



The Khacharas: Medieval Feudal Lords of Haveri Environment

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Haveri, an intermediate district of Karnataka, is historically important. During the ancient and medieval period, many vassal royal families were ruled the various areas belonging to this district. Among them the Challaketans of Bankapur, the Senavars and Khachars of Basavuru, the Kadambas of Nurumbad, the Guttas of Guttavolal, and the Kadambas of Hanagal are the most prominent. Among these, the Khechara family was one of the feudal royal families that ruled over the Basavuru-140 kampana comprising the areas of Haveri, Hanagal and Badagi taluks of the district. The Khachars came to power in the 11th century AD and ruled as vassal under the Chalukyas of Kalyan, Kalachuris and Sevunas, over the Banavasi-12000 Mandal's main administrative division Basavuru-140. Although they started their power as Nalgavundas in the beginning, later they increased their status and held power as Manneya and Mahasamantas. The purpose of the present article is to introduce the rule of the Khachara or Khechara family rulers of the medieval period, in the Haveri environment.

Basavuru Kampana :

Basavur-140 was one of the several kampanas of the Banavasi-12000 administrative division during the ancient and medieval period. It has a long history of more than five centuries from the 8th century to the end of the 13th century A.D. The Basavuru division included the areas of Haveri, Hanagal and Badagi taluks of present Haveri district. River Varada was the southern and northern boundary of this division. 'Hirebasur' presently in Hanagal taluk of Haveri district, was the headquarter of this kampana. This kampana has included two sub-divisions namely Kaginele-12 and Kalakeri. Inscriptions here mention that before the Khacharas, from 8th century to end of 11th century A.D. Senavara rulers were ruled as Nalgavundas. After the Senavaras, the Khacharas ruled from the late 11th century A.D. to the end of the 13th century A.D.

Analysis of the word Khachara/ Khechara:

The word 'Khachara' means eagle. Also the word Khechara can be interpreted in this way. Khe + chara + ru, 'khe' means sky, 'chara' means mover, 'ru' is a suffix indicating lineage. Khechara means one who moves in the sky. As sky walkers are usually devas themselves, it means that their lineage is of deva origin. As it was common for ancient royal families to trace their origin to divinity, of course the Khacharas may have followed suit. The Khacharas had the serpent as their flag (Pannaga Dwaja). Claimed to be 'Padmavatilabdavaraprasadaru', it seems that they were the follower of Jainism.

Rulers of the Khachar Dynasty:

Inscriptions are the most important source of information about the reign, genealogy and chronology of the Khachara dynasty. Based on them, the rulers of Khachara dynasty and their rule are analyzed below.

Kaliyammara-I :

Kaliyammara-I was the first king of the Khachara dynasty who ruled Basavur-140 and is mentioned in the Kallihala,¹ Kolar² and Mallur³ inscriptions. The Kolar inscription mentions Kaliyammara as a descendant of Jeemuta vahana of Khachara clan, Padmavatilabdavaraprasada also mentions that he is the one with the Sarpadhvaja, and that he was the fourth of Basavur-140. This inscription refers to Kaliyammara as 'Daiga Dallalam' (the troublemaker of Dayigas). It states that Kaliyammara donated 30 houses to Nanda Divige, the god Kalideveshwar of Kolar.

He seems to have been a mighty man as the Kallihala inscription records him as Bhima, Chaladankaram. The Mallur inscription of 1048 AD says 'Srimat Nelliymara Basavuram Nalvattarkkem Nargavundathanam Geyya', whereas the Kallihal inscription of 1055 AD says Srimat Kaliyammara (Basavuru) Nura Nalvattarka Nalga- - - - The Nelliymara mentioned in the Mallur inscription is none other than Kaliyammara becomes clear. AD 1034 is the earliest reference to him, since 1055 is the last reference we have of him, he ruled between 1034-1055 AD.

