



## Mahanadaprabhus of Madhugiri and their contributions

**Shivaraju**

Assistant Professor of History,  
Govt. First Grade College,  
Koratagere, Tumkur District, Karnataka.

### Introduction

There were more than 70 feudal states in Medieval Karnataka. Among them Madhugiri was an important one. It included many part of Madhugiri, Koratagere and Pavagada. The Nadaprabhus of this territory were very powerful in the days of Vijayanagara. Today Madhugiri is a Taluk Head Quarter in Tumkur District. Immadi Chikkappa Gowda had built a strong fort at Madhugiri and made it as a new capital. The Mahanadaprabhus contribution in the field of Administration, Religion, Literature, Art and Architecture is of immense value. Mahanadaprbhus were hereditary rulers. They were Veerashaivas. They built good number of Veerashaiva Mathas and Shaiva Temples. They also built some Vaishnava Temples at Madhugiri. There were poets under the patronage of Mahanada Prabhus. Mummadi Chikkabhupala was also a poet. He wrote many books. They built a number of temples, forts and mansions.

### Origin of Mahanada Prabhus :

The ancestors of Mahanada Prabhus originally belonged to Henjeru, the capital of Nolambawadi. When the Nolambas were defeated by the Cholas, they went and settled in Kampli to the south of Hampi. When Kampli was also attacked Thuglaks they migrated to Sollapura. When the Sangama Dynasty came into existence at Vijayanagara they came and jointed the Vijayanagara Cavalry. Maregowda and his 6 brothers win the confidence of Vijayanagara king Hariara-I. They were appointed as the feudatories of Madhugiri Region. Thereafter Maregowda and his brothers ruled at Thungavati, Kora, Thereyuru, Cheluru, Gubbihosahalli, Ennegere, Bidare of Tumkur District.

Thungavati was a capital of Maregowda for a short time. He migrated to Jayamangali valley and built a second capital at Mummadi Pattana. During the rule of Veeregowda S/o Maregowda Mummadi Pattana was attacked and destroyed by Bahamani Army. Veeregowda was succeeded by Hire Chikkappa Gowda. He built a third capital at Bijjavara, near Madhugiri in 1524. This was the capital of Mahanadu upto 1601. In the meanwhile Vijayanagara Empire had come to an end. It was revived at Penugonda by the Araveedu Dynasty. The Mahanada Prabhus of Bijjavara near Madhugiri continued as the vassals of Araveedu rulers. When Penugonda was attacked by the Sultan of Bijapur, Karithimma Chikkabhupala successor of Hire Chikkappa Gowda helped Srirangaraya at Penugonda and defeated the Bijapura Army. In 1594 Karithimma Chikkabhupala was succeeded by Chikkabhupala-II.

### Chikkappa Gowda-II

He ruled for about 20 years from 1594 to 1614. In 1601 he built a new capital at Madhugiri. He expended the old fort and built new temples of Gopalakrishna, Veerabhadra, Byrava, Vigneshwara at Siddapura near Madhugiri. In 1613 his young son died pre-maturely. In his memory Channakeshava Temple and a new

village was built. It was called Channarayadurga. In the same year Venkatapathi emperor at Penugonda arranged a meeting of 77 Paleyagars on the occasion of Mahanavami.

But Madugiri Paleyagar did not attend the meeting. He tried to declare independence. Due to his absence Venkatapathi sent Jagadekaraya to capture Chikkappa Gowda. But Jagadekaraya was defeated and repelled. Again the attack was led by Venkatapathi Raya with a larger army. This time Chikkappa Gowda had to surrender and seek pardon. He was pardoned and continued as Samantaraja. During his time the borders of the villeges were marked with stone pillars. But the neighbouring Palyeagars of Koratagere, Nidagallu and Midigeshi frequently attacked his territories. Ranabyregowda of Koratagere fought against to Chikkappa Gowda at Maskal. But he was defeated and repelled.

