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**MILITARY ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE  
KAKATIYAS RULERS (1000 to 1323 AD)**

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**Abstract:** *In the military history of any country, forts were given pivotal importance. Hindu Dharmasastras described a king without a fort to the elephant without a rut. The nature of fortification is dual in purpose – to afford protection from the enemy’s offensive and to make defense effective. The defense was one of the considerations of the pre-historic dwellings, be it a cave, rock shelter or hut, which gradually led to the construction of some defense device in the form of a cluster of houses and later it was felt to construct a defense building to keep their arms and armory. In the present article, an attempt is made to study the military administration during the Kakatiya period.*

**Keywords:** *Military Administration, Infantry, Cavalry, Elephantry, Recruitment and Training, Lemka system, Weaponry, Vyuha*

**Introduction**

With the expansion of the frontiers of the kingdoms, the concept of protection became more conspicuous than earlier and the need for sharing the responsibility of the king by ministers and generals increased. In due course of time, it became impossible for the king and his minister to bear the responsibilities of the state-craft since it became so heavy and complicated. That’s why, there arose the dire necessity of creating separate departments for finance and military, the former for the maintenance of administration and the latter dedicated for the protection of the state. Gradually, when the kingdoms further expanded territorially, many other departments came into existence which led to a hierarchy of ministers, officials and other employees. Kautilya advocated the centralized authority of the king who was described as both a despot

and the first servant of the people. He bestowed absolute powers on the king merely to serve and protect the people from internal hazards and external attacks. The author of *Sukranitisara* explains the biological organism of the state saying “The kingdom is an organism of seven limbs, viz., Sovereign, Minister, Friend, Treasure, State, Fort and Army. Of these seven constituents of the kingdom, the king or the sovereign is the head, the minister is the eye, the friend is the ear, the treasure is the mouth, the army is the mind, the fort is the arms and the state is the legs. The king, devoid of any one of these, cannot rule the kingdom.

According to the *Arthashastra*, an army is the most important requisite of a State. Much care was taken in organizing and maintaining an efficient army in Ancient India. Kings maintained their army as a standing army in addition to the army supplied by various sources. The standing army or the royal forces consisted of four wings viz., *Ratha* (vehicle-force), *Gaja* (elephant force), *Turaga* (cavalry) and *Padati* (infantry). Traditionally, this concept of *caturangabala* is accepted and followed during the ancient and medieval days with some minor modifications to meet the contemporary conditions and to enable the army to combat the enemy forces in different situations, in varying geographical settings and climatic conditions. The king was the supreme head of the army. But each wing of the army was separately headed by a commander and all the commanders worked under the orders of the commander-in-chief of the kingdom. The military department was an extensive department with a wider range of responsibilities and functions to be executed since it was solely responsible for the protection of the people and the kingdom from internal and external disturbances.

### **Military Administration**

Let us examine how the Kakatiyas administered the military department and maintained the forts as the centers of their strength:

The Kakatiyas were known for their valor and it was for the first time that all the Telugu-speaking people from nooks and corners were united. Their kingdom extended from Bastar in the north to Kanchipuram in the South, from Bidar in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east and Ganjam in the northeast. It was made possible only by their efficient military power and unquestionable loyalty of their generals.

Military administration from the very ancient times was well-conceived and constituted in India. The ancient law-givers also suggested ways and means for constituting a well-organized military mechanism and described the importance of the *caturangabala* and their maintenance by efficient administrative strategies. Megasthenese who studied the practical administrative system of ancient India describes the military administrative system thus: “A third governing body directs military affairs, of which there were six divisions with five members to each one co-operated with the admiral of the fleet, another with the superintendent of bullocks, the third division has charges of foot-soldiers, the fourth of horses, the fifth of war-chariots and sixth of elephants”. All

the law-givers of ancient India such as Kautilya, Kamandaka, Somadeva Suri, Someswara III and others explained the *chaturanga-Bala* as the best composition of the army.

Someswara III, the Western Chalukyan ruler, under whom the Kakatiyas once ruled as feudatories, had given the characteristic features of the four components of *Caturangabala* in his work *Manasollasa*. However, chariot, as a war force had ceased to be one of the four constituent components of the army by this time.

