CHAPTER - III

SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE AMANTAPUR MUSLIMS
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The Muslims living within a Geographical sphere or political state constitute a significant sections of society which is tending to have a separate identity. The study of the socio-economic life of the Muslim helps in an understanding of their participation in public and general life. It cannot be denied that as a community, the Muslims are an integral part of Indian society. It is true at the same time that the community is confronted with certain peculiar problems resulting from its historical role and the product of its own social stratification. According to the provisional figures of 1971 census the Muslim population in India is grown to 61,417,934 from the 1961 count of 46,940,799.

The Muslims are spread over all the 356 districts of India. About 27 per cent of the total Muslim population lives in urban areas. It is also clear that Muslims are much more urbanised in regions where the process of urbanisation is

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1Zafar Imam: Some aspects of the social structure of the Muslim Community in India in Muslim India, Op.cit., p. 71.

newer and faster. It appears that South Indian urban Muslims are becoming more forward looking successful in business and professions and desirous of participating in public life.³

The Muslims of Anantapur city provide an example of a population with a large urban history. They are a segment of the Muslim minority of Andhra Pradesh. Like its counterparts in the other southern states, the Anantapur Muslims also indicate migratory origins. In the beginning they were a conglomerate community which grew as a result of intermarriages and conversions. These conversions perhaps took place during the time of Tipu Sultan and Muslim rulers. These Muslim spoke their regional languages namely Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. There were other Muslims who had migrated from northern and Central Indian states. As a result of repeated incursions from Muslim rulers from North and Central India and by the Nizams of Hyderabad and the Nawabs, the Carnatic, there was a steady stream of migration to South India. They were mostly Urdu speaking Muslims whose descendents form the present day population of Karnataka and Andhra State and many of them settled in Tamil Nadu also.⁴


⁴Government of Tamil Nadu - Tamil Nadu, Government of Tamilnadu 1972, p. 38.
The term migration has been understood in a variety of ways. Literally it means the settlement or shifting of an individual or a group of individuals from one culture area of habitation to another more or less permanently. A person or a group of individuals may migrate from one place to another for many reasons. Several problems are associated with or caused by migration, particularly for the migrants. Their caste values and practices have also to be redefined. The modes of social controls, the celebration of social events are also affected by migration.

Migration may be accidental, or temporary, permanent or periodic and definite migration. Migration may be voluntary as well involuntary. Among the involuntary types of migration, we have examples of persons who are forced by political or social agencies, to leave their normal places of habitation. Thus at the time of the partition of India in 1947, a large number of people migrated from Pakistan to India a few from India to Pakistan. Voluntary migration, on the other hand, takes place as a result of the operation of the free will and personal choice of the people. It is therefore interesting

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6 Ibid., p. 5.
to study how people coming from different socio-economic groups and with varying educational, occupational, family, political and caste backgrounds organise their social life in the new cultural settings.

The Muslims of this region are commonly divided into Telugu, speaking and Urdu speaking. At least with this indication, people of other religious differentiate the Muslims as culturally more advanced or less advanced. Thus the Urdu language has helped in identifying the Muslims. The Urdu speaking Muslims are the descendants of those who have migrated into the State. They settled here as Government servants.

Besides the division based upon language, the Muslim can be classified sect wise as Sheikhs, Syeds, pathans, Moghuls and Labbaies. The Shias and Labbaies are rather rare in the district of Anantapur. Sheikh is supposed to be the direct descendent of one of the first three califs; a Syed is a direct descendent of the prophet; a Pathan is an early convert from Rajasthan.

According to the 1971 census the Muslims population of Anantapur town numbers nearly 20,530, thus forming the second largest segment next only to the Hindus. The Muslims

are well scattered all over the city. There are certain clusters like Gulsarpet, Nalband Street, Asar Street, Bahama-th Nagar, where we find a concentration of their households. Among rural migrants the town in the decades goneby, community and kinship relations continue to be important determinants of social order. Migrants are poor and ignorant and lack of knowledge of urban life and jobs. Under these circumstances, migrants settle in areas where their relatives have proceeded them and in this manner create the urban residence pattern of the migrating section of Indian cities.