### **Battle of Haravekote (1913) :**

Bhyrendra Gowda of Karehalli took advantage of the weakness of Venkatapathi Raya. When Venkatapathi was not in the capital, Penugonda was attacked by Byrendra Gowda. He plundered 18 lacks of varahas from the palace and returned with Elephants and Horses. On hearing this news Chikkappa Gowda and his son Thontendra attacked Bhyrendra Gowda of Karehalli. In such circumstances he offered 10,000 varahas along with Bommanahalli and Aresamudra and Harave Agrahara to Chikkappa Gowda but Bhyredra rejected and forced him to surrender the wealth plundered at Penugonda along with Midigeshi. A battle was fought near Haravekote, unfortunately son Thontendra was killed in the battle field. On hearing the news Chikkappa Gowda died of Heart attack.

### **Mummadi Chikkappa Gowda (1614-1640) :**

He was the younger son of Chikka Bhupala. His royal preceptor was Siddalingeshwara of Yedeyuru. He strengthened the port and stored food grains. He built Malleshwara and Venkateshwara temples at Madhugiri and renovated Nolambeshwara Temple. During this time nominal emperor Venkatapathi Raya transferred his capital from Penugonda to Chandragiri. He built a new palace at Chandragiri.

### **Kaalachikkappa Gowda :**

He was a very courageous person and he expanded his kingdom. Mummadi Chikkappa Gowda divided his kingdom among his three sons.

1. Madhugiri to Sangappa Gowda
2. Channarayadurga to Hire Thontappa Gowda
3. Midigeshi to Kaala Chikkappa Gowda

The two elder brothers who came to power at Madhugiri and Channarayadurga were easy going and pleasure loving. Except Midigeshi the remaining Nada Prabhus of Kora, Thereyuru, Gubbi Hosahalli, Ennegere, Bidare, Cheluru were also inactive. Under such circumstances Kaala Chikkappa Gowda at Midigeshi emerged as a Hero.

Among them Kala Chikkappa Gowda was very ambitious and courageous. He supported Kasturi Rayappa of Sira and defeated Poovalakenge rival of Kasturirayappa. As Rayappa was still a boy Kaala Chikkappa Gowda acted as a regent of Sira. Thus his power and prestige increased.

Kaala Chikkappa Gowda and Bidanur Shivappa Nayaka who were vassals of Srirangaraya of Vijayanagara were asked to attack Srirangapattana and conquered it from Ranadhira Kanteerava Narasaraja Wodeyar. But they were defeated and expelled. At that time the local hero by name Range Gowda had served heroically on the side of Sriranga Raya. On Sriranga Rayas advise Range Gowda was given the gowdike of Kammana Kote, near Madhugiri. A sannad was issued by Kaala Chikkappa Gowda, Dalvoy Narasaiah, Pradhana Amaatya Bhaskara Pandita and Munshi Ranganatha. In 1646 the last Araveedu ruler Sriranga Raya-III died and the Mahanadu Prabhus became independent.

### **Cultural contributions :**

**Religion :-** Mahanada Prabhus were Veerashaivas. They owed their power to Gurusiddarameshwara of Sonnalige. They are also blessed by Gosala Channabasaveshwara of Gubbi and Thontada Siddalingeshwara of Yedeyuru. They built good number of Veerashaiva Mathas. According to an inscription found at Siddapura 5 temples were built by Immadi Chikkabhupala at that place. Many other temples were built at Midigeshi, Madhugiri, Gubbi, Kora, Yalanadu etc. They also built some Vaishnava temples at Madhugiri.

**Literature :-** There were many poets under the patronage of Mahanada Prabhus. Mummadi Chikkabhupala was also a poet. He wrote 'Abhinava Bharatha Sarasangraha' in Sanskrit. Virakta Thontadharya was the royal preceptor of Immadi Chikkabhupala. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and Kannada. He wrote more than 20 literary works. Mention may be made of Siddeshwara Purana, Palkurike Someshwara Purana, Niranjana Shataka. Thontadarya Ragale Anadi Veerasaiva Sangraha etc.