Mallarasa:

After Kaliyammara-1, Mallarasa became Nalgavunda of Basavuru. The only inscription that records his reign, it is the Kalakeri Inscription of Hanagal Taluk, dated 1055A.D. It refers Someshwara-I emperor Chalukyas of Kalyana was ruling, at that time it mentions that, 'Basavura Noora Nalvattarkkam Mallarasam Nadgamundugeye'.⁴ Thus at the end of 1055 A.D, after Kaliyammara, Mallarasa becomes Nalgavunda. But his reign was short-lived. Because an inscription dated 1089 A.D. mentions Rajadhityarasa. Therefore the rule of Mallarasa may have been in power between 1055-1059 A.D.

Rajadityarasa :

Rajadhityarasa as Mallarasa's successor is recorded in the Mallur,⁵ Devihosuru,⁶ Devageri⁷ inscriptions of this region. During the reign of Kalyana Chalukya Someshwara, the Khacharas were promoted to Manneya as can be found. The Mallur inscription mentions Manneya Rajadityarasa as Nalgavunda of Basavuru-140 with a comprehensive award. It mentions that Srimatsampadeviyarum Rajadityarasaram Mallavurakke Bijayageydu piriya kereyam nodi and donated generously to the lake. The Devgeri inscription records that the Mahasamantha Rajadityarasa washed the feet of Gangarasi munipa and left a donation to the temples of Govindeshwar and Chatteshwar in Devgeri . He seems to have ruled from 1059 A.D. to till 1065A.D.

Kaliyammara-II:

The most influential ruler of the Khachara dynasty was Mahasamanta Kaliyammara-II, who is referred to in an inscription as the 'Lion of Rajaditya'.⁸ From this it is clear that he is the son of Rajaditya. A total of nine inscriptions referring to him have been found in Devageri,⁹ Hommaradi,¹⁰ Kalakeri¹¹, Kolar,¹² Bankapura,¹³ Kaginele¹⁴ and Hirehalli in this region.

The Kaliammara-II seems to have come to power towards the end of the reign of Someshwara-I Chalukya emperor. The undated Devageri and Hommaradi inscriptions the reign of Someshwara-I record, 'Srimanna (Ha) Samanta Likhayammara' and 'Srima (Telli) Yammara as Mahasamanta of Basavuru-140 respectively. Both these persons can be perceived as Kaliyammara.

The Kalakeri Inscription states that Mahamandaleshwara Veeranolamba Udayaditya of Chalukya Someshwara-II and his queen Malaladevi visited the Someshwara temple at Kalakeri and performed great puja and donated 'Nura Nalvatara Manneya Kaliyamarasanum' in the presence of other leaders. Kalakeri was the sub-division center of Basavuru-140. Thus it is clear that Kaliyammara-II was the manneya of this region, even during the reign of Someshwara-II

The reign of Vikramaditya-VI, who pushed Someshwara-II back and took power, can be said to be the period of progress and prosperity of Kaliyammara-II. A Bankapura inscription dated 1090 A.D. refers 'Sri Someshwara Labdavaraprasadam Danavinodam Chandaladeviya Gandhavaranam Ripumadanivaran Srimanmahamandaleshwara Kaliyamarasasarpanungallayunuram Sukhasankatavinodadim Naldarasugaiyuttamire'

It is clear from this inscription is that the Khacharas were Padmavatilabda Varaprasadas i.e. they were the follower of Jainism, but it seems that during his time they were inclined towards Shaivism. This is evidenced by the saying 'Someshwara Labdavaraprasada'. This can be a foreshadowing in the direction of Kaliyammara's son Hermadiyara under taking Saivadiksha. Gandhavarana of Chandraladevi, who was the queen of Vikramaditya-VI, claimed to be Kaliyammara, so she must have felt close to him as a relative of the emperor. Thus, apart from being elevated to the rank of Mahamandaleshwara, it seems that he was entrusted with the ruler ship of Basavuru as well as the dominion of Panungal-500.

