CHAPTER VII

RELATIONS WITH GOLCONDA AFTER 1565 AD

The battle of 1565 AD had far reaching consequences on the fortunes of Vijayanagar empire, the first and foremost being the shifting of the capital from Vijayanagar to Penugonda. This change of political headquarters of Vijayanagar kingdom affected its relations vis-a-vis Golconda. As far as Ibrahim Qutb Shah was concerned Vijayanagar "seemed to be a valuable buffer between Bijapur and Telangana much in the same way as Bidar was a buffer between Telangana and Ahmadnagar". It was in his own interest to maintain Vijayanagar intact and thwart the expansion of Bijapur beyond certain limit in the north western direction. This factor henceforth played an important part in the future relations of Golconda with Vijayanagar.

The league organised by Sultans did not last beyond the victory obtained over Ramaraya. Soon after their victory, differences among the four Sultans came to the forefront leading to the breaking up of the alliance. At any rate, the alliance was only the result of common enmity towards Ramaraya, whom they could not match singlehandedly. Their coming together was not the end of their own mutual jealousies and rivalries. The alliance of 1565 was bound to break
up sooner or later after achieving its object. Interestingly it came about sooner than expected. The break up of the alliance is attributed to Mustafa Khan Ardistanty of Telangana. Prior to the march of the allies to Vijayanagar in 1565 AD, it was agreed in principle to hand over the Raichur Doab to Bijapur in keeping with its traditional claim over the area. But when Mustafa Ardistanty chose to hand over the forts of Raichur and Mudgal to the representatives of Bijapur without informing either Ibrahim Qutb Shah or who Hussain Nizam Shah sent a strongly worded letter to Ibrahim Qutb Shah for the rash action of the Qutb Shahi general Mustafa Khan in giving over the Raichur Doab without prior permission or knowledge of Ahmadnagar. Apart from reprimanding his general and ordering him to proceed to Mecca, Ibrahim Qutb Shah did nothing. This episode is cited to be responsible for the surfacing of the dormant jealousies among the allies.

Ali Adil Shah's appetite for further share in the spoils of Vijayanagar was also responsible for the deterioration of the relations between Ibrahim Qutb Shah and Ali Adil Shah. Taking advantage of the weak government at Penugonda, Ali Adil Shah had annexed many of the outlying forts at Vijayanagar namely,
This alarmed Ibrahim Qutb Shah very much. He could not remain an idle spectator of the rising power of Bijapur. Apart from this, being a staunch supporter of the theory of Balance of Power, he viewed this accession to the strength of Bijapur, as a grave matter. Before he could make plans to counter the Bijapur advance into Vijayanagar, Ibrahim received an appeal for help from Sri Ranga Raya of Vijayanagar. The circumstances which forced Sri Ranga to seek the help of Ibrahim Qutb Shah, presently need our attention.

In AD 1576, Ali Adil Shah assembled a huge army at Adoni, and aided by Hande' chief Timma Nayak set out for Penugonda. Having reached Penugonda, he invested it closely for three months. Unable to face Ali Adil Shah's forces single handedly, Sri Ranga first bought off the Hande' Chief to his side by offering a huge bribe and then set about weakening the rear guard of Ali Adil Shah's army by quick manoeuvres.

He sent an envoy to Ibrahim's court requesting his help against Ali Adil Shah, fully aware of the growing animosity between Bijapur and Golconda. Ibrahim Qutb Shah lost no time in formulating an attack against Bijapur. He despatched his general Shah Muhammad Anju to plunder the Bijapur provinces. Then he sent another officer Fazl Kha.. to conclude a treaty
with Raya. These developments unnerved Ali Adil Shah so much that he withdrew not only from Penugonda but also deemed it advisable to return home. Thus Sri Ranga was successful in thwarting Ali Adil Shah's soaring ambition.

Ibrahim Qutb Shah had justified his armed action against Ali Adil Shah saying that "the invasion of the Vijayanagar territory by Ali was against the accepted usage and tradition that no action should be taken by any Sultan against Vijayanagar without first informing the others. This was of course an enunciation of a doctrine which would hardly hold water and Ibrahim helped Sri Ranga not because Ali was guilty of any faux-pas against an ancient usage but because he did not want any inordinate expansion in the power of an individual Deccan State".

Though Ibrahim was against inordinate expansion of any individual state, even he was not above temptation to exploit the prevailing anarchial condition in Vijayanagar. Thus was the hollowness of his own appeal revealed. Ibrahim Qutb Shah himself attacked Vijayanagar in 1579 AD. The anonymous Historian justifies this invasion of Ibrahim by saying that the king of Golconda had to claim arrears due to him from Venkatadri, Kustury Timraj and Nursing Row. Dr.N.Ven-
Kataramanayya expresses surprise at the inordinate delay in collecting these dues if any and states that "the real cause of the invasion was the anarchy prevailing in the Karnataka country". Apart from this, the feuding nobles in Vijayanagar territory were eager to declare their independence. They extended support to Ibrahim. Prominent among them were the Hande Chiefs—Malakappa and Kadamba Raya.

In 1578-79, Golconda army under Murahari Rao or Raya Rao crossed the river Krishna and attacked eastern districts of Kurnool including the famous temple of Ahobalam. The Golconda army under Murahari Rao ransacked the temple. He is said to have looted Gold and Silver vessels worth lakhs of Huns, from the temple. After the subjugation of the whole region of Kurnool, it was given over to Malakappa Nayudu as a reward for his treachery.

