CHAPTER - II
During the medieval period the peninsular India was connected with outside world by hydraulic routes. The torsion routes were confined to intra-sub-continenal transactions, covered by waters on three sides. Seas alone formed the basis of foreign contacts till a time when aerial modes of travel were invented. We only hear of sea routes in southern regions of the sub-continent and the other road networks in northern parts of the India. We have references to overseas trade as well as overseas exploits in the south dating back to earlier times. In the absence of land routes, it was but natural that there was exclusive emphasis on watery ways in this part of the sub-continent.\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1} The trading activity in the Coastal Andhra has been going on from very early times. The maritime activities of Pallavas and the Cholas where the continuation of the Satavahana interests in overseas trade. This trade dates back to early years of Christian era as has been established both from literary and archeological findings from southern India and southeastern Asia. The sea seems to have offered lot of opportunities to coastal people for trade and other allied activities. The Chinese records identify Kanchi as an important centre, from 2nd century BC. Among the other areas the Coromandel Coast which does include Andhra coast is identified as an important entrepot of trade- Burten Stein - \textit{South India some general considerations of the region and its real history} (ed) in Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib: \textit{The Cambridge Economic History of India}, 2 Vote., Delhi, 1982, Vol-1, pp. 17-19. also see, S. Arasaratnam: \textit{Merchants of...
It is not out of context here to state that sea routes alone laid the true roads to power for foreign adventures.\(^2\)

The Andhra coast from Nizampatnam to Nellore too was a part of greater Coromandel coast during this period, and of all the foreign trading companies, the British East India Company successfully fished in troubled waters and scored the success for their supremacy over other foreign companies in the region. The unequal distribution of water available is best illustrated by pointing out that while almost the entire western coastal strip may be classified as wet', or abundantly supplied with water, six months a year, only two substantial regions on the east coast, the Kavari and the Krishna-Godavari deltas can boast of the same level of water availability.

\(^2\) The Portugese entered into Coastal Andhra in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries basing their trading stations on loose networks on the edges of the coast, these bases developed into larger fortifications and warehouses with small contingents of Portuguese and larger class of native middlemen interpreters and officials. After initially colluding with Arab Naval forces the Portuguese controlled the area. They were later joined by various other European powers among whom the English termed to be more successful in building the colonial methods. Because they could control the sea routes. Urs bitterli: *Cultures in Conflict*, London - 1989, pp. 52-57 and also pp. 155-161.
Water was the main source of transport for trade during our study period and ports had the main role in the commercial transactions.  

History unveils that the ports in colonial Asia have often been referred to as 'enclaves 'out posts' and 'grafts' on the assumption that their form and functions were divorced from the systems in which they emerged. In case of Andhra, it enjoyed special privileges from times immemorial that accrued to a country with a long and hospitable coastline. When ships were the only means of bulk transport, Andhra ports were centres of brisk trade. According the accounts of Abdur Razak, a foreign traveller of medieval period, the kingdom of


4 Indu Banga, Ports and their hinterlands in India, New Delhi, 1992, p. 63

5 This entire coastline was always a busy trade zone it was littered with a number of ports situated within small distances from each other. Many of these ports served as outlets for innumerable products of the hinterland to the outside world. There is an ample information on topography and the evaluation of these ports such as Nizampatnam, Bimlipatnam, Sadraspatnam and so on. S. Arasaratnam: Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1750, Delhi. 1986, pp.23-33. also see Thomas Bowry, A geographical account of Countries round the Bay of Bengal 1669-1697 (ed) in Richard Temple London 1905, p. 103. Coastal Andhra area is watered by a number of rivers like Godavari, Krishna and Pennar etc. These river valleys produce rice sugarcane, tobacco, groundnut pulses, cashewnuts and millets etc. Much of this area covered by red soils which are highly fertile. MR. Chaudhuri, Economic Geography of India Delhi, 1976, p. 14.
Vijayanagar had, at one time, about 300 ports. Historically, ports of Andhra under Satavahanas bubbled with trading activities from 270 B.C.\(^6\) The coins of Satavahana period, with motifs of ships embossed on them certainly indicate the amount and influence of trade on economy of the state. In coastal districts of Andhra, Roman coins of the period between 14 B.C. to 217 A.D. have been discovered.\(^7\) The prospects of trade in this region attracted almost all the European trading companies which established their collection points by textiles in the ports in the Krishna and Godavari delta.\(^8\) As a result of the growing export market, ports in the region were considerably

\(^6\) J. Mangamma, *Early Andhra Ports and Activity around them*, *APHC*, 1985, pp. 106-109

\(^7\) Ibid

\(^8\) In the middle of the seventeenth century the Dutch, the English and the Dutch developed their settlements in this region. They also established their administrative units. To quote Arasaratnam "Each of the companies had an established capital on the coast which was its seat of authority and command for activities along the whole coast and even beyond. The Dutch, the most deeply entrenched among them had founded a fortified castle in Pulicat in 1612, which was the residence of their government and the controlling post over their Coromandel activities. J.J. Brennig: "Chief Merchants and European enclaves of seventeenth century Coromandel", in *Modern Asian Studies*, 2-3, 1977, pp. 321-346, also see S.P. Sen, *French in India first established and struggle*, Calcutta - 1947, pp. 245, to 320. For details see G.B Mallison. *History of French in India*, Delhi, 1984, pp. 19-82.
The port city of Masulipatnam expanded and the port of Masulipatnam developed into an important port city. Traveller Marco Polo visited the Port of Motupalli and paid rich tributes to the muslins of the place. The "Arthasastra" of

Masulipatnam or Machilipatnam was known as Masalia to Hippolus, the Greeco-Egyptian merchant who wrote periplus of the Erithrian sea (C 60 AD) and also Marbola to the Greek Astronomer Ptolemy (C 90-168 AD), the author of Tabula Pentingenana. Marco polo (1254-1324) the Venitian traveller also knew Machilipatnam as a centre of the production of the some delicate and expensive textiles called bukrams. This port town was also known as Bandar-I-Mubarak in the Indo-Persian chronicles of late Qutb Shahi period. The town was known for the manufactured large quantities of muslins during the first century after Christ. With the rise of the Qutb Shahi dynasty under Quli Qutb Shah in the second decade of the sixteenth century and especially from the time the Krishna-Godavari delta as far Ellur (Eluru) and Rajamundry was brought under Qutb-ul-mulk, the port of Machilipatnam began to develop as the chief maritime outlet of the kingdom of Golkonda. It was famous for very fine clothes of diverse colours and artistic works. The Portuguese used to buy them in the sixteenth century though they did not have a permanent factory at Machilipatnam. Haygen Van Linschoten: The Voyage of Johan Hugan Van Linschoten to the East Indies Vol.1, London, 1874, p. 91. also see R.C. Majumdar The Classical accounts of India, Calcutta, 1981, p. 367. and also M.K. Fereshta. Tarikh-I-Fereshta (Pusian), (John Briggs trans), History of the rise of the Mohammaden Power in India, Vol III, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 218-219. H.K Sherwani, P.M. Joshi (ed), History of Medieval Deccan, 1925-1724, Vol. I, Hyderabad 1973, p. 25. Also see "S..M. Alam, Manchilipatnam, A Metropolitan port in seventeenth century," Islamic Culture, XXXII-3, 1959, pp. 174-178.

It was one of the ancient ports which had commercial relations before Christ. Pliny and Ptolemy mentioned about the Motupalli in their writings. Merchants from Rome and Alexandria came to this port for trade for textiles, muslins, diamonds and spices ships from Japan, China, Borneo, Sumatra, Ceylon and Arabia used to come here. After the Satavahanas in the time of Kakatiya Ganapathideva (1198-1261) again it became prominent port of the Andhra coast. He developed the trade by inviting merchants from other places and by giving exemptions on taxes. He took personnel interest to develop this port. After this, it was under the control of Reddy Kings for some time. There are inscriptions saying that this port controlled by Vijayanagara Kings, but it was not the important port at that time. By the seventeenth century, it seems to have lost its importance. M.V. Rangaiah
Kautilaya refers to the administration of sea trade. The work draws attention to a particular state official viz superintendent of commerce and ships who used to examine the accounts relating to navigation on seas, rivers and lakes. Vessels carrying merchandise spoiled by water could, sometimes, be fully exempted from customs. Foreign merchants were allowed in the port towns to conduct their trading activities. There are inscriptions erected at the ports and the travellers often referred to them. The early factory records and references in literature give us an idea on the port activities of the contemporary period. The help us in reconstructing trade patterns. The coastal trade in those days was mainly in food grains, firewood and such other bulk commodities from the coastal districts. When ships with merchandise traversed high


seas and reached the other ports the goods could be sold there even in part and carried to the next port where they could fetch a better price. After collecting a ship load at cheaper rates, the merchants hired ships and carried goods from port to port, selling and buying to advantage at every place.\(^\text{13}\)

Amongst the early Europeans, the Portuguese carved out a special area of trade in the east. The Andhra coast soon became the pioneer of sea trade and served as a magazine for merchants from the East during the 15th century.\(^\text{14}\) Some of the European travellers like Thevenot and Tavernier from France, John Fryer and Hallon from England, Irishman Jon Oaifson or Marco Polo from Venice.

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\(^{13}\) In the absence of detailed evidence on merchants accounts it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the precise volume of business but it is certainly true that from the beginning of the seventeenth century till the later half of the eighteenth century a large number of coastal Andhra merchants in the surroundings of Nizampatnam and Nellore moved into business with European companies right across the coast. By the end of the period there were merchant families which had served the main companies at different ports for generations. S Arasaratnam, *Merchants* \(\text{op}\.\text{cit}\), pp.49-51 also see, K.N. Chaudhuri, "The structure of Indian industry in the 17th and 18th centuries", *Economic Social History Review* (now *IESHR*). II, 2-3. 1974. pp. 127-182. S Arasaratnam Aspects of role and activities of South Indian *merchants*, C 1650-1750 (in) *Proceedings of First International Conference of Tamil Studies*, Kaulalampur 1968, Vol. I. pp. 582-596.
described the ports of India, and these descriptions encouraged other travellers to come here.\textsuperscript{15} The Aravidu dynasty of the Vijayanagar empire witnessed the Dutch and the English competing for a trade booking in south India. The political set up of the early seventeenth century presented a disintegrated condition with a number of petty kingdoms. Since there was no imperial authority in the peninsular India like that of the Mughals, it became favourable situation for the European traders to establish their trading settlements on the Coromandel Coast. Unlike the Western Coast (Viz. the seventeenth century coastal Gujarat, where the English faced many problems to get a place for their settlements).\textsuperscript{16} The rulers in the eastern coast

\textsuperscript{14} W.H. Moreland. \textit{From Akbar to Aurangzeb}, Delhi, 1972, p 6


\textsuperscript{16} In the first half of the seventeenth Century the main difficulty in the English was the lack of \textit{capital} But soon after the expulsion of Portuguese from Hormuz. The
invited the foreign traders to establish their factories and also give them permission with sites to construct their own factories and fortresses. The British East India Company was formed in 1600 and the Dutch East India Company in 1602. The Europeans established their factories at the ports. But these factories do not convey any meaning in modern sense of the term. These factories were trade centres where the Europeans unloaded goods from their own countries, and where the Indian goods were collected, processed and shipped off. The middlemen who came into contact with the factors, funned out into the hinter-land and their prime concern was to collect cloth, fine fabrics, prints and other related articles. They followed an unwritten law which forced the weavers into contracts to supply cloth

English utilized their position in Surat and Bandar Abbas to encourage their trade. S Arasaratnam, Maritime India in the seventeenth century, Delhi, 1994, pp. 77-79.


on receipt of small advances. In these transactions, one main difference between the Portuguese and the other European traders was that, while the European merchants brought woolens, iron, lead, copper and glassware for selling in the east, the Portuguese could not bring anything except money.\textsuperscript{20}

The oceans and seas with all the inherent dangers, were always attractive to traders and provided a constant attraction with the lure of rich dividends to compensate for the enterprise, adventure and insecurity.

