CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest state in India. It occupies 8.37 per cent of the geographical area and 7.82 per cent of the population of the country.

Formation of the State:

The composite state of Andhra Pradesh came into existence on November 1, 1956 in accordance with the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission. The first Andhra State was formed with all Telugu speaking districts of the Madras State. Kurnool became the Capital of the new state.

The Andhra Pradesh state was enlarged by the addition of 9 districts formerly in the Nizam's Dominions. Hyderabad, the former Capital of Nizam's was made the capital of the enlarged Andhra Pradesh State. The new state has 20 districts. Three districts were subsequently created, Prakasam, Ranga Reddy and Vijayanagaram taking the total to 23 districts.

Andhra Pradesh thus consists of three distinct regions (1) Coastal region, consists of nine districts generally called Circars - namely Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, Krishna,
Gutur, Prakasam and Nellore. (2) The interior region consisting of four districts collectively known as Rayalaseema - namely Kurnool, Cuddapah, Anantapur and Chittoor and (3) Telangana region comprising ten districts namely Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy, Nalgonda, Mahaboobnagar, Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar, Medak, Nizamabad and Adilabad.

Objectives of the Present Study:

Plants play a significant role in the routine life of human beings. Forests are the most important resources of plants. Plants and their products are inevitable for man. Plants are the "Primary producers" and oxygen suppliers for respiration. Plants maintain the ecological balance and provide us food, fuel, clothing, shelter, medicines, enjoyable landscapes and aesthetic and recreational needs. Hence plants have many diverse uses which show direct or indirect impact on the human civilization.

Many important and interesting plants which are endemic, rare and threatened are disappearing due to industrialisation, urbanisation and human interference. This has left permanent scars on the natural habitat of plants. Although the forest cover in Andhra Pradesh is 23 per cent of land area according to Forest official...
records but satellite pictures have shown that the tree cover is only 9 per cent. This data indicates how fast the plant cover is dwindling. Hence under these circumstances it is necessary that an exhaustive inventory of plant wealth of Andhra Pradesh along with other regions is at hand to be preserved for future use.

Since the publication of the Flora of the Presidency of Madras by J.S. Gamble and C.E.C. Fischer (1915-1935), no attempt has been made to revise the Flora of Andhra Pradesh in recent times. Though Gamble and Fischer wrote the "Flora of the Presidency of Madras" about 70 years ago while the present Andhra Pradesh was a part in composite Madras Presidency, it is the only source of reference even today. At present, geographical boundaries of the State have been changed and also several changes have been made in the nomenclature of the taxa.

Under the circumstances stated above, there is an urgent need for the flora of Andhra Pradesh which would help in proper reassessment of the plant wealth as well as in various developmental programmes.

The present investigation is based on the critical study of the author's own collections which have been collected from the different regions of Andhra Pradesh and also from herbarium specimens deposited in
The main objectives of the present investigation are:

1. To expose the occurrence of species belonging to the families Campanulaceae, Sphenocleaceae, Plumbaginaceae, Primulaceae, Myrsinaceae, Sapotaceae and Ebenaceae in Andhra Pradesh.

2. To collect and identify the specimens, to know the recent nomenclature, phenological data of individual taxa reported from Andhra Pradesh till today.

3. To formulate diagnostic keys and work out detailed descriptions along with illustrations and photographs of some of them.

4. To append notes on distribution and ecology of the plants reported from Andhra Pradesh.

5. To contribute the data on the families Campanulaceae, Sphenocleaceae, Primulaceae, Plumbaginaceae, Myrsinaceae, Sapotaceae and Ebenaceae of flora of Andhra Pradesh.