But this success of the Golconda army was short lived as Malakappa Nayudu was unable to retain Ahobalam for long. It is said that the Jiyar of the Ahobala Math, Satgopalaswami by name, recounted the atrocities committed by the invading armies to Sri Ranga Raya and requested him to drive away the invaders and restore the temple to its former glory. Sri Ranga was eager to lead the expedition himself, but he was persuaded to send the Telugu Cola Chief Kondaraju Venkataramu
against the Mohammadans. Kondaraju was not only successful in driving away the Muslims from the vicinity but also succeeded in restoring the shrine of Ahobaleswara to its former glory. This event occurred in 1579 AD.13.

When the news of this setback reached Ibrahim Qutb Shah, his ire knew no bounds. In retaliation, Ibrahim despatched a strong army against Vijayanagar under Telangana general Amir-Imadu-din-Shirazi entitled Haidur-ul-Mulk and Raya Row to cross the Krishna and attack the petty states which only nominally acknowledged the sway of Penugonda. Haidar-ul-Mulk started from Golconda on 29th March 1579.14

Haidar-ul-Mulk had a smooth sailing and subdued one fort after another without much difficulty. Bellamkonda, Vinukonda and Nagarjunakonda15 were reduced in succession. He then proceeded against Kocherlakota held by Velugoti Kasturi Ranga and Moodna Chinia. Though they had 20,000 infantry with them, "on the approach of the Muhammadans they evacuated it without firing a shot and it was occupied by king's forces".16

The same success awaited the Golconda forces against Udaigiri defended by one Venkata Raju. He is identified by Sherwani,17 Heras,18 and Rangaswamy Saraswati19 with Venkatapati, the younger brother
of Sri Ranga Raya. But Venkataramanayya strongly rejects this identification saying "There is nothing to recommend this identification excepting the similarity of the name. He was probably one of the numerous Kstratriya Chiefs who held office under the government for instance, Kondaraju Venkataraju". Venkatapati Raju the younger brother of Sri Ranga was entrusted the governorship of Chandragiri by Sri Ranga Raya.

The fall of Udaigiri was a prelude to the conquest of other small forts in the vicinity such as Addanki, Ammanabrolu, Kandukuru, Podili, Darsi, Kambham, Kakarla Dupadu, Tangered, Gurijala, Ketavaram and Karempudi. The conquest of these minor forts facilitated the subjugation of Kondavidu, the only fort which was still untouched by the Muhammadans.

The Hindus did not give up easily and they made a final effort to stem the tide of Mussaiman invasion. Kasturi Ranga and his friends Nandi Timmana and Moodna Chinia collected a force of 30,000 men and tried to block the way of the Muslims but they were routed. "The Mohammadans gained a complete victory and pursued the enemy to the fort of Goorum, which surrendered". Thus, the Muslim army marched on unhindered, to Kondavidu which was under the command of Gobburi Timmaraju, the son-in-law of Ramaraya,
He was ably assisted by the valiant general Velugoti Timma. Haidar-ul-Mulk could not gain an entry inspite of his best efforts. He had no recourse except to apply to Golconda to send reinforcements. They arrived under Syed Shah Tucky entitled Ameer Shah Meer who took over the charge from Haidar-ul-Mulk. Inspite of the fact that he had the best detachment of Moguls and Persians under his command, he was not successful in breaking the resistance of the Hindus. Consequently it was decided to take the fort by applying nonmilitary tactics. It is mentioned in the Kai-fiyat of Kondavidu that Murahari Rao offered a bribe of "brass bags of varahas." to Velugoti Timma, the commander of Kondavidu. As a result, the vigil was relaxed and Mohammadans could easily breach the walls of the fort. Golconda royal army was able to make its entry into the fortress on 29 April 1580 AD.

The loss of Kondavidu was a terrible blow to the prestige of Vijayanagara kingdom. The reasons for the failure of the Hindus to counter the Golconda offensive are not far to seek. Sri Ranga's kingdom was like house divided against itself. The empire lost its unitary character and was divided
into three important principalities of Penugonda, Chandragiri and Srirangapatnam. Not only this, the nobles of the kingdom too fought against one another and even invited Golconda to fish in the troubled waters. Lure of gold and want of patriotic fervour led to the fall of Kondavidu.

"This war weakened the kingdom. The nobles who were absorbed in their own affairs, neither assisted the emperor to organise the defence of the country effectively nor co-operated with one another to expel the invader. No wonder the Muhammadans succeeded in subjugating large tracts of Vijayanagar territory without much difficulty". 25

The conquest of Kondavidu was the last success of Ibrahim Qutb Shah. He expired on 21-4-968/5-6-1580. 26 Inspite of his ambitious ventures in to Vijayanagar territories, he has been dubbed an essentially a peace loving monarch, by interested writers.

It is difficult to subscribe to this view. As already pointed out, the factor which weighed most with Ibrahim was the Balance of Power in the Deccan. To counter the growing power of Bijapur, he extended help to Sri Ranga against Bijapur. But once, he saw the anarchial condition of Vijayanagar, he was tempted
to extend his dominions too at the expense of Vijayanagar. There is no evidence to suggest. Ibrahim was basically a peace loving monarch.

Sri Ranga Raya's reign came to an end in Nov. 1585. He was succeeded by his younger brother Venkatapathi Raya whose coronation was celebrated according to Virappayya Kalajnanam on 21st Jan AD 1586. Though he did not have any sons of Sri Ranga to contest for the throne, his elder brother Rama, the viceroy of Srirangapatnam left two sons Tirumala and Sri Ranga. Inspite of this the nobles selected Venkata II to head the government as they wanted a strong monarch at the helm of affairs. "The nobles seem to have felt the need for a strong monarch who could restore order among the warring chiefs and offer effective resistance to the Mussalmans."

