

CHAPTER – III

FORTS IN RAYALASEEMA

INTRODUCTION

The chapter entitled “Vijayanagara Forts in Rayalaseema” is the core section of the thesis concerned with the history and characterisation of forts. The institution of forts in the Vijayanagara empire [14th to 16th century A.D.] attained its heyday in the body politic. During this period, the forts attained the status of political headquarter of the province or district the capture of which resulted in the conquest of entire territory under its control. Several forts of Rayalaseema like Penugonda, Chandragiri, Udayagiri, Gutti, Adoni were raised to the level of rajyas or provinces during Vijayanagara, which in turn, had smaller forts as the headquarters of the *simas* functioning under them like Gandikota, Siddhavatam, Kurnool, Gurramkonda and others. All these forts were important strongholds of the Vijayanagara in Andhra particularly located in Rayalaseema. These forts played a key role in the warfare between Vijayanagar with Reddis of Kondavidu, Gajapati’s of Orissa in eastern province and with the Sultanates of the Deccan in Krishna – Tungabhadra doab.

Here, the main aim is to look at the Vijayanagara fort complexes in Rayalaseema, their history, and see how different structures can be located in the architectural scheme. This chapter is sub-divided into ten sections. Each sections begins with a brief description of the physical location of the site which would provide the geo-political context of the Vijayanagara empire. From here, each section would then elaborate the political context of the province, its administrators, and try to link up the structures in the fort with the developments in construction of the fort. This is done by a description of the physical structures of the fort taking care to look at the major architectural devices like the parapets, walls, gateways, moats, bastions, temples and other minor structures. The task here is to correlate the different sources like the literary, inscriptional and archaeological sources with secondary sources. The following is the order of the forts discussed in this section.

- Penugonda fort
- Chandragiri fort
- Udayagiri fort
- Gandikota fort
- Gutti fort
- Adoni fort
- Kurnool fort
- Siddhavatam fort
- Guramkonda fort
- Other forts.

III.1. PENUGONDA FORT

History of Penugonda

Penugonda is the headquarters of a taluk of that name in Ananptaur district, Andhra Pradesh. It is situated on the Guntakal - Bangalore section of Southern railway and is about 44 miles from Anantapur. It was one of the important provincial centres and occupied a strategic position in the Vijayanagara period or even earlier. The place is famous for its hill fort and two temples. It is well known that in the last phase of the Vijayanagara history it attained the position of a capital of the empire following the fall of Vijayanagara in the Tallikota-battle. Penugonda meaning a big hill surrounded by hills with high cliffs on all sides. Rightly in the inscriptions of Vijayanagara, it is called as Ganagiri or Ghanadri, the Sanskrit variants of Telugu Penugonda.¹

In addition to being the capital of the *rajya* it was also the headquarters of a *sima* called Penugonda *sima*,² a chief town of *sthala*³ and a *chavadi*.⁴ It was one of the biggest territorial divisions under Vijayanagara was divided into several sub-divisions like; *sima*, *chavadi* and *sthala*. Singagiri-*sima*, Rodda-*nadu*, Guyyaluri-*sima*, Vavilapatti-*chavadi* Cheluru-*chavadi*, Kumkapura-*sthala*, Mallela-*sthala*, Gandikota-*sima* were included in the Penugonda *rajya*. Interestingly some inscriptions referred to this province also as Penugonda-marjavadi-*sima*.⁵ Taking consideration of the present day location of these divisions and villages included in it can be surmised that Penugonda *rajya* spread itself over the whole of Anantapur district, southern fringes of Kurnool district, western parts of Kadapa district and northern part of Chittoor district.

Penugonda Under Hoyasala Dynasty: The earliest reference to the fort of Penugonda occurs in the first quarter of the 14th century A.D., when it stood as the south-eastern outpost of the Hoyasalas of Dwarasamudra.⁶ Inscriptions in this area vouchsafe to the fact that prominent Hoyasala generals governed this place during the time of Ballala III. Ballala III [1320-1342 A.D.] occupied Penugonda and appointed his son-in-law Macheya Dannanayaka as the governor. An inscription dated A.D. 1336 mentions Mahapradana Aliya Macheya Dannanayaka making a gift of land in Madhuvukunta Halli in Ramadinadu.⁷

Gangidevi Dannanayaka was the another governing the Penugonda province in 1339 A.D. after the death of Macheya Dannanayaka.⁸ It is evident from the inscriptions that prominent Hoyasala generals governed this place during the time of Ballala III. With the demise of Ballala and the extinction of the Hoyasala kingdom, Penugonda region came under the new Vijayanagara rulers Harihara I and his successors.

Penugonda During Vijayanagara : The earliest reference to the Vijayanagara rule over Penugonda found in an inscription dated 1352 A.D. at Kadiri in Anantapur district. The inscription refers to the reign of Virabukkanavodayalu, ruling from Dwarasamudra and Penugonda.⁹ Number of inscriptions belonging to Bukka found in and around Penugonda mention Virupanna, son of Bukka, very frequently and mentions grants made by him.¹⁰ During the reign of Bukka I Penugonda was constructed to his son Virupanna under the guidance of his able minister Anantarasa Chikkavodayar, who according to one account, was responsible for building the fort of Penugonda.¹¹ The numerous inscriptions at this place state that king Bukka I of Vijayanagara entrusted the province of Penugonda to his son Virupanna Vodaiyar in whose time Penugonda fort was built.

Hence, Penugonda was made the headquarters of the province from the beginning of the Vijayanagara empire. Virupanna held the governship of Penugonda for a long time up to the death of Bukka I.

There are epigraphical evidences to show that the next kings Harihara II and Devaraya II governed from this headquarters.¹² The Madireddipalli inscription of Harihara II refers to the reign of Bukkaraya, the son of Viraharihararaya, caused of feeder channel dug in order to bring water from the river Cireru by certain Polinayaka.¹³ An inscription at Kallodi in Mysore reveals that Bukkaraya had a channel dug in order to bring water from the Panneru to this from which appear to be originally the summer resort of Vijayanagara kings of the second dynasty, which is called 'Gagana mahal'. Another inscription dated 1392 A.D. found at northern gate of the fort near Anjaneya temple records the construction of Virabhadra temple by Mailapa.¹⁴ The Vanavolu inscription dated 1406 A.D. states that Gangarani, daughter of Bhagrisetti of Pamidi, wife of

Ramachandranayaka committed *sati* at Penugonda where her husband died. A *brindavana* and *sati stone* were erected in her name at Vanavolu by Tippanayaka.¹⁵

During the reign of Devaraya II, his younger brother Pratapadevaraya is mentioned as having a high office and acquired the rule of the Kingdom of Ghanadri from his elder brother in 1424 A.D..¹⁶ The next important event in the history of Penugonda occurs in the reign of Mallikarjuna. During this period came the fearful invasion of Gajapatis of Orissa against south in 1454 A.D. under Kumara Hamvira, son of Kapileswara Gajapati. Mallikarjuna, in order to storm the tide of oriya invasion, transferred one of his best generals Saluva Narasimha from Chandragiri to Penugonda, probably to defend the central part of the empire.¹⁷ He had been, for several years, the Governor of Penugonda. He was able to keep his kingdom intact till the end of the reign of Mallikarjuna that is about 1465 A.D. Virupaksha II came to the throne after assassinating his cousin Mallikarjuna and proved to be in competent ruler. His failures against Bahmanis and Gajapati's provided Saluva Narasimha, a splendid opportunity to emerge as the saviour of the kingdom and the custodian of the power of the Vijayanagara. Saluva Narasimha to save the Kingdom from internal dangers and external invasions deposed the worthless master, Virupaksha II and seized the throne for himself in about A.D. 1486.

Saluva Narasimha was the governor of Chandragiri before he declared himself as the imperial ruler. Penugonda attained much as the centre of provincial importance during the Saluva period. Saluva Narasimha entrusted his two sons to the care of his military general Tuluva Narasanayaka and he acted as regent and even assumed with royal titles. The elder son died in a year, the other son Immadi Narasimha known from his own inscriptions which run upto 1505

A.D. This crazy general confined Immadi Narasimha at Penugonda and carried on the administration in the name of the king. Friction thus naturally arose between him and the king. The breach between them reached to such a pass that Narasanayaka marched with his troops from Penugonda to lay siege to the city of Vijayanagara in 1492 A.D. The king, Immadi Narasimha was now removed to Penugonda where he was kept under severe surveillance. An inscription dated 1499 A.D. states that Narasanayaka an agent for the affairs of Immadi Narasanayaka, the ruler of Penugonda, made a grant of the village to the god Malleswara.¹⁸ Narasanayaka's eldest son Viranarasimha, succeeded the realm in 1503 A.D. murdered Immadi Narasimha, who thus inaugurated the Tuluva dynasty over Vijayanagara empire. Thus, Penugonda played an important role in the political events of the Vijayanagara empire during Saluva dynasty.

During the rule of Krishnadevaraya [1509 to 1529 A.D.] he appointed strong Dandanayakas as the governor of Penugonda such as Rayasam Kondamarasa, who held this high position in Udayagiri also. It is interesting to note that, Rayasam Kondamarasa, the raya's subordinate performed the *Lakshahoma* ceremony, at Penugonda for the success of the king's army.¹⁹ The immediate task of Krishnadevaraya upon his accession to the throne was to bring the rebel chiefs of Ummattur who claimed the fort of Penugonda under the title of Penugonda Chakreswara. He therefore, according to Tr. Luis, dispatched an army against the rebel before 1510 A.D., who seized Penugonda and captured it. Thereafter it was kept under the command of Rayasam Kondamarasa, till 1512 A.D..²⁰

Achyutaraya's inscriptions were found in the Penugonda *rajiya* from 1531 A.D. onwards. Virupanna mentioned as a subordinate of Achyutaraya at Penugonda.²¹ The Bukkapatnam inscription dated 1534 A.D. in the reign of Achyutaraya, states that

the land below the Hosekara in Penugonda gifted to the gods and Brahmanas by Kondappa, under the orders of the Banadarada Timmarasa the treasury officer.²² It states that the king handed over Roddanadu in Penugonda *rajiya* for the chieftaincy of that magani Timmappa who also figures in the Channapattana inscription dated 1536 A.D. is the same as Timmarasa noted above, as he is referred to as the treasurer.²³

Sadasivaraya connected with Penugonda ranging from 1543 – 1567 A.D. to these, the Budili inscription dated 1551 A.D. is interesting. It refers to Tirumalaraya as the king and made a gift of the village Srinivasapura with its hamlets to a number of Brahmanas. The interesting point is that this Tirumala was one of the three sons of Sriranga.²⁴ During his reign in 1551-1558 A.D. Channappanayaka a Chauri-bearer of Vira Tirumaladeva – maharaya occupied the town of Penugonda pattana and was ruling it, built under orders of that heroric prince, a dwarf fort [pillakota] with in the big fort, erected fort gates, added bastions, dug trenches etc., and lower down the pit fort he renovated the hill fort, by the grace of his family god Channaraya of Marakapura whom he had established at Penugonda.²⁵

Chennappanayaka was a trusted general of Tirumalaraya who continued to serve the latter's son Srirangaraya also. He was kept incharge of Penugonda fort which he renovated at the instance of Tirumalaraya and also built a smaller fort there in 1558 A.D..²⁶ Penugonda does not figure prominently in the history of the empire after this till the battle of Tallikota fought in the year 1565 A.D.

The fateful battle of Tallikota gave a mortal blow to the glory of the Vijayanagara empire. The death of Ramaraya obviously created utter confusion in the empire. Tirumala, one of the brothers of Ramaraya and also one of the commanders of the army, made good

his escape with all his treasures of the emperor, he deserted the capital and fled to a safer place Penugonda along with royal entourage. It is generally believed that he took with him the ruling king Sadasivaraya also who is supposed to have been the puppet in his hands, leaving the erstwhile capital to the mercy of the looters. He took his abode in Penugonda and began rebuilding or reviving the glory of Vijayanagara with only indifferent success. The exact date of Tirumalaraya commencing the rule at Penugonda is not known. His earliest inscription mentioning Penugonda as the capital is dated in 1571 A.D..²⁷

Tirumala crowned himself emperor in 1570 A.D. and inaugurated the rule of Aravidu dynasty. During his short reign he was troubled by the revolting nobles and the invasions of the Sultan of Bijapur. Sultan Ali Adilshah who exposed the cause of Pedda Tirumala and sent a contingent under Khizr Khan to lay siege to the Penugonda fort. But this attack was repulsed by Savaram Chennappa nayaka, the commandant of the fort. In the second attempt led by Malikhan laid to siege of Penugonda which was saved from capture although Adoni had to be surrendered to the powerful armies of Bijapur.²⁸ Tirumala divided the empire into three provinces and placed his three sons incharge of each one of them. Consequently his son Sriranga became the ruler of the Telugu area with Penugonda as his headquarters. Thus, Penugonda not only became the capital for the Vijayanagara empire after Tallikota battle, but also continued as headquarters of the province headed by the prince Sriranga. Since then, as evidences show, Penugonda frequently became the target of muslim attacks. The earlier of them was in 1576 A.D. when an army led by Ali Adilshah I laid to siege to Penugonda. In the battle that ensued the emperor Sriranga himself fell a prisoner, Penugonda came into the possession of Ali Adilshah I. Sriranga retreated to Chandragiri in Chittoor district

with all his treasures leaving the protection of Penugonda to the veteran Savaram Chennappa.²⁹ Reference has already been made to the military officer Chennappanayaka and to the repairs and extensions carried out by him to the fort of Penugonda.

In 1581 A.D. notices one Hegoli Timmanayadu as the agent and minister of Sriranga I, ruled the Penugonda rajya.³⁰ His coronation at Penugonda is particularly recorded as having been performed by the best of Brahmanas according to sastric Injunctions. The Kunnatur inscription dated 1585 A.D. refers to Venkatapati I, the last of the four brothers as maharaja ruling over the province Penugonda and the inscription records the gift made by the general Gobburi Tirumalanayaka for the merit of the Kings younger brother --- .³¹ The Udayagiri inscription dated 1586 A.D. refers to the king Venkatapatiraya was ruling from Penugonda.³² He was still at his headquarters at Penugonda when Venkatapati II [1585-1614] became emperor.

Venkatapatiraya II started his rule from Penugonda. During the reign of his predecessor the empire had been deprived of the northern districts, Venkata II was tormented by the Muslim states of Deccan. Mohammad Quli Qutb Sha, the sultan of Golkonda attacked and laid seige to the city within a short time meanwhile Venkata assured a submissive posture and secured a little time during which he reinforced his garrison and dispatched a strong contingent under Jagadev Rao and others to offer stubborn resistance to the Golkonda forces.³³ Venkatapati II appointed Chandragiri Konetiraya to defend Penugonda when Bijapur Sultan attacked on it. Apart from the trouble from the muslims, also to face grave difficulties within his own dominions by the distract station of the federations. But Venkatapatiraya was quite equal to this task.³⁴

The rebellion spread all over the empire, and when Penugonda was attacked by the sultan of Bijapur, Venkatapati shifted his capital permanently to Chandragiri, which was quite well known to him, since a number of years had been spent by him there as viceroy of the Tamil country.³⁵ After the death of Venkatapati II in 1614 A.D., the empire lost an able ruler.

The disastrous civil war which convulsed the Vijayanagara kingdom for over a decade attracted the attention of the neighboring sultanates. In 1619 - 1620 A.D., the Bijapur sultan, Ibahim Adilshah II sent one of his officers Abdul Wahabkhan against Kurnool which he successfully occupied.³⁶ During the reign of Sriranga III Mustafakhan, the Bijapur general, induced by the rebellious nayaks of Sriranga III, marched against Penugonda.³⁷ In 1628 A.D., Ramadeva was reigning from Penugonda.³⁸ About the same time, prince Sriranga claimed to be on the throne of Penugonda. But almost at the same time yet another record refers to Venkata with the titles of Rajadhiraja and Rajaparameswara, while in 1631 A.D., he is said to have ruled from Penugonda. Whatever the fact and whatever the circumstance that made Sriranga occupy Penugonda and then make room for his rival Peddavenkata [Venkata III] in the course of few months the effect on the Vassals was disastrous.³⁹ Venkata II and Kempegowda marched on Penugonda with the help of many chiefs that had by now swelled his ranks, they captured Penugonda in a short time and the major part of his objective being fulfilled. Venkata II had himself finally and duly crowned in 1635 A.D..⁴⁰ He appointed Chandragiri Koneti Nayaka to be in charge of the fort of Penugonda and its neighbourhood. But soon his Kingdom was invaded by the Bijapur and Golkonda armies and he was compelled to retire to the mountainous tracks of the Chittoor district where he died in 1642 A.D. The Bijapur general Mustafa khan marched against Penugonda and laid seige to it in 1645 A.D., but was

repulsed by Konetinaayaka, the commandant of the fort.⁴¹ The Mir Jumla of Golkonda also marched against Gandikota in 1650 A.D., captured it and followed it up by the seizure of Gooty which brought as a war in its wake the Bijapur Sultan. Khan Muhammad, who was sent from Bijapur to chastise Mirjumla, defeated him in a number of battles.⁴² Khan Muhammad then advanced towards Penugonda fort, encamped at Roddam for some time and finally captured Penugonda from the chieftain Konetinaayaka in 1652 A.D. There after Bijapur sultan gave Kundurpi to Konetinaayaka after surrendering the fort Penugonda as a prince.⁴³ Though it is on the record that Sriranga III the last ruler is said to have returned to Penugonda in 1665 A.D. No precise conclusion can be drawn on the last years of his rule. The Kodigepalli inscription ⁴⁴ and Gangavaram inscription ⁴⁵ refers to his reign in the district before the above date. With the death of Sriranga III in 1675 A.D. perished the Aravidu dynasty and the Vijayanagara kingdom and Penugonda occupied by the Bijapur sultan.

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

Penugonda was the second capital to the Vijayanagara kings and was called as "Ganagiri" or "Ghanadri" in inscriptions. The structure of the fort shows the splendid sculptural beauty and skilled workmanship on the medieval times.

In describing the monuments of Penugonda, the fort is dealt with first, as it contains some buildings which were the earliest to be erected during the time of Bukka I, the first ruler of the Vijayanagara dynasty. The next group embraces the temples, tombs and besides which were constructed by the later Vijayanagara rulers, from 14th century to 18th century. The fourth group, includes the courtly structures, the fifth or the last group includes all monuments of historical, religious and architectural significance situated within a

distance of twenty kms from Penugonda. This order is chronological to a certain extent, but individually, the monuments of each group, sometimes lacks in providing the exact date of the structure.

Now we have here about 25 temples, 12 tanks, 3 tombs, 2 basadis, 2 courtly structures, besides 4 gateways, 3 watch towers, mandapas and other structures built for the benefit of the people and the town. In short, Penugonda, was a well developed headquarters of the Vijayanagara rulers and the town studded with religious, secular and military buildings.⁴⁶

The fort of Penugonda is just like the fort of Hampi, Chandragiri and Gandikota with stone veneering on exterior and a large earthen wall to serve as a core inside. The fort is more of defence nature. The fort is a cyclopean construction, in which large blocks of stone were piled up and tightly fitted, without the use of any joining or binding material, The fort is very imposing with the addition of barbican peep-holes, the enlargement of gateways, walls, bastions, towers and turrets both in height and thickness..⁴⁷

The fort of Penugonda consists of a moat, seven rampart walls, four gateways and a number of bastions at regular intervals of distance, besides a few postern or side entrance ways, a large number of tanks, etc. The ruined fortifications enclose the old town and the high hill had seen the remains of a large round tower with a room inside, a large granary, a small Hanuman temple. The fort of Penugonda is approached from the north. i.e., *Erramanchi Uruvakili*, outside it is a moat, probably dry about 10.80 mts. wide at the base. Behind it slants the lower fortification wall running around on east, south and west.⁴⁸

Proceeding along the wall, towards west, it is found that the wall is built of irregular white granite stones, of lesser height built on a high ground level. In this section of the wall are noticed about 6 bastions at regular intervals of distance all of uniform shape, i.e. rectangular resembling those of Hampi and Chandragiri, a typical Vijayanagara feature. The wall on this side rises to a height of about 7mts, from the ground level. Another interesting aspect of this wall is the method of its construction, like the walls of Hampi and Chandragiri, it has earthen wall in the interior which serves as core with stone veneering in the exterior and the cyclopean masonry, a characteristic feature of contemporary Hindu structure.⁴⁹

Bastions : After a few paces walk along this wall comes the 1st bastion, which is rectangular at the base but tapering towards square at the top. It is devoid of any crenellations as there are no remnants of any parapet on the top, along the outer edge. Then comes the 2nd bastion, also of similar shape and design, measuring 12 mts. width at the base and 10mts. at the top, with a frontal projection of 15 mts. on either side. A portion of the wall of this bastion is ruined. It continues forward again, after taking a slightly curved turn. The third bastion comes after a distance of about 35 ft. After this, the wall appears to be intact, although some minor damages are noticed. After this comes the famous watch tower known as *Rama-buruzu* standing on the top of the 4th bastion, which commands a full view of the entire town and is visible even from a long distance. This *Rama-buruzu* is an octagonal structure, built of brick and lime mortar and stands as a typical example of Indo-sarcenic style, a feature of the late Vijayanagara period.

Proceeding along the same wall towards east beyond the northern gate are noticed six bastions built closely to each other. On this side the wall and bastions rise to a higher level than on the west,

being built on plain level ground. Altogether, there are 16 courses in the wall, measuring a height of about 7.70 mts. The design and shape of the bastions is the same as on the west. The first bastion is reached after a distance of about 42.80 mts. The method of its construction is typical cyclopean masonry i.e., without the use of lime or mortar as joining material. Near the 5th bastion comes the eastern gateway called Gorantla uruvakili..⁵⁰

After this comes a famous watch tower known as *Lakshmanaburuju* standing over the 6th bastion. Near this 6th bastion, comes *Firangi-dinna*. Beyond this, the wall proceeds forwards to a considerable distance along a high ground and turns towards south. On this side i.e. towards south, the wall has 7 courses, with a large blocks of stones in lower courses and smaller ones on the upper levels. There are only 3 bastions on this side. There is also a large tank called *bhogasamudram*, towards the end of this wall reaching the southern gateway called *cheruvu-uruvakili*.

On the west stands the hill about 3000 feet high and there is no continuity of the lower fortification wall at its foot on this side.

A survey of the lower fortification wall reveals that it consists of 3 gateways and 15 bastions all of uniform shape and design..⁵¹

Gateways : At present the fort is entered through the northern gateway i.e., *Erramanchi-uruvakili*. On the outside, it is flanked by two semi circular or 'U' shaped watch towers, with a covered roof above. These watch towers are also built of huge blocks of stone, and on the right-side watch tower is seen a carving of *Gaja-Lakshmi*.

Passing through this outer entrance, comes the 1st court-yard of the gateway. On the left i.e., east, the wall is broken, but is found to run in a semi-circular fashion, which connects itself to the 2nd

entrance; while on the west i.e., right, the wall is intact. Proceeding along further towards south, one is compelled to take right-ward turn i.e., west, to enter the 2nd courtyard, which again is flanked by two rectangular watch towers of huge size, crude in shape and design. Like the outer Once, these also are devoid of any parapet wall on the top. Passing through this narrow entrance, one notices a barbican wall in front.⁵²

The above description of the northern gateway reveals that the plan of the gateways of Penugonda, consists of one outer and two inner entrances, with intermediary courtyards, and right angled turns towards right and left, a common feature of almost all the Vijayanagara gateways. The other gateways of the same fort, i.e., *Gorantla-uruvakili* on the east and *Cheruvu-uruvakili* on the south are also of similar type and plan. The eastern gateway, i.e., *Gorantla-uruvakili* appears to have derived its name as it faces the village Gorantla. It is also entered through an outer entrance with 6 mts. wide gap, flanked by rectangular watch towers on the outside. Inside are two courtyards, and two inner entrances.⁵³

The *Anjaneya-uruvakili* or *Roddam-uruvakili* on the west appears to be somewhat less complex in plan, with one courtyard, and one inner entrance obviously because the fort is well protected on this side. (On plan) The entire lower fort area appears to be somewhat irregular in shape.

Inside these gateways lies the entire town of Penugonda. The citadel of the fort lies on the hill on the west. It is climbed up by means of a stone paved path up to a distance of about half a mile where are noticed two pillared *mandapas*. The fort in the hill enclosed by a number of ramparts at different levels, as at Gooty, numbering about 7 in all. There are a number of entrances one in each. The first

entrance faces south flanked by two semi-circular bastions. It is also connected by corresponding walls on either side which run in a carved manner going up the hill.

Proceeding along further after the 4th gate, comes the 5th gate flanked by two watch towers and aligning walls. From this area begins the khilla or citadel portion. Inside is a well called *khilla-bavi*.

Proceeding along further through the 5th gate comes the 6th which is not of much importance. After this comes the 7th with a flight of steps to climb up within it, is seen an underground passage; on its right is the wall which faces south. After climbing up the staircase is a circular watch tower, supported by pillars.

Proceeding from this citadel portion towards south one reaches the *Narasimhaswamy-gutta*. On the way near the first wall is small cleft of water called *antarganga*. After walking for about a mile further comes the *Narasimhaswamy-gutta*.

After passing through this entrance is seen a ruined temple probably of Narasinathaswamy mentioned by the Kaifiyat, built in typical Vijayanagara architectural style, outside in the east runs the fort wall built in cyclopean order with an underground passage, at its foot below is another line of wall, near the *Uruvakili* on the south.⁵⁴

Water Resources : The fort of Penugonda is well provided with several water resources by means of tanks, wells etc., both outside and inside the fort. To name a few are, *Bhoga-samudram*, adjoining the south wall of the fort. Near by, to its west is *Tiruvengalanathuni-cheruvu*. Within the fort area are two big wells called *Posalakkeri* and *Palakkeri*. There are also about twelve other wells like *Peddanagula-bavi* and *Chinnanāgula-bavi* near the foot of the lower fort wall, *Eguvanagula-bavi*, *Velupala-bavi* outside the fort wall, *Chakkera-bavi* near the

*Babayyadargah and Bhairannakunta on the top of Narasimhaswamy gutta.*⁵⁵

Ramaburuju : The Ramaburuju is one of the most interesting monuments which deserves our attention. This watch tower is constructed towards north-west side, which faces Roddam. From this tower it is very easy to have a very clear picture of about fifteen to twenty kms. distance without any difficulty. Roddam, Kondapuram, Konapuram, and Erramanchi all are clearly visible from this tower. The tower is in Indo-sarcenic style and it is about 16 high, with two stories of which the lower one has five windows and the upper one has four windows. It is in ruined condition.

Lakshmanaburuju : Laksmanaburuju is towards the eastern side of the fort near the eastern gate. It was a main tower which protected the eastern side of the fort, which raised to a height of about 30'. But now this watch tower is in ruined condition.

Gummatalu : This tower is situated towards the western side of the fort, next to Ramaburuju, which is of about 30 high from the ground level. From this tower, Roddam, Kogira and Turakalapatnam are clearly visible.

Gaganamahala : The king's palace 'Gagan mahal' is in the heart of the town and is constructed in 1575 A.D., during the time of Srirangadevaraya. The Gagan mahal witnessed the majesty and aristocracy of the royal times. Gagan mahal has a basement in Hindu style but a ground floor of Intrilate Islamic traditions with later additions. It is a fine example of Indo-sarcenic architecture. It faces east and is a pretty little palace with an upper storey and contains a watch tower. The palace is enclosed by a compound wall. The mahal is approachable through five narrow steps.

There is a big hall in the centre, having 20 arches of uniform size. There are number of enclosures on all the three sides. There are two staircases to the first floor one inside and the other outside. The inside staircases are very narrow and high whereas the outer staircases are broad and low. Near the staircases there is a cantilever projections which act as watch towers, through which the whole town and the hill are visible. The ground floor is raised on a high stone basement. The palace is supported by massive pillars and arches, the upper rooms and some of the lower rooms also are provided with numerous little windows on all sides. The pillars and arches are mohammadan in design and character. The base, the roof, the cornice are Hindu in design. It is an interesting blending of two different style and a fine example of Indo-sarcenic architecture in Penugonda. The stepped pyramidal tower reminds us of Lotus mahal in Hampi and the palace at Chandragiri.

Now the palace is so much mutilated by the ravages of time and the vandalism of the people that no vestiges of its former grandeur can at present be detected, but it has retained something of its ancient grandeur of sixteenth century. This must have been a great building in the declining stage of the Vijayanagara dynasty.⁵⁶

Gagana Mahal Plan : The building consists of a two-storeyed pavilion, both levels being divided into a number of bays. A multi-storeyed staircase adjoins the pavilion at the north-east corner; at the south-east corner is a small single-storeyed structure.

The lower level of the pavilion has 5 bays by 5 bays of uneven dimensions; the larger bays are positioned on the central east-west aisle, with smaller bays symmetrically arranged on either side. The front [east] three rows of bays are defined by piers with stepped plans; these are free standing or engaged into the walls. The rear [west] two

rows of bays are enclosed by thicker walls pierced with doorways and windows.

The central three front [east] bays are open. These are flanked by narrower bays with projecting balconies. These balconies have raised seating areas, as well as three openings on the front and sides [blocked up]. Steps ascend to the raised floor area of the other bays where there is an open space of 5 bays by 2 bays with balconies projecting from the side walls. Doorways separate these bays from the others to the west. The central square bay at the rear is flanked by chambers with doorways and windows on the north and south these bays are accessible only from the east. A door in the rear [west] wall of bay leads to the last row of bays. The central bay here has a projecting balcony in the west wall [no raised seating]. Due to the enlargement of bay, additional transitional bays are inserted.

Outside the pavilion to the east are the remains of column footings and stone steps. Here also are a misplaced Nandi sculpture and an overturned column.

The upper level of the pavilion originally consisted of 3 bays by 2 bays [longer in the north-south direction]; a further three bays were later added on the front [east]. The central rear [west] square bay is raised up with an opening in the back wall. The rectangular bays to the north and south have doorways and windows. The front [east] three bays are open to the east.

Surrounding this upper level of the pavilion on four sides is a walkway contained by high parapet walls. At the northeast corner the walkway connects with the staircase tower. This has a small chamber at ground level around which steps turn as they ascend. This chamber opens off the corner bay of the lower level of the pavilion. At

the next level, this plan is also repeated, though here the chamber is reduced in size. An entrance bay on the south leads to the walkway that surrounds the upper level of the pavilion. The upper- most level of the staircase tower consists of a central chamber defined by piers, with narrow bays on four sides and at the corners. Balconies project from each side; that on the south is displaced from the middle of the walls due to the steps at the southeast corner. From this level, steps ascend to the roof level.

The adjoining square chamber at the south-eastern corner of the pavilion has nine bays, the central one of which is enlarged. Openings are positioned on three sides with an entrance in the middle of each side. A modern staircase wraps around the east and north sides of the chamber beneath.

Exterior : The principle [east] elevation of the pavilion is dominated by three arched openings set in rectangular frames. Arches with angled profiles are defined by mouldings in two planes. Over the central arch is a foliated motif at the apex. Balconies project from the end bays. These are supported on four corbelled brackets, with multi-curved profiles and uppermost pendant lotus elements. Arched openings are framed by plain bands. Above rises a short wall with an angled eave in plaster covered brick-work which is broken by a broad, arch-shaped opening [blocked up in the north balcony]. Only traces of the ornamental finials that once formed part of the parapet can be made out.

The walls are terminated by corbelled brackets with curved undersides. These carry a stone beam and angled rafters which support the overhanging double-curved eave. This eave projects slightly above the balconies. Traces of petalled friezes are seen on the vertical edge of the eave. The high parapet has narrow pilasters with

temple-like capitals that frame niches and arched recesses. Friezes of angled and circular elements as well as of stylised foliation are visible. The central part of the parapet is slightly lower and unadorned. An eave-like capping moulding runs along the top.

The outer walls on the other three sides of the pavilion are plain. Here can be seen arched openings and recesses, the continuation of the eave and also the high parapet wall. The projecting balconies in the middle of these walls preserve few original features; most probably. They resemble those on the front [east].

The exterior of the upper level of the pavilion is partly obscured by the addition on the east. The original facade presents three broad arched openings set in rectangular frames. Between the arches are pilastered elements with multiple capitals and bracket-like projections; stylised foliate elements are positioned at the apexes. Brackets, beams and angled rafters once supported an overhanging eave. Elsewhere, the outer walls are unadorned except for arched recesses.

An octagonal tower rises over the central rear bay. This has four ascending and diminishing tiers of eave-like mouldings and upturned motifs at the corners. The capping roof form on a circular drum has regularly spaced fluted ribs. No finial is preserved.

The elevation of the staircase tower is characterised by tapering walls and projecting balconies. The walls rise above a line of projecting corbels at ground level, now partly buried. On the east and north sides of the lower level is an arched recess within a rectangular frame. The upper levels are plain, except for arched openings that light the staircase and projecting balconies. The latter are each supported on four corbelled brackets with curved undersides. Over

the arched openings are angled eaves. Traces of brick and plaster parapets above have finials at the ends with pierced interlaced merlon motifs in between. A variation is seen over the balconies that project from the uppermost level; these appear to have curved vault-like forms in ruined.

At the top of the walls are corbelled brackets that support a beam, angled rafters and an eave that runs around the building, projecting slightly over the balconies on each side. The parapet has plain walls broken only by rectangular holes enlarged merlons with curved contours are seen above. At the south-east corner of the parapet wall a fragmentary design of interlaced motifs probably indicates the original parapet design. Circular finials are positioned at the corners.

The octagonal tower that rises above the staircase roof is partly concealed by the high parapet wall. The tower consists of three ascending tiers of cave moldings. The circular capping piece with ribs is partly restored. There is no finial.

Little can be seen of the lower portions of the exterior walls of the structure at the south-east corner of the pavilion. Traces of the angled cave on projecting brackets are visible, also portions of the original brick and plaster parapet. The parapet displays deep niches with both arched and multi-lobed tops ornamented with bands and flame-like motifs; the niches are flanked by half-pilasters. On the south wall, a triple-headed niche in the parapet is furnished with three empty pedestals. Miniature reliefs of temple-like towered forms rise above the multi-lobed arch in the middle.