Seventeenth century marked not only the emergence of Nizampatnam and Nellore but whole of coastal Andhra as an important centre of trade and commerce as it was the cradle of the

\textsuperscript{20} The Portuguese presence was not so strong as to take over and control an age old trade to south east Asia carried on by Hindus and Muslim merchants from the neighbouring ports. Besides the establishment of companies like the English, the Dutch, the Danish and French together with residual trade of Portuguese ushered in such a period of completion in which Portuguese could not established themselves very stifly. The Portuguese domination on the Andhra Coast in Coromandel region and not register much progress in the bringing of seventeenth century. S. Arasaratnam: \textit{Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast}, pp. 115 to 118.
Indo-European maritime trade which contributed mightily to the prosperity of India itself.\textsuperscript{21}

Andhra coast particularly from Nizampatnam to Nellore formed one of the most important region of the Coromandel coast. It remained a most sought after place by the foreign companies.\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{22} The word Coromandel' is generally applied to denote the Eastern Coast of India encompassing a wide geographical region. In the contemporary period it formed the core region in the Indian trade with outside world. Coromandel coast lies approximately between cape Calimere (10o 17N., long. 78o 56'E.) and the mouth of the Krishna river. According to European factory records, the East coast was generally referred to as Coromandel coast. The word was spelt as choramandel in the records of fort St. George. It was also called Chola Mandalam or Choramundal as it formed one of the important regions of Chola empire in the ancient period. The original meaning of the word Chola (Tamil) or Shozham is southern. Cholamundalam or the geographical jurisdiction over which cholas held their sway was held by the foreigners to be the origin of term Coromandel, and the term was applied to refer to the peninsular shore of Bay of Bengal. The literary meaning of Tamil, however, merely signifies a tract of land. The name was applied by the Portuguese to refer to the Eastern Tamil and Southern Telugu districts. It had not well defined limits Rather, it appears that it was more like an imaginary term the scope of which differed from one to another. It was often held to comprise areas even as far north as to the Krishna river or even to Orissa. Tradition has it that one of the early explorers who landed on the coast enquired for the name of the place-ignorant of the language, he did so by pointing to a handful of black soil which, for him, was symbolic of the local village or its name. But the people mistook his ignorance of the language and told him the literal name of the black sand as Kori manal (Tamil) The explorer considered it to be the name of the region. According to historical traditions, the chola
The Coromandel coast extended from Nellore to Pudukottai, where it met the Pandyan territory. On the west, it reached the borders of Coorg. These limits as defined thus, include Madras with its adjoining districts and a large part of the Mysore state. It was the wide expanse of India's eastern coast from Point Calimere to the mouth of Krishna and sometimes to the port of Ganjam. The geographical limit to the Coromandel coast in the northern most point was Ganjam.

In the maritime history of the sub-continent, India had a domineering influence on the Indian ocean. Vessels from India travelled far and wide, and carried cargo loads to Persia, Arabia, East Africa, Egypt Greece and Rome in the west. The Chief trade of India empire occupied Coromandel coast. The empire was considered as the only Indian state that had a proper appreciation of sea power.


has always been with countries lying to the west. In the East, the country carried its trade transactions with Siam, Malaya and China. Indigenous Kingdoms like Satavahanas and cholas had a brilliant track record in overseas trade. She had trading colonies established in countries like Pegu and Cambodia. It established trading settlements in regions like China, Malaya and Arabia. She struck cordial and beneficial trade relations with farther regions including those under the Roman empire. Even from the early centuries of Christian era, how of bullion (gold and silver) into Indian market is an already established fact. Aspects of trade were caricatured in Indian art, coins, paintings and sculpture. For over three thousand years, India stood as the nucleus of the commercial. The east and the west, thus, became real platform for Indian commercial activity and provided much needed scope for her naval enterprise. The chief trade of India had always been with countries lying to the west. The inhabitants of the Coromandel coast seem to have been distinguished by their maritime enterprise from their countrymen on the west from very early

times. Muhammadan historian start referring to trade activities in their works. Ships were built on the banks of navigable rivers or on the seaboard. After the Qutb Shahis, the naval wing of armed forces under Aurangazeb was actively involved in ship-building enterprise. Akbar remained attached to a free trade policy and during his reign the duties on exports and imports never exceeded 2.5%. The imperial fleet of Jahangir consisted of about three hundred ships. During the reign of Aurangazeb, there was a conspicuous development of shipbuilding activity and trade transactions on the Coromandel coast.

With the coming of Europeans, the mainland of India gradually took a larger share in the international trade. During the 17th century, the term Coromandel included the coastline of modern states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu with the appendage of the southern tip of Orissa. The entire coast formed into one major trading

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26 Narasapur with excellent dockyards and ships was built for the Golkonda royal merchant fleet, for native merchants and even for the companies and European free merchants. S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants Companies and Commerce*, p. 14. At Narasapurpet, a large ship building yards where muslims, gentoos and the Portuguese built their ships - M. V. Rangaiah, *Sangraha Andhra Vignana Kosamu*, 21
region with common patterns of trade and common characteristics of seafaring. The western shores of the Bay of Bengal were generally inhospitable as there were no natural heavens on the coast.\textsuperscript{27} Though Kakinada had a natural harbour, it was not a major port to have trade outlet in the seventeenth century. Most of the ports on the Coromandel coast were fully exposed to the force of elements of ocean or they were sheltered behind mouths of rivers. The coastline, on the other, was interspersed with rivers and they were generally shallow.\textsuperscript{28} A number of these rivers were perennial but dried up in the dry months. During the monsoonal season, huge quantities of soil were deposited at the estuaries. As a result these accumulations of soil consequent upon torrential rains, large rivers like Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri were blocked. Such, vessels over 300 tons burden could not find their way into these rivers. Under these conditions, a number of


\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{28} With the collapse of Corangi Port, Ships of the \textit{Dutch}, the English and the French started coming to Kakinada port. In 1628 the Dutch established their factory and started their business. Labours from Andhra were going to Burma through this port. The Dutch controlled this port till 1825. M.V. Rangaiah: \textit{(Telugu), Sangraha Andhra Vignana Kosamu - Vol} II, Hyderabad, \textbf{1962}, p 626.
flat bottomed boats suitable for withstanding the surf were used for loading and unloading of goods.\textsuperscript{29} The silting of rivers and the shifting of sands led to the decline of some ports and the rise of other port towns. When compared to the Coromandel, the ports of North Coromandel or Andhra were considered to be a secure heaven for the anchorage of ships. Despite many problems, there was a discernible growth of trade all along the coast of Bay of Bengal spreading over one thousand and six hundred kilometers. This long coast-line had many ports within a short distance of each other, and thus serving the immediate hinterland regions.\textsuperscript{30} No single port was developed into an entrepot.

Contemporary chronicles and accounts of foreign companies as well as travellers show that there was a regime of equality among the

\textsuperscript{29} C.R. Boxer, \textit{op.cit.} p. 189.

\textsuperscript{30} If you think of an entrepot as a lotus of trade in widen networks of by distance on the Andhra coast we are well informed from the evidence available about several entreports between fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that a tenanory of entrepot was not easily constructed because entrepots were of many kinds. It is important to note here that the location of entreports was also determined by geography for the prosperity of entrepot the rulers and the visiting merchants at corporate.
Coromandel ports. Many ports were open roadsteads where ships were anchored close to the shore. The process of loading and unloading was conducted by flat bottomed boats, locally called massoolas. These boats were also known by the name, patellas. The method in question was followed by most of the Europeans whose vessels were of larger burden. A number of ports were located at the wide tidal mouths of rivers and the boats would sail through the narrow channel into the river for loading and unloading. The ports which could admit ocean going vessels through the river mouth were highly favoured. The average load was in the range of 200 tons.

**Ports:**

**Ganjam:**

The northern most port of Coromandel with some significance in coastal and oceanic trade during our period is Ganjam. Ganjam (the flag-staff) was situated at lat. 19°23’N, long. 85°3’E, at the mouth of river

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31 S. Arasaratnam, *Coromandel Revisited*, op.cit p. 102.
Rishikulya. It was a typical port at the mouth of the river characterized by shifting sand banks and narrow through. It was of considerable size allowing navigational activities for some distance inland. The solid strength behind the port was the fertile Rishikulya valley. It was to this port rice was transferred from the valley as well as the regions of proximity to Orissa, and the cargo thus brought here was exorted. The port was also proximate to textile producing centres. Though there was strong evidence to port’s prominent place in the overseas trade, it appears to have been a feeder port to some of the neighboring export centres of Golkonda.

32. It was one of the important commercial centres from ancient times. The control of this area changes from dynasty to dynasty, at last, Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah occupied this port in 1571. The English and the French had their commercial relations with this port. M.V. Rangaiah. Sangraha Andhra Vignana Kosamu (Telugu), Vol-III, p 523.

33. It was navigable for local vessels to send rice other items to the neighbouring Orissa, Madras and other areas. The fanciful etymological meaning of the word Ganjam is the store house of the world. Imperial Gazetteer of India. Vol. XII, p. 142.

34. Because of its proximity to the weaving villages it became a feeder port to some of the export centres of Golkonda, Despatches - 31st January -1695, p. 41.
It was a regular place for the call of steamers and protected by a sandy point and rocks which extended reward on the south. It was backed by a rich hinterland which produced rice and textiles. The town of Srikakulam is situated about fourteen miles south of Kalingapatnam on the banks of Langulya river. Its port of outlet was mafuz Bandar at the mouth of the river. It was the capital of a district during the Qutb Shahi period and later under the Mughals. There were a number of weaving villages in the vicinity of Srikakulam, rich in the production of textiles. Due to the choking of the river mouth, the port soon leased to function. The fact was attested by the supply of textiles from Srikakulam by land northwards to Kalingapatnam or southwards to Bimilipatnam. The muslims from Srikakulam bound their way to England, France and Persia.

35 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Political economy of commerce*, op cit, p 48


37 Ibid pp. 416-419.

38 It had commercial relations with foreign countries and was included in the Kalingapatnam area. It was one of the district head quarters of the Qutb Shahis. M.V. Rangaiah, *Sangraha Andhra Vignana Kosam*, (Telugu), p. 523-524.
Bimilipatnam

Bimilipatnam was also a significant port during the course of 17th century, situated on lat. 17° 54'N and long. 83° 27'E on the coast, it was an important trading port more important than the port of Visakhapatnam. The coastline between Kalingapatnam and Bimilipatnam is brought with dangers and, generally inhospitable. The Dutch established their settlement at Bimulpitnam in the seventeenth century and, built a fort and factory. The fort was involved in the purchase of local cloth and exported the same to overseas market in Batavia. Though an open roadstead, the port was well protected by Uppada and sugar leaf headlands, and provided safe anchorage

39 It was the Visakhapatnam district and a good port town first for the Dutch and later to the English. A large number of ships sailed for other areas like south coromondel Bengal and south east Asia. The Chief exports were gengili, oil, hides and skins, jute and indigo, the imports were cotton and piece goods. But its coastline was dangerous and inhospitable. CD. Meclean, Manual of the administration of the Madras Presidency Vol II, p. 167

40 Though it was a commercial centre for a long time., it became prominent, when Dutch established their factory and port in 1628. The Dutch controlled this area from 1628 to 1754. In 1781 English occupied this port But after 1754, it had lost its prominent because of the rivalry between the Dutch and the English Acharya Mamidipudi Venkataiah: Sangraha Andhra Vignana kosamu, (Telugu). Vol. III, Hyderabad, 1970, pp.15-16.
facilities in all seasons. It was a resort of a large indigenous shipping fleet and, large ships that sailed to south-east Asia. It was a principal rice exporting port to Ceylon and Malabar coast. Daniel Havart, described Bimilipatnam as a ‘rice bowl’ for Ceylon and other ports.\(^{41}\) The Dutch ships, on the onward transport to Malacca and Batavia, anchored here to procure rice, meat and other foodstuffs for the journey. Textiles were also exported from this port. In addition the other chief exports from the port were gingili, oil, hydes, skins, jute, indigo and myrabolams, and cotton and piece-goods formed major items of import. according to the Dutch records villages surrounding Bimilipatnam were burnt down during the second decade of eighteenth century forcing the local merchants to migrate.\(^{42}\)

**Visakhapatnam**

The natural port of Visakhapatnam is situated in lat. 17\(^o\)42’N, and long. 83\(^o\)17’E. The coast was little convex in shape with middling


highland near the sea. It provided a bold and safe access to its shore.