Venkata II amply justified his selection as the emperor of Vijayanagar by doing everything possible to recover the territories lost by his predecessor to the Sultans. The first step in this direction was the transfer of his capital from Penugonda to Chandragiri. The second step was the sending of an expedition against the Mohammadans soon after his coronation. This is confirmed by the anonymous
Chronicler of Golconda who says that at the beginning of his reign Venkata "made some incursions and invasions into the Golconda dominions." This was a very bold step and marked a departure from the policy followed by his predecessors of post Talikota period. Till now the Vijayanagar emperors had to be content with defensive measures but now Venkata probably feeling his position secure launched an offensive campaign.

Though the anonymous chronicler refers to incursions by Venkata, we do not have details as to what those incursions were.

Dr. Venkataramanayya opines that most probably Venkata II reconquered Udaigiri from the Sultan of Golconda as Kowlanunda (Kowi Ananta) was ruling over Udaigiri on behalf of Venkata II sometime before 1589 AD. The loss of this fort seems to have alerted Mohammad Quli to the danger from Venkata II.

At about the same time, Venkata II seems to have encouraged disaffection among the Golconda officers guarding the strategic fort of Kondavidu. One officer by the name of Ali Khan Lur, the commandant of the fort of Kondavidu defected to the side of Venkata because of some differences with Rai Rao, another
commandant of the fort. Venkata hoping to extract maximum advantage of the situation sent his son-in-law Mekur Timma to lead an expedition into the district of Kondavidu. But this contingent was defeated by the Golconda army near Cambam. "He besieged the fort of Cambam but was compelled to fight the royalists under Ray Row who gave him a total defeat."

This defeat was viewed with disfavour by Venkata II who refused to have anything else with Ali Khan Lur. On this being repulsed by the Vijayanagar king, Ali Khan Lur had no other option except to be a freebooter in the vicinity of Kondavidu and occupied the forts of Narakondapalli and Addanki. But the Qutb Shahi forces sent against him were successful in putting down his revolt by killing him in action. Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah was quite disturbed by the trend of the recent events and so decided to strike at the root cause, namely the dangers emanating from Vijayanagar side.

"The defeat of his army, loss of the fort of Udaigiri, with its dependent territory and the frequent troubles fomented (by the agents of the emperor of Vijayanagar in the province of Kondavidu seem to have stirred up Quli Qutb Shah to activity."
With this purpose the Sultan of Golconda sent Mirjumla Amir-ul-Mulk at the head of the forces to march into the Vijayanagar territory. He crossed the river Krishna and after subjugating the fort of Musalimadugu in Kurnool marched to Gandikota in the Jammalamadugu taluk of Cuddapah district. On the way, he was opposed by the chiefs of Nandyala (Basa-vant Raj) and of Kalagur, Narsing Raj. However, they were unable to hold against the Mohammadans and agreed to pay an annual tribute. Their example was followed by the chiefs of Jammalamadugu, Jutur, Sirivella, Nandavaram Kota, Dole (Dhone) and Cennuru.

Next on the way was the fort of Gandikota held by Narsimha Raja, a cousin of Venkata II. After standing a siege for some time, he too agreed to become a tributary to the throne of Golconda. It was at this juncture that Mohammad Quli joined his army and resolved to march to Penugonda, the seat of Vijayanagar empire. The Anonymous chronicler refers to the breach of some imaginary treaty existing between the two kingdoms by Venkata as the cause of this march. But Dr. Sherwani has rightly commented "This sweeping movement and the prestige which the royal army acquired by its success encouraged the Sultan to strike at Venkata's Capital Penugonda itself". Meeting with no opposition, Mohammad Quli reached the city of Penugonda and laid siege to it.
It was a crucial time for Venkata II. Dr. Venkataramanayya gives two reasons responsible for Venkata's faulty defence of his capital. "Probably the Muslim invasion was too sudden and the nobles whom he had summoned to his assistance had not yet joined him."

In order to gain time he sent his minister Gopraj Timma and his general Pavia Chitty (Papiah Setti) to sue for peace. They pleaded with the Sultan to grant them a truce so that they could discuss terms for a permanent peace. Satisfied with the outcome of the siege Mohammad Quli withdrew from the vicinity of Penugonda.

It was a critical time for Vijayanagar kingdom. It appeared as if the fall of Vijayanagar was inevitable. But Venkata II made one more attempt to assert his independence. Taking advantage of the truce, he prepared himself for a long defence. "The Hindus taking advantage of the absence of the Mohammedans from the vicinity of the fort, supplied themselves in three days with provisions for a siege and on the fourth the famous Jagadeva Rao, accompanied by Gulrang Setti, Manupraj and Papia Samy at the head of thirty thousand musketeers, threw themselves into the fort."
It was probably on this occasion that Venkata requisitioned the help of few other nobles such as Raghunatha of Tanjore, Matli Ananta, Velugoti Kasturi Ranga, Velugoti Chinna and his son Venkatapati. Emboldened by their quick response, Venkata threw off all pretensions of submission and openly defied the Muslims. The Raghunathabhudayam of Ramabhadradamba states that Raghunatha Nayaka, at the bidding of his father, Achyuta Nayaka, joined the emperor followed by hundreds of tributary chiefs. The poem further states that "Many of the enemies of the emperor fled from Penugonda, when they learnt of the arrival of Raghunatha with troops, while a few mounting, their horses opposed him. But they were easily defeated by the Valiant Raghunatha and were scattered as Rakshas were by Rama."  