One can see a good number of permanent urban dwellers also in the town. The Anantapur Muslim’s urbanisation is associated with their occupational skill for business and through history they have earned a reputation as shrewd hard-working merchants. The town bazaar ties expanded. It is in the bazaar that the Muslim merchants work, and most of them live and conduct their social affairs around it. The Muslims are one of the most successful groups of merchants in the bazaar, although they are not as numerous as the Hindus. Among the more enterprising Muslims, we find fleet owners, owners of textile, provision and oil-men stories, dealers in auto-parts, electrical and electronic goods. The middle sector
consists of the mechanics, watch repairers, plumbers, technicians, Government servants and professionals. The lower strata of the Muslim society of Anantapur is engaged in such occupations as slaughter houses, petty trading, hawking and daily-wage earners. There are a few families of displaced Muslims consequent on the partition of the country in 1947 in Anantapur town engaged in trade.

Social life and practices of Muslims:

With all its regional variations and sect differences the Muslims' community in India is split into two broad socio-economic categories — urban and rural. By the very nature of the two categories there is an inter-connection between them. Even the urban Muslim population is not homogenous. New capitalists and businessmen, urban based landed rich, higher number of the intelligentsia and top professional people, in short, the main beneficiaries of 'secularism' and economic development, comprise the so-called privileged class. The middle rung is comprised of educated employed, petty shop-keepers, middle businessmen and lower members of the intelligentsia. The lowest in the ladder are working men and the un-employed, educated and uneducated. Naturally, the lowest in the ladder far out number the privileged and middle class.


As against the general analysis of the social pattern of the Muslim community in India, the Anantapur Muslims may fall in the middle and lowest categories. The first category of new capitalists and urban landed aristocracy is conspicuously absent in the social structure under study. Whatever may be the economic and educational level of the segments in the community, the character and quality of social relations based on kinship and always been regarded as a major aspect of interest in the study of small-scale societies.

There is a widespread impression that Muslims in India adhere strictly to the basic tenants of Islam as embodied in the 'Sharia'. However, several studies focusing on Muslim social life have suggested that Muslim familial life exhibits a peculiar synthesis of Islam and Hindu traditions. Both the Hindus and Muslims of Anantapur town constitute a corporate unity in many ways. Nonetheless, the different Hindu castes and Muslims maintain their distinct social boundaries through separate religious institutions. The concentration of Muslims in certain parts of the city has led to the formation of a number of Muslim neighbourhoods. The old Muslim neighbourhoods

are mainly occupied by city-born Muslims, while the recently established neighbourhoods are occupied by the people who have come to the city over the last two or three decades from various parts of the state.

The Family and Household:

Like in most other Indian communities, the basic unity of the kinship system among the Anantapur Muslims in the household. It refers essentially to a residential and domestic unit comprising the person or persons living together under the same roof and eating food cooked in a common kitchen. The family is the smallest and most basic sociological unit based on descent and filiation. There is an overwhelming majority in both the Muslim population and the non-Muslim families that believe that joint living is the ideal. In terms of joint households, the ideal of joint living, and in having sons actively stay home until the death of the father, the Muslims seem to be, in fact as well as in theory identical to or even more conservative than the non-Muslims. The joint family structure is well suited to the management needs of business expansion.

11 Ibid., p. XX iii.
The household head occupies the apex of authority and oversees all the family enterprises. His sons individually manage separate shops, while their sons-in-law or other relatives act as their respective assistants. This trend seen among the Tamilnadu Muslims living in Madras city is true of Anantapur Muslims also.

Like in most Indian communities, marriage among Anantapur Muslims is looked upon as essential for both males and females. Parents are said to be 'not free,' unless they see their daughters and sons happily married. Marriage is also considered as a Sunnah and therefore it is regarded as an obligation which must be fulfilled. Further more, all daughters are said to the Pariggaher, literally meaning 'for some one else's house.' This belief compells parents to get their daughters married as soon as they reach marriageable age and a suitable match can be found for them. Formally people were married at a very early age. However, today, particularly no one below the age of sixteen gets married and for boys the marriageable age is usually eighteen. But sometimes early marriages are arranged to please elderly grand-


parents who insist on seeing the grand children married before death.

