Chapter-VI

CONCLUSION
Following the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire in 1565, the whole South India passed through a period of anarchy. During the prosperous days of the Vijayanagara Empire, the administration had created two important agencies to secure tranquility on the borders of the empire and peace in the villages. The agents were those of the *palyam* on the borders and the *kavalgars* inside the empire. The agencies created to meet a political exigency of the time performed well according to the eye-witness accounts of foreign travellers like Abdul Razak and Paes. Once the empire began to decline, these agencies became monstrous instruments of tyranny and plunder.

Many epigraphical and literary evidences testify to the fact that the agencies of the palegar and the kavalgar originated during the Vijayanagara times. Even during the reigns of Krishnadevaraya and Achutadevaraya, the palegars asserted their independence and authority by rebellion. However, they functioned well and added to strength of the local sovereigns. Once the Central authority weakened, the palegars once again asserted their military power. The Sultan of Golkonda, rulers of Mysore and Nawabs of Hyderabad were not able to crush the rising power of the palegars.

When the Company established its control over the ceded districts in 1800, there were about eighty *palegars* in Rayalaseema many of whom were men of strength and renown. The *palegars* lived in style and wore costumes with all trappings of royalty. The miniature courts they held and the titles which they were fond of assuming confirm their intentions of becoming sovereigns in their own right. But for the advent of the rule of British East India Company in the region, they would have achieved their ambition. The native rulers like the Nawabs of Hyderabad and Cuddapah and
the Mysore rulers Hyder Ali and Tipu sultan could not suppress the palegars. But the British with their superior military might were able to do this easily.

In 1800, the ceded districts were granted by the Nizam of Hyderabad to the British in lieu of the subsidy. The modern districts of Bellary, Cuddapah Anantapur and Kurnool comprised the ceded districts of modern Rayalaseema. The English were determined to make their new acquisition pay for the maintenance of British troops of Hyderabad. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to suppress the lawless palegars and make them pay the rent regularly. In this matter, the British had to approach cautiously as the Court of Directors in London feared a possible general revolt if harsh methods were to be used against the palegars. Sir Thomas Munro who was the principal collector of the ceded districts was sure that any mild approach would not work with the palegars. Yet he wanted to bid time. He evolved a clear-cut policy.

He was prepared to give time to the suspected party. But once he evaded, absconded or showed signs of indifference in pay merit of rent, he would pounce on the palegar with overwhelming strength and compel him to surrender. Those who submitted peacefully were pardoned and pensioned off.

The suppression of the palegars was so complete that not a single one was allowed to survive as an independent chief. Their estates were held on ryotwari tenure. Their descendents were given small pensions. Still in the early days of the British regime in Rayalaseema, the future palegars turned to be dealers in stolen property. The ruined forts were conveniently used as hide outs for
stolen goods. Later on the palegars left their old ways and turned a new leaf in their lives. They still inherited the martial and war-like spirit of their ancestors.

There are varied opinions about the origin of the palegar system. It is generally believed that the system was the outcome of the anarchy and chaotic conditions following the fall of Vijayanagara after Tallikota. But the system prevailed in some parts of Rayalaseema long before, say, since the establishment of the Vijayanagara by the Sangam Brothers in 1336.

This school of thought is of the opinion that the palegari system was not the consequence of anarchy in the wake of the fall of Vijayanagara, but rather it was a well-planned formalised, decentralised military and revenue system even during the early period of the Vijayanagara Empire. Later on the system deteriorated into an exploitative aspect of feudal lordism. The palegars represented the living force of feudalism and medievalism in the 18th century South India.

But the existence of the palegar was a colourful chapter in the history of South India. Whatever their origin they maintained a government of their own. The chief officials were the pradhan or Dalaway. Durbars were held. The palegars functioned like a virtual king because he collected taxes, administered justice, maintained order and kept his own army. He did certain economic functions too as he undertook charitable activities, cleared forests, executed irrigation works and built villages. In brief, the palegar was the administrator of his forces, the renter of the ruler and a ryot among his people.
The palegars had their own armed establishments. They in common cherished the spirit of dependence and turbulence. They constructed forts enclosed by barriers and woods. They had their own system of warfare. Despite the limited resources at their command, the palegars put up formidable resistance even against major campaigns.