Mohammad Quli realised his mistake too late and knowing the futility of facing such a formidable army decided to retreat to his territory. The reason advanced by the anonymous chronicler is "The rains were now approaching, provisions were also scarce in the camp and aware that the inundation of the Krishna river would cut off all communication with the Golconda territory, the king deemed it advisable to raise the siege."
This appears to be a cover up for the humiliating defeat suffered at the hands of the Hindus. We have literary and insciptional evidence to prove that the Hindus succeeded in recording a resounding victory over the Muslims. The sidhout Inscription of Matli Ananta dated 1605-6 AD states that Ananta destroyed the pride of the Mohammadan king in the battle of Penugonda. Jagadeva Rao also played a prominent role in the battle. "Jagadeva Rao appears to have made a sally from the fort and attacked the Qutb Shahi army. In the engagement that followed he defeated the troops of Mrtruja Khan and Nuri Khan, took citta Khan prisoner and put Sanjata Khan to death and offered protection to Cenna Mulk."

Inscriptions such as Dalay Agraharam Padmaneni grant, Mangalampad grant, Vellangudi plates refer to the defeat of the Golconda Sultan by the Vijayanagar general. Vellangudi plates say that the Sultan used "daily to return dejected from the battlefield after being deprived of his elephants, horses, armies and umbrella". Ramarajiyam further states that "Venkatapati Raya collected his army and drove the son of Ibrahim who had invaded his territory as far as Golconda. He chased his army back and defeated it on the banks of the Pennar. The water of the river was crimson with the blood of the Mohammadan soldiers
This battle of Pennar is mentioned in all the grants of Venkata II - it being a remarkable event in the Hindu empire. It appears that there was more than one battle between the Muslims and the Hindus as the grants say that the Sultan of Golconda was defeated repeatedly by the Vijayanagar forces.

So, it was the combined strength of the various nobles acting on the behest of Venkata II which was responsible for the utter defeat of the Muslims and the subsequent flight of the Sultan to his dominions. Before he crossed Krishna, Mohammad Quli made suitable arrangements for the defence of his newly conquered territories in Kurnool and Cuddapah districts. "Having left Sunjar Khan in Gandikota, Asyrow (Asva Rao) in Mossulmooroo (Musalimadugu) and juggut row in Nandial and placing a large army under the command of Moor-tuza Khan in the territories South of the Krishna, Mohamed Koolly Kootb Shah returned to his capital."

Elated by this grand success against the Mohammadans, Venkata II decided to try his fortune further. He started attacking the strongholds of Mohammadans in the vicinity of Krishna. He captured Gitti and later Gandikota. Mohammad Quli ordered
Afzal Khan, the governor of Kondavidu, to send adequate forces to defend Gandikota. But this was an unwise move as it "left the district of kondbeer wholly unprotected. "Venkata II deeming it to be a magnificent chance to recover the lost territory, he sent instruction to the governor of Udaigiri Kowlanunda to harass the Muslim army and lay waste the Golconda territory. With this purpose, he also sent a large force to Udaigiri. "Kowlanunda after being joined by this detachment sent his son-in-law Woorias Ray to carry this scheme into effect". 51

Afzal Khan retaliated by inciting the jagirdars to collect their forces and devastate the territory of Udaigiri. The anonymous Historian Credits Afzal Khan and Ajda Khan with success against the Hindus. He Woorias Ray was defeated with the loss of 3,000 men, killed wounded and taken prisoners and all his camp equipage." 52

But the Hindu records give the credit of victory to the Hindus. The Kaifiyat of Cittivelli describes in detail the role played by Matli Ananta and Kasturi Rangappa to put the invaders to flight. "In obedience to the Royal order they marched to Kamalakuru and
routed the Golconda army in a fierce battle. Kasturi Rangappa chased the broken forces of the Qutb Shahi nobles as far as Koccerlakota and Matli Ananta repaired to Gurram Konda with his army and laid siege to it". 53

These victories sealed the fate of the garrison of Gandikota. Though Afzal Khan was present there, the forces under him were inadequate to cope with the situation. A large Vijayanagar army of 10,000 men under the command of Yarra Timmaraja, Galrang Chetti, Manupa Raja and Velugoti Cennappa and Yaca marched to recover Gandikota which was under Sunjur Khan. To ease the pressure on Gandikota, the Muslim forces under Mustazakhan made a sudden attack on a local temple in Cuddapah and sacked its idol. 54 On receiving this information, Venkata sent Yara Timmaraja and Manupa Raja with 10,000 cavalry to oppose Murtaza Khan but were said to be defeated by him. 55

This victory of the Muslims did not have much effect on the main course of the siege of Gandikota. Rev. Heras rightly questions the claims of victory by the Muslims. He says - "How can this be true when the same writer records immediately after the brilliant siege of the town by the Hindus, the distress of the Mohammadans, who required help from Golconda
Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah learning of the dire straits of his army sent another contingent of 5,000 horse under Rustam Khan who was also appointed as the supreme commander of the troops in the south. This move was doomed to fail as soon there developed a clash of egos between Rustam Khan and Murtaza. They could not co-ordinate their actions.

Murtaza Khan was defending himself for three whole months and seeing the swelling numbers of the Hindus, decided against an open action in the field. So, after the arrival of Rustam Khan, Murtaza proposed that he would march towards Penugonda with half the army while Rustam should engage in predatory warfare with the remaining half of the army. But this advice fell on deaf ears. Disregarding the advice Rustam Khan insolently embarked on an independent action. He crossed the river Pennar which lay in front of him and pitched his tent on the black clayey soil, wet with rain.