The king was the supreme head of the Kakatiya army and was known as the *Sarva-sainyadhyaksa*. All the commanders, viz., *Senapati* (in-charge of foot-soldiers), *Asvasahini* (In-charge of Cavalry), *Gaja-sahini* (in-charge of Elephantry) and all *Lemkas* and *Kataka-palakas* worked under his command. In between the King and the commanders of other wings, *Sakala-Sainyadhyaksa* was appointed to supervise the functioning of all other wings and their strategies and general administration of the military department, playing a catalytic role between the king and the other *Senapatis* and *Sahinis*. Nami Reddy was the *Sakala Senadhipati* during the reign of Ganapatideva. During the thirty years of Rudrama's regnal period, Padaram Boppesvara Nayaka in the early years and Dadi Somaya Nayaka in the later phase were the *Sakala Senadhipatis* of the Kakatiya army. Somayajaula Rudradevawas the *Sakala Senadhipati* of Prataparudra during the battle against Ambadeva. Later, Adidam Mallu and Somaya Lemka also are referred to in the inscriptions as holding that post.

According to the chronicles, the Kakatiya army during the reign of Prataparudra consisted of 100 elephants, 20,000 horses and 9,00,000 foot soldiers and their commanders were called *gajasahini*, *asvasahini* and *senadhipati* respectively. Gangaya Sahini is said to have been invited by Ganapatideva to train his cavalry and he is mentioned in the inscriptions as *Asvasahini*. Bendapudi Annayamantri is said to have been *Maharaya-gaja-sahini*, the chief of the elephant forces of the Kakatiya king. The famous general and brother-in-law of Ganapatideva and more known as the author of *Nrttaratnavali*, Jayapa Senani served the Kakatiya kingdom as *Gajasahini*. These *Sahinis* were well versed not only in training the horses and elephants as militant forces serving their masters on the battlefield but also were proficient in the art of healing their ailments and diseases.

In addition to the standing army maintained by the king, the nayakas also used to supply forces at the time of expeditions. The *nayamkara* system of military administration was the contribution of the Kakatiyas. It was first initiated by Rudramadevi and was well organized by Prataparudra. According to *Nitisara*, the king should assign villages to the *nayakas* instead of their salary and the maintenance of some army for the king's use. It was incumbent on the part of the *nayaka* to maintain some army for the service of the king in times of war. The number of foot soldiers, horses or elephants he had to maintain depending on the extent and revenue from the principality that was sanctioned to him. In addition to the supply of the army, the *nayaka* had to pay some tribute to the king annually.

The importance of the military as an offensive and defensive organ and fort as a defensive organ was recognized by the lawgivers. Kautilya, while propounding the theory of *saptanga*, conceived the seven constituent components of the state viz., 1. *Swamin* (king), 2. *Amatya* (minister), 3. *Mitra* 4. *Kosa* (treasury), 5. *Rastra* (kingdom), 6. *Durga* (fort) and 7. *Bala* (army). Of these seven constituents, territory, forts, army and treasury constituted the resources of the state. Forts and army were virtually necessary to defend the very existence of the state and so are regarded as its essential constituents. The defense of the country and the proper discharge of the constituent and ministerial functions of the state required ample resources and so *kosa* is also regarded as indispensable to the very existence of the State. These seven constituents are regarded as the limbs (*angas*) of the body politic by the Indian thinkers. Nobody politic can stand if one is found missing, just as these poised properly against one another will collapse if one of them is taken away.

The Tripurantakam inscription of Ambadeva refers to this *saptangas*. Here Ambadeva is said to have deprived Rudramadevi of her seven limbs. The *saptangas* in this context can be taken as the seven constituent parts of the kingdom namely *swami*, *amatya*, *Mitra*, *Kosa*, *rastra*, *Durga* and *Bala*.

Among these, *bala* or army was the most important *anga* to protect the kingdom from internal disturbances and external attacks. Hence the Kakatiyas were keen on organizing and maintaining an efficient army. They followed the prescriptions of the dharmasastras and the precedents of their predecessors i.e., the Western Chalukyas. Let us examine the military divisions of the Kakatiya army:

The term *Caturangabala* (*Ratha*, *Gaja*, *Turaga* and *Padati*) is used in the military administration of the period under study. But it is a traditional term vaguely used since the chariots had disappeared in military service long back and only *gaja*, *turaga* and *padati* *dalas* served the Kakatiya forces in the war field. Besides these main wings, the auxiliaries of the main army such as carts, beasts of burden etc. for carrying the amenities such as food supplies, additional weaponry, tent or war-camp material, water, medicines and other things, also had to follow the army to the war camp. The contemporary works on anthology also atleast to the fact that the concept of *saptanga* was accepted by the kings and the nobility during the Kakatiya period.

