ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The chapter deals with the socio-economic life of the people prior to their displacement. The chapter also describes the temples existed in old villages. The area under submission belongs to Cuddapah district which is situated within the geographical co-ordination of 13°43' and 15°14' of northern longitude and 77°55' and 79°29' of the eastern latitude. The district is bounded on north by Kurnool, on south by Chittoor, on west by Ananthapur and on east by Nellore districts. The district has occupied an area of 15,359 sq kms. The total population of the district is 22.68 lakhs of which 17.23 lakhs (75.97%) are in rural and 5.45 lakhs (24.03%) are in urban areas (Census, 1991). The population is mainly dependent on agriculture though the area is in rainfed Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The district has been globally famous for its natural deposits of barytes.
Climate and Rainfall

Cuddapah forms an integral part of the semi-arid region of the interior Deccan, which is one of the recognized drought prone areas of the country. Climate is the most prominent and fundamental factor in determining the physical environment and agricultural development. It exerts considerable influence upon the cultivators and his economic status. With the onset of monsoon, cultivators start their agricultural operations. But so far as irrigational facilities are concerned, agriculture may be considered as "gamble in rain." In case, by chance, rainfall exceeds the average or does not rain in time or it becomes erratic, crops which form the mainstay of the cultivators, get collapsed, resulting in economic hardships.

Agriculture is concentrated in ayacuts of Kurnool-Cuddapah canal and various tributaries of Pennar river. On the other side, dependence on ground water potential, electricity, non-fertile lands cause hardships to agriculture. Wind erosion is frequent and damages the crops in Rajampet revenue division.

Forests

Cuddapah is one of the important districts in respect of forests covering about 32% of the total land area. The area under forests is mostly confined to the eastern and south-eastern parts of the district which in turn indicate important hill ranges, the Velikonda and Lankamalai, the Nallamalai and Palakonda Seshachalam, North-western part of the district notice patches of scrub forest land, where a variety of floral species are found to grow.
The forests of the district are of tropical deciduous type. They vary considerably in their condition and density and also in floristic distribution due to natural factors and the continuous depredation of man. The climate is rather oppressive in Summer months. The soils are such that owing to dry conditions, they support forests. The forests in the district are grouped into three divisions (tentatively on the basis of climate and rainfall) viz., (1) Cuddapah division (2) Rajampet division and (3) Proddatur division.

**Soils**

Broadly speaking there are two main classes of soils namely (1) Black (or) Regars and (2) Red ferrogenous soils. Again both of them are divided into (a) clays (b) loamy and (c) sandy. Among these the predominant are black clay, black loam and red loam and red sand.

**Table - 4.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S No</th>
<th>Taluk</th>
<th>Classified acreage</th>
<th>% Distribution of Classified Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black Clay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jammalamadugu</td>
<td>217753</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Proddatur</td>
<td>165026</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pulevendula</td>
<td>182898</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cuddapah</td>
<td>139369</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kamalapuram</td>
<td>135603</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rayachoti</td>
<td>260310</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Badvel</td>
<td>160512</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rajampet</td>
<td>266121</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sdhout</td>
<td>59159</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1587751</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Census of India, 1971)
Black clay is highly productive and constitutes 24% of the area and found mostly in Jammalamadugu, Pulivendula, Proddatur and Kamalapuram taluks and partly in Cuddapah and Rajampet taluks (taluk was an administrative unit before the introduction of Mandal system, which is smaller than taluk) Black loamy soils constitute about 19% and are found in the western plains but they are too shallow in Sidhout and Rayachoti taluks. Black sandy soils constitute 4% and are found on the steep slopes of the western districts. Red clays account for 1% and they are found in Rajampet taluks. Red loamy soils account for 25% of the area of the district and they are mainly found in Rajampet, Badvel and Eastern part of Cuddapah taluks. They are rich and fertile. Red sandy soils are mainly found in Rayachoti taluk and elsewhere and constitute 27% and they are unproductive (Table-4.1).

