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# Development of Internal Trade Routes and Centers under the Kakatiyas

Dr. A.Renuka Devi

Deputy Director Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University G Ram Reddy Marg, Masthan Nagar, CBI Colony, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana, PIN-500033

**Abstract:** During the Kakatiya period internal trade seems to have been in a fairly prosperous condition. The Kakatiya rulers, royal families, subordinate chiefs and others also encouraged development of internal trade. The trade was conducted by well-organized merchant guilds. The epigraphical sources reveal that several kinds of merchant guilds used to carry on the commercial operations in the kingdom. The guilds were famous for carrying on the trade and each guild acted as a single corporation and their acts were recognized and respected by all. The guilds also tried to maintain cordial relations with the state since the successful functioning of trade and commerce depended upon the stability of the government and peace and order that prevailed in the kingdom. According to historical sources, the Kakatiya rulers, after remarkable development in agriculture and industry, widened the extent of internal trade centers and brought new markets and constructed good highways for the easy transport of commodities from place to another. Under these favorable circumstances, a brisk internal trade flourished.

**Keywords:** Kakatiyas, Internal trade, Routes, Centres, guilds, develop

## I. INTRODUCTION

The great kingdom of western Chalukyas which flourished for over 150 years declined about the middle of the twelfth century, and one of their feudatories, the Kakatiyas, taking advantage of their master's weakness, asserted their independence in 1158. From then on till AD.1326, a period of more than two centuries, starting their rule from Telangana, the Kakatiya kings extended their sway slowly all over the land of the Telugus. It is an accepted fact that the name of the Kakatiyas is symbolically associated with irrigation system. The tanks and lakes of the period are still serving the farmers of both the Telugu states. Therefore the development of irrigation, agriculture and industry gave scope for the remarkable development in trade and witnessed development in every sphere.

Prior to the Kakatiya period, internal trade was very difficult to do in South India due to a large number of mountain streams and lack of roads and bridges across rivers. Forest ways were infested with thieves and wild animals. Mountain passes, for the obvious reason, that the population in the Deccan was not so dense in those days, however served as the main trade routes. Important provincial capitals seem to have been connected with one another by broad routes fit for cart and animal traffic. Therefore the present study is undertaken to study the aspects of internal trade and trade centres under the Kakatiya period to probe into the factors that contributed to their development.

## II. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this research paper are the following:

- 1) To trace out the history of Kakatiyas, and the categories of trade routes and centres
- 2) To study about the agriculture and industrial products, and the role of guilds in the internal trade
- 3) Lastly to study the development of agriculture and industry, its impact on the promotion of internal trade

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present paper is purely a historical study basing on historical sources. The sources for this paper are multidimensional like the epigraphical, literary works, travelogues, archeological sources etc.;

### A. Trade Routes

During the Kakatiya period there were very good highways in the empire for the easy transport of commodities from one part to another and an efficient system of administration ensured absolute security of person and property.

Under these favorable circumstances a brisk internal trade flourished. Another factor which contributed to this end, probably was the definiteness and mildness of taxation in those times. Ganapati Deva gave great impetus to the internal and external trade of the Kakatiya kingdom through his famous proclamation promulgated at the famous port of Motupalli in 1244-45 AD. This Abhayasasana or edict assuring the safety was granted to traders by sea, starting for and arriving from all continents, islands, foreign countries and cities.

We come across Teruvus in the inscriptions. Teruvu means a path. An inscription dated A.D.1260 refers to the following teruvus: Pradedla teruvu, Kilakanta teruvu, Bedowati teruvu, Dondapati teruvu, Bandi teruvu and Kirihpudi teruvu. These paths or road ways connecting different towns and villages facilitated the development of internal trade and to transport the goods to the port towns by land through narrow *pedestrian* tracks, called *kalu-trovaluor batalu*. Leading from village to village, broad roads fit for vehicular traffic, called *bandi-trovaluor* teruvulu, connecting important places like the provincial towns and imperial capitals, like Warangal and grand trunk roads, connecting South with North constituted the chief means of communication.