Visakhapatnam\(^4^3\) is known by the bluff headland, famously called the Dolphin's Nose, and forms the southwest point of the road. Golkonda ruler, Sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah (1626-1672) gave necessary nod to capt. Thomas Joyce to carry on trade, free from any exactions, to their mutual benefit. This act helped British in establishing commercial relations with the local mercantile community and established a factory in 1682 A.D. It was a place abundant in all sorts of goods that could be procured for nominal rates. The English obtained a caul in 1682 A.D., and upon this they were freely allowed to settle and trade in

\(^4^3\) Once insignificant port, became big port city in modern times. We had the past history since satavahana times. Kakatiyas, Vijayanagara kings and Gajapatis controlled this area for a long time. In 1538, it came under the control of Qutb Shahis. The three major companies the Dutch, the English and the French had their commercial relations with this port. M.V. Rangaiah, Sangraha Andhra Vignana Kosamu (Telugu), Vol. III, pp. 261-262.

\(^4^4\) The British were not to be driven to the wall by the Dutch.S they had been able to get what is called the \textit{Golden Farman} from Abdula Qutb Shah in 1636 which was in some way similar to the concessions granted to the Dutch. Under \textit{Golden Farman} the English were to carry on trade within the Qutb Shahi dominions, duty free on payment of a lumpsum of 800 pagodas which was a sum equivalent to the amount allowed as compensation to the farmers of the tolls at Masulipatnam in case the duties chargeable to the English exceeded the amount they were to pay. H.K. Sherwani, \textit{The reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah}, (1626-1672), Economic aspects-1, Journal of Indian History, Vol XLII, 1964, pp. 463-464. Also see, J.N.Sarkar. \textit{The life of Mir jumla}, p. 51. W.H. Morlenad,
goods like coffee, tin, pepper, oil and others, they were exempted from the payment of an duties or customs. Another caul obtained in 1685 A.D. further exempted the company's goods from customs of the land and permitted to raise a factory. There was a dock yard for repair of ships and the facilities attracted even the European shippers.

Kakinada

The port of Kakinada is one of the most interesting Eastern ports and busiest minor ports on the Coromandel coast. It was the safest

*From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, p. 70. also see William Foster, *The English factories in India - 1634-36*, p. 14

But the Qutb Shahi hold on the customs revenue became more exacting and we find Winter, the English Agent, complaining to oxendon at Surat in a letter dated 2nd April, 1663, that the Governor of Masulipatnam was pressing the English further and was proposing to establish a bankseal or customhouse of his own to collect customs there and then perhaps to hand over half the amount to the company. They had realized that the English making considerable underhand profit and were paying only a small portion of the proceeds to the Royal Officials William Foster. *English Factories in India, 1661-64*, pp 176 180. also See, H.D. Love, *Vestiges of old Madras*, *op.cit*. 343, also see, H.R Sherwani, *The Reign of Abdulla-I*, *op.cit*. p. 465.


harbour in India in those times as it had all the natural advantages. In addition, it was one of the best shipping ports in India. All the raw materials and Lasker seamen were cheaply available in this port. Kakinada, in fact, one of the pivotal ports on the Coringa bay. This bay is south of Visakhapatnam and made up of multiple ports each with a spatial proximity, Coringa, Kakinada, Ingeram, Bendamurlanka, yanam and Jagannathapuram formed important ports of the Coringa bay. We have evidences, drawn from ancient literature, to show that all these ports were put to use over different periods of time. Yanam, Ingeram and Jagannathapuram are on the branches of the Godavari river in its delta area, and they were approachable in small boats and country vessels which brought goods through to the ships anchored in the Bay.

These small ports featured more during the course of eighteenth century. The English merchants shipped their loads from Ingeram, the

48 J.F. Richards, Mughal Administration,. pp. 69-70.

French from Yanam and the Dutch from Jugannathapuram. The Coringa Bay, thus, came to play an important role in contemporary trading activities. Coringa (East Godavari district) was an international emporium of trade in timber, where 2000 to 3000 timber logs were available every year.\textsuperscript{50} Of the ports in the Bay, Kakinada soon rose to prominence both as a trading centre as well as an important urban town in the course of time.\textsuperscript{51} Among the exports from the ports like Jagannathapuram in the Coringa Bay cloth, tobacco, groundnuts, rice, sugar etc. formed the important items of export while chemical fertilizers were the main commodity of import.\textsuperscript{52}


\textsuperscript{51} For a detailed account on the development of Kakinada from a place abounding in "bunches of thorn bushes" of an urban centre see, V.V.L Narasimha Rao, \textit{The History of Coconada,} (Telugu), \textit{Coconada, 1923}

\textsuperscript{52} E.H. Warmington, \textit{Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India,} Cambridge, 1926, p. 175.
Narasapur

Narasapur port and docks are seen to the south of the cluster of ports in the Coringa Bay in the Godavari delta. It is on the west branch of the Godavari river, the Vasistha Godavari and is also known by the name Narasapur river and was famous for iron foundry and saltpetre works. Narasapur and its adjoining place viz. Madhavaipalem (famously called Madapollam in contemporary English records) were important ports in the Godavari delta and known for cotton and timber. It abounds in handsome quantities of timber and is a convention yard for ship-building as well as repair. The place was historically known for more than two centuries for its docks and repair of vessels. The place yielded high quality of timber and commendable technicians who

\[53\] At Narasapur, there is a river where the Muslims and the Portuguese and gentus build their ships because timber iron and other necessary materials were available and the wages were low. Ships of even large tonnage displacements used to be built here as the native merchants of Masulipatnam used ships of 600 tons or even more in their overseas trading operations. The 'advice' a ship of English East India Company damaged in a stormy weather of the coast of the Masulipatnam was sent to Narasapurpet for repair in October, 1641. The proximity of this ship building centre further facilitated the coastal trading operations of the trading nations. S. A. Alam, "Masulipatnam. A Metropolitan Port in the seventeenth century", Islamic Culture, Vol. XXXII1, No.3, 1959, p. 172.
were adept in repairs of the ships. Narasapur produced coarse woven cotton cloth and lesser quantities of painted cloth. The English East India company secured the necessary permission from the Sultan of Golkonda to construct a factory at Madapollam along the side of Godavari river. The English shipped long cloth from Narasapur to Masulipatnam to convert the same into Chintz. Goods meant for final shipping were carried in boats from Madapollam. They were transferred into the anchored ships in the port of Narasapur. Both Narasapur and Madapollam were accredited centres of shipbuilding with excellent dockyards for building, sheathing and caulking ships. The Golkonda royal merchant fleet, indigenous merchants, companies


55 The English East India Company obtained permission from the king of Golkonda to construct a factory at Madhavaipalem near Narasapur by the side of the river Godavari. William Foster, The English Factories in India, 1661-64, p. 391.

56 Narasapur was the ship building centre with excellent dockyard for building, sheathing and caulking ships. Ships were built here for the Golkonda royal merchant fleet, for native merchants and even for the companies and European free merchants. S Arasaratnam, Merchants Companies Commerce, op.cit. pp. 13-14. Also see, Bowrey, Countries round the Bay of Bengal, p 103. Also see, Moreland: India at the death of Akbar, p 289. Also see, H.K. Sherwani, History of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, p 422.
and even the European traders individually got their ships built here. Once a ship of the capacity of 1000 tons was built here for the king of Golkonda. The Europeans used these facilities and built their ships here as the timber, iron and steel were readily available in the Godavari regions. Needless to state that they are the unavoidable necessities in the manufacture of anchors, nails, couplings and other related components of ships. Ropes and cordage were made from coir imported from Ceylon, Malabar and Maldives. Soon, the English as well as the Dutch large number of skilled and unskilled Indian labour. In the Godavari delta, a few villages were highly reputed for their cotton goods. Specially the villages enriching Kakinada and Rajahmundry belonged to this category. The blue palempores and fine shirting cloth from Nellore were, at one time, largely exported to the West Indies. The coastal trade carried between Narasapur and Madapolam, and other places in the sub-continent like Madras, Bengal and Balasore


58 Oven C. Kail: The Dutch in India, New Delhi, 1987, pp.86-87.
resulted in the opulence of these two places.\(^5^9\) They also had a reputation among European circles as health resorts. By early eighteenth century, the decline had set in. Gradually Madapollam was abandoned and Narsapur too followed the suit.\(^6^0\) Their hinterland was exhausted of raw materials required for ship building activity. Moreover, the rise of European-controlled dockyards had a severe bearing on the indigenous ones.\(^6^1\)

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\(^5^9\) European ships carrying European goods and treasure sailing to Narasapur and other ports both from Madras and Bengal sometimes the European Cargoes and treasure used to be sent from Madras and Machilipatnam to Madapollam. Thus the coastal trade of Narasapur and Madapollam carried between Madras, Bengal, and Balasore brought rich economic dividends to these ports Noone John Babu - "Coastal Trade", *op.cit.* pp. 160 162.

\(^6^0\) This industry thrown to such an extent that it was supposed to be a danger to the English shipbuilding industry, and the king Charles II of England had to issue a royal warrant on February 2 1662, to the effect that no natives should be taught how to build and navigate ships by the English East India Company as that would be prejudicial to the English trade. H.K. Sherwani: "Reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah Economic Aspects-II ", *Journal of Indian History*, p. 680. also see, Sen, *The Indian travels of Thevenat and Carreri*, pp XVIII - XXX

Masulipatnam

The port with highest reputation and greatest publicity on the Coromandel coast was Masulipatnam. This was largely because of the rich accounts about the place left behind by a number of foreign adventurers. It is situated on lat. 16°9'N, long. 81°10'E. It was one of the first ports in which the Europeans on the Coromandel operated. Every European company had its firm administrative and office establishments at Masulipatnam. It was natural then that the place was frequently mentioned in the contemporary writers. Masulipatnam was the leading port even before Madras was thought of. Even to this day the reminiscences of early Europeans are still alive in the town. There are regions within the town of Masulipatnam or Machilipatnam (‘Machili’ in Hindustani language means fish) called Frenchpeta and Valandupalem (Holland palem). The English Company at


63 Probably the first European factory, to be established in Masulipatnam was that of the Dutch, which was established on the strength of the Farman issued by
Masulipatnam followed certain formalities in the purchase of goods. Three of the council including the agent or the warehouse keeper were present whenever goods were brought for sale. These goods were compared with the samples already supplied and, after being satisfied with the standards of the commodities, fixed the prices caused them to be entered into factory records. Five percent tonnage of each ship was set apart for private trade - the chief at Masulipatnam could carry up to three tons and all the others of the Council up to two tons. The factors who were not members of the council could carry up to one ton. Ships set on sail from Masulipatnam year after year to the coast of Bengal, Arakan and Pegu. The incoming and outgoing commodities were


The first portion of the name leads to obscure questions which I can not answer and would gladly avoid but some notice of them is necessary, because they are raised by William Moreland himself, in his statement that Masulipatnam was first a poor fisher town from where it took the name it yet retains afterwards the convenience of the road made it a fit residence for merchants. W.H. Moreland: *Relations of Golkonda in the early seventeenth century*. London 1931, p. X-VI.