The period between 1650 and 1760 witnessed unprecedented growth of the influence of the palegars. They made vast additions to their privileges through various means. They encroached upon the circar lands. They sometimes induced the inhabitants of the circar villages to flee to the palayams. Then they got by force from the circar servants their right of protection over the inhabitants.

Stormy political situations also contributed to the growth of palegars' influence. In the midst of terrors wrought by interminable conflicts more villages sought the protection of the chieftains. The rewards made by the ruler or his governors in return for the palegars' services also increased their resources. The rulers sought the military aid of these chiefs in order to defend their authority against the rebellious subjects. The chieftains helped the rulers only with the aim of obtaining more and more rewards.

The administration connived with the palegars to increase their palayams and interfering with the collection of revenue. The palegars in turn allowed the circar only such proportion of the revenue as they pleased. By the fair and foul means the palegars greatly enhanced their resources and extended the limits of their palayams.
VIJAYANAGARA POLICE SYSTEM

The head and petty Kavalgars were appointed by Government, their offices were usually hereditary but they were liable to dismissal for misbehaviour. The employment of the talari was based on the custom of village community and he was under the authority of the Kavalgar only in matter of police and only at the time when search was making after an offender. The number of villages or districts assigned to the charge of the several Kavalgars was not determined by any fixed rule. The jurisdiction of some petty Kavalgars was limited to two or three villages, that of others, extended to twenty or thirty and that of a head Kavalgar often comprehended as many districts, yielding revenue of some lakhs of pagodas. About the middle of sixteenth century when the territories of the Rayas of Vijayanagara was taken over by the Mohammadans there were twenty head Kavalgars in the Ceded Districts. Though the petty Kavalgars were under the authority of the head Kavalgar, they could not be removed by him. However, if any of his villages were without petty Kavalgar he could in such cases appoint them.

The head Kavalgar kept guards of his own peons in all great towns and in all passes infested by banditry. He was exclusively answerable for all robberies and murders in such passes and jointly with the petty-Kavalgars for the safety of the persons and property of the inhabitants and travellers in all other places. He was answerable for grain, cattle and property of every kind. He was also answerable for the conduct of the petty Kavalgars, therefore, for watching over them and also for collecting his dues, he usually kept one or two peons in each village and when his districts were too extensive for his own immediate superintendence, he appointed gomostahs on payment
and maintained certain portions of them. It was also his duty to observe the conduct of landlord and Zamindars. He was supposed to join with his peons the troops of the circar in suppressing disturbances caused by the local potentates.

The duties of the petty differed from those of the head Kavalgars only in being confined to a smaller rangers. The petty Kavalgar or his peons attended at all fairs and weekly bazars to prevent thefts. He watched travellers during the night whether they halted at the choultry in the middle of the village or at the place which is generally on the outside near the gate. When merchants having a number of bullocks from the village, he watched them as long as they stayed and when they departed he accompanied them to his boundary.

In cases of murder, it was his duty to produce the murderer and in cases of theft to produce both the thief and the property stolen. When a robbery happened in any village, the complaint was usually first made to the patail and karanam who directed the Kavalgar to discover the offender. As long as the search continued in the village, where the robbery took place, the Kavalgar was accompanied by the talari, for it was chiefly on his assistance and on his report of the characters he begins his operations by looking for the print of the robber’s foot, and on finding it followed in whatever direction it went. If led to a house in the village he seized the person whose foot corresponded with it; if to the fields he traced it till it reached the boundary of the neighbouring village where he stopped until he was joined by the talari of the village to whom he showed the foot steps and that it had passed the boundary. The Kavalgar on being satisfied that the fact was so, dismissed the first talari and continued his search with the second. If the robber was not found, he proceeded in the
same manner accompanied by the talaries of the villages, through which he passed until he reached the limits of his own jurisdiction where he waited until the arrival of the adjoining Kavalgar. When he had satisfied him that the robber had passed from his own boundary into his he returned home and the new Kavalgar continued the search. If a petty Kavalgar made a practice of restoring the value of property stolen without discovering the thief, he was removed on the complaint of the head kavalgar and another was appointed in his place. If murders frequently occurred without the discovery of the offenders, both the head and petty Kavalgars were dismissed.

The duties of the talari were of the same nature as those of the petty Kavalgar but were limited to his own village. Though he was not bound to make good any part of the articles stolen, he was considered the watchman of the village and was responsible for the safety of all persons and property in it. If theft or murder was committed without his being able to discover the offenders or to trace them to another village he was liable to be punished by fine, imprisonment or removal from office. The mode of following the footsteps seems to have been always the most common way of discovering offenders.