Interior : The chief interest of the interiors of both levels of the pavilion are the domes and vaults triangular pendentives are found

beneath at the corners. Above these bays, flattish domes rise on octagonal drums. Over four bays, eight-faceted, dome-like vaults extend into the space between the arches. Pointed vaults on rectangular plans are seen in eight bays and on square plans in two bays. Intermediate vaults with miniature fluted domes above faceted pendentives are positioned at either end of two bays, also between four other bays. Of particular interest is the vault with bay. Here, the octagonal drum supporting the shallow dome is carried on eight intersecting arches [without mouldings] with deeply angled pendentives in between. Blocked out medallions are seen at the summits of many of the drums and vaults. The walls are enlivened by shallow arched recesses. Horizontal vaults roof the projecting balcony bays.

The piers of the upper level of the pavilion are lower and broader, but otherwise similar [additional arched support within the central arch is a later reinforcement]. Above the [original] front [east] central bays is an angled vault extending down between the arches. Flanking bays are roofed by flattish domes on octagonal drums with additional angled elements between the arches. The enlarged central rear bay over which the tower rises has an octagonal drum marked by a projecting moulding. At the corners are pilaster-like elements with brackets; small windows are positioned on four sides. Above rises the flattish dome with octagonal mouldings. The side bays are each divided by intermediate arches into two rectangular vaults. The end walls of these two bays are adorned with three arched recesses in shallow frames. The other walls are plain.

The interior of the staircase tower has chambers at different levels roofed by octagonal dome-like vaults or flattish domes. Nine-square designs and pyramidal vaults are seen in the smaller adjoining bays. Sequences of arched vaults cover the steps. The chamber at the

uppermost level has a dome raised on a high octagonal drum with traces of pilasters and wooden brackets, as if to support ornamental elements.

The piers of the adjoining structure at the south- east corner of the building are similarly shaped to those of the interior, though some what smaller and shorter. Of interest is the flat ceiling over the central bay which is divided into nine panels by beam like elements with lotus emblems on the undersides. Miniature curved brackets ornamented with petal-like motifs are seen at the sides. Similar beams and brackets appear in the flat ceilings over the narrow side bays.⁵⁷

Mint : To the opposite of Gagana-mahal is a small rectangular room called the Mint. The dimensions of the structure is 20'x20'x20. The wall of the building are plain and have arched windows. The walls raised from the ground level and crowned by stepped pyramidal tower which is very similar to the tower of Gagana-mahal. It is believed that the small building might have been used for stamping coins. Even to this day in the vicinity of this building we find pieces of metals, charcoal and other chemicals.

Timmaraju Samadhi : Timmaraju samadhi is to the south of the *bhogasamudram* tank near Veeranna hill. It is believed that the body of one Timmaraju is buried here. We see a rectangular room raised on a platform, supported by pillars and a dome over it. Very close to this building, there is another similar structure which is called as the *samadhi* of his faithful dog. These buildings are in the Indo-sarcenic style.

There is a ballad which sings a story related to Timmaraju. It is said that the wife of Palegar of Penugonda, (Kondareddy) fell in love with this local ruler Timmaraju, but it was refused by Timmaraju. She

took it as an insult and made a complaint to the husband, wherein, Timmaraju was punished by the Palegar. The punishment was that Timmaraju was cut into several pieces and he was buried in the outskirts of the town. It is also said that a faithful dog of his followed him in his death. So the two structures were constructed by the people in memory of Timmaraju and his faithful dog [Plate. 6].

Bhogasamudram : In the year 1388 A.D., by the orders of Veerapratapa Bukkaraya, one Singayabhata, who was called as *Dasavidyachakravarti Jalasutradari* brought water from Pennar river to Penugonda so as to solve the water problem of Penugonda. The water tank which was constructed by Singayabhata was called *Bhogasamudram*. From the 16th century epigraph, it appears that he made a channel from the river Pennar to the *Bhogasamudram*. The tank is situated on the southern side of the fort, adjacent to the fort wall, which acted as a water storage and also a protection to the fort.

The water is further supplied to the town through a channel, first to the palvakkera then to the pasuravakkera and the extra water is fed to the agarta constructed on the north side, which protects the northern side of the fort. This channel system which is seen even to this day at Penugonda, was constructed under the supervision of Singayabhata, has been highly appreciated by the modern engineers. People very much believe that the water from the *Bhogasamudram* tank is more hygienic, as the water undergoes natural filtering and purification.

By the side of the tank, a *snanaghata* [bathing ghat] is seen, believed to have been the place where the queens used to bath which is now in dilapidated condition.⁵⁸

Veeranna Gutta, Babayya Gutta: There are two hillocks by the side of the Penugonda hill. The hillock next to the Penugonda hill is called *Babayya-gutta* the other as *Veeranna-gutta*. We have traditional accounts regarding the names given to the hillocks. There is also a very beautiful folk song glorifying the activities of Veeranna, a hero; similarly the muslim traditional books speak about the greatness of Babayya and his superhuman powers.

According to the legends one Babayya, a muslim saint, who took rest at Penugonda was tested by the king. The test, that as given by the king, was challenged by another Veerasaiva saint. The test was to prove their superhuman powers. It appears that both the saints were tied in different lime-bags and thrown into the *Bhogasamudram* tank; unfortunately the veerasaiva saint disappeared whereas Babayya, the muslim saint, was found on the top of the hillock. So, the hillock was named after Babayya.

According to the legend and the folksong there were two brothers Naganna and Verranna, who were descendants of Saluva Narasimha. These brothers came from Chandragiri to Kadiri where their father Veerannarasimha was the local ruler from Kadiri, again travelled to Vanavolu and from Vanavolu to Penugonda. Finally they settled at Penugonda. As time passed, Penugonda faced a severe famine and drought. In order to feed their cows these brothers travelled from Penugonda to Nijavalle Gollapuram near Pavagada. During this time Penugonda was under the control of Nawabs and the Nawābs demanded Naganna to pay taxes for the cows, else they would be either carried away from Penugonda; or he has to give his sister in marriage to his son. The brothers Naganna and Veeranna were successful in defeating the Nawabs. Veeranna became the chief of Penugonda and lived on the top of the hillock, so the hillock was named after Veeranna. The people belonging to Veeranna's community

that is Yādavas, have constructed a temple in memory of Veeranna at Rmagiri and worship him.⁵⁹

Gymnastic Hall : To the left of the eastern entrance there is one underground room called as Gymnastic hall. It is said that the different Gymnasts of the capital to have the regular practice at this place during the time of Vijayanagara. Though there are no inscriptional evidences, the room with heap of said, parallel bars and rods horizontal and vertical clearly show that this place was regularly used by Gynmasts for practice.⁶⁰

Kalchetti : Towards the western edge of the hill is a small mound over which is a rectangular structure called as Kalchetti or Grain measure. It is said that it was constructed by Murarirao in 18th century A.D. to store the grains given by the subordinates. The style of the structure is Indo-Sarcenic, the lower section of the structure consists of plain wall with arched entrances on all the sides, over this is a rectangular slab supported by stone hooks at equal intervals, above this is a circular bowl like structure, in which the grains were supposed to be poured.⁶¹

Firangi Dinni : It is a tower situated towards the south-east side of the Fort, whose purpose was mainly to keep Firangi against protection. This is also of about 30 high but in ruined condition.

Khilla : The Khilla is a two storied building on the top of the hill. It acted both as watch tower and living place. The ground floor consists of five rooms and first floor has four rooms. Above the first floor we have a watch tower with five windows. We could easily see fifteen to twenty kms, distance surrounding Penugonda area from this hill fort tower. It has an underground passage which connects to Gagana-

mahal situated in the town. Presently the underground passage is blocked by State Archaeological Department.⁶²

Babayya Darga : Babayya *Darga* is situated at the outskirts of the town on the Anantapur, Bangalore highway. The *darga* was originally a Hindu temple. It is Hindu in architecture surrounded by a number of other remains of Hindu shrines and *mandapas*. The sculptural motifs on pillars, depicting the story of Siva and other Hindu gods, the Hindu architectural style of the pillars, terraces, walls, the steps and the Gajalakshmi panel on the upper door jamb all testify to the fact that the present *darga* was once a Siva temple. There was an inscription on Penugonda belonging to the reign of Venkata II which records the restoration of certain villages originally granted by Veeranarasimha to the *darga* of Muhammadan saint, Bābānātha , to which great veneration was done by the people for its astrological triumphs. The renewal of the grant was necessitated by the loss of the original documents when Penugonda seiged by the chiefs of the Immadi family. The inscription stated that *Verikatadevaraya*, during 1538 A.D. granted number of villages to *darga*. Even to this day the *darga* and its authorities enjoy the fruits of those nine villages.

According to a popular legend, Babayya was born of royal blood; turned out a Khalandar Fakir, went to Macca and had his spiritual teacher, one Natharaulia. The teacher gave him a small twig asking to plant it at each spot where journey; he must take his abode at the place where the twig budded. Babayya after several wonderings, arrived at Penugonda with a band of Fakirs, planted the twig in a place and continued his discourses. Very soon the twig added Babayya took up his abode in the famous temple of Harihara. Taking his presence in this temple to be a sacrilege, the emperor ordered the saint to quit the place. Babayya refused to obey the royal order despite persistent warnings: the emperor applied several tests of holiness to

judge whether the fakir or the temple priest was better qualified to occupy the temple [see *Babayya-gutta* for details]. Babayya came out successfully in the test. Thus he was permitted to remain in the temple which was converted into mosque, when he died a *darga* was erected and later it became a place of pilgrimage. His descendants have been looking after the tomb since then.

The *darga* is rectangular in shape. Architecturally it is Indo-sarcenic, here and there we find Vijayanagara pillared *mandapas*, doorways, ceilings inside the *darga* compound. The main building, *darga* where Babayya's tomb is erected, is a plain building surmounted by a sarcenic screen. The *darga* consists of four parts; *Jalkadarvaja*, *nagarkana*, *masjid* and tomb. It has four entrances to the north, south, east and west. It is covered by a very big compound wall.⁶³

The tomb of Babayya is placed at the right side. It is a simple plain structure with a room and open pillared hall in front. The twig that was brought by Babayya has grown into a very big tree, which is seen in this hall. Opposite to the hall, after climbing three or four steps enter into rooms where different tombs of the relatives of the Fakir are kept; the rooms are always sanctified by incense sticks. To the left of the tombs hall is a *masjid*, where the Quran is read regularly. Opposite to *masjid* is an open yard, where hundreds of tombs are kept. It is believed that the *darga* was constructed by Hyder and Tipu. As the reputation of Babayya reached different corners, grants were received from distant places and rulers like Rani Mangammal of Madhura.⁶⁴

Today, Penugonda lends itself an interesting sociological study in which the gradual growth of a centre of pilgrimage. From the earliest time of the establishment of a *darga* to a period when it gained

a covetable position as a holy place capable of attracting devotees from far and wide. The Urs, celebrates once a year during the month of January is visited and participated by thousands of Muslims and also Hindus coming from all over India and abroad. The Urs exhibits the unity and integrity of Hindus and Muslims. It appears that Penugonda *darga* had control over four chouks, fourteen choukandis and three hundred and sixty masjids. According to the muslims the *darga* is the highest religious centre. Then comes chouks, which consists of a few choukandis and laces there is a religious headman to look after. Similarly the choukandis have a few masjids and places under their control and also a religious headman. The last group is the different masjids and its head. It appears that in medieval period the economic and religious aspects of these were controlled and regularised by the manager of the *darga*. Even to this day, the management of the Penugonda *darga* invites and hosts, the different religious heads and Fakirs of chouk, choukandis and masjids.⁶⁵

Jamia Masjid : Jamia Masjid is situated in the heart of Penugonda in between Siva temples. An inscription on a slab built into the central niche of the Jamia masjid dated 1668 AD, records the construction of the mosque by Abdul Hassan during the period of Ali Adilshah II, in order to propagate Islam faith. It is a mosque the facade of which was lavishly decorated stucco work; in general appearance, this building resembles very much the Bukarai masjid and the Rangin masjid at Bijapur. The general design of Malik Zahans mosque at Bijapur and its style of architecture grew up in Deccan when Hindu masons had the upper hand, both in designing and decorating the buildings. The plan of the mosque comprises a prayer hall with five arches facing the east and a low platform in front. The floor of the prayer hall is 80 x 30' . The ceilings of the hall vaulted, and divided into three compartments, the middle one of which has dome rising above the

roof of the building. The walls of the two side compartments are shallow and concealed in the thickness of the roof. The opening of the arches are adorned with receding bands in the style of the doors of medieval Hindu temples. The arches are of uniform size each with a span of 10'.11" and height upto the apex of 15'.11". The spandrels of the arches and the portion of the wall below the chhajja are richly decorated with medallions and floral designs worked out in plaster. The parapet above the wall of the mosque is decorated with uniform windows.

The minarets of the mosque have a graceful form and they rise 6' above the base of their pedestals, the galleries which project the body of the shafts have crumbled very much, and the plaster of the minaret have also peeled off at several places, but the portion of the decorative work which are intact give a fair idea of its pristine beauty. In the forecourt of the mosque there is a huge garden. The main entrance of the mosque has pillared *mandapas* on either side, which reminds us of an idea that the mosque was originally a Hindu temple. The interior of the mosque has white plastered arches and a few pillars.

Sherkhan Mosque : Sherkhan mosque is situated outside the town towards east, behind the mandal office. An inscription in the hall of the mosque, in Arabic records the construction of the mosque by one Sherkhan during the reign of Tippu.⁶⁶

There is another epigraph, in Telugu, on a slab built into the floor of the Sherkhan mosque, belonging to the time of Sadasivarya of 1565 AD, recording a grant given by mahamandalesvara Ramarajayyadeva maharaja, son of Tirumalaraju and grandson of Araviti Rāmaraju to the god Somesvara who was the protector of great Penugonda fort and to the goddess of Kamakshi. In general

appearance the building very much resembles the Jamia Masjid. The only difference is that mosque was constructed about twenty feet above the ground level.⁶⁷

Divanikhana : Divänikhana is situated to the west of *Babayya darga*, it is said that the building was constructed by one Mastanshah, a local soldier under Tippu, but the pillars and *dvajasthambam* in front of the building, reminds one of a Hindu temple.

It is said that this building was used as a religious court among the muslim heads, it appears that this was the centre of all *dargas* in South India. The duty of the *darga* manager or the head is to maintain peace and solidarity among the various Islamic groups such as Jalai, Banuna, Pahatabatrafayi. If the head of the Divanikhana found that any of the religious followers had gone wrong in maintaining peace and discipline, they were punished and even expelled sometime.⁶⁸

Octagonal Watchtower : This building is elevated on the highest bastion in the fortification walls north west of the town. The watchtower is now incompletely preserved, though much of its original plasterwork has been restored, especially on the exterior. The core of the tower consists of a central octagon containing a spiral staircase that leads to an upper level. The entrance is on the south. An octagonal passageway surrounds the staircase. The inner walls of this passageway have part-circular recesses; the outer walls have alternating rectangular and part-circular projecting balconies. The rectangular balconies each have three arched openings on the front and one on both sides; the particular balconies have three openings only which project outwards. The upper chamber is octagonal with four openings and four part-circular recesses. Access steps are seen on the south.

Exterior : The octagonal walls of the passage are plain except for pilasters at the corners. These are adorned with fluted amalaka-like motifs with brackets at the top. These and other brackets support a beam, angled rafters and an overhanging eave that runs around the building. Of interest are the projecting balconies which are of two types. The balconies on rectangular plans are each carried on four projecting corbels. Arched openings are surmounted by plaster covered brickwork suggesting an eave like moulding, possibly also a parapet. The balconies have arched openings set within deep frames and are roofed with fluted half-domes; the half-finials at the summits have bulbous profiles divided into two parts.

The tower rises above the roof as a central circular shaft broken only by the arched windows. Above a projecting band at the top of the wall are rafter-like projections carrying the continuous eave moulding. The circular drum of the dome has a frieze of enlarged merlons. The dome itself is plain except for the double finial with upturned petal-like motifs.

Interior : The passageway has a flat roof. The only interest is seen in the arched openings from which the balconies project outwards. The upper chamber is roofed with a dome set back from a circular drum with stylised foliate motifs. Square holes between the openings and the arched recesses suggest wooden brackets.⁶⁹

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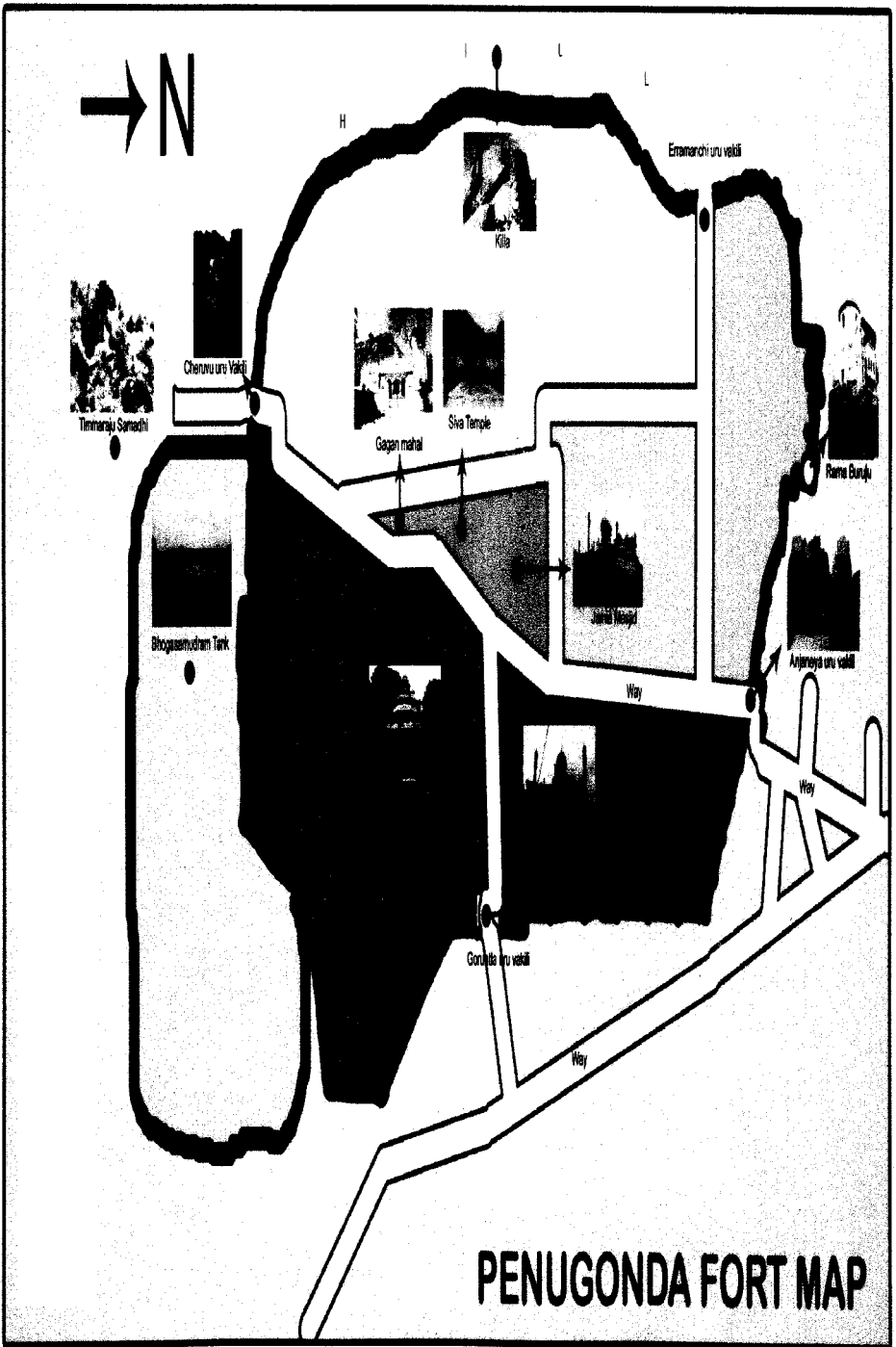
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63. Anantapur District Gazetteer, Madras Presidency, 1905, p. 194.
64. ARE, 1911, No. 17.
65. SII, Vol. IX-II, p. 577.
66. Ibid, p. 561.
67. Ibid, No. 561.
68. ADGMP, 1905, p. 82.
69. George Michell, Op. Cit., p. 34.

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PENUGONDA FORT MAP

PENUGONDA FORT



Plate 1 : View of Anjaneya Uru Vakili



Plate 2 : View of Cheruvu Uru Vakili



Plate 3 : View of Gagan Mahal

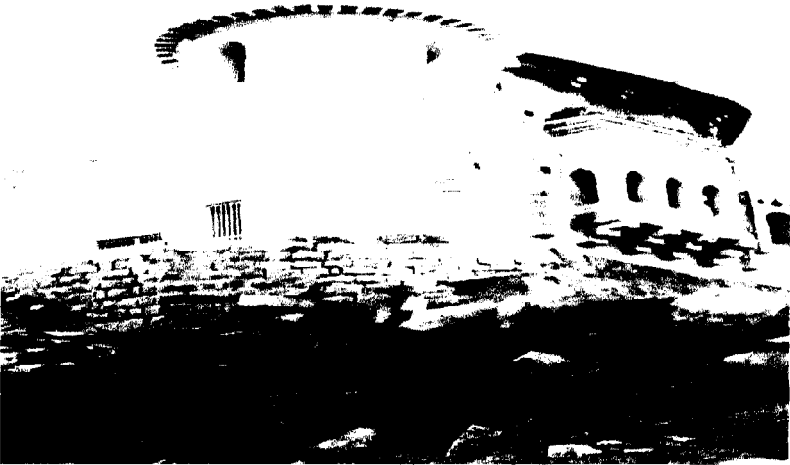


Plate 4 : View of Rama Buruju

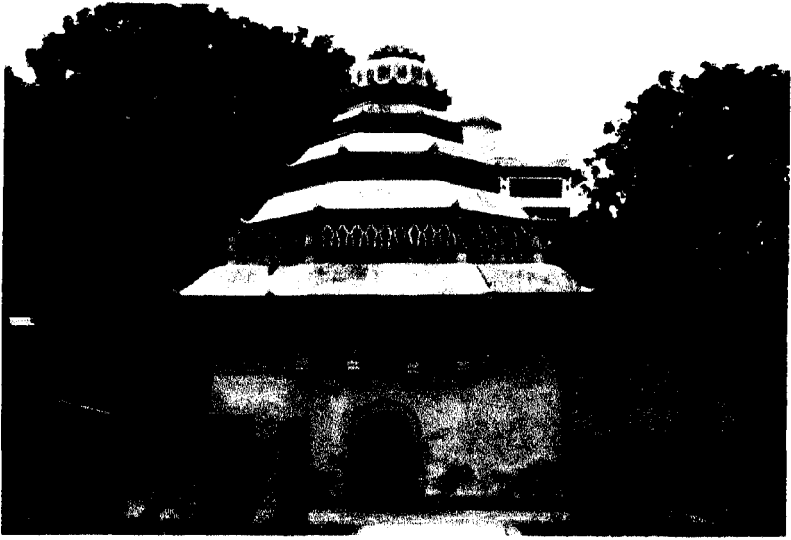


Plate 5 : View of Mint (Timmaraju Jail)

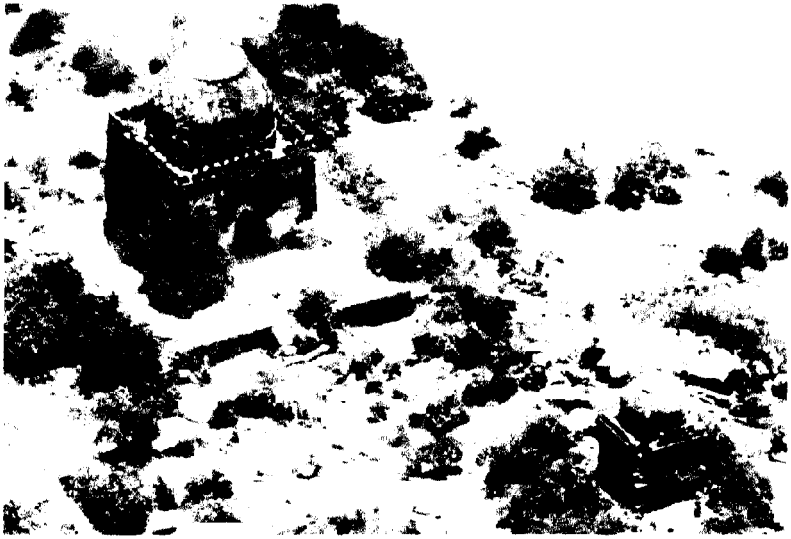


Plate 6 : View of Timmaraju Samadhi

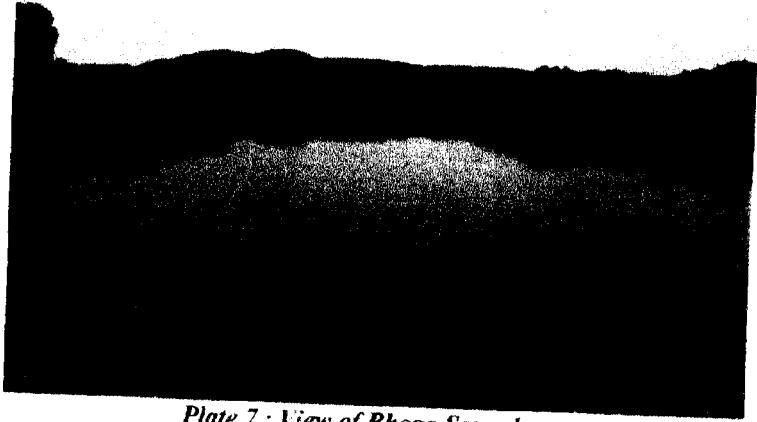


Plate 7 : View of Bhoga Samudram



Plate 8 : View of Killa

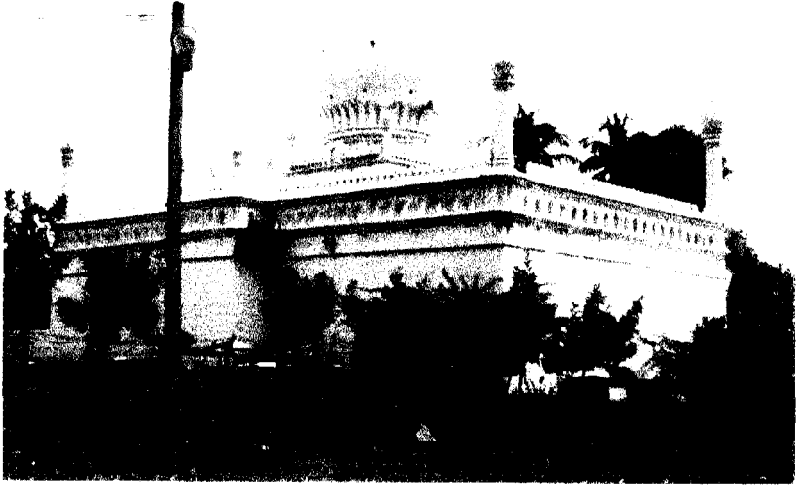


Plate 9 : View of Jamia Masjid

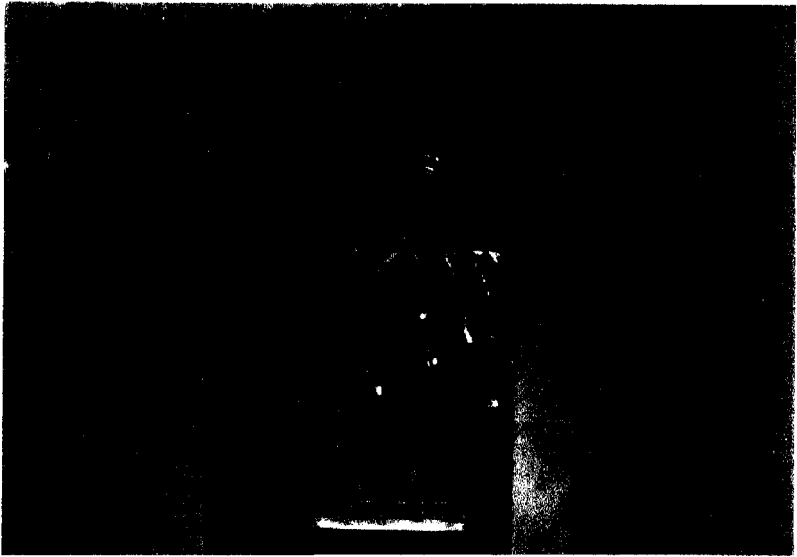


Plate 10 : View of Babayya Darga



Plate 11 : View of Sherkhon Masque

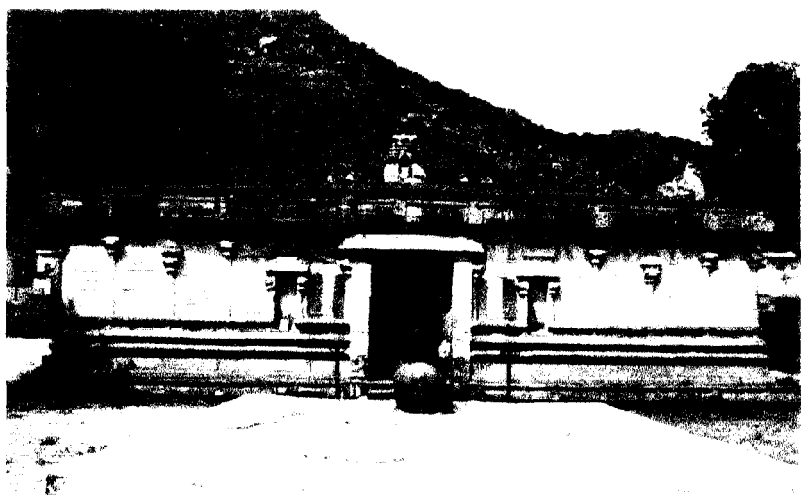


Plate 12 : View of Siva Temple

III.2. CHANDRAGIRI FORT

History of Chandragiri

Chandragiri is a place of historical importance in the Chittoor district of Rayalaseema. Chandragiri denoting the “Hill of the Moon” is traditionally associated with Chandra, the Moon god, who performed penance here for pleasing Lord Siva. The etymology of Chandragiri is derived from the plan of the fort, which resembles a crescent or half moon and hence was called (Moon hill) Chandragiri¹. It is situated 14kms south of the famous Hindu pilgrimage centre Tirupati (lat 13^o 35’ N, long 79^o.19’E). Like Hampi and Penugonda, Chandragiri had acquired the position of an administrative headquarters for the Vijayanagara Empire. It was included in the Vijayanagara administration from the date of its inception and served as headquarter of the province known as Chandragiri rajya. During the reign of Saluva Narasimha, Chandragiri was made his residence and it

was visited by number of religious and foreign personages. He enlarged the fort by adding high walls and fortification. The erection of kings palace (Raja mahal) in Chandragiri fort is attributed to Krishnadevaraya. The emperor Achyutaraya is credited with the construction of the Queen's palace (Rani mahal) in the Chandragiri fort². After Tallikota battle Venkata II shifted the capital to Penugonda and from there to Chandragiri in later 1585 A.D³. Now, Chandragiri is punctuated with lush green fields and hillocks, the vicinity of which is studded by well built fortification, two palaces, sculptured mandapas and several temples.

The history of Chandragiri begins from the time of the Cholas. According to a palm leaf manuscript, the founder of the village Chandragiri and the fort was built around 1000 AD by Immadi Narasimha Yadavaraya, a Karvetinagar ruler from Narayanavanam in Chittoor District. He was a subordinate of the Cholas. It further states that ten members of the family ruled over in succession the region of Chandragiri for nearly 314 years before the advent of Vijayanagar⁴. But this is not supported by contemporary epigraphical evidence so far, since, nowhere in their inscriptions does Chandragiri find any mention. It is evident from the above that the Yadavarayas represent the local dynasty, exercising authority over the Chandragiri region of Tondaimandalam in between 11th to 13th centuries A.D.

The establishment of the Vijayanagara empire in 1336 A.D. the area passed under their sway. The four dynasties, namely Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu ruled over the Vijayanagara empire from 1336 A.D. to the last Quarter of the 17th century A.D. Chandragiri rajya became one of the important provinces and the third capital during their rule. The boundary limits of this rajya roughly corresponded to the present boundaries of Chittoor district excluding the north western part i.e., Palamaner, Punganur,

Madanapalli and Vayalpadu taluks⁵. The Punganur and Palamaner taluks were included in the Mulavayi-rajya⁶ of Andhradesa and parts of North Arcot and Chingalput districts of Tamilnadu. As the other provinces of the empire the Chandragiri rajya was placed under the charge of a governor (who was usually a member of the royal family) till the time it became the capital for the empire during the Aravidu dynasty.

The earlier ruler of the Sangama dynasty represented in the inscriptions of this region was Kumara Kampana. His conquest of this region was beautifully corroborated in the literary work authored by his wife Gangadevi in his Madhuravijayam. He ruled over the region as a viceroy under his paternal uncle Harihara I and his own father Bukka I⁷. The inscription citing Harihara II and earliest reference to the town Chandragiri is found at Sivapuram, in Madanapalli Taluk, dated 1401 A.D⁸. The inscription refers to the reign of Kumara Harihararaya, ruling at Rayavaram and made gifts for worship and offerings to the god Mallikarjuna of Chandragiri. The governorship of Devaraya I over Chandragiri rajya is attested by three inscriptions ranging in dates from 1406 A.D. to 1417 A.D. The Tamballapalli inscription of Harihara II dated 1406 A.D. states that Devaraya I was Mahamandaleswara and records the gifts of cows, lands and others to the god Mallikarjuna of Chandragiri by his servant⁹. The mention of his residence in Chandragiri as also of governor in all the three inscriptions proved that he governed the Chandragiri rajya. During this period, it is not clearly known what role Chandragiri played.

Mallana Udaiyar was the governor of Chandragiri rajya during the reign of Devaraya I. He was originally ruling over Barakanuru. He further appears to have been shifted to the governership of Chandragiri rajya¹⁰. Mallanna, as a governor of Chandragiri rajya often visited the temple at Tirumala and constructed

Tirumamanimandapa near *bangaruvakili* and renovated *anandanilaya vimana* over the sanctum at his own cost and dedicated to lord Venkateswara in 1417 A.D¹¹. He also made arrangements for the provision of *naivedyam* and other food offerings to the god. Later, he became one of the ministers of Devaraya II.

During the time of Devaraya II, the local administration of Chandragiri was held by another minister, Devaraya Udaiyar. The consistent description of Devaraya Udaiyar in the records in association with Chandragiri rajya which finds mention here for the first time points clearly to the fact that Devaraya Udaiyar was ruling from Chandragiri as governor of this area¹². He was also described as Mahapradani of Pratapadevaraya in the inscriptions.

