

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNICATIONS

THERE is no authentic and precise information about old-time trade routes in Coorg district except some fragmentary observations of surveyors who have described the state of affairs prior to the British annexation in 1834. Lieutenant Connor in his *Memoirs of the Codugu Survey* published in 1817 has this to say about communications: "Codagu broken by hills, covered with woods having but indifferent roads and no large towns, holds out but few temptations to an extensive intercourse with its neighbours, the superior advantage it enjoys for the production of rice renders it however in some measure the granary of the countries in its vicinity". During the rule of the Rajas, no attention was paid to the development of road communications. It was the policy of those, who ruled the area before the British stepped in, to make the country as inaccessible as possible. Towards this end, they discouraged all efforts at road-making. They did not want outsiders to come into Coorg. Thus, during the rule of the Rajas, there was not a single good road worth the name. A few that existed were mere pack-bullock paths and the rest were mere bridle paths. Before 1834, when the British military engineers thought of opening up some means of communication, the roads in Coorg were in a primitive state wholly unfit for wheeled carriages and scarcely less for bullocks. The Rajas feared that easy communications would facilitate invasion of their country by outsiders. For this reason, some of the more direct and practicable lines of communication leading to Mercara were closed and travelling by them was prohibited. To that extent, intercourse with the outside world was not possible. The earliest road construction work in Coorg was begun in January 1835, one year after the British took over. The route from Fraserpet (Kushalnagar) to Mercara, a distance of 20 miles, was completed within two years and opened for traffic. Captain Underwood of the Sappers, ably assisted by Lieutenants Rundal, Doria and Fast, supervised the work. This route from the Mysore side to Mercara had to cross the Cauvery river for which a bridge had to be constructed. The first stone of this bridge was laid on 1st January 1846 by Captain W. G. Onslow who was Superintendent of Coorg at that time. The bridge

site was at the point where the trunk road from Mysore enters Coorg at Fraserpet. This bridge is a masonry construction of seven arches and is 315 feet in length. Having commenced the bridge in 1846, the same was opened for traffic on 12th May 1848. The portion of this road in the proximity of Mercara is in several places very steep and has many hair-pin bends. The tortuous nature of the road has been improved in recent years so as to make it safe for traffic.

The next important road was through the Sampaje ghat and this was taken up after the monsoon months in 1837. This was the line from Mercara towards Mangalore which is also called "Fast's Ghat", so named to perpetuate the professional skill of the young engineer officer who planned and executed this road work and who fell a victim to the jungle fever at the spot. The construction of this road was beset with many engineering difficulties as the passage lay through dense forests. The Sampaje ghat road was laid on a good soil with a gentle slope down the valleys so as to facilitate cart traffic of those days. At certain stages of this important ghat road, particularly between the ninth and tenth mile from Mercara, the gradient for a short distance is as much as one in 12 and one in six or seven. The total fall in the first 15 miles is about 2,900 feet which gives a gradient of one in 37 for the whole ghat road. From the foot of the ghat to Sampaje village at the South Kanara frontier, the fall is only 55 feet.

Another important old-time road from Cannanore in Kerala towards Coorg passed through the Periambadi ghat, the construction of which was completed by 1849. This ghat road was laid mainly for military purposes. Shortly afterwards, a road from Virajpet to Mercara was laid connecting the Periambadi Ghat road. This line was linked from Mercara to Kodlipet in 1868. The Cannanore road has a steep gradient with one in nine at several places. Beyond the seventh mile from Mercara, a high arched bridge across the Mutharmudi river has been constructed. Beyond the 12th mile, the Cauvery river had to be crossed and in the old days a ferry service offered facilities. From this point to Virajpet, the road is level. Near about Virajpet, the Periambadi ghat descends towards Kerala. From the head of the ghat, which is 3,141 feet above mean sea level, the descent down the ghats varies from one in 18 and 20 to one in 30. At some places near the Wottékölly Bungalow, there is a severe gradient of one in 10 and one in 12. The road after this point is easy.

The northern highroad which is also old—constructed near about 1870—connects Mercara with Sakleshpur in Hassan district through Somwarpet and Kodlipet. It was not until 1862, that the roads of Coorg were sufficiently recognised to induce the Government to organise a regular establishment for the execution of public works. A detachment of Sappers and Miners having been

stationed in Coorg since 1834, all the urgent public works were carried out by them and after they had been withdrawn, an overseer took charge of the roads. In order to avoid the steep Mercara ghat roads for the through traffic from Mysore to Mangalore, a new pathway was cut by Lieut. Clarke and Mr. Gramatzki to connect the Periyapatna—Siddapur road with the Sampaje ghat road. In addition to the roads, designed and carried out from Government funds, others have also been constructed by coffee planters without any State assistance.

Before Coorg became a district of Mysore State, there were ten main outlets which are as follows :—

1. Mercara to Mangalore *via* Sampaje.
2. Mercara to Kerala *via* Makut.
3. Mercara to Kerala *via* Kutta.
4. Mercara to Hunsur *via* Kushalnagar.
5. Mercara to Hunsur *via* Gaddige.
6. Mercara to Hunsur *via* Anechowkur.
7. Mercara to Konanur *via* Sirangala.
8. Mercara to Arkalagud *via* Sanivarasanthe.
9. Mercara to Sakleshpur *via* Sanivarasanthe.
10. Mercara to Hassan *via* Kodlipet.

Main outlets branching off from Mercara were all black-topped. There is also a network of internal village communications reaching almost every village in the district.

