SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
The study area in southern part of Nellore District lies between 13°45' to 14°20' N.: 79°38' to 80°15' E. and covers an extent of 1250 sq. kms. It is characterised by dry tropical to tropical dry/ever green scrub forests in main land and islands respectively. In the southeastern part of this area, the Pulicat lake & the SHAR islands, in the western side the Veligondas, a part of Eastern Ghats are situated. There are about 52 islands in the Pulicat lake comprising both inhabited and uninhabited types. The main land is dotted with numerous tanks varying from 125 m. to 3.7 km. in their long diameter. A total of 1,130 tanks/lakes have been recorded. The area is traversed by the rivers like-Swarnamukhi, Kalangi, Kaivalya and Arani and several small and intermittent streams. The maximum annual average rainfall is 1041 mm. The highest rise mean monthly temperature is 40.1° C. in May, where as the mean monthly minimum temperature is 18.7°C in January.

From this area the Stone Age data have been collected from both the surface and in a stratified context along the nullahs, streams/ rivers. Thus a total of 27 loci and 60 scatters have been located. To ascertain the stratigraphic position of the industries, a trial-pit excavation was carried out at locus IV. 5 at Venkatagiri. Based on the écotomes, relative distance and altitudes, the sites have been classified into (i) Coastal, (ii) Midland, and (iii) Interior zones. Each zone is divided into -- (i) Plainland sites, (ii) Lakeside sites,
(iii) Streamside sites, (iv) Riverside sites, (v) Foot hill sites, (vi) Hill top sites and (vii) Valley sites and each is further divided into several loci. From all these a total of 4397 artefacts were collected and studied. Among them 1528 (34.75%) are shaped while 2869 (65.25%) are simple artefacts.

The tool kit is studied in two lithic cultural periods (1) Palaeolithic and (2) Mesolithic. The former is again divided into (A) Lower, (B) Middle and (C) Upper Palaeolithic phases.

In the total collection, 38.71% belong to Lower Palaeolithics, 35.16% are Middle Palaeolithics and 16.03% are that of Upper Palaeolithics while 10.10% are of Mesolithic data, studied as follows:

1. PALAEOLITHIC:

The period comprise all the three phases, they are:

(A) LOWER PALAEOlITHIC:

The Lower Palaeolithic occupations occur in varied topographical settings: in the vicinities of rivers, streamsides, lakesides, and on the low plateaux (plains) having scrub and thorny thicket cover, foot hill zones in (now) degraded woodlands and in valleys.

The Lower Palaeolithic is represented by 18 sites through 1702 (38.7%) specimens. These consist both the shaped (549: 32.26%) and simple (1153: 67.74%) artefacts. The ratio between shaped and simple artefacts is 32.68. The shaped artefacts include—handaxes (51.73%),
choppers (36.79%), cleavers (2.91%) and also scrapers (9.08%). The simple artefacts are -- end flakes (31.83%), side flakes (27.41%), indeterminate flakes (18.65%), split cores (10.67%), flake cores (9.45%) and chips (1.99%).

The chief raw material employed was coarse to medium grained quartzite, which is available in rivers and streams as well as in quartzite outcrops at the foot hills. Most of the specimens show small and shallow flake scars, symmetrical outlines, thin cross-sections and even surfaces, all suggesting use of the cylinder hammer technique. These are occupational as well as factory sites. Among the handaxes, most of the specimens are of ovates (24.3%). Thin butts were probably meant to facilitate the hafting of handaxes as spearheads, pointed tips and with thick pebble butts were probably used for holding while digging roots and tubers. Technologically, the assemblage is advanced than Chirki, but cruder than Gunjana and Tirupati industries, this can be assigned to late phase of Middle Acheulian or early phase of Late Acheulian status.

(B) MIDDLE PALEOLITHIC:

The evidence for the Middle Palaeolithic comes from 18 loci - represented from plainland sites, riverside sites, streamside sites, foot hill sites, lakeside sites and valley site. The industry comprises 1546 (35.16%) artefacts, which include shaped (592: 38.29%) and simple (954: 61.71%) artefacts. The ratio between shaped and simple artefacts is 38: 62. The shaped artefacts comprise miniature handaxes (9.63%), side scrapers (64.02%), points (7.26%), notches (4.56%), and scrapers
bencers (3.21%), side cum end scrapers (2.20%), denticulates (1.86%), round scrapers (1.01%), borer cum end scraper (0.84%), blades (0.68%) and biconcave cum borer (0.17%). The simple artefacts are cores (12.47%), flakes (66.35%) and chips (21.17%). Majority of the specimens are made on medium grained quartzite of brownish colour available in the shape of fluviatile pebbles. The continuation of quartzite as raw material indicates that the present area fall well within the pattern with Cuddapah basin which is different from other parts of Indian sub-continent where silicious material is used. As this industry display morphological similarities to the Mousterian (as can be seen in the point variants) with the persistence of Acheulian traits, this can be regarded as the Mousterian of the Acheulian facies.