The accepted pattern of marital arrangement among the Anantapur Muslims is monogamy. Cases of polygamy are occasionally met with but even this is fast disappearing. The growth of urbanisation and the spread of western ideas have brought about significant changes in the customs governing marriage. Inter-caste marriage among Brahmans, Balijas, Kammars, Kapus, Muslims and Lingayats are also now common. Among the Muslims, there are certain prohibited degrees of relationship based on consanguinity which are strictly adhered to.  

The Anantapur Muslims being predominantly an endogamous group, they practice endogamy strictly. Since marriage among them is mostly arranged by parents. They take place according to customary rules. It is possible to identify three endogamous units or marriage circle among the Anantapur Muslims. These marriage circle relate to kins or relatives, those of Khandams (families) and those of inter-marrying villages. The most important part of marriage negotiations is making a formal proposal. Marriage negotiations can be initiated either by

the boy's or the girl's family, but the formal proposal can be made only by the boy's family. Sometimes this is done through a professional matchmaker, or a close relative or a friend. The acceptance of the proposal is a mere formality. Thereafter the boy's parents will visit the girl's family to finalize the details regarding mahr.  

Marriage Ceremonies:

Marriages among the Muslims are proceeded by nisbat or betrothal, and a day is fixed for the marriage according to Muslim calendar. There are no particularly auspicious days, but no marriages take place in the month of Muharram and the first ten days of the next month, Safar. The ceremony attending the betrothal consists generally of the distribution of betel leaves and gifts to the bride and groom. While now-a-days rings are also exchanged. When the actual 'Nikah' or the wedding ceremony approaches, the customary anointing and bathing of the bride and bridegroom follows the exchange of wedding presents and wearing apparel between the two parties.  

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15. Mahr is a sum of money which is payable to the bride by her husband at the time of marriage. According to Islam, it does not go to her parent, but remain the property of the girl. Cf.: Imtiaz Ahmed, Family, kinships and Marriage among Muslim in India, Op.cit., p. 67.  

Four days before the wedding, a ceremony called 'Pithi' (Mansa) is held. On this day, some young female relatives of the boy visit the girl's house and smear the girl with turmeric powder (Pithi) mixed in some herbs and oil. Pithi is also applied to the boy as well as the girl by their respective female relatives. Nowadays this practice is decaying, but it has not completely died out.¹⁷

The Nikah:

The day of the marriage begins early both at the boys and the girl's house. The potential couple are usually given a bath. The Hajjam (barber) helps the boy with his bath after giving him a hair-cut and a share of the clothes of the boy and girl at the time of the ritual bath is gifted to the barber and his wife. After the bath the boy as well as girl are dressed in good clothes and they visit the elders of the village. Two hours before the Nikah, the auglar or Mahandi ceremony is performed at the boy's house. Young girls from the girl's house, feed him with it and apply some mehandi (henna paste) on the palm of his right hand. They present to the boy's mother seven betelnuts (Supari), four betel leaves (Pan) and seven

bonquets of flowers (Kalghit)\textsuperscript{10}

The essential elements of wedding ceremony is the Nikah. Muslim marriage is a civil contract pure and simple and is entered into solely by the bride and bridegroom. The contractual words are first repeated by the bride in the presence of two witnesses or vakils who are nearly always her relatives. This is done in the Zanana part of the house where the only males are the two vakils. The bride either says 'yes' to their queries whether she would accept a bridegroom as the husband in consideration of a certain amount of money as her mahr or keeps quiet which is regarded in meaning assent.\textsuperscript{19}

Then the marriage is carried by the two witnesses to the khazi who is attending the bridegroom. The khazi also repeats the identical questions to the boy thrice times and everytime the bridegroom answers in the affirmative in a loud voice. After the civil contract is over the khazi or some one learned in the tradition of the Prophet, deliver the Sermon containing the verses of the Holy Quran and the traditions pertaining to the rights and duties of the husband and wife.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 75

accruing from the marriage contract. Then, a prayer is recited for the success of the marriage and the party disperses after almonds and sugar-candy are showered.