### Infantry

In the Kakatiya army, infantry was the strongest concerning numerical strength. According to *Pratapa Charitra*, the infantry in the army of Pratarudra was 9,00,000 and hence he was called *Navalaksa-daladhipati*. This wing of foot-soldiers was kept under the command of *Senapati*, who was the highest authority in this wing of the army. He was responsible for the recruitment and training of the soldiers, their payments, guiding them according to the strategies in the war-field, providing facilities like water supply, food arrangements, medical aid in the war field, etc. Above all, it was his responsibility

to take lead in the protection of the whole contingent from the enemy's attacks. He had to obey the orders of the king and act accordingly.

The foot-soldiers were held by Kamandaka and the author of *Sukranitisara* to be valuable as magnifying the strength of the army and creating a feeling of terror in the minds of enemy forces. They marched towards the war field guarding the other wings of the army on both sides. They consisted of highly professional warriors, wild tribes and forest brigades. Their weaponry, martial modes of fighting and strategies varied under the nature of the martial art in which they were trained and gained expertise.

The swords of different sizes, shapes, shields, javelin, axes, spear and lances were used by the foot-soldiers. The wild tribes surrounded the whole marching army with bows and arrows, safe-guarding the contingent and always in vigilance to keep away the approach of the enemy's forces. The soldiers in the infantry were to serve the whole army in times of need as water carriers, technicians to repair the paraphernalia or weaponry, to remove the wounded soldiers from one place to another for taking proper treatment and as spies also.

### Cavalry

The cavalry wing was so powerful that war became decisive on the physical strength. Especially during the medieval period, every king tried to possess a strong cavalry wing to sustain in the changing scenario of warfare. According to Somadeva Suri of Vemulavada (10<sup>th</sup> c. A.D.), the cavalry represented the mobility of the army, fortune smiled on a king with a strong cavalry and war became almost a sport to him. Chalukya Somesvara (12<sup>th</sup> c.A.D.), the author of *Manasollasa*, described cavalry as a key to royal fame. The rapid mobility mainly contributed to victory on the battlefield.

Realizing the need for the increase of cavalry, the Kakatiya rulers especially from the time of Ganapatideva, took steps for purchasing trained horses from the Arab merchants. It was during the reign of Rudrama, cavalry was further strengthened. Arabian merchants were provided many facilities to reside in the capital city. They were allowed to build their masjid. Ganapatideva trained his daughter Rudrama in all the martial arts and when the Seuna king of Devagiri marched into the Kakatiya capital. Rudrama riding on the back of the horse succeeded in driving away from the enemy and chased him up to Devagiri.

In *Kridabhiramam*, we find a reference to a reference to the thoroughfare of the warhorses with their riders on the back, swiftly moving on the main road of the fort city of Orugallu. It was a general practice in the fort city to send them for daily exercise and training and bring them back to the stable which according to *Kridabhiramam* was located in the north-western side of the Ekasila.

The sculpture found on the fort complex also depicts the cavalry proceeding in a procession to the war field. These horses were so favorable to them that they were

decorated on their faces, legs and back with a variety of colorful beads, silk cloth, leather belts and wool ribbons.

The study and research in *Asvasastra* were encouraged by the Kakatiya rulers. Those who were proficient in the science were appointed as *Asvasahinis* who could identify the horse suited into the war-field, to train them and to heal them of their ailments. An inscription from the Nalgonda district informs us that Ganapatideva invited Kayastha Gangaya Sahini from the north (Maharashtra) to train his cavalry. Later Gangaya Sahini received great admiration and *Gandapendera* (Hero's anklet) from Ganapatideva and was appointed as *Bahattara Niyogadhipati* and the governor of Mulikinadu. Since he had no sons, his nephews Jannigadeva and Murarideva became the chiefs over the cavalry and inherited the governorship of Mulikinadu. But their younger brother Ambadeva, who secretly imprisoned his brother Tripurari, the loyal servant of Raudrama and became the governor of Mulikinadu. He gradually developed his relations with the internal and external enemies of the Kakatiyas, rebelled against Rudrama and at last succeeded in putting her to death in the war field by treachery. The strength of cavalry at his behest and the support extended by the Pandyas who also possessed a huge cavalry force and elephantry were the main reasons for his courage to rebel and opting to treachery. Intoxicated by this, he issued an inscription boasting over his successes.