Population

The population of the district according to the Census of 1981 (1981 census has been taken as baseline as the PAPs were displaced prior to 1990) is 19,27,682. Cuddapah is one of the most thinly populated districts in the State. Within the district, the density is by far less in its mountainous eastern portion, but it is the highest in its central plain stretches. This is evident from the fact that the taluk-wise density of population is 172 in Proddatur, 169 in Cuddapah, 121 in Kamalapuram, 101 in Pulivendula, 99 in Jammalamadugu, 92 in Rayachoty, 86 in Rajampet, 72 in Badvel and 61 in Sidhout. The dot map (Map-4.1) vividly reveals the spatial pattern of distribution of population and is mainly concentrated along the river valleys of Pennar, Kunderu, Papagni, and Cheyyeru, where the agricultural activities are more. The less concentration of populations are seen on the southern plateau region, on the western Pulivendula basin and Eastern Sagileru basin.
4.2 : MAP SHOWING VILLAGES UNDER SUBMERSION & STUDY
CUDDAPAH DISTRICT
POPULATION MAP
DOT METHOD

ONE DOT REPRESENTS 1000
number of weavers and traders and it is popular for good quality of saris. The population depends on the forest mainly for the purpose of firewood and timber. The large extent of sandy river beds and climate play important role for the weaving families in colour dying to the fibers to make quality clothes.

The old villages, which come across the study, are Brahmanapalli, Pattapurai, Malinenipatnam, Sarvappanayunipeta, Vogur, Juvallapalli, and Yeppiralla (Map-4 2), which were resettled in command area, and Madhavaram Panchyat which consists of Boyanapalli, Bempalli and Madhavaram were resettled in non-command area.

**Density of Population**

The villages have less density of population i.e., 136 persons per sq km (Census of India, 1981). It excludes the urban area with high concentration of weavers. In Madhavaram, the density of population drops to 88.53 persons per sq km. The density of population ranges from 6.04 to 180.03 persons per sq km in Brahmanapalli (shortium) with low and Yeppiralla with high density. Yeppiralla is a revenue and panchayat village with 4 hamlets located between Vogar-Vakamada canal and river Pennar, and has easy access to bus stop and majority of families belong to lower socio-economic strata.

**Infrastructure facilities**

The villages come across the study, namely Brahmanapalle, Vogur, Pattapurai, have kaccha roads and do not have any bus facility, whereas Juvallapalli, Yeppiralla have pucca roads and bus facility at the villages Pattapura; and Sarvappanayunipeta have navigable waterways i.e. river Vogur and Malinenipatnam have Post offices and other villages have
postal facilities within 5 kms of radius. Brahmaanapalle has electricity for domestic purpose whereas Malinenipatnam has electricity for agriculture purpose only. Other habitations were not electrified.

The first of its kind in the district, Vogur-Vakamada supply channel provides irrigation to many of the villages in the study area. Besides the river, exploitation of abundant ground water through open and bore wells play crucial role in the prosperity of agriculture in the submerged villages. A few business men who have enough capital to invest in agriculture has invested in land reclamation, agricultural implements and to provide irrigation facilities round the year through powered pump sets and oil engines. The soils in the submergeable villages form rich alluvial with riverbed and they belong to red loamy, black and black loamy type. The agricultural population residing in these villages are traditional and belong to different ethnic groups. The service castes like carpenter, blacksmith, potter, etc., also contribute to agriculture to flourish further. A number of landless laborers and tenants are provide to hold large extent of land by the rich landlords. Low level of literacy also caused more people to depend on their traditional occupation of agriculture. The tank with feeder channels from the river provided enough irrigation facility to the concerned ayacuts.

Patterns of Livelihood

Agriculture is the primary occupation of the inhabitants and nearly 72.5% of the total population is engaged in this occupation. The remaining 27.5% depend upon non-agricultural services like transport, commerce, industry, etc. The working population in the district is 40.2% and the non-working population is 59.8% (Census of India, 1981)
The area is multi-ethnic in composition. The major ethnic groups distributed in the district are Reddy, Balija, Sali, Vysva, Brahmin, Muslim, Christian, service and artisan castes, Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes. The Scheduled Castes are represented by Madigas and Malas. The Madigas are distributed in almost all the villages of Cuddapah district. They always live outside the main village, occupy the lowest status in the Hindu caste hierarchy and depend on agricultural works of the higher caste groups. Their primary occupation is leather working. Scheduled tribes are mainly represented by Yanadi, Yerukula and Sugali. The Yanadi population mainly depends on forest for their livelihood.