J. Mangamma., *op.cit.* 107.
equally important. There were three principal reasons behind the success story of the East India Company's trade. The continents of America and Africa opened up for trade and there was a growing demand for Indian goods in those virgin markets. The colourful calico prints of the east coast had a good market in Europe and Africa.\textsuperscript{67} The Indian rulers permitted the trading companies to have their own coinage in trade transactions. Individual traders in the company employ could pocket a certain percentage of their purchases free of duty and freight charges.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{66} Surat was of course the most urbanized of the ports and next to it came Masulipatnam. Both Surat and Masulipatnam had substantial residences which belonged to wealthy merchants and administrative officials. S. Arasaratnam: Maritime India, op.cit. p. 16.

\textsuperscript{67} Thus the main exports of Masulipatnam at the beginning of the 17th century were, Calico and muslin, fancy goods and Zaru, Indigo, diamonds and slaves, the destination being Malacca and beyond, Achin, Pegu, Tenasserim, the Persian gulf and the coast regions. T.I. Poonen. Early History of Dutch factories, op.cit. p. 273.

\textsuperscript{68} In Abdulha's reign there was a whole Pletora of coins. The establishment of European factories on the east coast, better communications and trade with neighbouring kingdoms expansion of the Mughal power which acted as an economic liaison between different parts of India and the diamond trade with it's centre at Golkonda, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Venitain, English, French, Persian, Gujarati, Mughal and Vijayanagara coins were in use in the coastal tons and Hyderabad. Licences were given by the Sultan to the Europeans to coin rupees and coins with their own emblem. R. Parthasarathy. "Administration under Qutb Shahis an overview", Itihas, volume EX and X, Hyderabad pp. 123-124.
Masulipatnam had excellent anchorage facilities and they rivalled with those at the great Moghul port of Surat in Gujarat upto 17th century. even in quantitative trade terms, Masulipatnam was on equal footing with Surat.77 Masulipatnam was mentioned as Bandar-i-Mubarak in the Indo-Persian chronicles of the late Qutb Shahi period.69 Capt. Hippon of the English East India Company commanded the ship, Globe in 1611 with the aim of striking trade relations with Coromandel coast.70

Ptolemy immortalised Masulipatnam in his Geography and the reputed work, periplus of the Erythraean sea states that the Masulipatnam port had been famous since the dawn of human civilisation for the manufacture and export of cotton piece-goods. Marco Pola stands a testimony to the manufacture of finest variety of cotton goods at Masulipatnam. The territory around Masulipatnam was

70 A.V Williams Jackson History of India. First English settlements on the Coromandel coast - 1611-1658, pp. 219-220.
studded with villages and towns which acted as feeders to the international market.

The English had an agency at the town of Masulipatnam, a port then under the active jurisdiction of the Qutb Shahi state. As already stated the Sultan of Golkonda had a mercantile marine under effective use during most part of the seventeenth century. The intrinsic importance of Masulipatnam as a centre of trade facilitated its speedy growth and its connection with outside world. Though all these gave Masulipatnam a place of primordial importance yet the place was poorly endowered with nature. Its road stead was open and unprotected. The port of Masulipatnam is located at the mouth of one

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71 With the rise of the Qutb Shahi dynasty under Quli Shah in the second decade of the 17th century and especially from the time that Krishna Godavari delta as far as Ellur and Rajahmundry was brought under Qutb ul Mulk, the port of Masulipatnam began to develop as the chief maritime outlet of the kingdom of Golkonda. Mohammad Kasim Firishta (John Biggs trans) *History of the rise of the Mohammad Power in India*, Vol III, New Delhi, 1981, pp 218-219.

72 The major strength of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century was its political links with the Qutb Shahi kingdom of Golkonda, serving as its major indeed only port outlet on the eastern side. Thus alone among the ports of Coromandel, it was able to look both east and west into the trade of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea. S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies*, op.cit. p. 15.
of the branches of the river Krishna. Because of a few disadvantages, ships had to sail and navigate cautiously through the sand banks and shoals. The vessels were loaded and unloaded by mossoola boats. The river was shallow but free from silting and the boats had an easy passage.

During the rule of Qutb Shahis of Golconda, Masulipatnam way a major port of outlet on the Coromandel coast. In fact, the major strength of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century was its political links with the Qutb Shahi kingdom and served as the kingdom's major port. Thomas Bowry, an English traveller to India during 1669-1679 A.D. noted "the greatest trading and shipping centre of the time on the Coromandel coast was Machilipatnam, of which the inhabitants are

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73 A.V. Williams Jackson. *History of India*, op.cit p. 221. Also see, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants Companies*, p. 15.

74 The major strength of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century was its political links with the Qutb Shahi kingdom S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants*, op.cit. p 15.

75 The port which grew and developed under the influence of a wide hinterland was Masulipatnam. It did not have particularly favourable natural characteristics, but it had good land communications with the heart of the sultanate of Golkonda gave this port an edge over its neighbours. S. Arasaratnam: *Maritime India. Op.cit*. p.14.
great merchant adventures": Its linkage with the Bay of Bengal in the
East and Arabian sea in the west was a major attraction for the
Europeans. It was able to tranship goods from one region to another.
Being the most significant port on the Coromandel coast during our
study period, it established direct overseas trading links with the ports
of Mokka (Red sea), Murkat (South Arabia) and Basra (Persian Gulf).
It was involved in voluminous trade dealings with Surat, Malabar,
Ceylon, Maldives, Bengal, Arakan, Pegu, Tenasserim and Bantam.\(^76\)
The shipping of Masulipatnam revealed the strength and ownership of
Indian shipping or Coromandel in the seventeenth century.\(^77\) The
Gentoos (name given to Telugu people in the records of East India
Company) were significant ship owners and active traders on the Bay
of Bengal.\(^78\) From 1670 onwards the Dutch, the English, the French and


\(^77\) Thomas Bowry, British traveller who visited Andhra between 1669 and 1675
AD noted that Masulipatnam was a great trading and ship building centre on the
Coromandel coast and its inhabitants were great maritime merchants and

\(^78\) Hindus formed the great majority of the engaged in trade, though Muslims were
significant in key sectors. At the beginning of the century long distance shipping
the Danes had their active trade established at Masulipatnam. The Europeans also used the facilities of Masulipatnam with its rich hinterland. It became an indispensable market in the European import trade. After Golkonda Kingdom was occupied by the Mughals in 1688 A.D. Masulipatnam gradually lost its political advantages and was reduced to the status of an ordinary port. The imposition of Mughal administration in the region upset existing relationships, and Masulipatnam lost its privileged character. Daniel Havart observed in 1690 that the port declined lately due to the high tariffs on the goods transported in inland trade. Some of the factors that resulted in the decline like the "insane, unwise and high-handed attitude of native officials at Masulipatnam", famines and the shift of trade to Bengal. The decline was further attributed to the shifting of import trade direct into the interior markets by passing Masulipatnam after the

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establishment of the Dutch factory at Hyderabad.\textsuperscript{80} However, this does not seem to provide a plausible explanation and evidences indicate that Masulipatnam continued to be a redistribution point of imports even after the establishment of the Dutch factory. Moreover, in order to safeguard the sales in Masulipatnam, the Dutch were denied permission to carry their goods to an intermediate station between Masulipatnam and Hyderabad.

Divy

Twelve miles away from Masulipatnam is the port Divy. Though this island, as it had been cut off from the main land for most of the year by various rivulets of the Krishna river, was not a suitable place for a harbour or any form of outlet of trade, it was extremely fertile on account of accumulations of alluvium by the Krishna.\textsuperscript{81} On account of its well cultivated lands and dense woods, the place always remained a


\textsuperscript{81}S. Arasaratnam, \textit{Merchants, Companies, Commerce}, p. 17.
tempting attraction to the Europeans who had a mind to relax and an eye on wild game. Moreover, it provided a place for contending European powers which were brought with provisioning problems.\textsuperscript{82}

The Dutch, in fact, put in hard efforts to get a grant of the island from the rulers of the land, planned to shift their trade from Masulipatnam to Divi Island and deepen the channel to take vessels of some size in an attempt to develop inland navigation to weaving hinterland.\textsuperscript{83}

\textbf{Nizampatnam}

To the South of Divy Island and lying on the estuary of a river is Petapolee, popularly called Nizampatnam.\textsuperscript{84} The name Petapuli was in

\textsuperscript{82} The Dutch had grand plans to shift their trade from Masulipatnam to Devi and to construct port facilities. With the decline of Masulipatnam the English Embassy under Sir William Norris went to Aurangzeb in 1699 A.D. with a request to cede Devi to the English. H.D. Love, \textit{Vestiges of Old Madras}. Madras, 1968, Vol. II, p. 155

\textsuperscript{83} S. Arasaratham, \textit{Merchants}, op.cit., p. 17.

\textsuperscript{84} Sea Port in the Tenali Taluk of Guntur district, in old Madras, situated 150-55N and 80-91E Nizampatnam was the first port on the east coast of India at which the English began to trade. Factory was established in 1621. The English called the place Petapolee from the neighbouring town Peddapalli. also see, William Foster, \textit{The English Factories in India}, 1618-1672 Oxford, 1906, p. XXXIII. The Dutch participation in India trade began from 1606 by establishing trading post at Nizampatnam. Om Prakash, \textit{Dutch factories in India}, p. 2 100. Gordon
the records till 1679. It was a quite substantial place of trade and was second in importance to Masulipatnam as a seaport. This sea port is mentioned by Ferishta under that name but, the English who had a factory from 1611 called it Petapolee from the neighbouring village of Peddapalli. The port was called by the name Nizampatnam from the end of seventeenth century. At Nizampatnam large quantities of long cloth murrees, salempores, lungees, painted calicoes of diverse sorts, saltpetre, iron and steel were sold to foreign merchants. Ships of greater tonnage frequented the port during seventeenth century and 

**Streynsham** Master observed in 1677 several vessels of 50 to 100 tons

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85 The English who had a factory on the creek from the year 1611 called it petapolee from the neighbouring village of Peddapalli. Streynsham master in 1679 remarked that the proper name was Nizampatnam. Gardon Meckenzie: Manual of the Krishna district in the Presidency of Madras New Delhi, 1883, p. 34 and Nizampatnam mentioned by Ferishta as Arjunapatnam was originally Peddapalli in the records till 1679. J. Mangamma, *Early Andhra Ports*, op.cit, p. 107. In 1611 Captain Hoppon and Peter floris in the Globe sailed from Pulicat further up the coast and landed at Petapolee, at the mouth of southern channel of Krishna delta more exposed to monsoon than Pulicat yet sufficiently sheltered for a ship side out of storm, was well received by the local Governor left two super cargoes to find our first shore settlement on the Bay of Bengal. A V Williams Jackson, *History of India*, p. 220.

in the river. The port was closely situated to a cluster of weaving villages, and hence, its reputation as a famous centre of textile industry. In the near vicinity of Nizampatnam there were some minor ports like Motupalli, Kothapatnam and Ramapatnam from where piece-goods were transported in small vessels to the north and the south. There was a big shipbuilding industry and, both the Dutch and the English competed for trade in salt-petre. The Dutch companies participation in Indian trade started with the establishment of a trading port (called Factory) at Petapolee, in 1606. There was, in fact, a scramble for "romallas" which were popular in the African countries. A red dye known as "chaya" was also largely exported from here. Because of the presence of a large number of Persian merchants, there

87 Painted cloth was the main article of trade on the east coast. Initially the Europeans had dealt in coarse cloth, cotton yarn and indigo. Later many commodities were added like spices, quicksilver and broad cloth. But it was the paintings that were the pride manufacture. The principal centres were Nizampatnam, palacole and Masulipatnam. N.S. Ramaswamy. Fort St.George, p.4. The Dutch and the English brought to Nizampatnam, their usual import commodities namely board cloth, lead pearls, corals, polished beads and namely the chests of money. William Foster. English factories in India, 1616-1621 p 41.