Realizing the situation and the need to improve the cavalry wing of his army, Prataparudra had undertaken some military reforms. He improved the strength of cavalry and elephantry and might have asked the experts to write on the sciences like *Asvasastra* and *Gajasastra*. Thus can be seen the appearance of some works on animal life such as *Sahadeva Pasuvaidya Sastramu* by an anonymous writer and *Salihotriyam* by Madhavacarya Saladu. *Salastr* is a Sanskrit word that means horse-trainer. In Telugu, it had become *Saladu* since the usage of '*du*' *pratyaya* is a typical feature of the Telugu language to adopt the Sanskrit word easily into Telugu.

### Elephantry

Elephantry occupied an important place in the military history of ancient and medieval India. According to Kautilya and Kamandaka, the destruction of the enemy's forces and the victory over the enemy mostly depends on elephant force. Kamandaka says that a duly equipped and war-trained elephant could slay 6000 well-caparisoned horses. The *Sargnadhara Paddhati*, written by Sargnadhara in the mid-fourteenth century affirms that an army without elephants is as despicable as a forest without a lion, a kingdom without a king. Hence the importance of training the elephants suited for the war field was highlighted by the experts in war science and also the administrators. According to *Pratapa Charitra*, the Kakatiyas maintained 100 elephants in the standing army alone. In addition to this, the regional governors also gave importance to elephantry and maintained elephants in their army as it increased their pomp among the other governors and military generals.



The sculptural representations also reveal that elephantry was regarded in high esteem. We can see rows of elephants proceeding to the war field as depicted on the walls of temples and military structures. The war elephant could create great terror in the war field by its great size and strength and also by the training it received from the trainer in attacking the enemy. It was regarded as a special arm of the whole army.

The early Kakatiya rulers seem to have felt it prestigious to enter into the war-field seated on the back of an elephant. Rudradeva marched into the war field against the Seunas of Devagiri mounted on an elephant, but lost his life, though a valiant fighter who won many wars. Even Mahadeva, his brother and successor, lost his life on the battlefield fighting against the treacherous forces of Devagiri at midnight while mounted on an elephant. These two incidents indicate that though the early Kakatiya rulers felt it royal dignity to march into the war-field while mounted on the back of the elephant, the later they preferred the horse, which can move fast facilitating the rider to escape from the dangerous situation and move fast to attack the enemy.

Rudrama, according to *Prataparudra Charitra*, moved into the battlefield seated on the back of a horse and gave a tough fight against the Seuna forces of Devagiri and succeeded in driving away Mahadeva and chased him up to his fort of Devagiri. Though she is depicted as seated on an elephant in some scenes of the procession in sculptures, she is shown very often on the back of a horse. In the Viragals also she is shown as mounted on a horse and holding a weapon indicating that she died while fighting on the battlefield. In one of the *viragals*, she is shown as valiantly fighting to hold a knife and the horse too can be found galloping ferociously. In the next panel, she is depicted as if losing consciousness with her head leaning to the right side and her horse too can be found depicted in a stand-still posture. According to the information given in the Chanduptla inscription, she died in the middle of November 1289 at the age of nearly 85 years. She won the wars mostly with the help of the cavalry, in addition to the infantry and elephantry.

However, elephants were regarded as the most precious and noble that Rudrama is shown in her glorified appearance as *Rayagajakesari* in the sculpture. In this sculpture she is shown sitting on a lion, which stood on an elephant and her, receiving a flower offered by the elephant by its tusk. It is an indication here that she had the credit of defeating elephant-like enemies and received their appreciation and had become a lion (a nightmare to the elephants) towards them. Her prowess is revealed by showing that she had defeated very powerful elephant-like enemies, which magnifies her strength and chivalry.

Elephants here were regarded as the embodiment of strength to the army and were protected carefully under the supervision of specialized personnel who looked after their feeding, cleanliness, health care, regular training, etc. The training to which these animals were subjected was such that they could face the ordeal of battle efficiently, would obey the orders of their master to attack the enemy, safeguarding

both its ownself and of its master. It uses its limbs as weapons and attacks the enemy in the war-field. It was trained in such a way to destroy the fences of the enemy's camps, ramparts of palaces, forts and other structures and to shatter the enemy forces to nooks and corners so that its master could reach the targeted area.

Some elephants were used as beasts of burden to transport the necessities into the war camp. Steps were also taken to guard the elephants' vulnerable physical parts by covering them with leather bags and belts. Each elephant was looked after and protected on the battlefield by a small group of combats in addition to the rider.