The birth of a boy is always hailed with greater rejoicing than of a girl. An interesting custom observed on the completion of the seventh month of the first pregnancy is that the woman is dressed in new clothes and adorned with flowers. On the 40th day after confinement termed 'Chilla.' Certain ceremonies are performed for the purification of the mother and ending the pollution period. A ceremony called 'Hagiga' is performed by which the infant is staved and the hair weighted in silver and the money is then distributed among Fakirs.

The normal expectation among the Muslims is that a marriage will remain in belief so long as both the parties to it are alike, but in keeping with the Islamic Law, there is a provision for divorce (Talaq). However, the provision exists more in theory than in practice. Divorce is disapproved by the Community at large and tends to lower the reputation of

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20 Ibid., p. 139.
21 Ibid., p. 124.
the family. Divorce is not a matter of common occurrence in Anantapur. When divorce takes effect at the instance of the wife, it is called 'Khula'. Among the Muslims widow marriages are prevalent. There is nothing in Islam against widow marriage.22

The traditional practice of payment of Oli or Mehr (Brides Dowry) still exists. Among Muslims it is necessary that the amount of money to be paid to the bride by the bridegroom be specified in the formal contract of marriage. It is paid either at the time of marriage or at some future date. The former is called Mehr-i-muwa22jal (immediate) and the later Mehr-i-muwa22jal (deferred).23

The Muslims of the Anantapur district are governed by the injunctions of the Holy Quran and the Muslim Law of inheritance, according to which the property is divided among the heirs of the deceased.24

22Ibid., p. 134.

23Ibid., p. 134.

What is striking here is that the impact of the regional cultural environment on Muslims' kinship and marriage pattern is not restricted to family norms and role relationship alone. It extends to marriage customs and practices as well. For example, the Nikah ceremony occurs side by side with a series of other social ceremonies which serve to underscore its social and religious significance. Customs and rituals observed by the Muslim community at the time of marriage are adaptations of the customs and rituals observed generally within the region. Customs of presentation, of singing of songs by women and of the ritual of purificatory baths given to the bride and groom are easily comparable to similar customs observed by the Hindus of the area.

Funeral rites among Muslims:

When a Muslim is about to die, one of the relatives or outsider recites a chapter of the Quran called 'Sura-e-Yasin' and the Kalima which is repeated many times. The corpse is washed ceremonially as soon as possible. After life is extinct the body is neatly wrapped in sheets of white khadi or long cloth and is carried on a bed-like structure (Zanana) generally on the shoulder of the followers and sometimes in a motor to a place outside the mosque where the funeral service is held.
It is then taken to the graveyard and laid to rest on its back with the head to the north and face towards Mecca. The grave is paved with Geoly stories and holes closed. Each person then takes up a little earth and puts it gently on the grave. Prayers are offered and all go home after alms have been distributed.25

House-life - Types of Dwellings:

The pattern of home life of the people of Anantapur testifies to their popular preference for a simple and quite way of life. Most of the old houses were constructed to answer the needs of the joint family system. But with the social and economic changes in recent years style and design also change. Self contained houses are now built to suit individual families.

Most of the houses of upper and middle class families are well furnished and decorated. Apart from costly chairs, tables, bedsteads and bureaus, modern electrical goods, the television sets and radios, fans gresses and gas stoves are now an almost unavoidable part of furniture and decoration in a modern house.

The poor classes of Muslims cannot, however afford most of these luxuries. All households have at best a cot of country timber and mulaika (twine) and that date leaf. The cot, besides being used for sleeping, serves numerous other purposes.

