after the fall of Tipu and the chaos that followed and the consequent uncertainties, there were a lot of unsettled situations in the State. People were scattered due to wars and a correct picture could not be assessed. The presence of the Company’s army and the able administration of Purnaiah, definitely changed the situation and encouraged people to return to their villages.

Buchanan gives a similar account of Bangalore. Even the British were afraid of the chances of restoration of order in the State and the relief they felt at the changes that were evidenced is reflected in a letter of Arthur Wellesley dated 26 May 1801, where he says that inhabitants are returning fast to those parts which the last savage had forced them to quit. The Raja’s “families have moved into Mysore, where the ancient palace has been rebuilt in the same form in which it was formerly built and I believe on the old foundation. The whole family appears as happy when this Government was established. Mysore

11. Ibid. p.2761

12. Ibid.

13. Quoted by Hayavandana Rao, p, 2795.

has become a large and handsome native town, full of inhabitants, the whole country is settled and in perfect tranquility.”¹⁴

Arthur Wellesley further writes in the letter that Purnaiah who had an eye on the future prosperity and revenue of the country had repaired numerous tanks. He particularly mentions a large one near Melkote (Moti Talab at Tonnur). He also states that he built many towns and forts and encouraged inhabitants in the country in all parts by advance of money and remissions whenever they required it. “Thus the establishment has succeeded in a manner equal to our expectations; and there is every prospect that the prosperity will be permanent,” Arthur Wellesley hopes.



Kere Tonnur Tank

Growth of Towns

Bangalore grew as a prosperous town. “The merchants and craftsmen who had deserted it during the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War returned to Bangalore. Most of those who had left for Madras Presidency having known the tranquil situation created by the British there, returned to Bangalore,” says Buchanan in 1801. The merchants “many of whom had been at Madras, and are acquainted with British policy, seem to have the utmost confidence in the protection of our Government,” Buchanan says regarding the merchants who had returned to Bangalore.¹⁵

Purnaiah not only rebuilt the damaged fort at Bangalore to make it safe for the citizens staying in the city, but also created a new tank (which has been identified as the Sampangi tank by Hayavadana Rao) to supply drinking water to Bangalore. “Apparently it was outside the fort. Inside the fort there was scarce room sufficient to erect more houses,” says a contemporary account to indicate the growth of population in the town in the course of years after Purnaiah’s administration.

The creation of Closepet in memory of Resident Close was a notable event. This is located at the present Ramanagaram, at a strategic point between Mandya and Bangalore, amidst hilly surroundings. Since it was harboured by dacoits, a strong contingent was stationed there. Thereafter, it grew to be a taluk headquarters and industrial center with the growth of activities connected with sericulture. An inscription located there states that the town was established around 1800. Based on paper records, M.G.Nagaraj states that new streets were arranged and designated for Brahmins, sellers

14. Bangalore Dist Gazetteer, 1990, p.81.

15. Nagaraj, MG, Dewan Purnaiah (Kannada), 2008, p.62.

of vegetables, shoes fixers¹⁶ for horse and draught bullocks, cobblers, etc., Balajirao, who was an officer in charge of the place improved the town greatly which is presently called Ramanagaram¹⁷.

At Srirangapatna, he built a new bridge to Kirangur, which exists even today, called Wellesley Bridge. It was built across the Cauvery to the north of the town at a cost of 64,500 Pagodas. This huge work connected the town during the major part of the rainy season. An English letter of 1804 described the bridge as “constructed in the strongest manner, is calculated to endure for ages without decay.”¹⁸ Governor-General Clive praised Purnaiah on hearing the news of construction of the bridge “as a fresh proof of his unwearied attention to promote the wealth and resources of Mysore and calculated to combine utility and magnificence of the State.”



Wellesley Bridge, Srirangapatna

The Sagarakatte Dam across the Lakshmanteertha, a tributary of the Cauvery was another notable work in Mysore taluk, near the Sagarakatte village. It was also intended to supply water to Mysore from a canal drawn from the Lakshmanteertha, another tributary but after 20 miles it did not flow, though it was planned for a 45 mile length.



Tipu's Sannad

“The Sagarakatte canal irrigated 1,300 acres and the revenue derived from it was Rs.7,200 per anum,” states Hayavadana Rao.¹⁹ J.V.Gayathri narrates the following developments at Mysore. “The new capital Mysore came to have a strong fort with strong bastions and new bazaars. The palace graced the center of the town, and had fine parks around. The Athara Kutcheri were built on the side of the palace and the Naubath Khana was constructed at the front. Purnaiah Nala supplied water to the town. In addition to the



Wellesley's House, Mysore.