88 W.H. Moreland, Relations of Golkonda, pp.67-68.

89 Om Prakash. The Dutch Factories in India. p. 2.

was a constant demand for porcelain ware.\textsuperscript{91} Captain Hippon had found shelter in \textbf{1611} promised under the protection of the powerful Golkonda kings a better fortune. In 1614 Peter Flores built a halt fortified factory at Petapolee with lofty flag staff. Though the English dissolved in 1621, but resettled at Petapolee in 1633 and the factory was under their control till \textbf{1787}.\textsuperscript{92} It appears that after the opening of the English factory at Nizampatnam the relations between the Golkonda authorities and the Dutch began deteriorating. The problems accentuated so much that in \textbf{1616} the Dutch decided to abandon their factory.\textsuperscript{93} Nizampatnam was one of the first places on the Coromandel coast for the English and the Dutch to establish their \textit{factories}.\textsuperscript{94} In the early years of the establishment of the East India Companies at


\textsuperscript{92} Williams Jackson, A.V., \textit{History of India. First settlements on the Coromandel Coast, 1611-1658}. pp.220-221


\textsuperscript{94} William Foster. \textit{English Factories 1618-22}. P XXXIII, also see, Om Prakash, \textit{Dutch Factories}, p.2
Nizampatnam, it has enjoyed equal status with Masulipatnam the two factories in Golkonda in Masulipatnam and Petapolee were at first independent of each other. The Governor of Petapolee had the exclusive right in deciding with whom the Dutch should negotiate for cloth. In practice the two chiefs consulted each other over the negotiations for trade. Later in in 1609 it was resolved at Bantam that both the factories should be under general head. Nizampatnam with its surrounding minor ports like Kothapatnam and Ramapatnam, there seems to have been some shifting around of trade and outlets in this area. The mouth of Gundlakamma river (near the present day Ongole), lying at lat.15 o 27'N., is generally held to mark the northern boundary of the Coromandel coast proper.

There are references in earlier records to Karedu, a minor port lying between the present day district headquarter towns of Ongole and

95 The two factories in Golkonda i.e. Petapolee and Masulipatnam were at first independent of each other. Then each presided for two months by turn. The Governor of Petapolee and the exclusive right of deciding with whom, the Dutch should negotiate for cloth. In practice the two chiefs consulted each other over the negotiations for trade with the natives which was of a complicated nature. Later in 1609, it was resolved at Bantam that both the factories should be under general head. Pieter Ysaaxx of Masulipatnam filled that place, Jan Van Wesick being in subordinate change of Petapolee, T.I. Poonen *Early history of Dutch factories*, p, 275, and however, the English factory at Nizampatnam, also see, William Foster, *The English Factories in India*, 1665-60, p. 263.
Nellore. The port is located at the mouth of the river Munneru. The port, in the contemporary period, was of some significance as it was directly connected with the capital city of Golconda Kingdom by land route. The port could accept vessels of medium size. The place was primarily a weaving centre. Customs duties were comparatively low at this place. The port helped in the transportation of goods to the markets at Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam.

**Krishnapatnam**

The chief port of Nellore town was Krishnapatnam. It is situated on the left bank of the river Upputeru. The port is also known

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96 This port had some importance in the seventeenth century, a small sea port and a best town on the hitherto, Master touched this area on the way to visit the coastal ports. *Dairies of Streynsham Master*, Vol. I, p. 77.

97 S Arasaratnam *Merchants, Companies, op.cit. p.18.*

98 *Ibid. p 18.*

99 Krishnapatnam otherwise known as Calitor in the records, traded in salt, which was mainly indented by government and sent to Calcutta and Chittagong. In the district there were 31 places from where salt was manufactured and it was lifted from 11 platforms. Salt was also exported to Sumatra and out stations J. Mangamma, *op.cit. p. 109.*
as Calitor in the old records.\textsuperscript{100} Though the river was shallow here, it was navigable upto forty kilometres. As Nellore district was mainly a weaving area, the river facilitated the transport of piece-goods to \textbf{Krishnapatnam} for the final shipment.\textsuperscript{101} Nellore on the river pennar formally exported blue chintzes for the case of the negroes on the west Indian plantations.\textsuperscript{102} Nellore mandalam has historical importance in modern India mainly because of the Europeans had trading settlements especially at Pulicat and Armagaon (Dugarajapatnam) which were among the earliest factories on the East-Coast.\textsuperscript{103} Nellore had a coast line of 150 miles, nearly one fourth of the entire sea board of Andhra Pradesh.\textsuperscript{104} Apart, the trade in salt was in vogue at this port.\textsuperscript{105} Salt was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{100} J. Mangamma. \textit{Op.Cit.} 109
\item \textsuperscript{101} The hinterland of Nellore and approaching the Krishna river were weaving villages whose produce was exported from these places. Thus there was Armugaom, situated on the left bank of the Upputeru river. S. Arasaratnam, \textit{Martitime India}, \textit{op.cit} p. 30.
\item \textsuperscript{102} C.D Maclean, \textit{A manual of the administration of Krishna district}, p. 22.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Both the Dutch and the English frequented for trade in textiles. Vijaya Ramaswamy. \textit{Textiles and Weavers in medieval south India}, Delhi, 1985, pp 31,118,135.
\end{itemize}
exported from here the Sumatra and outstations. About fifteen miles south of Krishnapatnam is located another port viz., Armagaon or Armagoan. It was also situated on a river and the port was of considerable importance in seventeenth century. The river and port provided good anchorage facilities to European vessels. Because of the difficulties with the local Governor at Masulipatnam, the English decided to the move to Armagaon on September 27, 1628. Armagaom was testified by the English Company presumably with the permission of the Rajah of Venkatagiri, It was in fact instance of fortified possession of the east company in India.

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106 The Port Armugaon was established by the English in 1628, because of the harassment by the local Governors. It was the first fortified factory in India by the English. A V. Williams Jackson, History of India, p. 235.

107 Ibid

ARMAGAON

In the Nellore district there were nearly forty minor ports. The information about these ports is scanty, as there are only European records to know about them. Since, European records concentrated only on the favourable ports and ports of some strategic and communicative utility found mention in their records and information about others are often scanty or non-existent. A few local records and vernacular sources sometimes throw light on these ports. Of all these minor ports in the district, Armagoan was the most important during seventeenth century. The port was also called in contemporary times as "Blackwood's Harbour" after the name of a naval officer who visited the area before other Europeans did so. The port offered good protection because of the anchorage at the shoal. The local Karnam (village accountant) obtained a site in the village from the Rajah of Venkatagiri for the construction of a factory. The village official, Pantaswamoola Armugam Moodelly, was instrumental in the developments at the port. After his name, the port came to be known as
Armugam or Armagoan. Permission was granted to the traders on the condition of paying one percent on goods imported and three percent on exports. To be free from the ruler of Golkonda, the English established their factory at Armagoan in 1628. And even shifted their centre of activity from Masulipatnam because of the commercial embarrassment by the Golkonda officials at Masulipatnam. The place was also known in contemporary times as Monapalem where there was a light house. This was the only light house in the district. The object of light was to keep vessels clear of the Armagoan shoal. This shoal was 10 miles long. Dugarazupatnam was another name and there was an open communication with the sea that could be easily

109 Boswell, A manual of Nellore district 1873, pp. 15-24, also see William Foster. The English Factories in India, 1624-29, p. 343.


112 N.S. Ramaswamy, Fort St. George, pp. 5-6.

113 The place is now sometimes called Monapalem from a neighbouring village with light house and sometimes Dugarajupatnam from another village where open communication with the sea can be maintained. A Manual of Nellore district, p. 24.

114 Ibid.
maintained. The place for important for textiles. Both the English and the Dutch frequented the place for trade in textiles.¹¹⁵

About thirty five miles south of Armagoan is the port of Pulicat or Palecat. It is situated on lat. 13o 26'N. Long. 80o 11'E. With a dangerous reef off shore. Larger ships were given instructions in the contemporary times to avoid the port.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the river flowing into sea by the side of the port was not deep and could admit vessels with less than 50 tons.¹¹⁷ However, the port enjoyed reputation as an important post engaged in the trade to South East Asia. It was an important place for Indian shipping even before the seventeenth century.¹¹⁸ It functioned as the spot of outlet for handloom goods as there were many weaving villages on its hinterland. The Dutch

¹¹⁵ Vijaya Ramaswamy, op.cit pp. 31, 118 and 135 respectively.

¹¹⁶ S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, op.cit. p. 19.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Bowry. Countries round the Bay of Bengal, p.53.

¹¹⁸ Though the Dutch had come to Masulipatnam in 1606 and the English in 1611, the tyranny and oppression of the Golkonda officials drove them south in search of safer places. In 1610 the Dutch merchants built a port at Pulicat. Puliat became the seat of a governor in 1617 and at the Dutch settlements were subordinate to the Pulicat government. M. Pattabhi Ramireddy. Some features of Nellore mandalam, p. 51.
constructed a fort here called Fort Geldria and slowly acquired a few nearby villages. They developed the region into a substantial port town in the later part of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{119} Fort Geldria became the chief Dutch settlement on the Coromandel Coast. The fort established close shipping links with important Dutch centres of trade such as Malacca, Colombo and Batavia. The port had rich waving hinterland villages in the Poneri taluq.\textsuperscript{120} The port flourished for considerable amount of time.

The foregoing account of various ports in Andhra on the Coromandel Coast particularly from Nizampatnam to Nellore and in the surrounding region exhibits a few common characteristics.\textsuperscript{121} The


\textsuperscript{120} But the shifting of river estuary, the sand banks and coastal erosion appear to have made Pulicat dysfunctional by the break of 18th century. By 19th century it disappeared as a trading port and was not in use even in the coastal trades. S.Arasaratnam, \textit{Merchants Companies, op.cit} p. 19

\textsuperscript{121} The favourable political, economic and administrative policies of the rulers of this region contributed towards the development of the ports and their hinterlands resulting in harmonious growth of agricultural production textile manufactures and allied trades as well as the facilities needed for commerce and trade. Indu-Banga (ed), \textit{Ports and their Hinterlands in India, 1700-1950}. New Delhi, 1982, p. 10.
conditions in all these ports bring out the fact that the coast was not endowed by nature with safe heavens of shipping and trade. There is a certain monotonous similarity in the pattern of rise, growth and decline of ports.\(^{122}\) The most common situations were those where ports had roadsteads open to the ocean, made relatively safe by one or more of many factors, and a creek alongside into which either the ships could sail themselves or where smaller boats could unload their cargo.\(^{123}\) In addition, the silting of rivers and shifting of sand banks was seen as a regular phenomenon.\(^{124}\) Sometimes there was a change of entry channels and the roadsteads of the ports on the sea side were either open or narrow depending on the strength of the surf.\(^{125}\) Most of the ports had their origins in tiny fishing villages or empty beaches.

