Chapter-V

THE BRITISH AND KAVALGARS AND PALEGARS
The History of Peninsular India, South of the Krishna, after the decisive battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi in A.D. 1565 (Battle of Tallikota) was a long period of dark anarchy till the establishment of the British rule, though now and then it was relieved by the strong rule of Venkata II of Aravidu dynasty and some Nayaks Tanjore and Madura. The reason for the continuance of this anarchy over a long period needs to be emphasised. The Vijayanagara empire which established peace and tranquility in the South of the Krishna and promoted the prosperity of the people had employed two special agencies to secure tranquility on the borders of the empire and in the villages. The agencies were those of palegars on the borders and kavalgars inside the empire. These agencies which were devised to meet the exigencies of time in a rational manner for want of adequate monetary means on a large scale, functioned extremely well as seen by foreign travellers like Abdul Razak and Paes who visited and stayed in the Vijayanagara empire. Once the empire began to weaken after A.D. 1565, these very agencies turned out to be veritable instruments of spreading horror to plunder the wealth of the weak people.

Inscriptions, literature and pension records of these palegars who surrendered to the British testify to the fact that these agencies of Kavalgar and palegar had their origin in Vijayanagara times. These palegars were inclined to rebel and assert their own authority was well evidenced even during the times of the mighty Krishnadevaraya and his brother Achyutadevaraya. They functioned well and according to the intentions of the rulers for over a long time added to the inherent strength of the rulers of the land. When this strength declined and began to decay, the kavalgars and palegars asserted their
military power. Even the Sultans of Golkonda, Sultan of Mysore later Nawabs of Hyderabad and Nawabs of Cuddapah all failed to crush the rising power of the palegars who were out to established independent kingdoms of their own.

When the ceded districts were brought under the control of British, Cuddapah region was dominated by palegars of strength and the renowned palegars of Chitvel, Porumamilla, Narasapur, Tippireddipalli, Uppalur, Kamalapur, Bonamala, Yerraguntla, Sethivariapalem, Vemula, Lopatinutla, Kommanutla, Gopagudipalle and Mudinpadu were eager to play the role of their sovereigns. Their intentions were made clear by the dress they wore in public with all trappings of royalty. The miniature courts they held and the titles they flaunted confirmed their real intentions of becoming sovereigns in their own right. It they had ultimately failed it was because of the emergence of a superior power in the shape of the East India Company rule. What the native rulers like the Nawabs of Cuddapah and Hyderabad and Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan of Mysore could not do, the English who have acquired territories did.

As a result of the Mysore wars fought by the English, Tippu Sultan had to give up lands to Nizam. The Nizam who failed to pay the subsidy promised to return to the English, the contingents they maintained at Hyderabad, and gave the lands he acquired from Tippu Sultan to the English. Thus were ceded to the English the modern districts of Bellary, Cuddapah, Anantapur and Kurnool.

The English were determined to make their new acquisitions pay for the maintenance of British troops at Hyderabad. If this determination was to become a fact, the turbulent palegars who were
not accustomed to pay their rent properly, should be crushed or be made to pay by persuasion and example. The Court of Directors were afraid of a possible general revolt if harsh methods were used against the palegars. Munro, the man on the spot, realised that any soft approach would not yield results. Yet he was not prepared to act in haste. He followed a calculated policy of giving time to the suspected party and fell upon him with overwhelming strength compelling him to surrender rather than commit horakiri (suicide). Those that submitted peacefully were not only pardoned but pensioned off.

Of all these turbulent vayabonds there is now not one remaining. Their estates were held on royatwari tenure and their descendants were in the receipt of small pensions. In the first year of British rule, these descendents were the principal dealers in stolen property. The interior of a ruined fort was a favourite hiding place for stolen property. Afterwards, they became more honest, and though they have inherited the war like spirit of their ancestors, their conflicts were no longer carried on in the field by means of sword but at the bars of the various civil courts.

**New Interpretation**

The general contention was that the palegars emerged after the battle of Rakshasi Tangadi (Tallikota, 1565). But an analysis of the case history of Cuddapah District (vide Appendix) points out that the palegari system was in existence even during the Annegundi Raja (1360 A.D.). The inference is that palegari system is not a consequence of anarchy which prevailed after the battle of Rakshasi Tangadi, but it was a well-planned, formalised, decentralised military and revenue system even during the early period of Vijayanagara.
Later on the system deteriorated into an exploitative system of feudal lordism. These palegars represented the living force of feudalism and medievalism in the 18th century South India. The reasons for this are during the periods of Sultans of Golkonda and during the reign of Aurangazeb, the system had become a contractual system. Under this new method, the people used to bid will for the rights of palegar for control over a certain territory by paying an acceptable rent to the king and supply of military needs. This essentially led to a great tax burden on the peasantry reminiscent of Zamindari system during the British period.

Finally, this also has a consequence on social mobility trends. The system of obtaining palegarship by bidding higher rents gave an opportunity to the people of lower rungs of administrative hierarchy and status. For instance, kavalgars and Talagars could bid for higher rents and obtain sanction.

The interpretation based on the present study reveals that the principal reason for the failure of the palegari mutiny was due to lack of support from the major rulers. The secondary reason was that the palegars were not an organised elite and hence they lacked popular support. The general populous also considered them just feudal lords and in view of this latter reason, the mutiny of palegars had not received the attention of the Historians in the light of freedom movement in India.

They were only troop mobilizers and troop retainers. In other words, it was a decentralised military command. The palegars were required to train and maintain the prescribed number of fanj. For the maintenance of this small band of military, palegars were assigned
MAP OF THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY
control over a particular jurisdiction, from which they collected taxes. A fixed portion of tax was remitted to the treasury and the remainder was used for the maintenance of the troops and the palegars.

As the frequency of feuds and battles increased among the pattern kings, the palegars revenue dwindled and there was much demand to impose new taxes on the peasants and further to forceful recruitment of troops. These factors have led to the increase of misery on the part of peasants and decline of popularity and welfare of the palegars.

Finally, this study on the palegari system, which emerged as a military system in the beginning and later took the form of an exploitative system of local in nature resulted as a reminiscent of zamindari system of British rule indicates the decline of power of major rulers in South India.

**BRITISH AND THE NEW RECRUITS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND ORDER**

After annexation, Wellesly appointed major Thomas Munro the civil administrator and ordered Lt. Colonel Mackey for occupation. Mackey and Munro entered Harpanhalli on 9th November with lind Batallion, Vth Regiment. On the other side, Lt. Colonel Money Penny crossed Tungabhadra river near Annagundy and occupied Bellary, Adoni and Gooty with 25 Dragoons, the first and fourth kavalry, the 73rd foot and lind Battalion. Lt. Colonel Cuppahge, who at that time in Nundidurg, also sent a detachment of IIrd Batallion 18th to occupy the fort at Gurramkonda on 15th November. Major Daughald Campbell appointed to command in the ceded Districts. Principal places were occupied without difficult and military occupation was
completed by January A.D. 1801, but the settlements introduced by major was resisted by many of the Jagheerdhars and palegar chiefs.³

In the month of December A.D. 1800, Hurry Naigue, a relative to the former palegar of Bellary, declared himself as palegar of Bellary and came to Bellary with his servant Junghum Chinna Basavaiah and opened correspondence with Fatekhan, Kasim Sahib and Hussainbaig inhabitants of Bellary. They advised him ‘that it is better for him to assemble an armed force’. Later again they made their meeting at Fatekhan’s house and ‘Oman’ was taken by Panchangam brahmin for the success of palegars enterprise. Chinnaroth and Lingapah co-ordinated to him and introduced Jallinaig and Hanama, a servant under Tipu’s Government.⁴ Two other persons Kerrithulle and Penniah also joined them. After several other persons he convened a meeting with Gellinag, Hanama, Kerrihulle and Penniaiah at Bulnaig’s house. Last day of the Moharram feast was fixed as ‘day for attack’. Timmiah who was acquainted with the road up of the hill, consented to be the guide and agreement was made. According to the agreement Letchmannaig, agreed to furnish two hundred peons with his money; Narasingaiah and Hallapah, agreed to bring fifty peons on their own, Boolnaig, a peon, took twenty seven pagodas and agreed to furnish hundred peons, Mahammad Hussain, received four pagodas to bring peons, Sheshaiah, received two and agreed to furnish three or four peons, Mulling, agreed to furnish the palegar with hundred pagodas upon condition of getting Jageer in the district. Veeranna goura, sent to the palegar thirty five rupees.⁵

