

History and Archaeology of Gadag Taluka: A Study

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Abstract – On 24th August, 1997, ‘Gadag’ emerged as a new district. In the fields of arts, literature, culture, spiritual and industry, Gadag has its own heritage since long back. It is also a tourist place with greenery and being visited by many nature-lovers. The temples with enthralling sculptures, Basadis, ancient monuments, artists, painters, musicians of international fame, renowned poets, writers, playwrights, actors, directors, spiritual leaders, seers, scholars, social reformers, religious pivots who take people in good path – all these have enhanced the internal richness of Gadag District.

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POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Historical Background:

The influence of Jainism in Karnataka has been substantial for more than 1200 years from the beginning of the Christian era to the 13th century A.D., Jainism played an important role in the social and political life of Karnataka. Several ruling dynasties like the Kadambas of Banavasi, the Gangas of Talkad, the Chalukyas of Badami, the Rastrakutas of Malkhed, the Chalukyas of Kalyana, the Kadambas of Goa, the Kalachuris of Kalyana, the Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra and the Vijayanagara rulers gave royal patronage to Jainism. The epigraphs and the literary works introduce us to the royal families who extended their support and help to Jainism.

Kadambas of Banavasi:

The Kadambas of Banavasi, who ruled from the 4th century to the 6th century A.D., were essentially the followers of Hinduism (Saivites or Vaishnavites). Yet some rulers like Kakusthavanna, Mrigesavanna and Ravivarma gave liberal grants to the Jain temples and establishments. The Halsi plates of Kakusthavanna start with an invocation to Bhagavan Jinendra and ends with reverence to Rsabha, the first Tirthankara of Jainism. It records an interesting information that the giant was made to general Srutakirti, for having saved the King. The gift consisted of a field called Bodavarakshetra in the Khetragrama which belonged to the holy Arahantas. From the contemporary records it appears that Halsi was a great centre of the Yapaniya sect of Jainism. The Devagiri copper plate of the third regnal year of

Mrigesavanna informs us that forty nivartana of land was donated by the ruler to the Jina Chaityalaya at Brihatparalura for the purpose of worship and maintenance. The Devagiri plates¹ of the fourth regnal year of Mrigesavanna records that the King having divided the place of Kavalavangu into three parts, granted them to the worship of Jaina Gods, to the Svetapata² Mahasramana Sangha and to the Nirgrantha Mahasramana³ Sangha. It has been the belief among the followers of Jainism that Karnataka was the sole abode of the Digambara sect of Jainism from the very beginning. But the Devagiri record of Mrigesavanna reveals that ascetics of both the Digambara sect and the Svetambara sect thrived in the Kadamba Kingdom. The record confirms our belief as to the existence of the Svetambara faith in Karnataka from very early times. The Halsi plates of the eighth regnal year of Mrigesavanna⁴ mentions that the King granted 33 nivartana of land to the ascetics of the Yapaniyas, Nirgrantha and Kurchaka Sangha. This record seems to be the first record that makes reference to the Yapaniya Sangha.⁵ Probably Halsi thrived as a great centre for the congregation of monks of the Yapaniyas, the Digambaras and the Svetambara sects of Jainism. These records of Mrigesavanna further reveal that the King had built a Jinalaya at Palasika for the merit of his father Santivarma. This fact leads us to a doubt as to whether or not, Kadamba King Santivarma was a follower of Jaina faith. The grant of four nivartanas of land for puja of Jina is recorded in an undated Halsi inscription of Ravivarma.

Another copper plate record⁶ of Ravivarma from Halsi dated in his eleventh regnal year states that

fifteen nivartanas of land were granted at Palasika for the anointing of Jinendra on every full moon day. The grant made to the Jaina religious establishments by Kakusthavarma, Santivarman and Mrigesavarman, is referred to in the set of copper plate records⁷ of Ravivarman. It is specifically stated in the record that the income received from the donated place should be used for the festivals of the Jain temple and for the feeding of ascetics of the Yapaniya Sangha at Halsi. Further, Yuvaraja Devavarman, the son of Kranavarman donated a place to the sect of the Yapaniyas for purposes of worship and maintenance of the temple.⁸ This has been recorded in the Devagiri plates of the Kadambas of Tripadvata line who ruled from Dharwad region.⁹ Due to the personal allegiance of several Kadamba rulers, Jainism, particularly the Yapaniyas and the Digambara sects, became popular among the masses in the Kadamba Kingdom.