\(^{122}\) S. Arasaratnam, * Merchants, op.cit. p. 31

\(^{123}\) *Ibid*

\(^{124}\) The origin and growth of a port depends on many physical and cultural factors. Among the physical factors site is the most important. The site is the area of land and the associated waters on which the port and the port town are actually developed B S. Hoyle, * Sea ports of East Africa.* 8 No 13. Quoted in Indu Banga *Ports and Hinterlands in India, 1700-1950 AD.,* p. 12. There is a great deal of silting of sand banks and much soil is deposited in the ocean at which point are found sandbars or sand banks where the water is very low. S. Arasaratnam. *Maritime India,* p.7.

\(^{125}\) *Ibid*
developed by deliberate state policy. A port was a good source of revenue both for the locals and the foreigners.\textsuperscript{126}

It was realised during the period that fleeting a port could result in destruction. Often the ports were in the strong grip of oppressive policies imposed from above by the political masters. There was plunder of ports by invading armies and external invaders. Multiplicity of ports within short distances did not allow the individual ports to expand and agglomerate. This resulted in the static nature and transient character of these ports. Influential merchants or agents did not reside in the ports. A few mariners, labourers and boatmen drawn from the nearby fishing villages often formed into small administrative bodies and manned the routine administration of the ports. To encapsulate the idea, Coromandel Coast was almost an extension of rural India into sea beds. Conditions in the hinterland allowed these ports to develop into autonomous ports.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid

\textsuperscript{127} Port hinterlands, however continued to be defined as studied In oft cited paper, Weigend described them as organized and developed land spaces which were connected with port by means of transport lines and which receive or ship goods through that port In more recent literature, the complexity of the port
As stated earlier, the description of the ports and details regarding sailing patterns came to us through the European accounts, estimates and records.\(^{128}\) There is plentiful literature on the topography with attendant natural features and the evolution of European ports such as Pulicat and Masulipatnam.\(^ {129}\) We do not have in our possession any knowledge of ports like Bimilipatnam and Nizampatnam. Details regarding weavers, customs houses, limits of port towns, their residents and administration are unknown to us.

The ports on the coast were exposed to the climatic vagaries emanating from the Bay of Bengal. The mariners, pilots and merchants orally transmitted abundant information to their kith and kin. The information was subject to effective use by sea-faring persons in hinterland concept is being acknowledged and they are being considered as economic rather than geographical regions. They represent a superimposition of layers of commodity flows connected through the medium of transport facilities, market organization, shipping services and port facilities. G.G. Weigend, "some elements in port geography" 1923-43, quoted in Indu Banga, Ports and their Hinterlands, p. 19.

\(^{128}\) The existing port system in India began to evolve in 17th century in response to European trade which was then making its presence felt in the country. Indu Banga (ed) Ports and their Hinterlands in India 1700-1950. p. 34.

\(^{129}\) The prospectus of trade in this region attracted almost all the European trading companies, which established their collection points for textiles in the ports in the Krishna and Godavari districts. As a result of the growing export market,
describing the routes across the Bay of Bengal. Europeans added further to the existing knowledge in the more systematic manner. Sailing of vessels to or from the Coromandel Coast depended upon monsoons and the changing velocity of winds. High velocity winds naturally clipped the wings of sailing. The British instructed their sailors to pursue most favorable routes across the Bay of Bengal. They had chartered directions to those specified routes. The Dutch established definite schedules for their factories on the coast in 1660s much before the English had done so. The cosmopolitan and the integrated character of the maritime world would have facilitated a smooth dissemination of knowledge from Europeans to Asians, and from Asians to Europeans.

Cyclones over the Bay of Bengal often posed natural problems and hit the coast with unfailing periodicity and frequency. This caused ports in the region were considerably expanded and the port of Masulipatnam developed into an important port city. *Ibid.* p. 63.

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130 We have shipping lists which have been left behind by the companies, particularly the Dutch East India Company, which claim to give us lists day by day of ships that called at these ports and went out. *Indu Banga...* p. 369.
considerable damage to shipping and to structures in the ports.\textsuperscript{131} For example, Masulipatnam was subjected to the nature's fury many a time over a period. The storms and floods that followed destroyed the town. Many people and cattle were drowned in 1660, and the country round Nizampatnam, Narasapur and Palakol was \textit{destroyed}.\textsuperscript{132} Many ships lost their anchors and were destroyed at sea while others were dashed to pieces aground. In the Dutch dockyard, during the same time, near Narasapur a new ship, uncommissioned yet, was buried under seven feet of sand. Another ship was buried under 4.5 feet. Another cyclone in 1662 hit the coast in a savage manner and affected a wider area from Masulipatnam to Port Novo, devouring thirty vessels.\textsuperscript{133} Again in 1679 Masulipatnam was hit by a flash flood with cyclonic winds sweeping

\textsuperscript{131} Of the ports on Coromandel most were located up small rivers creeks or inlets, but these afforded little protection in cyclonic weather or even in the violent returning \textit{monsoon}. Besides if the branch of the delta on which the port was located did shift, or silt-up or if there occurred sea level changes over the medium term. Ships might be forced to anchor either down river or off the open coast, taking recourse to smaller vessels to gain access to the port proper. J. Deloche. "Geographical considerations in the localization of ancient sea ports of \textit{India}”, \textit{IESHR.}, Volume, XX (4), 1983, pp 439-48

\textsuperscript{132} S. Arasaratnam. \textit{Merchants, Companies, op.cit.} p. 37.

\textsuperscript{133} H.D. Love, \textit{Vestiges, op.cit,} Vol. I, p. 179
away buildings and bridges linking the port. Ships and boats were
lashed and stranded on shore, a few miles inland. Contemporary
estimates had it that nearly eighteen thousand people perished. "A great
part of the town, both houses and people, being carried away and
destroyed by the sea water which was washed among the Island before
it, the Bar, town and bridges". Over a period of time the people of
Coromandel Coast had learnt to live with the unexpected but frequent
storms. The survey conducted on the coast revealed that dynamism,
change and adaptability were essential for the development of the
ports. Factors of change resulted in socio-economic realignments.

The pattern of shipping and navigation played a crucial role in
the trade and commerce on the coast between Nizampatnam to Nellore
and its surrounding areas. In the seventeenth century, despite the more
intense and diverse presence of European navigators in the Asian
waters there is no corresponding increase in the evidence available on

134 Ports rose, few grew and fell under the impact of any or all factors. The ocean,
with all its hazards, was both a constant attraction and challenge for the
participants. Rich rewards were offered to consignee rate risk on waters. Despite
many vicissitudes, the tradition provided a foundation for continuity of
Asian shipping and navigation. The Dutch who appear to have spent more time than other Europeans in recording Asian shipping movements, do not go beyond the superficial facts of the ships. The English had far fewer personnel and were less spread out in Asia than the Dutch recording only the skimpiest details of Asian shipping. The Portuguese used European terminology to describe Asian Craft that in their eyes distantly corresponded to the ships with which they were familiar. Ships or vessels of large size played an important role in long distance trade of the country. The ships, which plied in the Andhra coast around Nizampatnam to Nellore broadly, belonged to two main categories viz., the European and native craft. Various foreign travelers in the Middle Ages have described the building activity witnessed in the sector of indigenous shipping. They include the Arab travellers (Nineth and tenth centuries A.D.), Nontecarvino and Marco polo (13th century A.D.), Odoric and Ibn Batuta (14th century A.D.), Vasco Da Gama and Stefano (15th century A.D.) and Barbosa (early 16th

\footnote{S. Arasaratnam, Maritime India, p. 247.}
century) etc.' In addition there are travellers like Tavernier and Thevenot and Bernier and others who visited Golkonda kingdom during the seventeenth century. The broad spectrum of ships in use in indigenous sector which have been identified by K.N. Choudhuri from records were as follows.\textsuperscript{138}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{136} According to Pliny, the Indian Ship building industry already reached its high watermark during the beginning of Christian era and the Andhras were proficient in navigation. K. Satyanarayana \textit{A Short history and culture of the Andhras}, p. 143.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Marcopolo, the Vanitian traveller (1288-94) came to India and described about Indian shipping and navigation particularly on the coast. He visited Andhra at the time of Kakatiyas and described port of Motupalli. ibu Batuta (1377) was an Arabic traveller gave valuable information about shipping, navigation and ports on the Indian coasts. He travelled all through the Indian coasts and gave a list of the vows and offerings made by the mariners to their patron saints for a successful and smooth voyages. Ptolemy, the Egyptian, had written about Telugu courts in his writings Martin was made about Maisolia which is the modern Masulipatnam. William Methold from Holland, wrote about Machilipatnam, Nizampatnam, Pulicat and other places between the years 1618-1622 and their relations with outside world. Vasco-da-gama, the Portuguese navigator, arrived Calicut on the West Coast in India in 1498 and encouraged the other travellers to come to India. It was the historic incident, which changed the Indian politics. Antony Schorer employed at Dutch factory in Masulipatnam and was written for the riches of India and its commercial transaction between the coastal ports and Holland in 1615-1616. Dr. Akkiraju Ramapathi Rao. \textit{Videsee Yatrikulu, Telugu Desam}, (Telugu), \textit{Teluguvar}, Hyderabad, 1975, p. 77-80.
\item \textsuperscript{138} K.N. Chaudhuri, \textit{Trade and civilization in the Indian Ocean}, Delhi, 1985, p. 141.
\end{itemize}
1. Jalboot small boat
2. Ballam small boat
3. Boom small boat
4. Baghla small boat
5. Sambuk small boat
6. Shewe small boat
7. Kotia small boat
8. Ganga small boat
9. Galibat small boat
10. Grab small boat
11. Pattamar small boat
12. Masoola On the east corresponding all purpose vessel was the Masoola.\(^{139}\)

The episode illuminates several aspects of Asian shipping in the mid seventeenth century. A vessel carrying more than two hundred people as crew and passengers and fifty five horses together with other cargo could not have been less than five to eight hundred tons in European measurement. The Golkonda ship was a large one according to Tavernier.\(^{139}\)

It thus covered more than 2000 miles within a short span of time at the rate of forty miles per day.\textsuperscript{140} Though Tavernier had his own doubts about the efficacy of navigational ability of Indian s and Persian, the Qutb Shahi ships proved contrary to his notions and travelled longer distances. The design of the hull incorporated multiple decking and the method of construction was strong enough for the ship to withstand gale force, strong winds and even storms.\textsuperscript{141} The Qutb Shahi rulers entrusted the duty of piloting and defending their vessels against pirates and also the Dutch whom "won't allow these vessels, which belong to any king or princes of India, a pilot, two or three gunners".\textsuperscript{142}

\textsuperscript{140} Tavernier, \textit{op.cit}, Vol.1, pp. 203-207

\textsuperscript{141} K.N. Chaudhuri, \textit{op.cit.} p. 140

\textsuperscript{142} In the time of Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah the seas were patrolled as far of as the island of Sacotra which lies nearly 2000 sea miles from Masulipatnam. This patrolling by Qutb Shahi naval units was effective and they guaranteed the safety of all foreign shippings as is evidenced by episode of the modernity level on the Dutch ship the \textit{WappanVan Rotterdam} in 1623. H.K Sherwani. "The Reign of Sultan Muhammad Shah" \textit{Journal of Pakistan historical society.} July, 1962, p. 276. Quoted in H.K Sherwani. \textit{The reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah:- Economic aspects-II} \textit{Journal of Indian history}, p. 678.
By the late seventeenth century the ship builders of the Coromandel coast around Masulipatnam had thoroughly mastered the technique of European naval construction and according to Thomas Bowry many English private traders had their ships built in these yards.\textsuperscript{143} From the interesting narratives of Floria Peter Williams, who was a Dutch man in the English Company's service on the board of Globe which touched the Masulipatnam port for the first time in 1611 during his second trip in 1613, it is said that the ships traded not only in Europe but a profitable business was done in selling Masulipatnam goods in Sumatra and other spice Islands.\textsuperscript{144} Thomas Bowrey has left behind a rich account of bouts and ships during the period of our study. On the other, the same coastal vessels of 20 tons coming from Bengal had their planks made of some kind of cord derived from the rinds of coconuts. Iron was not used in the same.\textsuperscript{145} There was a constant interchange of ideas between European ship owners and ship and weights and local ship builders. Thomas Bowry thought that the Master