However, the conspiracy was failed Choonane, subordinate collector of Harpanhalli alarmed with information of conspiracy and
apprehended the persons. But Hanumapahnaig author of the conspiracy and Boolnaig the king-pin of the conspiracy were held, but escaped when Chocrane troops entered the village. Hanumappah naig turned as bandit and committed many robberies till A.D. 1803. William Thackery reported “I have some hopes of seizing Hanumah, the plunderer, but he took refuge in a village beyond the river and I must send a large party to bully the village people who protected him”. At last, he was apprehended by a Karanam of his own village with a body of peons and they were rewarded with three hundred rupees.6

On September A.D. 1801, General Cambell reported that tranquility had been established throughout the provinces, but actually heroic resistance of these traditional chieftains continued as life and death struggle.7 Their traditional hold on village people and anti-British sentiment improved their strength. At the end of A.D. 1801, ‘Taranikallu’ or ‘Tarnikal’ a village of Panchapalem, seven coss from Adoni division gave serious trouble to company administration when subordinate collector of Adam.8 Captain William Thackeray was residing at this village in view to settle a jammabundy of this village of Panchepalem. In a broad day light the inhabitants suddenly closed the gates, manned walls and attacked the cutchery.9 On hearing screams and yelling, Thackery who encamped within ran there to calm the tumult. He was not allowed and when he approached to scale the wall, rebels prepared to pick him. He retreated to his tent. Srinivas Rao, amildar of that place has been picked in three or four places and Neguldinna Sheristadar who had acquainted with the secret of the country and gave evidence against the patel who was also been killed and two patels, of other villages who were in service

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of company were ‘murdered and their carcasses were thrown’ into a pit. However, in the evening Thackery got out wounded and sent them to Adoni. At night rebels released Srinivasa Rao after taking an oath from him that he would forgive them. They made amildar and his cutcheri people as hostages and refused to release unless the promises a pardon for the dead. Thackery prepared two thousand rupees to release the amildar and his people but rebels only asked cowel which Thackery rejected.\textsuperscript{10}

Finally, Potail held up a fort with the help of other insurgents and took refuge in the port, by sending away their families and cattle, built up the gates and prepared for resistance. At this time, Thackeray had only twenty military peons. He sent a message to Major Thomas Munro for the new enforcement in his letter dated 24\textsuperscript{th} November, 1801, “more murders have been committed, and the country is as much if a Maharatta army had broke in, the toddy people here have killed. . . . It has been their custom to murder every man who steps forward to assert the right of Government. . . . The inhabitants considered me stray ferrinjee . . . so, that I mean to raise forty or fifty more and send them to Eaputra.\textsuperscript{11} Country was much alarmed with this incident. Donghold Campbell send six troops of Kavalry H.M.S. 25\textsuperscript{th} dragons. 4\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} regiments of Kavalry from Cantonment at Bellary which is seven miles to the place moved under command of major strachy 6\textsuperscript{th} kovalry attacked the place on 14\textsuperscript{th} December, but was repulsed with the loss of sixty. Captain Miltland of 2\textsuperscript{nd} Battalion was killed. Captain Crane of 1\textsuperscript{st} Battalion and Lt. Dated of 4\textsuperscript{th} Kavalry were wounded. A few days afterwards, General Campbell marched to the place himself with all his forces. H.M.S. 73\textsuperscript{rd} and a second attack was made on 20\textsuperscript{th} and this attempt was also
repulsed by rebels successively. The loss on this occasion from company side was one hundred and seventy three officers and men killed and wounded. Campbell sent for help for want of sufficient caliber from Gooty. Breaching guns were brought up afterwards from Gooty. With these, breaches were made in the wall of the part and fort was taken by storm. The seditions patel, ‘hero’ of the Limmit was duly hanged.¹²

In A.D. 1802, Jully Dewakar Nair palegar of Pullalacheruvu in Adoni, rebelled against company Government and collected a force. On 5th May, he entered Markapur village and immediately retreated to Juggannaut Rao, the Zamindar of Jetaprole.¹³ On hearing this Mr. Grome sent Nurthurree Rao, a thasildar under company Government, with three hundred peons to hunt him. Dewakar Nair halted peons to hunt him. Dewakar Nair halted proprietor of land with Sholapur Zamindary to escort his family to Gainder ghur. Nurharee Rao a tahasildar informed this situation to Major Kirk Patrick for the new enforcement. On May 5th Nurharee Rao informed by a fakeer that Dewakar was bathing on out side that fort in a garden with Baghash Khan and another person.¹⁴ Nurharee Rao divided his peons into two parties and surrounded the garden. But Dewakar Nair suddenly mounted the horse of one of the Jamedars and reached the port on the other road with full speed. When Nurharee Rao went there, gates were closed. He communicated to the people in the port about fugitive rebel conduct and requested them deliver him up but they declined. Nurharee Rao encamped with his peons near the walls sought the help of an officer of the Nizam Government who resided nearly at two miles distance. He came with his Jamedar. Daulat Khan with hundred horse men two days expended in negotiations
between Daulath Khan and people in the fort but failed and returned. The Tahsildar, Nurharee Rao sent some persons to General Campbell who resided near Rachore at that time with an arzee explaining the circumstances and particulars of Gujenderghur. Negotiations continued between British officials and peshwa who ordered Killadar of Gujenderghur for the apprehension of Dewarkar Nair. In this course, Dewakar Nair with his family escaped in the night of 19th and 20th June of 1802 by making a hole in the wall and fled to Sholapur near Hyderabad. A letter from the dewan of Solapur to the Azim-ul-Umrah shows that later he took shelter in the Moraul village of Naubutpur taluq and eventually died there in A.D. 1808. Thirty six of his followers were apprehended.15

In A.D. 1803, Sultan Khan in Kurnool collected a body of horsemen and peons with a view to capture Cuddapah. Major Munro however had previous information of his movement. He ordered the amildars of that place from Rayadurg to place to collect all the peons of their respectable districts to attack and if possible to make him prisoner. Amildar stationed with two hundred followers about a mile distance where Sultan Khan was crossing the border of Kurnool. He cautioned Sultankhan that he was crossing the territory. But Sultankhan did not care it. Amildar collected extra forces and forced him to retreat to 'vallal' village within Cuddapah. Sultan Khan acted as if he was obeying his orders and immediately after this he attacked. With a loss of five men Dewakara Naidu escaped to 'qunni' village in Kurnool. His adherents were apprehended for inquiry. Later he was captured. He was supported by some of Zamindars and local inhabitants and two brahmins of the same district.16
In A.D. 1804 a widespread conspiracy was formed to seize Gooty and Adoni forts and to establish the authority of Kudrit Ulla-Khan son of Basalat Jung, the former Jagirdar of Adoni. Kudrit-Ulla-Khan sent his servants Lall Mohammud Raiah Ali Mohammad Othman to the Anantapah nair Zamindar of Adoni who was already in rebellion. Stayed at Gudwal Samsthanam with an intention to make a conspiracy. Kudrit-Ulla-Khan's servants stayed at Lechmen Singh, a catchery peon's house and held conversation with Anantapah Nair and presented to him five hundred rupees, two shawls and pieces of cloths. Several palegars and principal inhabitants of those districts joined him. The correspondence found in Anantapah's house shown his relation with certain chiefs of Poona. Some of the members of Nizam family and the principal inhabitants of Gooty, Adoni and Bellary for the purpose of wide rebellion to surprise the British Government. The British administration alerted with evidence given by Timmabhutt, and troops moved for his hunt. However, the conspiracy failed and some of the conspirators were arrested. Timmabhutt was arrested on 17th April, Govinda Narapah was arrested on 4th May 1804, Konhoor Ramana on 16th May A.D. 1804; Timmana on 16th May A.D. 1804; Chirzle Goundapah on 28th May, A.D. 1804; Kondee Rama Rao on 26th June; Mull Reddy Bomlapoor Annapah on 2nd July; Hemaree Hullapah on 13th August, Hugloor Bimah. Timmanabhut were also on the same day confined.18

Anantapah escaped to Sholapur while inquiry was going on this conspiracy. Some of the conspirators who joined Anantapah, escaped and took their position to show their strength. Guruvapah Nair, the palegar of Kamlapoor, a village in Gooty, was expelled in A.D. 1801. He had matrimonial relation with Perumal Nair, a palegar of
Dodicondah in Adoni and hence he secretly protected Guruvapah Nair. His uncle Gowal Guruvapah also rebelled against the Company Government and committed several robberies. He was apprehended on 27th March A.D. 1804. With his five hundred followers Guruvapah Nair seized the fort of Konakondla. With a view to take revenge on the headman and Kavalgar of the village, who apprehended the uncle of Guruvappa, he seized the headman and Kavalgar, and tortured them for some time and cut off their heads. They also murdered four other men, and wounded six others severely and plundered the principal inhabitants. On hearing of troops arrival, they moved from that place. Thomas Munro ordered Mr. McDowell, IInd Battalion 15th regiment to march towards Adoni, for his apprehension. On his march, he heard ‘Lall Munnie a Company servant and an amildar were surrounded the place where Perumal Nair resided on a hill with a few desperate followers. McDowell immediately marched to the place that evening at 6'o clock evening, and ordered a detachment to scale the hill with ladders, but Perumar Nair escaped. They found two Pallanqui and some arms of different kinds, and 16 insurgents and 20 women belonging to Perumal Nair were apprehended. McDowell kept an amildar to watch the hill and the surroundings in hope of knowing about rebels moving and ordered Bhima Rao, an amildar to send peons and a covering party in search and for remaining defence on the hill. They were not captured for several months. On 19th September, A.D. 1804, Perumal Nair and his followers Ramana and Ngagapah were apprehended.