Gangas of Talakadu :

The Gangas who ruled in the southern parts of Karnataka, were great champions of Jainism. Kongunivarman I established the Ganga Kingdom at Gangaperur with the help and blessings of Jain Acharya Simhanandi.¹⁰ The great Acharya admonished the royal disciples in the following words "If you fail in what you promised; if you do not approve of Jaina teachings; If you seize the wife of another; if you eat honey or flesh; If you form relationships with how people; If you do not give your wealth, to the needy; If you flee from the battlefield; then your race will go to ruin".¹¹ The place of Gangaperur¹² where the Ganga princes met Jaina guru, was already a great Jain centre in the days of Simhanandi.¹³ Avinita, being a devout Jain, made a number of grants to Jaina basadis in Punnad and other places.¹⁴ Durvinita, the son and successor of Avinita, patronized Jainism. A later record (1055-56 A.D.) of the time of the Kalyana Chalukya ruler Somesvara I, mentions that the Parsva basti was built by King Durvinita.¹⁵ The celebrated Jaina grammarian Pujiyapada was the spiritual Guru of Durvinita.¹⁶ King Shivamara I gave some gift of land for the services of Jain temple.¹⁷ Sripurusha, Shivamara II, Nitimarga and Butuga were Jains by persuasion. During the rule of the Rastrakuta King Krishna III his Ganga subordinate Mahamandalika Butayya Permadi (Butuga II) was governing the Gangavadi 96000. His Queen Padmabbarasi constructed a basadi at Naregal. The Naregal record of 950 A.D. registers gift of a tank made to the danasala attached to the basadi.

King Marsimha II, a very fervent Jaina, constructed basadis and manasthamba¹⁸ at various places. The Ganga Kandarpa Jinamandira was built at lakshmesvar. Three lithic records found at Lakshmesvar in Gadag dist, are related to Marasimha II of the Ganga family. The first record¹⁹ which is in Sanskrit dated 968-69 A.D., mentions the fact that the king Ganga Kandarpa alias Marasimha, gave the place of Siggala to the Kandarpa Jinalaya

named after him. The grant was made over to Jayadeva Pandita, a disciple of Ekadeya. It is stated that the grant must be utilized for the worship and festival of Jinendra. The second inscription²⁰ which is dated in 968-69 A.D., also records some land grant to the Ganga Kandarpa Jinalaya. Ganga permadi Jinalaya is also referred to in it. Sravanabelgola²¹ record refers to the Jain ascetic Maladhari Svami as the resident of Annitaka. Annitaka is the same as Annigeri where the Ganga ruler Permadi Butuga had built a Jaina temple named after himself as Permadi Jinalaya.²² Maladharasvami probably spent chaturmas here in this temple. The third record²³ informs a grant for effecting repairs to Sankha-Jinalaya and for feeding of Jaina ascetics. The grant was made by Marasimha II in 971 A.D. Since this inscription is badly damaged, the details of the grant are lost. The Kuge Brahrnadeva pillar inscription²⁴ on the Chandragiribetta or Chikkabetta at Sravanabelgola dated in 974 A.D., informs in detail the military achievements of Marasimha II and narrates his faith in Jaina doctrine. Marasimha II participated in the battles fought by his overlord, Krishna III, the Rastrakuta king and won victories over the enemies in several battles. In these wars, he got the help of his own minister and general Chavundaraya. After the death the death of the Rastrakuta king Krishna III, Marasimha tried to restore the glory of the Rastrakutas by installing Indra IV on the throne at Bankapur but failed to accomplish his desire.

The 12th century A.D., record²⁵ found at Bognur in the Navalagund taluk refers to Bankapur as the capital of Indra-Vallabha. In this connection Dr. Desai says "Bankapur was a seat of reputed Jaina teachers and Indra IV being a devout follower of the faith must have had great attraction for it. As the Rastrakutas ceased to wield political power by 973 A.D., Indra IV could not have ruled in reality. He was however, crowned to the Rastrakuta throne about 973 A.D., by his maternal uncle Marasimha of the western Ganga family. Claiming himself to be the master of the Rastrakuta Kingdom, Indra IV appears to have settled at Bankapur until his death in 982 A.D. In this manner the place came to be known as the capital of Indravallabha. This genuine historic association handed down in popular tradition seems to have been recorded more than a century later in the epigraph of about 12th century.²⁶ Marasimha relinquished his kingdom and observing the vow of sallekhana for three days with the rites of worship in the holy presence of Ajitasenabhanaraka, died at Bankapur. It may be remembered here that the composition of Mahapurana by Gunabhadracharya in the 9th century A.D., at Bankapura further popularized this place as a great resort of Jainism. Rachamalla and Chavundaraya extended their patronage to art and literature. Besides being minister and general, Chavundraya was a scholar and poet. The world famous Bahubali statue is said to have been made by him in 981

