# PALYNOLOGY OF LOWER GONDWANA SEDIMENTS IN THE BHOPALPALLI AREA, GODAVARI GRABEN

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### **ABSTRACT**

Palynoflora recovered from 360 m thick sequence of bore core GJ-6 from Bhopalpalli area of Mulug coal belt is divided into three distinct palynoassemblages. Assemblage-1 dominated by Scheuringipollenites shows Lower Barakar (Early Permian) affinity. Occurrence of some taxa viz, Vitreisporites, Falcisporites, Lunatisporites, Corisaccites, Guttulapollenites, Gondisporites, Verticipollenites, Hindipollenites, Densipollenites and Weylandites along with dominance of striate disaccates in Assemblages II and III indicate Raniganj (Late Permian) affinity. High incidence of Parasaccites alongwith striate disaccates in Assemblage III suggests that the climate towards the end of the Permian time tended to become colder. This evidence supports the contention of a third glacial phase during the Late Permian/Early Triassic (Panchet Stage).

Key words: Palynology, Lower Gondwana, Bhopalpalli area, Godavari graben.

## INTRODUCTION

Bhopalpalli is a part of Mulug coal belt along south-eastern margin of Godavari sub-basin and is situated between the two active mining centres, Ramagundam in the north and Kothagudem in the south. In order to prove the continuity of the coal-bearing sediments of the Ramagundam area further south, the drilling operations in this area were conducted by Geological Survey of India. Bore core GJ-6 was drilled near Gopiapalli village in Bhopalpalli Block and is located in the north of bore core GJ-3. The details of the samples have been given in table - 1. The bore hole was closed at 470m in

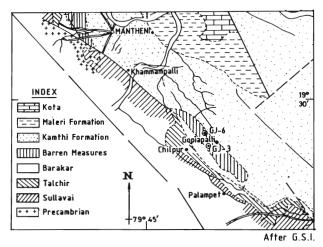


Fig. 1. Geological map of the Bhopalpalli area showing location of bore core GJ-6 (after G.S.I.).

Barakar Formation. The lithological succession from bottom to top consists of alternating sequence of medium to coarse-grained whitish feldspathic sandstone and thin coal bands in lower part of bore

Table 1: List of samples investigated in bore hole no. GJ-6 from Bhopalpalli area, Godavari Graben, Andhra Pradesh. \*indicates fossil-yielding samples.

Sample No.	Depth in meters	Lithology
* 1	20	Laminated shale within coarse grained greenish sandstone.
2	58	Coarse grained greenish sandstone.
* 3	68	Current bedded sandstone
3 A	69.3	Carbonaceous shale
* 4	77	Shaly micaceous sandstone
* 5	82-83	Sandy shale
6	120	Carbonaceous shale
7	136	Sandy black shale
* 8	160	Sandy shale
* 9	168	Carbonaceous shale
10	182	Greyish green shale
11	192	Greyish to greenish clay
*12	211	Carbonaceous shale
*13	223	Carbonaceous shale
*14	244	Sandy shale
*15	258	Carbonaceous shale
*16	268	Carbonaceous shale
*17	301-302	Sandy carb shale
*18	310-311	Carbonaceous shale
*19	322-323	Carbonaceous shale
*20	357-360	Carbonaceous shale

core and greenish sandstone, grey to greyish white sandstone/siltstone/clay sequence and black shale, medium to coarse grained ferruginous brownish sandstone and clay at top. In all seven coal seams have been recorded in the bore core.

## **PALYNOLOGY**

Palynoflora recovered from the subsurface sediments in bore core GJ-6 consists of 52 genera. A list of species has been given in table-2 and some important Late Permian taxa are presented in Pl. I. Three distinct palyno-assemblages have been recognised on the basis of quantitative and qualitative distribution of various palynotaxa (fig. 2).

Table 2: List of species recorded in bore core GJ-6 from Bhopalpalli area, Godavari Graben, A.P.