**Agriculture**

With the above scenario, the agriculture in these villages has flourished well. Being fertile soils, these lands have yielded good and rich dividends to the farmers. They have practised wet crops like paddy, onion, turmeric and chilies and dry crops like groundnut, saja, gingel. These major crops have provided good nutritious food to most of the people in this area.

The Vakamada, Ramambapuram and other neighbouring habitations cultivate indigo. The indigo cropping pattern at Vakamada was adopted by so many farmers of neighbouring habitations, because of its wide familiarity of that variety in the market. Normally, the growers calculate the value of yield of indigo in terms of gold. They sell their indigo at near by/local market for 4 manumus (1x12 kgs) to 4 thulas (1 thula =11 600 gns) of gold. The villagers from Vogur, Juvalapalle and Yeppiralla reported that onion and turmeric were the major cash crops raised after paddy, groundnut, gingel and saja.
Crop rotation and multi-cropping helped them maintain the quality of land. It also helped them get more income. As they cultivate varied crops, the need to purchase of commodities has become less. Various types of millets, red gram, oilseeds and fodder were grown from both dry land and during summer (kharif) season in wet lands. They cultivate paddy, onion, chilies in wet and Rabi season. The commercial crops like turmeric, onion, gingle, castor seed and beetel leaves have greater economic and social values.

Majority of the families depend on family labour, joint family system, low level of literacy, subsistence mode of economy, less exposure and penetration of mass media, plenty of natural resources availability of agricultural labourers and tenants contributed to flourish agriculture in this region.

The farmers have the habit of using less chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and this in turn decreased capital on farm and provided enough margins. The villages also grow vegetables in Kharif and Rabi seasons and sell their produce in and around their habitations. They move on river to Somasila and sell their produce, which helped them choose their destination at the time of displacement.

Multi-cropping system and multiple crops (2 or 3) per year in wet and irrigated dry lands have further encouraged agriculture. More usage of manure, less usage of chemical fertilizers, better pest control, multi-cropping system, regular traditional land reclamation processes and method of crop rotation provided good yields in all varieties of crops. Commercial crops, like turmeric, chilies, gingle, millets, onion, oilseeds helped the farmers to reinvest and regular practice of agriculture.
The denser vegetation index covered by horticultural plants such as mango lime pomegranate palm, tamarind, etc., provided soil restoration and sources of income. The farmers have rich productive lands. The soils of this area have also favoured good yields. These productive assets with plenty of water from river Pennar have paid good dividends to these farmers. Many villages with production of day to day requirements including clothing used to purchase from neighbouring village, Madhavaram. According to one of the key informants they produce every required commodity except salt. They are greatly thankful to God to provide river, land and suitable climate. Thus, their world is very small, beautiful and resourceful. Every cultivator family has enough land holding. Many families hold 6-7 acres of land and a few families have more than 20 acres of wet land in the submerged villages. The villages of Brahmanapalli, Sarvappayumpeta, Pattapuram have limited access to transport facilities as on the date of their uprooting, they rarely visit the areas. Thus, they have less or limited exposure to the wider world.

Social Life

The villages prior to displacement were multi-ethnic and based on traditional caste system. Every caste has endogamous and it has again divided into sub-groups like sub-caste, lineage, clan/gotra and surname. Inter-caste relations within the village were based on jajamani system with socio-economic dependance of each caste on the other and vice-versa. In most of the villages, the land owning and agricultural castes had to depend on service and artisan castes and in turn the service and artisan castes received cash or kind for their services.
The neighbourhood is quite important in child rearing and enculturation process. It is also important in safeguarding the crops and agricultural plots. It is quite important in the sharing the labour and getting minor forest produce. Bringing domestic water and fuelwood is normally accompanied with neighbours. The second phase oustees had different social structure due to wider exposure, better literacy levels, different kinds of occupations, bigger village, better infrastructure facilities and factionalism. However, the role of caste is of great importance in performing the caste functions, festivities. The role of caste panchayats was high and in some cases they became unfunctional due to political and factional reasons. It is even observed in the numerically biggest caste of the area 'Padmasah'.