A.D. at Sravanabelgola. The Kannada literary work Chavundaraya Purana was composed by Chavundaraya in 978 A.D. The introductory verses²⁷ in this work, are devoted to the praise of several renowned Jaina preceptors such as Kumarasena, Chandrasena, Virasena, Nagasena, Aryasena, Ajitasena etc., Mulgund, Lakshmeshvar, Bankapur and Kopana had some religious links with Sravanabelgola. Ajitasena who appears to have held the pontifical throne at Mulgund,²⁸ was the preceptor of Kings Marasimha as well as Rachamalla and his reputed minister Chavundaraya.

The Chalukyas of Badami:

The Chalukyas of Badami who ruled from the 6th century to the middle of 8th century A.D., continued the tradition of patronage to Jainism. Most of the rulers of this dynasty were ardent followers of Hinduism, yet their liberal attitude and support still continued to foster the cause of Jainism. The Chalukya Prince Jayasimha I patronized the Jaina preceptor Vadiraja²⁹ the disciple of Somadeva who was the author of Yasastilaka Campu, Mangalesha, the son of Kirtuvarma built the Jaina cave at Badami. Puligere (modern Lakshmeshwar in Gadag dist) has several Jain inscriptions³⁰ of the Badami Chalukya rulers. All these inscriptions are in Sanskrit and they are probably, the later copies of the original copper plate or stone inscriptions. The earliest record³¹ of this dynasty which is found in Lakshmeshvar refers to the reign of Pulakesi II who is described as Erayamma Satyasraya, the son of Ranaparakrama Maharaja. This inscription states that during the rule of Pulakesi II, a certain Durgasakti, son of Kundasakti and grandson of Vijayasakti of Sendraka lineage, gave grant for the worship of an offering to the God in the Sankha Jinalaya. Durgasakti was apparently a subordinate of the Chalukyas. King Vinayaditya donated Hadagile place in the Beluvala 300, for the benefit of the temple of Sankha-Jinendra at the place of Puligere. During the rule of King Vijayaditya³² the place Sembolal was given as a gift to the temple of Jina Bhattaraka at Purikaranagara.

Jaina preceptors were looked upon with great respect by the Chalukya rulers. In 730 A.D., at the instance of the preceptor Nirvadya Pandita, King Vijayaditya gave gift³³ of the place of Kaddamma for the worship of Sankha Jina and for the maintenance of a danasala in the temple premises. Vikramaditya II embellished the Sankhatirtha Jinalaya of Pulikara³⁴ and repaired the Dhavala Jinalaya at the request of Bahubali Shresthi.³⁵ For the offering and maintenance of the temple, a gift was entrusted into the hands of Vijayadevapanditacharya of Mula Sangha and Devagana. The recipient of the gift was the disciple of Ramadevacharya who performed the most austere penances.³⁶ It is interesting to note that the Jaina record at Lakshmeshvar of King Vikramaditya II begins with an invocation to lord Vishnu, the family god of the Chalukyas.

Rastrakutas of Malkhed:

During his rule, Rajadityarasa of Saluki (Chalukya) family gave a gift of land to the Jaina temple called Demallave-Vasadi.³⁷ The next prominent Rastrakuta ruler Amoghavarsha Nrupatunga who is described as the follower of Syadvada doctrine,³⁸ was a staunch follower of Jainism. In Parsvabhyudaya, Jinasenacharya calls himself as the chief preceptor of the king. This view is further corroborated by Gunabhadracharya, the author of Mahapurana, who relates that the monarch was the disciple of holy Jinasenacharya. Amoghavarsha used to consider himself purified by the very remembrance of this holy monk.³⁹ He had appointed Gunabhadracharya, the author of Uttarapurana, as the teacher for his son Krishna II. An important lithic record of 860 A.D., is found engraved on the slab set up in the Paramesvara temple at Konnur which is situated on the south bank of the river Malaprabha in the Nargund taluk of Gadag Dist. It states⁴⁰ that Amoghavarsha, while residing at his capital Manyakhela, granted the place Taleyuru and some land in another place for the benefit of a Jain sanctuary built by Bankesa of the Sellaketana family at Kolanura to the Jaina sage Devandra. The recipient of the grant was the disciple of Trikala yogisa of Mula Sangha.⁴¹ According to Dr. Sundara, the present Paramesvara temple at Konnur, was originally a Jaina sanctuary⁴² built by Bankesha of Kolanura, as evident from the Jinabimba in the lalatabimba of the door frame of the garbagriha.