On the other side, Hindus were also cautious in their approach. They did not immediately engage the Muslims in warfare. On the contrary they decided to bide their time. One day whether to amuse their
own soldiers or for some other reason - "the Hindus dressed up a red bullock with gilded horns and having painted it with many different colours and fastened bells to its legs and neck, drove it towards the Mohammadans. Rustam Khan, who happened to be in front of the army and alone, becoming alarmed at the strange appearance of the animal, galloped off to the rear in dismay and communicated to his troops. The Hindus, observing confusion in the line of the Mohammadans took advantage of it to surround them with their musketeers and galled them on all sides. The Mohammadan cavalry in which their principal force consisted unable to charge through the heavy black soil were shot one by one and might have been annihilated but for Moortuza Khan who collecting a small party forced his way though the enemy's ranks and thus covered the retreat of many of the Mohammadans; but all the camp equipage was taken and a heavy loss sustained".

Such is the extraordinary description of the Muslim Chronicler. Rev. Heras comments - "Such cowardice could not be believed of such a general if the case was not narrated by the Mohammadan Chronicler. Whatever may have been the truth about
the bull story this much is certain that the Muslims suffered a humiliating defeat. This battle was fought on the banks of Pennar and the Hindu forces led by Velugoti Cennappa and Yaca marched to Gandikota and captured it.

"The fall of Gandikota was a prelude to the surrender of other minor forts in the neighbourhood.

The Mohammadan garrisons were chased across the Krishna and the Sultan Mohammad Quli had to recognise that river as the boundary between his kingdom and the dominions of the emperor of Vijayanagar."  

Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah became highly indignant at the series of defeats and terrible loss sustained by the Muslims. Anonymous Chroniclers says - "Rustam Khan who was a notorious boaster was disgraced on his return to Haidarabad by being dressed in female attire, after which he was banished from the kingdom."  

As far as the Vijayanagar king Venkata II was concerned, he not only repelled their attacks but wrested from them much of the Vijayanagar territory which they had conquered earlier during the reign of his predecessor. Encouraged by these achievements
of Venkata II, the jagirdar in the vicinity of Kondavidu seem to have revolted against the Sultan of Golconda and refused to pay the taxes due to the royal court. The Anonymous chronicler records "At the period when Amir-ul-Mulk became Meerjumla or minister, to Mohamad Quli Qutb Shah he sent officers to collect the balance of the customs due to the government from the different jagirdars. This demand had been so long deferred that the jagirdars deeming it an innovation, prepared to rebel and in consequence Alum Khan, Patan Khan Khanan, Sabajee Maratta, and Bala Rao, resisted the authority of the collectors and not only refused to pay but made overtures to the Raja of Beejanuggur to join him in opposing the king's forces." 61

From the aforesaid it becomes clear that of the jagirdars who revolted against Mohammad Quli - there were both Hindus and Mussalmans. Aminabad Inscription too refers to the names which correspond to those given by the anonymous chronicler. They are Alama Khanudu, Khanakhana, Sabaji and Ballerayandu 62

When the matter was reported to Mohammad Quli, Amir-ul-Mulk was deputed to lead a force against the rebels. His first task on arrival at Kondavidu was
to seize the Hindu Chief Kowlananda, believed to be the chief investigator of the rebellion. This act struck terror in the hearts of the jagirdars who shrank from an encounter. They requisitioned the help of the Vijayanagar king in championing their cause.

In the meantime, disaffection was also brewing in Kasimkota who king Mukund Raj attempted to seize the person of Birlas Khan the Sultan's representative in the country. "Such outrage" says the Golconda chronicler "called for the immediate interference of the king particularly as the Raja, confiding in the valour of his troops and his native woods and mountains for protection, had not sent the annual tribute to the court." 63

A big army was collected under the Golconda general, Mir-Zain-ul-Abidin to reduce the chief to submission. Finding the forces inadequate, Amir-ul-Mulk too joined the former detachment. Alarmed at the serious preparations made to attack him, Mukund Raj sought the assistance of Venkata II and the neighbouring rajas, while he with thirty thousand infantry and 3,000 cavalry engaged the king's army in the neighbourhood of Rajahmundry. In this battle Mohammadans were defeated and Mukund Raj on reaching
Kasimkota put to death Bbirias Khan and Ghuzunfur Beg, together with several other Mohammadans whom he inveigled into his presence.  

Rev. Huras observes that the anonymous chronicler while describing the success of Mukund Raj, attributes the victory to the Mussalmans.

Notwithstanding this victory of Mukund Raj, Venkata II invaded the district of Kondbir again. At this time a great part of the Golconda Sultan's army was employed in supporting the ruler of Ahmadnagar and therefore Venkata thought it was a very favourable moment to strike another blow at the Sultan. With this view, Venkata marched with an army of 20,000 horses and infantry, 1,000 elephants. In retaliation, Mohammad Quli directed his army under Adil Khan Bungy or Bangush, accompanied by 200 elephants and many guns to oppose him.

The Chronicler states that Venkata "finding that the king's (Golconda Sultan) troops had arrived and that the army was formidable...thought it prudent to send ambassadors with rich presents to the king of Golconda. The ambassadors had directions to proffer his excuse, by saying that the object for which he had left his capital and come towards Kondbir
was merely to see the lake Khammam. Orders were accordingly issued to Adilkhan Bungy to refrain from invading his territories but to remain with the army at Kondbir as a corps of observation."