**Dress and Ornaments:**

The pattern of dress varies from one community to another. But the perceptible link that can be discerned is the simplicity. The dress of the Muslims exhibits a blending of the Hindu and Islamic cultures. The attire of the Anantapur Muslims as that of the Muslims of the other towns of Andhra are more less the same. The common dress of a Muslim male is lungi, a shirt and fez cap white colour is preferred to other colours. No one wears normally silk or even gold rings. On religious occasions, they wear turban, jibba and pijama. The Muslim women wear saries with sari work and blouses and in a few cases full-sleeved blouses. The teenagers among girls generally wear punjabi-kurta pijama and a white thin scarf called 'oddini'. A 'Duopata' is universally carried by all women observing 'gosha'. A 'burkha' is as much a part of a Lady's attire, as a cap is of a male.27

Like the other women the Anantapur well to do Muslims women also dress themselves with jewellery. They do not go for plain gold jewellery. As a rule they wear only costly stone studded jewellery. They wear necklaces, earrings, bracelets and anklets while men mostly put on silver rings. The Muslim women do not put an kumkum. Fully shaved head, wearing a beard by men is an orthodox custom among Muslims, but such people are few and far between. Of late there is a tendency among the youth to grow beards.

Food habits:

Rice constitutes the staple food of the people both in towns and villages. Wheat and maida are also consumed. Muslims generally take mutton, fish, and the flesh of ordinary edible birds. The consumption of meat 'perota's' or chapati and kichidi made of rice and dhal or plain rice is usually confined to Muslims. Biryani is a special dish among Muslims of Anantapur. Groundnut oil generally figures in all culinary preparation and the condiments used include pepper, turmeric, ginger, cardmon, cloves, spices, chillies, mustard, onion and garlic. Almost all Muslims in the city are non-vegetarians. Once ragi also was taken as a staple food. Nearly 25 mutton butcheries

are in the hands of Muslims in the town. The Muslims take tea in preference to coffee, smoking beedies, pan-chewing and snuff are also common. Consumption of alcohol is not widespread.

**Amusements and entertainments:**

Young and old of all castes and communities play a variety of indigenous games. Children play with dolls of various kinds and other popular games like hide and seek. Boys play with marbles, tops and kite flying. Games like koti kommalata, beligudu, pulijudum, kolam, tokkudu-billa and playing with cowris, caroms etc are also popular. Cricket, ball-badminton, basket ball, foot ball are the patronised indoor games of the youth now. 29

The Muslims participate in Mushahiras, Sher-shahris, and Khawatis. In Anantapur many Mushahira are held under the auspices of the Anguman-e-Jarrique-urdu.

**Festivals:**

The lives of all sections of the people of Anantapur have been chastened by a great variety of festivals. There is a lot of sharing, merriment and joy among all communities during

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29Ibid., p.154.
Interview from General Secretary, Anguman-e-Jarrique-urdu Anantapur (Branch) A.P., date, 14-8-87.
the Hindu festivals like New Year's Day, Puja, Deepavali and Sankranti. Among the Muslim festivals Muḥarram, the first month of the Hijira year, is a festival marked by solemn mourning in remembrance of the martyrdom of the Prophet's grand son, ʿImām ʿAbd Allāh ibn Alī (a.s). There is an interesting alam (pir, at Gugulu, Anantapur) ascribed to Kullayi Swami the saint with a long cap) which is held in great veneration and people of all communities visit it in fulfilment of their vows. One of the principal attractions of the festival is the fire walking ceremony, which takes place on the ninth day of Muḥarram. On the festival called Akhiri chahershaamba, the Muslim women leave their seclusion, go to open places and enjoy it as a sort of picnic.  

Apart from these festivals, Biṣār d-e Milad the Prophet's birthday is observed with lectures in Telugu and Urdu on the life of the Prophet attended by all people without distinction. Ya’qdum Sharif, Shob-e-miraj and the Shob-e-bareth are other occasions of solemnity and merriment for the local Muslims. The Ramzan-seed and the Baqrid-seed are the two chief festivals celebrated gaily and with alms giving and sharing.

