In view of long gap between my field work and presentation of this thesis, it became necessary for me to visit the village again to renew and update the contacts. Accordingly I spent a week in the village during March 1985 and observed the following changes and developments in Shāmalāpura. I noticed that initial symptoms of major changes had become visible during the last panchayat election of 1979-80. At the same time, two prominent Reddy traditional leaders and one Muslim, who was an ally of Reddies, had died. The occurrence was a real blow to the Reddy power structure and provided an opportunity to their traditional rivals, the Lingayats and Kurubas. The Kurubas, who were until now in a dormant stage, came out openly and claimed more representation and power in the panchayat. This happened because of their increased financial power and subsequent political awareness. Added to this was their numerical strength. In this election, all the four Kuruba candidates won from their respective wards and also unopposed. A majority of the Lingayats were also elected unopposed. Contrary to this and quite interestingly, the seat on which the sitting Chairman was contesting became the real issue. There were three
opponents in the constituency - two Lingayats and one Kuruba. The election became a prestige issue for Reddies and so they diverted all their resources to this constituency to win the seat. In view of the changed situation, the Reddies came down and even asked for a compromise. As a result, the sitting Vice-Chairman, a Reddy traditional leader, was made to withdraw himself from the candidature and make way for a Lingayat. In their bargain to get the chairmanship of the panchayat for themselves, the Reddies had to forgo a major share of their representation in the panchayat membership. This in other ways, proved helpful to his opponents. Chart 6 shows the caste-wise positions of different castes holding the seats in the panchayat since the beginning of the century.

The second blow to the Reddies came during the 1932 State Assembly elections. The Janata Party, the major opposition to the ruling party, the Congress (I), contested all the assembly seats. In Shamalapura, as per the tradition, the Lingayats and a faction of Kurubas, extended their whole hearted support to the Janata. The Reddies, along with their following, supported the ruling party in the State, the Congress (I). This they did because of their alliance with Reddy leaders
CASTE POSITIONS DURING DIFFERENT PANCHAYATS,

CHART 6
at the taluka and State level. Much unexpectedly, the ruling party lost the majority in the Assembly and the Janata Party came to power in the State and the Congress (I) became the opposition party. This change gave a new lease to the political life of the Lingayats and they started mobilizing their group.

The Janata Government, with new enthusiasm, started many programmes and schemes for the upliftment of the rural population and especially the rural poor. Some of the programmes undertaken during the period are the Janata Housing scheme, Village Health and Nutrition, Pension for the old and widows, financial help to poor expectant mothers and so on. Naturally the Lingayats and Kurubas have taken an active interest in implementing them as most of the beneficiaries are non-Reddies. Under the Janata Housing Scheme, free sites and financial support for house construction are provided to forty families. And another twenty are to get them soon. Thirteen old persons, six widows and twelve expectant mothers got financial benefits. The list shows that a majority of the beneficiaries are Harijans, Kurubas and Lingayats.
Under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the main objective of which is to bring the poor families above the poverty line through providing employment generating and productive assets, until now five hundred families have been identified as target group and, of these two hundred and fifty-four have been already provided with the inputs. Among these, the majority of the beneficiaries are other than Reddy castes like Harijan, Muslim, Kuruba and Lingayat.

The Janata Government with its foresight and looking at the weaknesses and deficiencies in the panchayats and to streamline the administration in a democratic way, are making efforts to introduce a new system of local level administration based on the Mandal Committee Report. And to this effect, all the village panchayats including that of Shēmalāpur, were superseded on 25-8-1983. This action of the Government has further reduced the Reddy dominance in the village to a great extent.

Under the new proposed system, a group of villages with a population of about ten thousand will have a panchayat, and each thousand population will be
represented by a member irrespective of the village. The Chairman will be elected from among the members and monthly meetings are to be held in each constituent village on a rotation basis. The major objective of this system is to provide more independence, powers and autonomy to the panchayats keeping the bigger area as a unit for the developmental purposes. These, known as Mandal Panchayats, will be made responsible for the area's revenue, developmental and judicial processes for which the required staff and finances will be kept at their disposal. Through this type of innovative schemes, the Government intends completely to do away with the traditional power structure in the rural areas based on caste, economic and other aspects.

Another factor which is creating a profound impact on the community is Irrigation. Under one of its Irrigation Schemes, the Government has fulfilled the long felt need of the area through providing a canal from Malaprabha Irrigation Scheme. The water has reached the Shamalapura and neighbouring villages two years ago. The village land being suitable for growing cotton and wheat, almost all farmers, irrespective of their holdings, are going for these two crops. Until now they have harvested three crops with encouraging
results. By this canal more than four thousand acres of the village land have been covered and the lands are in different levels of development.

Owing to the introduction of irrigation facility, the employment opportunities to the landless have also increased many fold and quite a number of families are reaching the village during the harvests as migrant labourers from neighbouring districts. As an indication of the coming prosperity to the region, a few families from West Godavari and Krishna districts from Andhra Pradesh, which has great pressure on agricultural land, have moved into the village as share croppers and labour contractors. Like this irrigation has definitely provided an impetus for drastic changes in the village.

The intensive agriculture and commercial crops are likely to open new vistas for small industries, business and allied activities in the village. Compared to the eleven tractors, there are now more than forty and many more are expected soon. More than twenty motor cycles/scooters have come into the village. This factor will act for opening of repair shops,
garages and technicians soon. An entrepreneur has already established an oil extracting unit, the Government has opened an office for procurement and storage of cotton, and the Karnataka Co-operative Credit Bank (K.C.C.) has opened a branch in the village in 1983.

All these indicate the rapid development and change in political and economic structure of the village. This economic development is not likely to create the major changes in the social system. The society still being an agrarian one and the situation requiring more intensive farming is likely to strengthen the traditional farming economy. The big land holders will be forced to concentrate more on their farming activity and leaving little time for other activities, especially for politics. In this newly created agrarian situation, and the declining, dominance of Reddies in the power structure, how both communities, the Reddies and Lingayats, will utilize the situation in their political pursuit will be of much importance.