Name of Species	Barakar	Raniganj	<i>Kamthisaccites kamth</i> Jha, 1986
Callumispora tenuis Bharadwaj &			Lueckisporites crassu.
Srivastava, 1969			L sp.
Leiotriletes sp.	+	+	Guttulapollenites han
Indotriradites korbaensis Tiwari, 1964	+	+	Lunatisporites ovatus
Gondisporites raniganjensis Bharadwaj, 1962		+	Banerji, 1975
Lundbladispora willmoti Balme, 1963		+	Lunatisporites sp.
L. microconata Bharadwaj & Tiwari, 1977		+	Corisaccites alutus \
Lophotriletes rectus Bharadwaj & Salujha, 19	64 +	+	Corisaccites vanus V
Verrucosisporites trisectus Balme &		+	Hamiapollenites mini
Hennely, 1956			Striatites communis E
Horriditriletes rampurensis Tiwari, 1968	+	+	S. solitus Bharadwaj
H. ramosus (Balme & Hennelly) Bharadwaj	& +	+	S. tentulus Tiwari, 1
Salujha, 1964			Lahirites rarus Bhara
Lobatisporites gondwanensis Tiwari &		+	L. laevicorpus Tiwar
Moiz, 1971			L. rhombicus Maithy
Brevitriletes communis Bharadwaj & Srivastav emend. Tiwari & Singh, 1981	va +	+	<i>Verticipollenites debil</i> Kar, 1968
B. unicus (Tiwari) Bharadwaj & Srivastava	+	+	V. secretus Bharadwa
emend. Tiwari & Singh, 1981			V. finitimus Bharadwa
Hennellysporites diversiformis		+	Hindipollenites indici
(Balme & Hennelly) Tiwari, 1968			Striatopodocarpites la
Microbaculispora tentula Tiwari, 1965		+	S. decorus Bharadwa
Microfoveolatispora foveolata Tiwari	+	+	S. brevis Singh, 1972
emend. Tiwari & Singh, 1981			S. globosus (Mahesh
Pseudoreticulatispora barakarensis			Dwivedi, 1981
Bharadwaj & Srivastava, 1969	+		S. rotundus (Mahesh
Osmundacidites pilatus Tiwari & Rana, 1981	l	+	Dwivedi, 1981
O. sennectus Balme, 1963		+	S. subcircularis Sinh
Laevigatosporites colliensis (Balme & Henne	lly) +	+	S. multistriatus Jha,
Venkatachala & Kar, 1968			Faunipollenites parvi
Densipollenites invisus Bharadwaj &		+	F. goraiensis (Potoni
Salujha, 1964			F. varius Bharadwaj,

D. indicus Bharadwaj, 1962		+
D. magnicorpus Tiwari & Rana, 1981		+
Tiwariasporis simplex (Tiwari) Maheshwari &	+	+
Kar, 1967		
T. novus Bharadwaj & Dwivedi, 1981		+
Weylandites obscurus (Tiwari) Bharadwaj &		+
Dwivedi, 1981		
W. minutus Bharadwaj & Srivastava, 1969		+
W. circularis Bharadwaj & Srivastava, 1969		+
Parasaccites korbaensis Bharadwaj & Tiwari, 1964	-t-	+
P. obscurus Tiwari, 1965	+	+
P. distinctus Tiwari, 1965	+	+
P. diffusus Tiwari, 1965	+	+
P. talchirensis Lele & Makada, 1972	+	
Plicatipollenites ganjraensis Saxena, 1971	+	
Trochosporites sp.	+	
Kamthisaccites kamthiensis Srivastava & Jha, 1986		+
Lueckisporites crassus Sinha, 1972		+
L sp.		+
Guttulapollenites hannonicus Goubin, 1965		+
Lunatisporites ovatus (Goubin) Maheshwari &		+
Banerji, 1975		
Lunatisporites sp.		+
Corisaccites alutus Venkatachala & Kar, 1966		+
Corisaccites vanus Venkatachala & Kar, 1966		+
Hamiapollenites minimus Jha, 1996		+
Striatites communis Bharadwaj & Salujha, 1964	+	+
S. solitus Bharadwaj & Salujha, 1964	+	+
S. tentulus Tiwari, 1965	+	+
Lahirites rarus Bharadwaj & Salujha, 1964		+
L. laevicorpus Tiwari, 1968		+
L. rhombicus Maithy, 1965	+	+
Verticipollenites debilis Venkatachala & Kar, 1968	+	+
V. secretus Bharadwaj, 1962		+
V. finitimus Bharadwaj, 1962		+
Hindipollenites indicus Bharadwaj, 1962		+
Striatopodocarpites labrus Tiwari, 1965	+	+
S. decorus Bharadwaj & Salujha, 1964	+	+
S. brevis Singh, 1972		+
S. globosus (Maheshwari) Bharadwaj &		+
Dwivedi, 1981		
S. rotundus (Maheshwari) Bharadwaj &	+	+
Dwivedi, 1981		
S. subcircularis Sinha, 1972	+	+
S. multistriatus Jha, 1996		+
Faunipollenites parvus Tiwari, 1965		+
F. goraiensis (Potonie & Lele) Maithy, 1965	+	+
F. varius Bharadwaj, 1962	+	+