Both the horses and the elephants were so much loved that they were decorated gorgeously with a variety of ornaments, silken cloth and embroidered leather belts and sheets. Horses were believed to have had their origin from the Gandharvas. They were used for riding not only in warfare but also in adventurous sports like hunting and also as a means of speedy transport. Whatever might be the purpose it served, every horse was usually decorated with a feather on its head. Its body was covered with mukhamal strewn with precious stones. Its face was covered likewise, but with openings at the eyes. A belt studded with gems which were hidden in the middle of the body was spread over its body, on its neck were decorated chains with a variety of pendants.

The royal elephant was profusely decorated. Its body was covered by a multi-colored silken cloth on which a rectangular couch, made of gold and studded with precious stones, was arranged. Generally, the royal personages used to sit on it. The face of the elephant was decorated as in the case of the horses. From head to the back, strings of pearls were hung on both sides of the body. Chains with bells were hung on the neck which was made of gold. The sculptural representations on the walls of the temples and the forts are visual evidence of the importance given to the horses and the elephants.

### **Recruitment and Training**

It is a known fact that there were mainly two categories of army secured by the king in times of war. They were a) The Standing Army and b) the Army Marched along with the Royal Forces to the war field. The former category was recruited, trained, equipped with arms and armory and paid by the royal treasury. The latter was maintained by the feudal lords or others. The former was known as *Siddha-sainya* or standing army and the latter was called *Sadhya-sainya* or the gathered or collected forces.

In ancient India, the army generally was composed of the hereditary troops (*Maula*), hired (*bhrita*), *sreni* (guild) troops, *mitra* (troops deputed by friendly rulers), *amitra* (troops defeated and became submissive to the king) and the troops belonging to the wild tribes (*atavika*). Kautilya explains the relative merit of the troops thus: The best army is the one that was recruited directly from the hereditary troops, well-disciplined and loyal. The hired troops are regarded as better ones when compared with the *sreni* troops as they are more obedient and disciplined than that of the hereditary forces. When compared with the *mitra* troops, the *sreni* troops were considered as preferable as

they belong to the same state and had great regard to their master/ruler. However, the troops of an ally (*mitra-sena*) are preferable to *amitra-sena*.’ However, it is advised that the last two troops are to be handled carefully and are to be treated as something like a serpent at the feet. The *atavika* troops also are not reliable as they lack proper training and discipline and the troops recruited from civilian society were preferred. But in practice, the *atavika* troops were the main components in *vanadurgas*. This *sadangabala* concept was taken into consideration by the writers on anthology during the period under study. But the Kakatiya rulers followed their policy following the need and availability of the soldiers and trained them accordingly.

“Military institution in a country or a state reflects the social system, the national economy, state policy and the level of military art. The influence of the socio-political setup is seen in the nature and aims of the army – its composition, recruitment and training methods.” The Kakatiyas followed the policy of conciliation in socio-political matters. They aimed at the establishment of internal peace and order by enforcing the feeling of equality of all castes and tried to share their authority or administrative responsibility with the caste organizations known as *samayasa*. The same policy was followed in the case of recruitment of the army and allotment of fiefdoms. Only merit and capability were taken into consideration while promoting the military personnel to higher levels rather than the caste considerations. Especially, social equality among the soldiers and non-discriminatory policy in the army was advised by Rudradeva in *Nitisara* to be followed by the rulers. Otherwise, he says, even Indra, the Lord of Heaven too, cannot protect his fort.

Kautilya, Kamandaka and the author of *Sukraniti* expressed their opinions on the ideal social base of the army component. Kautilya prefers Ksatriyas as the best group to be recruited into the *Maula-sena* or the royal army; next he prefers the vaisya and sudra troops to improve numerical strength. He had no faith in the Brahmana troops but expresses that they can be admitted into the army if they voluntarily offer their services. Kamandaka also expresses almost the same opinion, but *Sukranitisara* lays down that Sudras, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and *mlecchas* (mixed castes) can be recruited into the army if they are brave and are built physically strong and devoted to their master and revengeful to the enemy in safeguarding their homeland. Kakatiya Prataparudra stresses the need to follow a policy of social equality among all the soldiers in the army.