The above account is absurd. It is highly improbable that Venkata II was put off by a mere force of 200 elephants that he had to sue for peace. It is more likely that chronicler was trying to draw a veil over the defeat of the Muslims. In this context Rev.Heras remarks. "Such is the incredible account given by the anonymous chronicler of Golconda in his anxiety to conceal the defeat of the Golconda troops. Is it not strange that Venkata with the whole of army of two hundred thousand foot and horse and one thousand elephants, dare not give battle to the Muslim general, with an army accompanied only by two hundred elephants and an artillery lagging behind him? As a matter of fact, the Mohammadan army that opposed Venkata was not at all formidable. The story of the ambassadors sent by the Vijayanagar emperor and of his desire to see the lake Cummum is still more obviously, the Writer's concotion."

The untruth of the Muslim chronicler becomes more apparent by the reference to the Sultan of Golconda seeking terms of peace from Venkata in Rama Rajiyamu. According to this work, it was finally settled "that Krishna should thence forward form the boundary bet-
This was the last occasion on which Venkata II and Mohammad Quli clashed. There is no other account of war between Golconda and Vijayanagar during the reign of Venkata II. Venkata II laboured throughout his reign for the glory of Vijayanagar and his success in this direction cannot be doubted. He succeeded in recovering most of the lost territories and re-established the old limits between Vijayanagar and Golconda. Only Kondavidu could not be wrested from the Qutb Shahi's. But what is important is Venkata II by his energetic and vigorous policy succeeded in rejuvenating the empire. He successfully faced the onslaught of repeated Golconda invasions and gave a fitting reply to the invading armies - Spirit of glory and sacrifice were rekindled once again. "During the period of his reign, the glory of the old empire which seemed to have faded on the battle field of Rakasi - Tangadi shone again brilliantly".68

Venkata II died in 1614 AD and Vijayanagar was plunged into a civil war. Venkata II had no sons and before his death in August 1614 AD he nominated his nephew Sri Ranga II (Chikkaraya) as his successor. This was not agreeable to some nobles led by Jaggaraja - the brother-in-law of Venkata II and so they vowed to displace Sri Ranga from the imperial throne and place the young boy claimed to be born
to Bayamma', the queen of Venkata II. As a prelude to their aim, they imprisoned Sri Ranga and crowned the young boy as emperor.

At this juncture, a noble of Vijayanagar, Yacama Nayaka, the son of Kasturi Ranga, came to the rescue of Sri Ranga. He upheld the cause of Sri Ranga displeasing Jagga Raya. "The quarrel which had arisen between Yacama and Jagga in this manner soon developed into a huge civil war and plunged the empire into confusion and disorder." Unfortunately Yacama was successful in rescuing only the Prince Ramdeva. The rest of the royal family was killed by Jagadeva Raya.

This Civil War culminated in the Battle of Topur of AD 1616 in which Jagga Raya was killed and Ramdeva was proclaimed the emperor of Vijayanagar. This civil war brought into prominence the three Nayaks of south-namely Madura, Tanjore and Senji who later played an important role in the destiny of Vijayanagar.

"For the first time we find the great Nauaks or Viceroys taking each his own line of action, the authority of the emperor being confined to the block of territory round the capital." These Nayaks conducted themselves independently and only recognised the imperial authority in public documents. This protracted civil war of 1616 AD sapped the strength of the
Vijayanagar kingdom and thus prevented the Vijayanagar rulers from pursuing a vigorous foreign policy.

In the intervening years, Golconda was ruled by Sultan Mohammad Qutb Shah (11-1-1612 to 30-1-1626 AD). He was succeeded by Abdullah Qutb Shah in 1626 AD. During this period as well as in the whole of the reign of Ram Deva there was no serious effort on the part of the Golconda rulers to conquer Vijayanagar territory. This was because both Golconda and Bijapur had to keep a close watch on the activities of Moghul rulers who were busy putting an end to the Nizamshahi rule in Ahmadnagar. In 1635 AD Shah Jehan was successful in overthrowing the Nizamshahi rule. In 1636 AD he dictated a peace to the rulers of Bijapur and Golconda known as Deeds of submission. According to these both the Sultans were put in a position of nominal subordination to the empire, with freedom to extend their territory if they cared not within the limits of the Nizamshahi territory in the north but the Hindu territory of Vijayanagar in the south. It is this that introduced a new element of disturbance of a serious character for the empire of Vijayanagar and hereafter Bijapur and Golconda are constant factors that have to be considered as influencing the course of the history of Vijayanagar."
Abdullah Qutb Shah's contemporary in Vijayanagar was Peda Venkata or Venkata III of Vijayanagar. During his reign, war renewed once again between Golconda and Vijayanagar. In April 1642 Abdullah sent a strong army along the east coast with instructions to annex as much territory as possible. The large army of 40,000 foot soldiers and 4,000 cavalry left Kondavidu under the command of Mohammad siad and reached Nellore. Velugoti Timma, chief of Arma-ganon and Damerla Venkata of Madras offered some resistance. But Udaigiri was attacked and captured. An inscription at Udaigiri dated Hijira 1052 (1642 AD) says that the Hindus were forced to taste the bitterness of defeat. When the news of the reduction of this great fort reached Golconda there was great rejoicing and "Sultan immediately conferred the robes on Mohammad siad making him the Mirjumla of the kingdom."

In 1642, Venkata III was succeeded by his nephew Sri Ranga III. "The reign of Sri Ranga III (1642-49) has a tragic interest for the historian of South India for it witnessed a downfall and disappearance of Vijayanagar empire." The troubled times in which he ascended the throne of Vijayanagar ensured that Sri Ranga's reign would not be peaceful. Sri Ranga
"understood the situation and wanted to take such action as would save the empire from destruction, then imminent.