The police of towns was conducted in the same manner as that of villages by the talaries and Kavalgars within whose limits they were situated. If a town stood upon the ground of two or three adjacent villages, the Kavalgars and talaries of these villages were answerable for such parts of it as lay within their respective boundaries and the head Kavalgar, instead of having only one or two peons as in the villages, kept guards their size, population and other circumstances. The security of the roads belonged to the Kavalgars
and talaries of the villages through which they passed with the exception of a few jungles and ghats which were exclusively under the protection of the head Kavalgar whose guards were stationed in them for that purpose. The police, therefore, of the villages, towns and roads was under the charge of talaries of petty and of head Kavalgars who again were all under the control of subedar or other officer entrusted with the management of the country.

The reports of Munro, especially the Memorandum of Palegars of 1802 and roughly 250 kaifiyats belong to the Ceded Districts. On the whole 88 Kavalgars are found from these sources. They were spread out differently in the Ceded Districts.

The districts of Kurnool and Cuddapah have the highest number of Kavalgars. These two districts being covered by Nallamalai and Yerramalai hill ranges, necessitated the emergence of Kavalgars. Hence, 68.17% Kavalgars was found in these two districts.

Based on their rank and jurisdiction the Kavalgars can be divided into four grades.

They are: 1. Arasu Kavalgar
2. Desa Kavalgar
3. Nadu Kavalgar and,

This classification was done on the evidence of inscriptions, Kaifiyats and Munro Reports.

The palegars being local rural elite, gained favour from the kings and forced them to recognise their services. The semi-
patrimonial ruling elite in turn encouraged the Kavalgar institution which was in rudimentary stage. The palegars themselves held the Kavalgar office by combining it with their own office. It is evident from the kaifiyats, or the village accounts that several Kavalgars who were posted to look after the passes and jungle routes rose to prominence in due course and declared themselves as palegars.

According to Munro’s Reports, there were eighty palegars ruling over the Ceded Districts at the time of the advent of the British. They were unevenly distributed. Out of this eighty, forty-nine palegars were found in Cuddapah District, and the remaining thirty one belonged to Bellary and Kurnool Districts. Within the Cuddapah District the concentration of the palegars was in Gurramkonda sub-division. Out of forty-nine, thirty eight were in the sub-division and eleven in the main division of Cuddapah.

“Palegars or adventurers or great daring and courage, were stationed at suitable centres with a considerable body of retainers”. This give the impression that the palegars were exclusively appointed to safeguard the routes in the jungles and passes. However, the palyams were also found in almost every cluster of villages in the Ceded Districts. These palegars held two types of Kaval. The minor palegars held Munni Kaval and the petty palegars enjoyed Nayal Kaval.

The palegars by performing the duties of Kavalgars enriched themselves and strengthened their local base. They even made the kaval rights hereditary persuasions and divided them among their kith and kin. For example, the palegar of Kapatralla, namely Gujjala Paramappa Naidu divided the Kaval rights of Adoni, Kurnool,
Gandikota etc., among his four sons. Pandikona Kaifiyat also reveal similar distribution of kaval rights by the palegar, Mallikarjuna Nair to his sons.

The Kavalgar, like the talari, received no salary from the government. He was however, given a manya in every village within his jurisdiction. It is said that Konapuli Peddi Nayadu was the owner of a manya in one of the villages within his jurisdiction. It is not unreasonable to infer that he was given similar manyas in all other villages. In the two grants which sadasiva made to Lakki Nayadu and Yerrama, it is explicitly stated that the kavali-mirasi consisted of a manya in each of the villages under their respective jurisdictions. The existence of similar kavali mirasi manyas is also indicated by the kaval grant of Aliya Ramaraju to Bucci Nayadu. In addition to the mirasi manya, the Kavalgars were entitled to collect some other dues from the ryots. Sadasiva’s grant to Mahipati Yerrama refers to kavalgar’s mera and vartana in addition to his manya. Themera is said to be one sheaf of paddy in every turn and sunka-sutras. Further, they collected two rukas for every loom and merchant’s house. The kaval-katnam or rusumu mentioned in the inscriptions refers, probably, to these dues.