In A.D. 1828, Bomatrauj, a palegar of Godikota in Bellary district revolted after he failed in getting pension and suffered from financial crisis. The warned amildar on 28th June A.D. 1828 that
“we die for want of bread” with his two brothers Sidharamapah and Ramapah, he tried to beg grain in the villages, but in that year the crops failed. Under these miserable conditions, finally Bomatrauj collected a number of peons and threatened the company authorities. Company officers tried to make a settlement, but he rejected all the summons. Additional forces were launched for his apprehension. The palegar and his followers were captured and the revolt was suppressed without making any further steps.\(^{22}\)

In A.D. 1846-47, a rebellion took place in Koilkuntla in Kurnool district. Organised by Narasimha Reddy whose ancestors were *patels* of *Chenchumalla* and *deshmuks* at first under Rayas of Vijayanagara and then under Qutbshahi Sultans of Golkonda and for some time under Sultans of Mysore, and finally under Nizam. His uncle Nossum Narasimhareddy rejected to attend Munro’s cutchery, and declined to make any settlement of his arrears of rents. When he was pushed into miserable conditions, he gave heroic resistance. Later haunted up, and confined in the part of Gooty hill in Bellary district there he died on 4th November, A.D. 1804.\(^{23}\) Pension amounted to Rs. 8,323 continued even to his widow after her death. Narasimha Reddy, who was adopted by Jayarami Reddy, asked one per cent of the *pollam* collection and they rejected his appeal. Only Rs.70/- was given to Wooyalwada brothers as monthly pension and Narasimha Reddy’s share was Rs.10-10-8 per month which was insufficient, and when he attended for monthly pension he was insulted. These miserable conditions led him to secure some gainful employment, but failed. He finally decided to give a blow to the company administration with his old Friends Karcnem Aswadhama, Dasari Rosi Reddy, Jungam Mallaya and Gosayi Venkanna (a
Sanyasi who foretold Narasimha Reddy's Future and encouraged him to revolt) and with thirty other followers he went from village to village and collected the Kattubodi peons and other village ranks who were already affected with bhattavartu and kattubodi inams. He also extended his relations with Arabs, Zamindars and some persons in Hyderabad of Nizam family. On A.D. 1846 July, Narasimha Reddy was ready with arms and ammunition and nine hundred followers for rebellion.24

At this time, he sent his servant for the monthly allowance as usual. The Tahsildar rejected to give and insulted him. After hearing this, Narasimha Reddy sent a message to tahsildar that he is coming to cutchery next day 12'O clock and attacked the cutchery. Next day with five hundred followers he attended the cutchery and killed the tahsildar and a company gumasta.25

On third July, 1846, he entered Akumalla village with his followers. On hearing about his intention, local tahsildar of Koilkuntla, sent a party of peons to ask him to attend the cutchery. But Narasimha Reddy refused to attend the cutchery. Then the tahsildar issued a warrant for his apprehension and sent 106 Katubodies. When armed peons resided in Rudravaram village at Mittapalli on July 9th, Narasimha Reddy with his nine hundred followers attacked and killed one duffadar and nine peons. Remaining peons joined insurgents, there he wounded the head of police and confined him and the principle merchant of that place.26 Five sepoys who resisted him were also killed. Brigadier General of Ceded Districts who resided at Kurnool sent a body of peons immediately but rebels repulsed them successfully. British officers assumed seriously about his gurilla warfare and urgent appeals for
reinforcement were sent to Madras Council. General Anderson appointed General Commander of operations, adopted the co-ordinated strategy. One detachment under J.H. Chocrane took his stand at Bichinapalli to check the movements of estimated rebels three thousand including the addars yanadies and kattubodi peons. Lt. More with twenty sepoys and savaras encamped at Rudravaram to guard Goota Koncma pass. A detachment of two hundred peons under Captain Nott and Assistant Commissioner to guard Nandi Konama pass. His assistant Thornhill also followed them and the rebels were surrounded from all sides.27

On July 23rd evening, five thousand rebels attacked Captain Nott. He took refuge in a ruined fort and in the night he suddenly came out and killed two hundred insurgents who were in a position to return. With this loss the rebels in search of the arms and ammunition marched towards Satitledu. On July, 24th Captain Nott reached Krishnama Chettipalle and on hearing the rebels approach, he marched the tedious and long distance and faced rebels at Mundlapadu on 25th July, and killed twenty five insurgents, apprehended thirty five of them and ten Jivage Firangees were captured.28 The loss from the company side was four sepoys and one local tahsildar. Narasimha Reddy escaped to Koilkuntla with four hundred principal followers, and disappeared into Nallamalla forest. River Tungabhadra was unfordable, all the ferries were strictly guarded by the British sepoys. Hyderabad resident took precautionary measures to protect his escape into Nizams’ territories, Cuddapah Collector also alerted his sepoys for rebels’ apprehension. Chocrane ordered three companies to keep a watch on surrounding areas of the Yerramala hills and five hundred soldiers to attack him.

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At this time, rumours were spread all over the ceded Districts. In some places, petty outrages took place. Major Road ordered Brigadier Anderson and marched Bellary to Chitagunta. British Government declared one thousand rupees reward for his apprehension. The elder son of Narasimha Reddy, Malla Reddy, brother of Owk Palegar, relative of Chitwel Zamindar, and relatives of Narasimha Reddy were arrested. Many of the insurgents demoralised and left Narasimha Reddy with two hundred of his followers took refuge in a temple on the Perusomala hills in the Nallamala range. The military forces under Nott and young Husband, and Lt. Newlyn of the 19th Regiment under overall command of Colonel Granthem, surrounded the hills of Perusomala. Chocrane with Thornhill marched ten miles and joined that action on 6th October. In this attack, fifty insurgents were killed and ninety of them captured. Narasimha Reddy with his wounded leg escaped.29 When he was in Jagannathapuram, informers to the British Government bribed his maid servant Janakamma and apprehended him. Madras Council appointed ‘Scot’ to bring the prisoners to trial. Narasimha Reddy was tried before the Faujdari Adalat and was sentenced to be hanged on 9th January, 1847. The sentence of the Faujdari Adalat No.11 on the calendar of the special Commissioner of Cuddapah for 1846 is as follows:

Sentence was carried out at a place near Koilkuntla centre of his influence as well as resistance in A.D. 1847 on 22nd February, Monday at 7 p.m. His head was severed from the body and hung on a scaffold in the fort of Nossum.30

The 1857 sepoy mutiny spread its mutinous spirit into Dharwar district. British authorities took steps towards rebellious conduct and
their troops waged in search of arms. Dessavis and Zamindars of that place were anxious about British atrocities. Nurgunda Raja and desai of Damal, Hammigi and Taragal took Bhima Rao into their alliance. Bhima Rao was a tahsildar of Harapanahali and Bellari and was dismissed in A.D. 1854. He was no ordinary Tahsildar but a man of some landed property and himself a cultivator at Mudligi in Dharwar district. He was a keen sportsman and had great personal influence. Conspiracy was made for a rebellion on 27th May, 1858, Bhima Rao was chosen as their leader. On 24th British sepoy came to Hammigi Desai’s house and Hammigi Desai and Bhima Rao took up arms prematurely. While they were waiting near Hossair to cross the river to make an attack on Ramadurg Fort, the British troops came from Bellary and attacked them, but Tungabhadra was not fordable for their escape. They captured Kopul fort, 26 miles from Hospet, and made it their camp for defence. On hearing this, the British officials took serious steps. Their forces – a company of the 74th Highlanders, two companies of 47th native cavalry with two guns and the fort was stormed. Rebels gave a heroic resistance but were retreated to the citadel which was at the top of the hill. But on the way rebels, with their leaders Bhimarao Desai and Hammigi Desai were killed. The loss on the company side was seven Europeans and one native soldier was wounded his rising later recounted in a ballad which is sung to this day in the western taluks.