Marriages

These families speculate their children's marriages within their kin groups. In case of their inability to find suitable spouse within their kin group then they used to prefer spouse from nearby villages. They did not prefer to have spouse from a long distance. However, the second phase oustees, used to move to long distances in the old villages as they were moving with wider world on business purposes. The caste endogamy made them marry at specific locations.

Interpersonal Relations

In most of the villages, the oustees were depending on traditional caste based occupations. With the limited exposure in the old villages especially those who were ousted in the first phase, the bonds between person and person, family and family, caste and caste were more stronger. Many families especially priest, village administrator, had done
agriculture with the help of the co-villagers. The less importance of cash economy and with traditional interpersonal relationships, they were able to lead pleasant life.

The informal relationships between neighbours and friends had immense impact on the life of the villagers. The neighbourhood pattern had an impact on cropping pattern, exposure with the wider world especially at the time of evacuation and resettlement.

**Jajmani System**

The 'Mera' was paid during the harvest season. All types of specified performances vested to perform during various festivals were performed according to the traditional payment structure. The service castes were inhabited in most of the villages with enough number of families. Where a few number of families residing the service families from the neighbouring villages were serve the demands of all agriculturists by living in every habitation. Thus, these families served not only their villagers but also to their neighbours. These families served on traditional hereditary processes and rendering their services in exchange of agricultural produce. In case of Madhavaram being larger urban area, the servicing castes served their masters for exchange of agricultural produce as well as for cash.

The families residing in Madhavaram also served the needs of other villages. The servicing castes normally working families who practised agriculture and weaving provided the clothes at the festivals especially for 'Sankaranti' in January besides their payment of agricultural produce.

1 Mera-It is local terminology for paying annually agricultural produce in kind to the services rendered by the land by the landowners through the service caste families throughout the year.

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Temples Under Submersion

Several temples have also been submerged under the reservoir of Somasila Project. Besides several village deities, historical temples of Great and Little Traditions from different villages were relocated at different places due to submersion.

Family Dieties

Besides, the Great traditional deities of Hinduism, many little traditional temples like Mallem Konda near Gattupalle were also submerged. This temple had historical importance in the area. Many people beget children after worshipping the deity and name the children after name of the deity. Many families used to worship the deity and perform special rituals like tonsure ceremony and naming ceremony. Worship by the newly married and special rituals on selected dates were customary to a number of families of this area. This temple was not reckoned and not reestablished anywhere. There were several village temples which were rebuilt at Somasila and other places.

Voguramma Temple

Voguramma temple at Vogur was another important female deity, which was relocated at Badvel by the local people with the efforts of the temple trustee. The temple has a long history of about 500 years and the temple has significant importance in the region. A number of small idols were taken from this temple and constructed in and around the neighbouring villages.
Ankalamma Temple

This temple was situated at Kothur and is shifted to Venkatareddy Palli by the villagers as majority of the villagers were resettled here from Kothur. Many families in and around the village worship the deity at Venkatareddy Palli.

Bava Narayana Swamy Temple

The temple at Madhavaram has much significance not only in the spiritual dimension but also in the social dimension. ‘Bava Narayana Swamy Temple’ at Madhavaram is one of the big and remarkable temples. This god belongs to Padmasahi, a weaver caste which was dominant in the village. It is believed that he was a person who made clothes to all gods. The caste organization was evolved and functional from the temple itself. Various office-bearers were elected by the community to perform day-to-day functions including special rituals. The organization used to look after not only for religious functions but also social functions in old villages. After displacement, it was reconstructed at Madhavaram-I (see photograph) with the help of local and oustee elite. Though its importance has diminished, the role of the temple trustee has much importance especially at the time of elections and in solving conflicts arising among the caste population.