The hills and dense jungles of Coorg presented untold difficulties in road-making in the old days. During the time of the Rajas, there was no attempt at opening up communications because it was feared that outsiders would invade the territory. They were content with foot-paths laid from place to place which were used as cart tracks also. It was only after the annexation of Coorg that real road-making was started. The Fraserpet-Mercara road, the Periyabadi ghat road and the Mercara-Mangalore road were the earliest roads in Coorg. Just before the First World War, Coorg had 205 miles of metalled roads and by 1927 this was increased to 253 miles. By 1935, a net-work of village communications was opened both by the State and the District Board. In the year 1935, Coorg had 253 miles of metalled roads, 132 miles of gravelled roads and 73 miles of local fund roads. Between 1933 and 1939, the road from Virajpet to Mercara leading to Napoklu and the road from Ammathi to Vontiangadi were all metalled. The metalling of the Napoklu-Kakkabe road was taken up in 1945 and the Gonikoppal-Devanur road in 1948. The asphaltting of the roads in Coorg was started in right earnest from 1929. Some lengths of the Mercara-Fraserpet road, Mercara-Siddapur road and Mercara-Mangalore road were all asphalted in 1929. The main roads leading to the headquarters town were widened. Up to 1953, more than 80 miles of roads were asphalted.

Roads

As there are no national highways in Coorg District, the roads maintained by the State Public Works Department are classified into various categories, viz., State Highways, Major District roads, other district roads and village roads. The total road length maintained by the Public Works Department as on 31st March 1963, was 591 miles and 2 furlongs consisting of all the categories mentioned above. This total excludes the mileage maintained by the Forest Department. The State highways in the confines of the district run to a length of 82 miles and 2 furlongs. In the category of Major District roads, there is a total length of 376 miles and 5 furlongs. A total length of 37 miles and 4 furlongs comes under other district roads. Only 94 miles and 7 furlongs come under the category of village roads. The surface-wise break-up of the total length of 591 miles and 2 furlongs is as follows :—

Black-topped	406 miles and 6 furlongs
Water-bound Macadam surface ..	52 miles and 5 furlongs
Other kinds of surface treatment .	6 miles and 6 furlongs
Natural soil roads	125 miles and 1 furlong

*Total Road Mileage :—*According to the statistics furnished by the State Public Works Department, the total length of roads under various agencies as on 31st March 1963 was 823 miles. Coorg District has an area of 1,590 square miles. The road mileage in charge of the State Public Works Department was 591 and the various local bodies maintained 120 miles. The Forest Department had a total length of 112 miles under their care. Out of the total length of 823 miles, the surfaced portion was 473 miles and the rest came under the category of unsurfaced roads.

Roads maintained by the Public Works Department.—Out of a total length of 591-2 miles maintained by the Public Works Department, the surfaced portion was 459-3 miles and the unsurfaced portion was 131-7 miles.

Under Local Bodies.—The roads maintained by local bodies (Taluk Boards) as on 31st March 1963 came to 120 miles.

Forest Roads.—The State Forest Department have under their maintenance a total length of 112 miles and 2 furlongs. Out of this total, only 13 miles and 4 furlongs are surfaced and the rest unsurfaced.

State Highways.—Under the category of State Highways, a total length of 82 miles and 2 furlongs is maintained by the State Public Works Department. The whole length under this category is black-topped.

Major District Roads.—A total length of 376 miles and 5 furlongs comes under the category of Major District Roads maintained by the State Public Works Department. Out of this total length, 300 miles and 6 furlongs are black-topped, 23 miles and 4 furlongs have a water-bound macadam surface and 52 miles and 3 furlongs are unmetalled.

Other District Roads.—The district has a total length of 37 miles and 4 furlongs under this category. Out of this length, 18 miles and 5 furlongs are black-topped, 9 miles and 3 furlongs are water-bound macadam, and 9 miles and 4 furlongs are unmetalled.

Village Roads.—The total length of village roads is 94 miles and 7 furlongs. Out of this total, 70 miles have no metalled surface. Only 5 miles and 1 furlong are black-topped. A total length of 19 miles and 6 furlongs are treated with water-bound macadam.

Roads taken over.—The road mileage taken over as State Fund Roads from the District Boards from 1958 to 1961 was 168 miles and 2 furlongs.

Expenditure.—The total expenditure on roads and bridges beginning from 1956-57 shows an upward trend. During 1957-58, the total expenditure was Rs. 27.72 lakhs. During 1961-62, the expenditure on roads and bridges in Coorg was Rs. 21.81 lakhs. During 1962-63, the expenditure was Rs. 37.23 lakhs.

A brief description of some of the important roads is given below. The length indicated in brackets is the actual length within the confines of the district.

Mercara-Mangalore Road (Length 18 miles and 4 furlongs).— **State Highways**
The entire length of 18 miles and 4 furlongs is black-topped. Starting from the headquarters town of Mercara, the road descends down the ghats and leaves the district near Sampaje village. This road is familiarly called Sampaje ghat road. The road has many hair-pin bends and is particularly steep near the ninth mile from Mercara. Vehicles coming up the ghats from the Mangalore side stop at a point in the middle of the steep ghat section where the road maintenance authorities have fixed up a water point, for providing water for car radiators. The road is one of the oldest in Coorg, passing through dense jungles, rich rubber estates and teak reserves. It is of particular interest to note that of all the ghat roads in the west of Mysore, the Sampaje ghat road is the easiest from the point of view of negotiation. It is not so steep or tortuous as the other ghat roads leading towards South Kanara from the plateau. The Mercara-Mangalore road has a good asphalted surface and is well-maintained as an all-weather road. Several portions have been

protected from landslips. This road is the only road in the district connecting Coorg with South Kanara district. The Mercara-Galibeedu road runs parallel to this road.

Mercara-Malabar Road (Length 43 miles and 5 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped. The road is also called the Periambadi ghat road and is aligned through the Heggala pass. Starting from Mercara, the road takes a south-easterly direction up to Siddapur where it crosses the Cauvery river and then runs south-west passing through Ammathi, Virajpet and Periambadi ghat. The road leaves the district after crossing the Kari-hole, a mountain stream near the Kerala border. The portion of the road from Virajpet onwards is particularly tortuous as it descends down the ghats. Vehicles from Mysore to Kerala pass through this important road.