During the last years of Devaraya II, a branch of the Saluva family ruled over the Chandragiri rajya with its headquarters at Chandragiri¹³. Saluva Peri Mallyadeva maharaja, son of Errakampayadeva maharaja, mentioned in an inscription at Tirumala dated 1446 A.D. as a mahamandaleswara i.e., a provincial ruler and probably held charge of the Chandragiri rajya after Mallanna left it¹⁴. He might belong to the senior branch of the Saluvas, having descended from one of the five brothers of Saluva Narasimha. The inscription records the grant of the Ellambakkam village by him for the benefit of the temple treasury of Sri Venkateswara of Tirumala¹⁵. This grant by Saluva Mallyadeva makes it appear as though he was the governor of Chandragiri rajya, at that time, ruling it almost independently. In the inscription he did not mention the reigning sovereign of Vijayanagara. During the last days of Sangama Dynasty i.e., in the reign of Mallikarjuna and Virupaksha, Mallyadeva and his cousins, ruled over the Chandragiri *rajya* with headquarters at Chandragiri¹⁶. During the reign of Mallikarjuna, there is only one inscription at Tirupati referring to Chandragiri formed part of

Vaikunta-velanadu. This period is remarkable for the rise of a new family of subordinate chiefs (viz.) Saluvas who were later to come into prominence. It clearly prints to three chiefs appearing simultaneously, including Saluva Narasimha¹⁷.

Saluva Narasimha, the son of Saluva Gunda succeeded to his family estate of Chandragiri in 1456 A.D.¹⁸. Having originally been a semi-independent chief in south in the days of Mallikarjuna¹⁹ and having gradually extended his power and rule over the present North Arcot (Chittoor and Vellore) Chingalput and South Arcot districts, and became prime minister and de-facto ruler of the empire. From the narration of *Saluvabhyudayam* it appears that he had inherited an ancestral Kingdom whose capital was at Kalyanapuram but which was subsequently changed to Chandragiri, owing partly also to the fact that the old capital was burnt down²⁰. Consequently, it is observed that the earliest record of Saluva Narasimha dated 1456 A.D., was issued some time after the transfer of his capital to Chandragiri²¹. He transferred his main army to Chandragiri and conducted invasions against the Gajapatis. Thus Chandragiri became a centre of provincial political power during the governorship of Saluva Narasimha. In 1463 A.D. when the Gajapati armies were fighting in the south, the deference of Chandragiri rajya seems to have been left to Saluva Ramachandraraya, son of Mallayadeva maharaja. After the subjugation of Udayagiri rajya Pusapati Timmabhupati marched against Chandragiri and conquered it some time before 1464 A.D. probably defeating Saluva Ramachandraraya²². Thus, Chandragiri came under the Gajapatis' occupation, and was placed under the command of Kumara Kapileswara Mahapatra, son of Hamvira, and his kingdom extended from the Ganges to Kaveri.

During the reign of Virupaksha II, Saluva Narasimha taking advantage of the dissensions among the Gajapatis subsequent to the

death of Kapileswara Gasjapati in 1470 A.D. expelled the Oriyas from Kondavindu, Udayagiri and Chandragiri rajya. He emerged as the saviour of the Vijayanagara empire at a critical time when the empire was torn by internal factions and foreign invasions. He was a great benefactor of the temples of Tirumala and Tirupati. The *Saluvabhyudayam* written by Rajanathadindima states that he made Chandragiri his residence for the purpose of worshipping Vishnu at Tirupati (Tirumala)²³. While Narasimha was at Chandragiri as governor, Vyasatirtha, a famous Madhva saint, visited this place. Narasimha accorded a befitting reception to him and the acharya is said to have stayed at Chandragiri for several years as adviser²⁴. The Portuguese called Chandragiri Narasinga after the name of Saluva Narasimha²⁵. The inscriptions of Saluva Narasimha found in this region range are dated between 1446 A.D. and 1471 A.D. During the period of anarchy, he increased his power and usurped the Vijayanagara throne in 1485 A.D., and with his accession, the Saluva dynasty came to power.

During the period of Saluva Narasimha a general namely Timmaya Dannayakkar, son of Karanika Annadevagal 1493 A.D was at Chandragiri, and this seems to imply that he was the commander of the force stationed at Chandragiri²⁶. At the time of the death of Saluva Narasimha in 1492 A.D., his sons being very young he entrusted the administration of Chandragiri to his minister and commander Tuluva Narasanayaka of the Tuluva dynasty. During the reign of Immadi Narasimha he became the de-facto ruler and ruled in the name of the king up to his death. After the death of Tuluva Narasanayaka the regency of the kingdom passed into the hands of his eldest son Viranarasimha, and with his accession to the throne in 1505 A.D. the third dynasty namely the Tuluva dynasty came to

power. Viranarasimha was represented in the inscriptions of the region between 1505 to 1509 A.D.

Srikrishnadevaraya, 1509-1529 A.D. the brother and successor of Viranarasimha was the ablest and the most celebrated of the Rayas of Vijayanagara. The Chandragiri rajya reached the acme of its glory during the reign of this illustrious emperor. Nearly 100 inscriptions of the king found in various places of the region attest to his great rule and his seven visits to Tirumala Temple accompanied by his two queens²⁷. It is said that the fort at Chandragiri was improved in the reign of Krishnadevaraya. He is also credited with the construction of the king's palace (Rajamahala) in Chandragiri fort²⁸. It was during his period that Chandragiri became the headquarters of a rajya or bigger administrative unit under the name of Chandragiri rajya which extended to the Tamil region.

Achyutaraya was the governor of Chandragiri during the reign of Srikrishnadevaraya. According to Nuniz, was a brother of the late king, and in company with two brothers and a nephew, had been confined by Krishnadevaraya in the fortress of Chandragiri, in order to prevent dissensions in the kingdom²⁹. Later, Krishnadevaraya himself selected Achyutaraya, who had been confined at Chandragiri to succeed him. After the death of Srikrishnadevaraya in 1529 A.D. Achyuta left Chandragiri, proceeded to Tirumala and Srikalahasthi, and held two coronations there before finally going to Vijayanagara to succeed to the throne.

Achyutaraya as an emperor visited Chandragiri several times and stayed for some time in the fortress in the year 1532 AD³⁰. He is credited with the construction of the Queen's palace (Ranimahal) in the Chandragiri fort³¹. An inscription at Chandragiri dated 1533 A.D.

states that Ramabhattachar was the viceroy of the king at Chandragiri fort and described as an able general and skilful administrator³².

Sadasivaraya's rule marked the rise of Aliya Ramaraya and his dominance in the political affairs of Vijayanagara. It is even said that he sponsored the claim of Sadasivaraya for the throne and exercised virtually complete control over the empire sidelining the king. During his regency to suppress his rebels and establish his authority, Ramaraya sent an expedition to South in 1543 A.D. under the command of his cousin China Tirumala and Vitthala. In the process, they first attacked Chandragiri and captured it.³³ The capture of Chandragiri by China Tirumala is attested by the contemporary Telugu work *Balabhadragavatam*. It is a biography of this general and states that he captured Chandragiri and other forts³⁶. This information is also given in a communication of St. Francis Xavier dated 1544 A.D. As a result China Tirumala was appointed to rule over the subdued regions, jointly with his brother Vithala³⁵. An inscription from Chittoor district refers to China Timmayadeva maharaja as the governor of Chandragiri rajya from 1547 A.D.

After the great battle of Tallikota in 1565 A.D. begins a new phase in the History of Chandragiri. Tirumala, the brother of Ramaraya during the course of the reorganization of the empire, constituted the Tamil area into a rajya with Chandragiri as its capital and entrusted it to his youngest son Venkata³⁶. Following the death of Tirumala, Sriranga I became the emperor in 1572 A.D. During his reign, there was an invasion from Bijapur sultan Ali Adilsha, in 1576 A.D. who, accompanied by Hande Timmappanayaka, marched against Penugonda. At this, Sriranga, left the defence of his capital to his trusted general Savaram Chennappa and retired to Chandragiri. He repaired the fort of Chandragiri with all his treasures³⁷. It is evident from the above that Chandragiri was a provincial head quarters before

the rise of the Aravidu dynasty and assumed the position of second capital. Sriranga was followed in 1586 A.D. by his brother Venkatapati II. Venkatapatiraya's association with Chandragiri was more intimate since he functioned as provincial governor before becoming the king from that place. Because of this association with Chandragiri and on the basis of the statement of Freristha, Father Heras surmised that Venkatapatiraya shifted his capital from Penugonda to Chandragiri because of the Muslim attacks on the former³⁸. According to some scholars, the transfer of the capital from Penugonda to Chandragiri took place in the year 1585 A.D.³⁹ and some others suggested that Chandragiri became the capital under Venkata II in 1592 A.D.⁴⁰. He was a staunch devotee of Sri Venkateswara of Tirumala. A copper statue of Venkata with folded hands in a prayerful attitude is found in the *pratima mandapa* of the Tirumala temple. It is a fact that Chandragiri enjoyed great prosperity during the reign of Venkata II who brought Chandragiri to prominence and it enjoyed absolute peace. Tarigopula Mallanna, a resident of Chandragiri wrote *Chandrabhanucharitam* during his reign. Mallanna was the Rayasam officer while his elder brother Dattanamatya was the *pradhani* or secretary in the court of Venkata II⁴¹. A Jesuit mission flourished at Chandragiri during his reign enjoying much patronage. There was a good gymnasium here where the nobles of the realm practiced wrestling and other exercises⁴². The Sultan of Bijapur, Ibrahim Adhilshah II sent an embassy to Chandragiri in 1604 A.D. He even received an envoy from the Mughal emperor, Akbar⁴³.

Venkatapati may be regarded as the last great ruler of the Vijayanagara empire, who had his headquarters at Chandragiri. He died in 1614 A.D.. His death was the signal for the dismemberment of the empire. It was followed by a war of succession and the consequent rise of disintegrating forces. Sriranga III succeeded and ruled from

Chandrigiri. The site on which the Fort of St. George, Madras stands was granted to Francis day, the chief factor of the English there, by Srirangaraya in 1639 A.D., the king being then resident at Chandragiri⁴⁴. Ramadevaraya, according to Portuguese accounts, the king of Bisnaga was living at Chandragiri early in 1633 A.D. In the same year the Portuguese encouraged by the king still at Chandragiri, attempted to eject the Dutch from Pulicat⁴⁵.

The intervention of the Bijapur Sultan in South Indian affairs made the task of Sriranga III all the more difficult. In the middle of the 17th century the Qutub Shahis had come to an agreement with the Mughals in the north and were forced to turn South by about 1636 A.D. The Qutub Shahis conquered the Telugu country, defeated the Vijayanagara raya of Chandragiri. In 1645 AD the Qutub Shahis invasion brought havoc to Tirumala, Tirupati and Chandragiri rajya. With this the decline of the Aravidu dynasty started, and in a short time the entire country came under the complete rule of the Qutub shahis of Golkonda. In the end, the Bijapur sultans forced Srirangaraya to agree with a treaty with the Adil shahis by which Vellore was kept by the viceroys and Chandragiri with the revenues of certain districts were left to the vanquished. After him the empire dwindled in both size and importance. In 1758 A.D, it was ruled by Nawab Abdul Wahab Khan, brother of the Nawab of Carnatic from Arcot. In 1782 A.D. Hyder Ali took it and it remained so under them till 1799 A.D. ⁴⁶.

Based on the above discussion, it may be summed up that Chandragiri rajya and its fort assumed great importance as an administrative headquarters since the beginning of the empire. Chandragiri fort played an important role in Vijayanagara kingdom and was stronghold from the first dynasty of Vijayanagara. Later after the battle of Rakshasa Tangadi in 1565 A.D. forced the Vijayanagara

rulers to shift their headquarters from Hampi to Penugonda in Anantapur district and then from Penugonda to Chandragiri in Chittoor district. Later, during the Aravidu rule, it was made their permanent royal residence they extended the fortified area built even a double storied palace and various temples. The fort witnessed many changes in polity, warfare and building technology over a period of time. Chandragiri attained prominence during the rule of the Aravidu dynasty, though this was a period when the political fortunes of the Vijayanagara were at its nadir. Chandragiri appears to be a frequent rendezvous for the Vijayanagara emperors because of its proximity to the great temples of Lord Venkateswara of Tirumala, Srikalahastiswara of Srikalahasti and of a fort. Many Telugu kavyas from the celebrated poets of Vijayanagara were believed to have been composed here. The great Telugu poet Tenali Ramakrishna is claimed to be a native of this village and a mandapa in his name still exists though in ruins.

A small fiefdom in 14th Century A.D. gradually rose in power and enabled local potentials to grow to the level of empires. It developed into a rajya had served as capital for the whole of South India from the river Krishna to Kanyakumari. It also attains significance because of the grand of Fort St. George, Madras by Srirangaraya. It also claims that the first missionary conversion in the whole of India took place at Chandragiri. Even today the fort of Chandragiri is a veritable wonder for Scientists, Geologists, and Historians. The two water pits on the top of the hillock locally known as *Vuppuchatti* and *Pappuchatti* are, indeed, a difficult nut to crack.

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

Chandragiri, "The mountain of Moon" is the name of a high hill, the vicinity of which is studded with great fortifications, Mahals

[Raja and Rani Mahal] innumerable complexes, old tanks, carved mandapas amidst fertile and charming green fields. The fortification is cyclopean masonry with rectangular bastions and steep moat was built during the time of Immadi Narasinga Yadavaraya, ruling local from Narayanavanam. Later the Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu kings of Vijayanagara empires extended the fortified area and built palaces and temples and acquired the position of administrative headquarters.

The fort of Chandragiri is built upon a high rounded mass of granite, rising about 600 ft. above the valley. A large space upon the southern side of the hill is delimited by strong walls, surrounded by a ditch. The fort of Chandragiri roughly covers an area of about one mile in circumference and extends over an area of about 25.50 acres; and consists of two parts [viz] lower and upper forts. The former, i.e. lower fort encircles the entire plain terrain below i.e., at the foot of the hill, on three sides i.e., east, south and west, while on the north rises the high hill. The fort resembles a crescent or semi-circle and hence appears to have derived its name Chandragiri [Moon hill]. A general outlook, reveals that the fort of Chandragiri appears to bear close similarity to the other two Vijayanagara forts, Penugonda and Hampi, in matters of construction technique, i.e., cyclopean masonry the use of material, i.e., irregular and crude blocks of heavy granite the plan of the gateways with right angle inside entrances and in the shape of, rectangular reveal clearly the frabeati method employed. The lower fort comprises - two rampart walls, four gateways - two on each side i.e., east and west, and a number of bastions.⁴⁷ The location of the fort is itself a matter of geopolitical importance for it is situated away from the prosperous Vijayanagara empire. The situational context of the fort on the peripheries of the empire guaranteed the continuance of the Vijayanagara polity even after the down fall of the empire. This political development helped in the continuance of the Vijayanagara

traditions and more particularly architectural traditions that are seen in the fort premises. Another feature of the location is the easy availability of good quality stones used for construction and natural outcrop of the hill that prevents easy attacks. The natural contours of the hill buffered as a strategic spot for immediate warnings against any sudden attacks since they provide a very good view of the area for miles and it is on the top of the strategic and commanding spot that the upper fort is constructed. Another reason for the sustenance of the fort is the abundance of good water supply. In matters of the plan of the fort, water to a large extent dictates the spatial location of the two main places.

Fort Wall and Lower Fort : The fort of Chandragiri is entered through an outer gateway built in the outer rampart wall, on the east. The fort is divided into two parts, one is the lower fort with the residential quarters and the palaces and beyond it is upper fort.

The fort wall starts from the projecting eastern wing of the hill, proceeds in a zig-zag manner and joins the other end. The walls are constructed in the cyclopean fashion with large blocks a dressed stone rivetted into each other.. The stone used here might have been obtained from the quarry now popularly known as *Peruru-banda* at Peruru, two miles to the south-east of Chandragiri. There are two entrances which lead into the interior, one from the east and the other from the west. The interior is divided into three enclosures by means of two more fortification walls each of which starts from the hill and joins the southern wing of the fort wall. These two walls are perced by gateways one in each case. The fort wall is surrounded on the outer side by a moat which was originally fed by a natural spring. The Tirupati - Chittoor road runs parallel to the southern wing of the fort wall.⁴⁸

The walls are arranged in a very thick fashion and are also to extend crude as seen in the accompanying photograph [Plate. 15]. The photograph reveals that the walls are mainly irregular by shaped stones using the analogy of the forts during the Tuglak period as given by K.V. Soundararajan. This can be corroborated by the fact that there is a clear absence of inscriptions in the fort. This part of the wall was rebuilt and renovated by the later Vijayanagara occupants of the fort i.e. 4th dynasty and probably during the time of Veñkata II.⁴⁹

Gateways : A gateway of a fort offers a majestic entry and the term for the gateway is called the *dtuara*, meaning a door. There are two entrances which lead into the interior of the fort, are in the east and the other in the west. Even the architectural texts use the same word for the gateways as it marked the boundary between the fort and the outside.

Outer Gateway : As pointed out already the outer entrance of the 1st gateway on the east, faces north. On the left side is a huge rectangular watch tower, while on the right is the shrine of Hanuman. Here the entrance gap measures 5 mts. wide. This main entrance resembles the entrance of a temple gopura, with a covered ceiling above in the interior. The entrance gap is about, 3 mts. wide, while it runs to a considerable distance of 4 mts. length in the interior. Inside are two low platforms on either side, each containing two rows of pillars of five in each. This gateway appears to be simpler than the inner or second one, with only one outer entrance and one court-yard and one right angled turn inside. The 1st bastion comes after about 30 mts. distance. But it is very much ruined. Beyond it, within a distance of about 50.45 mts. comes the 2nd which has a width of about 11.34 mts. at the base with a forward projection of 9.70 mts. This wall also has no parapet on the top and hence no loopholes or crenellations; [Plate. 13].

2ND Gateway : Unlike the 1st gateway in the outer wall, this faces east. On either side, it has two rectangular watch towers. On plan this appears to be some-what complex in design than the outer. It is entered on the east. On the left side i.e. south the wall rises to a height of 5:40 mts. while on the north it is much higher. Proceeding through it, one faces the wall on the north, compelling him to take a right-ward turn. On the right side of the exterior i.e. south, are the carved Hindu figures of Hanuman, a boar, and sword, the royal insignia of the Vijayanagara dynasty, thus, indicating the construction of the fort by the Vijayanagara rulers.

Proceeding through this gateway one has to walk for about half a mile further towards west, to reach the 3rd gate, or the inner wall of the west gate. The gateways of this and the 4th i.e. outer-most wall, resemble in plan, with simpler turns and curves, the outer gateway on the east. In between the third gateway on the west, and the 2nd gateway on the east lies the citadel portion, in the northern wing i.e. near the foot of the hill. In it are the two famous palaces, called Raja Mahal and Rani Mahal, a big tank, and a number of halls and water springs, which have come to light during recent archaeological excavations. Also noticed are traces of water cisterns, running for long distances, made of earth or clay and plastered with mortar. Traces of other palace structures, built of brick and lime mortar, they have also been unearthed, probably belonging to the period of its Vijayanagara occupants in the 15th and 16th Centuries.⁵⁰

The gateways at Chandragiri may on grounds of style be dated to a very early period of Vijayanagara since they are in the form of beams without any decorative device. The number of gateways inside the different enclosures also reveal their increased attention to security. In many of the forts of medieval south India particularly at Golkonda and Warangal, we find in addition to secure gateways, there

are also exists other devices, particularly in the form of special structures to deflect weapons or to prevent escapers. Such structures are not found in large number at Chandragiri.

The Upper Fort : It is reached by means of a ramped pathway up the hill towards west, from the northern end of the second wall. On the left i.e., south long this path, is a low wall built of crude boulders of rock. On the right i.e., north runs the outer rampart, obviously of the muslim period, with steep scrap on the outside and a deep valley below.⁵¹

There is a pathway commencing from the north-east corner of the second enclosure which leads to the fort on the hill. The fort wall on the hill are also constructed in the cyclopean style with large blocks of stone. The first entrance is guarded by a *mandapa* of the Vijayanagara period with face to the north.⁵²

Like the gateways in the lower fort, it is also slightly curved with right angled turn inside. Out side are two semi circular watch towers. Proceeding through it, and turning towards right, after a short distance, comes the 2nd gate, parallel to the outer one in the west. This also like the 1st is curved, protected by high watch towers of semi circular type. Inside is a flight of steps to climb up and reach the hill area inside. On the top, in the bastions are turrets with arch shaped parapets, providing large accomdation to the soldiers. There are also large and wide loop holes in the arched parapets..⁵³

Inside of this gate way there are a number of water clefts formed in the rock it self, known by several names as *Uppusetti* and *Pappusetti-koneru*, *Akkachellendra-koneru* etc. This topmost part of the hill is protected by the fortification with wall running all around. On the summit of the hill there are two ruined temples dedicated to

Koppunatha Perumal and Somanatha. The summit commands a panoramic view of the lower fort and the country side. The monuments that litter the land-scape still breathe something of that vanished splendour of Vijayanagar.⁵⁴

The eastern wall on this side is devoid of any parapet and hence no loop holes on crenellations. It has a wide wall walk or battlement on the top, in the interior. Behind it is the huge earthen wall with stone veneering on the exterior. Proceeding towards left of the entrance i.e., south, the wall runs for considerably longer distance than on the north. On this side the wall rises to a considerable height wide wall walk on the top, in the interior. The upper fort can be seen from the lower structures and it merges very well with the surrounding stones. There are seven well proportioned ramparts (they sent their schemes best team) of the upper fort which clearly reveals the defensive mechanisms of the fort.⁵⁵ The use of the uninvolved earthenware wall with stone beading is a cost effective and local method of defence prevalent in the contemporary period. In this matter irregular shape stones are some of it and fit into the mud wall and provide foundation upon which earthenware wall is bared here. There is also a facility to walk on the top giving a strategic advantage to the person who could suddenly shift to any direction and launch a counter attack.

At the top of the hill is a square shaped structure on which is a hangman's noose. This was, evidently, to publicly demonstrate the hanging of a person that could be visible over a large area and hence a clever use of landscape for the visual display of political power was wielded into this architectural design. Moreover, the decorations on the fort is seen in the bastions that are visible from afar i.e., the bastions command the landscape for a considerable distance. This imaginative use of architecture (to impress) amplified its visual appeal.

Thus the location was then confirming to the natural contours of the hill which was used to the maximum in the plan of the fort.

Bastions : There are five bastions on this side, of which four are of semi circular type, unlike those noticed on the northern side. There are also clear traces of lime pointing and a mortar, which points evidence to its construction and renovation at a later date.⁵⁶ On this side there is a flanking watch tower, of rectangular type, resembling the one at Hampi near the Bhima's gate. Walking along with the wall walk or battlement, after a short distance comes the first bastion, which is devoid of any parapet wall. Along the outer edge are noticed four protruding corbels on the front face in the centre, with openings in between, in the floor. Walking further beyond, comes the second bastion, semi circular plan, which is better preserved. The 4th bastion, which is reached after some distance further, presents a peculiar look. It like the others, is semi circular in shape. But over it are found turrets, resembling a temple gopura or sikhara on three sides, i.e., east, north and south, resting on heavy protruding corbels, of temple design.

These turrets of sikhara type probably serve as *Attalakas* or *Indrakota* mentioned by Kautilya, viewed from outside it consists of a small *adhistana*, a bhatti or wall portion with two pilasters, a *kapota* or cornice above and surmounted by sloppy surface on the top. The wall portion on the exterior, has three loopholes, one each of the compartment. On the interior, there is a wide entrance gap providing accommodation for soldiers to sit.⁵⁷

The last bastion i.e., 5th is of octagonal design built of rough stone blocks. Along the outer edge, on the top, are two lines of brick work, obviously showing a phase of later construction. Proceeding along the rampart on the south, are noticed a number of bastions of

semi circular shape. Near the 6th bastion, Which merges into the 2nd gateway and continuous beyond further towards north. The 7th bastion also shows traces of turrets, which are completely fallen. The 8th bastion is of square or rectangular type, and small in size. After this continue the bastion further upto 11th. There are four more bastions of semi circular type noticed on this side beyond which the wall discontinues. In the interior of this wall are a flight of steps leading to the wall walk or battlements providing ascent up the hill.

Bastions are the more dynamic parts of the fort in terms of architecture since we see a wide variation in different styles. The variation can be explained on the basis that since military architecture was constantly responding to the demands of warfare changes were therefore inheritable. This generalization is true not only of all parts of the world as Jeremy Black has shown or only in Mughal India as Jos Gommans has shown, but also in the south as the recent works like JF Richards work on Golkonda and Anila Varghese's work on the Vijayanagara style show. Thus, we see that the earlier bastions resemble the prototypes at Hampi including the watch towers that were built on models drawing much from simple temple designs like the use of *adhistana* or plinth and these are decorated with figurines of god.

Hydraulic System in the Fort [Water Supply] : The Chandragiri fort is served by a number of water clefts formed in the rock itself known by several names as *uppusetti*, *pappusetti* and *akkachellendra koneru* etc. For water supply, they used advanced technology through pipes, construction of channels and wells. Archaeological excavations reveals a complex system of water supply provided in the Chandragiri fort. It is a fact that many forts of medieval period had a problem of trying keeping the invaders at bay where as the inhabitants could wait for reinforcements and the only limited factor was food and water supply.

This was a concern of the forts of medieval India and elaborate arrangements for water are made in the forts more famously at Golkonda. Davison Jenkins portrayal of the construction of the hydraulic system of Hampi illustrates the main devices. There was a channel that got water from the natural springs diverted through pipes and then conveying it to the next level.

Moat : There is a moat on the outside of the fort which was originally fed by a natural spring.⁵⁸ Which is not in existence now. The prevalence of the moat is a feature of medieval South India architecture and is also seen in all Indian forts and wherever possible the moats were fed by waters. In Chandragiri too the same methods are followed when we see that the width of a moat is considerable like the fort at Beilary. At present it is difficult to trace it, to know its true nature as the ground is full of agricultural fields.

Palaces : In Chandragiri, we find two palaces, which constituted the most important and attractive monuments, Rajamahal and Rani mahal. There are also a large number of temples. The Raja mahal is bigger one with imposed well balanced a cades, triple-storeyed, the topmost with pleasing *gopuras* of the southern order a bigger are surmounting a *Darbar hall* [Plate. 17 and 18]. The residence of the loyal Ladies with elaborate and beautiful stucco decorations. The Rani mahal is the model style and salient features of these two buildings indicate that they are not earlier than 17th century, allowing sufficient margin for slight alternations and additions at a subsequent period. These two palaces are close together at the eastern gate of the inner fort and adjoining at the foot of a hill.⁵⁹

THE RAJA MAHAL

The Raja mahal is an oblong building running from east to west with the front façade facing south. It has a frontage of about 160 feet [48.5 meters] and as 50 feet [16 meters] in breadth, the total height of the building being 95 feet [28.8 meters].⁶⁰ It is three storeyed, has a terraced roof and ornamental parapet, a great brick tower in the centre and a pair of side turrets of a smaller dimension facing south. At the four corners there are small towers surmounting small rooms with balconies.

Due to the sloping terrain of the ground the builder was constrained to form a raised platform of basement in stone which is now roughly 3 meters high. On this plinth stands the palace. This has no entrance on the south though actually it forms the front of the building. It is provided with a pair of stone entrances on the north. The ground floor and the first floor were built of coarse rubble, interspersed with brick wall, while the second floor is entirely built of brick. One peculiar feature of this construction is the supporting brackets of the balconies, the supporting rafters holding the eaves of the cornices of the roof. Even the towers above are all of cut stone with external decoration in stucco.⁶¹ What the Raja mahal might lack in its conformity to known palace models based upon the silpa-sastras, it more than makes up for in its strict axiality. The eastern half of the Raja mahal is mirrored in the western half. There are minor variations, but they are so minor as to be dismissed from consideration.⁶²

Ground Floor : The ground floor is the rectangular building consists of 13 bays by 3 bays longer in the east-west direction. At the first [ground] level a row of thirteen bays faces north. The two bays at either end are raised up [with access steps] and have balconies with

seating areas projecting outwards. In the middle at the rear [south] is an enlarged chamber entered by a door-way on the north. Here there are raised floor areas on three sides. Piers on the raised floor area divide the surrounding space into smaller bays [three on each side, two at the corners]. Windows are positioned on the south; these project outwards in the central three bays. Flanking this central chamber [on both the east and west] are enclosed triple-bayed chambers entered on the north. Windows in the middle of the south side project outwards as part-circular balconies with seating areas.⁶³

On the east and on the west bay a substantial block consisting of a square room at the south, a small octagonal room to the north and a staircase leading up from the main verandah. The rooms on the upper floors generally follow the same arrangement.⁶⁴

The ground floor consists of a vaulted corridor, and massive pillars and arches which supports the floor above. There is a hall in the centre which measures 10.7 x 9.00 metres with an entrance on the north and a window on the south. The length of the corridor is 31.39 metres and its width is roughly 3.10 metres. It has two rooms on either side and two antechambers at extreme end along with the staircase galleries in front of the antechambers. The side chamber measure 10.10x6.10 metres. A flight of steps leads to the first floor above, the plan of which is similar to that of the ground floor. The arched corridor in front is partly closed and in the centre there is a projecting balcony supported by brackets. The arched openings at either end have similar balconies, while those that flank the central portion on either side are panelled and the central hall is provided with an open gallery. A panelled frieze and the stucco decorations of the ceiling are striking and noteworthy.

Second Floor : The plan of the second floor more or less resembles the first except that the central portion is covered by the open gallery below.⁶⁵ The essential arrangement of the ground level with a row of open bays on the north, central enlarged chamber in the middle flanking triple-bayed and end chambers for staircases. Balconies project from the bays at the ends of the building, also from the penultimate bays on the north side. Balconies are extended at the south-east and south-west chambers. An additional balcony projects outwards from the central north bays. A walkway runs along the south side of the building linking the central enlarged chamber to the other bays which are open on the south. Part-octagonal projections are located in the middle of the walkways.⁶⁶

Third Floor : At the third upper level part of the plan becomes open; on the two north corners a single bay is preserved, each with a projecting balcony. The central chamber consists only of a corridor on three sides [overlooking the floor beneath]; the south side projects outwards. Modern windows are inserted between the piers. This surrounding corridor also connects with a walkway that runs along the south side of the building [seats are built into the walkway]. Arched openings [no balconies] light the two south corner chambers.

Roof : The fourth [roof] level, which is mostly open, has a central domed chamber flanked on the two south corners by miniature towers. Triple-bayed chambers are positioned at the east and west ends; the steps here ascended to the roof tops where there are additional towered forms.⁶⁷ The flat roof contains smaller towers at the corners along with a larger tower over the domed hall at the centre. As has been mentioned earlier, at either end of the southern face of the hall there is a brick cell with a tower. The main tower rises in five receding tiers surmounted by a domical *sikhara* with a *stupi*. The *kalasa* which once adorned this tower has disappeared.⁶⁸

Exterior : As elsewhere, the front [north] elevation is much restored; almost no original plasterwork is visible. Only part of the plain stone basement of the front elevation survives. Steps ascend to the floor level where there are thirteen arched openings on two levels. The first [ground] level has eleven identical arched openings in two planes set within rectangular frames. These arches spring from piers with projections in the middle of each side. Intermediate blocks suggest ornamental brackets [now vanished]. Balcony seating projects from the peripheral openings. Each of these balconies is raised on four corbelled brackets with curved undersides and pendant lotus buds. Beyond the eleven arches the wall projects forwards slightly. Smaller arched openings are seen here with balcony seating. This is projected outwards on a series of mouldings which are supported on a central pendant bracket. The walls of the first storey are terminated by corbelled brackets [mostly broken]; only traces of the eave survive.⁶⁹

The second level repeats the eleven-arched scheme with additional arched openings in the end bays [slightly projecting]. Balcony seating at the central opening and at the end two bays are each carried on five corbelled brackets [incomplete]. Several of the arched openings are filled in with screens pierced with rectangular openings [restored]. Brackets support an eave over the central nine bays only [partly collapsed]; there is a plain parapet wall above. Over the end two bays the balconies are projected on corbels [broken].

The third level is partly set back. At either end there are two arched openings with balcony seating; note the screens with rectangular openings at the west end with eave-like details above. Over these bays are the angled eave on rafters and part of a parapet wall [pierced with rectangular openings]. The end bays are roofed with square towers. These, each, have three temple-like elements at the base, an angled eave moulding with a central projection, and a

capping square-to-domed roof form. Set back from the chambers at both ends of the building are three additional arched openings sheltered by an eave on corbelled brackets. Here, original plaster details are preserved, such as petalled motifs and medallions on stone brackets with reliefs of animals and birds in between. Above is a parapet wall with rectangular openings.

The central part of the elevation at the third level replaces the three arched openings of the lower levels by five smaller arched openings; these project forwards from the flanking walls around which the eave runs continuously no parapet wall here. The walls of the central square tower which rises above each have an arched opening in the middle. This is flanked by rectangular recesses and over-hung by an angled eave [broken by the arched opening]. The ornamental parapet above consists of five tower-like elements [central element enlarged]. Another set of walls with five rectangular openings is overhung by a second eave. The parapet above this second eave consists of a pierced design of interlocking merlons on squares; miniature circular finials are seen at the ends and at intermediate points. Another set of smaller tower-like elements is set against a background of pierced merlon-like designs. On the east side of the tower there are traces of plaster ornamentation with stylised foliage and wavy brackets.

Four eave mouldings in an ascending and diminishing sequence create the steeply pyramidal profile of the tower. With projections in the middle of each side, these mouldings have upturned petal-like motifs at the corners. The capping roof form is square-to-domed with projections on each side. The finial is star-shaped with pointed petals. The rear [south] elevation is more elaborate than on the front [north]. As in the other elevations most of the plasterwork has been restored; even so, some original details may be observed. The

walls are raised on a plain basement with a single projecting course. Along their length the walls have double projections at the five central bays; the single bay at either end also projects outwards. Above the first [ground] level, the central five bays have small arched openings projecting outwards on double corbelled brackets, both large and small [curved undersides]. Traces of plaster sculptures [ganas?] suggest ornate brackets beneath the corbels which once supported the capping eave of this level [vanished]. A similar scheme appears on the second and third levels. Note the neoclassical cornices and rectangular openings at the second level. Lion-like beasts adorn the corbelled brackets of the third level. Friezes of foliate motifs and rolled brackets with scrollwork carry the projecting angled brackets and rafters of the capping eave. Plaster animals and geese are seen in between the brackets. Rising over the side bays of this projecting part of the elevation are two small square towers. These have walls with central openings overhung by miniature eaves. The pyramidal towers have three sets of ascending and diminishing eave mouldings. The capping roof forms are square-to-domed with ribs. Set back from the facade is the pyramidal central tower that dominates the roof line.