The Kavalgar had to supervise the work of the talaries in his district. His main duty was to see that no thefts or other crimes were committed within his jurisdiction. He had to made good any loss sustained by the people within his district from his own pocket. It is not possible to state definitely to whom the Kavalgar was responsible.

As stated above, all these kavalgars enjoyed kaval rusums and manyams for their services. Munro reported various kinds of funds
assigned for the support of these kavalgars. The palegars were the key persons in the police establishment in the pre-colonial period. The palegars rendered military service to the Sovereign and gave security to the country against external invasions. The Kavalgars on the other hand discharged police duties and preserved internal order.

PALEGARS IN CEDED DISTRICTS

The palegars being local rural elite, gained favour from the kings and forced them to recognize their services. The semi-patrimonial ruling elite intum encouraged the kavalgar institution which was in rudimentary stage. The palegars themselves held the kavalgar office by combining it with their own office. It is evident from the kaifiyats, or the village accounts that several kavalgars who were posted to look after the passes and jungle routes rose to prominence in due course and declared themselves as palegars.

The term palegar is derived from the Tamil word ‘Palyam karar’. The term Palem or Palyam means, ‘army camp’ or ‘contonment’, and ‘Karar’ means its ‘chief’. Hence, palegar simply means an army chief. He combined in himself the revenue and the military duties. Like revenue farmer, he collects the land revenue and as military chief, renders military services to the king.

According to Munro’s Report, there were eighty palegars ruling over the Ceded Districts at the time of the advent of the British. They were unevenly distributed. Out of this eighty, fortynine palegars were founding Cuddapah District, and the remaining thirty one belonged to Bellary and Kurnool Districts. Within the Cuddapah District the concentration of the palegars was in Gurramkonda sub
division. Out of forty-nine, thirty-eight were in this sub-division and eleven in the main division of Cuddapah.

There were various ways of acquiring the palegarship. Based on the roots of the palegarship the palegars can be divided into five types (1) Those of the palegars who received their villages at first as inam as a personal allowance for the support of their rank. (2) Second type of palegars were more turbulent and powerful than all others and attained the palegarship through usurpation and self proclamation. (3) The palegars who received their villages at the usual rent partly as a personal jagir and partly for the military service. (4) The fourth category of palegars comprised those who were commoners or a body of peons who paid in money and not by the Jagir. After being absolved from military services, they become the renters of the districts and finally by holding these districts for a number of years, during the times of confusion they declared themselves as the palegars and the terms of peshkush (tribute) was substituted for that of rent by their over-lords (5). The final category consisted of those who were merely renters assessed at the full kamil but by taking advantage of the negligence or weakness of the Government they rose to the rank of the palegars. Thus, the five categories of the palegars were ruling over the Ceded Districts at the time of the advent of the British.

The palegars also held the office of Kavalgaries. The office of kavalgar being lucrative, the palegars also resumed the office either directly or collected the Kavalrusum or fees by leasing it out (the office) to subordinate kavalgars, military peons known as Cuttubody peons, or talaries. According to N. Venkataramanaya, for policing the areas in the outskirts jungles and in the villages built within forest
clearings, “Palegars or adventures of great daring and courage, were stationed at suitable centers with a considerable body of retainers. This gives the impression that the palegars were exclusively appointed to safeguard the routes in the jungles and passes. However, the palyams were also found in almost every cluster of villages in the Ceded Districts. These palegars held two types of Kaval. The major palegars held munni Kaval and the petty palegars enjoyed Nayal kaval.

The Ceded Districts of pre-Colonial period seem to have the same fundamental contradiction which was found in Maharashtra and Tirunelveli areas. The Kavalgar system or the country police system, which came into existence during the post-Vijayanagara or the pre-colonial period itself is an indication of the ‘contradiction’ in the economic structure. The pre-colonial period witnessed the ‘palegar’ rule which was no other than a patrimonial, military regime. The patrimonial regimes are defined as those in which access to core authoritative roles and offices depended upon personal relations to rulers. The patrimonial rulers therefore, enjoyed both the ‘prebendal’ and the ‘patrimonial’ rights and possessions. The former were bestowed upon them by the rulers for their services and the later inherited from the ancestors. Almost all the palegars of the Ceded Districts enjoyed these two rights and possessions. Incidentally, all these palegars also held the office of Kavelgar, indicating the growing interest in the mercantile projects and protection of trade and commerce. Thus, in this new light of research it can be surmised that the nature of economy which was in a state of transition itself created sufficient background to the origin of kavelgar system or the native police system in the country side.
Firstly, the forms of property under the patrimonial regimes during the pre-colonial times of the Ceded Districts were manifested in 'prebendal', 'communal' and 'personal' (or 'private') property. The first two forms led to the third and in fact the private property grew in size and created a sense of competition in the economy which in course of time enlarged trading activities connecting villages to the market centres. However, for a long time, private or personal property was a particularistic form for which Brahmins and a few others were eligible. The prebendal rights, dependent upon political or military services, was the form favoured by patrimonial regimes and these rights were substantially increased under the palegarship in the Ceded Districts. The communal property was reflected in *mirasi, inam, watan, agraharam* etc., land tenures. These were protected by communal customs and by institutions, such as panchayats, with considerable judicial authority.

