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## Socio-economic conditions during Kakatiya dynasty

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### Abstract

The Kakatiyas ruled Andhradesa between the 11th and 14th centuries A.D. had left a great legacy in Political, Economic, Literary, Architectural and Artistic spheres. The Telangana region, i.e, the North-Western part of the present day Andhra Pradesh, being their homeland they exhibited their creative zeal in the form of Temples, Mandapas and Forts which speak about their talent in building monumental structures and creating thousands of beautiful sculptures. The Kakatiyas ruled over a vast area, comprising of a major part of the present Andhra Pradesh except the three extreme northern circar districts and also some places in the present Karnataka and Tamil Nadu districts. It embraces the area from Draksharamam to Pitapuram in the north and Kanchi in the south. It also included Bidar and Raichur districts and some places in the present Kolar district in Karnataka.

**Keywords:** Kakatiya, social, economic, chiefs, varna

### Introduction

The prosperity of any kingdom is largely dependent on its geography and economic status. Just before the advent of the Kakatiyas into the political scene, the entire Andhradesa was fragmented into small principalities and ruled by various mandalikas. They were the chiefs of Polavasa, Chalukyas of mudigonda, Cholas of kanduru, Kona chiefs, the Chalukyas of Nidadavole, the Natavadi chiefs, the chagi chiefs, the ayya chiefs, the Kondapadumatis, the Kota chiefs, the Durjayas, the Haihayas of Palnadu, the Telugu Chola chiefs on Konidena, Nellore and the Kayasthas of Vallur. The mandalikas were politically ambitious and fighting one against the other for political supremacy. Kakati Rudra took the opportunity and extended his kingdom from Kalyana to Bay of Bengal and Godavari to Srisailem. The success of Rudra paved the way for further consolidation of power by the later Kakatiyan rulers Ganapatideva, Rudramamba and Pratapa Rudra and the entire Telugu speaking people and the land in which they lived came under a single political authority and gave Andhradesa its first politico-geographic identity. Thus Kakatiya period is one of the most celebrated epochs in the history as the country enjoyed the political unity, after a long period of endless warfare. C.V. Ramachandra Rao analyzed the Kakatiya state as metropolitan state which maintained relations between the centre, peripheral and intermediate zones. According to him the area in between the rivers Godavari and Krishna was the nucleus of the Kakatiyas state. It consisted of Polavasa, Visurunadu, Sabbinaadu, Kolanupaka and Kandurunadu though circumscribed Hanumakonda vishaya the earliest principalities prior to Ganapatideva. The three peripheral zones were 1. The region between Gundlakamma and Penna up to Kanchi included Pakanadu, Mulikinadu, Pantanadu and major portion of Thondai mandalam ruled by Telugu Cholas. 2. The Second peripheral zone located between east and north-east of nucleus in the control of Velanati Chodas, Ayyas, Kolanus, Cholas of Nidadavolu etc. and 3. The third zone ruled by the chiefs on Sinda, the Viriyalas and Kona families. The areas in between nucleus and peripheral zones were termed intermediary zones like Kammanadu, Velanadu, Palanadu, Eruvanadu and marajavadis. Nucleus areas of Sub- regional powers as conceived by Burton Stein has been applied to the Kakatiyas since they superimposed their imperial power on various petty chiefdoms like Viriyala, Kondapadumatis etc. The power of the empire was based on mutual co-existence of already developed minor powers with their own cultural and socio-political background as opined by Burton Stein as multi-centered system of power. To know the administrative system of the Kakatiyas, going in further details, the country was divided into nadus, sthalas, etc. According to S.J Mangalam and Venkateswar Rao. The grama (village) was the lowest territorial unit. A few gramas were united to form a sthala.