The end bays project outwards slightly. The elevations here are repeated on the end walls. At the first [ground] level the arched openings have been filled up; four corbelled brackets [upturned mouldings, pendant buds] suggest vanished balconies. At the second level the brackets support a balcony with three rectangular openings beneath and six smaller openings above. An idea of the original parapet scheme might be had from the plaster fragments preserved on the balcony on the west face where there are crisscross designs miniature finials and even figures. The third level has lost its balconies but these probably would have resembled those on the end walls. The supporting brackets of the balcony projecting from the west

wall at this level preserve traces of original petalled designs on their curved undersides. The small towers over the eave and angled rafters imitate the similarly positioned towers above the end bays of the front [north] facade.⁷⁰

Interior : The interior of the first [ground] level is characterised by the uniform shape of the piers, with projections in the middle of each side, from which spring arches with angled profiles. Walls and doorways are invariably plain; windows are raised on seating areas [curved brackets in plaster are preserved beneath one of the balconies]. In the enlarged central chamber empty brackets [once supporting sculptures?] protrude from the pilasters between the arched openings. The roof here is a flat dome with two metal hooks in the middle.

The ceilings of the other bays are almost flat domes; here are preserved portions of original plaster ornamentation. Ceilings are divided into nine panels by miniature beam-like mouldings decorated with bracket designs and pendant lotuses. At the sides are friezes of foliage and petal-like brackets and arched vaults, roof and staircases at either end. The interior of the second level repeats the basic scheme of that beneath; the fragments of ceiling decoration seen here include beams with curved undersides, pot-like, motifs and miniature crouching lion-like beasts. The wall details of the central chamber are much altered; note the addition of neoclassical cornices above the colonnade, for instance. The ceiling over [actually at the third level] is a flattish domed vault on an octagonal plan. Flat bands divide the vault into nine panels; an enlarged lotus medallion is seen in the middle. The third level interior [reduced in height] has unadorned walls, piers and supporting arches. Pilasters adjoin several of the piers in one of the inner chambers [south side]. The ceilings preserve traces of nine-panelled designs. At the fourth [roof] level the central chamber has arched doorways on four sides; similarly arched recesses create

squinces in the corners. The octagonal drum is divided into two tiers of recesses [much restored]; light is admitted on four sides. Above rises the unadorned octagonal dome.⁷¹

The construction of Raja mahal is peculiar and remarkable, and the fact that the building is still standing today is due to the excellent quality and wonderful tenacity of mortar employed in its construction, which is particularly noticeable in the striking series of failed arches and coffered ceilings with the building. The plaster work, too is excellent and its good quality has been means of keeping the building water-tight and preventing the growth of vegetation in the joints of the masonry, thus saving it from decay. Another curious feature is the absence of timber in the construction. The brackets supporting the balconies and the little rafters carrying the projecting eaves and cornices of roof, and the thick towers above, are all made of cut stone bedded in mortar and decorated in stucco, much of this had some stucco ornament and some still exists but it is clear that this work and even the plain plastering of the outer surface of the walls were completed, this being particularly noticeable on the northern facade.⁷²

THE RANI MAHAL

This building is oblong on plan with a frontage of 92 feet and is only 16 feet in breadth and faces the east. It consists of ground floor, 1st floor and terraced roof: with, a tower at a each end over the stairs and a large one over the central hall below. The ground floor is level with the ground and has no raised platform as in the case of the king's palace. In the centre of the eastern facade is the main entrance. On either side of the main entrance there are three open compartments with arches above.⁷³

The Rani mahal consists of two levels on what would be considered the ground floor plan. The eastern spaces, i.e., those bracketed by the openings and the northern pavilion as well as portions of the western pavilion are on one level, on what appears to be a podium. The remainder of the ground floor is approximately two metres lower. This would seem to imply that the Rani mahal had been conceived of as a monumental gate in which the entrance to the rest of the interior wended its way through this lowered portion as a defensive measure.

The second story is divided into a series of rooms, flowing one into the other and three staircases leading to this level certainly, the upper level would lend itself to the quarters for the Rama with adequate, multiple means of ingress and egress. But, what of the lower level? It is suggested that either the deep eastern spaces of the ground floor i.e., the southern or the northern with their wide arched openings could well be utilized for the Rayas darsana. Finally due to the electric design of the Rani mahal, it is difficult to view this structure as adhering to any of the standard design forms. The whole does fall within the danadaka plan.⁷⁴ This two-storeyed building faces eastwards onto a court which is defined by a stone basement moulding; similar basements, steps with balustrades, and floors at different levels indicate a complex of courts and structures on the other three sides [recently excavated]. The building itself has been much restored; some original plaster ornamentation is preserved on the front [east] façade.⁷⁵

It has also a central chamber, adjoining long halls and ante-chambers at either end. On the ground floor, there is no corridor. The central chamber, projecting well beyond the back wall, measures 7.0 x 4.72 metres. The side halls vary in dimensions but roughly measures 6.1 x 2.74 metres. The span of the arches is 2.29 metres while the

corner rooms are 2.74 metres square. In the first floor the proportion of this corner chamber considerably increases. On the terrace there are three pyramidal towers, one in the centre and one on either side. The central tower rises to 5.8 metres while the smaller ones are only 3.42 meters. This building also exhibits stucco decoration of superb quality.⁷⁶

Elevation : The front [east] facade consists of an open colonnade on two levels with towers at either end. The arcades are raised on a simple tripartite basement [undulating profile on the underside of the topmost moulding]. This is broken in the middle and at the south end to permit walkways at ground level. Five principal arched openings are seen here; there are also two tiers of smaller openings and recesses either side of the central arch and at the south end of the facade. The southern most of the large arched opening is partly filled in with a smaller arch. A free standing arch projects east-ward from the north end of the elevation to partly define the court in front. Arches are characterised by angled profiles [in two planes] set within rectangular frames. The upper recess at the south is multi-lobed. Arches rise from piers that are ornamented with friezes of petalled motifs and curved brackets; colonettes in the corners have pot-like bases, zigzag designs on the shafts and curved brackets. Wall pilasters between the arches have multi-tiered capitals [partly preserved]. A variety of ornamental motifs in thick plaster- work is preserved on the arches. These motifs include arabesque designs, undulating stalks and ribbed fruit motifs - [on the band], tufts of foliation and monster masks [above the bands and at the apexes], and medallions of stylised arabesques on fish-like brackets [in the spandrels]. There are even traces of colouring on the two medallions [especially blue]. Friezes of jewels and geese with foliated tails are seen at the tops of the walls. Here, projected brackets are elaborately adorned with double bunches of petals, over the

central bay these brackets are transformed into rearing yalis. The brackets support a horizontal shelf with petalled friezes on the edge. Also to be noted here is the trilobed arched opening that is recessed within the central arch. This is ornamented with the relief of miniature temple tower framed by a multi-lobed arch with makaras at the sides, conch emblems and monster mask at the apex.

The upper elevation has three unadorned arched openings in the middle with two decorated arched openings at either side. The arches on the south are adorned with birds [parrots?] with long tails transformed into foliation. The openings are flanked by half-pilasters. The arches on the north have infill walls divided into miniature arched openings and recesses, some multi-lobed. A panel to the right repeats these arched patterns. A double-curved eave projecting as solid masonry overhangs the walls. Other than arched openings on the south tower, the walls of the towers are plain. Three towers rise upon the roof. (That in the middle has) An octagonal drum and consists of four tiers of eave mouldings rising in 'an ascending and diminishing sequence. Uprturned motifs appear at the corners. The capping roof form is circular with a double-curved profile; the sides are ribbed. Almost nothing of the finial is preserved. The side towers over the staircases are much restored. These too are octagonal but have only three tiers of eave mouldings. No ribs are preserved on the capping roof forms. Almost no original detail survives on the other elevations. On the south side there are arched recesses and openings at the lower level. At the upper level an enlarged opening projects outwards on four stone corbels; an eave-like moulding is seen above. The rear [west] facade has arched openings in two planes at the lower level; doorways at either end in the towers provide access to the steps. The doorway in the south side of the central projecting entrance bay is contained within a larger arched recess. A walkway is carried on corbelled

brackets [curved undersides are much restored]. This walkway has an open arch on the north side. Further arched recesses and openings are positioned above. The north wall of the staircase tower is plain except for an arched doorway beneath.

Interior : At the lower level the interior is much restored and there are few original features. Arched recesses in the walls support a flat ceiling [restored] over the central west chamber. The open chambers of the front arched have flat ceilings or flattish domes on octagonal drums. At the upper level the west chamber has arched openings on four sides; these intersect [with corner pendentive-like elements] to carry a smaller square over. Above rises the octagonal drum of the dome. Here, brackets project between arched windows. The dome is ornamented with an octagonal design [petal-like motifs at the corners] filled with radiating ribs; the central medallion is missing. The open bays of the arcade have flat roofs [restored]. The chamber within the north staircase tower has enlarged multilobed arches on the four walls; additional arches in between create pendentives at the corners. Above rises the octagonal drum of the dome [four openings and four recesses] and the unadorned dome itself. There is a similarly plain dome on an octagonal drum, supported on angled arches and pendentives, above the chamber within the south staircase tower.

Adjoining Court : The large court on the east occupies an almost square area. It is defined by basement mouldings which continue the tripartite scheme seen on the basement of the building itself. An opening on the east indicates an entry leading from an outer court. There are traces of plaster flooring on the south side.⁷⁷

The Rani mahal is smaller in size than the Raja Mahal having ground floor and one storey. The structure also resembles the Raja mahal and has arches in the Islamic style with three domes are on the

centre and the other on both sides of the roof. This structure is an architectural treat and appeal to the eyes mainly because of the elaborate stuccowork. The whole architectural scheme is full of decorative devices that are three dimensional and protruding coexisting with the full-dimensional medallions and petals. The whole architectural scheme is one with very few spaces left, blank pointing to a profusion of objects and devices ranging from the arch to stucco. Another interesting aspect is that both the Raja mahal and Rani mahal are pink in colour with stucco. Pink was the colour used in the lotus mahal at Hampi and also a similar structure is seen in the Queen's bath here. This style was adopted wholesale in both these structures and in the Rani mahal we see more evidence of decorated aspects in the exterior. The treatment of the exterior is advanced cement and stucco bared exterior with pink colour adds a finishing touch. The finesse of the stucco reveals the evolution of high degree of craftsmanship which is not seen earlier in Deccan.

In conclusion it may be stated that the fort at Chandragiri grew over a period of time, many centuries and in this period we see the blending of the earlier architectural traditions like the hundred valuts and the undecorated gateways to the more sophisticated temple. Other structures like hangman's noose were based on the public display of power. Most important is the incorporation of Hindu and Islamic styles in very close proximity in a large scale by deeply integrating them as part of the political culture is reflected in the palaces. Thus, the defence structures can be characterised as both Hindu and the Indo-Islamic.

TEMPLES

There are seven temples, big and small inside the fort. The absence of inscriptions in these temples stands in the way of

determining the exact date of these temples. An inscription found in the Kodanadarama temple dated 1547 A.D. states that there were seventy four [74] temples in Chandragiri.⁷⁸ Further, we get references in the archaeological reports only to the seven temples. The Anjaneya temple is located to the north of the entrance into the first enclosure from the east. Two miles south – west of Chandragiri is the ruined temple of Malleswara on the hill, which belongs to the last quarter of 14th century A.D. About two miles to the north-east of the fort located the Kalyana Venkateswara temple in Srinivasa Mangapuram which was constructed in 1541 A.D.

The Rayavachakam states that every fort shall have a temple. In all the forts of the Deccan we find this aspect and also in Vellore fort which closely resembles Chandragiri fort in style. On the grounds of style the temples can be dated to resemble the Chola Style which is typical of the Vijayanagara period. What is intriguing is the fact that the temple is in very close proximity to the two places, namely, the Raja Mahal and the Rani Mahal, but does not borrow any decorative elements or the decoration devices or even in advances in technology.

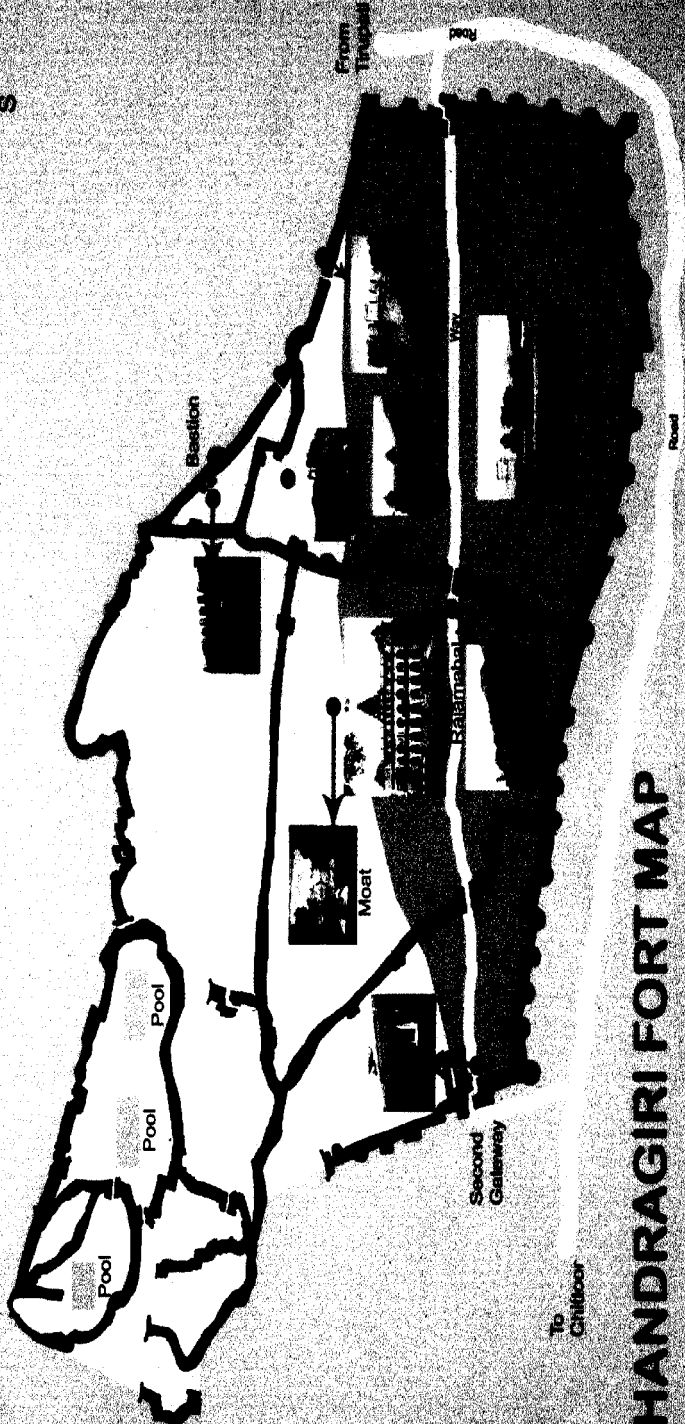
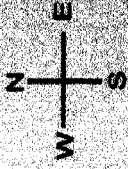
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CHANDRAGIRI FORT MAP

CHANDRAGIRI FORT



Plate 13 : View of Outer Gateway



Plate 14 : View of Second Gateway



Plate 15 : View of Bastion



Plate 16 : View of Buruju

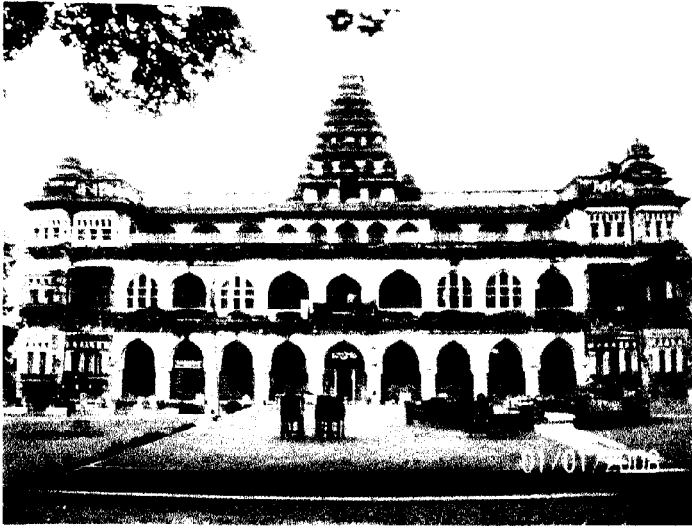


Plate 17 : View of Rajmahal

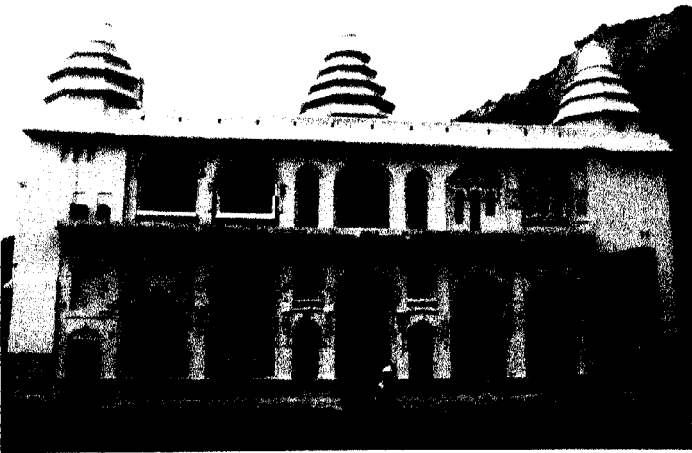


Plate 18 : View of Ranimahhal



Plate 19 : View of Moat (Tank)



Plate 20 : View of Hangman's Noose



Plate 21 : View of Kodandarama Temple

III.3. UDAYAGIRI FORT

History of Udayagiri

Udayagiri is a small village and headquarter by the same name in Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh. It is situated at a distance of 96 kms from Nellore and 80 km from Kavali. Udayagiri is famous for its historical fort situated 938 metres above the sea level. It was known in ancient times as Kondayapalem. The Udayagiri was an important territorial division in medieval Andhra and served as provincial centre of the Vijayanagara empire. It was a sort of guardian deity of the eastern borders of the mighty Vijayanagara empire and hence became a bone of contention among the three super powers viz, the Rayas of Vijayanagara, the Bahmanis of Gulbarga, Qutubshahis of Golkonda and the Gajapatis of Orissa.¹ It served as a military base for the Vijayanagara rulers in their expansionist activities in the farther coast and hence described as “Modali Durgam” in inscriptions.² The area

within and around Udayagiri is full of vestiges of medieval structures, historical fort, Masjids, Granaries, Springs and Temples.

Udayagiri, being one of the viceroial centres, occupied a prominent place in the History of Vijayanagara provincial administration. It is evident from the inscriptions that the fort and the region around is known as Udayagiri rajya and formed the part of the Vijayanagara empire from the very commencement of its rule. Geographically Udayagiri rajya extended over the present day Nellore district and Southern part of Prakasam district and Northern part of Kadapa District. This rajya contains within it simas or divisions, prominent among which were Ghandikota-sima, Kandukuri-sima, Potladurti-sima, and Siddhavata-sima.

The earliest reference to their sway over the region found in an inscription dated 1343 A.D. It records the gift of land to the temple of Durga by Kampana, one of the five sons of Sangama.³ Another inscription from Kodavaluru dated 1346 A.D. refers to the prince Kampana Odaya, the lord of the east and western seas. The inscription further records that the Prime Minister Harihara I made the gift of cattle (Jivadhanam) for maintaining lamps in the temples of Sridhara-perumallu and Nageswaradeva of Kodavaluru⁴.

It is evident from the above that Harihara I appears to have fortified Udayagiri and made it headquarters of his province and entrusted its administration to his younger brother Kampana. According to the tradition, the fort of Udayagiri was built by a certain Langula Gajapati, whose historicity, is however uncertain. On the other hand, Udayagiri lying as it did on the South - Western flank of the Reddi Kingdom, became a standing menace to it ever threatening its existence.⁵

Kampana was succeeded by his son Virasavanna who issued three records dated 1351 A.D. 1356 A.D. and 1364 A.D. respectively at Mopuru in Bhairaveswara temple, Pulivendula taluk of Kadapa district.⁶ These inscriptions mention him as lord of the eastern ocean with his capital at Udayagiri-pattana. Virasavanna continued to rule over this region during the reign of Bukka-I also. Bukka - I (who succeeded Harihara I) appointed his own sons as the governors of the provinces and made them responsible for the maintenance of the royal authority. After Virasavanna Bukka-I appointed his son Virupanna as the governor of Udayagiri and entrusted the care of the fort. He was succeeded by Baskara Bhavadura another son of Bukka-I in 1369 A.D.⁷

Bukka-I died in the beginning of 1377 A.D. and Harihara II ascended the throne. He wanted to establish his control over the east coast and therefore appointed his son Devaraya as the governor of Udayagiri rajya. In 1382 A.D.⁸ In 1386 A.D. the same monarch built at Udayagiri the temples of Siddhesvara besides excavating a holy tank "which resembled the *manasa lake* for men to bath in⁹. When Devaraya I succeeded his father Harihara II to the imperial throne. He appointed his son Ramachandra as governor at Udayagiri. During this period, the Reddis of Kondavidu made inroads into Udayagiri territory but Devaraya however get them back in 1413 A.D. after a short interval of 7 years.¹⁰ He continued in this position for a fairly long time till his coronation as a king. This Ramachandra continued to hold the administration of Udayagiri from 1406 A.D. the date of his Dadireddipalli epigraph to 1417 A.D.¹¹ He was succeeded by his son Parvataraya who ruled from 1417 A.D. to 1435 A.D. and was followed by Devaraya Odaya from 1435 A.D. to 1446 A.D.¹² After this, Udayagiri went into the hands of a family of feudatory chieftains.

The earliest member of this family was Kantamaraju Vallabha. His son Tammmaraya built two temples in Udayagiri in 1416 A.D. and 1462 A.D.¹³ He was followed by his son Basavaraja. During this period Udayagiri attracted the attention of Kapileswara Gajapati of Orissa whose son Kumara Hamvira wrested it from Vijayanagara in 1454 A.D.

Kapilendra seems to have appointed Tamma, as ruler over a portion of the Udayagiri rajya. Basavabhupala, son of Tammabhupala ruled Udayagiri as a subordinate of the Gajapati and earned for himself the titles *ranaranga bhairava*, *rasika-sikhamani* etc. In 1463 A.D. when the Gajapati armies were fighting in the south, the defence of Chandragiri *rajya* seem to have been left to Saluva Ramachandraraya, son of Mallayadeva maharaya. After the subjugation of Udayagiri rajya Pusapati Tammabhupati marched against Chandragiri and conquered it some time before 1464 A.D., probably defeating Saluva Ramachandraraya. These two epigraphs make it clear that the fort was in possession of Tammaraya one of the Oriya generals until 1470 A.D.¹⁴ However, the loss of the two strategic forts of Udayagiri in Nellore and Kondavidu in Guntur, together with their dependent territories weakened the Vijayanagara empire. Mallikarjuna did not long survive this disastrous Gajapati invasion and died in 1465 A.D. He was succeeded by his cousin Virupaksha II who ruled from to 1465 A.D. to 1485 A.D.

However, with the death of Kapilesavara Gajapati in 1470 A.D., the political conditions changed rapidly and they plunged coastal Andhra into the throes of a civil war and offered a unique opportunity of Vijayanagara to take back the lost possessions.¹⁶ On the advice of his ministers, Saluva Narasimha declared war against Kalingaraja, and defeated him in open battle. He pursued the Kaligaraja and laid

siege to the fortress in which he shut himself up. The Udayagiri fortress was captured from Kalingaraja who placed himself with all his dependants under the protection of the victorious army. Saluvabhyudayam gives all this information but omits to mention the name of the fort captured.¹⁷ Two other contemporary works *Jaiminibharata* and *Varahapurana* refer to the victory of Narasimha over the urigyas. The latter work mentions the capture of Udayagiri by Narasimha's general Isvara.¹⁸ But Purusottama Gajapati was successful in wresting it again from Saluva Nasimha. The Anantavaram inscription dated 1500 A.D. confirms this fact. Of the forts under the administration of the Gajapatis, the forts of Udayagiri, Kondavidu and Kondapalli were *giri durgas*. Of these, the Udayagiri durga was the most formidable, and had only one narrow passage of entry into the fort. The fort and the rajya remained in the possession of Gajapatis for a long time until Krishnadevaraya made elaborate plans for his eastern expedition and finally captured it by ousting Gajapati ruler in 1514 A.D.

Krishnadevaraya laid siege to it for a year and half, in which time he made many paths across rocky hills, breaking up many great boulders in order to make a road for his soldiers to approach the towers of the fortress. The fort was commanded by Tirumala Rautaraya a paternal uncle of the Gajapati Prataparudra, he offered stubborn resistance to the assaults of the Raya's army when Krishnadevaraya's generals failed to effect any thing even after great exertion²⁰. Nuniz tells that when Krishnadevaraya went to invest the fort of Udayagiri, with an army of 34,000 foot soldiers and 800 elephants, the Gajapati force in the fort consisted of 10000 foot soldiers and 400 horses. For Krishnadevaraya, it was a prestigious achievement and naturally his own inscriptions and his successors graphically described the achievement. From then, till the end,

Udayagiri remained as part of the Vijayanagara empire. Krishnadevaraya put his own competent men in charge of this fort such as Rayasam Kondamara, and his son Rayasam Ayyapparasa. Ramabhatla Ayyavaru Achyutaraya's minister played an important part in the administration of the Udayagiri rajya in 1534 A.D.²¹ In 1535 A.D Achyutadevaraya, appointed Venkatadri as the Governor of Udayagiri.²² Sadasivaraya seated on the diamond throne in Vijayanagara, was ruling the earth against of Udayagiri durgam which was governed by Aliya Ramayadeva Maharajulu and Timmayadeva Maharaju.²³ An inscription dated 1548-49 A.D. refers to a grant made under the orders of Sadasiva by Maha Mandalesvara Ramaraju Timmayadeva maharaja to certain barbers in the Udayagiri *rajya*.²⁴ As chief minister of the regent, Tirumala was given the most important province of the empire to rule, this was Udayagiri called the chief fortress under the royal throne of Vijayanagara, owing to its proximity to the Mahamanadan frontiers. Formerly it was almost always governed by princes of the royal family as viceroys, on behalf of the emperor. We find him fulfilling the same office, however he did not stay at Udayagiri, because in the same year 1551 A.D. according to an inscription at sangam the governor of Udayagiri was Civvakkaturi Bayaca Rajayya who ruled on behalf of Tirumala was this the same Tirumala who was governor of Udayagiri in 1535-36 A.D. His appointment was not due to that time to his brother, but either to Achyutaraya are to the ministers of the latter..²⁵ At the same it refers to Ferista's narrative of Kondapally attack by the raja's south of the Krishna, and Sri Rangaraja fixing himself at Udayagiri and conquering Kondavidu, Vinukonda etc.²⁶ The Sultan of Golkonda had also broken his alliance with Sri Ranga-1 and invaded Ahobalam district soon after in 1579 or 1580 A.D. The Golkonda troops entered the province of Udayagiri and would appear to have captured Kondavidu also round about 1580 A.D..²⁷ Venkata-1 seems to have served his elder

brother Ranga-II as viceroy, being placed by him in charge of Udayagiri, Kondavidu and other outlying hill fortresses. We have seen above how Ibrahim Qutb Shah of Golkonda acquired these fortresses by driving out of them Venkatapatiraya, by which undoubtedly Venkata-I is meant.²⁸ Udayagiri was captured by the Qutubshahis in 1580 A.D. The Ahobilam inscription of 1584-85 A.D. states that Ahobilam and its neighbourhood were occupied by the Qutub Shahis in 1578-89 A.D..²⁹ An inscription from Korrappadu dated 1551 A.D. states that Chenna Avubhaleswaradeva obtained *Udayagiri rajya* as *nayamkara* from the king Sadasiva.³⁰

An inscription from Ganganapalli dated 1606 A.D. [Cuddapah] refers to the rule of Matle Ananaraja's son Tiruvengalanatha Devachoda maharaja. He appears to have been entangled in some local wars. His victory over the chief of Gandikota Macanolu and his overthrow of the governor of Udayagiri Fort was described in *Kumudavatikalayanam*.³¹ Venkat - II bestowed the Udayagiri rajyam on Muddayadeva maharaja. This was obviously after the conquest of the Telugu country from the by Venkat-II subsequent to 1643 A.D. records of the Qutubshahi's are found in Udayagiri rajya.³² The Vijayanagara territories were invaded by Golkonda under Mirjumla part of Qutubshahi army laid siege to Udayagiri while the rest after pressing forward along the coast of Nellore district attacked pulicat on the 12th of August 1645 A.D. At this news Srirangaraja dispatched to its relief a force of 4000 men which camped before the town closely blockading.³³ An inscription at Vazzavaripalem dated 1663 A.D. mentions a grant in this region by Mahamandalesvara Jaggarayadeva maharaja while Venkatapati - III was ruling at Penugonda.³⁴ After Venkata II the Udayagiri *rajya* was occupied by the Qutubshahis and appointed Japalle Venkataraju to be the pategar of Udayagiri. In course of time he refused payment of tribute and consequently he was

attacked by the Nawab of Arcot and was vanquished and slain in the battle. Subsequently the Nawab of Arcot conferred the jagir of Udayagiri on Mustapha Alikhan. Since then the region of Udayagiri was under the Muslim jagirdars of the time was deported to Chingleput in 1839 for treason by the East Indian company.³⁵

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

The fort on the hills of Udayagiri is at a height of 3079 ft above the sea level. Its geological formation is gneiss, with an upper deposit of quartzite. The fortifications are in a fair state and the ascent is about five miles. It consists of eleven fortresses, 8 are on the hill and 3 are in the foot of the hill. There were eleven bastions, 12 guns, 23 gates, 11 reservoirs, 12 granaries, and 8 pogadas, ruined number of rampart walls.³⁶ The fort, on most of its sides, is inaccessible, but it can be reached by a jungle track on the eastern side of the hill and by a path along with ravine on the northern side of the hill. There are also ancient temples in the village depicting Pallava and Chola architecture. On the hill at height of about 610 meters, there is a cool spot where water falls in drops from a height of 6 metres. The Udayagiri hill is noted for various types of Medicinal herbs and the local people, therefore, call this as Sanjiva hill. There are many ruins in the village which indicate that the place was once an extensive and popular town of great importance.³⁷

The upper portion of the hill which is a rugged plateau is thickly strewn with the remains of extensive fortifications and buildings all of which are in ruins. What is left now of the once famous fort is an appreciable length of the rampart and ruined gateways recently conserved by the Archaeological Department. But the existence of the fortifications now in ruins indicate that they had witnessed a strenuous period of struggle and war through many

centuries.³⁸ The fort is not visible from outside and appears to be both a *vana* and *giridurga*. The existing fortifications reveal only Islamic features. It is quite difficult to make a complete field study of the fort as most areas are inaccessible due to the thickly grown wild bushes and forest system, thus making it impossible to know the actual number of rampart walls, bastions and gateways.³⁹ The fort as such can be climbed up on the north and east, from the village. After proceeding towards east for about half a mile, begin the remains of the fort at the foot of the hill. Here the path takes a turn towards south where a narrow entrance is seen, built of crude and irregular boulders.⁴⁰

The Lowest Terrace and Tiers : The later structure was erected as a monument of victory by Krishna- devaraya after his successful capture of the fort of Udayagiri in 1513 A.D. It is a square in plan and rises in three diminishing tiers. The lowest terrace is 40.22 mts x 40.22 mts., while the topmost one is 24.77 mts. x 24.77 mts. Two faces of the constructions of the high plinth are clearly discernible. The earlier one was of solid masonry veneered by polished and sculptured chlorite slabs, and was partly covered in the subsequent stages when the platform was extended. In the second phase, local granite blocks were used and these are comparatively cruder and less polished. During this phase a staircase was added on the south. Over this terrace are remains of pillar bases indicating that there was a pavilion which is missing now. The approach to the top of this structure is by means of a well laid-out staircase on the west flanked by elephant decorated balustrades.