The Kaginele and Kolor inscriptions of 1121 A.D. are the last inscriptions that mention his reign. Thus, the Kaliyammara-II had a long period of power as a subordinate of the Chalukya Someshwara-I, the Someshwara-II and the Vikramaditya-VI but it is clear that he ruled as Mahamandaleshwara during the time of Vikramaditya-VI, even though he was initially ruled as a Manneya.

Hermadiyarasa:

Kaliyammara-II was succeeded by his son Hermadiyarasa a Manneya of Basavuru-140. He was the son of Kaliyammara and Lacchaladevi, the Devageri inscription records his reign.¹⁵ An important event of his reign is that Hermadiyarasa, who was originally Padmavati Labdavara prasada,(follower of Jainism) later took the initiation of Maheshwara and left donations to Sribhuvaneshwar and Bhairava of Devageri. Tribhuvanasinghi Pandita, his influence must have been on him as he washed his feet and gave charity. This incident is a big turning point in this family.

Kaliyammara -III:

After the rule of the Hermadiyarasa, Kaliyammara-III became Manneya of Basavuru kampana. He must have been the son of Hermadiyarasa. The Devageri inscription of the Someshwara-III, dated 1134 A.D. states that Prince Kaliga (Kaliyammara) of the Khachara clan was initiated by Maheshwara and washed the feet of Pandit Mallikarjuna for the worship and sacrifice of Lord Kankaleshwar here. During the reign of Chalukya Jagadekamalla-II, he also ruled as his subordinate. The undated Hirehalli inscription,¹⁶ Devihosuru¹⁷ inscription of 1149 A.D. and other inscriptions referring his reign.

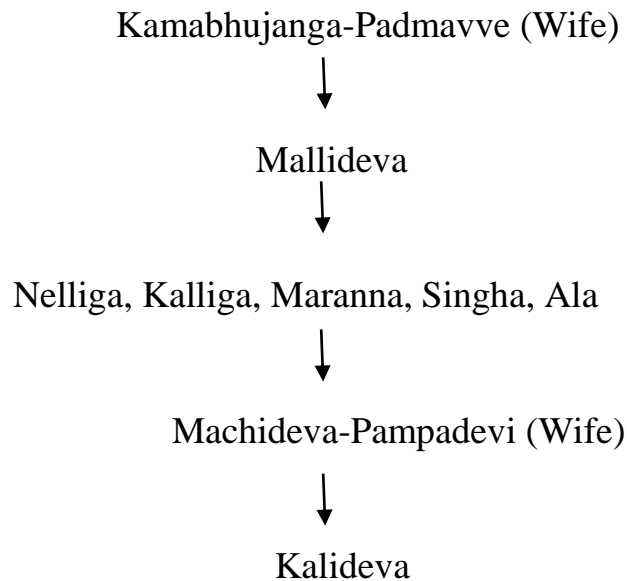
Machidevarasa:

A Haveri inscription dated 1152 A.D. of the Tailapa-III, mentions that Sriman Mahasamanta Machidevarasa was the Manneya of Basavuru-140. He must have been the successor of Kaliyammara-III. It records that Machidevarasa and many customs officials donated to the daily worship of Lord Siddeshwar of Haveri.¹⁸

Even during the reign of Kalachuri Bijjala, who usurped power from the Chalukya Tailapa-III, Mahamandaleshwara Machidevarasa was the Manneya of Basavuru. The Devageri inscription of 1160 A.D. mentions Mahamandaleshwara Machidevarasa ruling Basavuru- 140 and mentions that Machidevarasa washed the feet of Ramasinghi Pandit of Devageri and donated to the Ranga Bhoga, Naivedhya Khandspatita of Grameshwar deity for the merit of his sister Lacchaladevi.¹⁹ The last inscription recorded by Machidevarasa is in 1161A.D. Devihosuru Inscription²⁰ It is one side completely lost, It mentions Machidevarasa as Manneya darasu of Basavuru-140.