But the conditions under which Sri Ranga III ascended the throne were hardly propitious for success in this direction. The southern Nayaks had assumed an air of insolence towards Sri Ranga. "The Nayak of Senji was unwilling to pay tribute - Vijaya Raghav Nayak of Tanjore though not inimical towards Sri Ranga was impotent as a political figure. Tirumala Nayaka of Madura had already tasted the fruits of independence by humouring Venkata II." 78

Tirumala (1623-1659 AD) the Nayak of Madura aimed at practical independence. Venkatappa the Nayak of Senji following the example of Tirumala Nayak stopped paying tribute to Sri Ranga. Tirumala was said to have formed a secret alliance against Sri Ranga with the Nayak of Senji. Vijaya Raghav of Tanjore was not in the league. Sri Ranga marched against the Nayaks burning and plundering the country side asking the route until he reached a place called Cettipattu. 79 Though they offered stubborn resistance ultimately Sri Ranga was successful in crushing their conspiracy. This was in Oct.1645 AD. 80 In their desperation they sought help from Golconda and Bijapur
promising to pay them large sums of money.\textsuperscript{81}

The appeal made by Tirumala Nayak of Madura was the spark which kindled the ambition of Muslims again in Vijayanagar. Mirjumla from Golconda and Mustafa Khan from Bijapur attacked Vijayanagar simultaneously and Sri Ranga was faced with two great Muslim invasions at one time. His position was hopeless as none of the nobles rushed to his rescue. On the contrary, the Nayaks determined to get rid off Sri Ranga, mustered an army of 60,000 soldiers near Vellore\textsuperscript{82} Sri Ranga was forced to seek the help of Mustafa Khan against his own nobles but could not afford to pay the high price demanded by the Bijapur general. With the result, Sri Ranga was defeated in a battle near Vellore and he had to pay what all he had to Mustafa Khan.

These defeats of Sri Ranga awakened the Nayaks of Madura and Senji to their own likely fate as Mirjumla from Golconda was proceeding steadily from the eastern direction. So they initiated a meeting with Sri Ranga near Senji for a joint action in defence of the country. It seems impossible but true that the Hindu ruler and the Nayaks instead of concerting action to meet the Golconda and Bijapur challenge wasted their time in festivities and drinking
bouts. Father Proenza in a letter to Nikel dated 1650 says - "Here the Indian character was revealed. Narasinga (Sri Ranga) spent more than a year with the three Nayaks in the midst of festivities feasts and pleasures during which the Mohammadans quietly achieved the conquest of his dominions. Soon joys gave place to jealousies and divisions".83

When Sri Ranga was thus involved in banal pleasures - MirJumla not only captured Pulicat but was also said to have occupied Poonamalle, Kanchipuram and Chingle put one after another as far as the frontiers of Senji in March 1648.84

Sri Ranga had nowhere to go. He dared not go to Vellore as Mustafa Khan was camping in the vicinity and all his nobles deserted him. From the same letter of Fr. Proenza referred above, we get further information about the movements of Sri Ranga in this critical time. He writes "Rejected again by the Nayaks, Narasinga established his court in the forest of Thieves (Kallans) lying to the north of Tanjore where he spent 4 months, a prey to all discomforts, his courtiers soon abandoned him and this grand monarch, one of the richest in India, was forced to beg for help from the king of Mysore, once the vassal of his crown".

The ruler of Mysore who promised help to Sri Ranga was Kanthirava Narasa (1638-59).85 Even while
Sri Ranga was making plans to get back his ancestral kingdom, the political situation in Vijayanagar underwent a change. It so happened that Mirjumla after conquering Vellore proceeded against Senji and Tanjore and annihilated them. Tirumala Nayak realizing that the same fate awaited him, committed another folly. He sought the help of Bijapur general against Golconda general. But those two came to an understanding according to which Mirjumla withdrew from Senji. All the three provinces of Madura, Tanjore and Senji were overrun by Mustafa in the same manner as did Mirjumla. Tirumala had no option but to submit to the dictates of the invaders. Thus Tirumala had to reap the consequences of his own evil deeds and fallacious policy.

In the meantime Golconda's general Mirjumla fell out with Bijapur with regard to the division of territories conquered in Vijayanagar. So he opened negotiations with Kanthirava Narasa and encouraged Sri Ranga who was with him to fight against Bijapur and win back Vellore.  

Sri Ranga seized this opportunity and won Vellore and surrounding areas from Bijapur in 1652 AD. But he was not destined to enjoy his patrimony for long as Tirumala Nayak again intervened by inviting Bijapur to invade Vellore and Mysore. Consequently
Bijapur general Khan Mohammad, again invaded Vellore in 1653 AD. Sri Ranga made peace by ceding the fort of Chandragiri to Bijapur general.

Tirumala Nayak's action against Sri Ranga is justified by Prof. Sathainatha Aiyer in the following way. He says that the Vijayanagar king was now powerless to defend the kingdom against foreign invasions and the tribute to the royal court is paid only for safety against foreign aggression. But this sort of argument does not hold water. The plain truth is that Tirumala Nayak instead of co-operating with the emperor brought about his ruin. "The king of Bisnaga, betrayed for a second time by his vassal, succumbed to the contest and was obliged to seek refuge on the confines of the kingdom in the forests where he led a miserable life."