30 Ibid., p. 156.
Inter communal life:

In the social culture and economic spheres there is a lot of give and take among the Muslims and the other communities of the locality. The social life of the Muslims is to a great extent influenced by Hinduism. There are a large number of temples and mosques in the town and in the neighbourhood which attract pilgrims from all communities. The tomb of saint Baba Fakruddin of Penakonda is an important pilgrim centre for devotees of all communities. Although the Muharram is supposed to be a month of mourning, both Muslims and Hindus celebrate it in a festive mood. They go well dressed in groups and participate in the traditional songs and dance with the beating of drums. Enthusiastic men putting on the guise of the tigers, horses and monkeys provide considerable fun.\textsuperscript{31} This festival is popularly called 'Pirla Pendiaga.'

The diet of the Muslims resemble those of the Hindus except for the fact that the former takes mutton and fish. The dress of the Muslims also become closer to that of the Hindus. In matters of public interest, business and cultural matters there is lot of mixing and mingling among the various communities. The Muslims of Anantapur are not an island to

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p. 160.
themselves but they join the mainstream of urban life to a considerable extent. This is a redeeming feature which goes a long way in building up a harmonious community life and in fostering brotherhood.32

**Economic condition of Anantapur Muslims**

The Anantapur district is unfortunately vulnerable to famines. It lies in the heart of the famine zone with an exceedingly light rainfall, poor soils and precarious irrigation sources. In spite of the administrative importance as headquarters of the district, Anantapur town does not enjoy the same commercial importance as Hindupur or Guntakal. The volume of business turn out is comparatively small. Economically Anantapur is one of the relatively backward districts of the State. This is mainly due to the agricultural nature, its nascent stage of the industrial development, its susceptibility to recurring and virulent famines and its decline of cottage industry. Anantapur has still to salvage itself from the morals of economic stagnation caused by incessant sessional uncertainties.33

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32 Interview with Mr. H. Khaja Hussain, B.Sc., B.L., President, Anantapur District Wakf Board on 12-9-1966.

The social life of the Muslim of Anantapur is based to a considerable extent on their economic conditions, their professions and position in society as well as their relation with other communities. The Islamic society being a casteless one, there are men who would do all jobs. Further no Muslim will consider another as inferior because of his occupation. The Muslims of Anantapur town are mostly engaged in business. A good number educated Muslims are settled down in jobs as clerks, officials and administrators. The Telugu speaking Pinjaris pursue their old profession of cotton cleaning and take up other jobs as well. Among the educated Muslims we can see an good amount of professionals like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers and Teachers. In the middle rung of social ladder are found a good number of mechanics, Petty traders, Tailors and artisans. The poor Muslims are engaged as labourers, coolies, pedlars and so on. 33

A majority of Muslim population is urban oriented. It is in the bazaar of Anantapur town that the Muslim merchants and petty traders have established themselves. They

have come from the nearby areas of the district. Merchants come from a wide variety of places and represent equally wide family backgrounds. They migrated to where they have relations in business because these kins know the nature of local consumer demands and can give advice about the kinds of business which are likely to prove successful. Relatives cooperation closely with each other mainly because it is socially and economically profitable.

Another obvious feature of bazaar enterprise in Anantapur town is that they are family business. Family Organisation forms the basis of business management. According to studies made this pattern of organisation is wide spread in South Asia. The head of the household is also the Manager of the business. His sons act as his assistants. If a merchant has no sons, then son-in-law or a poor relative substitute.

Muslims living in Anantapur who had come from neighbouring regions distinguish a kin unit, which is similar to the concept of Vamasa. Typically the family name designates a place of origin or former occupation of an ancestor.

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One of the most influential business families of Anantapur town is the Kammur family. According to Mr. K.M. Safiulla, the present scion of the family, his ancestors had migrated from Sri Rangapatnam and then to Kammur till they settled at Anantapur. The family even claims linkage with the family of the Mysore ruler, Tipu Sultan. This family has contributed much to the public life of the town. His father K. Rahamuthulla was a member in Composite Madras Legislature Council in 1937 from the Muslim League party in Muhammadan Anantapur rural constituency. His other brother, K.M. Saifulla is leading advocate and Vice-Chairman of the Municipality. The firm deals in wholesale and retail business of electrical and electronic goods and appliances. It is a family concern.