EMERGENCY OF BANDITARY AND PINDARI

The drought and dearth conditions that prevailed frequently in the ceded districts during the British rule created a new set of institutions namely the Bandits and pindaries. Due to non-availability of materials either food or consumer goods, for the
survival, many poor and hungry people turned as decoits who looted the rich and became an obstacle of social peace and safety. These decoits and robbers began to station at important centres of highways and created havoc to the travellers, merchants and caravans. Travel on trade roots connecting business centres and cities, marts, markets etc., became very dangerous. Robbers and decoits were cowed down by the local kavalgars and palegars. They have made use of their lower officials to control the decoits and robbers and recovered the stolen property and restored normalcy. Controlling the manace of the robbery and decoits was not that much easy. Therefore new mercenaries were recruited by the law and order department. Mostly, the new recruits to this police department were famous, noted thieves robbers and decoits. As the old saying goes that “A diamond only can cut a diamond”. Therefore, the ruling palegars and also the kavalgars preferred to recruit and appoint noted decoits, thieves and robbers to this protection force. Rural crime also increased during the drought and dearth conditions of the country during the period of study. David Arnold aptly observed it as a special famine crime. Cultivators turning robbers was a common phenomenon of the time as the above instances of resistance shows. The palegars who were capable of giving much social leadership in the ceded districts themselves encouraged gang robberies and decoity as part of their anti-British struggles when their attempt on the British authority field. They escaped into nearly forests, hills, or neighbourhood country and committed depredations. British officials referred them as bandits.

On 6th November of 1801, a respectable merchant belonging to Terremulla district was murdered while he was returning from Chitteldurg district. Articles which belonged to the victims, two silver
boxes containing 32 *pagodas* with several other articles found in the houses of those who murdered him. When they were examined they said they were induced to perpetrate it to be relieved from the payment of their debt and to possess themselves some money which they know the merchant had along with him.\textsuperscript{34} In A.D. 1803, a Saukar (money lender) belonging to Hyderabad was staying at a choultry. Three persons entered from the top of the choultry in the night when he was sleeping and robbed him of all the money which amounted to fifteen hundred rupees. All the four robbers were tappal runners and members of a gang of thieves who were thirty in number.\textsuperscript{35}

In 1806, Thomas Munro in a letter to George Strachy, Secretary to Committee of Finance, stated that in the ceded Districts “most of the inhabitants were robbers . . . experiences show that a great part of the robberies committed in the country have no other object than the acquisition of a cloth or turban and that robbers expected nothing more.\textsuperscript{36}

Hurry Naig was former *palegar* of Cannegherry in Doab, since 1792 he was in the service of Tipu Sultan.\textsuperscript{37} When his district was ceded to the Nizam he entered it once or twice a year as the head of a party of plunderers and taken refuge in Maharatta country. After failure of several attempts for his apprehension, Nizam gave him two villages as *Jageer*. Hurry Naig resided in the largest of these villages called Mattoor, twenty seven miles from Kumpali and fortified it with a deep dry ditch and a wall of the height with lower half built of stone, upper half mud was belonging to Canaphery and was about nine cross from Kumpali, protected with eight peons. Hurry naig had another villages Munnoor three cross from Muttoo but there were no peons. He always private some time openly supported by following
Zamindars against Nizams officers. Menahole Zamindar kept with him 400 peons: Menikinihall Zamindar placed under him 300 peons; Jagethall Zamindar sent to him 200 peons, Karedgher gave him 100 peons. He became increasingly powerful and resisted the British for considerable time. Later, he was apprehended by the British. During his time, he sponsored several banditries and robberies in the neighbouring provinces of Bellary. On 19th March, A.D. 1806 morning at 2 a.m. a party commanded by Hurry Naig entered the Kumpli village in Bellary district and plundered the house of principal money lender of that place named Veerapah. He reported to Munro saying that “on my getting up I found that a party of peons with four torch bearers had come in having jumped over the wall. I attempted to escape but was seized and threatened to death if I was not willing to show my treasure. I showed my treasure and store rooms containing clothes, but Hurry naig was not satisfied with that. Further, he beat me with the belt of sword until I pointed out the place where my cash chest was concealed. Hurry Naig took that and went to rob another house of some toffling articles. He stole six thousand pagodas.

Adding to those revolts and banditary pindaries also created a state of violence in the districts between A.D. 1815 and A.D. 1818. In A.D. 1815, an attempt was made by Mohammed Rajan, the younger brother of Chittu durra to attack the districts, but river Krishna being in spate did not allow them and they returned. Again in A.D. 1816, November they crossed river Krishna and Tungabhadra and attacked a village in Guntur District with their two thousand kavalry. Kurnool, Cuddapah, Amaravati, Mangalagiri, Cumbum, Markapur, Turlpadu and hundred other villages were plundered.
within three months. A circar was issued to the Magistrates to collect five thousand kuttubodies i.e., military peons. Two thirds were employed in Bellary district and one-third in Cuddapah district. In A.D. 1818, a body of five hundred pindaries crossed river Tungabhadra and attacked Harapanhally in Ballary district looted from the treasury four thousand rupees and destroyed the revenue records tortured the officer, his Sheristadar other servants and killed many of the inhabitants and marched towards Kuldligim. On their way, they pillaged Kothary. When they arrived at Kadiligim, the Tahsildar of that place closed the gates and defended and sent them out from Bellary. The Tahsildar was rewarded with a pair of gold bangles and with seven hundred rupees for his bravery.

'Drunadula Konuma' in Cuddapah district was infested with thieves who carried torches and attacked villages during nights and looted the treasuries. Therefore, the Collector sought the help of the palegars in protecting the treasuries, for which the palegar agreed and kept his jawans at the respective places to protect the treasuries. Thus both the treasuries were strictly guarded. In the A.D. 1840, these torch-bearing thieves of Cuddapah comprising 400 to 500 men raided upon Revoor Veriguntapadu taluk division treasury in Nellore district and ransacked it completely, and they retreated to Budvail in this district. Twenty two of them were arrested including their leader, who was a village headman. During the same year serious gang robbery was committed in the Cushah town of Rayachoty and rupees thirteen thousand was stolen. Sham Rao, the leader of the gang and twelve other members committed serious crimes. Acting Magistrate of Cuddapah Mr. Lane adopted steps towards suppressing the gang robberies was offered a reward of five hundred rupees for the body of
Sham Rao "dead or alive". But Board criticised him that "no circumstance can justify an act so unusual and so violent as to hold out the prospect of reward for the body "dead or alive" of any person, particularly of one in the position of Sham Rao who was not yet been proved to be a criminal. Again in 1854, during the failure of rains and scarcity of grain robberies increased, seventeen prisoners escaped from Cuddapah jail and disappeared into woods having supported by heads of the villages. Later with great trouble some of them were arrested by the Government.

In the year A.D. 1855, four hundred Rohillas crossed the Krishna and attacked the Government treasury near Koilkuntla and plundered it, but there was only 1.706 rupees in the boxes. Two men were murdered and none was severely wounded. The military was alerted. Head assistant marched against them with thirty peons but Rohillas escaped without loss of a single man by crossing the river Krishna. In A.D. 1857, numerous reports were sent out about the opinion of these gangs, two hundred men were reported from Kadiri, forty from Sidhout, hundred from Rayachoti and fifty or sixty from the Palkonda hills.

From the above accounts, it can be noted that frequency of occurrences of the palegar revolts and social banditry acts is quiet exorbitant. Though the palegar revolts against the British subjugation during the last decade of the 18th century and the first decade of the 19th century, seem to be high, the British yet allowed them to stay in their villages as renters. This shows that the British made a silent settlement with the palegar families, the most powerful in the countryside and without their support the British in roads into
the countryside would have possibly been hampered. The following table shows the action taken against the palegars by the British.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of British Actions</th>
<th>Description in Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jailed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removed from or expelled palegar, living still in villages</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued with village protection power</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>59.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Munro's Report on palegars.

From the above table, it can be noticed that only 18.37 per cent was alone jailed or expelled. Roughly 60 per cent of palegars was allowed to continue as village renters with all the revenue rights and privileges and 22.44 per cent, though removed from their office of palegarship were allowed to continue in their villages with all their hereditary rights and properties. This shows that the early British administrators strategically manipulated the local powers in which they perceived potential force which could be used for their smooth functioning of revenue administration.