The 13<sup>th</sup> century Telugu poet Ketana mentions a route from Kanchi to Ayodhya, passing through Nellore and Warangal. This was chief inland route from North to south connecting the towns of Nellore and Warangal with Ayodhya. Muhammad-Bin-Tughluq also took the same route and came to Warangal. All important towns and cities were connected with the capital city of Warangal. Some popular routes connecting important religious centers found mention in contemporary literature. *Palakurki Somanatha*, the author of *Panditaradhya Carita*, mentions the routes taken by him from Candavolu, in the present Guntur district, to Sriparvata or Srisailam in the Kurnool district, touching on the way *Amararama*, *Nirugudumulu*, *Panugallu*, *Vanipuramu* and *Vellaturu*. Similarly, there must have been in existence other high-ways leading to other other celebrated shrines like those of Srikurmam, Simhachalam, Tripuratakam, etc., probably, the pilgrim routes were also the routes of the traders because the merchants of the time could transact profitable business in pilgrim centres.

*Kridabhiramamu* describes the short-cut route to the capital city Warangal from Tripurantakam via Nakarekal.

The *Ayyavali* guild used certain inter-state long routes. Such routes still remain as national highways connecting important towns of Andhra and Karnataka. The roads existed between Bellary-Nellore, Bellary-Chittor, Raichur-Kolanupaka, Bidar or Kalyani-Kolanupaka and Anumakonda were some of those ancient inter-state routes of trade. The road between Kopal-Raichur in Karnataka and Kolanupaka in Andhra was a fairly traversed high-way during the latter Chalukya period. The road is called *dandubata* or military route reminding us that during the prolonged military conflicts of Chalukyas and Cholas and their armies were led along that way. It has become an important national highway connecting Andhra and Karnataka today. The road between Bidar-Patancheruvu-Warangal is one of the ancient routes. The salt producing coastal towns like Pedaganjam and the sea port Motupalli were linked with Ballary through Tripurantakam and Kurnool.

When travelling along insecure routes, a number of traders used to join together to form a caravan, called *satu* and provided themselves with strong armed guards. In the festival seasons the caravans were joined by many pilgrims also for reasons of security. Means of communication were many and varied on inland waters, like lakes, rivers and streams and country crafts were the only means of transport. The mountain streams flowed torrentially in the rainy season but dried up in the summer when they could be easily crossed on foot or in carts. Great rivers like Krishna and Godavari etc., which are perennial, caused much difficulty in fording when in freshes. A small circular basket-boat called *putti* or *puttica* was used to cross these rivers. The *putti* or *puttica* was circular in shape and made of wicker work covered with leather on the outside. It was used specially in places where the river contained large boulders and crags in its bed. There are references to use of the *putti* on the Krishna and Godavari. The term *putti* has been assimilated in the idiom of Telugu language as evidenced by the expression *putti-munguta* to mean complete loss.

## B. Transport

Transportation was the basic need for the development of agriculture, industry and trade. As at present, in those days also the services of both man and beast (cattle) were utilized in the transport of commodities from place to place. Pack-animals like the oxen, the mules, the buffalos, the horses and the ass carried many goods. The Telugu poet Ketana in his *Dasakumara Carit* refers calf bullocks to carry the wealth while men carried head-loads on *kavadis* on land routes. Camels also though rarely, were employed for the transport of goods by the army. Articles were carried in *gunny* bags large or small. The bags had openings in the middle the expression *perikes* or *perika-setlu* meaning traders in articles conveyed Perikalu occurs in the records of this period. "The perikes" writes Triston "claim to be a separate caste, but they seem to be in reality a sub-division, and not a very exalted sub-division of Balijas, being in fact identical with *Uppubalijas*. Their hereditary occupation is carrying salt, grain, etc., on bullocks and donkeys. The perikas earned their livelihood by transporting the goods during the Kakatiya period and can be seen as petty traders also during the Vijayanagara period. As mentioned above, puttis, boats etc., used to transport through rivers in inland trade.