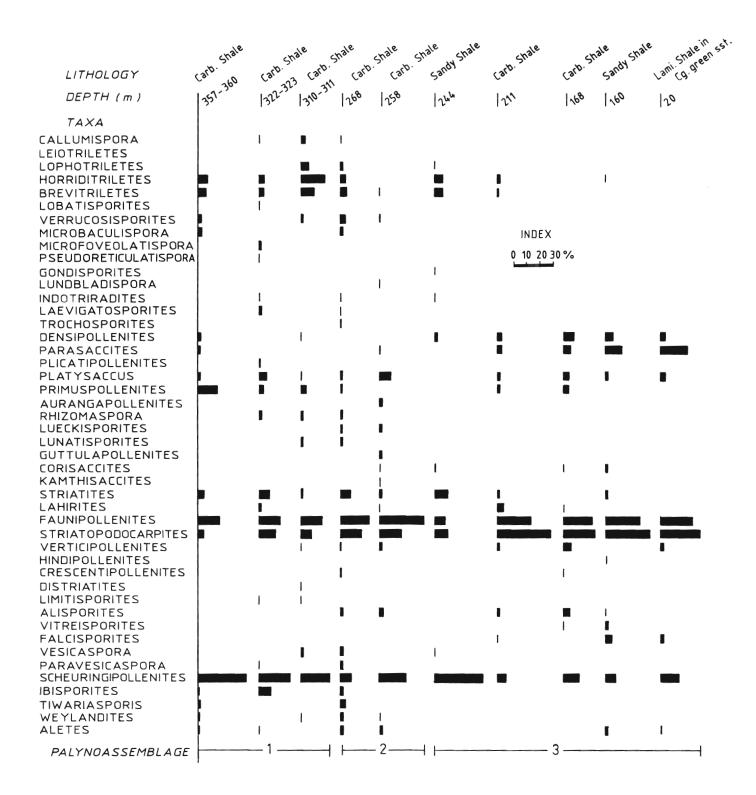


Fig. 2. Percentage distribution of various palynotaxa in bore core GJ-6.

F. bharadwajii Maheshwari, 1967		+
F. singrauliensis Sinha, 1972	+	
F. gopadensis Bharadwaj & Srivastava, 1969	+	+
Strotersporites crassiletus Jha, 1996		+
Distriatites insolitus Bharadwaj & Salujha, 1964	+	+
Rhizomaspora indica, Tiwari, 1965	+	+
Primuspollenites levis Tiwari, 1964	+	+
Crescentipollenites globosus (Maithy) Jha, 1996	+	+
C. densus Jha, 1996		+
C. gondwanensis (Maheshwari)		+
Bharadwaj, Tiwari & Kar, 1964		
C. talchirensis Lele, 1975	+	+
Scheuringipollenites maximus (Hart) Tiwari, 1973	+	+
S. barakarensis (Tiwari) Tiwari, 1973	+	+
S. tentulus (Tiwari) Tiwari, 1973	+	+
Ibisporites diplosaccus Tiwari, 1968	+	
I. jhingurdahiensis Sinha, 1972	+	+
Platysaccus plicatus Bharadwaj & Dwivedi, 1981	+	+
P. papilionis Potonie & Klaus, 1954	+	+
Alisporites indarraensis Segroves, 1969		+
A. landianus Balme, 1970		+
Falcisporites nuthaliensis (Clark) Balme, 1970		+
Paravesicaspora ovata (Balme & Hennelly)		+
Bharadwaj & Dwivedi, 1981		
P. brevis (Sinha) Bharadwaj & Dwivedi, 1981		+
Vesicaspora luteus Salujha, 1965		+
Aurangapollenites minimus Jha, 1996		+
Vitreisporites pallidus (Reissinger) Balme, 1970		+
Chordasporites australiensis de Jersey, 1962		+
Limitisporites rectus Leschik, 1956	+	
Barakarites indicus Bharadwaj & Tiwari, 1964	+	
Inaperturopollenites spp.	+	+