(C) UPPER PALAEOLITHIC:

The Upper Palaeolithic occurrences belong to four loci accounting to 705 (16.03%) artefacts. These specimens are collected from lakeside site, riverside site, foot hill site and valley site. The specimens are classified as shaped (240: 34.04%) and simple (460: 65.25%) artefacts and five specimens (0.71%) as "others" category. The shaped artefacts include 10 types: side scrapers (50.83%), knives (16.25%), burins (11.25%), notches (10.42%), denticulates (3.75%), borers (2.50%), bill hooks (2.50%), points (1.67%), crescents (0.42%) and pointed blades (0.42%). The simple artefacts are flakes (37.39%), blades (36.52%), chips (14.13%) and cores (11.96%). The cores include blade cores (52.73%), microblade cores (9.09%) and flake cores (38.18%); and the blades include complete blades (42.26%), broken blades (50.59%) and microblades (7.14%). The "others" category include four bored stones
and one stone hammer. A majority of artefacts from all the sites are made on fine grained quartzite of grey, cream, light green, olive green and brown shades. A few specimens are also made on quartz and black lydianite. Though when compared with the adjoining sites like Renigunta, Tirupati valley in Chittoor district and Gunjana valley in Cuddapah district the present collection is less, its importance lies in its first report of Upper Palaeolithics from Nellore, the coastal district of Andhra area.

2. MESOLITHIC:

The evidence for Mesolithic comes from four loci. These are represented by 444(10.10%) specimens which are collected from lakeside, streamside and riverside sites and also from a hill top site.

The industry is classified as shaped (147: 32.26%) and simple (297: 66.89%) artefacts. The shaped artefacts can be sub-divided into two groups (i) Blade tools (65.99%) and (ii) Flake tools (34.01%). The shaped artefacts include -- blunted back blades (41.50%), side scrapers (23.81%), crescents (8.84%), points (7.48%), denticulates (5.44%), retouched blades (4.76%), truncated blades (3.40%), notches (2.72%), burnins (1.36%) and a knife (0.68%). The Mesolithic tools are predominantly made on quartz of milky, smoky, and dull white shades (74.55%). Fine grained quartzite (13.74%) of brown colour and black lydianite (11.71%) also were employed.

The Mesolithic industry is of non-geometric type like the industry of Tirupati valley and has striking similarity with the quartz
based Mesolithic industries of the southeast coast, which in general are crude when compared to the industries from Adamgarh and other surroundings.

ETHNOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF YANADI:

The ethnographic analogies are made from the tribe Yanadi, who are living in the environs of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic clusters of the study area, and also Venadu, Sriharikota islands, Dugarajupatnam, Thanamala and Ganadibba which are situated in the vicinities of Pulicat lake. A study on the life ways of this hunter-gatherer-fisher folk inhabiting in this area, gives an insight into the prehistoric subsistence and adaptation patterns. Yanadi tribe is the second largest tribe in Andhra Pradesh and nearly 50% of them have been inhabiting in this district alone, whose origin is believed to be the Sriharikota island in this Pulicat lake.

The Yanadis, traditionally live in conical huts in bands of 2-20 huts in some cases as at Thanamala and Ganadibba and at Venadu 50-85 huts some times in rather haphazard settlements of circulars with conical roofs made entirely of plant materials. The huts are crudely built of bamboos and palmyrah leaves, covered by grass or millet stalks, with a small entrance, through which grown up people have to creep. Each hut in a settlement has a boundary made of hedges. In some settlements, for all huts of a common exogamous unit, a common boundary made of canes or split bomboos is built.
The original language (dialect) of Yanadi is unknown, which they often use to express confidential matters not to be made known to others.

Yanadi in the study area show a four-fold subsistence pattern such as (1) Gathering, (2) Hunting, (3) Fishing and (4) Fowling.

In terms of number, approximately 35% of the household equipment consists of food gathering tools. They have expert knowledge of their ecology, gather at least 55 type species of edible fruits, seeds, nuts, flowers, endosperm; 15 species of bulbs, tubers, roots; 31 species of leafy greens; 11 species of vegetables other than leaves; and 10 plants used as pickles and preservatives. Boiled seeds and leaves of six plant species are used as pot herb at the times of scarcity.

The household equipment of Yanadi constitute approximately 20% of hunting equipment. It includes rat catching, small game and big game. They hunt different species of game with snares, nets and other methods.

25% of equipment constitutes that of fishing equipment, there are about 11 fishing aids used in eight methods for catching about 38 species of fish.

Yanadi are vehement in their claim that besides gathering, hunting and fishing, trapping and selling of the wild fowl apart from using insects as food has been their traditional livelihood from the times unknown.
The Yanadi produce fire by means of rapid friction between (i) a piece of wood against another wood (Nakkeru) and (i) plant species and that of two stone using as blocks for the same purpose. As it is inevitable to go into dense and thorny forests, Yanadi use skillfully trimmed pieces of local wood as footwear using creepers as knitters.

It is interesting to note that from nearby villages and towns, some quacks are found to visit Yanadi to know about various local names of flora and their uses as food and medicine, Yanadi can identify atleast 145 plant species used for medicine. This intimate and wide knowledge and extensive exploitation of wild plants and animals as food and medicine on the part of Yanadi show that it must have been a long tradition, suggesting to postulate, the Yanadi as the bio-cultural descendants of Stone Age hunter-gatherers deep rooted to atleast to Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic times of the study area.

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