CHAPTER II

THE DUTCH AND FRENCH IN KANARA

THE DUTCH

The Dutch activities in Kanara coast commenced in the early part of the seventeenth century and they made considerable progress in the second half of that century. Comparatively speaking there are more differences than similarities between the activities of the Dutch and that of the Portuguese in Kanara. Like the Portuguese, the Dutch, too, came to Kanara for trade. It was the fame of the Karwar pepper which they heard from the accounts of the travellers, that induced them to come to Kanara. Like the Portuguese, again, the Dutch, too, viewed with great concern the
activities of the Marathas and became jealous of the English trade at Karwar. In the same way as the Portuguese, the Dutch involved themselves in the local politics when their interests were adversely affected. But unlike the Portuguese, the Dutch involvement was lesser. Secondly, unlike the Portuguese, the Dutch were not so much intensive in spreading Christianity. In other words, the Dutch activities in Kanara were purely commercial. They entered Kanara as competitors in the field of trade and competition resulted in rivalry. They also tried to establish some sort of friendship with the Keladi Nayakas and the Sultan of Bijapur. The entire activities of the Dutch in Kanara were directed against the Portuguese. However, it must be remembered that their activities remained for a short period.

It seems that the Dutch came to know of Kanara from the accounts of Linschoten, who was one of the enthusiastic promoters of the Dutch Company. With the foundation of the Dutch East India Company in 1603 A.D. they made an attempt to enter the Swādi kingdom in that year. But they could not gain any success on account of the Portuguese opposition. We do not hear anything about their activities in Kanara during the next 37 years or so. Perhaps they were busy in fighting with the Portuguese in other places, outside the boundary of Kanara.
In 1637 A.D. the Dutch sent an envoy to the court of the Sultan of Bijapur to secure pepper trade in the Northern portion of the coastal region on which the latter had some hold. They supported Muhammad Shah of Bijapur in his unsuccessful attempt of conquering Goa. This alliance seriously affected the Portuguese interest.

In due course the Dutch tried to spread their commercial activities in the Keṭadi kingdom also. It seems that in 1637 A.D. they made friendship with Vāsudēva, the chief administrator of Bārakūru, who allowed them to disembark at Basrūru. He even urged Virabhadranāyaka to permit them to establish their factory in an island of Bogapatana (Bokkapatana, near Kahānapura).

We learn from the Portuguese correspondence of the year 1647 A.D. that the Dutch intended to establish their trade centres in the ports of the kingdom of Keṭadi and tried to instigate the Nāyaka against the Portuguese. It is said that with the Dutch help Sīvappa drove the Portuguese from Honnavar in 1654 A.D.

According to the Portuguese document of 1658 A.D. Keṭadi Sīvappanāyaka granted audience to the Dutch envoy and permitted them to establish their factory at Honnavar. But it is not known if the former took advantage of the permission. On the other hand it is certain that they were
trying to undermine the English trade at Karwar from their base at Vengurla. With their supremacy over the sea they made it difficult for the Portuguese to keep in constant touch with their homeland.

From 1659 A.D. the Dutch took active interest in the affairs of Kanara. According to one of their records of that year they had correspondence with the Keladi Sivappa nayaka, Venkatappa II, and also court merchant Malappa Mallya.

During the reign of Venkatappa II the Dutch made their claims to share in pepper and rice market of Kanara. In 1660 A.D. their resident at Vengurla began to court the Keladi Government by presenting 100 Lbs. of nails, 60 Lbs. of mace and 24 red clothes and 400 nuts in order to buy 600 pagodas worth of rice in Kanara.

Keladi Venkatappa II also desired to maintain good relationship with them probably on account of strained relationship with the Portuguese. He even went to the extent of prohibiting rice supply to Goa if the Dutch would buy all the quantity of rice. The Keladi trade agent Malappa Mallya also realised the benefit of trade with the Dutch and saw a good opportunity of sending rice to the Dutch in Ceylon under different pretext.
In 1662 A.D. the Dutch established a factory at Bassinore (Basrūru, South Kanara) to carry on rice trade. 18 Within a short period they controlled the Portuguese possessions south of Goa and were trying their best to monopolise the trade of pepper. 19 They thus became the worst enemies of the English at Karwar. 20

The increase of the Dutch prestige over the other Europeans induced Keladi Bhadrappa to seek their help 21 against the Adilshahi ruler of Bijapur who attacked his kingdom in 1662 A.D. But they refused to handover ammunition. 22 This event led to their losing the opportunity of coming into close contact with the former and increase their hold on trade.

In the beginning of 1664 A.D. the Dutch still retained their trade contact with the Keladi Nāyakas. For instance, Nārāyana Mallya, the Keladi trade agent, requested them to bring a lot of merchandise and offered better price for them than that prevailing at Surat. In the meanwhile, the Dutch complained to Nārāyana Mallya, that they had been forced to pay tolls on the daily food, etc. since a year and expressed fear that the same thing would happen with goods imported for accounts of the Company. The complaint of the Dutch had such an effect that they received two firman by which the toll collectors were
ordered to refund the toll paid. Gradually the Dutch started interfering in the local politics also. For instance, they supported the Nayanmar chiefs, against the Keladi forces supported by the Portuguese. This resulted in heavy loss to the Keladi forces. The Dutch, however, tried to explain that their opposition was to the Portuguese move rather than the interest of the Keladi.