Ramulavari Temple

Ramulavari temple at Bukkayapalli was reconstructed at Somasila. It was also called as ‘Chenna Kesava Temple’ in the old village. It has mythological history dates back to 800 BC. According to the Hindu epic the Ramayana, Jambavanta was one of the followers of Lord Sri Rama.
Jambavanta has constructed this temple in Thiru.thayuga. In the temple, another idol, Anjaneya Swami was also located. The ancient scripts available near the idol reveal that it was constructed in 800 BC. The temple had another deity, Veerabhadra. The Veerabhadra idol was replaced in 'Someswara temple' at Somasila. The temple had a hereditary trustee under the leadership of Jale Ayyappa Chetty of Yellampeta before its displacement. After displacement, he was not able to keep enough concentration on the reconstruction of this temple because of problems within his family. The amount of Rs 3 lakhs received as compensation was kept with the endowment board without any further action and the amount was not yet invested in reconstruction of the temple.

**Mukti Koteswara Temple**

Mukti Koteswara temple at Gundlamada was of Lord Shiva. This Saivaite temple was located at the confluence of Cheyyeru and Penna near Gundlamada. The 'Mathi' kingdom that ruled Yerraguntla as their capital, had constructed this temple. It was one of the 64 temples constructed by them with 64 Brahmin agraharas. 'Svarathn' festival was celebrated with gaiety in February - March of every year and people from all neighbouring villages participated in the festival. The temple had much importance in the area due to its historical architecture.

Another 'Saivite' temple namely 'Vasantha Madheweswaradu' was located between Eppinalla and Juvalapalli. The history of the temple says that the main idol of Shiva was dug out by a Harijan devotee after a suggestion of Lord Shiva in his dream. The temple was also submerged without any reclamation or rehabilitation.
Ranganayaka Swamy temple at Revalakollu, 3 kms away from Bukkayapalli which had no permanent temple, had considerable importance in the local cultural milieu. Copalaswamy temple was located on the banks of Cheyyaru near Yellampeta. These two temples were submerged in the waters of the reservoir.

Rama temples at Isukapalli and Eppiralla were also submerged. After displacement, the main idols of Lord Rama, Seetha, and Anjaneya were relocated in Ramalayam at Somasila.

**Ramalayam at Yeppiralla**

The main idol was donated to the temple trustee of Naidupalli, situated in Kaluvai Mandal. The trustee and other villagers opined that it was difficult to renovate the temple in the new village at the time of evacuation. With the prior permission from the trustee of Naidupalli temple, they donated the idol to the Naidupalli temple.

**Community Festivals**

Mallemkonda festival was celebrated during February-March of every year. All families with their respective family duties used to celebrate various rituals. On the festival day, they used to arrange a special dinner to the invitees. The entire expenditure was born by the participant communities.

A festival dedicated to Bava Naryana Swamy was celebrated by the Padmasali community in May of every year. The function consists of procession of the deity in the village and every household used to worship through special offerings. The entire community used to share the expenditure of the festival. The festival was organised by the trustee of the temple.
Political organization

Factions

In the second phase of displaced villages, factionalism can be observed. The two main faction groups were divided within a caste. The two rival groups openly debate for various instances. These two groups later turned into two groupings of the two political parties. Both the groups helped to get more benefits from the compensation with various channels and made use of the short comings of the law. Even in caste panchayats, because of the factional groupings, they were unable to identify and solve various problems though they have enough potentials.

Conflict Resolution Mechanism

The conflict between various families within the caste were resolved with the help of the caste panchayat consisting of elders of the caste. The role of the middlemen is important in the resolution between the inter-caste families. The conflict within the family was resolved with the kin groups especially lineage and affinal relative’s decision. Conflict between the two factions would not be resolved and any decision would cause imbalance between the groups. The factional leaders always took care of their followers and vice versa. The tensions between the groups never lost. Displacement had given an opportunity to them to minimize the tensions between the groups.