Though the British oppressed the rent mutineers, they continued indirectly to sponsor the social banditry activities such as looting the treasuries, pillaging the wealthy merchant households, burning the revenue records, attacking the money lenders etc. All these indicate the social crisis that was taking place in response to the economic policies formulated by the British based on written records and legislation which was contrary to them existing oral tradition of native customs.
REVENUE POLICY OF THE BRITISH IN THE CEDED DISTRICTS

The land tenure systems that were introduced by the British in Madras presidency in the first half of the 19th Century made an immense effect on the rural economy. One among the prominent land tenure systems of British was ryotwari system. The ryotwari system though introduced for the first time in Baramahal by Col. Read in 1799, it came to prominence in the Ceded Districts under Thomas Munro, in a modified form. In fact, Munro’s system became a model to the whole of Madras and Bombay presidencies.

In as much the company’s commercial interest was predominant in the first half of the 19th Century, the company was trying to restructure its agrarian policy towards commercialisation of agriculture. The ryotwari system was viewed as a potential source of translation to change the agrarian base of the Dry district. In the Madras presidency all the Dry Zones except Ramnad and Sivaganga in Tamilnadu, had Ryotwari system.

The Ceded Districts, being in the Dry zone due to geographical and ecological factors, gave rise to the existence of ‘estates’ or in other words, large holdings where extensive cultivation was a normal feature unlike the ‘wet’ regions, which usually needed intensive cultivation (which means small plots of land). The estates were in the hands of village headmen or rich ryots or influential Brahmins. All the estate holders tried to unite when the land revenues were assessed and controlled by the Central Government agents such as the amildars or a section of ruling elite, the palegars. The British were already victorious over the central powers (such as Nizam and Mysore
Sultans), their next target was the 'local powers'. The rural elite was the potential force in the country side and prevented the British from the smooth collection of the land revenue. Under these circumstances the British had to follow a policy which will either pacify or disintegrate the local powers. Munro followed the policy of pacification by accepting the custom of Inam (or the privileged holdings) for smooth functioning of the ryotwari land revenue administration.

The term 'Ryotwari' was generally taken to mean the elimination of intermediaries (rural elite), between the cultivators and the Government. But the plan of the Ryotwari system was not to remove in total the rural elite, but to subjugate it to the British authority, so that the revenues may be collected pacifically and smoothly in the country side. The term ‘ryot’ generally meant cultivator or citizen. It was commonly identified with the landless labourers or poor ryots. But, in fact the ryot should be identified more closely with high caste elite, ‘rayalu’ or the leaders of the village, since the ryots originated from high born peasant warrior caste. Under the ryotwari system Munro made settlements with each individual ryot (or rayalu or village leader) and held him responsible for the payment of the land revenue directly to the Government. Thus the ‘Divide and Rule Policy’ was clearly evident from this mode of settlement. Instead of jointly tackling the rural elite, Munro’s policy facilitated the company Government to deal directly with individual leaders or in other words individual families.

In the sphere of the collection of the land revenue, the administrative machinery used for this purpose was also changed by the British, to suit the proper working of the Ryotwari system.
palegars and the Amildars on one side, and the patels and the karnams on the other side were responsible for the collection of the land revenue. In this twin groups, the potails and Karnams were the real custodians of the land revenues of village where as, the palegars and the amildars with their military force and with the support of their overlords or the central powers acquired the right of the land revenue collection in their respective provinces. The British authorities looked down upon them as corrupt, parasitic and unwarranted elements between the state and the ryot. Hence the palegars were uprooted from their possessions. Thus, the mode of land revenue collection was changed from Central ‘power-palegar-Ryot’ pattern to that of ‘central power-Ryot’ pattern. In other words, through the ryotwari system, the intermediary agency was removed and a direct link was established between the Government and the cultivator in the land revenue dealings.

This resulted in the elaborate establishment of the revenue administrative machinery. Right from the Board of Revenue to the village level is linked up by creating various offices. However, the traditional officers of the village were retained by the British administration.

The basis of the system of revenue administration is found in the village corporations, which had existed from time immemorial, and in many respects still retain their vitality. In almost every Hindu village there are twelve village servants, called the Barabulote or twelve men, who perform all needful public offices. The first five only who render service to government are recognized as part of the revenue administration. They are (1) Headmen (2) Karnam or Accountant (3) Shroff or Notagar (4) Nirganti and (5) Talary.
The Headman who goes by various names, such as manager Patel, Naidu, Reddy, Peddakapu, Natamgar etc. is an important officer; he represents the Government in the village and collects the revenue. He also has magisterial and judicial powers. As a magistrate he punishes persons for petty assaults and offences and as a judge he tries suits for sums of money or other personal property up to Rupees 10 value, there being no appeal against his decision. If parties consent he can summon a panchayat who will then adjudicate on suits without limit as to value and also without appeal. The headman is generally one of the largest land holders in the village, and as a rule exercises much influence over the inhabitants. Acting as a judge, he is a styled munsif. In some cases the custom of the place separates the Munisifship from the Managership, and sometimes more than one manager is appointed for a village.56

The Karnam is the village accountant and is a very important ministerial officer. The shroff is found only in certain villages, his duty is to test the money paid by villagers, to the headman on accounts of Government. The Nirganti has charge of the irrigation of village lands where there is irrigation from tanks or channels. Some villages however have irrigation but no Nirganti, the work being done by the village peon or by the cultivators themselves. The village is simply a village peon acting under the orders of headman. This office is generally held by the lower class of the community. The Talary is sometimes a separate official acting in the capacity of a watchman. In the remaining seven ayagars artisans are necessary to the internal conduct of a village community.

Taluks are divided into five grades according to their importance. The Tahsildar's establishment consists of sheristidars,
clerks, revenue inspectors and servants. The sheristadar is in immediate charge of the taluk treasury and also of accounts, abstracts, registers, and periodical returns. The clerks eight or nine prepare the accounts, bills, abstracts, cultivation statements, season reports, village abstracts of demand collection and balance, settlement accounts, registers etc. in magisterial work they also attend to the correspondence, and take charge of the office records, which under the ryotwari system are voluminous. The revenue inspectors, three or four, are in charge of portions of taluks and go constantly from village to village to see whether the work of the village affairs is properly performed, and conduct such local enquiries as may be considered necessary by the Tahsildar. Every Tahsildar is also a Sub-magistrate. In this capacity, and also to a limited extent in his revenue work, he is assisted by officers viz. Deputy Tahasildar and Sub-magistrate, who are established in important towns and outlying portions of taluks. Some of these officers are also placed in charge of large estates which do not fall within the jurisdiction of any Tahsildar.57

The Deputy Collector’s main duties are to assist the Collector in revenue administration and in magisterial work. When an Assistant Collector has passed a certain examination in Law and Language he is said to be a passed assistant, and may be placed in charge of one or two taluks. Until he passes, he is attached to some superior officer to learn the work. The head Assistant Collectors hold independent charge of two or three taluks, but are subject to the complete control of their Collectors. The Sub-Collectors who are also magistrates have larger charges, and are more independent. Their establishment consists of a sheristadar or manager and clerks and servants.58 The Collectors who are also Magistrates, have each a

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territorial charge immediately under them and exercise a general control over their Sub-Collectors, assistants and Deputy Collectors. The Superintendents who have control over all persons engaged in the administration of revenue are responsible for the treasury to which the taluk collections are sent, and which keeps and dispenses a large stock of stamps. They see that the revenues are punctually realised, and that when arrears occur the proper processes are resorted to, for recovering them they manage estates. They are expected to be thoroughly acquainted with the state of native feeling in their districts in regard to the policy and measures of Government and to be the adviser of Government with respect to police, public work, education, sanitation and the miscellaneous matters which conduce to the welfare of their districts. A Collector's establishment consists of (1) a sheristadar managing the native correspondence department (2) The English correspondence and general account department (3) The Treasury and Stamp Department, (4) Press, and (5) Miscellaneous officer servants. The Deputy Collector in charge of the treasury supervise the second, third and fourth departments and a head clerk is in immediate charge of the second department. One fifth of the cost of all the establishments which have been described is considered chargeable to law and justice on account of the magisterial work performed by them. As the incharge of land revenue administration, the Collector is authorised to suspend from the office or dismiss any servant of inferior grade to that of Deputy Tahsildar, Tahsildar Sub-division sheristadar or Head Sherista when he finds them corrupt.