We find many references to the active role played by Brahmana generals even before the Kakatiyas, which indicates the fact that even brahmin youth also were trained in martial arts, were recruited into the army and got promotions as generals and commanders by dint of their merit. The Addanki inscription makes it clear that Pandaranga and Vinayadi Sarma played a crucial role in expanding the frontiers of the eastern Chalukyan kingdom during the reign of Gunaga Vijayaditya. Both the generals were of Brahmin caste with hereditary family history as military generals.

Unlike the north Indian social structure basing on a fourfold caste hierarchical social structure, the South Indian social system comprised of 18 castes (*Asta Dasa-varna*) which were identified with their occupation. It is also to be noticed that there was no rigidity in shifting to the profession of choice with mutual understanding of the groups. Especially during the Eastern Chalukyan period, Brahmanas in the Telugu regions were divided into *Vaidikas* and *Niyogis*. The *Vaidikas* dedicated themselves to *adhyayana*, *adhyapana*, *yagna*, *yajana* and the like whereas the *niyogis* took to government service mostly in revenue and military departments. That's why during the Kakatiya period we can find references to Brahmana military generals in the inscriptions.

Gangadhara and Peda Mallana, son of Nanaguara during the reign of Prola II and Rudradeva, Induluri Somana and Samanta Bhoja's family, especially belonging to the *niyogi* Brahmana community, Induluri Annayadeva and Ponkala Mallana Peggada, Somayajula Rudradeva and some others during the reign of Rudrama and Prataparudra served as a military general and won many wars.

The officers employed to train the animals used in warfare were called *Sahinis*. Those who trained the horses were known as *Asva-sahinis* and those trained the elephants were known as *Gaja-sahinis*. Marana, the author of *Markandeya-puranamu*, was an *Asva-sahini*. He dedicated his work to Gannaya-nayaka, who was also a military general under Prataparudra and later became the *Kataka-palaka*, i.e., the military officer-in-charge of the fort-city.

Bendapudi Annaya, belonging to *niyogi* Brahmana caste served the Kakatiya army as *Maharaya-gajasahini*, the chief of the elephant forces of the king. Earlier to this, he served as a military general and a Nayaka. He is described as 'Moon to the kingdom of the Lord of Nine lakhs of archers, the Fire of Destruction to the Yavana armies and the ravage of the pleasure gardens of the city of Karnataka.'

Macaya Nayaka and his son Devineningaru or Devari-nayaningaru were the other generals who served as *Gaja-sahinis* in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. Their ancestors Devinayaka, Yerrapa-nayaka, Parvata-nayaka and Poti-nayaka were employed in the Kakatiya army as generals and *Gaja-sahinis* by dint of their chivalry and scholarship in the science of elephant anatomy and medicine and also their expertise in training the war elephants. These generals who claimed the Pallava origin took lead in the southern campaigns of Prataparudra and won the commendable achievements where elephantry is said to have played a vital role. Their successors continued their military services even during the Vijayanagara period as Kamma commanders with the family names of Devineni and Parvataneni as both the brothers Devinayaka and Parvatanayaka had grown with name and fame as military generals and in course of time, this led to the separate identity of the family names. The change of family name can be seen in the case of the Induluri family also. When Kolanu region was occupied by Induluri nayakas on behalf of the Kakatiyas, Rudra of this family was appointed as its governor and then the family name of Rudra had become 'Kolani'. This is an interesting social aspect in the military history of Andhradesa.

## The Lemka System

The *Lemka* system was the significant system in the military administration of the Kakatiyas. The king was accompanied by a special troop of soldiers to the battlefield. Generally, everything in India during the ancient and medieval days was guarded always even surrounded in the Royal court by a band of bodyguards. The Kakatiya kings maintained another type of bodyguard brigade to follow the king to the battlefield. They were companions at arms, who called themselves as the sons of the ruler. The main feature is that they took an oath to look on their lord as the preceptor and deity in this world and the next, to have no regard either for their property or for their lives in furtherance of his interests, to stand by him in the hour of danger, to fight his battles, either to perish with him in the war field or kill themselves if they happen to survive their lord.

An inscription dated A.D. 1045 describes the main characteristics of a *Lemka* thus: "Truth should be his utterance, praise of him (the king) his work, a charity his recreation, the succour of the distressed seeking his protection his merit and unflinching attitude in a great battle his prime concern." The rules and regulations to be followed in the military career of the *lemkas* were known as *Lenkavali*.