The late and post-Vijayanagara period witnessed tensions between patrimonial rulers and communities with regard to the adjustment of prebendal and communal rights. The palegars claimed their right over several villages and lands whereas the traditional and lord families of the village who enjoyed *mirasi* rights refused to pay the tax to the palegars denying the claims of the palegars' prebendal rights. The growing intensity of conflicts between rights resulted in the growth of private property accumulated by the office-holders, such as Karnams, tax-farmers, amildars, patels etc., who stood between the state and the community mediating their sharpening conflict during the pre-colonial period.

There were atleast 80 palegars in the Ceded Districts as per the Munro Reports. In fact, several other palegars who were not recorded...
by him are found in the kaifiyats of the ceded Districts. In Cuddapah alone, in a recent work, 39 new palegars are brought to light. All these palegars formed the core of patrimonial regime. They enjoyed both prebendal and patrimonial possessions in the country side.

But however, all these palegars basically had their local roots in the country side and enjoyed the patrimonial rights inherited through kinship. Later, they joined the services of the kings and acquired pre-bendal rights. The Kaifiyats of Cuddapah District testifies to the fact that not only 80 palegars but several others who were not recorded by the British officials also ruled the country side in the Ceded Districts. However, the kaifiyats originated during the time of Vijayanagara. Once, they acquired pre-bendal rights, they gradually transformed them into patrimonial rights, i.e., rights inherited from the forefathers.

Similarly, communal rights were reflected in the *agraharas, mirasis, inams* etc. In the Ceded Districts several *inams* were found in the pre-colonial period. Munro made extensive survey to register the communal holdings in the Ceded Districts as soon as he took over the charge as the first principal collector. To his surprise he found a large number of land holdings under the category of *inams, agraharas* etc.

The break up of Vijayanagara empire and the Bahamani empire into small kingdoms on one hand, and on the other, emergence of landed aristocracy as a part of rural ruling elite, resulted in perpetual irregularity in the revenue collections. Often, revenue collections resumed the nature of plunder. The palegars or the rulers that ruled the Rayalaseema provinces in the pre-colonial period did not have
clear cut demarcations of jurisdiction. Virtually no boundary can be
drawn between the two palegar's jurisdictions or between the ruler's
authority. The Nawabs of Golkonda, the Nawabs of Cuddapah and
Kurnool, the Marathas, the Sultans of Bijapur and the Sultans of
Mysore claimed their right over the provinces of the Ceded Districts.
The palegars made their prebendal rights into hereditary possessions
and removed substantially the control and protection of the state and
community. Similarly communal right holders, such as Brahmins
who held agraharams, devadanas and brahmadeyas; the village
accountants, called Karanams who enjoyed Karnikapu mirasis, Patels
or Reddies who possessed reddy manyams, the village servants,
known as pannedarayayandlu or ayagars who held inams – all tried
gradually to convert inams of their service tenures into private and
hereditary possessions. The palegars, patails and karnams who were
the core of the power structure in the pre-colonial state of
Rayalaseema. Of the four grades in the police institution of pre­
colonial period, the first two formed cluster and the later two formed
the other cluster. The first two i.e., the Rajas, Nawabs and famildas
acted as the central power while the palegars, kavalgars and talaries
formed the local power and acted as anti-state elements through the
police institution. By the time of the advent of the British in the
Ceded Districts, there were several of them who enjoyed private
possessions in land. Hence, Munro, successfully introduced the
Ryotwari system in the Ceded Districts by 1802. However, after a
brief period of lapse, it again came into operation in 1824 in the
whole of Ceded Districts and continued as one of most successful
land tenural systems in the provinces.
These developments had deep influence on the character of the palegar. The chiefs transformed themselves from a class of public servants into a domestic militia, paid by the inhabitants and compensated for their services by their overlord. Strengthening their military establishments and converting their detached villages into military posts, they gradually rendered themselves. They made continued encroachment not only upon the territories of the ruler whom they were expected to serve but also upon the rights of the inhabitants whom they agreed to protect.