Fraserpet-Mercara Road (Length 20 miles and 1 furlong).—The entire length of this road is black-topped. The road enters the district near the Cauvery bridge at Fraserpet (Kushalnagar) and runs westwards towards Mercara passing through Ane-kad reserve forests, Suntikoppa and through several coffee estates to the district headquarter town. This road is also called the Mysore-Mangalore road *via* Mercara and is maintained well as an all-weather road. Very near Mercara, the road has a steep gradient with many hair-pin bends. A panoramic view of the grandeur of the Western ghats is obtained from a point on this road three miles from Mercara. The mighty peak of Kudure Mukha is visible as also the towering Bettadapura hill. The portion from Fraserpet (Kushalnagar) to Suntikoppa passes through thick bamboo forests.

**Major
District Roads**

Mercara-Bhagamandala Road (Length 21 miles and 1 furlong).—The entire length is black-topped. The road takes a south-westerly direction up to a length of five miles and then runs towards west right up to Bhagamandala. This is a major district road, and thousands of pilgrims travel on this road to have a bath in the sacred Cauvery during Tula-Sankramana.

Mercara-Virajpet Road (Length 19 miles and 3 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped and runs south up to the Cauvery river and after crossing it takes a slightly south-easterly direction up to Virajpet, a taluk headquarter town. This road also affords a link to the Mercara-Malabar Road. Having been laid on the eastern spur of the Western ghats, the Mercara-Virajpet road is a winding one, presenting no difficulty in negotiation.

Mercara-Kodlipet Road (Length 46 miles and 3 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped and runs *via* Madapur and Sanivarsanthe to Kodlipet on the border of Hassan

district. Up to Madapur, the road takes a north-easterly direction and from there the road turns towards east for a few miles and then takes a northerly direction towards Kodlipet. This is a very important road in the district as it affords easy access towards Sakleshpur, Hassan and Chikmagalur.

Virajpet-Mysore Road (Length 20 miles and 7 furlongs).—This road takes a north-easterly direction and passes through Gonikoppal and Tithimathi towards the borders of Periyapatna Taluk in Mysore District. The entire length is black-topped and runs through the eastern spur of the Western ghats.

Gonikoppal-Wynad Road (Length 23 miles and 4 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped. Starting from Gonikoppal, the road passes through Ponnampet, Hudikeri and Srimangala in a south-easterly direction and leaves the district near Kutta on the Wynad border. This important road winds through coffee and cardamom plantations and enters Wynad, another rich plantation area in Kerala.

Napoklu-Bhagamandala Road (Length 14 miles and 6 furlongs).—Though a natural soil road, this road communication is an important one for conveying traffic from Napoklu towards Bhagamandala. The road has a north-westerly direction and runs parallel to the Cauvery river for most of the distance.

Sanivarsanthe-Banavara Road (Length 9 miles and 2 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped and runs in a south-easterly direction up to Banavara. The road is then continued and is called Kudige-Fraserpet road. This road has attained importance because it is laid through the paddy and ragi fields of Somwarpet taluk.

Ammathi-Tithimathi Road (Length 12 miles and 4 furlongs).—The whole length of this road is black-topped and runs east passing through Pollibetta to Tithimathi. The road is then joined by the Virajpet-Mysore road. Throughout, the road winds through rich coffee estates.

Fraserpet-Somwarpet Road (Length 13 miles and 6 furlongs).—This is a black-topped road running north-westwards to Somwarpet, a taluk headquarter town situated north of Mercara. From Fraserpet the road runs parallel to the Cauvery river for some distance and after crossing the Kudige bridge takes a north-westerly turn towards Somwarpet. The road is close to the Harangi river for some distance.

Ponnampet-Kanur-Nittoor Road (Length 14 miles and 3 furlongs).—Seven miles and five furlongs of this road have a natural soil surface and the rest has other kinds of surface

treatment. From Ponnampet this road runs in a south-easterly direction up to Kanur and then takes a north-easterly direction reaching Nittoor near the Lakshmanathirtha river. The entire length of this road passes through paddy fields and coffee plantations.

Somwarpet-Shanthalli-Kundalli Road (Length 10 miles and 1 furlong).—This is a metalled road running north-west from Somwarpet and reaching Kundalli which is close to Heruti Hole, a mountain stream flowing towards the west.

Siddapur-Mysore Road (Length 11 miles).—The entire length of this road is black-topped and runs north-eastwards to Periyapatna taluk in Mysore district. Vehicles coming from Mysore run through this road to Kerala through the Periyambadi ghat.

Siddapur-Pollibetta Road (Length 6 miles and 2 furlongs).—This road runs south-eastwards to Pollibetta, a coffee-growing area near Mysore district border. The entire length of this road is black-topped and continues from Pollibetta up to Tithimathi, joining the Virajpet-Mysore road.

Virajpet-Nalknad Road (Length 11 miles and 6 furlongs).—Only nine miles of this road are black-topped and the rest has a metalled surface. The road takes a south-westerly run to Nalknad, where the palace of the Coorg Rajas is situated overlooking the finest natural view in Coorg. This road is important for tourists as the palace in Nalknad provides a grand view of the Heggala pass.

Other District Roads

There are only seven roads coming under the category of other district roads, the more important being the Ammathi-Hosur-Gonikoppal Road, the Ponnampet-Echur-Hathur Road and the Pollibetta-Gonikoppal Road. No road of this category exceeds a length of eight miles. The Periyambadi-Bittangala road, Pollibetta-Gonikoppal road and Arakalgud-Kodlipet road are black-topped and the rest are either metalled or have natural soil surface. A few of the roads in this category need some description.

Arkalgud-Kodlipet Road (Length 4 miles and 4 furlongs).—This is a black-topped road running from Arkalgud in Hassan district to Kodlipet in Somwarpet taluk. From Arkalgud the road takes a north-westerly turn and then takes a westerly course to Kodlipet.