The second important family of businessmen in the Anantapur town is the Pan-walla family. Perhaps the name refers to their former occupation of an ancestor. At this moment the Pan-wallas are a leading automobile spare parts dealers in Kamalnagar. Proprietor Mr. Fakruddin had served as the Vice-Chairman of the Anantapur municipality in 1984-85. A third

36 Interview with Mr. K.M. Safiulla, Proprietor, Safi enterprises, Anantapur on 9-9-1986.

37 Andhra Pradesh Gazetter, Anantapur, p. 812.
business magnet of the local Muslim community is the Siddotam family. There are involved in building contract works. Apart from these three distinguished business tycoons of Anantapur, there are a few town bus operations, running the Sathar, Noor, and Salim transports. Muslim traders of the town are also involved in the whole sale fruit, marketing, provision stores, textile shops and Benyan shops. The Gemini colour laboratory in Anantapur owned by a Muslim is a leading Photo-studio in the town.

In the middle cadre of trades we have electricians, mechanics, tailors, watch repairers and technicians. One of these categories is a motor mechanic involved in the servicing of cars, lorries and tractors. His family was once Athar (perfumes) and flower vendors. From 1961 onwards he is continuing in this trade without any difficulty. He is getting a monthly income of Rs.2,000/- There is an electrician, whose father also pursued the same occupation. He too earns about the same amount and does not get any loan. Tailor Ismail's father was a government employee.

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38 Interview with Mr. A. Naqbal, Garage Owner, Kamalanagar on 28-7-1987.
The above sample survey indicates that the petty traders are finding it hard to earn their livelihood. Their income is not sufficient to run the family. They have no security of job and no financial aid. One moped mechanic, son of a retired Post-Master, is able to get loan under Gramodaya scheme from the State Bank of India.

The lot of the great majority of poor Muslim presents a sordid picture in terms of the economic conditions. This is all the more important as this segment struggles hard precariously in an economically backward region. They have no financial help either from the community or State. Their educational standards are deplorable. The menial groups located in the urban areas stand to gain actually. The

40 Interview with Mr. Muhammad Ismail, Majestic Tailor, Subhas Road, Anantapur on 27-7-87.

41 Interview with Mr. Abdul Masid, Watch Repairer, Subhash Road, Anantapur on 27-7-87.

42 Interview with Mr. M. Saleem, Moped Mechanic, Kamalanagar, Anantapur, on 27-7-87.
expansion of trade and commerce has led to an increase in
the demand for their services and the income they can command.
But they are largely unorganized. There is a widening gap
between the privileged and unprivileged. If further impover­
ished the masses of the Muslims, depriving them of a poten­
tional sources of sustenance and support. 43

The urban poor Muslims are mostly migrants from the
districts and are to a large extent uprooted from their old
agrarian economy and displaced persons. Basheer is a bullock
cart owner in Anantapur. He earns about Rs. 30/- per day. His
son is helping him in his work. He has to feed seven mouths. 44
Similarly, there is another poor Muslim who operates a rickshaw
on a rental basis. He earns about Rs. 25/- per day and his is a
joint family. 45 In these two families the women are forced go
for work, as domestic servants and hired labourers whereover
work is available. The boys also go for work. It cannot be
said that the majority of the Muslim population is well off.
Among them a good percentage must be below the poverty line.
Statistical information regarding their conditions are scarce.

43 Zafar Imam, Some Aspects of Socio Structure of the

44 Interview with Basheer, Bullock-cart-owner, Anantapur,
on 27-7-87.

45 Interview with Saleem, Cycle Rickshaw puller, Anantapur,
on 27-7-87.
Every one in the subaltern level tries to do some work to earn his livelihood. There are a few destitutes among Muslims. Physically handicapped beggars are also not a rarity. They get charity and alms.