*Lemkas* were granted estates by the king out of the proceeds of which they were to maintain themselves. For example, Malideva-lemka is granted the nayamkara of Kondavidu-sthala consisting of 18 villages in the present Duggirala Mandal of Guntur district. Even now, we can find a hamlet namely Virulapalem still existing in the vicinity of this village. Some hero stones also can be found around these villages. An inscription in the temple of Anandesvara in Pedakonduru village records the remission of the levy of *bantela-ayamu* on the temple lands. It suggests that on these lands a separate levy was collected for the maintenance of *bantus* or soldiers. Kopparam in the Guntur district was a cantonment maintained by four *lemkas*, namely Tikkaya-Rudrayalemka. Marayalemka, Picchayalemka and Rudrayalemka.

The other famous *lemka-generals who led the lemka* soldiers of this period were: Juttaya-lemka-Gonkareddy, Rudra-lemka, Somaya-lemka, Madaya-lemka, Dechaya-lemka and Timmaya-lemka. *Prataparudra Caritra* refers to some names of the *lemkas* like Visvanathuni Nagulemka, Jeti Nagulemka, Gogula Mallu-lemka, Vasigala Nagulemka etc. It is further said that these *lemkas* guard the cities with 3,00,000 infantry. These *lemkas* trained their army in their military camps known as *Gudemulu (regiments)*. *The same work* informs us that there were 25,000 such *gudemulu* maintained by these *lemkas* whereas the other cantonments were 300 in and around the city of Ekasilanagara. The seventy-seven nayakas protecting the fort of Orugallu maintained 1,500 soldiers each. It indicates the importance given to the *lemka* forces in the personal security and the protection of the capital city, especially the king's fort.

## Weaponary

The ancient works on Rajaniti refer to four kinds of war weapons *Mukta* (thrown), *amukta* (not thrown), *muktamukta* (missile) and *yantramukta* (weapons hurled from a

machine). The bows and arrows form the main weapons in *Mukta* group. Fire arms, *bhindipala*, *sakti*, *drughana*, *nalika*, *pasa*, *tomara*, *laguda*, *cakra*, *dantakanta* and *musundi* were included in this category. *Vajra*, *halayudha*, *parasu*, *gosura*, *asidhenu*, *astra*, *kuntapinaka*, *gada*, *mudgara*, *musala*, *mustika*, *pattisa*, *parigha*, *mayukhi*, *sataghni*, *asi* etc. form part of the *amukta* weapons. The *yantramukha* weapons were those hurled from the machines. Missiles were considered as *muktamukta* weapons. All these weapons can be found mentioned in the Itihasas and the puranic works while describing the war scenes.

Hieuntsang, who visited South India in the seventh century A.D., recorded his observations on the weaponry of infantry thus: "They carry a long spear and a great shield; sometimes they hold a sword or sobre and advance to the front with impetuosity. All their weapons are sharp and pointed. Some of them are spears, shields, bows, arrows, swords, sabres, battle-axes, lances, halberds, long javelins and various kinds of slings. These weapons they have used for ages." This indicates the non-progressive character of weaponry till the rule of the Chalukyas. Though their form was the same, there might have taken place a change in the shape and effective functioning, as change is the outcome of the need.

Some of the war weapons of the Kakatiya period can be found mentioned in the inscriptions and literary works of the period and the depiction of sculptural representations. The Vardhamanapura inscription refers to the weapons like *asi*, *kampanamu*, *musalamu*, *kanayamu*, *mudgaramu* *musindi*, *bhindivalamu*, *cakramu*, *krakacamu*, *naracamu*, *karmukamu*, etc. In the sculptural depictions, we can see *pasu*, *trisula*, *khatvanga*, knives, war-sickles, curved swords, bows and arrows. *Kumara Sambhavam* and *Ranganatha Ramayanamu*, the contemporary Telugu works of the Kakatiya period refer to the following war-weapons: *parasu*, *kumtamu*, *gada*, *bhallamu*, *suriya*, *vajra-musti*, *trisula*, *bida*, *mandalagra*, *parigha*, *vakra*, *pavu*, *pasa*, *ankusa*, *sabara*, *mudgara*, *tomara*, *eda-katti*, *samkha*, *bhindi*, etc. *Kumara Sambhavamu* also mentions the categorization of weapons as *Mukta*, *amukta*, *muktamukta* and *mantrayukta*

According to *Pratapa Charitra*, the number of foot-soldiers was high and among them, nine lakhs of soldiers were archers. From the very ancient days, Indians practiced archery beyond every other mode of fighting and developed it far beyond other nations. The Indian bow was as long as a man's height and was used by an arrow which was three cubits in length with a heavy point. Its advantage is laid in the fact that the fight could throw it at a greater distance than the other weapons like javelin or *cakra*. The use of long and heavy bows required great physical strength and securing unerring aim required constant practice. The highest number of archers in the Kakatiya army suggests the importance given to the training in archery and its popularity.