The Dutch and the Portuguese rivalry in trade supremacy took intensive stage in 1664 A.D. It resulted in a series of military conflicts between these two trading powers especially for the possession of important forts like those of Basrūru and Mangalore. There are large number of records giving the details for prolonged negotiation, threats, treaties and so on, between the foreigners on the one hand and the local rulers on the other. It is to be noted that the Keladi Nayakas tried to exploit the situation of this rivalry by seeking military assistance from either to strengthen their own position.

**THE DUTCH AND THE ENGLISH**

Having established their control over the rice trade in the Keladi kingdom, the Dutch made an attempt to capture the pepper trade of the Svādi kingdom. At Vengūra they were competing heavily with the English by selling their imported goods like copper, tin, etc. At Karwar...
They prevailed upon the Svādi chief to forbid any one except themselves to purchase pepper from his territory. This, however, does not seem to have materialised. 

In 1670 A.D. they opposed the English settlement and were trying to monopolise the trade. But it is said that it was ineffective. In 1674 A.D. they came to Karwar to establish a factory and had been given a lease to build a house as big as that of the English. The English at Karwar felt that their trade would be adversely affected. The chief of the Karwar factory, Bendish, persuaded the governor of the Adilshahi of Bijapur to withdraw his permission to the Dutch. In 1673 A.D. the Dutch had already built a fort at Basrūru. Dr Fryer, an English doctor, noticed the Dutch fort at Māngalore.

In 1681 A.D. the Dutch broker had already arrived at Karwar and built a ware house on the other side of the river and continued to hamper the English trade.

**THE DUTCH ACTIVITIES FROM 1661-1757**

The Dutch continued their trade activities in Kanara till 1757 A.D. after which, however, they were completely eclipsed because of the increasing activities of the English on one hand and the Marathas and Haidar on the other.
On the basis of the above study, the following surmises may be drawn:

I. Though the Dutch started their activities in Kanara coast, they made rapid progress, during the reign of Keladi Venkatappa II, Bhadrappa and Śomaśekharanāyaka.

II. In spite of the Portuguese opposition they continued trade activities throughout the period under study.

III. They, however, lacked shrewedness of the Portuguese and the English and thus they could not successfully interfere in the politics of the region.

THE FRENCH

The French like other Europeans entered Kanara for securing pepper trade and started their activities in the second half of the seventeenth century. In a letter of Giffard dated in 16th September 1668 A.D. to the His Majesty king Charles, wherein it is stated that they were "treating with Naram Malla" at Barcelor (i.e. Bāṅkūru) for pepper. From that place they passing by Karwar visited the governor of that region for the establishment of a factory at Karwar. Then through negotiation with the governor of the area, they established a factory at Mirjan in 1669 A.D. Dr. Fryer who passed through South Kanara in
1673 A.D. noticed the French flag flying at a place six miles to the north of Mangalore. This indicates that the French had started their activities round about Mangalore also. An English record of 1683 A.D. also notes that the French at Mangalore were attempting to get pepper from the queen Keladi Chennammaji. The English tried to outbid them. Later on they managed to obtain grants for its supply by fraudulent use of the English name. This frustrated the trade activities of the English at Karwar. It is, however, difficult to trace the French activities in Kanara between 1693 A.D. and 1740 A.D. In 1740 A.D. they were eager to help the Keladi Nayakas against the Malabars. But the commanding officer of Keladi Surappayya was not ready to take their help.

Though the French lost hope of setting up a trade centre on Kanara coast, they still continued to trade on rice at Mangalore as can be seen from an English record of 1742 A.D.

Not being able to get foot-hold in Kanara, the French in 1751 A.D. tried to set up the Portuguese and Malabaris against the Keladi Nayakas. With the French support, the Malabaris defeated the Keladi forces. Towards the end of 1752 A.D. the French sought peace with Keladi Basavappa II on the condition that they should be allowed to hold the forts which they had captured in the Malabar.
Finally, towards the beginning of 1753 A.D. the Keladi Nayaka decided to conclude peace with the French directly by sending his ambassadors to the court of the French at Pandicherry.

Towards the end of the period under study the French joined Haidar's army which overran Kanara in 1763 A.D.
REFERENCES AND NOTES

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10. *CWE.* pp. 223.
18. Foster, *The English Factories in India, 1661-64,* p. 120
27. Shastry B. S. *Keladiya Arasaru Hagu Portugejary,* p. 120-124.
   *JBHS.* (1931) p. 63.
32. *CWE.* p. 220.
34. *Public Department Diary* No. 30B 1757, pp. 467, *Secretariat*
   *Outward Letter Books* No. 18, 1757. Letter dated on 12th
   September 1757 A.D. Further detail see *Memoirs of J.V.*
   *Sein Colluessi* written in 1743 quoted by *Moræs G.M. *
   *Mangalore, A Historical Sketches* p. 38.
36. *Ibid.* p. 33, But here the author has not given the source
   for this statement.
37. *CWE.* p. 220.
   dated on February 1740 A.D. See also *Alvares, The Naya-
   kas of Ikkeri,* App. No. B. 18, 192.
    1740 A.D.
    March 1742.
42. Shastry B.S. *Keladiya Arasaru Hagu Portugeejaru*, p.172.


46. Secreatariat Inward Letter Book (1763), No.17, p.19–23
A letter of John Stracey from Onore dated 10th January 1763.

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