Bittangala-Periyambadi Road (Length 3 miles and 6 furlongs).—The entire length of this road is black-topped and runs south-westwards from Bittangala to join the Mercara-Malabar road through the Periyambadi ghat. This link affords easy access

to vehicles coming from the Mysore side and going towards Kerala without touching Virajpet. The distance saved is about ten miles.

Pollibetta-Gonikoppal Road (Length 4 miles and 7 furlongs).—This is also a black-topped road running southwards from Pollibetta to Gonikoppal. At Gonikoppal this road is connected with the Mysore-Virajpet road.

Ammathi-Hosur-Gonikoppal Road (Length 5 miles and 2 furlongs).—Except one mile of this road which has a black-topped surface, the rest is metalled. This road runs south-eastwards from Ammathi and joins the Mysore-Virajpet road near Gonikoppal.

T. Shettigeri-Marenad Road (Length 8 miles and 2 furlongs).—Only 6 miles and 6 furlongs of this road have a natural soil surface and it runs west from T. Shettigeri crossing the Karihohle river, some three miles from T. Shettigeri. T. Shettigeri is on the Mercara-Wynad road. A length of 1 mile and 4 furlongs has a metalled surface.

In all, there are 14 village roads in Coorg district. The **Village Roads** Bittangala-Kuttiyala road (8 miles and 4 furlongs) which is metalled runs south-eastwards from Bittangala and reaches Kuttiyala on the banks of the Karihohle river. The Kanur-Nagarahole road having a length of nine miles and three furlongs affords easy communication to the recently established game sanctuary. Some of the village roads in Coorg District have been black-topped. The Uduvathamotte road having a length of 2 miles and 2 furlongs, has been black-topped. Portions of Bittangala-Kuttiyala road, Ponnampet-Ponnappa Santhe road, Murnad-Balamuniparane road, Konnankatte-Tithimathi road, Subramanya-Kadamakal-Mercara road and Bhagamandala-Talakaveri road have been metalled. The rest have natural soil surface.

The Mysore Forest Department is maintaining a total length **Forest Roads** of 112 miles and 2 furlongs of earth roads and water-bound macadam roads. These roads are scattered throughout the district.

There are 55 roads formed by the Public Works Department to be maintained by Taluk Boards.

The following statement indicates the details of major bridges in the district having linear waterway of more than 100 feet :—

STATEMENT SHOWING THE DETAILS OF MAJOR BRIDGES HAVING A LINEAR WATERWAY OF MORE THAN 100 FEET
(Corrected upto 31st March 1964)

Sl. No.	Name of Bridge	Location	Waterway		Linear waterway	Type of decking	Road width over bridge	Cost of bridge	Remarks
			Span length	No. of spans					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Submersible Bridge at Bethri.	12/2 Mercara-Virajpet Road	34'	8	272	R.C.C. decking	22'	Rs. 23,800	Work completed in the year 1956.
2.	Hardur Bridge	Jamboor—Suntikoppa road at 2/1.	44'	7	308	Arched bridge	22'	4,10,000	Work completed in the year 1956.
3.	Cauvery Bridge at Fraserpet.	At 20/1 of Mercara-Fraserpet Road.	45'	7	315	do	18'	Not known.	100 years old
4.	Cauvery Bridge at Siddapur.	16/4—5 Mercara—Malabar Road.	40'	7	280	do	18'	do	do
5.	Hatti Bridge	7/6 Mercara—Kodlipet Road.	30'	5	208	do	10'	do	..
6.	Madapur Bridge	Along Mercara—Kodlipet Road between 12/4 to 12/5.	29'	2	203	R.C.C. decking	10½'	do	Old
7.	Bridge across Harangi near Kudige.	3/2 in mile of Fraserpet—Somwarpet Road.	70'	4	280	Steel trough bridge.	12'	do	..
8.	Balamuri H.L.C.	Onamnad—Parane road	12'	19	228	R.C.C. decking	12'	39,000	..
9.	H.L.C. across Payaswami river.	Balamuri near Sampaje	12'	12	144	do	12'	39,000	..

The bullock cart, as elsewhere, is the usual means of cheap transport in the rural parts of Coorg. But it was only in the beginning of the 20th century that the bullock cart made its advent in the countryside, though in the old days carts from Mysore district passed through Coorg to Kerala and South Kanara. Most of the raiyats now have their own carts for transporting manure and carrying harvested crops from place to place. It is significant to note that there were no country carts during the time of the Rajas because of the nature of the terrain and the absence of good roads. When compared to other districts of the State, the number of bullock carts in Coorg is rather low. According to a census taken in 1956, the total number of country carts in the whole of Coorg was only 1,306 (Mercara taluk 52, Somwarpet taluk 759 and Virajpet taluk 495). A noteworthy feature in Coorg is the absence of pony-driven jutkas anywhere. In towns like Mercara, Virajpet and Somwarpet, it is rather difficult to go from place to place. Travellers find it difficult to go to bus stands. They engage men to carry their luggage and walk the distance. Those who can afford it hire taxis.

Vehicles and Conveyances.

Coorg district has all the different varieties of modern vehicles, viz., motor cycles, jeeps, motor cars, taxis, buses and lorries. The number of motor cycles had risen from 20 in 1953-54 to 114 in 1962. But the number of lorries shows a reduced strength from 355 in 1953-54 to 231 in 1962. Motor cars including jeeps have also been reduced from 306 in 1955-56 to 125 in 1962. The following table gives statistics of the modern transport vehicles for three years beginning from 1953-54.

<i>Vehicles</i>	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56
Motor cycles ..	20	29	37
Private cars including jeeps.	250	284	306
Taxis ..	18	19	26
Buses ..	83	92	108
Lorries ..	355	332	394
Tractors ..	40	51	54

According to the figures furnished by the Regional Transport Officer, Coorg, the following number of modern transport vehicles were on the registers as on 31st March 1963.