*Bhindivala* had a broad and bent tail head measuring one cubic in length. It was used by the left foot of the warrior placed in front. The various uses of this weapon were cutting, striking and breaking. The *Sakti* is identified with the spear which was two cubits long and had an open and broad mouth in a shape like the leaf of a tree. Its shape resembled the udder of a cow and four *hastas* in length. The *Drughana* resembling

*mudgara* was a wooden mace or staff headed with a heavy spiked ball of iron. *Sukranitisara* refers to two kinds of *nalikas*, or guns – one big and the other smaller in size. The latter with a little hole at the end measured 60 *angulas* dotted with several spots at the muzzle end. It was carried by the soldiers individually whereas the former was heavy and was carried in a cart to the battlefield. The author explains the method of preparing these firearms. Kamandaka refers to *nalika* as a firing gun as a signal for the unwary king.

The *musundi* was an eight-sided cudgel. It was furnished with a broad circular disc with a small opening in the middle, which was of three kinds – endowed with eight, six or four spokes. The various uses of a disc were, felling, whirling, rending, breaking, severing and cutting. The *Gada* was a heavy rod of iron with one hundred spikes at the top. It was used to destroy elephants and rocks. It could be handled in twenty different ways as needed while fighting with the enemy by bending, stooping low, stringing forward, retreating, and ready to fly open and so doing as to create fear in the enemy.

The *musala* was a weapon in the shape of a pestle, both ends wellknit together. It was a pointed rod made of *khadira* and belonged to the category of *sula* or trident. The *mudgara* was a staff in the shape of a hammer, three cubits in length and with a strong circular handle.

Concerning the armour used by the soldiers, we can find the importance given to the leather coats of mail to cover the body from top to toe including both the hands and the second type consists of a mail of two separate plates covering the upper and the lower parts of the body. The third one was a cloth worn as armor. *Sirastrana*, *dalū* and *khatvanga* were the protective shields used by the soldiers while engaged in war. The *sirastranas* or helmets were generally made of metal with leather tips hanging on both sides of one's face. The *khatvanga* was a type of shield shaped like a human skull. It was held in the left hand to safeguard oneself from the attack of the enemy. The *dalū* was a round-shaped shield used for the same purpose. In the sculptural depictions found in the remains of Warangal fort, we can find the symbol of a bell embossed on the shields used by the Kakatiya soldiers. It served the purpose of identifying the Kakatiya soldiers on the battlefield and not to commit the mistake of attacking their soldiers, belonging either to the royal or nayankara wings.

In Amir Khusrau's account, we find a reference to the usage of a semi-mechanical contrivance known as *Manjanikas* used by the soldiers protecting the fort of Orugallu. It was used to throw heavy stone balls against the enemy forces preventing them from entering the fort. Recently, a heap of such stone balls are unearthed in the fort complex and are preserved in Khush Mahal.

Though the weaponry of the Kakatiya infantry was traditional, they excelled in utilizing their weapons with many talents by perfect training. Allauddin Khilji came to know of the swordsmanship of the Telugu generals and he was curious to witness such a sword fight. To satisfy his curiosity, Potuganti Maili and Telugu Bijjana visited his court in Delhi and fought an exhibition fight, in which Telugu Bijjana was defeated.

Alla-ud-din curiously witnessed their sword fight and was much impressed by their talent and honored them in his court.

### Vyuha

*Vyuha* or war-strategy is the most important approach to face the enemy successfully in the war field. There were four heads of different wings of the army organizing the army in different *vyuhas* on the strategic designs like *Chakravyuha*, *Sucivyuha*, *Makaravyuha*, *Garuda*, *Kraunca*, *Mandala*, *Kurma*, *Sarvatobhadra*, etc. This was essential to subdue the powerful army of the enemies, especially when it was formidable. Prataparudra was trained specially in *Vyuharacana* (art of drawing military strategies or engineering). He planned a three-pronged attack on Ambadeva and his allies as Prataparudra was fully aware that any attack upon Ambadeva would certainly involve the Kakatiya forces in a war with his powerful allies. Though he is mentioned as an expert in *vyuharacana*, such details of the *vyuhas* which he implemented in the war field are not available so far.

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