Kaliyammara-IV:

Kaliyammara-IV took over after Machidevarasa. The Sanguru inscription dated 1167 A.D. records the reign of Bijjala and mentions the genealogy of Kaliyammara as ‘Shrimat Kaliyammarasaru Basavuru Nuranalvattara Manneyadarasugeyuttamire’²¹ The inscription giving the genealogy as follows.

**Mallidevarasa :**

There is no information about the Khachara rulers till the reign of Yadhav Singhana after the Kaliyammara-IV. This may have been due to the conflict between the Chalukya, Hoysala and Yadava dynasties. A Kolar inscription mentions²² the reign of Yadhava Singhana and states that Srimanmahamandaleshwaram Mallidevarasa of the Khachara dynasty ruled Basavur-140 as the ruler of Manneya. Even during this period the Khacharas seem to have remained in a good position politically. The Hirebasuru Inscription states that Mahamandaleshwara Mallidevaras of Basavur-140, gave an endowment to the Baseshwara temple at Basavuru.²³ Another inscription here dates back to the time of Yadhava Singhana and mentions the donation left by the Mallidevaras to the Brahmadevalaya at Basavuru.²⁴

Thus, the Khacharas came to power as Nalgaundas of Kampana and with their efficiency and political influence; they become promoted as Manneya, Mahasamanthas, Mahamandaleshwaras. They expanded their powers and ruled largely independently. For such a long period (from the 11th century A.D. to the end of the 13th century A.D.), the Khachara rulers ruled as vassals of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, Kalachuri and Yadavas of Devgiri emperors, they were support, not only in the kingdom organization of their lords, but also worked hard for the efficient administration, religious harmony and cultural development of Basavuru Kampana.

Footnotes:

1. S. I. I. Vol. 18, Inc. No.50, 1034 A.D.
2. E.I. Vol.19, 1045 A.D
3. S. I. I. Vol. 18, Inc. No.60,1048 A.D.
4. Ibid, Inc No.333, 1055 A.D.

5. Ibid, Inc No.65, 1059 A.D.
6. Ibid, Inc No.69, 1063 A.D.
7. Ibid, Inc No.334, 1065 A.D.
8. E.I. Vol.19, Devagiri, 1075 A.D
9. S. I. I. Vol. 18, Inc. No.72.
10. Ibid, Inc No.73
11. Ibid, Vol. 20 Inc No.49, 1075 A.D.
12. E.I. Vol.19, 1085 A.D
13. S. I. I. Vol. 18, Inc. No.97, 1090 A.D.
14. Ibid, Inc No.117,1121 A.D.
15. E.I. Vol.19, 1121 A.D
16. K.I. Vol-4 Inc No.26, Hirehalli.
17. S. I. I. Vol. 18, Devihosuru
18. Ibid, Inc No.157, 1152 A.D.
19. Ibid, Inc No.177, 1161 A.D.
20. Ibid, Inc No.347, 1161 A.D.
21. Ibid, Inc No.179
22. E.I. Vol. 19, Koluru
23. Dha.Ji.Sha.Su. Inc.No. 327, Tq. Byadagi
24. Ibid

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- 1 Kalaburgi M.M., (Ed.) *Dharwad Jilleya Shasana suchi*, Dharwad. 1975
- 2 Lakshminarayan. N., (Ed) *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XVIII, Delhi, 1975.
- 3 Gai G.S., (Ed) *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XX, Delhi, 1988.
- 4 Harinandashastri., (Ed) *Ephigraphiya Indica*, Vol. XIX, Delhi, 1983
- 5 Korishettar Shivayogi., *Basavuru-140: Samskrutika Adyayana*, (Unpublished Ph D Thesis) K. U. Dharwad, 2018
- 6 Channakka Pavate., *Bankapura Shodhana*, Dharwad, 1990
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- 9 Sankappa S Angadi. *Archaeology of Tungabhadra valley (With Special reference to Haveri District)* Volume-1-2, Karnataka University, Dharwad 2012.