Motor cycles	..	137
Cars	..	555
Motor Cabs	..	50
Buses	..	76
Lorries	..	205
Tractors	..	80
Jeeps	..	143

Compared to earlier years, there is a marked reduction in the number of buses and lorries, while there is a noticeable increase in the number of motor cycles, tractors and taxis. The decrease in the number of lorries and buses since 1955-56 is perhaps due to the political changes brought about consequent on the States' reorganisation. Formerly, the Part 'C' State of Coorg was registering motor buses and lorries. Since it was merged in the New Mysore State several owners of buses and lorries preferred registration of their vehicles in South Kanara, Hassan and Mysore districts. As a result of the change in venue of registration, the figures show a decrease.

Prior to the States' reorganisation, there was no whole-time officer appointed for the administration of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939. Under Section 44 of the Coorg Motor Vehicles Act of 1939, the Chief Commissioner of Coorg constituted a board known as the Provincial Transport Authority to exercise and discharge the powers and functions under sub-section 3 of Section 44 of the Motor Vehicles Act (Act IV of 1939). The Board consisted of four official members, the presidents of two municipalities (Mercara and Virajpet) and three non-official members. The Assistant Commissioner of Coorg was the Chairman of the Board. The Secretary of the Provincial Transport Authority was an Executive Officer under the Motor Vehicles Act. With the merger of Coorg with the Mysore State, the structure of this department has undergone a change. There is a Regional Transport Authority with the Regional Transport Officer as the executive head. All motor vehicles have to be duly registered under the Act.

Nationalisation of passenger transport has not been fully extended in Coorg. The buses operated by the Bangalore and Hassan Divisions of the Mysore State Road Transport Corporation touch Mercara and other places in Coorg, enroute. There is no organisational set-up of the Mysore Road Transport Corporation in the district. There are Road Transport Corporation buses from Bangalore, Mangalore, Mysore and Hassan passing through Coorg. The Luxury Express bus operated by the Road Transport Corporation from Bangalore to Mangalore passes through Mercara.

The Express bus from Mysore to Cannanore in Kerala passes through Siddapur and Virajpet. Since the inauguration of the new Hassan Division of the Road Transport Corporation, buses are being run from Hassan to Mercara *via* Kodlipet and Somwarpet. The Regional Transport Authority in Coorg has given only three route permits to the Road Transport Corporation, *viz.*, the Hassan-Mysore route, the Hassan-Mercara route and the Hassan-Virajpet route. The Hassan-Mysore route passes through Sakleshpur, Somwarpet, Madapur, Mercara, Hunsur and reaches Mysore. The Hassan-Mercara route goes *via* Gorur, Arkalgud, Kodlipet, Somwarpet and reaches the district headquarter town. The Hassan-Virajpet route runs *via* Gorur, Arkalgud, Ramanathapura, Konanur, Sirangala, Fraserpet (Kushalnagar), Suntikoppa and reaches Virajpet.

In addition to the Road Transport Corporation routes, the Regional Transport Authority in Coorg had given route permits to 73 private bus-owners up to the end of the year 1960-61. These privately operated buses touch almost all important places in Coorg.

Private Bus Routes.

Bus stands are located in all important urban centres in Coorg, *viz.*, Mercara, Somwarpet, Virajpet, Kushalnagar and Kodlipet. Mostly, these bus stands are managed by the local self-governing institutions. The usual amenities like hotel and public conveniences have been provided in these stands. In the Mercara bus stand, the Municipal authorities have provided lodging for travellers.

Bus Stands.

At present, Coorg district is not served by any railway line. The question of opening up a railway in Coorg so as to connect Coorg with the Old Mysore State and the West Coast has long been under consideration, but there is yet no prospect of the project materialising in the immediate future. The question, however, deserves serious consideration as a measure of long-term planning and the Central Government has accordingly been addressed. A railway line from the Mysore district to the West Coast *via* Fraserpet (Kushalnagar) in Coorg with a branch line connecting Mercara is proposed in view of the necessity and importance of linking up Coorg with the railway system. The question of laying the Cannanore-Mysore railway line through Coorg was suggested in February 1949. Shri Karunakara Menon, a Member of Parliament who spared no efforts in stressing the importance of this link, said in one of his speeches: "It is very difficult for the people in the west coast to go by rail to a place north of Mangalore which is the terminus of the Southern Railway. It would be very easy if Mangalore is joined to Mysore or Hassan; still better it would be if the Southern Railway station at Cannanore is connected with Mysore after passing through Coorg". (I. M. Muthanna—A Tiny Model State of South

Proposals for a Railway line.

India—Pages 242-243). In a memorandum submitted to the Government of India, by the Southern India Chamber of Commerce in November 1952, the chamber urged the inclusion of the 105-mile long railway link between Mangalore and Hassan and the 40-mile long branch between Sakleshpur to Siddapur in Coorg, so as to open up rail communications in the small district of Coorg.* The proposal to construct a railway line between Tellicherry in Kerala and Makut in Coorg had once received consideration of the Government and even the preliminary survey of the route had been conducted about 30 years ago, but for various reasons the proposal was dropped. There was a tram-line on the Makut-Irite road in 1924 mainly for the transport of timber. Later, this line was dismantled due to mounting costs.

**Travel and
tourist facilities.**

Coorg has always been the tourists' paradise. Nature has endowed the district with an unusual loveliness and scenic splendour. Its dense evergreen forests and variegated flora and fauna, its coffee estates and orange gardens, its peaks and paddy fields present Nature's bounty in all its captivating splendour. As the rainfall is copious in Coorg, the best season for the tourists is from October to May. Facilities for pilgrims and tourists have been provided in choultries, rest houses and travellers' bungalows. There are Inspection Bungalows and Travellers' Bungalows at Mercara, Somwarpet, Sanivarsanthe, Kushalnagar, Virajpet, Napoklu, Ponnampet, Srimangala and Bhagamandala. Choultries have been constructed in Bhagamandala, Talakaveri and Mercara. The Circuit House in Mercara is located in the bungalow once occupied by the Chief Commissioners of Coorg. It is a Class I circuit house with telephone facilities. A list of the existing rest houses and travellers' bungalows is appended at the end of the chapter. Generally, a portion of the circuit house in Mercara and portions of travellers' bungalows are reserved for Government personnel and these are named Inspection Bungalows.