In the foreign trade big ships were sailed on the ocean followed by smaller ones. We get information regarding these smaller ships in *Haravilasamu* of Srinatha, a work of a century later. We can summarize that those ones were in vogue from the ancient days, they were: *kappali* long, *valli*, *valika* and *samman*.

### C. Fairs

Fairs, *addas* or *santas* were plausible places where the people gather generally once in a week for selling and purchasing the goods of merchandise. The trade, either wholesale or retail was generally conducted at select places. Besides this, a number of their commodities carrying them on heads in baskets or bags and *kavadis* (shoulder-rods) with two equal loads hanging at either end of it and sell the articles, undoubtedly it facilitates the business of both the seller and the purchaser. They were called *stala pemta*. Most of the village and town names ending with *petaor pemtain* the Telugu or Karnataka regions were formerly the centres of business where fairs were organized once in a week.

An inscription datable A.D 1147 mentions that the *santa* at Kotyadona was held on those days. In *Kridabhiramamu*, we find two kinds of *santas* known as *mailasanta* and *madisanta*. In *mailasanta* cattle, fish, meat etc., and popular drugs were sold. In *madisanta* vegetables, sarees, cosmetics etc., were sold.

The Koccherlakota inscription of the Kakatiya general Devarinayaka datable to A.D 1310 “furnishes the nature of a public fair or *pemta* of the period. According to it, the rent of each shed was started to be one *gadyana*, perhaps for a period of one week. The normal interval between two consecutive fair-days, when the commodity was taken from one shed and put for sale in the market yard he had to pay again one *gadyana* as yard rent. Finally, it is stated that the merchants had to pay *mudra-sumka* or registration fee to take the articles in to the market yard for sale, perhaps this item of tax had been very low, being levied uniformly on all items of sale big or small. In the Koccherlakota record, it is stated that the *bacchus* or *Komatiss* who collect the *mudra-sumka* should remit the same to the temple as *sarvamanya*. We can infer from this grant that the *pemta* or *adda* was constructed and properly managed by the state. The items of the income i.e rent of the sheds, the market yard and *mudra-sumka*, the initial licence charge as noticed before was also credited to the state or the local chiefs. The actual *ammubadi-sumka* or sales tax and *vilchu* or purchase tax which depended on the quality and quantity of the article were to be collected by the *sumkari* or *sumkamanyagadu* or toll-farmer to whom the right of collecting these *Sumkas* was periodically leased out by the authorities. The merchandise brought to an *Adda* or *Pemta* was subjected to a series of taxes before it was finally disposed.

It can be understood by the inscripational evidences that gifts were made to the temples from the *sumka-pemtas* or the market places. The chief of the region used to make the gift where *sumka* or toll regulations were enforced. This suggests that in small villages the petty merchants or street vendors were not liable for the multiple toll taxation. However, they were not totally excluded from the primary tolls. Itikala village epigraph of the Kakatiya chiefs Gundaraju and Hariharadeva records a gift of the local god of the income derived as toll levied on all the street vendors who sold articles carrying baskets on their heads. Each basket carrier had to pay some tax. These petty hawkers were perhaps subjected to annual tax without taking their monthly or daily sales into account. This can be considered in such a case, as professional tax. The whole sale merchants in the *addas* had to pay the *ammubadi-sumka* or sales tax only when the sale of his goods was effected. Thus these levies formed one of the main sources of income to the government exchequer.