Longhurst however conjectured that the superstructure was constructed in brick and plaster with carved wooden pillars supporting timber framed roofs, probably covered with small copper plates etc. These buildings might have been of several storeys. He

identified this platform as the base of the pavilion when the royal throne was kept during the Navaratri or Dasara festival and the king gave audience to all the chiefs, nobles and captains who came to pay their tribute to him. The top most tier or platform is beautifully designed; its horizontality is emphasised by a series of boldly moulded courses sharply projected and fashioned out of large beams carved and placed in position with skill and precision. The lower terraces are mere plain masonry plinths evidently to serve as means for raising the height of the structure. But here the vertical surface of the plinth was used by the builder to portray animal figures, sculptures and scenes from everyday life of the city.⁴¹ From here begins the ascent up the hill by means of paved stones towards west. This ramped pathway measures a width of 5.60 mts. After some distance comes a stone platform called "*Dora Kattinchina Arugu*" built by an European. From this point can be seen the high watch tower on the hill, called *Chintamala buruzu*.⁴²

Outer Fortifications : After some distance is noticed the carved image of the Ganges. From there being the outer fortifications of Udayagiri built of irregular blocks of white and red granite, in cyclopean order. It has 10 courses with pieces of pebble stones serving as core in between. The wall rises to a height of about 3.70 mts. and runs to a length of about 9.20 mts. Beyond it comes the outer entrance of a gateway called "*Badakala darwaja*" facing north. It is reached by a flight of steps. There is a rampart or fortification wall on either side of the pathway i.e., east and west. This gateway has no parapet above but four protruding corbels. It rises to a height of 4 mts. while the length of the passage is 8.30 mts. The battlement of the side walls measures 4.35 mts. wide. Unlike the gateways in other forts, the gateways in Udayagiri are direct and provide straight entry inside, instead of right angled turns. It is flanked by two square watch

towers on either side. The width of the entrance passage is 2.20 mts. Passing through this, we find that the wall continues further on either side and becomes narrow as we go further.⁴³

Rampart Walls : On the left i.e. is a prakara or rampart with bastion and arched hood parapets. These wood stones rise to a height of about 1.50 mts. The loop holes are slanting or sloppy measuring 75 cms long, 15 cms wide and 20 cms high, and 1.30 mts wide built of bricks and lime. Here the rampart rises to a height of 7.70 mts. with a continuous line of arched parapets ruined at several places. Here also is seen an under ground. There are 23 gates to reach the top of the hill. The portion of first gate is not traceable. Passing through the 2nd gate, after some distance begins another flight of steps, with a wall on the right built of crude and irregular stones, leading to another gate way called *eguvadiddi*. This gate way also is similar in plan like the first two, with a covered ceiling above decorated with minarates and thirty arched parapets. After this comes the 4th gate called *mupparayanididdi*, with a flight of 27 broad steps on the front to climb up. Here, on the east, are seen four lines of walls. Proceeding further though this comes the 5th gate way, with a platform on either side in the interior divided of ceiling above there is a huge courtyard inside.⁴⁴ There are two mosques located on the hill known as *china masjid* and *pedda masjid*. An inscription dated A.D. 1626 records that Shaik Hussain the Mir-jumla of Qutubsahis conquered and occupied the Udayagiri fort and built those two mosques.⁴⁵

Chinna Masjid : The Chinnamasjid is a rectangular structure with a mihra in the centre on three arches and two archi pillars in the front. The measure of the mosque south and north is 42.5 × 42.5 feet long, east and west 18 × 18 feet of wide, the wall rises to height of about 47.5 feet. Above it is a line of arcade with 9 × 9 arches south and north, 5x5 east and west arches in a row above the arcade are 4x4

minarets at regular intervals of distance. On the north a mile after climbing up the steps, comes the open level ground. In it is a big rectangular hall measuring 15.5 width, 23.4 long called granary, with an entrance on the south. There are eighteen pillars in two rows of nine in each. It measures a length of 24.20mts, and width of 7.40 mts. In the middle of the west wall is the recessed mihrab arches, and the northern wall is arranged niches. The building is elevated on a simple tripartite basement. The walls are plain except for a slightly projecting course in the middle. On the front [south], the column brackets support becomes with angled eaves to carry solping cave cored on the beam over the central is by an indentifying the muslim symbols. The columns have square shafts, the capitals are doubled with a circular lower element, and projecting square upper element with corner medallions. The engaged columns are plain. Angled brackets support plain becomes and horizontal ceiling slabs. The recessed niche is headed by a deep arch with a double curved profile carved out of a single slab [Plate. 24].

Pedda Masjid: On the eastern hillock is a big mosque called Pedda Masjid. There are a flight of steps to reach it. It is a huge rectangular structure with semi circular arches on either side. The rectangular structure is open to the east and enclosed on the other three sides. The Pedda masjid entrance is on the eastern side, built with single arch within 2 columns pillars are arranged. The pillars rise to height about 72.3 feet. The eastern side arch is 12 feet high and 7.5 feet length. Above it is a line of arches in 6x6 south and north row. The western side has 6 arches only. The Northern side pillars had a wide flight of steps, with a wall on the right built of crude and irregular stones. On the way there is a water tank called *Enugula kunta*. Proceeding to wards west from the pedda masjid are three gates or entrances. They are Buddingar Darwaja, with three lines of wall

beyond it is the *Madarsidi* which slightly curved. After this is the *Deyyala diddi* with in which is a granary of paddy called *Dhanyam garisa* [Plate. 25].

Horse Stable : This unique structure is undoubtedly the most monumental of all the courtly structures at the capital. The stable faces east wards into the large rectangular open space of enclosure. 25 square vaulted pillars are arranged in a long north south row. The plan of each vaults is more or less identical with recessed niches in the north, south and west sides and a plain entrance on the east. Except for the small arched openings on the east side, the building is perfectly plain on the west, north and south side. The passage way is roofed with horizontal stabs covered with plaster, a similar roof probably once covered the central space, now, only corbelled brackets are seen [four on each side]. These have pendant buds and sockets which, together with the stone projection beneath, probably once housed angled brackets. There are 8 types of vaults above the chambers, these are symmetrically disposed either side of the central chamber. The lower parts of the walls in each chamber though are identical in arrangement. Here recessed arches of the pointed type are positioned within rectangular frames in the middle of each side. Above a small angled block, corner arches with curved interior begin about halfway up the wall. They are narrower than the recessed arches but of the same type, and create an irregular octagon at the top. The measure of slab north and south is 82.7 feet long east and west 45.2 feet width above on the height 39.5 feet only [Plate. 26].

Temples : Besides the fort and mosques Udayagiri is also famous for temples. An inscription dated 1470 A.D. records that a certain Tammarayudu son of Katamaraju constructed a temple to the deity Kasiviswasara on the hill of Udayagiri, consecrated the image and arrangements were made for daily food offerings and worship.⁴⁶

Another inscription dated 1533 A.D. records the consecration of 12 alvars on the east of the temple of Konavallabha of Udayagiri by Madinendu, the door keeper of Salakaraju Tirumaladeva. The inscription further records the construction of Koneru and *mandapas* and gift of garden to the temple.⁴⁷ An undated inscription at Udayagiri village records that Timmaraju, son of Mahamandaleswara Ramarajukotayya, constructed the gopura, compound wall, reservoir and made provision for the celebration of festivals in the temple of Ranganayaka.⁴⁸ Another inscription dated 1568 A.D. records the construction of temple and the consecration of the image Hanuman in Udayagiri by a certain Singala Akkalayya.⁴⁹ Another inscription dated 1514 A.D. found at Lakshmana temple, records that Srikrishnadevaraya encamped at Udayagiri hill, persuaded Prataparudra Gajapati upto Kondavidu, captured *Udayagiri durgam* after besieging it and seized.⁵⁰ On this occasion he made the gift of the village Sikallu in Nelluri sima for proving worship to the deity Konavallabharaya of Udayagiri.

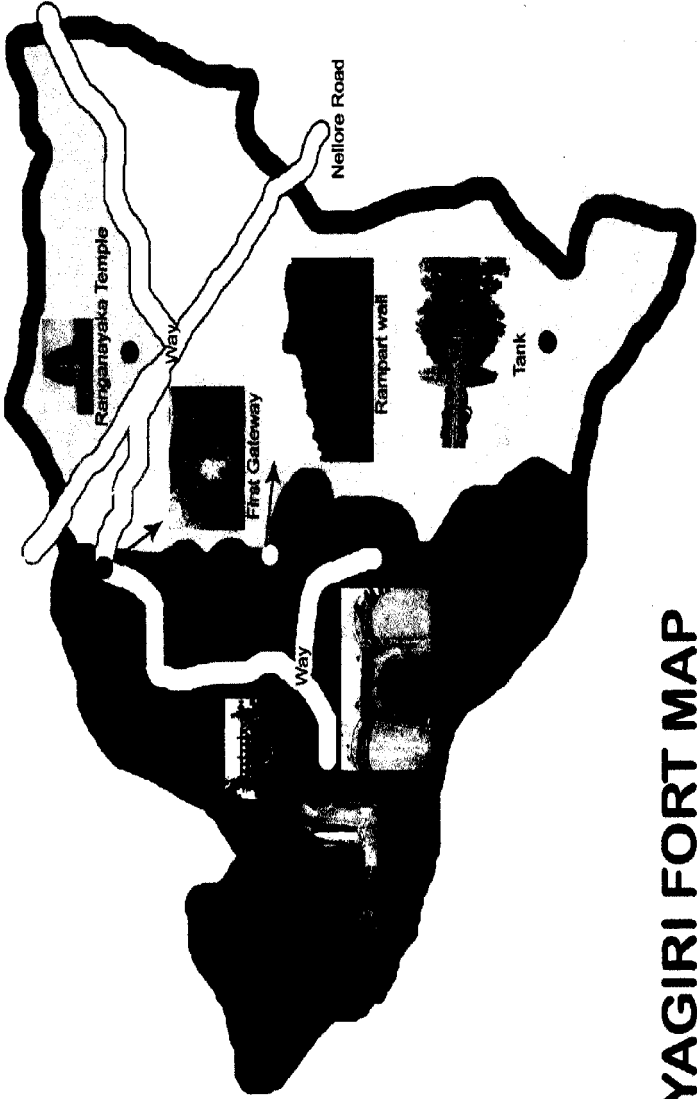
The above discussion make it clear that Udayagiri was an important administrative division in Medieval Andhra. It is famous for its historical hill fort built in the 14th century A.D. by the Rayas of Vijayanagara, two mosques built in the 17th century by the Qutub Shahis, temples, granaries and springs. Thus Udayagiri is rich in the study of its antiquity.

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UDAYAGIRI FORT MAP

UDAYAGIRI FORT



Plate 22 : View of First Gateway

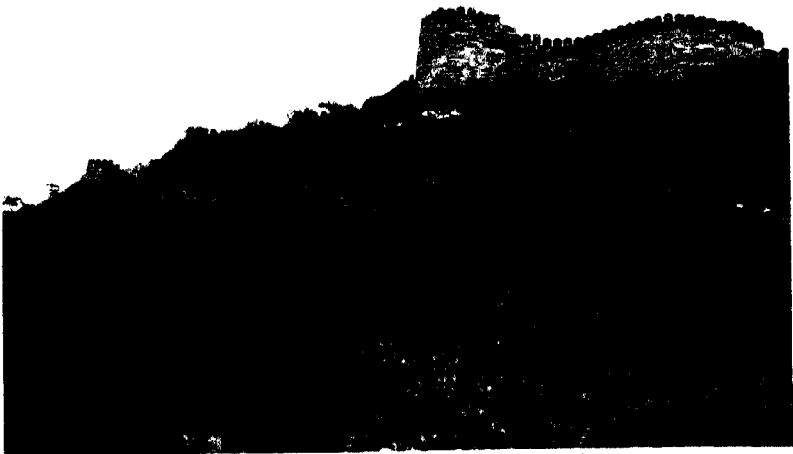


Plate 23 : View of Rampart Wall



Plate 24 : View of Chinna Masjid



Plate 25 : View of Pedda Masjid

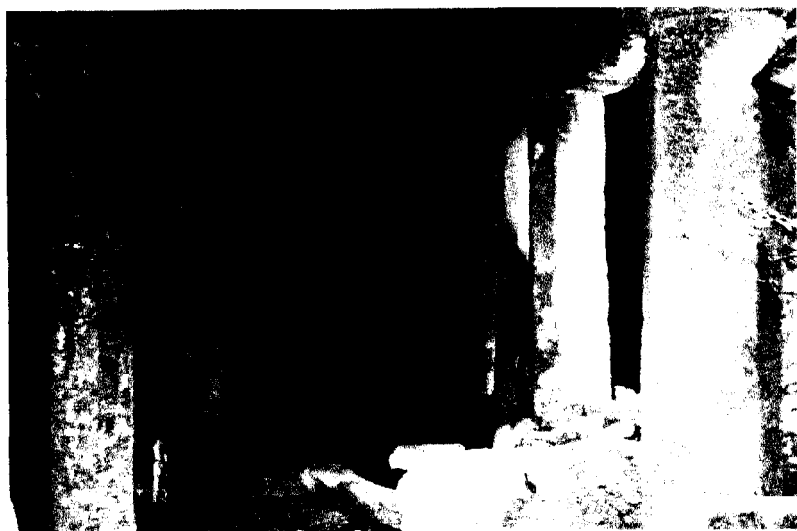


Plate 26 : View of Horse Stable

III.4. GANDIKOTA FORT

History of Gandikota

Gandikota is a small village (Lat 14^o47 N and long 78^o16 S) situated on the right bank of the river Pennar, in Jammalamadugu taluk of Cuddapah district, Andhra Pradesh. Here lies the famous fort of Gandikota, which acquired its name obviously due to the gorge, formed between the Erramalai range of hills, also known as Gandikota hills and the river Pennar that flows at its foot, reducing its width to a mere 300ft. Situated amidst beautiful landscape and wild forests. It is endowed with great potentialities of natural strength, surrounded by a deep valley and impossible hills, with massive boulders of red granite and the river Pennar that flows about 300ft. below on the occupants of the fort.

The river Pennar enters the district of Cuddapah almost a mile and half south-west of Koduru in Jammalamadugu taluk of

Cuddapah district and runs in a further easterly direction and approaches Gandikota about 4 miles away and takes a south-east course for 5 miles, where it meets at Nekanampet, its first big tributary in the district, by name Chitravati on its right bank.

Just below this confluence, it curved towards north and strikes right in to the hills, where its width is reduced to a mere 500 ft from 1400 ft and after 4 miles further down to 230 ft. where it passes through the gorge.

It is here in this gorge, on the rock above, is perched the fort. Strategically, it forms the link for a chain of forts in the neighbouring districts like Gutti and Penugonda in Anantapur district and Adoni in Kurnool district. Roughly it occupies an area of about 5 miles in circumference and is circular in plan. It can be reached by bus upto Jammalamadugu and from there by foot which is within 15 kms. distance as there is no regular bus conveyance to the place.¹

Gandikota-*sima* was a sub-division of the major province, Gandikota-*rajya*. It covered parts of Cuddapah and Anantapur districts. For sometime, the Gandikota division was a part of Penugonda-*rajya*.² The Gopavaram inscription of Achyutaraya dated 1533 A.D. records a gift of land to god Hanumanta consecrated by Vagumadugu Ramireddi in Gopavaram in Gandikota-*sima* by mahamandaleswara Jagapati Kanchiraju Rangaya deva Chodamaharaju.³

Several inscriptions referred to the division as part of Udayagiri-*rajya*. The place names like Pulivendula, Kokatam, Porumamilla and Thadimaladinne [all in Cuddapah district] associated with this *sima* indicate that this *sima* occupied the whole of modern Cuddapah district.

Like Udayagiri and Gutti, Gandikota also formed part of the Vijayanagara kingdom since its inception and was the headquarter of a *sima* in Udayagiri-*rajya*.

During the Pre-Vijayanagara period Gandikota though not a well developed fort, was mentioned in Ambadeva's inscription as a 'pattana' famous much earlier right from the days of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. However, it came to lime light during the reign of the Tuluva king Krishnadevaraya, when it became the headquarters of a *sima* or an administrative unit in the Udayagiri-*rajya*. Further Gandikota became the favoured fort of the Vijayanagara. The Nandyala and Pemmasani chiefs held this during the 15th, 16th centuries A.D, which was later held by the Qutbshahi general Mirjumla in middle of 17th century, Mayana Nawabs and finally the British.⁴

Political history : The early history of Gandikota, according to a legend contained in the Kaifiyat of Gandikota begins in 12th C A.D. when, a certain chief Kakaraja, a subordinate of Ahavamalla Someswara-I, the western Chalukyan king of Kalyani, founded it in 1122 A.D. Accordingly, he laid the foundations of the fort, in the south, by ordering the Gurikandlu and Ayakandlu that accompanied him to built the fort, and arranged *inams* for them. He is also said to have built several bastions.⁵

On the other hand, the known political history of Gandikota, begins a century later i.e., in the last decade of 13th C A.D. when Kayastha Ambadeva was exercising his authority over the region, as a feudatory of the Kakatiyas of Warangal. An inscription at Attirala dated 1279 A.D. states that Mulkinadu, Renadu, *Sakalinadu*, Pottapinadu etc. were under his control and ruled from his capital Valluru Pattana.⁶ After this, Gandikota was ruled by Tripurari-II son of Ambadeva for a short period, when he was slain by the forces of

Prataparudra. An inscription cited by the Kaifiyat, dated 1308 A.D. states that a certain officer of Prataparudra, name not given, was ruling from Gandikota.⁷

It is only after the establishment of the Vijayanagara empire by Harihara-I and Bukka-I in 1336 A.D. does Gandikota find its rise again. This region appears to have been liberated by Araviti Somadevaraja belongs to Chalukyan lineage, from Muslim yoke during the course of the liberation movement that pervaded the Telugu country. Ever since the establishment of the kingdom of Vijayanagara Gandikota formed part of it, almost throughout. During this period it comprised the regions of Mulikinadu and Renadu, and was the headquarters of a *sima*, in Udayagiri-*rajya*.⁸

The first Vijayanagara king ruled over the Gandikota was Bukka-I in 1375 A.D. during his reign a certain Kappadu Devaji styled himself as the builder of Gandikota. The Tadipatri Kaifiyat states that Bukka-I appointed a certain Jillela Chalapatiraju to rule over, Mulkinadu who impressed with the state, it is said to have built the fort. Harihara-II transferred the Jillela chief to Penugonda and appointed Nandyala Viraraghavulu to rule over both Gutti and Gandikota.

During the reign of Devaraya-II we find the association of the Pemmasani family with Gandikota. According to the Kaifiyat, a certain Pemmasani Timma was exercising authority over Gutti and Gandikota and made several repairs to the fort, by strengthening the existing fortifications and adding new ones. Bukka held the fort of Gandikota, during the time of Mallikarjuna.⁹ Again Sarappa nayini devineni (i.e., Devineni, son of Sarappa nayudu) is mentioned in a record from Nandalur in the Cuddapah district, to have been governing from his capital Gandikota, the province of Pottapinadu which included in it,

the districts of Sirvel, Siddhavatam etc., his chief executive officer being his own son Parvatanayadu. Thus, from the large area over which the Saluva king Immadi Narasimha is represented to have ruled, either actually or nominally under the direction of his able general and minister Narasanayaka the inference is clear that during the short interval of Saluva usurpation the Vijayanagara supremacy did not suffer in dominion.¹⁰ But, details about the rebels are not furnished, and it is not known who held Gandikota about this time. We do not hear of any chief of Gandikota in the following years, upto the succession of Krishnadevaraya.

During the reign of Krishnadevaraya, it was held by a certain Timmarusayya as Amaram, and a certain Annaji was acting as regent or karyakarta.¹¹ An interesting inscription dated 1518 A.D. at Kokatam mentions the grant of the village of Kokatam in the Gandikota-*sima* to Allasani Peddana, son of Allasani Chokkarajumgaru and the epigraph at Tippaluru records, the grant of Tippaluru as an Agrahara to the eight court poets establish the association of this district with the literary activities of Krishnadevaraya.¹² Another inscription of Krishnadevaraya 1525 A.D. in his administrative division of Sakali-*sima* which was included in Gandikota-durgam, the Nayankara territory of Demarasayya, by Annajayya, son of Padaviti Virupaksha Dikshita of Gargya-gotra, who had performed the Sarvakratu and Vajapeya sacrifices, for the merit of the king and Demarasayya.¹³ In 1526 A.D. we find three persons ruling over Gandikota (Viz.). Demarasayya, Timmarusayya and Rayasam Ayyaparasa. In 1529 A.D. Siddhavatam Ellamarasa, was acting as the Karyakarta of Rayasam Ayyaparasa, the nayankara holder. This Ayyaparasa continued to rule over Gandikota even during the reign of Achutaraya also.¹⁴

During this period, an inscription at Chinna Dasaripalle, dated 1533 A.D. refers to a certain karyakarta by name Bacharasa, who granted remission of taxes due under Durga Dannaya nivartanam. His successor was Nandyala Aaubhalaraja in 1535 A.D..¹⁵ In the record of Achyutadevaraya dated 1541 A.D. refers to Aghorasivacharyula Chennappa and Sthanam Peda Obayya and Pina Obayya, the sthanikas of the Vaidyanatha and the Chennakesava temples at Pushpagiri by Dalavayi Timmarusayya, son of the Somarusayya, stipulating that the annual income of 60 Varaha gadyas payable as Gandikota *Durgam*.¹⁶

The chiefs of the Pemmasani family claiming descent from Pemmasani Ramalinga Nayudu, a general whom Krishnadevaraya chose to lead an attack against the forces of Bijapur, Golkonda and Bidar, were some what intimately connected with this district. The most important of these chief is Pemmasani Timmanayudu who perhaps governed Gandikota at the time of Achyuta's demise 1542 A.D..¹⁷

Many of the chiefs of the Nandyala family of the neighboring Kurnool district had become prominent during the period. The family with its mythological emblem of Gandabherunda contributed notable chiefs like Timmayyadeva maharaja who governed the Gandikota and Sakali-*sima* which he obtained from 1544-1556 A.D. and referring to this subordinate in this district.¹⁸ An inscription of Sadasivaraya dated 1545 A.D. records the gift to god Raghunatha of Gandikota which is said to have been obtained a 'nayankara' from the king by the donor Nandyala Timmayyadeva maharaja, son of Narasingayyadeva maharaju.¹⁹ Another inscription dated 1547 A.D. states that on the royal orders, Aliyaramayyadeva maharaju having exempted the tax on barbers in the Karnataka country, Mahamandaleswara Timmayyadeva

maharaju of Nandyala, did the same for the whole of Gandikota *sima*.²⁰

According to an inscription of 1548 A.D. at Peddanapadu, Gandikota-*sima* had been granted to him by Sadasivaraya as nayankara. Mahamandaleswara Peda Timmana, another cousin of Ramaraya and also a brother of Chinna Timmana, is yet another subordinate figuring in some of the inscriptions of the district.²¹ Another chief of the Nandyala family connected with this district was Nandyala Naraparaja, son of Nandyala Timmayyadeva, who is referred to in an inscription dated 1546 A.D. at Velapucherla. Of the inscriptions referring to him, the one at Sankhavaram dated 1549 A.D. registers a grant to the Chennakesava temple of Muddireddipalle situated in the Sakali-*sima* in the Gandikota *sima* held as nayankara by mahamandaleswara Nandyala Timmarajayya Naraparajayyadeva.²²

The battle of Rakshasi Tangadi in 1565 A.D. brought about, a new phase in the history of Gandikota. It resulted in the change of capital from Hampi to Penugonda and thence forward came a new dynasty called Aravidu, under Tirumala, the younger brother of Ramaraju. Since then, Gandikota, which enjoyed almost absolute peace throughout uninterrupted, became the target of attack, by its Muslim neighbours, the Qutbshahis of Golkonda.²³ An inscription of the Venkatapatideva dated 1589 A.D. records the gift of *Dommari-tyagam* for burning perpetual lamp to the deities Chennakesava and Sakalanatha linga at Kokatam, an agrahara on the southern bank of the river Pinakini to the east of Gandikota in Gandikota *sima* included in the western division of Udayagiri.²⁴

After this, Gandikota came to be ruled by Nandyala Krishna-maraju, son of Narasimha. In 1597-1598 A.D. he declared independence and refused to pay tribute to Venkata-II. In this he was

joined by Kondraju Tirupatiraya, chief of Pottapi and Sidhout, and Kandanavolu Gopalaraju. Venkata-II, assisted by Matli Ellamarasa, Hande-Devappanayaka and Pemmasani Timma marched at the head of a large army against the rebels and a battle was fought, near Jammalamadugu. Krishnamaraju took of flight, and sought refuge in Nandyala and the confederacy broken. Venkata-II apportioned the territories between Hande-Devappa and Pemmasani Timma, making him, the chief of Gandikota.²⁵ The Ganganapalle inscription 1606 A.D. refers to the rule of Matli Anantarajas son Tiruvengalanatha Devachoda maharaja. He appears to have been entangled in some local wars. His victory over the chiefs of Gandikota at Macanola and his over throw of the governor of Udayagiri fort are described in the literary work *Kumadavati Kalyanamu*.²⁶

During 1649-50 A.D. Mir Jumla of Qutubshahi dynasty captured this fortress. It is on record that Mir Jumla was honoured with the present of a Naurozi-Khilat by Qutubshahi for his crowning victory very soon. He was defeated by Khan Muhammad, the Bijapur general for encroaching on the Bijapur territory in certain places. The capture of Gandikota in 1650 A.D. by Mir-Jumla was the most significant event for this district. But what continues to remain is the indelible impression created by the intimate association of the rayas with the region that Gandikota was restored to Mir Jumla by virtue of a treaty concluded in 1652 A.D. He made it the headquarters of his government. The success of Mir-Jumla in the Karnataka had enhanced his status almost to that of an independent ruler. But in subsequent years the estrangement that developed between him and the sultan of Golkonda drove him to the necessity of aligning himself with Aurangazeb, the then governor of the Deccan.²⁷ This marks another important event, for Gandikota was governed by the Mayana chiefs of Cuddapah, until its occupation by Hyder Ali in 1777 A.D. The

Khilledar, under Hyder Ali was Mir Jumaluddin, who kept a garrison of 4000 in the fort and 2 cannons brought from Banaganapalle and Rudravaram.

He also built two bastions out side the fort. In 1708 A.D. Tippusultan took control of it and maintained a force of 4000 in it. He also repaired the north wall and replastered it. From the Kaifiyat we learn that there were three Khilledars during the time of Tippu. They were Mir-Jamaluddin, Mir-Aliraja, and Syed Murtuza. The control of Tippu over Gandikota ended in 1790 A.D..²⁸

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

The fort of Gandikota comprised three fortification walls, a moat, two gateways. One each in the east and west, and a number of bastions, spaced at regular intervals of distance along the main fort wall. Inside, are a number of structures both secular and religious assignable to Vijayanagara and Qutbshahi periods. Among the religious structures are included the Juma masjid, the Madhavaraya temple, the Ranganayaka temple and the temple of Raghunatha, whereas the secular ones are the Magazine, Jail, Granary, Rangamahala and the Mini Charminar. There are also a number of water reservoirs, in the form of tanks, like the *Rājula-cheruvu*, *Kattulakoneru*, etc., and a number of wells. An important feature is the underground channel system meant for the flow of water by means of conduit pipes of clay, characteristic of the Qutbshahi period and connected to the different structures like the Rangamahala. Further there are a number of watch towers, circular in shape, at several vantage points, in the fort area. The fort roughly occupies an area of about 5 miles in circumference, and is circular in plan.

The fort is approached on the east, through a rough and uneven cart track. It is surrounded by a moat on the south, and the river Pennar on the west, north and north-east.

Stray remains of fortification walls are seen about a mile away on the east, which are in ruinous condition. In front of the fort proper, a few yards, away, is another line of wall, built of dressed blocks of red granite, with a curved entrance on the right, protected by two watch towers on either side. Above them is a parapet wall, built of brick and lime coating, with a downward slope on the front, and openings in between. This outermost wall and the gateway appear to be of Vijayanagara period, as seen from the resemblance of the gateway to the entrances of Vijayanagara *gopura* and the use of Hindu pillars.

Passing through this gateway and after walking for a few yards further, is noticed a retaining wall of lesser height, running parallel to the main one, in north-south directions, on either side of the main gateway. There is open space in between the two, which measures about 17 mts. wide.

After this, comes the main gateway, known locally as *Gayani dvaramu* with a slightly curved path way to the right. This gateway consists of three entrances one: outer and two: inner, three: court yards and one barbican in a curved manner, at right angles. In front of the outer most entrance which faces south, are two plain monolith pillars with a cusped dome above. On the right is a high watch tower flanking it. Then comes the outer courtyard, which is rectangular in plan measuring about 19 × 10 mts. On the right is seen the rampart of the wall, climbed up by means of a flight of steps, leading to the battlement. In the northern corner above it, is a turret or room with a flight of steps. Below it, at the foot of the wall, is a postern or side

entrance. The right wall is partly ruined, showing traces of original construction, done through the filling up of core with earth and stone facing on the inside. On the left i.e. facing east, stands the high and imposing main entrance, typically Muslim in design and style. It has two vaulted arched niches in the wall on either side of the entrance. Above it is a scroll design, with the central dome having projecting recesses. Above the door-jomb is the parapet wall, divided into three panels. In the central one, is the vaulted, arched niche with four loop holes in the centre, half closed. Similar loop holes are there in the two plain panels on either side, with three in each. The top section of the parapet facade is decorated by several arches in a horizontal row. Above it is a row of arched merlons perforated with loop holes and interspersed by four finial headed domes. The ceiling of the door-jomb is supported by seven decorated corbels which protrude forward. The exterior of this main entrance bears fine lime polish in white, characteristic of the Qutubshahi structures. On the right of the entrance is a small postern gate leading to the interior, about 30 cms. wide and 75 cms. high; with a wooden cross beam to obstruct easy passage [Plate. 27].

The entrance of this gateway is 3.20 mts. wide, with heavy door frames made of wood and coated with iron, on either side. The door frame is divided into three compartments and fitted with sharp and heavy iron spikes. It is about 2' feet thick. Each compartment is provided with five large spikes in a row and 30 small and medium ones in the inner space. Across the entrance is a heavy wooden beam, and on the inside in the walls is an arrangement of stone slots for fixing it up.

On either side are two platforms serving probably as guard rooms for the sentries. Proceeding further inside, is reached the 2nd courtyard and facing the main entrance is a wall. On the right is a

barbican running in west-east direction, with a parallel wall on the left, facing it. This front wall is built of crude undressed blocks of stone with continuous parapets above, having a sloppy surface on the top.

After passing through this comes the fort area proper. Similarly, there is another gateway in the west called *Petla darwaja*, measuring 2.20 mts. wide and 4.50 mts. high, which has several inner entrances ascended by means of a flight of steps, with turns towards left and right. The outer most entrance is flanked by the hill on either side. The inner most entrance has a width of 6.20 mts., with guard rooms for the soldiers.

The main fortification wall runs along the entire fort, on all the directions, rising on bare rock surface without any foundation below. Built of neatly dressed blocks of red granite, it rises a height of about 10 to 13 mts. with 16 to 18 courses, each measuring about 2 ft. thick, and presents an imposing and formidable appearance, even from a long distance. Its height varies at several places depending upon the nature and contours of the ground. It is high on the south and east, whereas on the west and north its height is less, as it stands on high rock surface. Above the wall, on the front face, is a long embattled parapet, consisting of several merlons or arched hood stones, pierced with loop holes, measuring about 4 ft. high and 2 ft wide. The loop holes are arranged in two horizontal rows, with three in each and another one in the top in the middle, thus, making a total of seven loop holes and a vertical row in the centre.

There are also several bastions, projecting forward from the main wall, at regular intervals of distance, along the entire length of the wall, on all the directions, which number about 40 in all. These bastions are rectangular in shape at the bottom, tapering towards

square at the top, having wide box-like openings at the corners and on the front face in the middle, probably meant for hurling weapons and discharge of fire from a wide range. Above them is a parapet of arches, pierced with three large loop holes in the bottom and three in the top and another one in the middle, on the top. The distance between each bastion varies from 25 to 50 mts.²⁹

Along the fort on the exterior, towards south from the main gateway i.e. rightwards, is noticed a slight inward projection in the wall, where is noticed the 1st bastion, having a basal width of 12 mts. at the bottom with a frontal projection of 9.80 mts. on either side. Within 25.50 mts. distance comes the 2nd bastion measuring 10.80 mts. wide at the bottom and 6.60 mts. Frontal projection on the right side, and 7.35 mts. on the left side. Here the height of the wall ranges between 25 and 30 ft. The third bastion is noticed after 42.80 mts. distance with 11.80 mts. width at the base and a frontal projection of 10.65 and 7.80 mts. on the right and left sides respectively. Immediately after this comes the postern or sally port about 2.40 mts high and 1.35 mts wide with a covered roof above. Thus there are 9 bastions in this section of the wall. After the 6th begins the moat, measuring about 5.20 mts., deep and 14 mts. wide. Near the 7th bastion is seen the spring Nagajhari which supplies water to the fort inside, through a stone cistern. After the 8th bastion is a low supporting wall, with a narrow wall-walk, emerging from the main one. In its front face, is a row of 40 arched hood stones, pierced with loop holes. Then comes the 9th bastion, at the south-eastern corner, which differs in shape from the others, it being semi-circular. On the top are five box like openings. There are three corbels protruding forward, to support the arches in the middle section above.³⁰

From here, the wall takes a turn towards west, running in east-west directions. On this side, i.e. southern side, is also seen the

low retaining wall, about 3 It. high with an open space of about 30 mts. wide. The wall on this side also bears several crenellations and loop holes. Immediately after the 1st bastion comes a sally port at the foot of the wall within a distance of 68 mts. comes the 2nd bastion, measuring 11 mts. wide at the base and 7 mts. Forward projection on the right and 7.30 mts. on the left. The 3rd bastion circular in shape, measures about 20 mts. in circumference. After the 4th which is also circular, the wall recedes inward, making a projection. Within this is a sally port, about 2.30 mts. high and 10.70 mts. long with a covered roof above. In the south-western corner is seen the moat connected to the river on the out side. There is also a cistern with two partitions in it. From here one has to proceed along the wall from inside, which begins near *Rajulacheruvu*. The rampart or battlement here is climbed by means of a flight of steps. Within the parapet of the battlement on the south, is a secret passage provided with stone doors, about 4' high and entrance gap of 1.6 mts. The bastions on the inside are square on plan. There are altogether four square bastions upto the south-western corner. The 5th bastion is smaller than the rest. From the 6th bastion, which is semi-circular in shape, the wall turns towards north, i.e. western wall running in south-north direction. Near this is a circular watch tower, about 100 mts. in circumference and provided with steps for ascent on either side [Plate. 32].

The main wall is provided with a wide battlement or wall-walk, about 20' wide. At the outer edge is the parapet of merlons, rising on a platform with a width of 4 ft. The 1st bastion in this wall measures 8 mts. wide at the base and 5 mts. frontal projections. The 2nd has a basal width of 6 mts, and 7 mts. projection. After this the wall proceeds for considerable distance, about 134' long and ruined in the middle. Again the wall continues further, and the 3rd measures 7 mts. wide with 6 mts. projection. After a distance of 129 ft. long comes

the 4th which is 5 mts. wide at the base and 7 mts. projection. Then is reached 5th after a gap of 125' measuring 55.18 mts. wide and 8 mts. Projections. There are 23 courses in all in this wall, built of crude blocks of stone of irregular size. It has an entrance on the south near *Rajulacheruvu*. The south and western walls are very much damaged originally built of mud, it shows stone veneering on the outer face.

Mini-Charminar : Immediately after entering the interior of the fort through the main gate on the east, is noticed the Mini Charminar, which draws our attention, bearing close similarity to the famous Charminar in Hyderabad. A roughly square structure, it rises on four slender pillars in the four cardinal directions with a vaulted opening on four sides, one in each. Above the vaulted arch is a scroll design, as in the main entrance, each arch height is 15ft. and width 8 ft. Above it are two decorated corbels supporting the structure above, under a protruding corbel. There are two storeyes above with a perforated screen wall on either side and a vaulted arch in the centre. Above the 2nd storey are four corner turrets, circular in design and connected by means of some arched openings below. Above it is a small arcade with mini domes, in a row. From the corner turrets rise the minarets, with a circular dome pointed on the top. The height of the entire structure is about 60 ft. and 10 ft square. Although it bears close resemblance to the Charminar at Hyderabad, it differs from it in many respects. Firstly, the corner pillars at Gandikota are square, whereas those at Hyderabad are circular. There are no screen walls and closed rooms in it as at Gandikota. The common points of similarity are its square outline and the minarets with domes. While the Hyderabad one is of large dimensions, the later is a poor imitation and humble in proportions [Plate. 28].

