



THE SMART TIMMARASU!

Dear Friends,

We need a strategy, a means to accomplish any task. Our elders profess four basic strategies – Sa:ma (motivate through counsel), Da:na (motivate through rewards and recognitions), Bhe:da (create difference or resolve differences through debate), Danda (punish) to accomplish a task. Any strategy we talk about falls under one of these four strategies. Let's now see how the third strategy, bhe:da is applied to accomplish an objective.

India had great rulers and Krishnadeva Rayalu is one among the jewels this great land was blessed with. Timmarasu was an intelligent minister in his court. Known for his wisdom and versatility, he was inducted as minister by Rayalu's father Tuluva Narasa Nayaka. His induction into the royal court is an interesting story.

Once there was vacancy for a minister's post in the King's court. The smart king initiated an interesting method to select the new minister. He drew a straight line on a slate and sent it across the kingdom to find out someone who can make the line smaller without erasing a portion of it.

This slate reached a Gurukul. A youngster, student in the gurukul looked at the slate and drew a bigger line next to the existing line. King's agents were impressed and took this story to him. The king chose that young man to fill the ministerial berth. No reward for this easy guess... the youngster was none other than Timmarasu.

Later on he became known for his wisdom and strategic skills that helped the Vijayanagara empire spread far and wide. He was also fondly called as Appaji.

Once Krishnadevaraya ventured out, towards the Kalinga kingdom, to expand his empire. Pratapa Rudra Gajapathi was the then ruler of Kalinga. The Kalinga kingdom then was spread from River Mahanadi in the north to Simhagiri in the south.

His army was famous for huge elephant mounted troops. Gajapathi also had the support of 16 mandala chieftains. They were very powerful. It was impossible for anyone to defeat Gajapathi, as long as he had the support of these mandala chiefs.

Tammarasu learnt about this through his spies. He devised a strategy and successfully annexed Kalinga kingdom into his fold, without a war or blood-shed.

He sent out some emissaries to the camp where 16 mandala chieftains were staying. Their movements created doubt in the minds of Gajapathi's spies. They caught these emissaries and started an enquiry. The emissaries confessed that they belong to Vijayanagara kingdom and were there to deliver a message from their minister Timmarasu to the chieftains. They also told they came as per invitation from the chieftains.

On searching, the spies found some gifts and letters addressed to the chieftains. Content of one of the letters went like this... "Received your message. As you had mentioned, if you isolate Gajapathi in the midst of the war, join hands with Vijayanagara troops and help us capture Gajapathi, we have no objections to recognise you as the leaders for Dakshina Kalinga from Barhampur to Simhachalam. We also happily acknowledge receiving your gifts. Please accept gifts from our end. – Your Well wisher, Timmarasu".

The spies conveyed this message to Gajapathi. As the content of the letter, gifts the emissaries were carrying and their oral submissions matched, Gajapathi believed that he will be in danger, if he goes ahead with the war plans against Vijayanagara kingdom. Those 16 chieftains are his key strength. Without them he cannot win the Vijayanagara troops. If they are hand in glove with the enemies, his life will be in danger. Thus realising, he dropped the war plans and returned to safety to his capital in Cuttack. He let go of the southern Kalinga region to Vijayanagara rulers.

When the 16 chieftains got to know that Gajapathi had dropped the war plans and returned to



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