### D. Trade License

The inscriptions of the Kakatiya period make it clear that the merchant associations had to purchase license, for conducting the business in a particular town or *Adda* (fair). The Chittapur epigraph of Prataparudra's period was special evidence in this regard. It regards that certain Bairisetti of the Virabalanja community excavated a tank in the village Pedapariyala and donated one-third of the yield from the irrigated land to the god, the remaining two-thirds being left over to the king. By this, we come to know that the merchant purchased the license of trade from the king or state, the cost of which he paid by digging the tank. Besides trade license, he could donate one-third of the yield to the god and acquire religious merit. The king in turn got some of the waste land reclaimed in the name of business-cum-religious motive of the merchant. The transaction is very interesting in the business as well as religious aspect.

The Tripurantakam inscription datable to A.D 1282 refers to the instance of purchasing trade license and the names of all the members of the guild who included Reddis, Nayudus, Settis and others. It is stated that they had come there on their *samayakarya* or the work connected with their association. P.V.P Sastry opines that, it cannot be the routine work of commercial business. It is definitely the office business of the guild. If it had been a routine business, the names of the members of the guild need not be mentioned.

The gifts are generally recorded in the name of the Nakara, so also routine business, for example, another inscription in the same place dated A.D. 1270 got at the rate of one *kesari-visa* per *madaon* the sale produce and they got in the *pentta* or the market of Tripurantakam. This was a mere gift. But in the present case where the names of all the constituent members of the guild are specified, it is to be inferred that the said members alone forming a guild had come to Tripurantaka on guild business (*samaya-karya*) perhaps to purchase license from the authorities concerned for conducting trade in the *adda* or market of that place. This is the import of the words *samaya-karyanikai vacchi* (having come on the work of the guild), so they have come to purchase the license for trade.

It was Nandasiva, the *sthanapati* or pontiff of the Tripurantakam temple estate, who was also the administrative head of all the *deva-vrittis* of the temple including the town Tripurantakam that issued the licence. Although there is no specific mention in it, the nature of the record clearly indicates that it was added of trade license, members of the guild whose names were specified in the record were supposed to have a right of conducting their business transaction in the *adda* of Tripurantakam. A perusal of the inscriptions thus makes it clear that there was a practice of issuing license to the traders on payment of certain amount which formed a source of income to the state.

#### E. Trade Centres

A number of trade centres flourished during the Kakatiya period as a result of the development of agriculture and industry.

- 1) Orugallu: The capital town naturally became a trade centre. In those days the market at this place was called *Mathiyavada* as the word occurs more than once in the Warangal record of Ganapatideva of the Modern Warangal, where all business activities still take place.
- 2) Panugallu: Near Nalgonda which was the capital of a branch of the Choda, Chiefs of Kandarua was a big trade centre and Peruru in the same district gained significance in the trading activities.
- 3) Magatala near Raichur on the left side of Krishna was not only a military centre but also a trade centre, linked up with many towns of the days by road ways.
- 4) Trupurantakam in the present Prakasam district, it was trade and famous pilgrim centre in those days.
- 5) Manthena in the Karimnagar district was a trading centre.
- 6) Darmapauri is in the present Karimnagar district. A holy place from ancient times, might have been a trade centre on the banks of the Godavari besides where ordinary ferry major transportation of commercial goods was also carried out on the river, wherever the boats used to load or unload the merchandise, the owners had to pay *Revu-Sunkam* which was usually collected during Kakatiya Period.
- 7) Vemulavada which was the capital of a branch known as Chalukya of Vemulavada was a big trade centre having connection with *podananadu* or *Bodhan*, *Naganuru*, *Chittapur*, *Konavattu (Koratla)*, *Ravikanti (Raikal)* and other important trade centres of those days.
- 8) Polavasa The capital of Medaraja was an important centre of trade. The local inscription dated A.D. 1108 states that the Virabalanja community, a merchant guild consisting of Ayyavali-five hundred made some gifts to local god Paulastyesvara Swamy.
- 9) Alampur, on the bank of Tungabhadra is famous pilgrim and trade centre in ancient days.
- 10) Jadcherla in Mahbubnagar another centre of business and this maintains the same status even today.
- 11) Dornala in Kurnool District was also a trading centre in those days.
- 12) Velpura in the Guntur, *Durgi*, *Tangeda*, *Kuppam* in the same district are also trade centres.
- 13) Upparapalle, *Mopur*, *Lebaka* and *Nanadaluru* in the Cuddapah district are also trade centres
- 14) Pengonda in the West Godavari was not only industrial centre, but was also a trade centre.
- 15) Nellore was famous for the manufacture of textile and leather products.
- 16) Ghantasala in the Krishna district and Gudivada In the same district was known for textiles etc.,
- 17) Kolanupaka in the Nalgonda district was not only a trade center but also Jaina religious centre
- 18) Chanduvayi and Tangaturu in Cuddapah district are the trade centres
- 19) Kondapaka in Medak district is a business point.
- 20) Pedaganjam was a business place.
- 21) Chandavolu was a business place.
- 22) Velpura in Guntur, *Durgi*, *Macherla*, *Tangeda*, *Koppam*, *Enamadala* in the same district are main business centres
- 23) Rajamendry (East Godavari District)