Juma Masjid : Proceeding further towards west along the main road, by the side of Charminar, is reached the *Kattula Koneru*. To its west is

located the famous *Juma masjid*. This mosque is a huge rectangular structure with semi circular arches on either side. It has several moulded bays on the outside. The outside corridor measuring 207 ft. long, and 260 ft wide and height 15 ft with the corridor hall 10.2 ft. wide. Inside corridor 239 × 239 ft wide and 201 × 201 ft long and 10.2 ft height measuring there. The outside corridor has a row of 17 decorated arches. The central arches are 10 ft height and 6 ft wide. The walls are plain except for the south side where a central arched recess in two planes frames the entrance. Corridor and other spaces, (rather than a series of separate and differently designed building standing with in a compound).

Masjid : The masjid is another structure in the Gandikota fort. Masque built in typical Deccan style with a domed roof in the centre. It has two minars at the corners, surmounted by rectangular domes. At four side are arched windows. Traces of plaster decoration include medallions filled with arabesque designs, and friezes of ribbed element and scrollwork. The architecture is also much more focused on the interior with its elaboration of columns, arches friezes and vaults [Plate. 33].

Jail : Proceeding towards southern side of the Mini Charminar is seen the Jail, entered through side entrance on the south and north. Inside of it is a central hall on a low ground with cells on either side, measuring hall 16 ft wide, 35 ft long and 50.20 ft height. Below it is a stair case leading to the bottom of the cell on either side, about soft deep. The ceiling has a flat circular space with a single aperture meant for ventilation [Plate. 29].

Granary : Adjacent to it in the north is the granary known as Bungalow comprising a huge hall, ascended by a flight of steps. Inside, is a big hall supported by twelve pillars, six in each row, each

measuring about 18 mts high. The hall itself measures 37 mts. long and 13.50 mts. wide. The ceiling consists of vaulted arches in the middle with small opening in the top section of the wall and a number of windows. On its right stands the *Ranganayaka* temple, built on high *adhithana* facing east. In the courtyard is the *Natya* or *Rangamantapa* in the south-west corner [Place. 34].

The temple has a *garbhagrha*, *antarala* and a pillared *mukhamandapa*. The pillars are profusely carved, depicting scenes from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavata*. There are 4 rows of pillars with 5 feet in each row. On the exterior of the *garbhagrha* are several line drawings depicting Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, Mahishamardani and scenes of *Dasavataras*. There are also erotic figures in the *adhithana* part.

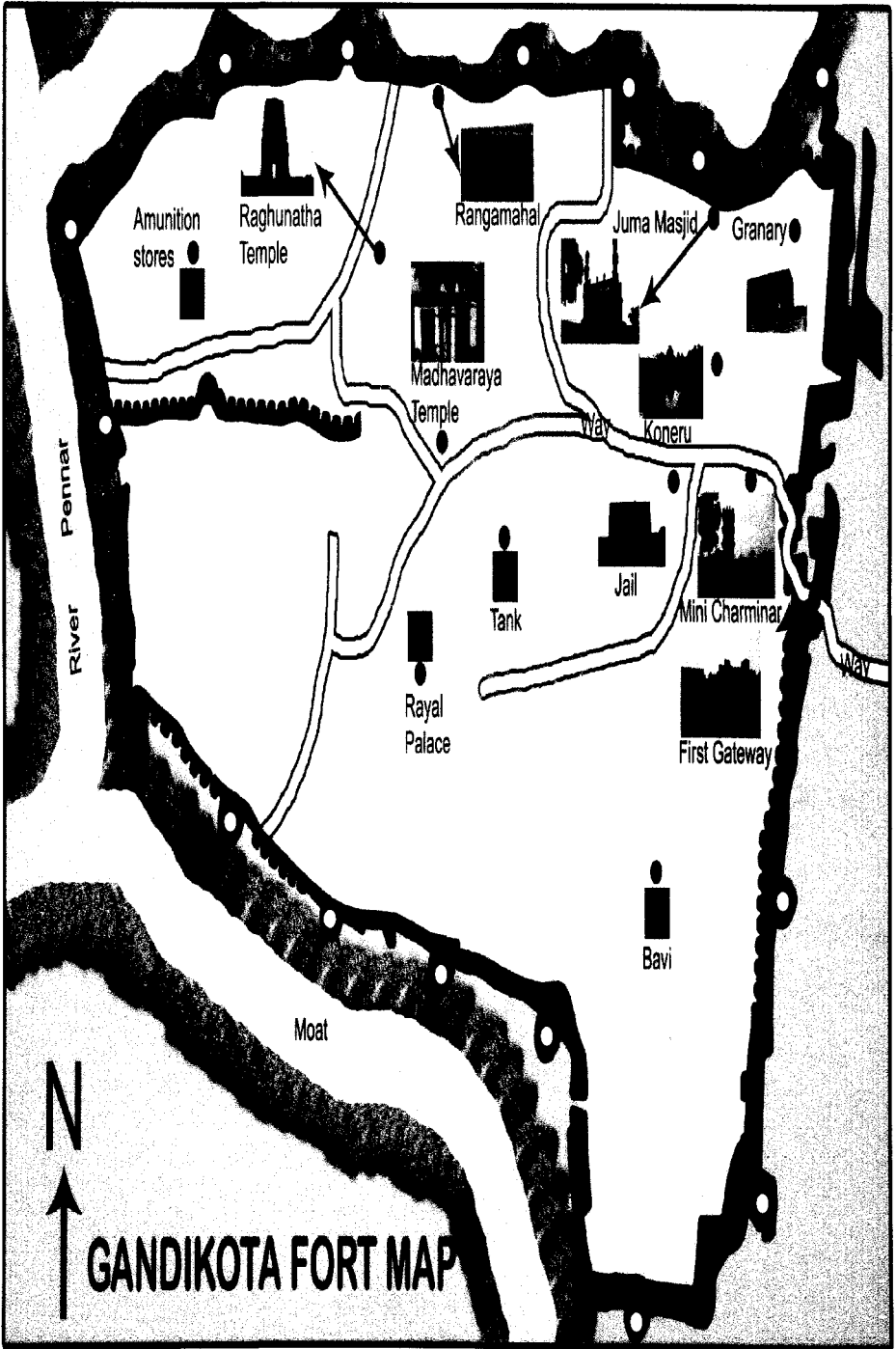
There is a magazine godown, near the western wall and traces of ruined palace called Rangamahall. Within this are noticed several porcelain sherds typical of the Qutbshahi period.

Water Resources : The main water sources for the fort, are *Rajulacheruvu*, situated on the southern side, behind Madhavaraya temple. It is a big reservoir, with a wall on the east, thus preventing its downward flow. There is another tank called *Kattula Koneru*, on the north in front of the masjid. Besides, there are two springs outside the fort called *Nagajhuri* and *Erracheruvu*. A magnificent feature is the existence of under-ground cisterns, by means of pipes made of earth like the conduit pipes of the Qutbshahi period as noticed at Golkonda.

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GANDIKOTA FORT

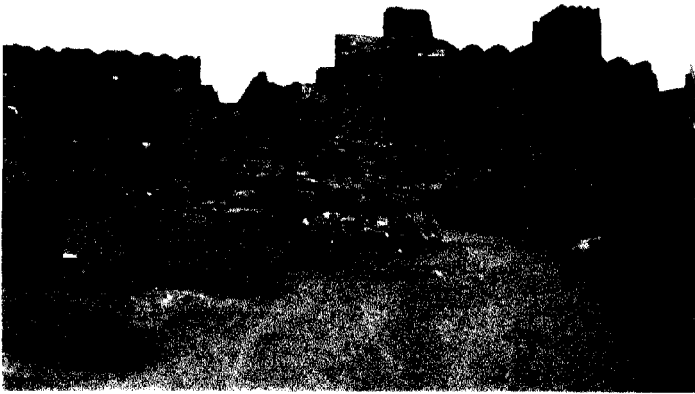


Plate 27 : View of First Gateway



Plate 28 : View of Mini Charminar

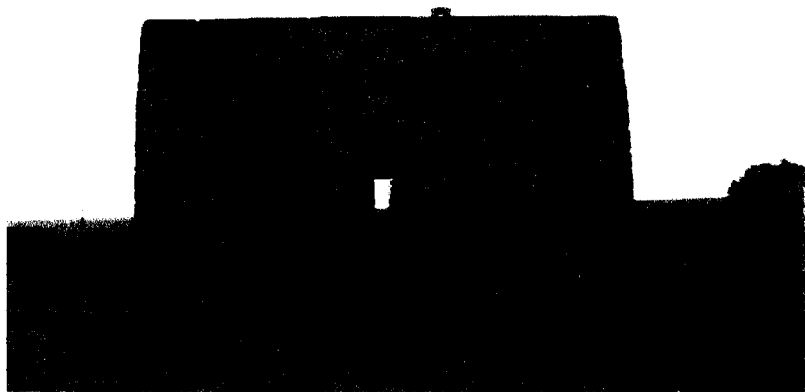


Plate 29 : View of Jail



Plate 30 : View of Madhavaraya Temple

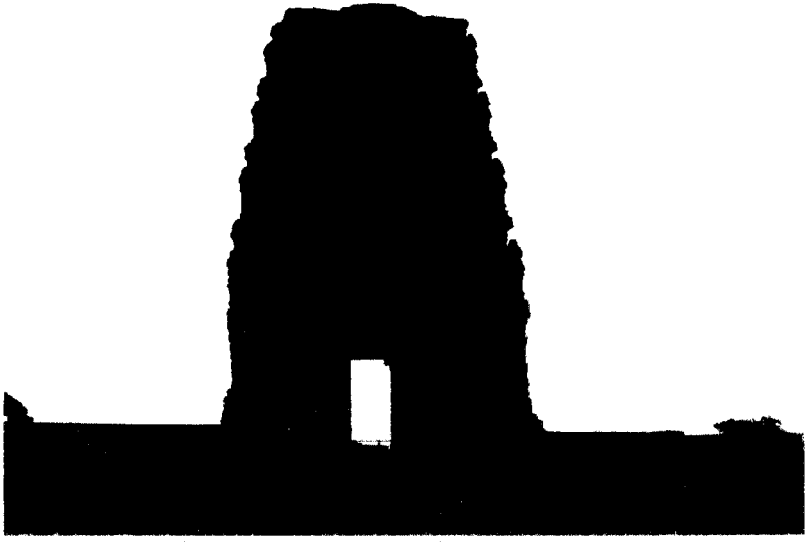


Plate 31 : View of Raghunodha Temple



Plate 32 : View of Kattula Koneru



Plate 33 : View of Juma Masjid

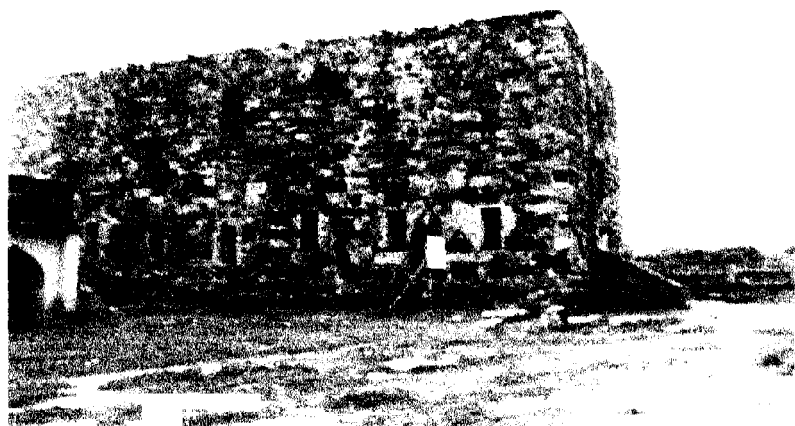


Plate 34 : View of Granary

III.5. GUTTI FORT

History of Gutti

Gutti fort town and the headquarters of a mandal in Anantapur district was another important *rajya* in the Vijayanagara empire. It lies on Madras – Mumbai railway line and situated about 50 km away from Anantapur. Gutti had a large history, scholars trace the existence of this place as the chief town of an administrative division to early as the days of Chalukyas of Badami.¹ In the beginning of Vijayanagara empire it assumed importance as a strategic place and provided a base for the expansion of the empire. Gutti served as a Nelevidu (camping place) for Harihara I who ruled over Sindavadi with its capital at Adavani, modern Adoni in the neighboring Kurnool district. An inscription from Gutti engraved on a rock in the fort belonging to the time of Bukka I calls this place as ‘novel to the wheel of sovereignty.’² During this period it guarded the western frontiers of

the Vijayanagara kingdom and prevented Hoyasala incursions. Bukka I was appointed governor of this *rajya* and actually stayed at Gutti till his capture of Penugonda from the Hoyasalas in 1347 A.D.

During the Vijayanagara rule, Gutti *rajya* is changed into several sub-divisions and appears that the region around Gutti itself was formed into a *sima* as a part of the bigger *rajya*. Several inscriptions of the period mention this *sima* as Gutti *sima* and occasionally Jagapati – Gutti-*sima*³ perhaps it was named after a person who bore the title Jagapati. It was also known as Gutti-*durgam-sima* because of the fort in it. On the basis of the villages mentioned in the inscriptions that the Gutti-*rajya* was spread over Anantapur district and covering partly the western portion of the Cuddapah district during the Vijayanagara period.

During the rule of Srikrishnadevaraya Gutti enjoyed the status of *rajya* or province. Saluva Govindaraja, the brother of raja's accredited minister Saluva Timma, the prime minister in 1513 A.D. was its ruler. The Tadipatri inscription of Srikrishnadevaraya dated 1513 A.D. introduces the king subordinate Saluva Govindaraya and records the gift of land situated in Gutti-*sima* of his nayamkara, to the Ramadeva of Tadipatri for conducting the offerings.⁴ Through it is not specifically stated in the record that he was the governor, the fact is indicated by the statement that he made certain grants of the villages in Gutti-*sima*. Earlier in the reign of Vira Narasimha, Saluva Timma himself stated to have received this *rajya* as nayamkara from the king. This information is mentioned in an inscription at Tadipatri dated 1508 A.D. during the reign of Saluva Narasimha.⁵

During the reign of Achyutaraya the officer of nayamkara of Gutti was bestowed upon mahamandaleswara Singamaraya. The Tadipatri inscription of Achyutaraya dated 1531 A.D. records the gift

of land in *Gutti-sima* to the god Ramesvaradeva by Mahamandaleswara Singamarajaya, the son of Srinatha Ramaraju for the merit of the king. In the inscription the donor Singamaraju is stated to be holding the nayamkara of *Gutti-rajya*.⁶

After Achyutaraya it appears a civic strife that took place between the two factions led by Salakaraju China Tirumala and Aliyaramaraya for the capture of the Vijayanagara throne. After a brief struggle Ramaraya succeeded in securing to reduce of Sadasiva from the captivity in the fort of Gutti and established him as the ruler, him self acting as defecto ruler. It seems from the above that Gutti fort became an important political strategic point during this period. During the reign of Sadasiva, Tirumalaraya was holding the nayamkara of Gutti. The Mannuru inscription of Sadasivaraya dated 1567 A.D. refers to the king and records the construction of *mukhamandapa* of the temple of god Chennakesava by Tirumalayya, while he was governing *Gutti-rajya*.⁷ Later he was followed by Koneti Rangaraju. It is evident that at the time of the battle of Rakshasa-Tangadi, a certain Timma held the fort of Gutti, who contributed 191, 176 hons towards the expenses of the battle.⁸

During the Aravidu dynasty Gutti as a boarder province became a target of attack by the neighboring Adilshahis of Bijapur on one hand and the Qutubshahis of Golkonda on the other. Gutti fell for the first to the Golkonda general Amnin-ul-Mulk when Venkatapatiraya II was ruling. However, it was wrested back with in a short period by the latter. Again, during the time of Sri Ranga, Gutti was occupied by Mir Jumla who laid to siege to the fort. Since the siege was long drawn out and protracted and the fort would not yield. Mir Jumla took it by escalade and appointed Mir Mohammad as incharge of the fort. Since then Gutti came under a Qutubshahi possession and continued to be rule as Gutti circar till 1687 A.D.

Gutti also fell into the hands of the Mughals after the fall of Golkonda and ruled by a general Ghiyasuddin Khan governor of Adoni. In 1754 A.D. came a new master for Gutti, i.e., Murari Rao Ghorpade, who effected several repairs to the fort and strengthened it and ruled over it for 20 years i.e., 1776 A.D. when the new rising Carnatic chief Hyder Ali captured it. He was followed by his son Tippusultan who continued to hold it, till the battle of Srirangapatnam in 1799 A.D. when Col Bowser took it for the Nizam of Hyderabad and later as ceded to the British East India company.⁹

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

Exact information is not available to know the date of its construction. It is evident from the inscription that, Gutti fort occupied a strategic position in the Vijayanagara period or even earlier in the doab of Krishna river.

The fort of Gutti is situated on a high rough cluster of steep and bare rocky hills on the east, north and south, connected by lower spurs. It measures 7 miles in circumference and rises to 1700 ft from the surround ground level. The hills are connected by a strong rampart wall, built of irregular blocks of red granite and pointed with lime mortar and chunam and interspersed with about 100 bastions at regular intervals of distance all along and 14 gateways one inside the other. There are also a number of watch towers flanking the gateways and sally forts called *diddi vakillu*. In short, the defences of Gutti comprise 7 rampart walls, one with in the other, encircling the different peaks of the hill, thus giving the shape of a conch or spiral to the fort.¹⁰

Another important feature of Gutti is the existence of long, wide battlements or wall walks inside the ramparts, protected by

continues parapet on the front face, pierced with loop holes in different tiers and sloping down are the exterior. The bastions, on the other hand, are protected by hooded parapets with intermittent openings with a downward slope. Inside the fort are many structures such as stables for horses, elephants, kitchen, jail, treasury, Rangmahal, the citadel, and finally the palace complex. There are quite a good number of springs with perennial supply of water and wells dug in the plain terrain available.

GATEWAYS :

Passing through this is noticed the continuation of the hill on the left, and the wall on the right. Below the adjoining hill on the left, runs another wall with four bastions in it, near the 1st is a secret passage or covered path, with 1.10 mts, width and 1.45 mts, high. All these bastions are built of cyclopean masonry, with no traces of lime mortar or lime pointing. On the way to the 3rd gate, in the hill on the left side is a small cleft called Gutti bilam, having perennial supply of water. Facing it on the right is an octagonal bastion with 8 openings and a number of arched merlons. Before the 3rd, gate which faces south is a barbican. After this comes the 3rd gate proper, the facade of which is decorated with floral patterns in stucco; with a vaulted arch and pierced with loop holes. Passing through it, the path turns towards right i.e., south, where comes the 4th gate [Plate. 37]. On the way to it are vault shaped sentry boxes five in number with one port-hole in each. After this the path turns leftwards i.e., north. The 4th gateway which faces south, has on the right side the high rock, while on the left is the wall. Its front facade, shows typical Islamic decorative treatment, in plaster, with low platforms inside, as guard rooms. On the top is the richly decorated lintel. On entering this, which has no ceiling above, is seen the high rock on the right, i.e. east, in which is a

small arched *mandapa*. Within it are two carved images of Ganesa and Mahisamardani, engraved on the rock boulder.¹¹

The 5th gate, like the 2nd is another example of the Hindu nature of the fort. It is entered through a low gateway flanked by pilasters built into the door-jamb. Inside are two platforms with a covered ceiling above and four pillars in each, supporting the ceiling. The entrance door-jamb has the typical Vijayanagara motif of Ganga and Yamuna on either side. The pillars in the platform show two different varieties. The middle ones are slender circular ones, whereas the extreme ones consist of a square block, octagonal shaft, square block, and octagonal section above with, 450 cut tendon like corbels. Outside this gateway, is another sentry box. Near here, in the rock, is the image of Anjaneya carved. The 6th Gateway which again faces south, is called Kodiguddu bavi gate. Flanked by two aligning walls on either side, it is devoid of ceiling above. On the right is a watch tower, with a parapet of arches and having architectural designs in plaster. Inside this gate is an oval shaped well, called Kodiguddu bavi. Hence, the name of the gate. Above it is a flight of steps, flanked by two walls on either side.

The 7th gate, like the others, has watch towers on either side. There are two guard rooms inside, with high platforms. After passing through it comes a wall on the left with four bastions. The second is about 8 mts. high. Facing it is a circular chamber, hollow inside, called the Light House. The 3rd is enclosed around. Beyond it, on the way, is a deep circular well called *Peddabavi*, about 150 mt. in diameter, the largest of all in the fort.¹²

Now coming back to the ascent of the fort from the *Peddabavi* in the 7th gate, after walking a few yards distance, we reach the 8th gate, facing north, ascended by a flight of steps and flanked by watch

towers. It is from here-that the Hindu features of the fort become evident, through several Telugu-Kannada inscriptions in late Chalukyan characters and small or miniature temples with Gajalakshmi motif on the lintel. From here the path turns towards right and leads to the 9th gate. There is a huge level space inside, with several Hindu pillars lying scattered. In this area on the south, is an oblong hall with a vaulted ceiling above called Raṅga Mahal. In the interior, it has fine paintings on the ceiling in several colours as black, orange, red and blue, having floral and foliage patterns. Among them the lotus is most outstanding. The walls of either side have arched bays in each. Behind it on the south-east is a huge circular bastion with a floral design below. From this the wall runs towards east, leading to the 10th Gate which faces north in the level space of the 11th gate, are seen traces of a ruined palace complex. It is a big rectangular building, completely ruined except for the base. It is divided into five compartments with bases of pillars seen on the floor. To its west is the magazine. On the left is a flight of steps leading to the 12th gate. Then comes the 14th gate where is reached the summit of the fort. Here lies the famous seat of Morari Rao. It is a huge circular pavilion, having a circumference of 25 mts. and a height of 4.40 mts. It is ascended by a flight of steps on either side.

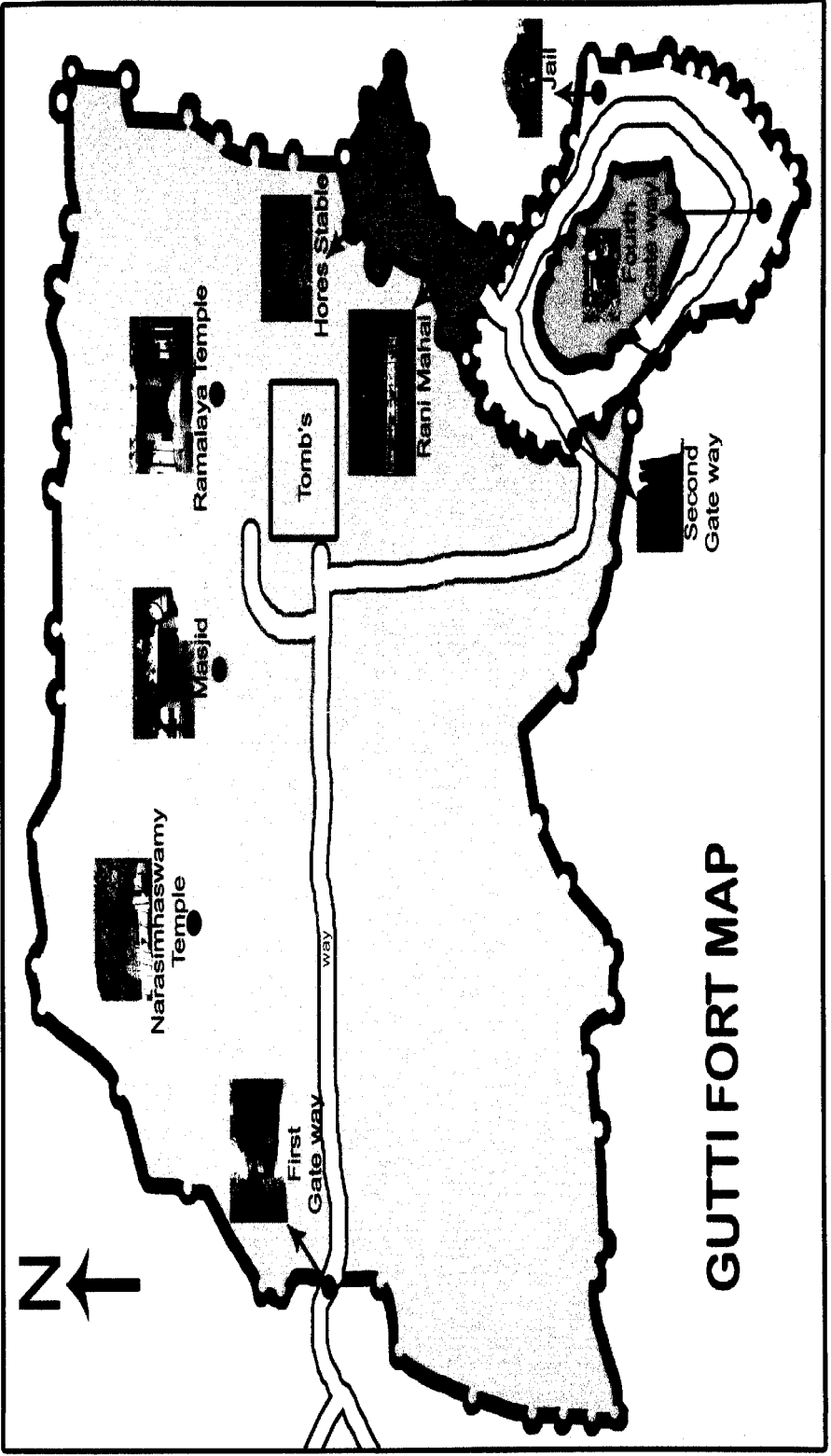
Structures : There are many structures in the fort of Gutti. The few existing ones are the stables for Horses, situated by the side of the square wall in the level space of the 1st gate, the stables for elephants, the kitchen and jail in the 8th gate area, a small temple near the vantasala, bavi, the Ranga Mahal in the 9th gate, and the ruined place complex and treasury with in the 4th gate. Among them the horse stables, is a huge rectangular structure. It consist of the large hall measuring 6 mts. long with 2 side ailes on the north and south about 5.50 mts. wide and 35 mts. long with a vaulted roof above and 6

windows in arch shape on the front side in the east is a pillared gate. It has several buttresses or revetments on the exterior with a sloppy surface. Facing it on the east, on a rock is the stable for elephants with an entrance on the east. It has three compartments inside with arch shaped openings the ceiling about is ruined.

Water resources : Sufficient care is taken to provide water to the garrison of the fort by means of several springs with perennial supply of water. Also there are wells dug with in the level space available in every gate, thus assuring water supply available at every level of the fort. This is because of the irregular nature of the fort. No cisterns or channels are noticed.¹³

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GUTTI FORT MAP

GUTTI FORT



Plate 35 : View of First Gateway



Plate 36 : View of Second Gateway



Plate 37 : View of Fourth Gateway



Plate 38 : View of Ranimahar



Plate 39 : View of Horse Stable



Plate 40 : View of Jail



Plate 41 : View of Rama Temple



Plate 42 : View of Masjid



Plate 43 : View of Narasimhaswamy Temple

III.6. ADONI FORT

History of Adoni

Adoni is the headquarters of a mandal in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. It lies between 15°38 north latitude and 77°17 east longitude and it is situated about 8 miles from Tumbalam in Adoni, the headquarters of Sindavadi vishaya in medieval times. It was known in the past as 'Yadavagiri' and 'Adavani'. Adoni was once the stronghold of the rulers of Vijayanagara. Muslims later controlled it until 1792 A.D.

Its earliest mention occurs in an inscription belonging to the reign of Someswara III, the western Chalukya king of Kalyana dated 1132 A.D. It mentions a certain mahamandalesvara Bachabhupa as ruling over Sindavadi in which included Adoni.¹ From the inscription we learn that Adoni was in existence ever since the times of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, first quarter of 12th century A.D.

After the Chalukyas of Kalyana, Adoni passed into the hands of the Yadavas of Devagiri, who became their political successors in the region. An inscription at Basarakodu dated 1278 A.D. belonging to the reign of Yadava Ramachandradeva states that a certain Kavitala Bhimadeva was ruling over Adoni as a feudatory of Ramachandra.²

It then passed into the hands of Kakatiya Prataparudradeva when Gonavithala, brother of Gonnareddi commander of Prataparudra captured Adoni. The establishment of Vijayanagara empire marked a new beginning in the history of Adoni. Adoni became the headquarters of the border province of the Vijayanagara and helped them expand their empire. In the early inscriptions of the Sangamas, we find Harihara-I ruling from Adoni with Gutti as his Nelavidu.³ Bukka-I crossed the Tungabhadra and captured Mudgal fort and ever since this time Mudgal in Raichur and in fact the entire doab between Krishna and Tungabhadra, became a bone of contention between the Hindus and the Muslims. Mahammad shah, the Bahamani sultan crossed the Tungabhadra and invaded Adoni fort in 1366 A.D. A great battle was fought and it went against the Hindu army.⁴ Vira-Channappa-odaya claims to have conquered the Muhammadans who were encroaching upon Adoni durgam. He took possession of the fortress and presented it to Harihara-II. This encounter of Channappa with the Muhammadans near Adoni must have been in connection with the continued fight between the Hindus and the Muhammadans which began in the later part of Bukka's reign.⁵

After this appears a period of gloom in the history of Adoni for the centre of political and military activity shifted from the doab region to coastal and Telangana regions. Adoni comes to light again during the reign of Vira Narasimha of the third dynasty, when a certain Kachappa Odaya, the commander of Adoni raised the standard of rebellion in collusion with the rebellious pategars of Ummattur and

Bijapur chief Yousuf Adilshah. As per their programme, Yousuf Adilshah proceeded against Kananavolu, with the sole object of joining the forces of Kachappa at Adoni and from there to move against Vijayanagara.⁶

Krishnadevaraya planned an assault of the forts situated in the Bijapur Sultanate but meanwhile the chiefs of the forts themselves surrendered and offered presents in token of their allegiance to him. He treated them kindly and aggressioned the fort of Adoni, Mudgallu, Raichur and other strong places with his own men as did Raghumaraja of yore, and prepared to proceed against the city of Golkonda.⁷ In the inscription of Krishnadevaraya dated 1512 A.D. states that while Kattige Kamana-nayaka was in charge of the fortress of Adoni his Manehagara, Chinkala, Tirumala bove and Senabova Timmarasa issued certain orders regarding the manufacture of salt in some villages belonging to Adapada macha of Minagondi in Adoni division.⁸

An inscription of Achyutadevaraya dated 1534 A.D. records the gift of the village Bommalapura, on the bank of the river Tungabhadra situated in the Satanuru-sima, a division of Adoni *rajya*, to Bhuatara Nagayya son of Kadabura Redyapayya of the Bhatanvaya.⁹ From about 1560 A.D. onwards to the last years of Sadasivas reign, we find Adoni in the possession of a certain Venkatadriraja. He was followed by his son Koneti Kondaraju as the commandent to the fort of Adoni who declared independence.¹⁰ In 1568 A.D. after the fall of Vijayanagara, in the Tallikota battle, Ferishta says that Ali Adilsha of Bijapur made a bid for Adoni and invaded. At that time Koneti Kondaraju, according to the kaifiyat of Adoni, offered stiff resistance but had to give way finally for the first time to the Muslim invader. According to it, the attack was led by Wazir Daulatkhan who besieged the fort for 2 years and 3 months.

The Sultan, after capturing the fort, appointed Malik Rahmankhan, as the governor of the fortress who resided there for 39 years and whose tomb can still be seen. During this period, the inscriptions mention two persons namely Gollala Nagarasa and Tipparasa exercising authority over Adoni for one year. Malik Rahmankhan was succeeded by Abdul Wahabkhan as governor of Adoni during the time of Ibrahim Adilshah-II.¹¹

The entire Rayalaseema, except the areas of Kurnool and Adoni were occupied by the Qutubshahis of Golkonda, whereas those two passed under the Adilshahis of Bijapur. Kurnool was wrested from Gopalaraju a grand-son of Aliya Ramaraya by Abdul Wahabkhan for Adilsha who appointed him as its first governor.¹² Yusuf Adilkhan became the master of the territories upto the banks of the Tungabhadra this acquisition whetted the appetite of Adilkhan. He appears to have entered into an alliance with Kaca or Kasappa odaya the governor of the fort of Adoni.¹³ According to the earlier understanding with Ahmadnagar, Ali Adilsha dispatched in 1570 A.D. a force against the fortress of Adoni, which was held at this time by one of the late Ramaraya's principal officers, who on the death of his master, had declared independence. Anukakhan the Bijapur general attacked Adoni with eight thousand strong horses, a large body of infantry, and a considerable train of several indecisive skirmishes were fought on the plain till, at length, the chief shut himself up in the fortress which was well supplied with stores and provision. But the vigour of the attack finally captured the fortress of Adoni.¹⁴

Venkatappa Nayaka of Keladi led the attack against Bankapur at one end, and laid siege to the fortress of Adoni which was held by Bijapur. Adoni was almost on the point of surrendering for want of provisions when calamity overtook Burham and Ibrahim Nizam.¹⁵

Following the disintegration of the Vijayanagara kingdom, the taluk of Adoni remained under the Muhammadan rulers of the Deccan with varying fortunes. Permapah, the talayari of the village of Gangandlah in Kurnool obtained the Kaval of Adoni from the Sultans of Bijapur. In 1687 A.D. Aurangzeb the Mughal emperor annexed Bijapur and sent Ghazi-ud-dinkhan to reduce Adoni. But as per tradition, from 1688 to 1702 A.D. Adoni was governed by two Rajus named Anupsingh and Bhimasingh and Ghazi-ud-din became the governor only in 1703 A.D. In 1724 A.D. when Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah, the Mughal suberdar of Deccan declared his independence and established the Asaf Jahi dynasty with the capital at Hyderabad and Adoni became a part of Niazam's kingdom. In 1756 A.D. Adoni was granted as a jaghir to Basalat jang by Njazijang, the Nizam Ud-Doulah Chandasahib, the neyayet chief on his release from Maratha confinement, proceeded to collect tribute from the palegar of Adoni on behalf of Muzaffarjang. Thus Adoni became the bone of contention among the major powers.¹⁶

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

The fortification of Adoni surrounded a group of five hills which stand in irregular circle and enclosed between them a considerable area of lower ground. The pathway up to this from the town leads with three large gates connected with three lines of walls one above the other. At the bottom between the first and second walls, are Sidi Masaudkhan's well already mentioned, which is just west of the lower gate, another well shown by an inscription on it to have been built by Kiza Ambar a 'dian' of Hindus temples, some of which contain odds and ends of well carved stone, and some mosques, none of which are of architectural beauty. The highest of the five hills of the fort is the northern most, called the *Barakhilla*, on the top of which are the ruins of the old magazines and a quaint stone cannon. To its

west comes the *Talibanda*, on which stands a large pipal tree which is a conspicuous land mark for many miles round, and the other three going from west to east are *Hazara-sidi*, *Dharma-betta* and *Tasina-betta*.