There was still hope for the brave but unfortunate king of Vijayanagar. Mir Jumla the Golconda general who conquered the eastern part of Sri Ranga's territories became ambitious and started making plans to convert this territory into an independent kingdom. This was naturally not in the interests of Golconda king Abdullah Qutb Shah. Mir Jumla meanwhile sought the protection of emperor Shah Jahan and joined
Aurangzeb the governor of Decan in 1656 AD. In order to teach a lesson to Mir Jumla, Abdullah Qutb Shah is said to have secretly encouraged Sri Ranga to re-conquer some of his territories and he in turn occupied Tirupati, Kanchi and Pulicat.\(^{90}\)

This was a false hope raised in the mind of Sri Ranga. Abdullah Qutb Shah displayed his true colours as soon as the danger from Mir Jumla was over. He sent his forces to re-establish his authority in the Karnataka.\(^{91}\) Chandragiri too was conquered in 1653 by Golconda Troops.

Sri Ranga became desperate now and is supposed to have an envoy to Aurangzeb seeking Mughal protection against the Sultans of Deccan in 1653.\(^{92}\) This appeal was rejected by Aurangzeb and Sri Ranga appealed for a second time in 1655 AD.\(^{93}\) According to Dr. Sarkar, Sri Ranga was willing to give 2½ crores of Rupees, 200 elephants and all the jewels in his possession and pay annual tribute. He was even willing to become a Muslim if Shah Jahan wanted.\(^{94}\)

Such was the pitiable condition of Sri Ranga. In the words of Krishnaswami, "Driven out of Vellore and Chandragiri by the Golconda and Bijapur Sultans respectively, Sri Ranga became an emperor without an empire and a king without a kingdom."\(^{95}\)
At this juncture, Sivappa Nayak of Ikkeri came to the rescue of Sri Ranga according to Sivatatva Ratnakara. Sivappa is said to have defeated the enemies of Sri Ranga and captured the fort of Vellore. But Krishnaswami does not agree with this view. He says - "If the fort that was captured by Sivappa was Vellore in the Tamil country, we have to pose the question whether Sivappa, a small chieftain could have marched all the way from Ikkeri to North Arcot and dislodged the forces of Golconda from there. There seems to be no truth in identifying Velapura of Sivatatva Ratnakara with Vellore in Tamil country. The Velapura mentioned must be Belur in the Hassan district of Mysore."  

The district of Belur was held by the ruler of Mysore from whom it was snatched and given over to Sri Ranga by the ruler of Ikkeri. The reason was that Sivappa regarded Kantirava Narasa as his enemy because he refused to give protection to Sri Ranga for the second time. An inscription from Belur dated May 1659 AD mentions Sri Ranga ruling from there.  

Sri Ranga lived as a fugitive in the court of Sivappa of Ikkeri till 16th Dec. 1672. With the death of Sri Ranga, the kingdom of Vijayanagar ceased to exist even notionally.
"According to the agreement between 2 Muslim powers, the Golconda Sultan retained the mastery of the Carnatic plains to the banks of Pennar, comprising the modern Guntur, Nellore, N.Arcot and Chingleput districts and Bijapur was allowed to hold the rest of the Carnatic." S.K. Aiyyangar says in his operations against Golconda, we can clearly see that Sri Ranga was badly served by his nobles "either because Sri Ranga was a bad judge of character or because in the circumstances of the time loyal service and capable generals were alike impossible. He happened to be badly served and that made his position impossible for carrying out effectively the policy of preventing Golconda, aggression and giving a further lease of life to the empire." But the reality i. Sri Ranga was not virtuous in his dealings with the Mussalmans. He allied with Bijapur Sultan against his own uncle Venkata III. When he realised his mistake and tried to undo the damage he was cold shouldered by his nobles. No doubt they imitated his own policy by inviting
the Bijapur and Golconda Sultans in their midst to overthrow the nominal emperor repeatedly. Sri Ranga had to reap the tragic consequence of his earlier evil deeds.
NOTES


3. Ibid., p. 134.

4. Ibid., p. 135.

5. Ibid., p. 136.

6. Ibid., p. 139.

7. Ibid., p. 141.


17. Sherwani, p.441.
18. Aravidu Dynasty, p.274.
27. F.S., p.310.
28. Ibid., p.311.
32. Ibid.
34. F.S., p.312.
38. Sherwani, p.452.
40. Briggs, III, p.454.
41. Sources, p.285.
42. Briggs, III, p.454.
43. Sources, p.250.
44. Sources, p.229-30
45. E.I., XII, p.186.
46. E.I., XIV, p.297.
47. Butter worth, I., p.31.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid., 456.
53. F.S., p.316.
55. Ibid.
59. F.S., p.324.
62. Sources, pp.239-41.
64. Ibid., p.464-5
68. F.S., p.325.
69. Ibid., p.326.

70. F.E., p.226.

71. F.S., p.328.


73. Ibid.


75. NDI, Vol.III, p.29.

76. Sherwani, p.470.


78. S. Krishnaswami, TC under Vijayanagar, p.348.


82. Ibid.

83. La Mission Du Madure III, p.43. Quoted from S. Sathianath Aiyer-Nayaks of Madura p.264, Appendix A.
84. F.S., I., p.361.

85. Krishnaswami - TC under Vijayanagar, p.357.

86. F.S., I., p.365.

87. W. Foster, 1651-54, p.33.


89. Quoted by Krishnaswami TC under Vol. in p.360.

90. W. Foster 00 93,95,97-98

91. F.S., p.366.


95. TC under Vijayanagar, p.362

96. Sources, p.347.


98. E.C. V. BL No.196.


JIH, p. 44.