All the Collectors and their offices were responsible to the Board of Revenue. The Board of Revenue consists of a president, a member of the Government, three ordinary members and an
The Revenue settlements made in the presidency should be ratified by the Board. All applications for disbursements of money on demand of Collectors for assisting cultivation, for repairs and improvement, for increase of ordinary expenses or incurring extraordinary expenses were made to the Board in the first instance and, if approved, was submitted by the Board for orders of the Government. The accounts of such disbursements were audited by the Board. Its duty was to advise the establishment of the collectors from time to time and to commend for the sanction of the Government such alterations as deemed expedient. But it could not authorise any increase of establishment without the previous sanction of the Government. The Board of Revenue could not make or confirm grants of land nor continue pensions without the authority of the Government.62

The covenanted officers attached to the Board of Revenue were a secretary and two deputies and a commissioned officer of Engineers under the title of secretary to the Board in the Department of public works. The secretary of the Board of Revenue was charged with the duty of recording the proceedings of the Board and conducting the correspondence with the Government and with subordinate officers. He was responsible for the due communication of the resolutions and orders of the Board to the parties concerned. The establishment of the Board was under his management and control. The Deputies had no particular duties assigned to them but assisted the Secretary General.

The elaborate revenue administration right from the presidency level down to the village level, made the British Government to claim every property in the country as their own. The company administrators even claimed the waste land, which always belonged
either to the village or to the family of renters who generally looked after the revenue administration. In the *Ceded Districts*, it was enjoyed by the palegars, the Patels and the Karnams or in other words, the local elite. When the company took over the administration, it did not give up the claim on waste land since it thought waste land would be a potential source for the increase of revenue. The size of waste lands in the Ceded Districts was known only after 1806 when the survey was completed in the districts. The waste land, which had been in cultivation within the space of the last twenty years, amounted to 2,133,363 acres and that which had not been cultivated within the specified period or before amounted to 4,129,953 acres totalling above six million acres of which one/sixth was fit for cotton. Even in Inam lands, one tenth of the whole was waste. In the Patel and Karnam Inams, only four fifth was cultivated. In the *palegar* villages, according to early reports, fifteen per cent was lying down as waste.

Waste land always remained a problematic issue in the 'Dry-zones'. In every village, the land was classified as cultivated waste and *puramboke*. Waste land was sub-divided into five categories, taking the years in which it remained uncultivated. The reason for this was, every punjah or dry crop land was to be kept under fallow. But, the British did not give any allowance to this and treated the waste as a measure for poverty and extension of cultivation (especially cultivation of waste) as a standard for progress and therefore compelled the ryots to take up waste for cultivation as a condition of holding Inams and other improved lands. Burton Stein pointed out the British outlook on the issue of 'waste land' in the following words: "Waste, a perceived system of poverty and over
assessment (as well as ignored as critical following requirements of the fragile agriculture of the *Ceded Districts* was rhetoricized by Munro as one of the most significant advantages of ryotwari over either Zamindari or communal tenural system. Government possession of waste was a vast potential revenue resource which would gradually be realised, as increased prosperity, population, and private proprietorship in land-all anticipated benefits of British rule led to extensions of cultivation. The cultivation of waste, especially in black cotton soil was very expensive and did not yield any profit, unless it was continuously cultivated for six or seven years, by applying a big plough which should be drawn by twelve to fourteen bullocks to remove the nuth grass (a deep rooted grass), which was commonly grown in the soils and only substantial ryots could afford to do that. The company Government took interest in cultivating them for extension of cultivation, especially cotton cultivation. For this purpose, taccavi was granted to the ryots and it became a regular feature in the Ceded Districts.

This resulted in another important feature of the village lease, the growth of Pykaree or non-resident ryots system. For instance, in Cuddapah District the amount paid by the pykaree was nearly 11.53% in the total land revenue paid to the Government. Statement showing the amount of cultivation carried on the Resident and "Pykaree ryots" which the proportion that the cultivation of the latter bears to the whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total cultivation</th>
<th>Amount performed by the Resident cultivators</th>
<th>Amount performed by the Pykarees</th>
<th>Percentage upon the whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>838,979</td>
<td>742,352</td>
<td>96,627</td>
<td>11-23-25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to encourage cultivation granting of lands to Brahmin, Sat-Sudra and other various communities, was a general feature of the pre-British Ceded Districts. The early survey reports of Munro showed that the Inam land holding comprised of 46% of all cultivated lands. The extent of Circar land in cultivation was 3,203,859 acres of which the assessment of fixed revenue was starpagodas 17,08,115. The total Inam in the Ceded Districts was 2,599,747 acres, but it paid only 12,35,458 starpagodas. These Inam tenures were basically “privileged land holdings”. Munro criticized initially these land holding permission to privileged castes when he was working under Mr. Read in Baramhal, later, he was convinced that the privileged landholdings in the Ceded Districts were an inevitable necessity for the smooth functioning of land revenue administration. Frykenberg in one of his recent writings on peasant studies came up with a new idea on ‘Inams’. He called the Inam settlement in the South as, “The silent settlement.  Since, there was no formal, normal documented settlement that had taken place between the early company administration and the privileged castes of rural South India.

Eric Stokes pointed out that the ryotwari villages of South, especially, of Madras presidency had Inam lands in common and were significant unlike in the North. “The characteristic of the ryotwari village”, wrote Eric Stokes”, was the existence of a number of dominant office holding families, one of which traditionally exercised political and revenue control as village head, subject to recognition by the ruling powers”. Therefore the village elite clustered not around landlord profits but around office and, their prerequisites were partly dues in cash and kind and partly in revenue privileged land. The Kamam (accountant) and the patel (village
headmen) were the chief officers in the ryotwari villages of the Ceded Districts and hence they held quite a larger number of Inam land accounted to 64,701,138 acres of which estimated rent was star pagodas, 3,02,587,21,334.

Though, Munro accepted the custom of Inam in the Ceded Districts, he did not give a clean chit to this system, as he understood the system had certain loop-holes and was mostly misused by the higher castes. Munro resumed most of the palegar Inams and pensioned them. Many Inams being unauthorised and were issued by the palegars to peons (militia) their authority need to be established failing which they shall be resumed. In 1805, Munro recommended that the remissions should be restricted to Brahmins and Muslims and might be fixed at three-sixteenths but should be only one-sixteenth, if a general remission of twelve and a half per cent was granted. But, Munro was aware of the consequence of such a measure and hence applied his discretionary power to reduce and resume Inam lands gradually. In 1822, Campbell, Collector at Cuddapah, wrote that the Inams were held to a great extent by Brahmins and it was the policy of Government to conciliate as they had great power over the people generally.

Another important change that was brought by the land revenue policy was in the sphere of land revenue assessment. The mode of land revenue assessment was changed in the British period. In pre-British period it was in the manner of sharing (asara) the gross produce between the Government and the ryot at the time of the harvest. The company administrators changed it to money payment fixed upon the actual fields under cultivation. Moreover, it was not the fixed percentage or the share of gross produce that became liable
on the part of the ryot to pay to the Government, but it was assessed on the fixed valuation of the soil in each field, taking into account certain factors such as the proximity to market, supply of water etc. The amount of revenue realised annually varied according to conditions affecting the crop each year instead of according to the size of the harvest.\textsuperscript{75}

Thus, through ryotwari settlement a section of rural elite i.e., palegars, and amildars who claimed legitimacy from the former Government were removed by the British Government. Munro considered it a parasite class which stood between the Government and the ryot and caused hardships for both. Later on the village lease settlement gave prominence to the traditional and resident village elite groups i.e. Patels and Karnams. The British Government in fact did not disturb the structural continuity. Through the ‘silent settlement’ with the legal rural elite groups, who were the backbone of land revenue administration of the British, the Government recognised their services. But they were brought under the judicial system of the British Government through which they controlled these elite groups.

A SOURCE OF EAST INDIA COMPANY POLICE SYSTEM IN CEDED DISTRICTS

In Indian History a general study of the revenue, the judicial and the military departments under various dynasties is made by the scholars. A very little information is provided about the police system in the ancient times. It appears as if there was no law and order problem in the ancient times during the Hindu period. In several studies it is depicted as if the military department itself has taken care of the internal law and order.\textsuperscript{76}
However, during the Muslim period, especially under the Mughals, a separate department of police seem to be in operation for the first time in the Hindu soils. During the Vijayanagara period, several reference are given to the native police system. The post Vijayanagara period or pre-colonial period witnessed a considerable growth in the rural policing. This gave a sufficient background to colonial police system in India. The colonialist and the imperialist historians such as C. Reith, E.C. Cox, C.E. Gouldsbury, J.C. Curry, C. Jeffries viewed the Indian police system as a mark of achievement and a means of legitimising the rule of the British in India. In their opinion, the police system is the creation of the British. C. Reith argued that the great mutiny of 1857 was a crisis of control that demanded for the reorganization of the Colonial Police system. C.Jeffries viewed the constabulary as basis and separate establishment to assist the collectors in maintaining law and order.

Hence, the police department’s criminal servillence duties eclipsed and its name was quitely changed to the intelligence bureau. Thus, the sympathizers of the Indian national movement depicted the Colonial regime as ‘Police Raj’ - David Arnold.