**Tourist
Bungalow
Class II**

Since the whole of Coorg is a tourists' paradise, the State Government decided to attract increasing number of visitors. Towards this end, the State Tourist Department set about its task and a fine Tourists' Home is thrown open for visitors. This imposing structure is built on a summit not far from the famous Raja's Seat and provides comfortable accommodation for individuals and families. The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Mercara Division, Mercara, arranges accommodation on application. The Home has seven rooms, lounge, kitchen and the like.

* The Chief Minister of Mysore turned the first sod at Hassan on the 30th June 1965 to mark the inauguration of the construction of the metre gauge line between Hassan and Mangalore. There is no proposal at present to link Sakleshpur, a railway station on the line, with Siddapur.

The Mysore Forest Department is maintaining several forest lodges in the midst of dense jungles. There are ten such bungalows in Coorg North Division *viz.*, Makut Forest Rest House, Watecoly Forest Rest House, Narimale Bungalow, Sellectolly Bungalow, Palemani Forest Camp House, Matre Forest Rest House, Mundrote Inspection Bungalow, Karike Camp House, Bengeri Inspection Bungalow and Dubare Inspection Bungalow. Most of these bungalows are III and IV Class bungalows with a cook-cum-caretaker; cooking utensils are also available. As no electric lights are available, petromax lights have been provided. All these forest lodges are situated in the midst of evergreen ghat forests and therefore not easily accessible. These bungalows are mainly intended for the use of camping forest officers during their inspection of the interior forest areas. Only the Dubare Inspection Bungalow is better situated inside the deciduous forests of the Kushalnagar range.

Forest Bungalows.

In the South Coorg Forest Division, there are three Forest Rest Houses located at Tithimathi, Murkal and Nagarhole. The Nagarhole Forest Rest House has two suites of rooms with facilities of cook, utensils, furniture and water. There is no provision of electricity. This lodge is situated 58 miles from the main Mysore-Hunsur Road. Tourists wishing to reach the game sanctuary at Nagarhole have to go through the approach road *via* Nallurpala which is on the Mysore-Hunsur Road. These three rest houses are managed by the Divisional Forest Officer, South Coorg Division, who has his office at Hunsur in Mysore district.

The oldest post office in the district is the one at Virajpet opened in 1864. A branch office was opened at Ammathi in 1871. The Mercara post office started working from 1870. When these post offices were opened by Her Majesty's Government, the *Anche* or local post played a notable part in conveying letters to all the taluk headquarter towns by employing mail runners. In the year 1894, a land mark was established in the carriage of mails. The foreign and outside mails were transported from Mysore to Mercara by tongas. The main telegraph line from the Mysore district passes through Mercara, straight on to Cannanore in Kerala. In 1865, a branch telegraph line to Mangalore on the west coast was completed. At present, the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department is looking after the postal, telephone and telegraph services. The Superintendent of Post Offices, Mysore Division, who has his headquarters in Mysore City looks after the work in Coorg district. The Post-Master General, Mysore Circle, is in over-all charge of the division. The Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Mysore, is in charge of the postal administration in his division and the staff in the division is subordinate to him. The opening of new post offices and the expansion of postal facilities is effected by him after obtaining necessary approval and

Posts and Telegraphs.

orders from the Post-Master General. As on 31st March 1964 there were in the district of Coorg, one Head Post Office, 21 Sub-Post Offices and 109 Branch Post Offices. A list showing the names of all categories of post offices is appended to this chapter.

**Telegraph
Offices.**

There are in all 13 combined post and telegraph offices in Coorg district. There are no departmental telegraph offices. The combined post and telegraph offices provide telegraph facilities.

**Telephone
Exchanges.**

Telephone exchanges are located in Mercara, Somwarpet, Virajpet, Kushalnagar and Gonikoppal. There is a public call office in Pollibetta for the use of the central offices of the Consolidated Coffee Estates, Ltd. The Mercara Manual Exchange has 79 connections. The other Manual Exchange with 33 connections is at Virajpet. There is only one Automatic Exchange in Somwarpet with 21 connections.

*List of Public Call Offices in Coorg District
as on 31st March, 1964.*

<i>Existing</i>	<i>Sanctioned</i>
Ammathi	Sampaje
Murnad	Napoklu
Ponnampet	Sanivarsanthe
Siddapur	Madapur
Suntikoppa	

*List of Telephone Exchanges in Coorg District
as on 31st March, 1964.*

Somwarpet	..	35 lines
Virajpet	..	100 lines
Kushalnagar	..	25 lines
Gonikoppal	..	25 lines
Mercara	..	120 lines

*Classified list of Post Offices in Coorg District
as on 31st March, 1964.*

MERCARA, CHO

1. *Mercara CHO*—
Bettagera
Boikere CBO
Gali Beedu
Kadagadala
Kalur
Kandanakolli
Kaggodlu
Karnangeri
Made
Makkandur
Mercara College
Talattamane
2. *Bhagamandala*—
Cherambane
Chettimane
Kottur
3. *Chettalli*—
Kudur-Chettalli
Regional Fruit Research
Station
4. *Chickpet Virajpet (NDSO)*—
(Delivery from Virajpet)
5. *Gonikoppal CSO*—
Balale
Hebbale
Mayamudi
Ponnappasanthe
Tithimathi
6. *Hudikeri CSO*—
Birunani
Hysodlur
Nadikeri
T. Settigeri
7. *Kodlipet*—
Bessur
Nirugunda
8. *Kudige CSO*—
Hebbale
Sirangala
9. *Kushalnagar CSO*—
Guddehosur
Nanjarajapatna
Valnur
10. *Kutta*
11. *Madapur*—
Aigoor
Goravale
Kumbur
Surlabi
12. *Mahadevpet Mercara (EDTSO,
NDSO)*—
(Delivery through
Mercara HO)
13. *Murnad (Phonocum)*—
Balamuri
Betri
Hakathur
Hoddur
Maragodu
14. *Napoklu*—
Kolakeri
15. *Pollibetta CSO*—
Attur
Bhadragola
Channayanakote
16. *Ponnampet CSO*—
Balliamandur
Kanur
Kirgur
Kunda