The Sanskrit work, Ganitasarasamgraha⁴³ was composed by Mahaviracharya under the patronage of Amoghavarsha I. In it the author praises the king in five verses in the beginning. Jayadhavala-tika, a commentary on the books of the Shatkhandagama, was composed by Virasenacharya and its concluding portion is attributed to Jinasenacharya who also composed Parsvabhyudaya and Purvapurana under Amoghavarsha I.⁴⁴ Jinasenacharya probably belonged to the Sena section of the Mula Sangha.⁴⁵ Srivijaya the author of Kavirajamarga⁴⁶ was patronized by Amoghavarsha. Jaina grammarian Sakatayana, a contemporary of the Rastrakuta Amoghavarsha, wrote a commentary on grammatical work named Amoghavartti in honour of the king under whose patronage he evidently wrote it.⁴⁷

Krishna II was the son and successor of Amoghavarsha I who appointed Gunabhadracharya as the teacher to his son. During his rule in 902-03 A.D., his governor Cikaraya of Belvala Vishaya, constructed⁴⁸ a lofty temple of Jina at the place of Mulgund in Gadag district. Arasarya made an endowment for the maintenance of the Jinalaya built by his father. The gift was entrusted to the hands of the Jaina

preceptor Kumarasena Acharya of Candrikavata. Further Krishna II gave some donations to this temple.⁴⁹

The Jain poet Somadevasuri⁵⁰ wrote his encyclopaedic work Yasastilaka Campu during the rule of the Rastrakuta king Krishna III. Another Jain literary figure by name Indra Nandi⁵¹ composed Jvalamalini Kalpa in 939 A.D., at Manykheta under the patronage of the same King. It was this ruler who patronized the famous poet Ponna, the author of Shantipurana and Jinaksharamale in Kannada and who gave him the title of Ubhaya-Kavi-Chakravarti⁵² or Imperial poet in both languages, for his proficiency in Kannada as well as Sanskrit. An inscription of the time of Krishna III, refers to the construction of a Jain temple at Naregal in Gadag district, by Padmabbarasi, the wife of Gnga Governor Butuga II and in 950 A.D., a grant of tank was made to the temple by the subordinate chief Mamayara Marasimghaya.⁵³

Chalukyas of Kalyan :

The Chalukyas of Kalyana who ruled from 973 to 1162 A.D.,⁵⁴ are considered to be the descendants of the Chalukyas of Badami. Most of the inscriptions of the Chalukyas of Kalyana commence their genealogy from the Chalukyas of Badami. Both Jainism and Saivism received royal patronage but Jainism became gradually weaker in its influence in the closing years of the Kalyana Chalukya rule.⁵⁵ Taila II, the first Chalukya ruler of Kalyana and his son Irvabedanga Satyasraya, were patrons of the Kannada poet Ranna who wrote Ajitapurana, Sahasabhimavijaya, Rannakanda, Parasurama Charita and Chakreswara Charita.⁵⁶ The last two works have yet to come to light. In the Gadayuddha, the poet Ranna has identified his patron the Chalukya Irvabedanga Satyasraya with Bhima, the hero of the poem.⁵⁷ In the Ajitapura the poet extols Attimabbe, a dutiful Jain lady for her generosity. It was for her sake that Ranna wrote Ajitapurana which narrates the story of the second Tirthankara of Jainism. Lakkudi inscription contains a few more details concerning her religious life. It states that after the conquest of Gurjara country Satyasraya made some endowment to the Brahma Jinalaya which had been constructed by Attimabbe at Lakkundi.⁵⁸ Vimala Candrapandia Deva, a great Jain teacher, was the Rajaguru of Satyasraya Irvabedanga. The king constructed a nishidi in honour of a Jain Guru who died at Angadi.⁵⁹

