

## ***Mahabharat and Delhi Sultan's wish***



Mohammedans ruled parts of the sub-continent with Delhi as their capital for over two centuries. Few of the Mohammedan rulers maintained patience towards Hindu rituals and maintained communal harmony encouraging Hindu scholars and prophets.

Delhi was in Adil Shah's rule concurrently while Sri Krishna Deva Rayalu was ruling Vijaya Nagar. A war broke out between the two kingdoms for supremacy over one another. At one stage, both the rulers felt there was a need to establish peace in the region. Adil Shah invited Rayalu to Delhi for finalising the peace treaty.

Hoping to utilise the opportunity to establish a cordial relation between the two empires, Rayalu headed for Delhi with a big team comprising of poets, dancers, scholars and others. At Delhi, Adil Shah gave red carpet welcome to Rayalu. During the pleasant rounds of discussions, Adil Shah urged the scholars and poets from the Rayalu band to recite some sequences from the epic Mahabharat.

The visitors recited several sequences to please the Delhi Sultan. It was then that trouble shot up for the Vijaya Nagar ruler. Adil Shah expressed his wish and requested Rayalu to make his men rewrite the Mahabharat portraying him and his friends as Pandavas and his rivals as Kauravas. The total visiting team was shocked to hear the Sultan. They somehow managed to close the day's meeting immediately.

Rayalu was worried about the development. He called for an emergency meeting with the learned persons of his team. In the meeting, he sought suggestions from them to avert the problem. Everyone started scratching their

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heads to find an amicable solution. None could come out with any concrete proposal. After watching all this, suddenly Ramalinga raised and put his proposal before Rayalu.

He said, "My Lord! I think there is not much for you or us to get so much worried and burdened about the Delhi Sultan's wish about Mahabharat. You please leave the problem onto my shoulders and have a relaxed sleep. I will solve the problem without any problem." The King Rayalu had his own doubts about the safety of the kingdom and its people.

"Ramalinga..." Rayalu said, "...I am aware that you are a genius. However, it is not a common situation. Dealing with the Delhi Sultan is not an easy job. It is similar to fete on the edge of a sword. You should be very careful!" He was worried that if the problem was not dealt properly, there was a chance that Delhi Sultan might declare a war on Vijaya Nagar.

Ramalinga was stiff to his argument and assured everyone to leave the matter to him. The big heads of the meeting could not comprehend how Ramalinga was confident that he could solve this 'so easily!' Anyway, they told each other, as we could not come out with any proposal for the solution, let him handle this. The meeting finally nominated Ramalinga to take care of the situation.

Next morning, the court was packed with both the rulers and their henchmen. Adil Shah recalled his wish about re-composing of the Mahabharat. Ramalinga rose from his seat and saluted the Sultan. "Huzoor! All of our poets are into the job assigned by your majesty's wish. However, every one of us is stuck at one specific issue. It is not proper for us to discuss the subject in the court. If you can kindly permit me, I wish to present the poking issue before you in private."

Adil Shah thought that there should really be some problem and consented for the one-on-one meeting with Ramalinga in a separate room. Ramalinga folding hands and presenting all respects to the Sultan in his words started, "Your Highness! You are the king of kings! It was our pleasure to know

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about your inclination about our epics like Mahabharat. The poets and scholars started re-composing the whole epic, in accordance to your majesty's wish. You are being portrayed as Dharmaraja, eldest of Pandavas and your friends as Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva."

Ramalinga paused a second and continued, "This is where we had to scratch our brains..." However he was not forth coming with the problem. Adil Shah waited and when it was clear that he has to get it out of Ramalinga he ordered, "What is the problem? Tell me clearly and quickly."

"You are aware Huzoor! That Pandavas are five. All the five were married to Draupadi and were sharing her equally..." Ramalinga stressed, "We are unable to portray your image as Dharmaraja in this regard, thinking about the prestige of the King of Kings...."

Long before Ramalinga could complete, Adil Shah hastened to say, "Stop this nonsense now. I cannot take this anymore. Stop rewriting Mahabharat immediately. I can never accept this."

Ramalinga tried to say... "Huzoor! We started to work as per your wish...now, how can we turn away from the word given to you by us...we..." "Look Poet!" Adil Shah raised his voice, "you should drop the Mahabharat topic as of now if you wish the friendship and co-operation between the two kingdoms to last long. Is that clear" and walked off the room.

Ramalinga bubbling with joy returned to his King Rayalu and his bandwagon of delegation and explained the whole sequence. Everyone including Rayalu appreciated the sharp intelligence and presence of mind Ramalinga had in solving the toughest problem just like that!