## PALYNO-ASSEMBLAGE I

This assemblage has been recognised at 310-360m depth and is dominated by non-striate disaccates chiefly Scheuringipollenites (upto 36%). Primuspollenites (3-14%), Platysaccus (1-7%), Ibisporites (1-9%) and Alisporites (1%) are also disaccates comprising present. The striate Faunipollenites (15%), Striatopodocarpites (4-8%) and Striatites (2-8%) are sub dominant. Triletes are fairly well represented in this assemblage both quantitatively as well as include Leiotriletes. qualitatively. These Lobatisporites, Lophotriletes, Callumispora, Verrucosisporites, Microbaculispora, Microfoveolatispora, Pseudoreticulatispora, Horriditriletes. Brevitriletes. Indotriradites. Aletes. monoletes and monosaccates are rare. *Primuspollenites* is 14% at 357-360m.

### PALYNO-ASSEMBLAGE II

This assemblage has been recognised at 258-268m depth. It shows dominance of striate disaccates chiefly *Faunipollenites* (up to 34%) and *Striatopodocarpites* (up to 17%). Qualitatively significant taxa recorded in this assemblage are *Lundbladispora*, *Lunatisporites*, *Verticipollenites*, *Gondisporites*, *Weylandites*, *Guttulapollenites*, *Corisaccites* and *Crescentipollenites*.

## PALYNO-ASSEMBLAGE III

This assemblage has been demarcated at 244-20m depth. It also shows dominance of striate disaccates chiefly Striatopodocarpites (upto 40%) and Faunipollenites (up to 25%). The radial monosaccate taxa Parasaccites is upto 20% at 20m depth. Densipollenites is 1-7%. Triletes are poorly represented Horriditriletes (2%) and Brevitriletes (1%). Some of the taxa viz., Falcisporites, Vitreisporites, Gondisporites, Corisaccites, Hindipollenites are rare in and percentage.

## DISCUSSION

The presence of *Scheuringipollenites* in high percentages in association with striate disaccates in Assemblage-1 (depth 310-360m) suggests Lower Barakar affinity (Early Permian). This palynoflora compares well with the Lower Barakar palynoflora of Godavari as well as other basins in India (Bharadwaj and Srivastava, 1973; Tiwari, 1973; Srivastava, 1973; Bharadwaj, Navale and Anand-Prakash, 1974; Tiwari et al., 1981; Srivastava and Anand-Prakash, 1984; Anand-Prakash Srivastava, 1984; Sarate, 1986; Srivastava and Jha, 1992a, 1992b, 1995, 1996). All these assemblages are accommodated under Scheuringipollenites barakarensis Assemblage Zone (Tiwari and Tripathi,1992). Primuspollenites is high (14%) in this assamblage at 357-360m depth (seam IIIB). High incidence of Primuspollenites (14%) has also been observed in Oueen Seam of Koyagudem area (Srivastava and Jha, 1996). Subdominance of Primuspollenites association with in

Scheuringipollenites has also been observed in bore core GGK-20 in Lower Barakar assemblage and in association with Parasaccites in Upper Karharbari assemblage (Srivastava and Jha, 1989). Queen Seam of Polampalli Incline in Yellandu Area association also characterised by Primuspollenites Scheuringipollenites and (Srivastava, 1987). Primuspollenites in high percentage in association with Scheuringipollenites has also been recorded from Bhadua, Khandia, Bali and Jatkuti coal seams of Giridih Coalfield (Srivastava, 1973) and in Unit-2 of Garu Formation, West Siang District (Srivastava and Bhattacharrya, 1996).

Dominance striate and of disaccates taxa like Lundbladispora, appearance of Lunatisporites, Corisaccites, Guttulapollenites, Gondisporites and Weylandites in low percentage indicates Late Permian age. Assemblage II of the present investigation compares Assemblage I of GGK-27 and GGK-20 from Ramagundam area (Bharadwaj et al., Assemblage-A of Chelpur area (Srivastava and Jha, 1987), Palynozone 6 of Ramakrishnapuram area (Srivastava and Jha, 1992b), Palynozone 7 of Budharam area (Srivastava and Jha, 1995) and Palynoassemblage 5 of Manuguru area (Srivastava and Jha, 1992a). The present Assemblage-II is also with Striatopodocarpites-Faunipollenites Assemblage-Zone described by Tiwari and Tripathi (1992).