**Sculpture and Architecture:-** They built a number of temples, forts, mansions. Among the temples mention may be made of Vigneshwara, Veerabhadra, Bhyraveswara, Basaveshwara and Anjaneya temple at Siddapura. Malleshwara temple at Madhugiri is rich sculpture. It was built by Chikkappa Gowda-III. The images of Basava, Ganapathi and the Dwarapalakas were brought from Mummadi Pattana after demolition by Bahamani army. There is a 30 feet high Nandi pillar in front of the temple. The Mahanada Prabhus were known for the construction of forts at Madhugiri, Bijjawara, Kora, Channarayadurga, Kodegala, Siddapura. Madhugiri fort was built by Immadi Chikkappa Gowda in 1601. It has 15 main gates on all sides. There are number of ponds which are known as Arasana bhavi, Pradhana bavi, Jananabavi within the fort. There are the temples of Gopalakrishna and Anjaneya.

### **Conclusion**

Kaala Chikkappa Gowda had two sons viz. Ramappa Gowda and Thimmappa Gowda. Ramappa Gowda was given the title Mahanada Prabhu overlooking the seniority of the elder cousins. This also led to dissatisfaction of Thimmappa Gowda. He went to Mysore palace and requested the help of Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar. Dalavoy was sent by Wodeyar who attacked Midigeshi. Ramappa Gowda was defeated and captured and imprisoned at Srirangapattana. Thimmappa Gowda was made Mahanada Prabhu at Madhugiri. Thus Mahanada Prabhus came under Mysore Wodeyars. He ruled for 30 years. Thereafter Ramappa Gowda was released from the prison and appreciated as Mahanda Prabhu. Ramappa Gowda continued to be a vassal. But his successors failed to pay tribute regularly. Hydar Ali Dalavoy of Mysore attacked Madhugiri and collected tribute. He transferred to Madhugiri to Nadaprabhus of Bijjawara. Later in 1774 Tipu once again attacked Madhugiri to recover arrears. Channappa Gowda of Madhugiri was removed in his place Hazratwali was put in charge of Madhugiri. Channappa Gowda and his relatives died without heirs. Finally Bijjawara Jagir was annexed to Mysore kingdom on the death of Channappa Gowda in 1812.

**References :**

- [1] Ramachandra Rao, 1939, Paligars of Mysore and their civilization O.J.M.S. 30-2, Bangalore.
- [2] Rajendraprasad. B and M. Bose Babu (2006) : Nayankara System in Andhra in P Shanmugam and Srinivasan (ed), Recent advances in Vijayanagar studies, Chennai, New era publications.
- [3] Krishna Rao. M.V., 1970, Karnataka Itihasa Darshana, Bangalore.
- [4] Lakshmana Telagavi, 1998, 77 Palegararu Ithihasadarshana Samputa-3, Ithihasa Academy, Bangalore.
- [5] Narayanacharya. K., 1945, Madhugiri Charitre, Pra.V.B. Subbaiah & Sons Bangalore.
- [6] Srinivas. M.D., 1987, Madhugiri Ithihasa, Sudha Prakashana, Madhugiri.
- [7] Yogeshwarappa. D.N., 2009, Madyakalina Karnataka Poligarau, Dhatri Pustaka Prakashana, Bangalore,
- [8] Yogeshwarappa. D.N., 2009, Vijayanagara Kalda Tumakuru Pradeshada Nayakaru in R.Gopal, Mysore.
- [9] Thipperudraswamy.H. 1985, Karnataka Samskruthi Samikshe, Mysore.
- [10] Phalaksha, 2012, Political and Cultural History of Karnataka, Vol.I, Shashi Prakashana, Tiptur.