Several generals and ministers under the Chalukya rulers of Kalyana were followers of Jina Dharma. A devout Jain Mallappa and his five sons joined the Chalukyan army as generals and commanders. Dallappa, a descendent of Vajikula enjoyed the confidence of the king Taila and he was made chief minister and chief of the army simultaneously. It is said that both Dallappa and Mallappa assisted Taila II in usurping the sovereignty of the Rastrakutas.⁶⁰ Nagadeva, the elder son of Dallappa ably assisted

prince Satyasraya and waged several wars with great success. Satisfied with the act of bravery, king Taila conferred a good number of awards on Nagadeva such as Subhata-Cudamani, Oratara-Malla, Hayavasta-Raja, etc. But as the fate would have it, this Nagadeva, who was the husband of Danachintamani Attimabbe, while at the height of his fame, met with a heroic death in the battlefield. Later his son Anniga alias Pedavala Taila joined the army and was soon elevated and installed as the General of the army. Lakkundi record dated in 1007 A.D., states that Pedavala Taila, the son of Danachintamani, Attimabbe, was then governing Masavadi-nadu⁶¹ which included the area round about Dambala in the Mundargi taluk in Gadag district.⁶² Jakkaladevi or Jakavve, the daughter of Rastrakuta chief Bhammaha was the queen of Taila II. Dr. Desai argues that "the name Jakkaladevi has to be connected with the Yaksha and Yakshi of the Jain pantheon."⁶³

In the Sravanbelgola inscription,⁶⁴ we are told that a Jain teacher Gunacandra worshipped the fest of Mallikamoda Santisa Tirthankara in Balipura. It is believed that this image of Santisa was set up by the Chalukya ruler Jayasimha II who bore the title Mallikamoda.⁶⁵ Dr. Salvatore believes that the basadi of Mallikamoda Santisa was built by king Jayasimha himself or by someone in his name.⁶⁶ During the reign of this ruler, when Revakabbarasi, wife of the governor Vanavarasa, was administering Posavur (modern Hosur in Gadag taluk), Aycagavunda constructed a Jain temple in the memory of his deceased wife Kanchikabbe. To this temple gift was in the hands of the preceptor Nagachandra Siddhanti in 1028-29 A.D.⁶⁷

Jayasimha, according to Badsavapurana⁶⁸ of Bhimakavi, was a Jain, while his chief queen Suggaladevi worshipped the Saiva by name Devara Dasimaya as her guru. At the request of this lady, Dasimaya came to Hottalakeri or Pottalakeri⁶⁹ and Jayasimha was converted to the Veerasaiva faith. "Thenceforth he is supposed to have persecuted Jains".⁷⁰ However, later rulers of the Chalukya family renewed their support and patronage to Jainism. Jain Ascetic Santideva received the title "Sabda-Chaturmukha" at the hands of king Ahavamalla another Chalukya King, who is identified with Somesvara I.⁷¹ It was during the reign of this ruler that the earliest Kannada work on astrology called Jataktilaka was composed in 1049 A.D. The author of this work was a Jain preceptor who hailed from Narigunda (present Naragunda in Gadag district).⁷² Of the inscriptions of Somesvara I, Motebennur record, dated Saka 988 (1066 A.D.), mentions mahamandalesvara Lakshmarasa whose subordinate Ayacha built a Jain Shrine and installed therein the image of Santinatha Jina, at Peleyageri of Bennevura(modern Motebennur). Later Lakshmarasa also made land grant to this temple.⁷³

The women of the Chalukya royal family were also 'noted for their liberal endowments in the cause of Jina dharma. For instance in 1072 A.D., Kanchalamahadevi who was a priyarsi⁷⁴ of Somesvara II made endowment to the Anesejjeya basadi at Purigere. This temple was constructed by Kunkumamahadevi who was the sister of Vinayaditya of the Early Chalukya ruler of Badami. In this connection Gudigeri record⁷⁵ states that Kanchaladevi who was ruling from her headquarters at Mulgund, gave endowment to the temple in the presence of king Somesvara II.