The Cambridge Scholar, who wrote on police power also viewed the Colonial rule as ‘Police Raj; In his opinion India’s Colonial police was created to be the ‘eyes and ears’ of the Government and to strengthen its control over indigenous society. These objectives could not be divorced from the broader policing rules of protecting the property and suppressing crime and rioting. For the British, crime and political opposition were always intimately related.
According to David Arnold, "created by colonialism, the police were expressive of the very nature of Colonial rule in India. The belief in the value of periodic exhibitions of force, the interplay of police and military responsibilities, the guation of force with authority and of opposition with crime, the absence of public accountability, the reliance upon supervisory and classificatory systems of manipulation itself— all speak of the Colonial nature and functions of the police established by the British in India. Very few had brought to light the native police system, especially the country police i.e. the Kavalgar system of pre-colonial India. D.J. Winfred who wrote on Trinevelly police, brought to light the native police system, Kavalgar system.89

J.C. carry90 wrote on native police system. His main thrust was on rural crime such as cattle lifting and the preventive measures taken by the rural police. David Arnold wrote on Madras police. He gave a background to the colonial police Raj and stated briefly the pre-colonial police system. The Territory beyond the Krishna river was generally called Ceded Districts in the records of the British administrators. The districts of Cuddapah, Bellary and Kurnool of Madras presidency were known as Ceded Districts since, they were Ceded to the British under the Subsidiary Alliance system by the Nizam of Hyderabad in A.D. 1800. Later on in 1885 Bellary was divided into Anantapur and Bellary districts.91 The structure and organisation of the police institution during the pre-colonial period was so established as to meet the needs of rural elite especially, the Palegars, Patels and Karanams, who were the core of power structure in the pre-colonial state of Rayalasima. Of the four grades in the police institution of pre-colonial period the first two formed one
cluster and the latter two formed the other cluster. The first two i.e. the Rajas, Nawabs and Amildars acted as the central power while the palegars, Kawalgars and Talaries formed the local power and acted as ‘anti-state’ elements through the police institution. The Paleagars were the key persons in the police establishment in the pre-colonial period. Several Kaifiyats give testimony to the appointment of the Kawalgars especially by the Vijayanagara rulers in the Ceded Districts to safeguard the jungle routes and passes in the mountain ranges. For example, the Rollamadugu kaifiyat bears testimony to the appointment of Erranna as kavalgar to safeguard the journey of the pilgrims to the temple of Tirupati.

The highway passing through Gooty and Munimadugu being infested with the forest became an abode of the bandits and wild animals. Therefore, Krishnadevaraya appointed Budda Reddy as the kavalgar, to protect the merchantile transactions. This was stated in the Racherla kaifiyat. The sentinel duties of the Jothy pass were entrusted to Virmeni Siddappa by Achutadevaraya. His duty was to safeguard the merchants and pilgrims visiting the Ahobilam from Porumamilla, Badvel, Cumbam etc.

The Thippireddypalli pass known as Yeddadugu and Enuma pass was entrusted to Viraneni Vithalapati Naidu. Tippireddipalli Kaifiyat bears testimony to this. The Chintakunta Kaifiyat mentions a person by name Kadtam Kasi Naidu, the Kavalgar to the southern parts of Owke sima. The Kotakonda Kaifiyat mentions Gujjala Paramappa Naidu as the Kavalgar of Adoni, Kurnool and Gooty areas. Thus, the hilly terrained the jungle tracts of the Ceded Districts warranted for the sentinels and therefore the kavalgar system.

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became an inevitable feature during the Vijayanagara and the post-Vijayanagara periods.

The advent of the British to the Indian soils, however, disgusting event to the nationalists, created a broad and strong platform to the historical research in India. The company administrators were the foremost is gathering voluminous material on different aspects of Indian life. Sir Thomas Munro, Col. Mackenzie, Brown, William Taylor, Arthur Cotton, Wilson, Buchanan, Mark Wilke, Edgar Thurston Etc, were some of the Company administrators whose services to the cause of historical studies shall always be remembered by the people of Andhra Pradesh. They are the one who brought to light the native institutions, the ethnographic accounts and various aspects of social life of the southern part of the sub-continent. These are the manuscripts collected by Col. Mackenzie, C.P. Brown, The Reports of Munro, Cotton, Thackery, The travel accounts of Buchanan, Mark Wilks.

Various quarries raised by the Board of Governors and other administrators paved the way for the collections, compilation and systematic understanding of the information on the native institutions, such as, village panchayats, Kavalgars, Palegars, Inam tenures etc. The information on native police institution was also obtained by the Company administrators by appointing a Committee. Letters were addressed to the collectors of all the districts in the Madras presidency asking them to collect the information. Col. Munro, the first principal collector of the Ceded Districts, also received a letter dated 30th March, 1805 from Geo Garrow, the secretary of the police Department, asking him to furnish the information on the native
police institution.\textsuperscript{108} To quote on a subject (Police institution) involving such various and important considerations the committee are desirous can be derived and I am directed to convey to you their wish that the material you may have it in your power to furnish may be accompanied with an unreserved communicators of your own opinion, resulting either from reflection on factors falling within your own personal observation and experience or from a knowledge acquired from authorities on which you can depend. The primary object of your enquiry and report will be the present state of police. The degree of protection it affords to persons and property either by the prevention of crimes, the speedy apprehension of offenders and with security of the country from internal commotion.\textsuperscript{109} Thus, the British administrators interest in finding the facts of the institution is very much clear from the above letter. The British became the Masters of the Ceded Districts by 1800 A.D. The Nizam of Hyderabad Ceded the Districts Cuddapah, Kurnool and Bellary to the British under the Subsidiary Alliance System.\textsuperscript{110}

As masters of the Ceded Districts, the Company government appointed Col. Munro the principal collector, who was an ardent supporter of the ryotwari system. In fact, Munro by introducing the ryotwari system shattered the collectivism of the rural elite.\textsuperscript{111} The native institutions were gradually absorbed with several modifications to suit the needs and fulfill the ambitions of the Colonial regime. Munro and his colleagues believed in continuation of the native systems. The \textit{"ancient system of police in India"}, Munro believed, \textit{"answers to every useful purpose, and requires no other aid unless that of being restored to its former state"}. An externally imposed police would by contrast be not only useless but vexatious to the
country. According to Munro in 1817, village headmen and police were of particular value to British rule "our situation, as foreigners, renders a regular village establishment more important to us than to a native government. Our inexperience and our ignorance of the circumstances of the people, make it more necessary for us to seek the aid of regular establishments to direct the internal affairs of the country and our security requires that we should have a body of headman of villages interested in supporting our dominion".\textsuperscript{112} Retaining or restoring the village police system, in Munro's eyes, was not merely compatible with Colonial rule but positively beneficial to its interest. However, the present police system is not so efficient as it ought to be. Wrote Munro, "this however does not proceed from any defect inherent in itself but from its having been perverted from its original purposes during times of disorder."\textsuperscript{113}

He further stated that, a very large proportion of the talaries were themselves robbers. All the kavalgars were either themselves robbers or employ them and many of them were murderers and though they were afraid to act openly, there was no doubt that many of them still secretly followed their former practices. Many patels and Karnams also harbour thieves, so that no traveller can pass through the Ceded Districts without being robbed, who does not employ either his own servants or those of the village to watch at night and even this precaution was very often ineffectual.\textsuperscript{114}

"The escape of robbers is likewise facilitated by many of them being inhabitants of the territories of the native states over which we have no authority or of our own tributaries over whom we have very little control, where crimes have long been encouraged by the weakness of government and by the sale of pardons. It is not by a
large establishment of police peons that order and security can be maintained, but by the vigour of government and by depriving power of all palegars and Zamindars, who harbour and encourage bandit. It is only by going to the root that the evil can be removed. The natives of India are in general industrious and inoffensive, where they are addicted to robbing it is to be ascribed less to their own disposition than to the relaxation of government enabling palegars to protect bandit and to consider their plunder source of income.” Many offenders were taken but great numbers also escaped, for convenience must be expected among the kavalgars and talaries who are thieves themselves and the inhabitants are often backward in giving information from the fear of assassination, which was very common.