Dominance of striate disaccates and fairly well representation of *Parasaccites* (up to 20%) along with *Densipollenites* (up to 7%) is the characteristic association in Assemblage III of the bore core. *Densipollenites* alongwith striate disaccates is characteristic of Barren Measures palynoflora. However, this genus almost disappears in lower part of Raniganj Formation but appears again in upper part of Raniganj Formation and is differentiated by the restricted occurrence of the *D. magnicorpus*. Further, the presence of some younger taxa like *Falcisporites*, *Vitreisporites*, *Gondisporites*, *Verticipollenites*, *Hindipollenites*, *Corisaccites* also distinguishes it from the Barren Measures palynoflora. Hence the palynoassembl-

ages II and III represent Raniganj equivalent palynoassemblages in bore core GJ-6 in Bhopalpalli area.

The percentage of *Parasaccites* gradually increases from 3 to 20% between 211m to 20m depth. The high incidence of Parasaccites in association with dominance of striate disaccates is also observed in bore core GRK-25 from Ramakrishnapuram area, in bore core GJP-I from Jaipuram area (Srivastava and Jha, 1992b) of Godavari Graben. In South Rewa Basin Assemblage 5 of bore cores JHL-24, JHL-25 (Tiwari and Ram-Awatar, 1989), and Assemblage 1 of bore core UKD-8 (Tiwari and Ram-Awatar, 1987) also shows high incidence of Parasaccites. However, in the Raniganj Formation of Damodar Valley Parasaccites is present in Striatopodocarpites-Densipollenites Assembllow percentage. Occurrence Parasaccites in high percentages is known in the Talchir Formation and also the Upper Karharbari sediments. Lithologically, the sediments in bore core GJ-6 which have yielded high percentage of Parasaccites shows greenish tinge. Hence, it is possible that towards the end of the Raniganj Formation (Late Permian) the climate of the region tended to become colder. However, the other spore genera, e.g., Plicatipollenites, Callumispora which suggest cold climate in association with *Parasaccites*, not being present, could only mean a weak cool oscillation. Nevertheless, this evidence tends to extend support to the contention of Bharadwaj (1975) for the third glacial phase during Panchet Stage. However, the lithological evidence for this glaciation in India, is not available till now but it is necessary to search and think over in this direction, particularly in the Godavari Graben due to its close proximity to south pole during that time. Talchir-like climate has also been suggested during Upper Raniganj and Lower Panchet by Tiwari and Tripathi (1987). Late Permian/Triassic (?) plant microfossils have been reported from the sediments being considered to be of glacial origin, i.e. varve-like rhythmites, deposited on Sri fragment of the Gondwanaland Lankan (Dahanayake et al., 1989).

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## **EXPLANATION OF PLATE**

## Plate I

(All magnifications x500)

Showing some significant palynotaxa from Late Permian palyno-assemblages.

- 1. Crescentipollenites globosus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9481, Coordinates 113.1 x8.0.
- 2. Weylandites circularis B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9529, Coordinates 15.84x5.0.
- 3. Osmundacidites pilatus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9339, Coordinates 112.2 x15.7.
- 4. Brevitriletes unicus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9332, Coordinates 111.2 x10.2.
- 5. Aurangapollenites minimus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9526, Coordinates 85.7 x18.1.
- 6. Vitreisporites pallidus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9324, Coordinates 95.7 x19.8.
- 7. Corisaccites alutus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9324, Coordinates 104.0 x12.6.
- 8. Hamiapollenites minimus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9522, Coordinates 98.8 x7.2.
- 9. Verrucosisporites surangei B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9339a, Coordinates 96.5 x5.3.
- 10. Strotersporites crassiletus B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9341, Coordinates 96.0 x5.0.
- 11. Paravesicaspora nilssoni B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9336, Coordinates 12.6 x90.0.
- 12. Kamthisaccites kamthiensis B.S.I.P. Slide No. 9480, Coordinates 101.7 x19.1.