Several mahamandalesvaras, and feudatory mahapradhanas showed marked favour to Jainism. A feudatory governor by name Baladevayya of the Ganga extraction was a devout supporter of Jaina faith. This feudatory governor during the reign of Somesvara II, was the lord of the agrahara place Saratavura and bore the titles Heri- Sandhivigrahi, Senadhipati, Kaditavergade, etc. He constructed a temple Saratavura (modern Soratur in Gadag taluk). This Jaina sanctuary was named after him as Baladeva Jinalaya. In 1071 Baladevayya also made a gift of land to this and it was entrusted to the hands of the nun Huliabhaijike, a lady disciple of Sirinandi Pandita. The two hundred Mahajanas of Saratvura also made grants of land and house sites to the same temple.⁷⁶ In 1074 A.D., another feudatory of Somesvara II i.e., mahasamanta Jaya Kesiyarasa visited Permasli basadi at Purigere, made it pura and remitted certain tax incomes to the temple.⁷⁷

Kalachuris of Karnataka:

The Kalachuris who seized the throne from the Later Chalukyas of Kalyana, had developed a sense of liberality and Catholicism in respect of religion. Of the four Jaina inscriptions of the Kalachuris noticed Gadag region, one inscription belongs to the reign of Bijjala and three other inscriptions belong to the period of Sovideva. Nadiharalahalli epigraph which refers itself to the reign of Bijjala, records the construction of a Jinalaya at Gottagadi by Nagagavunda and the gift made in 1168 A.D., for feeding the Jiana monks and nuns.⁷⁸ Another Nadiharalahalli record of the reign of Rayamuran Sovideva dated 1172 A.D., states that Davarasa, the Surikavergade of Nariyalige and Nurumbada, Sunkavergade of Bammadeva and others made gift of certain taxes to a Jain temple which was built by Nagagavunda at Gottagudi.⁷⁹ This was a period when Kesimayya dandanayaka was governing Banavasi 12000. It is interesting to note that Sunkavergades and others made grant, to the Jaina Sanctuary under the instruction of Mahesvaradeva, the dandanayaka of vaddaravula and hejjunka taxes of Banavasi nadu. Two other records of the reign of Sovideva i.e., Lakkundi record of 1173, A.D.⁸⁰ and Chikkahandigol record of 1174 A.D., refer to the gift made to the temple and the construction of Jinalaya respectively.

Yadavas (Seunas) of Devagiri :

Jainism had spread considerably in the Deccan during the rule of Yadavas or Seunas of Devagiri. Seunachandra III, an early member of the family, patronized Jainism⁸¹ Simhana II was a renowned ruler of this dynasty. His famous minister and general Bichiseni was a zealous Jaina devotee who had been called Jaina Jina Chudamni. Bichiseti's daughter Rajaladevi, on the advice of a Jaina preceptor, Padmasena Munindra renovated the Jaina temple at Lakshmesvar called Vijaya Jinalaya⁸² which was originally constructed by Sagaradatta of Ayodhya.⁸³ In the Kalkeri inscription,⁸⁴ we are told that Bichiseti's adopted son Payiseni constructed a Chaityalaya on the advice of preceptor Kamalaseana- bhattacharaka of Mulasangha. A lithic record from Huvinasiggali belonging to the reign of Kannara states that a Jaina lady built a basadi at Priya Siggali and Mahapradhanas and others made land grant for worship of Santinatha Tirthankara.⁸⁵

Like Lakshmesvar, Dambal to continue to flourish as a great centre of the digambara Jaina sec. An epigraph of this place refers to the famous Nagara Jinalaya which received grants from Saluva Chavundra, an officer under Ramachandra.⁸⁶ Some members of the Yadava family were devotees of Jaina doctrine.⁸⁷ In 1282 A.D., during the reign of Ramachandra,⁸⁸ under the orders of Kannaradeva Rani,⁸⁹ and at the direction of Mahapradhana Sarvadhikari Mayidevanayaka, certain grants were made to a Jaina basadi. Achanna Kavi, who is the author of Vardhamana PUrana and Sripadasiti, was the native of Purigere i.e., Lakshmesvar in Dharwad district which was situated in the Seuna Kingdom in those days.⁹⁰

The Hoysalas :

Asundi in Gadag taluk of Gadag district, reveals the existence of a Jain temple called Dhora Jinalaya at Bankapur. Most probably this was the temple renovated by general Bulla. This Bulla, probably had a great attraction for Bankapur because; firstly Gunabhadracharya had completed the famous Jaina Mahapurana (uttarapurana) at Bankapur.⁹¹ Secondly king Marasimha "the sovereign, having reverently carried out works of piety, one year later relinquished the sovereignty and observing the vow for three days with the rites of worship at the holy feet of Ajitasena Bhattaraka at Bankapura accomplished Samadhi"⁹² Such was the importance of Bankapur.