Part of the way up the *Barakhilla*, under an enormous boulder and faced by a conspicuous banyan tree, are the oldest and most curious antiquities in the place, namely some Jain tirthankaras, in the usual attitude of cross-legged meditation, carved upon the rock. Three of them are about nine inches high and opposite these are three other large and more elaborate figures, the biggest of which is some three feet in height. This has curly hair, long ears, up-turned palms and the absence of clothing usual in such representation and above it is a sacred umbrella with four tiers.¹⁷ The Jain marwaris of Adoni have recently built a wall in front of these three large images and now do worship to them. The figures seem to have been little known previously. These Jains had the third of the larger images, that on the left of the spectator carved there to match the other two and they have unfortunately made some attempt to restore these others. Like the similar hermitage in the Rayadurga fort, the spot is perhaps the most picturesquely situated and commands the finest view in all the hill. The early Jains seem to have had an eye for such things. Two tanks supplied the fort with water and cultivation still continues under the lower of them called the *Mocrari tank* just south of this is the *singara masjid* or beautiful mosque, said to be so called because it stood in the *Singaratotam* or beautiful garden, of Masaud khan. It is in no way remarkable architecturally, but is a good example of the manner in which the Musalmans turned the Hindu temple into mosques. The infidel carving has been chipped off the stone pillars. These have been coated with plaster and arches have been built in front of the faced, but within the building are the horizontal Hindu carvings with their

ornament still untouched. Almost every one of the several small mosques within the fort, none of which are deserving of detailed description bears signs or have been constructed in part with pillars or other materials looted from Hindu temples. In one case, that of a small mosque east of the main route up the fort, the plaster has peeled off and revealed an inscription recording that the building is a temple to Rama built in 1517 A.D. in the time of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara. Doubtless there are other similar records hidden under the plaster in other similar buildings. South of Singara masjid in a similar situation at the foot of a huge wall of sheer rock is *Malik Rahiman's tomb* already referred to. The tombs near it are those of his wives and offspring, and part of the building was obviously once a Hindu temple.¹⁸

This work was completed during the time of Yadavaraya, when the fort had 6 walls which go by the names *Tasina-betta*, to its west is *Bhadrakallu* and *Hazarusidi* to its west and in the north west is *Bhuvanakottala*. Another important hill is *Ranamandala*, where lord Hanuman is said to have killed several Turks besides the *Barakhilla*. To its east *Panjalakottala* where was kept a cannon. The western gate way on the *Barakhilla* is known as *Buvadevametta* named after the mother of Gollara Mallappa. To its east is a sally port *Nelajundi-diddi* and on the south *Kukkala-diddi* other gateways are *Chamantekivi*, *Andhom-diddi*, *Mallamma-diddi* etc. The outer gate way lies near kasha called Mullagiri. The ascent up the hill from the north has several inner entrances. They are *Kempagiri-vakili*, *Chimabella-giri belevakili* and *Tummalam-darwaja*.

Siddi Masudkhan strengthened the fortification near *Mullagiri-darwaja* and built a bastion called *Ambaru-buruzu* and also dug a wall. From there he built the wall in the north on the

Nallacheruvu-gattu and built a bastion by name *Sidilu-buruzu* and connected the *Kolikallu-vakili*.¹⁹

The present town of Adoni is apparently not older than the Musalman occupation in 1568 A.D. previously perhaps there were few dwelling outside the fort walls. It is divided into nine pettahs of which one, Venkannapet, is named after Sidi Masaudkhan's diwan and another Babanaya, after his son.

The buildings of interest in it are *Balalat Jangs* tomb, Venkanna's well and the Jumma masjid. *Balalat Jangs* tomb lies west of the town and is a picturesque spot, shaded by margosa trees. His wife lies beside him. The grave itself is marked by a small erection made of the handsome red porphyritic granite and the finegrained greenstone on the fort hill. In the fields of the west is a big idga which *Balalat jang* is said to have built.²⁰ The Masjids well known popularly as *Venkanna bavi* is a fine work constructed in cut stone masonry 60 yards square and about 40 feet in depth, the water looks in blakish.

Jumma masjid

The Jumma masjid, as has been said, is the finest piece of Muhammadan architecture. It is stated to have cost two lakhs and to have taken two years and nine months to erect. A photograph of it is given in Fergusson's Bijapur architecture and Meadows Taylor there describes it as a fine specimen of the florid architecture of the period, and more elegant, perhaps than any building of its kind in Bijapur itself. He notes, however, several traces of Hindu influence in its details such as the balconies and panels of the minarets, the latter of which contain figures of Hindu form and foliage of a design which though very exquisite, is not saracenic. The mosque is built within a

count surrounded by an enclosing wall the gateway in which faces it and in front of it is the usual pool for the ablutions of the congregation. Built into its fine façade are fifteen black stone slabs on which are carved, in Persian praises of the mosque and its builder and several verses giving the date of its completion as 1079 A.D. Hijri within the mosque are two doorways delicately carved out of black stone and many paintings, in geometrical and floral designs with pictorial scenes from the Quran. They are well executed in a style met within many Muhammadans buildings in the north of India, but more seldom in the south tradition says that the last of the Bijapur sultans sent sidi Masaudkhan a stone slab or tray on which were borne a thousand pieces of gold for the mosque. The stone was built into the mosque and is still shown, and the money was spent on decorating the building.²¹

On each side of the court in which the mosque stands are two mandapas supported on polished black stone pillars of Chalukyan design other pillars of the same style stand within the court, and from either end of the cornice hang two long chains each indigenously carved from a single piece of fine grained green stone. Local tradition and some of the manuscripts already referred to agree in saying that all these were looted from the Chalukyan temple at Peddatumbalam.

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ADONI FORT

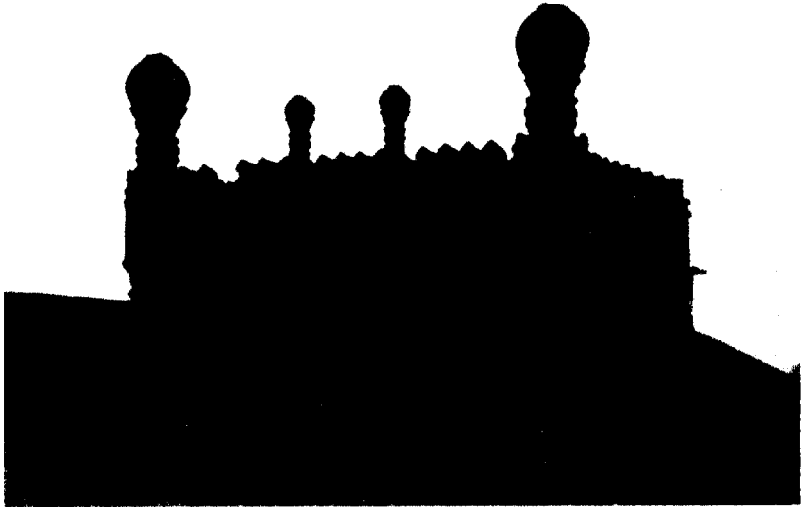


Plate 44 : View of Jumma Masjid



Plate 45 : View of Gateway



Plate 46 : View of Buruju

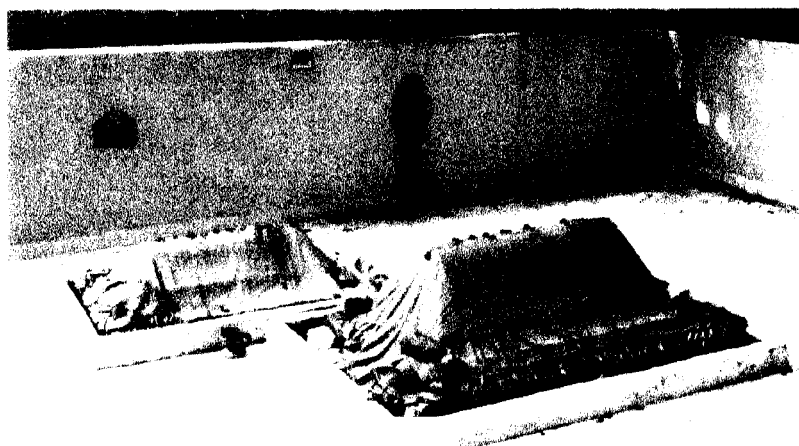


Plate 47 : View of Basalat Jangs Tombs

III.7. KURNOOL FORT

History of Kurnool Fort

The Kurnool fort is located in the heart of Kurnool and is one of the prominent land marks of the town. The present Kurnool fort (Kandenavolu Durgam) is said to have been built by Achyutadevaraya (1530-1542 A.D.) of the Vijayanagara empire. The fort played a significant role in Vijayanagara history.

The discovery of Asokan edicts at Rajula Mandagiri and at Erragudi attest that these territories in the Deccan formed part of the Mauryan empire. These territories constituted into a separate province, were under aryaputra or leiu apparent, with his capital at Suvarnagiri. Suvarnagiri is identified by some historians with Jannagiri in the Pattikonda taluk of this district.¹ After Mauryas, the region was ruled over by Satavahanas, Badami Chalukyas, Rastrakutas, Chalukyas of Kalyani and Kakatiyas of Warangal. After

the fall of the Kakatiya kingdom in 1323 A.D. this district passed under the sway of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq who divided the Deccan and south India into five provinces and placed them under governors. The rule of these governors became unpopular and there were uprisings throughout the length and breadth of the Tughluq empire resulting in the establishment of the kingdoms of the Reddis, the rayas of Vijayanagara and the Bahamani. The eastern portion of Kurnool district came under the sway of the Reddi rulers who regarded themselves as masters of the south eastern portion of the Kakatiya dominion. A portion of Kurnool in the west extending from Ahobilam to Srisailam came under Vijayanagara, during Harihara's reign Adoni and soon became an important town.²

The information is very meagre regarding the history of Kurnool fort upto the rise of third dynasty. It is stated that Araviti Ramaraja was a general under Krishnadevaraya's father and that at the latter's instance Araviti Ramaraja drove Yusuf Adilsavoi from Kurnool, and he was subsequently sent to Kurnool as a Jaghir from the raja of Vijayanagara. The defeat of the Savoi is also referred to in the Telugu poem *Ramarajeeyamu* of Venkayya where the poet says that Araviti Ramaraja made Kurnool his capital.³ It is stated in the same work that Araviti Ramaraya's father Araviti Bukka married on Abbaladevi a daughter of the chieftain of Nandyala and that by descendants through her, ruled as feudatory chiefs at Nandyala.

Aliya Ramaraja and his brothers were incharge of the district of Adoni, Gutti, Penugonda, Gandikota and Kurnool during the days of Krishnadevaraya, and that those districts seem to have been all along in their special charge. Every thing points to the conclusion that the district of Kurnool was the principality of the Araviti rulers before they became the emperors of Vijayanagara.⁴

With the fall of the Vijayanagara empire in the well known battle of Tallikota in 1565 A.D. the Sultan of Bijapur got as his share the territorial gains which included the Doab, Adoni, Nandyala and Kurnool. But for over forty years the Bijapur did not occupy these territories. In the beginning of the seventeenth century only the Bijapur general Abdulwahab. Abyssinisan, took Kurnool which was held by Gopalaraja, a grandson of Ramaraya. The raja escaped through the northern gate of the fort known as Gopal darwaza, Abdulwahab, then over ran Nandyala, Sirivel and Bethemcherla. He ruled as Bijapur governor of Kurnool for sixteen years 1602-1618 A.D. He was succeeded by his brother Mahammadkhan who governed the territory from 1618 A.D. to 1680 A.D..⁵

After 1687 A.D., Aurangazeb attacked Adoni, Kurnool and Nandyal in quick succession and renamed Kurnool and Nandyala as Qamarnagar and Ghazipur respectively in 1724 A.D. Nizam-ul-Mulk invaded the Deccan, defeated and killed the Jagirdar of Kurnool and founded the Asafjahi dynasty. Hyder Ali of Mysore collected tributes from the nawab of Kurnool and Cuddapah in 1767 A.D. and 1768 A.D. respectively.⁶ There are two conflicting account as to how Khizarkhan became the Jagirdar of Kurnool. According to one accounts, the Kurnool Jagir was conferred on Khizarkhan in 1651 A.D. by Aurangazeb, the subedar of the Deccan. According to another account, it was Mohammad Adilsha of Bijapur who bestowed the Jagir title on Khizarkhan Panni. On the death of Khizarkhan, his illustrious son Dawoodkhan was confirmed as the Jagirdar of Kurnool for his valuable services done to the Mughal empire. He was a well known Pathan general with great skill and talents. Aurangazeb set him as a deputy to Zulfikarkhan son of the grand Wazir Asadkhan, in the invasion of the Carnatic. Dawood khan captured in 1698 A.D. the

fortress of Gingi, the then capital of the Carnatic while Kurnool was ruled by his deputy.⁷

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

The fort was built with red sand stones. It is believed that the stones were brought from *Jagannatha gutta* on the outskirts of Kurnool. The fort consists of *Kondareddy-buruju*, *Gopal-diddi*, *Erra-buruju*, circular bastions, fort walls etc which are mentioned below.

Gopal-diddi or darwaja : It is named after Araviti Gopalaraja, the last Hindu king of Kurnool. It is the northern gateway of the fort. It is on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra river. The northern gateway popularly known as *Gopala-darwaja* has an interesting story to tell. The Hindu chieftain Gopalaraja was a born hero and his local force was outnumbered by the invading army of Abdulwahab. Undaunted, he took his bath in the Tungabhadra river early in the morning, worshipped Sri Venugopalaswamy, his titular deity and marched against the Muslim army. He fought very bravely against heavy odds, killed many soldiers and died a hero's death at the feet of Sri Anjaneya Temple near the gateway. There are sculptures on the walls of the fort like mythical lion, *Boddu-devara* (Yellamma or Sunkulamma) etc.

KONDA REDDY BURUJU

Araviti Gopalaraja was the last Hindu King of Kurnool. He was defeated by Abdulwahab, a general of the Bijapur sultan. It was Kondareddy, a pategar of Prathakota in Nandikotkur taluk, who refused to accept the suzerainty of Abdulwahab. Kondareddy was imprisoned and he later died in the underground cell here. Hence it derived the name of *Kondareddy buruju*. It is divided into four parts.

Underground floor : On the eastern side, there is an underground floor. It has a small garden and a guard room and is supported by four rows of pillars in the south-eastern corner. There is a flight of steps (numbering forty) leading to the first floor.

First floor : There are four big guard rooms and two small guard rooms here. On the left side and the right side, there are steps leading to the second floor. In the middle, there are steps leading to the underground chamber or cellar. It is believed that there is an underground tunnel from Kondareddy fort to Alampur via Tungabhadra river. It must have been a secret chamber of an important minister or commander.

Second floor : There are seven guard rooms built of stone. They are facing the west. There are thirty-four stone structures on the western side with small holes. Through these holes, the rulers were attacking the enemy with gunpowder. The Vijayanagara symbols like lion and elephant are found on these structures. These sculptures, though small in size, are very attractive.

Third floor : There are seven guard rooms built of bricks. They are facing the east. There is a *stupa* like structure measuring nearly forty feet in height.

Nawab's palace and boat : It is located on the banks of the sacred river Tungabhadra. From Sri Nagareswaraswamy temple, there is a road leading to the Nawab's Palace. It was the official residence of the Hindu kings of the Araviti dynasty. It is a picturesque building. Later, the Muslims occupied it. The nawab's boat shaped palace is located in the midst of the Tungabhadra river, It must have been the summer palace. It has several rooms. Now, it is in ruins. On the banks of the Tungabhadra river, there is a fort wall stretching from Sri Saibaba

temple upto Bandlametta. The walls are 6 feet in breadth, were built chiefly to protect the town from floods, to the Tungahhadra and Handri (Aindravathi) rivers. There are also circular bastions at Bandlametta, fruit bazaar and also at Harischandra ghat (Hindu burial ground) near Jammi tree on the banks of the Handri (Aindravathi) river. On the fort wall at Madhawa street, there are sculptural representations of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu like fish, tortoise and other figures of snake, lion, elephant, horses etc. The eastern gate leading to the Tungabhadra river was built of stone. It is very big and attracts the attention of the visitors. The small arch type entrance abutting Sri Narasimhaswamy temple is a fine specimen of Vijayanagara architecture. Khanderi is a street near the nawab's place. It has several ancient buildings which fell into ruins.

Erraburuju : *Erra-buruju* ('erra' means 'red' 'buruzu' means 'watch-tower') one of the ruined fortifications of the Kurnool fort is now in the heart of Kurnool (adjacent to Victory Talkies). It is so called because it was built with red sand-stone. It is circular in form (nearly 300 ft in width) and was surrounded by a moat, in the past. It is connected by a flight of steps on the southern side (Minchin Bazaar).

At the foot of *Erra-buruju*, there are two ancient temples of goddess Yellamma, one is the Pedda Yellamma Temple (on the south-eastern side) and the other one is Chinna Yellamma temple (on the north-eastern side).

Both the temples are now renovated and new idols are installed inside the temples. In the case of Pedda Yellamma temple, the sculptural remains of the original goddess Yellamma (like the left leg and the bust of the goddess) are still preserved. Daily pujas are offered in both the temples. Local people strongly believe that there is a hidden treasure in *Erra-buruju*.

Animal sacrifice: Animal sacrifice has been the social custom of the people since time immemorial. Buffalo (or Devara Dunnapothu as it is called in Telugu) is known to be offered to propitiate goddess Yellamma. This is corroborated by the sculptural representations of a buffalo and goddess Yellamma (Boddu devara as local people call it) on the walls of this *Erra-buruju*.

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KURNOOL FORT



Plate 48 : View of Erraburuju

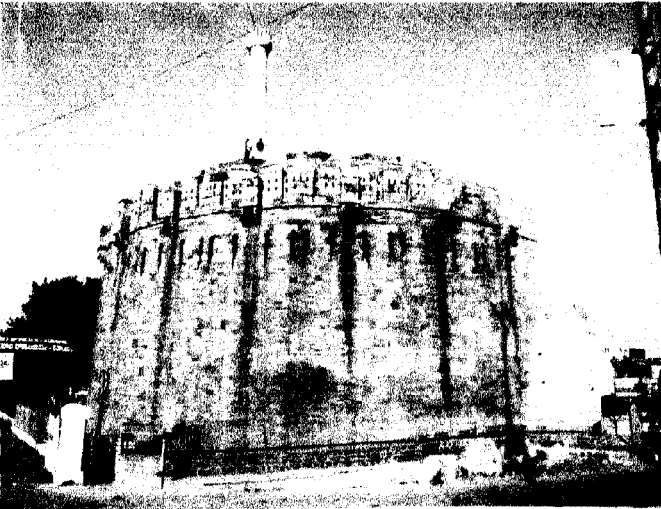


Plate 49 : View of Kondareddy Buruju

III.8. SIDDHAVATTAM FORT

History of Siddhavattam

Siddhavattam is a small village and headquarters of a taluk named after it in Cuddapah district, Andhra Pradesh. Topographically it lies between lat. 14'29N; long. 78'59E. It is some times called Dakshinakasi or the southern Benares. It is said to have derived its name from the Siddhas engaged in *tapas* or meditation under its Vatams or Banyan trees.¹

The historical interest of Siddhavattam centres in its fort; within it are to be seen traces of Hindu temple of which, prior to the Musalman ascendancy. This is attested by numerous inscriptions in the tract surrounding Siddhout. An inscription in Grantha and Tamil character of 1233 A.D. found in the deserted temple of Siddheswara in the Siddhout fort referring to Rajendra - III and mentions the construction of the western *gopura* of temple. The place passed into

the hands of the Matli chiefs who held it as their nayankara during the days of the Vijayanagara.² It was originally a dependency of the Chitvel raja a member of the Matli family and the fort in the town appears originally to have been grounded by a relative of the reigning Chitvel raja named Anantaraja in the year 1303 A.D. and subsequently occupied by the Muslims. It contains several buildings of interest.³

It is interesting to note that they took the title of Devachodamaharaja and claimed descent from the Chola kings, thus establishing their political continuity with the Telugu Cholas who ruled the Madurantaka Pottapi country as feudatories of the Cholas in the 13th century A.D. On the whole the administrative changes that took place seem to be as follows. Under the Vijayanagara kings the Matli family ruled the Pottapi division from Pottapi. There is a tradition that Pottapi was abounded as headquarters on account of its inferior strategically position. The Matlis therefore moved their headquarters to Yerraguntlakota, but this too was finally relegated to the sub divisional officer in-charge of the Pulugunati sub-division, while the old sub-division of Pottapi was administered from Tangutur, and the headquarters of the raja became Chitvel.⁴ Matli chiefs were one of the important subordinate royal family in Udayagiri *rajya* of Vijayanagar.

The Matli chiefs rose to prominence from the time of Srikrishnadevaraya and continued to hold the chieftancy till the first quarter of 18th century A.D. Originally they ruled the northern foot of the Tirumala hill comprising parts of Badvel, Siddhavattam, Cuddapah and Rajampeta taluks with Anantarajupeta near Rajampeta as their capital. The earliest reference to the Matlis is found in an inscription at Tirumala dated 1544 A.D. and belongs to the reign of Sadasivaraya.⁵ It records that Matli Varadaraja the son of

Potaraju and son-in-law of Srikrishnadevaraya gifted 312 rekai-pon as capital to the temple treasury for the daily offering to the Lord Venkateswara.

The Siddhavattam inscription of the time of Venkatapatiraya-II and Matli Anantaraja dated 1605 A.D. is important in the study of the Matlis and Siddhavattam history.⁶ It enumerates the achievements of the Matli Ellamaraja and his son Anantaraja. It is evident from the inscription that Anantaraja built the radiant and extensive stone wall at Siddhavattam, which his father had acquired in the battle of Utukuru by defeating Kondraju Tirupatiraju. According to the Kaifiyat of Chitval which describes the history of the Matlis, Kondraju, Tirupatiraju entertained the idea of ruling Siddhavattam *sima* and Pottapi-*sima* independently after the death of Srirangaraya and seized some belonging to Matli Ellamaraju and his son's as they had joined Venkatapatiraya, who was ruling at Chandragiri. To protect this territory from the attacks of the enemies from the adjoining Pulugunadu included in the Chandragiri *rajya* belonging to the later, Tirupatiraju fortified the frontier summit village of Utukuru, fortified in strong garrison to hold it, and began to subjugate the whole of Pottapinadu. Venkatapati-II sent an army under Matli Ellamaraja with instructions to destroy the fort exacted by Kondraju Tirupatiraju at Utukuru, to seize Pottapinadu and to post a garrison of his own troops in the village. He promised that if Ellamaraju affected the conquest of Siddhavattam, he would grant him the town with its dependent territory as Amaranayankaram. Ellamaraja proceeded with the royal army to Utukuru defeated and killed Kondraju Tirupatiraju in the battle, captured the fort, and having stationed a garrison of his own soldiers, pursued the fleeing army and destroyed. Ellama then marched on to Siddhavattam and entered the town without opposition.⁷ Venkata-II was greatly pleased with Ellamas victory and

bestowed upon him the *amaram* of Pulugunadu together with Siddhavattam *sima*.

Anantaraja the successor and son of Ellamaraja increased the popularity of the Matlis by his military exploits and became as mahamandaleswara of Siddhavata-*sima*. He excavated a tank at Siddhavattam in his own name (Anantaraja cheruvu) and another tank in the name of his father Ellamaraja (Ellamaraja cheruvu). He also laid foundation to erect a wall around the town of Siddhavattam, which also served as wall of protection to the temple of Siddheswara, which was completed by his successor Tiruvengalanatha.⁸ It is evident from the Chakibanda inscription dated 1647 A.D. which refers to mahamandaleswara Tiruvengalanatha also took interest in improving the irrigation facility and the development of agriculture in the region.⁹ The Sambaturu inscription dated 1623 A.D. refers to Matli Kumara Anantaraja as mahamandaleswara, the most distinguished king in the family.¹⁰ Another inscription at Alipiri dated 1628 A.D. records the description of the kings family, extant of his country, wars with enemy kings and his various charities in the cities of Tirupati, Tiruvalluru, Tirumala, Srikalahasti, Cuaddapah, Ontimitta, Nandaluru, Chandragiri, Pushpagiri and other charities performed by Kumara Anantaraja.¹¹

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

The fort of Siddhavattam, lies in about 36 acres. The existing fortifications consists of moat on outer side, 4 rampart walls, 3 gateways, interpret at regular intervals of distance all along the walls on plan the outer fort appears to be rectangular in shape. It is surrounded by moat and river pennar. The moat was connected from pennar on the east, north, and west. The southern side was flowing the pennar river. With in the fort area are several remains of ruined

buildings, temples, mosques and tanks etc. Three gateways are noticed in the stone rampart walls. These gateways appear to be outer arched entrances with additions being typical Muslim in design and construction having a curved outer arched entrance. Similarly three gateways on the standing top of the stone rampart, has on outer corbelled arched, but it supported narrow pillar beams. From here one has to take rightward south pass through the narrow entrance and reach inner of pennar river courtyard. The south outer wall is very ruined which appears to be Islamic in construction and living the Islamic families at present.

Gateway: Proceeding along further through 1st gateway come which is not of much significance. After this comes the flight of steps to climb up on the right and left side wall. After climbing up the staircase we see on the left side two watch towers and on the right side is one watch tower supported by a rampart wall. It was decorated with number of arches. Each measuring about 32 mts long 12 mts height. On the out side there is a 16 pillared corridor.

The 2nd gateway on the eastern side, which faces south on the pennar river. On the left side there is a flight of steps for climbing up and right two watch towers. The 2nd gateway is in semi circular of 'U' shape. Here the corridor is about 15 mts height with about 30 mts long. It is also connected by corresponding wall on either side which run in a curved manner to lead to reach the pennar river [Plate. 51].

Rampart Wall: The stone wall of Siddhavattam fort has rectangular plan and formidable, being built of irregular blocks of black granite stone. The eastern side rampart wall was measuring 102.6 ft. long and 20.5 ft. height, and western side 104.2 ft. long and 20.5 ft. height. The wall has surmounted by a parapet of arches used hood stone. Each arch was about measuring 3 ft. height and 2 ft. long. Northern side

rampart wall was measuring 204.9 ft long 21.5 ft height. Southern side wall has measuring 204.9 ft long 21 ft. height. Another important feature of southern side, is that the 3rd gateway is located in its midst. It is in Islamic style. This gateway is measuring 10.5 ft. height and 6.5 ft. long.

Temple : The Siddhavateswara temple constructed by Matli Anantaraja is in the fort. The Siddhavattam inscription of the time of Venkatapatiraya-II dated 1605 A.D. records that Matli Ananta laid the foundation to erect a wall around the town of Siddhavattam, which also served as wall of protection to the temple of Siddhavattswara.¹² Matli Kumara Anantaraja made liberal grants the god Chennakesava at Siddhavattswara, constructed *prakara* and the *gopuram* of the temple and also presented *hataka*.

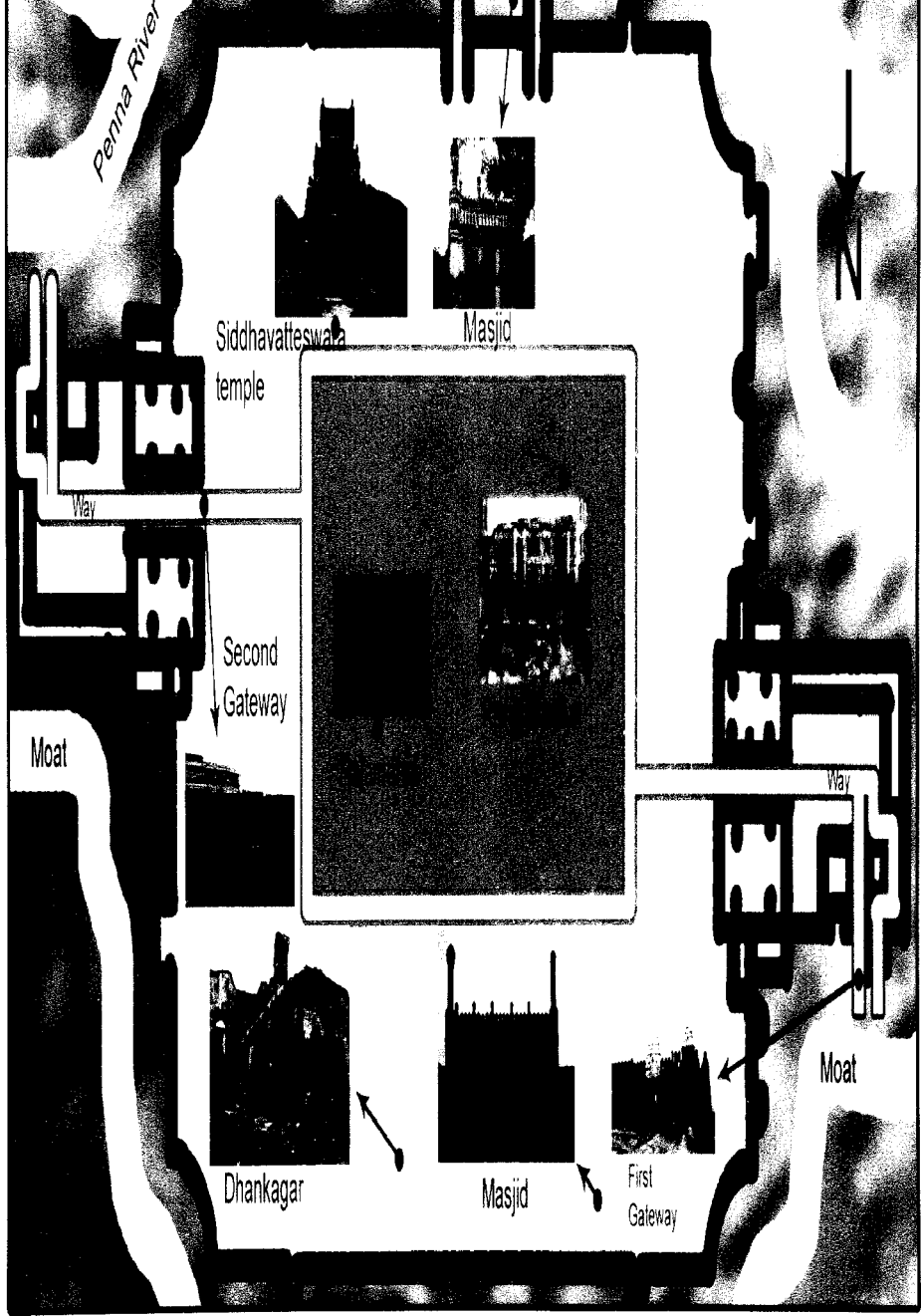
Masjid : There is a mosque built on the western side of the fort which faces east. It was located near the 1st gateway. It was in rectangular shape and has a line of arcades with 5 arches and 4 pillared row in front. Each arch is of 9.2 ft. of height and 4.5 ft long. On the east there are 22 arched parapets with a top hole in each. The west side wall is of 15 ft. height and 43.2 ft. long with supported platform. The north and southern side walls are single arched [Plate. 54].

Dhankagar : Near the gateway is located a rectangular building known as Dhankagar. In the northern side of it is supported by rampart wall and water tank. It also contain arches of Islamic style. It was constructed with bricks and lime mortar. Eastern side of it is a flight of steps to climb up to reach the first floor [Plate. 52].