Under the changed political conditions the tax burden of the villagers increased. The palegars now levied the *Deskakaval* tax on the people. This amounted to an absolute robbery of the circar revenue. Levies under various other pretences were also imposed. When the inhabitants refused to pay the levies; torture and the whip were applied. Sometimes the inhabitants were even taken captives. The system thus degenerated. The principle force took the place of service.

The days of the palegari system were numbered. The existence of the chieftains fortified by their independence, their arms appeared to go against the security of the Nawab or other local sovereigns. Attempts made by the rulers to suppress the chiefs led to a series of conflicts. The early expeditions were ineffective. However, the British alliance with the local rulers ushered in a period of vigorous military operations.

The rise to prominence by the palegars marked a serious attempt to afford protection during the dark days of the post-allikote era. But under the pressure of hostile circumstances the palegars
developed behind the barriers of their miniature status and aptitude for ego-centrism, independence and war and not always for service and loyalty. In keeping with the trend of the times, the system degenerated. As it went out of order, it symbolised a powerful force of disintegration.

By 1803, the implementation of the zamindari system was completed. The palegars were transformed into a class of zamindars. In their changed character, they were enhanced amount to the government under a permanent assessment. However, the chieftains were allowed to retain a fixed number of peons. All the forts of the palegars were destroyed and periodical inspections were conducted. Roads and postal communications were introduced into the old territories. These military measures were calculated to promote the consolidation of the British authority. The palegari system that flourished for two and a half centuries come to a violent end in the midst of the suppression of their struggle for survival.

The history of Andhra during pre-colonial period is conceived as a 'Dark Age; and scarcely probed by the historians. There seems to be a gap between the medieval and modern periods of Andhra history, for by and large, the historians who concentrated on the medieval period of Andhra history stopped at the fall of Vijayanagara empire and the Modern period historians started their writings either with the advent of the British or with the National Movement. Hence, atleast two hundred years of history of Andhra remained unprobed. In this thesis, an attempt is made to bring to light certain institutions which became prominent during the post-Vijayanagara or pre-colonial period which had actually given a base for the emergence of colonial rule in Andhra. To demonstrate this, the Native police
Institution (Kavalgars, palegars) of the ceded Districts is taken for the study.

As a background to the emergence of native police system (both these institutions may be called the country police system in Rayalaseema), the geo-political and the socio-economic factors are traced. The geographical position made the ceded Districts a ‘Dry zone’ area. This in turn, gave rise to nucleated village structure. The nucleated village structure increased the grain raids and boundary dispute which consequently resulted in the establishment of ‘Village Watchmen’ or talaries, mahatadies, dhades, gramapadas etc., who performed various sentinel duties in the villages. This particular group at the village level formed the basis of native or country police system in the Ceded Districts.

The hills, hillocks and mountain ranges which traversed the districts facilitated the rise of kavalgars, Achoo, Kavalgars and the palegars. The kavalgars and Achoo-kavalgars were entrusted with the duty of watching the roads passing through the jungles and passes. The palegars and the kavalgars form the main strata of the pre-colonial police system. The historical factors such as the rise of Mohammedan power in the South and the disintegration of the great Vijayanagara empire also accelerated the process of policing in the south. The break up of the Vijayanagara rule and the rise of alien power, namely, the Mahammadan dynasties, resulted in the fragmentation of the territories of Andhra in general, and Rayalaseema in particular. The patrimonial elite such as palegars, zamindars etc., who enjoyed the prebendal and the patrimonial possessions and rights, declared independence owing to the chaos caused by the aliens for the territorial possessions. The palegars
literally established "little kingdoms" converting their land revenue assignments into fiefs and styled themselves as little kings and forced their ailing rajas to bust on upon them titles and confer them with royal paraphernalia. This type of parcellization of power left the territories undemarcated and unruly. With the result, the need for guarding of the villages and the roads became acute.