Varahaswamy Temple, Mysore

reconstruction of the palace, Wellesley House, Government houses, Residency at Ilwal, Varahaswamy temple in the palace premises, Banquet hall etc. were Purnaiah's creations. These added to the beauty and growth of the capital

16. Ibid,

17. Quoted by Hayavadana Rao, p.2798.

18. Ibid, p.2798.

19. Shama Rao p. 370.

town.”²⁰ “By 1804 every embankment and channel then in use was put in perfect repair and many tanks which were useless or had been overgrown with jungle were also restored,” points out Shama Rao²¹.

The Tanjore agricultural circles in Madras Presidency raised a hue and cry over Purnaiah’s works to improve the Cauvery canals as they believed that the water supply from the Cauvery to their fields would be affected. The Tanjore Collector wrote to Resident Wilks over the matter. Wilks replied that area cultivated in 1804 was far less than what was cultivated in 1790 and there was no cause for alarm. Capt. Meckenzie who had started the survey of Mysore in 1799 also reported that the Tanjore ryots’ complaint was baseless. This demonstrated how vigorous Purnaiah’s thrust was in this sector that its echoes were heard even across the borders of Mysore State.

Prosperity Dawns

The State became prosperous agriculturally as a result of Purnaiah’s efforts. In fact, the famine-hit people from the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab, especially from Bombay Presidency migrated to Mysore State in large numbers. “The abundance of grain at that time was so great that those migrants were furnished not only with food but also large quantities of grain were exported to the affected British districts,” say Shama Rao²².

Lord William Bentinck, Governor at Madras wrote to Purnaiah in July 1804, “It has been a source of gratification that territories of Mysore have been preserved from calamity and continue to enjoy the blessings of abundance, due to the good and foreseeing administrative measures of Purnaiah. I am happy to learn that you continue to direct your attention to works of public utility and magnificence.” Restoration of the Mysore palace started in 1799 was completed in five years at the cost of 2,47,000 Pagodas.



Old Mysore Palace as in 1860

Wars and Disturbances

At a time when all these developments to organize and improve administration were going on in the State, there were disturbances causing unrest and revolt against the new arrangements. Rice presents the situation thus, “On the establishment of the present Government, there were accordingly few districts that did not furnish at least possessing or pretending to the hereditary

20. Ibid, p.371-72.

21. Ibid, p.600

22. Ibid., p.603

jurisdiction.”²³ Elsewhere he says, “The province of Balam was never effectively conquered until military roads were opened through the forest towns by the Honourable Major General Wellesley in the year 1801-02. The authority of Hyder Ali or of Tipu Sultan, over this province was extremely precarious.”²⁴ There was an uprising led by Dhondji and Balam Disturbances. The Maratha war had to be fought by the British to the North of the borders of Mysore and there was a revolt by British Officers and the Vellore Mutiny. Purnaiah helped the British not only with men but materials too. He attended to the needs of the British under all these contingencies with great presence of mind and alertness.

Dhondji Wagh, who was an able general in Tipu’s service, had been imprisoned by him. Soon after Tipu’s fall, he was released and escaped from Srirangapatna. Gathering hundreds of disbanded soldiers of Tipu, he secured control over Bidanur and Shimoga region. Detachments were dispatched to Hassan under Col. Dalrymple towards Chitradurga where Dhondji’s men had reached. Many were taken prisoners and the contingent was beaten back. Govinda Rao was in charge of Chitradurga fort under Tipu earlier and helped Dalrymple to join the march against Dhondji with Wellesley. Wellesley took Purnaiah’s consent to take him. Govindrao later joined Wellesley in the Balam campaign in 1802.

By August, Shimoga and Honnali were in the hands of Dhondji. Col. Dalrymple chased him till Shikaripur where he crossed the Mysore frontier. The Maratha army came to the aid of the British led by Dondopant Gokhale. Dhondji went to Belgaum district, and from there into the Nizam’s territory. On 10 September 1800, he was killed at Konagal in the present Raichur district. Arthur Wellesley who conducted the campaign has said that the Dhondji’s insurgence took the shape of a foreign war. It was Purnaiah who provided him with men and material as Arthur Wellesley was stationed at Srirangapatna.

Next was the campaign against the Nayaka of Balam within Mysore State’s boundary. There had been a large number of feudatories under the Vijayanagara empire including Mysore. Hyder and Tipu almost exterminated many of the feudal realms, some others were emaciated and seeking opportunity to rise again. Balam, Aigur or Manjrabad around Sakleshpur are separate places but are often considered as one since they are spread between a hilly forest range. Hyder or Tipu could not subdue this Balam Palegar completely. After the capture of Bidanur (Keladi), Hyder permitted the



Manjrabad Fort near Sakleshpura

23. Shama Rao, p.350

24. Ibid., p.357

Palegar Krishnappa Nayaka to continue, who paid an annual tribute of 5000 Pagodas. The Manjrabad fort was built by Tipu since Krishnappa Nayaka had joined Maratha captain Parashurambhau Patvardhan during his campaign in 1792.