\textsuperscript{143} K.N. Chaudhuri, \textit{Trade and Civilization}, p. 158

\textsuperscript{144} K. Gopala Krishna, \textit{Machilipatnam - an ancient port}, p. 20

\textsuperscript{145} W.H. Moreland, \textit{Relations, op.cit} pp. 36 and 40 respectively.
carpenters of the Krishna-Godavari delta on the Coromandel coast could construct and launch ships as well as any shipwright.\textsuperscript{146}

The Masoola boats, used in loading and unloading the anchored ships, were built very slight having no timber in them, save thefts to hold their sides together. Their planks were broad and thin, sewed together with coir. They were generally flat bottomed and most roper for the Coromandel Coast. A large proportion of the ships calling at Masulipatnam, for example is referred to as gurabs. The Patamar is another term referred to, more in southern India. In south India the thony is a gigantic term covering vessels ranging from small coasting boats to large oceangoing cargo vessels.\textsuperscript{147} The "oloak" boats were roamed with either four or six oars. "Budgaroo" was a pleasure boat used by the opulent. "Bajra" was a kind of large and clean boat with some room in the centre. "Booras" were very buoyant and floaty light boats rowing with either twenty or thirty oars. They were generally sued for transporting commodities like salt and pepper down the rivers. They also served as tow-boats for the ships bound up or down the river.

\textsuperscript{146} K.N. Chaudhuri, \textit{Trade and Civilization}, p. 158
\textsuperscript{147} S Arasaratnam, \textit{Maritime India}, p. 259.
Another European, Dr. Fryer, visited Madras about the year 1674. He thus describes the place and its surroundings. He went ashore in "Masoola, a boat where in ten men peddle, the two after most of whom are the steersmen using their peddles instead of rubber.\textsuperscript{148}

He also refers to the boats called by the name, "Catamarans" with a single sail in their midst. He himself landed at Masulipatnam by one of the country boats and, he describes it as large as one of "our ware-barges and almost of that mould, sailing with one sail like them, but paddling with paddles instead of spreads and they carry a great burden with little trouble, outliving either ship or English stiff over the bar".\textsuperscript{149} A "Pinnace" or Yateh was a strongly masted ship, divided into two or three apartments one for company another for the beds, and a third as a cabinet, besides a place called verandah forward for the servants. The "schooners" which were well fitted out were capable of making voyages even to European lands. Another ship was the Indo-

\textsuperscript{148} J.T. Wheeler, \textit{Early trends of British India}, p. 54
\textsuperscript{149} K.N. Chaudhuri, \textit{Trade and civilisation}, p 141-144
\textsuperscript{149} R.K. Mukherjee, \textit{A History of Indian Shipping}, London, 1912, p. 250
Arab dhow in the seventeenth century, but this original had been subject to much regional modification in the shape of hull, stern and prow, and in the riggings. A main characteristic of this type of ship appears to have been that it was shell built, with planks carved into shape and fitted together and the hull was subsequently strengthened by being fitted with ribs made out of wood of suitable shape, selected from the branches of trees. The "Grab" was a ship with three masts, a pointed prow and a bowsprit. The "Banglas" were largest Indian ships, and "Brigs" were vessels that carried goods from the coast of Masulipatnam and Malabar to Calcutta. To the coast of Musalipatnam also belonged the "Dony" with one mast resembling a sloop. Its deck consisted of a few planks fastened on each side. "Pattooas" were those ships that differed from other vessels by the virtue of there being clincher built. The boards were fastened one upon the other by little pieces of iron in the form of cramps.\textsuperscript{150}

There may have been other considerations, technical and engineering known to the local builders, but now lost to be historians

\textsuperscript{150}R.K. Mukherjee, \textit{A History of Indian Shipping}, London, \textbf{1912}, p 250
unfamiliar with the tradition of sailing ships. People who earn a living from the sea seldom share the landsman's image of it, as a romantic vision or its opposite, unknown terrors. They know that for man the sea is a hostile environment, but that it's predictable dangers can be partially mastered with a sea worthy vessel. Indian ships suffered from a few shortcomings in their manufacture. They were generally considered frail and uncouth with no iron. They had flimsy rudders and the rails were generally made of malting or some inferior cloth. The twine used to stitch the planks of ships was made from the coconut husk. It was, perhaps, done so, as the supple nature of a stitched boat was useful in a surf on the Coromandel coast.

As the ports of Coromandel were exposed to the Bay of Bengal climatic conditions in the Bay of Bengal were crucial in determining sailing in and out of the these ports. A large proportion of these sailings were north and south along the coast and eastwards across the bay.


The winds and the waves, shallow waters posed greater dangers, and rugged rocks too would result in wreckage of ships. Strong currents, dangerous fish and menacing snakes added to the distress of the sailors. Piracy was another terror to the ships. Piracy was more rampant on the West Coast from where it must have spread to the opposite end. Pirates were highly organised and adopted innovative techniques in order to surround and then rob the ships.

Thus, these vessels would generally cover 100 miles on seas. When a ship was sighted, the same was signaled to other vessels within the sea cordon. Once they approached the ship, they used to seize the merchants and plunder the goods they were carrying. If a ship were driven to another shore the local people would claim their right on the entire shipment under the pretext that it was a God-sent gift to them.

In addition to dangers in navigation, Sailors had to be very careful in selecting the time of set off on the seas. Usually ships left the shores of India in summer and returned in winter. They were supposed to be ideal months for voyages. MarcoPolo refers to these winds as the ones which would take sailors outside home and the ones which would
bring them homeward. Weather conditions in the months of June and July were so dangerous that the ships did not dare to make any voyage on the seas. It is generally a month with fine weather and steady winds. For example, the ships setting on sail on Red Sea in July would reach the Persian Gulf within a month. After a brief sojourn of about a fortnight their vessels would proceed to Coromandal coast. The merchants used to dispose their Cargo from the beginning of October to December.

Abdur Razak gives a vivid description of his own personal experience on one such occasion when his heart was "crushed like glass and my soul became weary of life".\textsuperscript{153} In order to face the risks on sea, the mariners were fully equipped with masts, rudder, anchor and nautical instruments. Huge ships like the Chinese junks were provided with four or six masts, three to twelve sailor and twenty oars in addition to other instruments, which helped to tow the big ships. The true sea going junks could reach huge dimensions. All were solidly built with a unique method of construction, and their rigging of rectangular fan
shaped bamboo mats was easy to handle. The Chinese junks represented a completely separate seafaring tradition in the Indian Ocean, and a whole way of life was associated with their movements. The huge wooden anchors were very useful in the ports of South India, when they had to steer through the river mouths and sand banks. Sometimes, mariners were guided by stars on days of clear sky. The mariners sailing out of their homelands were truly guided by the sun, moon and stars. As the ship masters were generally well versed in the configuration of the coasts where their ships were destined to reach, the masters used to steer the ships by stars during night and by the sun during day time. The mariners' compass was slowly emerging on the scene of navigation. The sailors always equipped themselves with charts for correct identification of places.

Among these communities there were rituals and beliefs which were central to their occupations and which contributed to giving them confidence in the pursuit of their hazardous occupations. They were influenced by certain beliefs and practices both at the beginning and
during the course of their journey on the seas. They had beliefs in astrology and consulted before setting on sail. Auspicious dates were fixed to set the sail. Mariners believed in the propitiation of Gods. For, it would, they believed, afford them a smooth voyage on seas. Nicolo Conti refers to various traditional performances by the sailors’ abroad when their ship got struck due to clam weather and total absence of favourable blows. While gods were propitiated to activate seas, holy water was used to be sprinkled to becalm the waves and wind. The water was carried in opaque glass bottles. Offerings to patron saints was a common practice among sailors. If any sailor died on the board, the body would be consumed to the sea waters, which was the custom among the sailors.

This unexpected but not infrequent freak storm was hazard the coastal people of Coromandel had learned to live with. During the height of the north-east monsoon, Indian vessels were either anchored in ports away from the coast, in south East Asia, Ceylon or Malabar, or were towed up the beach and secured in sheds. According to Marco

153 Major, India in the Fifteenth Century Hakluyt Society, 1858, pp 7-8.

154 John Major, op.cit., p.26
Polo "sea faring men are never to be accepted as securities as they say that to be a sea faring man is all the same as to be an under desperado and that his testimony is good for nothing."\textsuperscript{155} But, during the later medieval period, it can be seen that indigenous communities played a role in pivotal importance in the development of trade through the ports of Andhra. Despite all the risks and dangers involved in seafaring, the Telugu traders were active and adventurous. They were enthusiastic participants in the oceanic trade. They continued the tradition of seafaring and reaped rich dividends.

The flourishing of the ports during the period of our study primarily depended regular supplies from the surrounding villages viz., the hinterland. There were organic links between centres of production and centres of trade.\textsuperscript{156} The conditions under which the hinter land


\textsuperscript{156} The French Geographer, Lamierre, a proposed a two fold classification of port hinterlands into regional and supra-regional. The regional hinterlands consisted of natural, geographic or static areas as well as functional and dynamic areas which were won over from other ports when the area of functional development of a port extended beyond the natural hinterland, it became supra-regional and the maritime outlet became more important for the ports development than landward outlook. \textit{Indu Banga. op.cit.} p 19.
villages worked in turn were influenced by state's policies from time to time. Periods of peace and tranquility witnessed vigorous economic activity and any vagaries or shifts in the policies had a direct bearing on the socio-economic conditions. Like the ports, the hinterland villages too exhibited a volatile character during the period of our study. Added, there was also an overall similarity in the mechanisms of political and administrative control and in productive functions. Coinciding with the period of our study was the rapid disintegration of the Vijayanagara Empire.157

By mid seventeenth century the Qutb Shahi dynasty emerged as the strongest political power in peninsular India. With its capital located at Hyderabad, the kingdom expanded its wings of control into central and eastern Deccan. The entire coastal Andhra delta region came under its active administrative control. The Coromandal coast

157 By the middle of seventeenth century many of the Vijayanagara rulers were reduced to a status of pensioners under the Sultans of Golkonda. From the debris of the Vijayanagara empire rose two powerful kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda. Our period of study brackets with the rise of Qutb Shahi dynasty of the Kingdom of Golkonda. S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, op.cit, p. 68-70
starting with Srikakulam, and other regions upto San Thome were annexed by the Golconda rulers. With this annexation went important ports like Bimilipatnam, Narasapur, Visakhapatnam, Nizampatnam, Masulipatnam and Pulicat in Andhra coast. Golkonda began to occupy an enviable position in the affairs of the Bay of Bengal seaboard. During the seventeenth century, Golkonda was known among European circles as a legendary place rolling in riches. As the rulers of the kingdom belonged to Shia sect of Muslims, they forged close ties with the Safavid dynasty of Persian Empire. The cementing of ties between these two kingdoms led to Persian and Armenian merchants flocking to the port of Masulipatnam on the Coromandel coast. The


159 Among the famous sea ports which brought commercial prosperity to Andhra were Nizampatnam, Masulipatnam, Bimilipatnam Coringa, Kakinada, Madapollam, Motupalli and Injeram M.V. Raja Gopal *A.P. District Gazetteers*, p. 191.