The socio-economic factors further contributed not only to the emergence, but also for strengthening the country police system. The notion of "self-sufficient closed-peasant village economy" pervaded the historical writings of the 18th and the 19th centuries of India in general, and the Rayalaseema in particular. This notion reflected a 'static economy' in which built-in-growth factors remain absent. Hence, the economy in the pre-colonial Rayalaseema is perceived as one which acts according to the norms of village community. The advent of the British is showed as vital factor for the transition of the entire economy of Rayalaseema from 'Static' to that of the 'dynamic' and the vanguard of dynamism was no other than the East India Company. However, in this thesis such notion is questioned. The native police institution is an indication of "dynamism" in the economy. The native police institutions of the pre-colonial Rayalaseema signifies that the exchange relations not limited to one village or among few neighbouring villages but extended to a larger territorial units classified under the names of the rulers or dynasties of those territories.

The important economic factors are seem to be causative for the establishment and enlargement of the native police system. Firstly, the increase in privatization of landed property not only in quantity but also in quality, gave impetus to the exchange relations.
The forms of property under the patrimonial regimes during the pre-colonial times of the Ceded Districts were manifested in ‘probendal’, ‘communal’ and ‘personal’ or private property. The first two forms led to the third and in fact the private property grew in size and created a sense of competition in the economy which in course of time enlarged trading activities connecting villages to the market centres. However, for a long time, private or personal property was a particularistic form for which brahmins and few others were eligible. The prebendal rights, dependent upon political or military service was the form favoured by patrimonial regimes and these rights were substantially increased under the palegarship in the Ceded Districts. The communal property was reflected in mirasi, inam, watan, agraharam etc., in the territories. These were protected by communal customs and by institutions such as panchayats with considerable judicial authority. The late and post-Vijayanagara period witnessed tensions between patrimonial rulers and communities with regard to the adjustment of prebendal and communal rights. The palegars claimed their right over several villages and lands whereas the traditional landlord families of the village who enjoyed mirasi rights refused to pay the tax to the palegars denying the claims of the palegar’s prebendal rights. This growing intensity of conflicts between rights resulted in the growth of private property accumulated by the office-hotters, such as karnams, tax-farmers, amildars, patels etc., who stood between the state and the community, mediating their sharpening conflict during the pre-colonial period.

Secondly, the revival of monetary economy further accelerated trade and commerce in the economy. The increase in copper coins in the tri-metallic currency is an indication of the involvement of
commoners in the exchange relations. Hitherto, either nobility or the elite alone participated extensively in the exchange relations. Owing to the extension of exchange relations to the level of common man, the guilds hitherto monopolised commercial activities received a death blow. The “household business” based on individual competition acquired prominence. With the result, innumerable weights and measures came into vogue. The tax base also increased heavily during the pre-colonial period. The increase in trade and commerce warranted for the establishment of watchward system on goods which are in transit. Thus, various grades of sentinels were created in response to the dynamism of the economy.

In this study, for the first time, a clear cut hypothetical gradation in the native police system of the pre-colonial period is spelled out. Another major achievement of this study is that, for the first time, the names and the place of origin of the Kavalgars is listed. On the whole, 88 kavalgars are identified. Their distribution is also uneven in the Ceded Districts. More number of kavalgars are concentrated in Kurnool and Cuddapah districts than Anantapur, Bellary and Chittoor districts. the Kurnool and Cuddapah districts contain 68.17 per cent of the kavalgars and the remaining are in the other three districts.

The structure and organisation of the police institutions during the period under study was so established as to meet the needs of rural elite especially, the palegars, patails and karanams who were the core of the power structure in the pre-colonial state of Rayalaseema. 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, kavalgars and talaries formed
the local power and acted as ‘antistate’ elements through the police
institution. The extraction of surplus by the central power was not
only opposed by the custodians of police system, i.e., palegars,
kavalgars and talaries but also they enhanced their own revenues
through the police establishment.

However, the native police system did not sail smoothly. It
faced constant attacks from the alien rulers. The nawabs especially,
implanted Amildars, to check the palegars and kavalgars. Hyder Ali
and Tippu Sultan almost ransacked the palegars and kavalgars. But
their presence in the districts being short lived, the kith and kin of the
palegars and kavalgars resumed powers and restored their former
positions. The British dexterously brought the rural ruling elite, i.e.,
the palegars, kavalgars, patels and karanams under their control.
They, through legislation, gradually modified and adopted the
existing native institutions to suit the cause of colonial rule.

****