**Welfare measures:**

It is worth noting that, well-to-do Muslims willingly come forward to help a in dire need of a person. A Muslim is enjoined to take good care of his neighbours. Even though it is not strictly followed, the spirit prevails. During the celebration of religious festivals poor neighbours and needy relatives are well taken care of. In the month of Ramzan when 'Zakat' is due, poor people are looked after well. A rich neighbour contributes generously for the marriage of a poor Muslim neighbour's daughter. The public felt the need of an institution which can help the needy to save them from the clutches of the money-lenders.\(^\text{46}\)

In the Islamic Kingdom there existed an institution called 'Baithul Mall' (House of wealth). It was the treasury wherein was deposited the wealth fetched by their victorious armies. Besides this Muslim also deposited their share of

Zakat, an annual cess imposed on every wealthy Muslim. The amount so contributed was distributed among the needy. Pensions were paid to all widows and orphans, to the disabled and crippled soldiers and to all destitutes.

The enterprising Muslims of Anantapur town have instituted a 'Balatul Mall'. It was established as a Registered society under the Societies Registration Act-XXI of 1960 on 13th Feb. 1976. Its founder Secretary is Mr.S. Fakruddin of the reputed Panwalle family. This society is purely a social service organisation of the Muslims of the Anantapur town. It gives money for the marriage of poor Muslim girls. It bears the funeral expenditure (Manthas) of destitute Muslims. It renders financial assistance for the khatnas or circumcision ceremony of poor Muslim boys. It also extends help to Madrasas (theological schools). Even since its inception, this institute has extended help for the performance of 50 marriages, 257 khatnas and 200 Manthas.

47Zakat is the fourth pillar of Islam, the total being five. Every Muslim who has in his possession wealth, either in kind or cash, more than what he or she needs, has to pay one fourteenth of its value as Zakat. It is payable in the holy month of Ramzan chy, Majoric Kelly, Islam, The religious and political life of a world community, (Prayer, New York, 1984), p. 9.

The Muslim orphanage, Anantapur was started in October, 1955 with a view to provide the Muslim orphans with boarding, lodging and other facilities. It was located in a big cottage near Rudrampet at the outskirts of Anantapur. Recently two acres of land have been purchased for the construction of a permanent building. In 1958 this institution was converted into a Madrasa Ḥarul-u-ulum. It was registered in 1971. It offers the Hifz course. There are 25 students on rolls, receiving free boarding and lodging facilities. The main source of income is donations and subscription.

As already noted there is a core of Muslim merchants in the Anantapur town bazaar area some of whom have family large business. These merchants form a sort of leadership clique among the wealthy Muslims. For example, Mr. K.M. Saffiulla enterprises is deeply involved in community service like education, social welfare, women uplift or religious activities. He worked as a second class Bench Magistrate for three terms. He is also the President of the district Wakf board and a member of the State Wakf Board. He is the Mutvalli of the Jamia Mosque.

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49 Interview with Mr. Habibur Rahman, President, Madrasa-e- Ḥarul-ulum, Anantapur on 8-6-1987.
In addition he is a charter member of the Rotary Club. Similarly, Mr. S. Fakruddin of the Panwalla family has been the Vice-Chairman of the local municipal council and the founder Secretary of the local Baitul Mal. These leader merchants are closely associated with the Anantapur Merchants Association. In terms of active involvement of these members, the political party organization and religious organization are much more important than local merchants associations. Muslim merchants are prominent members of the Congress and Telugudesam parties.

Much more important than association is structuring links among people in the bazaar, are the co-operation bonds formed by neighbours and friends. Merchants feel that a certain degree of co-operation is necessary. Friendship forms the basis of very strong co-operation link between merchants. It is often through such ties that needed finances are raised, new credit is arranged and other business contracts are made. Business among Muslims in Anantapur is a family concern.

But the same is not the situation with the socially and economically deprived Muslim section. Even the middle rung artisans and craftsman have to fend for themselves. They do not get much help from the well-to-do Muslims. There is a
need to organise lot of credit facilities for the skilled segment. Powerful agencies should emerge to tap and utilise the financial assistance given by the State and other voluntary agencies. These categories have to be uplifted from their sustenance level and put on the road to dignified living. This is an important means of contributing to the economic and social development of the submerged classes among the Anantapur Muslims.

50 Interview with Mr. M. A. Hameed, Social Worker, Anantapur, on 30-8-1986.