17. *Sanivarasanthe CSO*—

Alur-Siddapur
Ankanahalli
Bembalur
Echalabeedu
Gowdahalli
Hosur-S-Santhe
Handli
Malambi
Nidtha

18. *Siddapur-Coorg CSO*—

Abyathmangala
Arekad
Badagabanangala
Guyya
Karadigodu
Maladare
Mekur-Hosakeri

19. *Somwarpet CSO*—

Abboorkatte
Balagunda
Belur-Somwarpet
Bettadahalli
Ganaguru
Hanagallu
Hancode
Kumaranahalli
Shantalli
Thanniruhalla
Tolur-Shettihalli

20. *Srimangala*—

Kurchi
Nalkeri

21. *Suntikoppa CSO*—

Attur-Nallur
Haradur
Hosakote
Kallur
Kanbyle
Kodagaralli
Mathikad

22. *Virajpet CSO (LSG)*—

Ammathi CBO
Armeri
Ballamavati
Bettiathnad Shettigere
Bettoli
Bilugunda
Bittangala
Cheyyandane
Devanagiri
Halagunda
Hathur
Heggala
Hosur
Kadanga
Kadanur-Boikere
Kakkabe
Kakkotaparamba
Kedamullur
Kandangala
Makut
Nelji
Parane
Vontiangadi

HO (Head Office)	..	1
SO (Sub-Office)	..	21
BO (Branch Office)	..	109

Total	..	<u>131</u>
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CSO=Combined Sub-Office.

NDSO=Non-Delivery Sub-Office.

EDTSO=Extra-Departmental Telegraph Sub-Office.

LSG=Lower Selection Grade.

Statement showing the details of Road Mileage in charge of Public Works Department, in Coorg District as on 31st March 1964.

Sl. No.	Name of the Road	Total length	Cement concrete	Black-topped	Meta-lled	Other kinds of surface treatment	Natural soil
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

I. National Highways.—

Nil

II. State Highways.—

1.	Mercara-Mangalore Road ..	18-4	..	18-4	..	..	..
2.	Mercara-Malabar Road	43-5	..	43-5	..	..	..
3.	Mercara-Fraserpet Road ..	20-1	..	20-1	..	..	..

III. Major District Roads.—

1.	Mercara-Bhagamandala Road ..	21-1	..	21-1	..	..	..
2.	Mercara-Virajpet Road	19-3	..	19-3	..	..	..
3.	Suntikoppa-Siddapur Road ..	8-2	..	8-2	..	..	..
4.	Fraserpet-Siddapur Road ..	11-3	..	11-3	..	..	..
5.	Bettageri-Nalkanad Road ..	12-0	..	12-0	..	..	..
6.	Ammathi-Muranad Road	10-0	..	10-0	..	..	..
7.	Kaggodu-Katageri Road ..	2-0	..	2-0	..	..	..
8.	Murnad-Napoklu Road	5-4	..	3-0	2-4	..	..
9.	Jamboor-Suntikoppa Road ..	6-0	..	6-0	..	..	..
10.	Mercara-Kodlipet Road ..	46-3	..	46-3	..	..	..
11.	Somwarpet-Konanur Road ..	7-4	..	7-4	..	..	..
12.	Somwarpet-Fraserpet Road ..	13-6	..	13-6	..	..	..
13.	Shanivarasanthe-Banavara Road ..	9-2	..	9-2	..	..	..
14.	Chennangolli-Balale Road ..	10-1	..	10-0½	0-0½	..	..
15.	Hebbale-Banavara Road ..	5-7	..	5-7	..	..	..
16.	Fraserpet-Sirangala Road ..	7-3	..	7-3	..	..	..
17.	Virajpet-Mysore Road	20-7	..	20-7	..	..	..
18.	Virajpet-Nalkanad Road ..	11-6	..	9-0	2-6	..	..
19.	Siddapur-Polibetta Road ..	6-2	..	6-2	..	..	..
20.	Ammathi-Tithimathi Road ..	12-4	..	12-4	..	..	..
21.	Virajpet-Vontiyangadi Road ..	5-6	..	5-1	0-5	..	..
22.	Siddapur-Mysore Road	11-0	..	11-0	..	..	..
23.	Gonikoppal-Wynad Road ..	23-4	..	23-4	..	..	..
24.	Kutta-Nagarahole Road	6-2	..	6-2	..	..	..