Venkatadri Nayaka, son of Krishnappa Nayaka defied Mysore on the fall of Tipu and fortified himself at Arakere, four miles away from Manjrabad. In 1800 Lt. Col. Montessor destroyed Arakere. Nayaka had connections with Dhondji Wagh and reconquered Arakere. Mysore troops tried to occupy Manjrabad but they did not succeed. After the death of Dhondji, Arthur Wellesley combed Manjarabad area and apprehended a considerable number of Nayaka's army and his family members, but Nayaka escaped into the Western Ghat jungles. However, his men who had come to take supplies to his hide-out were apprehended and with their help, on 9th February 1802, Nayaka was caught. He was executed on 10th September with six others who had violated the pardon granted by Purnaiah by joining hands with Nayaka.

"Purnaiah detained 300 families as hostages consisting of those who were principally concerned in the rebellion and suffered none to depart till they had delivered all their arms and paid all revenue arrears," says Shama Rao.²⁵

In their war against the Marathas, the Mysore army played a prominent part. Purnaiah's support was solid, both in men and materials. Peshwa Bajirao II, after some reckless acts of his against his own men was forced to accept Subsidiary Alliance in 1802, though he had refused to accept it in 1799. Daulat Rao Sindhia of Gwalior and Raghuji Bhosle of Nagpur wanted to secure Pune, the headquarters of the Peshwa but they were defeated at Assaye on 23rd September 1803 in the Nizam's territory by Arthur Wellesley. This was the Second Anglo-Maratha war.

The Subsidiary Treaty of 1799 obliged Mysore to help the Company in their difficulties. In December 1802, Purnaiah was asked by the Madras Government to provide them with all the Siledar horses. In 1803, Purnaiah sent 1200 horses to join the British contingent.

Again on 23rd August 1803, 1405 Siledar horses were dispatched on request from the Company, and they reached the battlefield in November. An Infantry with 4,026 soldiers, dressed in the Company's uniform were dispatched next. *Kandachar* peons numbering nearly 20,000 were kept ready on the Mysore borders at Harihar. Doly or doli bearers numbering 400, 60,000 bullock-loads of food grains and other material and 60,000 head of sheep were supplied. Banjaras were engaged by Purnaiah to carry the material to the war front. Mysore troops were regularly paid by Purnaiah, though they were fighting for the British.

Wellesley has acknowledged the role of the Mysore Cavalry, the support from Mysore by way of supplies and diplomatic role of Mysore Commanders like Govinda Rao and Bishtopant. The Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-05)

25. Jbid., pp.357-58

was won by the British, but in the Battle of Assaye and Argaum, the Mysore army played a major role. It is the Mysore army which was mainly responsible for their victories against the Marathas.

It was found in 1804 that “the total cost to the Mysore Government in connection with Maratha campaign including the amount of presents, rewards and reimbursements to the troops, gratuities and allowances on their return as well as the amount required for pay till the extra troops entertained were discharged amounted to very nearly 4,10,000 Star Pagodas,”²⁶ calculated Shama Rao. (Star Pagoda is 3 ½ Rs; Kanthiraye Pagoda is Three Rs.)

Governor-General Wellesley recorded his opinion that the Government of Mysore had fulfilled the obligations imposed upon by Article 3 of the Subsidiary Treaty in the most complete and satisfactory manner. “The merits and services of the Dewan have been particularly conspicuous in the promptitude and wisdom manifested by him in the application of the resources of Mysore to the exigencies of the public service during the late war with confederated Maratha Chieftains.” He further adds that “the expectations I formed in selecting Purnaiah for the important office of minister of Mysore have been greatly exceeded by the benefits which have resulted from his excellent administration,” quotes Shama Rao.²⁷

When the Palegar of Chittoor in Madras Province rebelled against the British in 1804-05, the Mysore Horses joined the contingent under Col. Monypenny to suppress the revolt. Yedergundu and Chergul were captured by the Mysore Cavalry. The disturbances ended in February in 1805.

There was some dissatisfaction among the British commanders regarding the service conditions and there was a revolt by nearly 150 of them, stationed at Srirangapatna in 1809. There were mutinous conditions everywhere. Even in this critical situation, Mysore Cavalry helped the British to bring the revolt under control. British soldiers, marching from other camps, to join the insurgents at Srirangapatna were checked by the Mysore armies and seers. The Srirangapatna Insurgency was finally checked. The Mysore forces helped the Company in its various campaigns and on the supply front, Purnaiah played a memorable part.

Mysore State functioned as a tool of the British in their imperial expansionist activities. Purnaiah was a loyal servant of Hyder and Tipu, and later to the Maharaja who had secured power by the grace of the British Company. However, Mysore did not benefit much by becoming a partner with the British in these campaigns.



26. Ibid, pp: 357-58

27. Ibid, pp: 357-58.

Jewels of Administration



Tipu's Armoury, Srirangapatna



Colonel Bailey's Dungeon, Srirangapatna