It was during the rule of Ballala II, the Hoysala kingdom reached the height of its glory. This monarch showed a marked favour to Jainism. In 1176 A.d., a Jaina temple was built by a Jaina merchant. This temple built in the honour of the king, was named as Vira Ballala Jinalaya and the king granted a place for its maintenance.⁹³ From the stone record dated 1169 A.d., we learn that

Sripaladeva was the spiritual guru of this ruler.⁹⁴ The successors of Ballala II continued the spirit of toleration and gave material support to Jina dharma.

Vijayanagara Kings:

The Vijayanagara Empire, which came into existence in the early part of the 14th century A.d., continued the tradition of toleration.

Although the Vijayanagara rulers were the champions of Hindu dharma, they never lagged behind in extending patronage and protection to Jainism. In this connection, the Vijayanagara inscription of 1368 A.d., is most interesting. It reads. "During the reign of Sri Bukkaraya, dispute having arisen between the jainas and the bhaktas (Vaihnava) the blessed people (the Jainas) of all the nadu including Aneyagondi, Hosapattana, Penunganqe and the place of Kalleha having made petition to Bukkaraya about the injustice done by the bhaktas, the king, taking the hands of the Jainas and placing them in the hands of the Srivaishnavas of eighteen nadu, including acaryas of the places... and declaring (at the same time) that there was no difference between the Vaishnava darsna (or faith) and the Jaina darsana, decreed as follows- "his Jaina darsana is, as before, entitled to the panchamahashabda (the five great musical instruments) and the kalasa (or vase). If loss or advancement should be caused to the Jaina darsana through the Bhaktas, the Vaishnava will kindly deem it as loss or advancement caused to their own (darsana). The Srivaishnavas will to this effect kindly set up sasana in all the bastis of the kingdom. For as long as the sun and the moon endure, the Vaisnavas will "continue to protect the Jain darsana. The Vaisnavas and Jainas are one (body), they must not be viewed as different".

His unique judgment of Bukkaraya reveals the fact that the king had saved a religion from persecution, by giving an equitable judgement in favour of the minority community. But by doing so the king never violated the principles of justice. It is evident from the record that after due enquiry and consultation, the king gave a learned judgment in the presence of all the leaders of both communities and declared that "there was no difference between the Vaishnava darsana (faith) and the Jaina darsana. . . Vaisnavas and Jainas are one (body).

Indeed, there was another civil case which arose during the rule of the Vijaya Nagara King Devaraya I. In 1412 A.D., a dispute between a Jain temple Sankhabasti at Puligere (Lakshmesvar) and Saiva Somadeva temple at the same place regarding the land claimed on behalf of both the temples, was a bone of contention. The dispute was referred to mmahapradhana Naganna dandanayaka who created a panel of judges. The judges who comprised purohit Sangamadeva and other learned men of the palace, were directed to study the

documents and decide the land dispute issue. The high priest Hemadevacharya and Acharya Sivaramayya represented Sankha basaid and Somedava temple respectively in the dispute. They were asked to give in writing that they would abide by the decision given by the judges. After a careful study of documents(including ancient Sasanas) of both the parties and after ascertaining from the Nagagauda and other subjects of the place as to which party was enjoying the land from the time of king Harihara, the learned judges finally gave judgement in favour of Hemadevacharya of Sankha Basti. The copies of this momentous decision duly signed by Sangamadeva and other learned men of the palace, were issued to both the parties. This impartial verdict showed that the destiny of a minority community was safe in the hands of the Hindu monarchs of the Vijayanagara.

Bukka II made grant to guru basadi or Siddantada basadi at Moodabidre where Dhavala and Jayadhavala are preserved. Bhimadevi, the queen of Devaraya was a Jaina by persuasion and her spiritual guru was Abhinava carukirti Panditacarya. She installed the image of Santinathasvami in the Mongayi Basadi at Belgola.⁹⁵ Devaraya II was tolerant towards Jains and it was he who built the Parsvanatha temple in 1426 A.D., in his capital.⁹⁶ Under Krishnadevaraya, the greatest of all the rulers of Vijayanagara, grants were made to Jaina basadis. It was during the reign of this ruler that Jainism produced its its most renowned exponent in the person vadi Vidyanandi. No Jaina guru in the Vijayanagara age had a more glorious list of achievements to his credit than Vadi Vidyanandi.⁹⁷

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