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
25.	Hakathur-Abyat-mangala Road ..	10-1	..	10-1	..	..	..
26.	Kadanga-Bellumadu-Napoklu Road ..	9-5	..	..	9-5	..	..
27.	Napoklu-Bhagamandala Road ..	14-6	..	..	1-7	..	12-7
28.	Virajpet-Boikeri-Bhagavathi Temple Road ..	2-2	..	..	2-2	..	..
29.	Ponnampet-Kanur-Nittoor Road ..	14-3	..	..	5-0	1-6	7-5
30.	Sanivarasanthe-Bellarahalli-Mallipatna Road ..	2-6	..	1-6	1-0	..	..
31.	Somwarpet-Shanthalli-Kundalli Road ..	10-1	..	6-0	3-7	..	0-2
32.	Bhagamandala-Kariker Road ..	18-7	..	..	..	0-4	18-3
<i>IV. Other District Roads.—</i>							
1.	Shanivarasanthe Chengadalli Road ..	4-0	..	3-4	0-4	..	..
2.	Arakalgud-Kodlipet Road ..	4-4	..	4-4	..	..	..
3.	Periambadi-Bittangala Road ..	3-6	..	3-6	..	..	..
4.	Ponnampet-Echur-Hathur Road ..	6-6	..	1-0	3-0	..	2-6
5.	Polibetta-Gonikoppal Road ..	4-7	..	4-7	..	..	..
6.	T. Shettigeri-Marenad Road ..	8-2	..	..	1-4	..	6-6
7.	Ammathi-Hosur-Gonikoppal Road ..	5-2	..	1-0	4-2	..	..
<i>V. Village Roads.—</i>							
1.	Bittangala-Kuttiyala Road ..	8-4	..	..	8-2	..	0-2
2.	Ponnampet-Ponnappasanthe Road ..	6-0	..	..	4-4	..	1-4
3.	Kanur-Nagarhole Road ..	9-3	..	..	..	..	9-3
4.	Murnad-Balamuni-parane Road ..	5-4	..	..	2-2	..	3-2
5.	Uduvathamotte Road ..	2-2	..	2-2	..	..	..
6.	Konnankatte-Tithimathi Road ..	4-0	..	..	2-0	..	2-0
7.	Chembebellur-Kondangeri Road ..	5-6	..	..	..	..	5-6
8.	Hathur-Kummehole Road ..	5-6	..	..	..	..	5-6
9.	Murnad-Kumbaldal-Bettageri Road ..	6-0	..	..	..	..	6-0
10.	Kathlekad-Maragodu-Kondangeri Road ..	9-1	..	..	..	..	9-1
11.	Harihara-Beliyamandur Road ..	8-0	..	..	..	..	8-0
12.	Yelakanur-Hosahalli Arrayoor-Heggala-Karkalli-Somwarpet Main Road ..	11-4	..	..	..	..	11-4
13.	Subramanya-Kadamakal Heggala Mercara Road ..	8-0	..	0-4	..	..	7-4
14.	Bhagamandala-Tala-Kaveri Road ..	5-1	..	2-3	2-6	..	..

LIST OF REST HOUSES AND DAK BUNGALOWS IN COORG.

Sl. No.	Name of the Bungalow and class	Location, Taluk and village	Approach road and distance from the nearest main road	Distance from the nearest railway station	Mileage of the point where the approach road branches off	Facilities like cook, utensils, furniture, water, light etc.,	Number of suites, etc.	Rates charged for the occupation of the Bungalow
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	(a) Circuit House —I.	Mercara	1½ flgs. from Sudarshan Circle.	75 miles from Mysore.	One mile (Mercara to Mysore).	Water and light facilities, Cook, utensils, furniture and phone available.	Two rooms double	Rs. P. 6 00 per set of room.
	<i>Names of places of interest nearby and distance—1. Raja seat to have a view of natural scene.</i>							
	(b) Inspection Bungalow—I.	do	do	do	do	do	One room double and three rooms single	Rs. P. 2 50 per day
	<i>Names of places of interest nearby and distance—2. Omkareshwara Temple. These two are in the town proper.</i>							
2.	(a) Travellers' Bungalow—I.	do	½ flg. from —M'lore road.	do	0/1 of Mercara-M'lore road.	do	5 rooms single	Rs. P. 3 50 per day *
	(b) Inspection Bungalow in the T. B.		2½ flgs. from Bus stand.				3 do 2 double	
3.	Inspection Bungalow—I.	Somwarpet	3 flgs. from Mercara-Kodlipet road.	53 miles from Hassan.	24/4 of Mercara—Kodlipet road.	do	2 Single rooms.	Rs. P. 3 50 per day. **

4.	Do	—II Sanivara— santhe. Somwarpet Taluk	1 flg. from Sani- varasanthe. Chengadally road.	40 miles from Hassan.	1/1 of S' santhe— Chengadally road.	do	2 Single rooms.	Rs. P. 2 50 ** per day
5	Travellers' Bungalow—I.	Kushalnagar S'pet Tk.	2 flgs. from Mercara-Mysore Road.	50 miles from Hassan. 53 miles from Mysore.	19/1 of Mercara- Mysore road.	do	2 double 2 single rooms.	Rs. P. 3 50 per day.

Names of places of interest nearby and distance—Kudige Milk Dairy Farm, Agricultural Farm 4 miles from Kushalnagar.

6.	Inspection Bungalows, Travellers' Bungalow—II.	Virajpet	2 flgs. from Bus stand.	60 miles from Mysore.	In town proper.	do (no bath rooms and no running water).	2 Single, 4 Single rooms.	Rs. P. 2 50 **
7.	Inspection Bungalow—II.	Napoklu, Mercara Taluk.	3 flgs. from Bettagere-Napoklu Road.	..	In town	do (no light)	2 Single rooms.	2 50 **
8.	Inspection Bungalows, Travellers' Bungalow—II.	Ponnampet, Virajpet Taluk.	1 flg. from Goni-koppal Wynad road.	58 miles from Mysore.	2/6 of Goni-koppal-Wynad Road.	do (no running water).	1 Single room.	2 50 **
9.	Inspection Bungalow—II.	Srimangala, Virajpet Taluk.	1 flg. from Goni-koppal-Wynad Road.	72 miles from Mysore.	14/5 of Goni-koppal-Wynad Road.	do (no running water and light).	2 Single rooms.	2 50

Names of places of interest nearby and distance—Irpu temple and water falls five miles from Srimangala.

10.	Inspection Bungalow—II.	Bhagamandala	1 mile from town	..	19/6 of Mercara-Bhagamandala Road.	do (no running water and light).	2 Single	2 50
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Names of places of interest nearby and distance—Talakaveri temple five miles from Bhagamandala and Bhagandeswara temple in the town proper.

11.	Tourist Bungalow, Mercara, Class II	Mercara	4 Flgs. from Bus Stand.	76 Miles from Mysore.	1 Flg from 0/2 of Mercara, Kadamakal, Subramanya Road.	Water, Light, Cook, utensils, furniture and phone available	3 single 4 double rooms	6 00 10 00
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* Phone No. 1 available in circuit house. ** The maity in charge of the Bungalow will also prepare food on prior intimation.