The Nadu was biggest division in size having sthalas and gramas as sub- divisions. The part played by the village assembly was noteworthy. There were four kinds of villages during the period, viz., Racha-ullu (Royal village), Nayankara-ullu (Nayanka villages), Brahamdeyas (Brahmin Agraharas) and Devadeyas (Temple villages) The division was mostly based on the fiscal system. The last two categories of villages were exempted from the payment of taxes. Taxes were collected from the remaining two categories of villages. The Royal villages were under control of village assembly which collected and remitted taxes to treasury. Whereas in the Nayankara villages, the Nayankara holders were responsible for collection of taxes under the control and remit them in the treasury. The village assemblies were also having the different status as Samastha Praja, Astadas Praja, Intivallu, Vakkalu, Mahajanas or Gavudas. In the case of Brahmadeya village, the assembly was confined to the shareholders, the membership was open to all households, Regarding agrahara, the membership of assembly was restricted to a prominent personality of different communities and they participated in the regular activities of the assembly. The officials called Ayagars, the Reddy and Karanam were in charge of the village administration. The ayagars were the servants to villages rather than servants to the government. In the Kakatiya period, it appears that the present panchayats type of administration had flourished. The functions of village assembly included maintenance of public works, supervision of gifts, administration of justice and collection and remittance of taxes. Sthalas or Nadus were having more responsibilities in addition to the welfare activities. They were engaged in military, education, medical service, trade, transport etc. As occasion demanded, they supplied army and stood by the side of the king at the hour of need. Thus the Kakatiya kingdom was more or less a confederacy of nadus. Hanumakonda and Orugallu were the centres of the state radiating the power to all constituent parts. It seems that the Kakatiyas have failed in maintaining popular relations with all their subordinates e.g., The Kayasthas who supported the Kakatiyas until Ganapati's rule rebelled during the last regnal years of Rudramadevi.

The economy of Kakatiyas was broadly based on agriculture. Cultivator's guilds received legal sanction from the king. Goutama, the earliest authority on Dharmasastra says cultivators could make rules of conduct for themselves. The term Kampulu denotes tillers of the soil in Telugu country as the Vellaras, in Tamil country. In order to promote agriculture, there were in the Kakatiya Kingdom a number of lakes such as the Gangasamudram, Kesarisamudram, Pillalamarri samudram, Sabbisamudram, Prolasamudram, Pakala lake, Ramappa lake, Nandigama cheruvu, Yenamadala cheruvu, Chintala cheruvu, Uppalpati cheruvu, Miriyala cheruvu and also canals like Kanipati kalwa, Vamsavardhana kalwa, etc. Digging canals, creating fresh reservoirs of minor and medium sizes, appointing officers for their maintenance, made the Kakatiyas self sufficient in food products. A record from Hanumakonda dated S. 1084 and another one from Tripurantakam of S. 1174 refer to converting forests into irrigation fields. An important inscription from Nagulapadu S. 1225 refers to a tax paid to the local temple by the cultivators, the Komatis, the Idaras (Toddy sellers), the Gollavaru, and the Akksala etc. The village, the sthala, nadu, mandala or the Rajya level organizations of cultivators suggest a country-wide

association of cultivators for agricultural purpose. The leaders were called as Kampu or Nayaka. Land revenue was an important source for the state. There were two kinds of guilds that functioned during the Kakatiya period viz., the merchant guilds and craft guilds. The Merchant guilds played an important role in shaping the economy of the Andhra country. The centres like Alampur, Krishnapatnam, Motupalli and Warangal were good trade centres. Ganapatideva revived the sea borne trade as mentioned in Motupalli inscription known as Abhaya sasana of 1245 A.D. Marco polo; the Venitian traveler gave a vivid account on the port Motupalli along with other important produce like diamonds etc. The craftsmen also had their own organizations. The important guilds included Panchanamvaru comprising goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, braziers and stone cutters. These guilds received royal patronage and economic stability prompted the building of temples in large numbers. The guild of weavers also had a significant role in the economy of the Kakatiya period. The social structure of Kakatiyas followed the concept Varna. Out of the Chaturvarnas, Brahmins, Vysyas, Kshatriyas and Sudras, the Brahmins occupied foremost place in the society. It seems the kshatriyas lost their glory whereas the sudras occupied important posts in the Government. The reason was that the Kakatiyas declared themselves as sudras. The ruling sudras enjoyed power and other members participated in the activities such as agriculture, trade, crafts etc.

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