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7. Venkatramanayya, N., Neelakantasastri, *Further Sources of Vijayanagara History*, Vol. II and III, Madras, 1969, No. 201.
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9. TTDER, Vol. VI, Part I, No. 29-32.
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SIDDHAVATTA FORT MAP



Panna River

N

Siddhavatteswara temple

Masjid

Way

Second Gateway

Moat

Way

Moat

Dhankagar

Masjid

First Gateway

SIDDHAVATTAM FORT

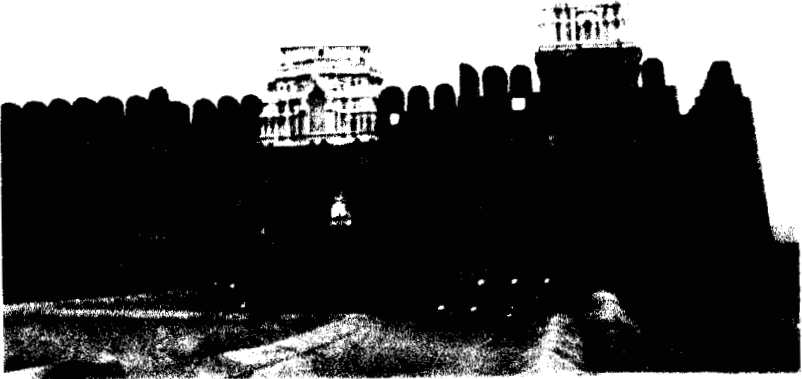


Plate 50 : View of First Gateway

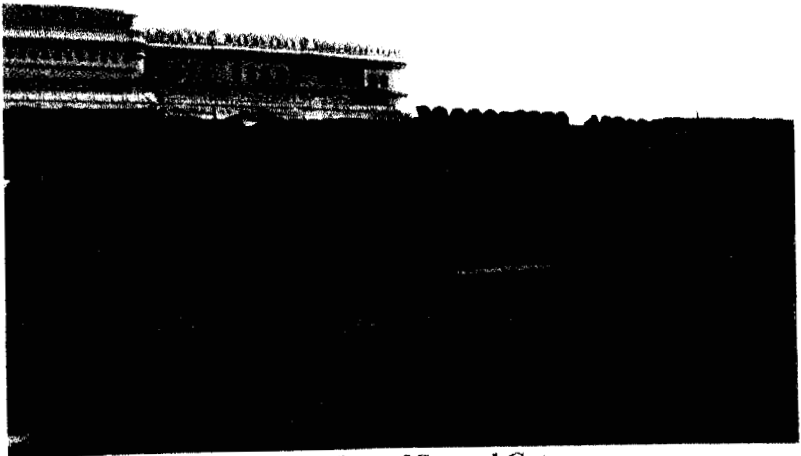


Plate 51 : View of Second Gateway



Plate 52 : View of Dhankagar



Plate 53 : View of Siddavateswara Temple

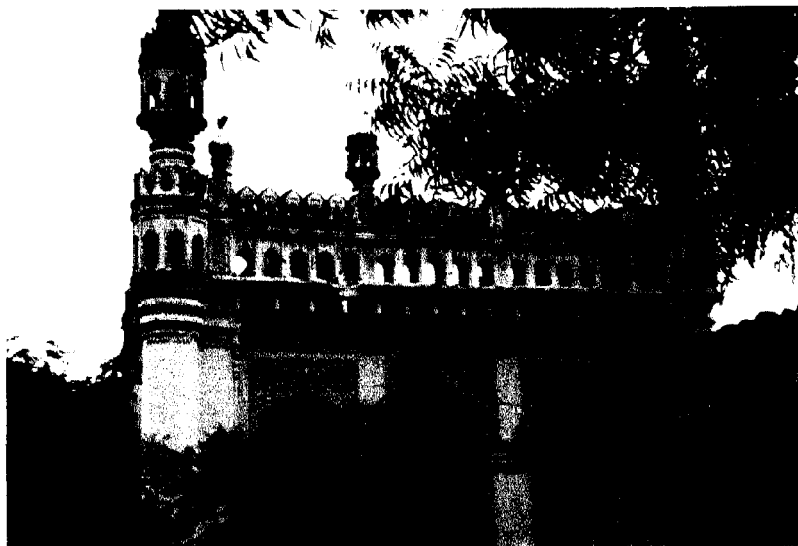


Plate 54 : View of Masjid

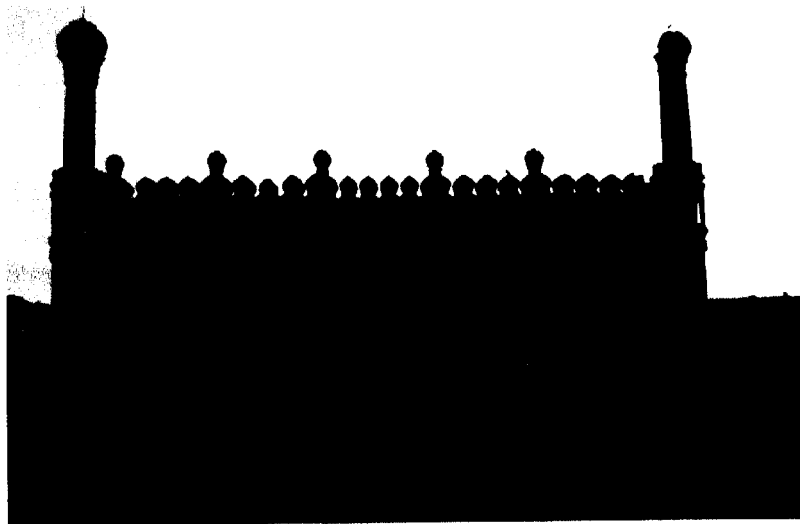


Plate 55 : View of Masjid

III.9. GURRAMKONDA FORT

History of Gurramkonda

Gurramkonda is the name of a small hill surrounded by a strong fort-wall located 16 kms from Vayalpadu and 21 kms from Madanapalli in the Chittoor district. It is one of the administrative divisions of the Vijayanagara empire. According to local tradition a thief succeeded in carrying off the horse and was not captured until he had traveled for some distance. He was then brought back and the Nawab, astonished at his skill gave him the village as present where he had been captured, which was consequently named Gurramkonda..¹

The history of Gurramkonda begins from the third dynasty of Vijayanagara. It is evident that after of the fall of Vijayanagara in Tallikota battle 1565 A.D., the zamindars and palegars who held the border fort on military tenure assumed independence. In order to keep

the palegars in check, probably the fort of Gurramkonda was built. This is some what bold conjecture on my part, for no data can be found, which fixes its building, but from the appearance of the fort it would not seem that there is any old Hindu architecture about it. The work is almost entirely Mohammadan. Hence, in all probability the fort was constructed after 1565 A.D. The present fort is believed to be constructed by Nawab Abdul Nabhikhan in the year 1714 A.D. after the fall of Vijayanagara kingdom.

However, the epigraphical evidences are available from the time of Venkatapatiraya to show the history of Gurramkonda as a territorial division. The Siddhavattam inscription of the time of Venkatapati-II and Matli Anantaraja dated 1645 A.D. is important for the description of Matli Ananta's heroic deeds. Among the military exploits of Ananta mentioned in the inscription the destruction of Revala Velikonda Venkatadri and the capture of Gurramkonda is worthy to note here. He also waged a war with Qutubshahis and scored victory in the battle of Penugonda.²

The first achievement of Matli Ananta referred to the present record is the destruction of Ravela Velikonda Venkatadri. This incident, according to the Kumudvatikalyanam of Kumara Ananta, the grandson of Matli Ananta took place at Gurramkonda.³ Though placed first in the inscription, it must be taken into consideration after Matli Ananta's victory over the Yavanapadu at Penugonda, for it is stated in the kaifiyat of Chittiveli that after his victory over the Malaka-Fauzulu at Penugonda, (Matli Ananta) returned to Siddhavattam which he later made his permanent headquarters. Then, he marched with his army to Gurramkonda at the instance of Venkatapatiraya to put down the sardar of the fort who had rebelled against the raya and made war on the territory belonging to the royal army.⁴ The rebellion of the sardar of Gurramkonda and the siege and the capture of the fort by Matli

Ananta were perhaps the final episodes of the Qutbshahi war. They may therefore be conveniently dealt with after consideration of the event pertaining to that war.⁵ The most important pategars at this time (1565 A.D). were those of Punganur, Ghattu, Kokkanti in Chittoor district and Mahal and Gandikota in Cuddapah district. The pategars of Punganur and Onikull were originally one family. These were tributaries of Vijayanagara who also helped the jagirs of Hoskote and Kolar in Mysore.⁶ There can be no doubt that a Mohamadan garrison was urgently required at this spot, if the newly acquired territory was to be retained. On either side were the descendants of the old Vijayanagara house, who, though greatly reduced in power, had still a strong hold in the traditions and the affections of the people. All round were turbulent pategars, who were ready to break into open hostilities at the first opportunity. Indeed, so important was the garrison of Gurramkonda, that its governors were allowed considerable powers, one of the privileges being almost a royal one, namely, the right of coining money. At the end of the last century the Gurramkonda rupees were current over the whole of the sub-division. Gurramkonda appears to have been held on military tenure and beyond the supply of troops little if any tribute was demanded from the governor.⁷

FORT AND FORTIFICATION

Gurramkonda has been considered as one of the most intricate of the fort. The fort is strongly built and the hill is surrounded by thick forests. It is built on the top of the hill some 500 ft high, protected on three sides by an almost perpendicular precipice, while on the side, there is steep ascent, which is guarded in every assignable part by ramparts and reboults. Whole fourth presence the appearance of fortress built with more than ordinary Indian skilled and knowledge of fortification.⁸ Its required minimum artificial defence

ordinary means of reducing the fortress such as mines, covered ways batteries etc. It is defended by a strong horn work consisting of a succession of three gateways two concentric lines of wall with a large number of bastions culminate into this citadel. The fortress is perched on a cone shaped hill of rock that rises abruptly from the base to about 700 feet in height and has a circumference of about two miles. In it is a royal palace, mosque, arsenal gunpowder, magazines, temple, cultivated fields, water tanks, etc, inside the fort also are of historical importance. Its escarpment is smooth and could not be scaled. The entrance to the citadel is defended by a wide and deep wet moat which was excavated out of a living rock.

Gateways : The fort in Gurramkonda roughly rectangular in plan is massive and formidable being built of irregular blocks of black granite. There are three gateways in the middle. The gateway to the fort is in ruined condition. There are walls at regular intervals of distance, mainly to reinforce the strength of the wall. These gateways unlike those in the mud rampart, are muslim in design and construction of the uniform plan. Even now the construction exhibits good engineering skill. The door way rises to a height of 21 feet, length being 60 feet and breadth 24 feet On the right side there is a room with a small door.

In the same way on the left side also there are small rooms. There is a small entrance gate on the back side. The gateway has three arches, the right and the left being closed with bricks. The roof is also decorated with the help of bricks into square compartments. The door jamb built in pillar beam and lintel style. A huge stone wall joins the gate at the proper left side. This darwaza can be called as the arched gateway on either side of are which pillars to support the carting [Plate. 56 and 57].

Anandi Basha Tomb : Passing through this entrance, come the 1st gateway on the left side constructed the Anandi Basha tomb. It is a ruined tomb. This tomb is neither dated nor does it name the person for which it was built nor the builder which was constructed during his life time. The tomb is long 24.10 × 24.10 cm and height 12.8cm with the corridor of 4.10 cm. Exterior of the tomb is relatively plain except for entrance. Each entrance is composed of arch, the arch crowning the octagonal pilasters, the arch measuring 5.2cm. This building is respected in the history more as an institution than an architectural project [Plate. 58].

Watch Towers : It is customary to construct watch towers on all sides for any fort. Around the hill there are many such towers. Each tower rises to a height of about 20 feet and in a projection from the wall. Hence they are bastions. It contains two halls, throughout which, the watcher can have long underviews. Inside the bastion there is a small room to give shelter to the soldier. It is more like a military quarter guard.

Rangini Mahal : The Rangini Mahal is constructed out of brick and mortar with a stone foundation. This building faces east and the pavilion preserves much of its details and plaster ornamentation. The palace measuring the length 130.2 cm and width 57.2 cm with the height of 61.5 cm. There is a corridor in it built with the support of 16 pillars. In its eastern side built a flight of 20 steps to reach it. The roofing has been done with the help of strong wooden beams. The palace has only one upper storey. In the centre of the palace there is a big hall. At the top there are seats to have a balcony view of dance performances etc., held. In the eastern side of the palace corridor is supported with 12 pillars and with the height of 11.3 cm. and 19.2 cm width the western part are steps leading to the first storey of the palace. The upper part contains many rooms and is well ventilated.

The sealing slab in these recesses have curved brackets beneath. The vaults are flat and in the side chambers are traces of ribs that divide the ceiling into seven squares.

For some time this building might have been used as a residence of the Nawabs of Gurrankonda. Later it was probably converted into quarters for a military garrison. Inside the place next to the entrance there is a dark room with a small opening, supposed to be the treasury or Khazana of the Nawabs [Plate. 60].

Elephant Stable: Inside the fort there is an open hall. It is almost ruined. The roof fallen has star shape. It resembles the Lotus mahal at Hampi. It rises to a height 17.7, length being 70 and width 34.4 perhaps this might have been used as an elephant stable.⁹

Cannon Shed : There is a pillared *mandapa* on the left side of the main gate of the fort. There are three rows of four of pillars each. The pillars are of the Chola order. Originally this must have been a *mandapa*. Later it might have been converted into Cannon Shed. There are small brick layers to keep the Cannon in this *mandapa*.¹⁰

Two Halls: There are two big spacious halls at the top of the hill. Originally these halls were pillared *mandapas*, because most of such halls found here Chola pillars. The pillars are simple. The roof portions are almost fallen. Perhaps these halls might have been used as resting places for the soldiers.¹¹

Tank: Very near the entrance gate (*darwaza*) there is a big tank. The tank has a four pillared *mandapa* in its midst perhaps this might have been used as *pushkarini* for the temple. The western side of the tank was constructed stone steps and southern side is *ratna*. The tank measures 508 cm. deep [Plate. 62].

Magbeera : Magbeera is another structure of the period situated in a village Khandriga, two miles from Gurrarakonda. It is the mosque of Mir Raza Alikhan who was buried in a mosque at the foot of the Gurrarakonda fort, which he had defended so well. This monument was constructed by Tippu Sultan in appreciation of the services to his father Hyder Alikhan. Again this mosque is still standing, though somewhat dilapidated, have been fired upon by the fort when in a sub-siege an English detachment took cover behind thinking perhaps that the defenders would spare this sacred spot. A description of these is given in the later pages. Certain rites were performed here over his grave and a grant of land has been made in payment of these religious services.

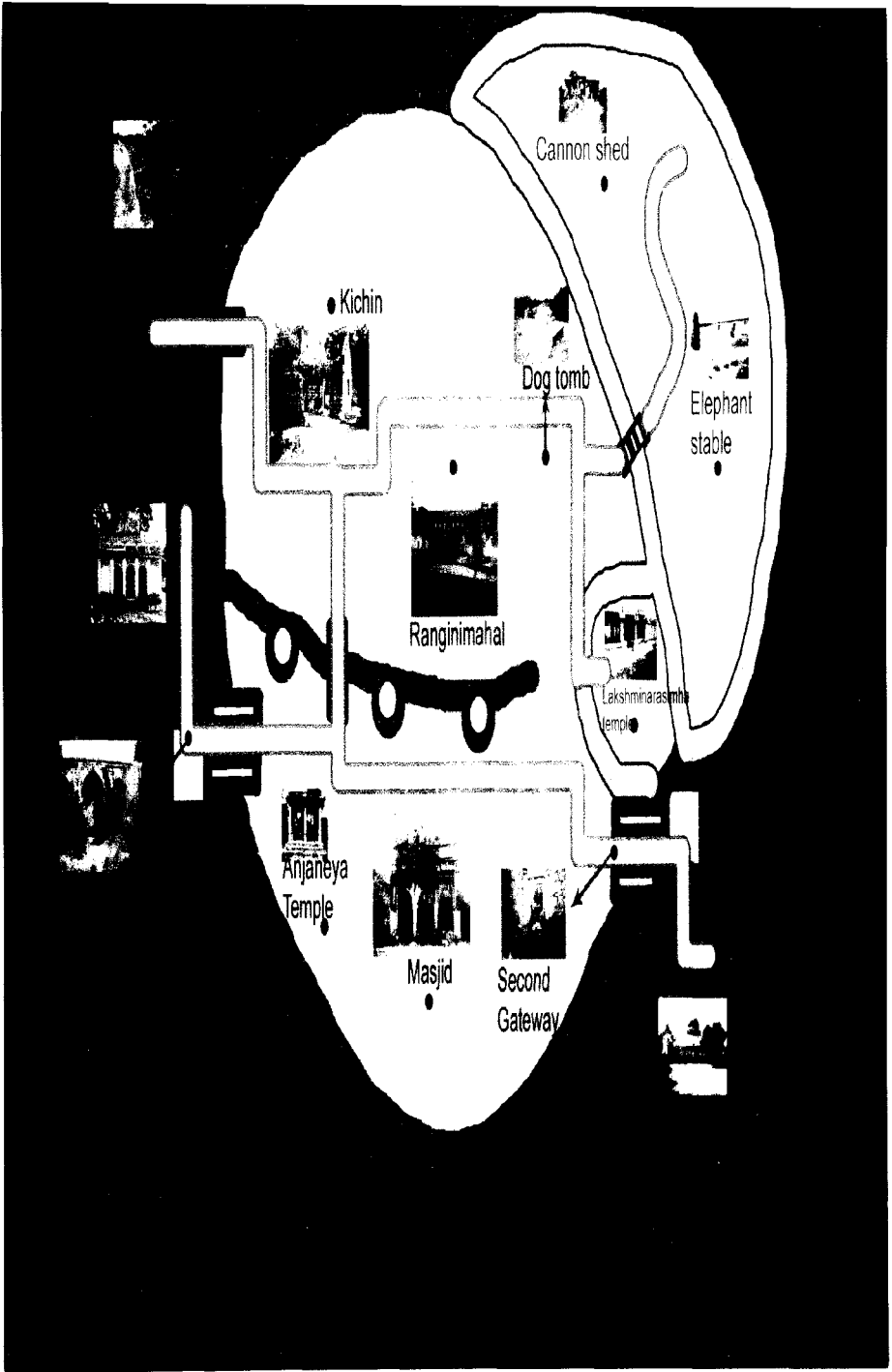
The Magbeera is a tomb and its entrance is in east. It is entered through a large gateway which is very attractive. The tomb has one storey, measuring the length 103.5 cm and width 103.5 cm. with the centre and seven arched pillars row in the four sides. Each arch height 7.9 cm and width 5.3 cm, and the walls support the roof. In the down floor there are many tombs built in memory of the family relatives of the Nawabs. These tombs are seen through decorated windows. Above can be found the tombs of the late Nawabs. The body was placed in the centre of the bell-shaped dome, with a heavy echo. It is decorated with lotus flowers, Magbeera is very attractive and is a beautiful specimen of Muslim architecture [Plate. 67].

Temples : Facing the fort there is a small *mandapa* housing Ganapathi and Anjaneya. It contains three rows of three pillars each. The figure of Ganapathi is not neatly carved, but the figure of Anjaneya is imposing. There is another temple in the middle of the hill, dedicated to Lakshmi Narasimha. There are very narrow steps leading to the temple from the palace. It contains two rows of four pillars and two more rows of three pillars. The central four pillars are

typical Vijayanagara pillars while the rest are simple and resemble the pillars of Chola order.¹²

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GURRAMKONDA FORT

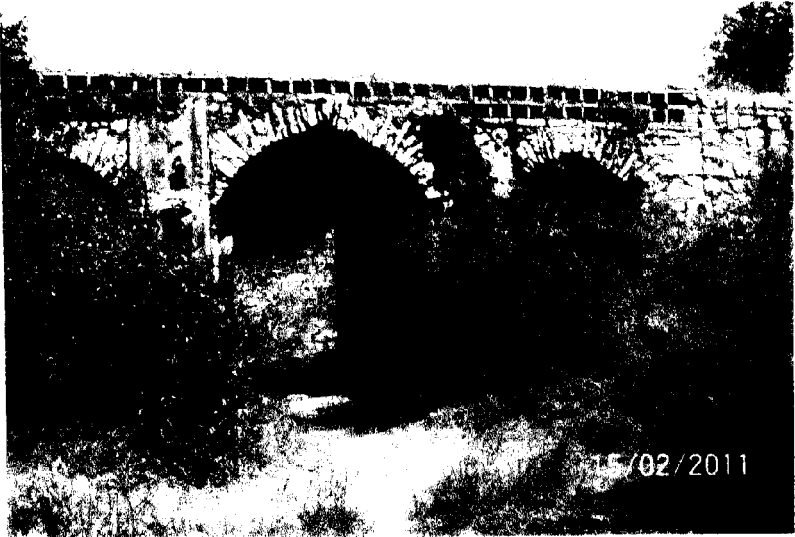


Plate 56 : View of First Gateway



Plate 57 : View of Second Gateway

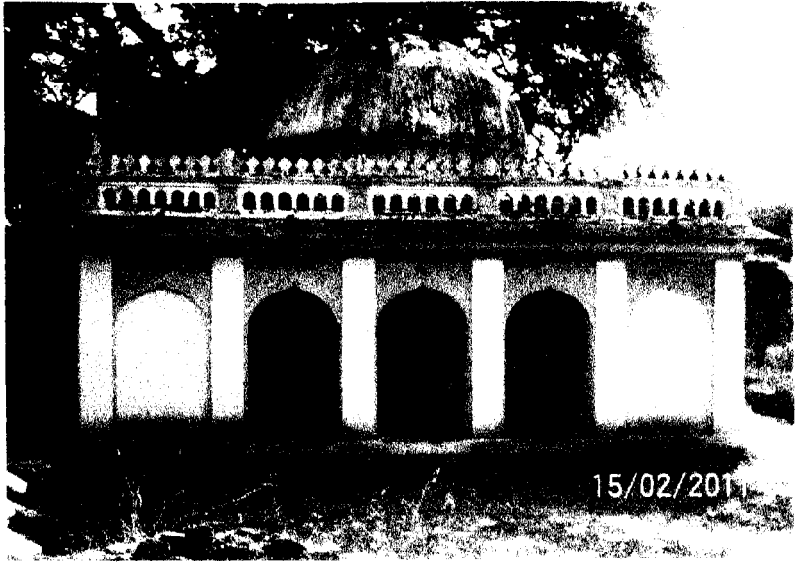


Plate 58 : View of Anandi Basha Tomb



Plate 59 : View of Anjaneya Temple

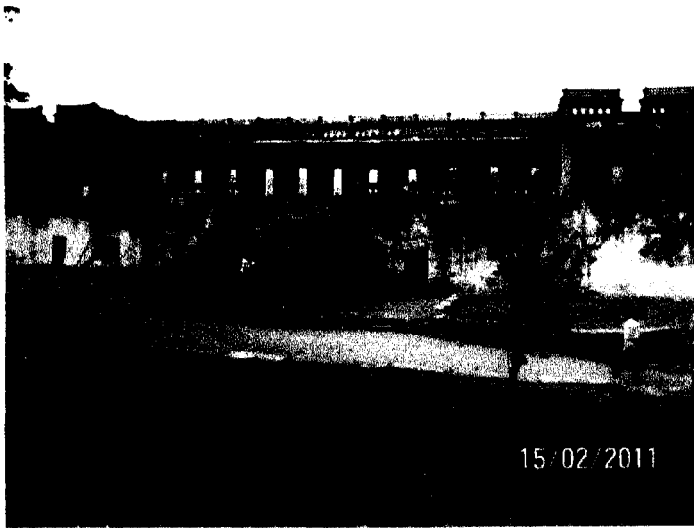


Plate 60 : View of Rasgini Mahal



Plate 61 : View of Masjid



Plate 62 : View of Tank



Plate 63 : View of Kitchen



Plate 64 : View of Elephant Stable

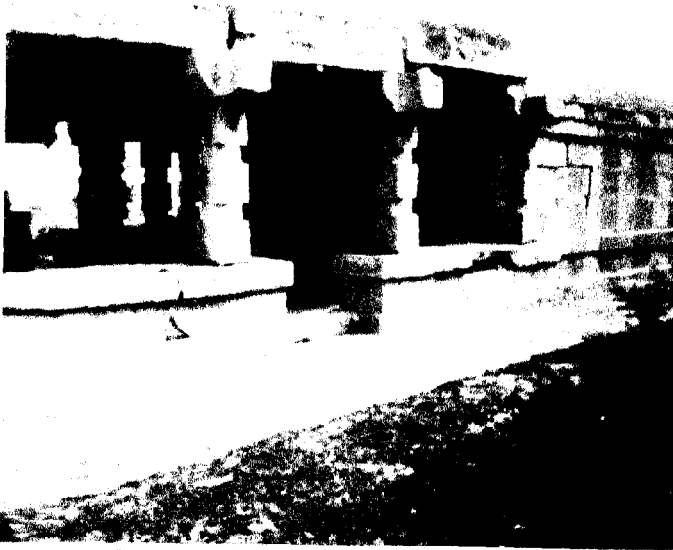


Plate 65 : View of Lakshminarasimha Temple



Plate 66 : View of Cannon Shed

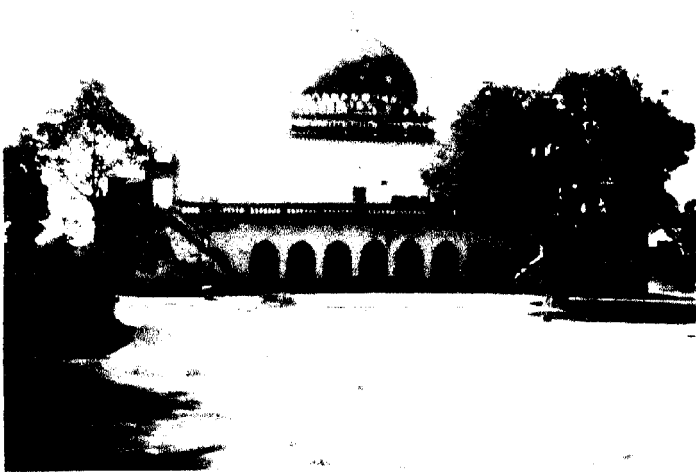


Plate 67 : View of Magheera



Plate 68: View of Dog Tomb

III.10. OTHER FORTS

SOMAPALYAM FORT

Somapalyam is situated in Madanapalle taluk in Chittoor district. This is a prominent hill fort. It is believed to have been constructed by palegars of the Vijayanagara. The fort is located to south of the village is now in ruins. It has an extensive fortification wall around the hill encompassing an approximate area of 2 to 3 km. Presently there are traces of three meters broad, dressed rubble stone foundation of a very extensive fortification wall. In the fortification wall in fragments and at some places intact. In most of the places the rubble wall was divested of the bricks.¹

The fort was provided with two main gateways on the east and west. To the right of the entrance are mud walls of a strong fortified enclosure. There was situated number of buildings inside the fort. There is also a sport over handing the scarp where executions took place.

Gateways : Gateways form an important obstacle in the structure of the fort, next to the rampart. According to the entrance gateways to the fort should be 4 mt as broad as the width and 3 mt length of the street. This gateways were in the pyramidal towers of imposing aspect.

First Gateway : In this gateway eastern side of the fortification wall appears to have been given importance and the main gate is located here. In the gateway is about the 4 mt the hillock indicates that this gateway is the lowest point from the sea-level. In all probability this must be the main gate of this fortification.

Second Gateway: This gateway is situated in western side. The gateway is nearly 5 mt width and 3 mt long. No stone boulders are visible. There were natural rock boulders which must have served as a gateway.

Chennakesava temple : This is one of the biggest temples in Somapalyam with a number of structures around the central shrine.

Though this central shrine bears traces of renovation, the main structure seems to retain most of the original features in their outline. It has cornices with slight projections in the central part otherwise this temple must be classified as belonging to a type represented by the Nilakantheswara temple at Laddigam, though very much later in date. Two other features viz., such as the beveled carder in the pilasters and pranala terminating in a curve, points to the care of this temple, including the central shrine as belonging to the Pre-Vijayanagara period.

The fort-wall, the replicas of the *vimana* and *panjaras* very well indicate the architectural wealth of the city of Lanka.

SOMAPALYAM FORT



Plate 69 : View of Gateway



Plate 70 : View of Buruju

UDIRIPAKONDA FORT

It is situated at a distance of 34km to the north-west of Anantapur on the Ballary road. According to local information, the village is named after the ruler Udarappa who constructed a fort on the hill top. According to Mackenzie manuscripts, the village was the strong hold of palegars who had the support of the Vijayanagara rulers.

The fort with a bastion is noticed on the hill top. While ascending the hill, three fortification walls are found one after the other with three entrance gateways. The first entrance gate measures 4.00×1.78 mts. The second entrance gateway is noticed at a distance of 36 mts from the first gateway. It measures 4.00×1.80 mts. the height of the fortification wall is 4 mts. The fortification wall on the west and eastern side is in dilapidated condition. The fort is built with dressed stone. Some cavities found in the fortification suggest that guns and similar cannons were kept. The fort seems to belong to the late medieval period.

Two inscriptions of 17th century in Telugu, Kannada script are found on a boulder near the fort. It is found inside the second fortification wall towards east of fort. The bastion is built with dressed stones and filled with mud. Its height is 4.50 mts. and circumference is 31mts.

Temple : Ellamma temple is situated inside the second fortification wall on the hill. The flat roofed shrine consists of a sanctum and a *mandapa*. Presently two female heads in black stone wearing kerita and ear pendants are placed in the sanctum for worship. On the basis of its architectural features it may be assigned to late Vijayanagara period.

Channakesavaswamy temple is another important temple, situated on the top of the hill inside the third fortification wall. It consists of a sanctum, an *antarala* and *mandapa*. It is in dilapidated condition. No idol is found in the sanctum.²

KANGUNDI FORT

Kangundi fort situated in Chittoor district. It is a prominent hill-fort at the centre of a granite outcrop. The fort was one of the strong holds of the palegars of the Vijayanagara dynasty. There are two more temples of the Vijayanagara period rich with sculptural wealth. The carved images of Hanuman face each other and depict the glory of the Vijayanagara art.³

This building consists of two storied pavilions both levels being divided into a number of bays. A multy-storied staircase adjoins the pavilion at the north and south corner, at the east west corner is a small single-storied statue.

SINGANAMALA FORT

It is situated at a distance of 21km east of the Anantapur on the Tadipatri road and can be reached by bus from Anantapur. It is believed that a stage Rasyasringa performed penance in a cave on the ledge of Singanamala. There are two ponds nears the cave. The tank *Srirangaraya Cheruvu* of the village, commonly known as *Singanamala tank* is one among the biggest of its kind in the district. It is believed to have been constructed by the Vijayanagara kings.

It is a ruined fort constructed on the hill top locally called as *Risingswamy konda*. The ledge of the hill is seen with on outer fortification wall which ruins for nearly three fortification walls are

constructed with dressed granite blocks no bastions or gateways could be traced. It is dated of the Vijayanagara period.⁴

DURGAM FORT

The village of Durgam lies 19 km, east of Anantapur and it can be reached by bus from Anantapur. It is covered by hillocks on three sides. The area covered by black soil, is irrigated & using the water from a tank called *Linganna cheruvu* which lies to the south-west of the village. It is a important town during the medieval period for there are land and forts, assignable to the Vijayanagara period.

The Remnants of a land fort are noticed to the south-west of the village. The fortification covers nearly 10 acres of land. Four round fallen bastions are noticed, no gateways could be noticed. The fort is surrounded by a moat. The wall have a thickness of 5 mts. at the base and 2 mts at the top with an average height of 5 mts. The height of the bastions are 6 metres. On architectural grounds the fort can be assigned to Vijayanagara period.

Another important fort on the top of the hill called Durgamkonda is a big fort. The fortification is constructed out of dressed stone. The width of the walls vary from 2 to 3 mts. The bastion are squarish and altogether 11 bastions were noticed. On architectural grounds the fort can be assigned to Vijayanagara period.⁵

CHINNA AKKALURU FORT

It is situated at a distance of 25km west of Tadipatri. It was a prominent place during the time of palegars. The medieval fortification built of dressed and undressed stone encompassing an area of approximately 100 × 100 mts. is noticed about 200 mts. west of the village. In the middle of the fortification is a watch tower measuring about 30 feet in height with a diameter of 20 feet at the top. The fort was probably constructed by palegar during the Vijayanagara period.⁶

BOMMEPARTHI FORT

It is located 11 km away from Anantapur on way to Dharmavaram. The village is surrounded by a fortification wall with stone masonry. The height of the fortification wall is about 4.5 mts. and the thickness is about a metre. There are no bastions or gateways. It is only a protection wall belonging to the late Vijayanagara period.⁷

ARAVIDU FORT

It is situated at a distance of 35km south of Tadipatri. It was prominent as the Aravidu dynasty of the Vijayanagara empire originated from this village. The ruins of late medieval fortification are noticed in the northern outskirts of the village covering an area of about 2 acres. The foundation of the wall shows a thickness ranging from 3.60 to 5.40 mts.⁸

TONDAMANADU FORT

In the revenue limits of *eguvadidhi* of Tondamandu Kota there is an ancient and ruined fort with outer and inner enclosure walls. On the western side of the ancient fort there is a temple dedicated to

Perumalleswamy. There are a number of loose sculptures gathered during trial excavation in the ancient fort.⁹

KOTANKA FORT

A hill fort about 80 mts in length is found in the village. It consists of a fortification wall built with stones using mud as binding material. The height of the fortification wall is 17.5 mts. There are two gateways to the fort. The width of the outer entrance is 2 mts. The fort contains two bastions. The intact bastion is 7.5 mts. in height with 20 mts. circumference. On the basis of its architectural features it may be assigned to the post-Vijayanagara period.¹⁰

PARNAPALLE FORT

Parnapalle was the headquarters of a palem in earlier times. The ruins of a fort, with bastions, with gates on the western and eastern sides and the moat, can still be seen. The fort is said to have been built by the palegar, Konctinayudu, some of whose descendants still live in the fort area. In between the fort and the river, is the long-abandoned and dilapidated temple dedicated to Chennakesavasvami. The village seems to have been of some administrative importance during the reign of Tippu who is accredited with the construction of the Jumma Masjid near the fort in the village. There is also a *dargah* on a hillock, called the Miskeenveli-dargah. It is said that the saint died at Parnapalle, where he was halting for a night, on his way from Tadimarri. He was returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is also said that Tippu had established a weekly fair on the hill and had pucca buildings constructed for the use of the merchants, devoting the market fees to the upkeep of the Vali's tomb. It lies on the right bank of the Chitravati about twenty one miles from Pulivendla.¹¹

RAYADURGAM FORT

Rayadurgam is another fort located in Anantapur district, played an important role in the history of the Vijayanagara empire. Rayadurga was originally a stronghold of Baliya palegars who were very trubulent during the Vijayanagara rule. The emperor deputed an officer to drive them out and ruled the place himself and the hill was thus called *Bhupatirayakonda*. After the battle of Rakshasa Tangadi, the palegars regained the place, but were again driven out after some time by Konetinayak. His son Venkatapathinayak who had differences with the palegar of Chittaldurg greatly strengthened the fortifications. Tippu Sultan captured the fort and made it a part of his Gutti province.¹²

The ruins of the fort can still be seen on the hill at the foot of which the Rayadurga town is built. The hill fort is said to have been built by one Junganayaka. A Portion of the fort wall has crumbled. Down below the slope of the hill are four caves with small stone doors with carving of siddhas. In the ruins of a fort covering an area of about 2 acres, with a gateway are noticed in the northern outskirts of the village. This place was said to contain a fort with ruins of four bastions. Each bastion is 6 mt. long and 3 mt wide.

Having two gates towards the two corner points and furnished with *Gopuras* (towers) dotted over with guard houses.

It is related that there was a fort at the place, but no signs of it can now be seen except a big buruju, a community hall and a maternity centre located at the place.

The fort area contains many of the temples of the village viz., Narasimhaswamy, Hanuman, and Ellamma. Prasanna Venkateswara, Venugopala, Jambukeswara, Veerabhadra and Kanyakaparameswari.

Another important and a spectacular sight is Dasabhuja Ganapathi a statue of Lord Ganesha with ten shoulders. It was carved out from a 4mt high monolithic stone. Dasabhuja Ganapathi statue is witness to the beautiful Shilpakala of olden days.

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