Though the talaries are not in the present state of things sufficient to prevent robberies and to secure offenders, yet neither these objects can be attained by the creation of a separate police establishment. If, therefore, the collectors have to act as magistrates, then all the duties of police might be adequately discharged by the talaries, kotwals, revenue peons with some small guards of military peons in the ghats most infested by robbers. But if the police is to be placed under the Judge as magistrate, he would require a separate police establishment, for the village one never could be efficient acting under two different masters in matters of revenue and police.115 The collector ought, perhaps, to be the magistrate for he has more means of controlling the police and of getting information than the Judge can have.116 The judge must depend entirely on a hired set of police officers, who having neither influence nor respectability among the inhabitants, are little qualified to procure the intelligence necessary for watching suspected persons or for discovering and
securing criminals. The patels and karanams from their hereditary officers as heads of villages are authorised from time immemorial to superintend the affairs of the village, to adjust all petty disputes and to seize and examine all who disturb the peace are regarded by the inhabitants as their immediate superiors to whom all their complaints of theft, robbery or murder is addressed and to whom all their knowledge relative to suspicious persons is communicated.

The judge will not feel equally as the collector feels for the interruption of trade and of the realization of the revenue from the depreations of thieves and bandit, and it would therefore be in vain to expect that he would be so anxious about the tranquility of the country as a man who has more motives to stimulate his zeal. If the police establishment is principally composed of hired under a judge, its care will probably be extended to European, travelers and to towns in which Europeans reside in a greater degree than to the more important object of the protection of the inhabitants and native travelers. The peons with the view of recommending themselves would be particularly attentive to Europeans and while Europeans with their baggage passed through the country without accident, it would be generally supposed that there was an active police. If the police is placed under the judge he will require an establishment of annual expenses of star pagodas.

This establishment is intended solely for the out station. The gradation of servants proposed by it are Darogas, Muttasuddies, Duffardars and Peons. A Daroga is allowed to one, two, or three districts in proportion to their extent, population etc. He ought to reside in the same town as the Amildar. Because it is more convenient than any other for obtaining information and sending out
parties of peons to whatever quarter they may be required and also the presence of Amildar will obtain him from fomenting disputes with the view of receiving money privately from both parties. He ought to go round of his district 3 or 4 times a year.\textsuperscript{121} Hence the British meddling in the closing years of the eighteenth century and opening decades of the nineteenth, under mind the effectiveness of the existing system. British nations of justice could not countenance the punishment of watchman or entire villages for crimes they did not commit and of which they were possibly ignorant. The system was under attack from other directions too. In clipping the powers of the palegars and petty chiefs in the early land revenue settlements district officers resumed the talaries, imams, substituting for a small stipend.\textsuperscript{122} From the security of receiving a fixed share of the village harvest, the watchman was reduced to begging his living from each household. Many ryots declined to pay, and a fatal blow was struck at the ancient institution.\textsuperscript{123}

The demoralization and decay of the talari was further accelerated by Cornwalli’s Anglicizing policies. In 1792 he sought to strengthen British control by supplementing the existing rural police with a body of India superintendents (darogas) appointed by the government and subordinate to the district magistrates. Each daroga policed an area of approximately twenty square miles, with twenty to fifty peons to assist him. The village watchman was also attached to the daroga.\textsuperscript{124} Introduced to Madras by regulation XXXV of 1802, this innovation failed in its objectives: crime increased, the integrity of the old village system was further eroded without any corresponding gain in police efficiency; and the darogas themselves proved despotic and corrupt. Munro, one of their strongest critics,
characteristically attributed their failure to the fact that they were ‘not founded in the usages of the country.’ The new police establishment had, he later relented, “no common interest with the people: it seldom knew anything of the neighborhood in which it was stationed, and has no means of discovering offenders but by the village watchers.”

As a result of recommendations made by a special commission, including Munro, the Madras government in 1816 abolished the dargoas and restored the talaries to their traditional subordination to the village headmen. The functions of the talari were now defined as being to apprehend persons whom they may discover committing any criminal act or breach of peace, and report to the headmen any information relating to the ‘peace and good order’ of the community. But although Munro and his fellow commissioners claimed to be reviving the ‘Traditional Practice’ by basing the police system on the village servants who had formerly had those duties, rather than trying to build up a separate organisation with no special links with particular villages, it soon became apparent that they had neither stemmed the talaris’ decline nor devised a policing system that satisfied the colonial State’s need for a ‘separate organisation’ responsible to itself rather than to the Villagers. In detailed reports on the district police complied by Williams Robinson in the late 1850s and early 1860s there were repeated references to the decay of the watchmen as a policing institution. In Trichinoploy for example, he found that the talaries had been for so long denied ‘true and proper support’ from villagers that only speedy legislation could revive them. Without it, they would die out in a year or two. But even had the talaries survived and flourished under early British rule they could have been of only limited use to the Colonial power. According
to David Arnold, village community, under the command of the headmen and the village elite, socially a part of the village and drawing their sustenance from it, the talaries naturally looked inward. It would be difficult at the same time to make them look outward to perform the functions of surveillance and coercion or the broader protective roles the state now required of its police.

In the past, the Kavalgars had come nearer to fitting this role. Unlike the talari, the Kavalgar was originally a state appointee. He was responsible not for a single village, but for several, and for the roads, wastelands and markets connected with them. But the British attitude to the Kavalgars were coloured by a conviction that they had become a corrupt and predatory 'robber police' and that they constituted a rival system inimical to European Control. During the warfare and political instability in South India in the eighteenth century, the right to collect kaval (protection) fees was one of the means used by palegars (and would be palegars) to gain control over the villages. J.H. Nelson, writing in the 1860s, described kaval as one of the palegars 'most highly cherished privileges', a means through which they 'gained an influence and authority over the ryots which were highly undesirable and indeed productive of the worst consequences.\textsuperscript{130}

Of Tinnerelly in the eighteenth century, Bishop Robert Caldwell wrote. The kaval fees was 'levied by the palegars from the defenseless villagers as the price of their forbearing to plunder them' and that this rapacious appropriations were confirmed by the strength of the palegars and the inability of the Nawab's government to enforce due authority over them.\textsuperscript{131} Earlier, in 1806, Munro in his report on the police of the Ceded Districts expressed great sympathy
and appreciation for the talaries, who discharged the 'real duty of the police', but he condemned the kavalgars as performing 'no useful service', being too little accustomed to subordination and constituting to the tranquility of the country. Even Munro's affection for the institutions of the past had its selectivity.

Encountering the kaval system as a bastion of palegar power and implicitly a threat to their own supremacy and effective control, the officials of the East India Company set out either to suppress the kavalgars or offered lands and pensions in exchange for the surrender of their kaval claims. Some powerful kavalgars were thereby transformed into Zamindars and other titular landholders, and their old form disappeared from most districts between 1800-1820. Petty kavalgars were invited to take employment under the Company as its own police. But, these ploys were not entirely successful in eradicating kaval and in some districts it remained a rival system of rural control.

This combination continued through the entire administration down even to the talari, who was both watchman and an assistant revenue collector. Apart from the sanction of custom, it was argued that this gave the local policeman a useful knowledge of the neighborhood and its inhabitants, acquired through his revenue duties. The following generation of administrators had cause to doubt the wisdom of concentrating power in a single set of officials. A Torture Commission, appointed in September, 1854 to investigate allegations of torture and corruption among revenue subordinates, turned its attention to the police as well. The Directors of the East India Company in London were in basic agreement with the Governor and the Torture Commissioners in Madras that radical changes were
necessary to remedy the evils of the existing system. The first step was to separate the police from the land revenue administration. It was resolved that the magistrate-collector should remain in overall charge of both the judicial and revenue broaches of the district administration and continue to oversee police work. But the internal management of the reconstituted police was to be entrusted to European officers appointed exclusively to perform police duties and keep close watch over their Indian subordinates.137

This arrangement ensured that the magistrate-collector remained undisputed lord of this district fief, but was freed from the burden of day-to-day police supervision far from weakening his authority and the concentration of overall control in the district in a single official the new police were to afford him an additional and independent channel of information in regard to this state of the district over which he presides. This was in fact one of the series of reforms in the 1850s taken to relieve the collector of 'petty details' of administration and allow him 'more leisure for controlling the acts of the native subordinates.138 In 1854,139 he relinquished control of the post office, in 1857 of public works, in 1858 of forest conservancy, and in 1859 of the police.140 Increasing specialization of function and the requirement of effective control were leading to a greater compartmentalization of government.
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5. CDR Vol. 648, p. 157 letter from Munro to Board of Revenue dated 11<sup>th</sup> January.

6. W.J. Wilson, supra, p.25.

7. CDR Vol. 630, p. 239, letter from William Thackery to Munro dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1801.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. W.J. Wilson, Supra, pp. 27-29.

11. CDR Vol. 629, p. 103, letter fro Tahsildar Narahari to major Kirk Patrick, dated 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1802.

12. CDR Vol. 648, p.16 letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1802.


14. CDR Vol. 664, pp. 515-518, letter from Munro to Secretary to Government, dated 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1803.

15. CDR Vol. 632, p. 15, letter from Kirk Patric to Munro, dated 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1804.

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