160 Though the curious historical coincidence both Masulipatnam and Hugli were Chosen as home ports by important communities of Shia's businessmen. This meant steady commercial contact with Persia and enforcement of India's general orientation towards west Asia at the time. But the Gujarats Predominance in the Red sea was not challenged and both high and Masulipatnam besides Coromandel ports like Pulicat, Nagapatnam and Porto-Novo as well as Hugh's neighbor Balasore concentrated upon the trade of the Bay of the Bengal. Ships from these ports maintained a steady intercourse with Pegu, Arakan, Tennaserim and Achin, while some trade with Macassar was done through the intermediary of Portuguese private traders. Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, (ed), *The Cambridge Economic history of India (1200-1750)* Vol.1, Delhi 1982, p.432.
Persian connection yielded rich dividends and strengthened the extant trade ties with South East Asia, Western India, Bengal and Ceylon. The revenue figures of Golkonda kingdom were an eloquent testimony to the riches resulting from royal trade connections. During the fiscal year, 1685-86 the kingdom's net revenue was 13,821,541 pagodas of which Karnatak districts alone yielded about 20 percent of total income.\(^\text{161}\) The existence of relative peace and stability in the kingdom truly laid from foundations for stable commercial bonds. In the process, the ports as well as the hinterland worked to mutual benefit.

After Golkonda became a satellite state of the Mughal Empire in 1636, there was political stability in the region and, hence there was breathing scope for the Golconda rulers to eye on the eastern territories. Soon agreements were signed between the Telugu military potentates of eastern regions and the Golkonda rulers. Following these agreements, lands across Godavari River were left in the hands of tributary rajahs on conditions of fixed annual payments. As already stated, district governors were appointed by the Sultans and these officials were responsible for fiscal administrations. These governors

\(^{161}\) H K. Sherwani, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.655-656.
were assisted by other subordinate revenue employees like "hawaldars" or tax collectors. Taxes embraced land revenue, dues on artisans, market dues, customs duties and tolls at transit point. However, revenue from important ports or market towns such as Masulipatnam was collected directly by the royal officials.\textsuperscript{162} The period of prosperity and plenty was not disturbed during most part of seventeenth century. Rumblings in the relatively safe administrative and revenue structures began with the defeat of Golconda Sultans in 1687 at the hands of the Mughals. With the complete annexation of the kingdom into Mughal Empire there were changes effected in the region. As our steady period does not go beyond the active rule of Qutb Shahi kingdom before its fall, our estimate is more confined to the developments during the seventeenth century.'

\textsuperscript{162} No Contemporary account of the position in Golkonda during sixteenth century, but early in the seventeenth century the country was wholly under the farming system in its worst form, the amount payable being settled annually by auction. Methold's, \textit{Relations of the kingdom of Golkonda in purchas. His pilgrimage} 4th edition. The evidence regarding Golkonda and Bijapur is discussed at greater length in \textit{From Akbar and Aurangazeb} -\textbf{III}, Sec-3, Quoted in Moreland: \textit{Agrarian System of Moslem India} Delhi, 1929, p. 187.
Production and distribution of economic goods in India was based on the co-existence and, at times, inter-penetration of subsistence and a commercialized sector. The rural market was very much a feature of the *intra-local* trade of the period.\textsuperscript{163}

Export outlets had an easy access to centres of production. There were extremely favourable conditions for trade in all those places where there was a confluence between food producing areas and areas of handicraft manufacture. In the absence of this, there was an exchange of commodities across most of the region. The important centres of food production also served as centres of administration and military placements. Under a stable government most of state's officials contributed to the rapid growth of trade and commerce. Existence of peace and political stability provided them an ample scope to divert their attention to trade from their ordained duties.

The trade and commercial activity around various ports on the Coromandal coast in seventeenth century coastal Andhra was developed by the availability of raw material in the hinterland. Several other classificatory schemes were attempted following the pioneering works just mentioned. The different types of hinterlands identified in these studies have been summarized as follows.

i) **Immediate** hinterland - the port-area itself and the port city;

ii) Primary hinterland or **umland** - the above area and the area where the port and the city assume a commanding role and determine the life of that area;

iii) Secondary or competitive hinterland - difficult to distinguish from the above, but can be taken to be the region where less than 70 percent of an area's traffic is forward by, or received from the port in question;

iv) Advantage hinterland - an area which falls within the sphere of traffic influence of one port due to the non-linearity of inland traffic from the other ports in competition;
v) Commodity hinterland - based on the indicated direction of shipments of particular commodities or groups of commodities.

vi) Hinterland functional overlap - occurs when the hinterland of a large port overruns that of a smaller port for certain cargoes because of the greater range of port functions, and perhaps due to the greater number of sailings from a large port;

vii) Hinterland area overlap - occurs where there is competition between ports of comparable size for cargo of the same type to and from the same area; and

viii) Inferred hinterland - refers to a port's hegemony over a particular area, that is, the extent to which a port satisfies the demand for imports within the area it serves.164

The goods were transported to the nearby ports from the hinterlands. In the district of Srikakulam, there was a number of weaving villages, which produced long cloth known by the Dutch as

164 J.H Bird, Seaports and Seaport Terminals, 125, n. 14,(quoted in) Indu Banga, Ports and their Hinterlands, op.cit., p. 20
Guinea cloth of fine and coarse Varieties.\textsuperscript{165} There was an abundant production of rice in the river basin of Langulya-Vamsadhara. It was exported in coastal vessels from the port of Kalingapatnam to Bimilipatnam.\textsuperscript{166} To the South of Visakhapatnam, the region watered by the Godavari and the Krishna rivers had a number of weaving villages and market towns. In the contemporary times they were frequented by a number of merchants of foreign and indigenous origin. The weavers in these places manufactured Cloth according to the requirements of the Indian as well as the European merchants. Tuni, about fifty miles to the South of Visakhapatnam, was the nucleus of weaving settlements on the coastal road from Masulipatnam to Visakhapatnam. The place produced fine and coarse woven goods, which attracted the English and the Dutch traders. Situated near Tuni and close to the port of Coringa, Peddapuram produced and supplied large quantities of cloth. The place was suitable for washing and bleaching of large quantities of cloth for export. Around 200 families of

\textsuperscript{165} Vijaya Ramaswamy, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 136.

\textsuperscript{166} S. Arasaratnam, \textit{Merchants Companies, op.cit.} p. 49.
washermen settled here during the period as the local textile industry could provide them likelihood.\textsuperscript{167}

According to Bowry, advanced techniques were used at the shipyards to ensure efficiency and accelerate construction. These were focus fold tackles with a system of moving blocks crabs etc. The Dutch had their own trading vessels built at their local shipyards of Bimlipatnam, Narsapurpet, Machilipatnam and Pulicat.\textsuperscript{168}

The place also produced shipbuilding materials like nails, ropes and coir.\textsuperscript{169} They were transported to Narsapur and Madapollam, the prominent regional centres of shipbuilding. Goods from these ports were carried to Masulipatnam, fifty miles away from Palakol, by flat-bottomed boats.\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{167} Madras Public Consultations, 240/39, 1775


\textsuperscript{169} Sanjay Subrahmanyam; Political Economy of Commerce Southern India., 1500-1650, Cambridge, 1990 p.72.

\textsuperscript{170} That the seventeenth century saw a comparative enlargement of the output of iron is implication in what Moreland says for the early years of the country. In the
Bowry reports that many English and other merchants got their ships built every year at Narasapur. The best timber was available here. The best iron upon the coast is for the most part vended here also. Any sort of iron work is here indigenously performed by the natives as speak bolts, anchorites, etc. Expert master builders were also available in plenty for the building of ships.\footnote{Thomas Bowry, \textit{A Geographical account of countries round the Bay of Bengal}, p. 102.}

It was at these Narasapur yards that large ships of the Qutb Shahi rulers were built for voyages in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea. The English authorities in England appeared to be unhappy with the Indian enterprise in ship building. King Charles II of England ordered in 1622 that "no one should teach the natives to build and navigate ships in those parts to the great prejudice of the English nation, contrary to the second decade, we notice Narasapur on the Coromandel coast emerging slowly as a ship building centre were vessels of not less than 600 tons were substantially built of very good timber and iron. Soon it rose as a well established shipyard in the second half of the seventeenth century. A. J. Qaisar, \textit{The Indian response to European Technology and Culture} Madras, 1982, p.26. also see, J Fryer. 1672-81 (ed ) W. Crooke I p. 326. also cf Irfan Habib. \textit{Banking in India. Contributions to Indian economic history. I}, 1960 pp 1-20. Also see, A J Qaisar \textit{Merchant Shipping in India during the 17th century Medieval India - a miscellany No.2}, pp. 195-220

\footnote{Thomas Bowry, \textit{A Geographical account of countries round the Bay of Bengal}, p. 102.}
royal character granted to the said (East India) Company". From the beginning, the English wanted to discourage Indian shipping enterprise. They hankered after hegemony first in the field of commerce and then in political sphere.

In coastal Andhra, the weaving settlements were unevenly distributed and were located within a hundred miles radius and sometimes even to 300 miles of the ports. Most of these cotton products were produced in various weaving settlements, spread mostly in the districts of Krishna and Godavari. The eastern banks of Godavari delta was particularly the area where weavers concentrated. Palakollu was an important trading place and the Dutch had a factory there and they paid annual rent to this place. Draksharama was also identified a major centre of marketing and it is found that there were fifteen villages around this place, coming down a bit south two important places for cotton textiles were Madapollam and Viravasaram. It must be remembered that these places came into prominence with arrival of European traders and the establishment of their factories here. It had the highest weaving capacity and the English had their factory there.

172 William, Foster, English Factories in India, 166-64, p. 99.
Even in the immediate vicinity of Masulipatnam a large number of weaving centres identified. Between Masulipatnam and Eluru as many as thirty two weaving settlements were identified. Nagalwancha was the main centre from where iron was sent to Narasapurpet and other places. Nalgulwancha was a town bustling with artisanal activity and became an important centre of commodity production in the seventeenth century. The special attraction of the place was long cloth of export variety. Indigo of this place gave brightness of colour and shine to the cloth. Iron wore mined near Nagulvancha was useful for ship building.

In the region of Rajahmundry too a few varieties of fine cloth like betilles (fine Muslin), Salemptores and percalles were produced. Petapolee or Nizampatnam was the highly reputed for production of best dye root and the place supplied good quality of painted and dye goods. Nellore manufactured goods were transported by land along the coast to Armagaon, Pulicat, Madras and St. Thome, a distance of 100 to 200 miles. A further forty miles into the interior from Nellore was Matalavare, another pocket with some weaving villages around it.
To the north of Masulipatnam is located Eluru district. It is about 60 miles from the port. Around this district twelve weaving villages were identified. Eluru was famous for carpets, woolen products apart from Salempores and Bellies. Around Vetapalem, about 60 miles south west of Masulipatnam fourteen weaving villages were located which were known for Salempores beetles and Gingham's varieties of cloth. The other centres of textile production with their clusters of weaving villages were Linga, Malipor and Mangalagiri. The demand for any cloth was often directly proportional to supplying capacity of producers.

If the required quantity could be produced by the artisans with in the specified time, then merchants too would be in a position to cater to the demands out side. Otherwise alternatives were sought by them to meet the market needs. The Masulipatnam had considerable patches of lands where indigo crop has failed. According to contemporary estimates Masula indigo was priced at 2.43 pagodas.
Macapenta, situated on the way to Golkonda supplied goods like spices, copper, silver, perfumes and other luxury goods to Hyderabad. The ruling aristocracy drawn from the Persian, Arabic, Afghan and Turkish nobility were major consumers of the luxury goods. Thus from all these details it appears that the region of coastal Andhra particularly surrounding the areas of Nizampatnam to Nellore were vibrant with trade and tradesmen during seventeenth century.