- 24) Chennupalli
- 25) Pattipadu
- 26) Yanamalakuduru
- 27) Bezwada(Krishna District)
- 28) Mandala(Guntur District)
- 29) Guntur
- 30) Yanamadala(Guntur District)
- 31) Bapatla(Guntur District)
- 32) Nadendla(Guntur District)
- 33) Errabalam(Guntur District)
- 34) Siddhantam(Krishna District)
- 35) Kondavidu(Guntur District)
- 36) Undavalli(Guntur District)
- 37) Ahobliam(Guntur District)
- 38) Uji(Ballari) etc., were the important centres connected with many towns and cities of the day. All the port towns and religious centres were big centres of merchandise.

The following agricultural and industrial products of inland trade find frequent mention in contemporary records:

- a) *Agricultural products*: paddy, mustard, seeds, millets, ragulu, Bengal gram, *Anumulu*, black pulse, sesamum seeds, wheatgreen gram, redgram, horsegram, grrenginger, dried ginger, salt, betal leaves, onion, jaggory, desi sugar, oil (variety of kinds) turmeric, vegetables, coconuts, indigo, arecanuts, etc., were sold in the local markets directly by the producers or the local merchants, articles from the producers, and disposed of these in shops and markets.
- b) *Animals*: bullocks, cows, she buffalos, goats, horses, elephants etc.,
- c) *Manufactured Goods*: Leather, silk-thread, textiles, silk clothes, cotton threads and cloths, blankets(*gorupadalu*) etc.,
- d) *Metals*: Tin, lead, copper, gold, silver and other metals corals, pearls, *rudraksha*, ivory, beads, glass, etc.,
- e) *Fruits*: *Madiphala*, *kammarenu*, mangos, banana, tamarind, pineapple, pickles, *regupandlu*, *edepandlu*, *neredupandlu*, *muali pandlu*, *draksha*, *kharjura*, *gidi*, *cidmudipandlu*, *jamapandlu*, *danimma*, *molugu pandlu*, *maredu*, *balusu*, *tumikipandlu*, *orange*, *gajanimma*, *gummadi*, *velaga*, *kalujuvvi*, *palapandlu*, *vellanki kayalu* etc.,
- f) *Cosmetics and Perfumeries*: sandal, camphor, civet, musk, saffron, peppers, cloves, drugs etc.,
- g) *Miscellaneous*: Pots, garlands, curds, ghee, flowers, meat and fishes, butter milk, milk etc., were to be imported from other parts generally. Among the animals, horses, camels, cows, oxen, sheep and buffalos commonly occur in the records of the period, as items of trade and separate fairs or pemptas were organized for animals as at present. The Warangal inscription which gives an exhaustive list of articles include even false hair as important activities of trade. It includes the multitude in the growth of variety in industrial production and trading articles.

The Kakatiyas were not only great warriors, but also great administrators and builders. Under their able administration the country developed in various fields.

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