

## PREFACE

**W**ith a view to bring out the revised district gazetteers after Independence, the State Government founded the Gazetteer Department in 1958. Even before that, the Bombay State had compiled the revised version of *Dharwad District Gazetteer*. It was handed over to the Government of Karnataka and the volume was released in 1959. When this office released the *Bangalore (City) District Gazetteer* in 1990, the programme of bringing out of the 20 revised district gazetteers had come to an end. In addition, the office had published the *Karnataka State Gazetteer* in two parts during 1982-83, and between 1984 and 1986, the Kannada version of the *State Gazetteer* was published in three parts. Though there was a natural demand for bringing out the District Gazetteer series in Kannada, the department was very keen on early completion of the series in any one language first, because before Independence for many districts there were no separate district gazetteers. Further to launch the developmental activities in a systematic way, there is a need to have a comprehensive picture of development in every district from the post-Independent period. Of late, the economic plans are prepared from the district level, and the coming into existence of the Zilla Parishads have increased the need for a hand-book like the district gazetteer for every district. When the *Mysore District Gazetteer* was published in 1988, the Chief Secretary of the Zilla Parishad stated that they had very useful and comprehensive data at their disposal for preparing their district plan for Mysore. The District Annual Plan for the year 1989-90 of Mysore had quoted the material provided by the District Gazetteer in almost all its pages. The economic, social and cultural details and the information on the economic resources of the whole district with reference to its various regions is presented in the district gazetteers in proper historical perspective. This helps to visualise an integral picture of the whole District.

Rev. Richter had edited the Coorg District Gazetteer (Manual) for the first time in 1870. In 1878 Loius Rice brought out the Gazetteer on Coorg as a part of the Mysore Gazetteer. The brief version on Coorg was included in the Imperial Gazetteer series in 1908. There had been one more edition of the Gazetteer of this district in 1926. After independence, this office had published the *Coorg District Gazetteer* edited by Sri B.N.Srisatyan (in 1965).

When the publication of all district gazetteers was over, this office was expected to take up the Dharwad District volume for revision, but the latest census

figures of 1991 were yet to be published and in view of this it was decided to take up a smaller district like Kodagu. This is the first District Gazetteer brought out in Kannada and this is the first revised District Gazetteer being published by this office.

Kodagu or Coorg is a small district in area, and it has 19th place in the State in this regard. This is followed by the Bangalore (City District) which has the 20th place. Kodagu stretches itself on the Western Ghat ranges and because of its rich natural beauty, Indians have called it the Kashmir of the South. Europeans described it as Swazerland or Scotland of India. The Kodavas, the prominent residents of the District are a people of whom Karnataka is proud. The Kodava men and women have impressive personalities, and as they live very close to nature, they are adventurous. Thus we had many renowned warriors like Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, Field Marshal K.M.Cariappa and General K.S.Thimmayya who hail from this District. When compared to the size of the population of the Kodavas the number of posts held by them in the Army, Navy and the Air Force causes surprise. Similarly in the Indian arena of sports, the Kodavas have left a notable impression. Though the Kodavas were not so educated before the advent of the British, they soon took to education and even before Independence in the field of banking, agricultural services and medical services, the Kodavas held coveted positions. After Independence, the District was once holding the first rank in literacy in Karnataka. Even now, it holds the 2nd or 3rd rank in this matter. Before Independence, in the field of Co-operative movement, Kodagu showed remarkable progress. The existence of grain banks in the co-operative sector can be seen even today in Kodagu. This district which is a hilly tract was famous for its paddy cultivation before the advent of the British. In fact the region was (and is) surplus in paddy crop. Coffee plantation spread rapidly in the district and the it stands first today in Karnataka in coffee production. It is also renowned for its plantations of rubber, cardamom and pepper. Its forest environment has been favourable for apiculture. Kodagu on an average produces more than 4 lakh kgs of quality honey annually. The District was also famous for its oranges, but the crop has received a set back of late. But the craft work in cane, bamboo and creepers of various tribal groups of the district are equally notable. The district has been freed from the menace of malaria after Independence. The people of Kodagu are industrious, but more industrious people coming from outside Kodagu appear to reduce these original settlers into a minority. This fear has caused the appearance of signs of social conflict in the district.

The scope for tourism in Kodagu is ample. The natural beauty of its landscape, the variety of wild animals in its sanctuaries, and the place of origin of the Cauvery, Talacauvery and places on the banks of the Cauvery like Bhagamandala,

Nanjarayapatna, Balamuri and Suntigutti are some of the captivating sites with magnetic attraction to the tourists. The designs of the temples of Bhagamandala and rare wood sculptures with which they abound have not received due publicity. The folk arts of the Kodavas, Gaudas, Kudiyas, Yeravas and a variety of other ethnic groups are really captivating. The enthusiastic display of the various folk arts during the annual festivals of many local deities are also hair-raising. The beauty of the water falls such as the Abbi, Abbi Matha Falls, Barpole and the Irpu has to be enjoyed only by seeing them. The adventurous trekkers are beckoned by the tall lush green charming hill tops of the district.

Economically the District is an advanced one in the State. The *per capita* income here is higher than that of the State average but there is a considerable number of people living below the poverty line. The population of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is sizable in the district. Though the district is the only one in the State not provided with railway link, the road net-work here is extensive. In the field of education and health services, there is a healthy competition between private agencies and the Government departments. The Government is very keen on the upliftment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. An attempt to outline the efforts of the Government in this direction is also made here. The district has not progressed much in industries. But are the new industries going to preserve the virgin natural beauty and environmental balance of the district is another question that confronts us. The district has not only its distinct geographical identity, but also specialities in the field of culture and economic set-up and these trends began from the days of the rule of the Haleri Rajas. A particular system of land tenure called Jamma which originated from the Kodagu Rajas has made its own contribution to the land system and on the life in the district. The expansion of education and plantations that were evidenced after the end of the rule of the Rajas have given new dimensions to the identity of Kodagu. This volume on Kodagu has attempted to introduce all facets of life in Kodagu, and by providing the vast mass of information on the district is likely to motivate, inspire and guide all people interested in its progress. This is our pious hope. This is not a mere chronicle of events nor a mere compilation of Government reports. It is not meant for providing only tables after tables of statistics. This is a very serious effort to help the readers know Kodagu in all its dimensions and also feel its pulse. Our effort in the direction has been both honest and enthusiastic.

The number of persons who were highly helpful in the compilation of this work is not small, beginning with the Deputy Commissioner and the officials at the District and Taluk levels working under him, the authorities of the Zilla Parishad, of the Banks, the Co-operative Institutions, Schools, Colleges and those engaged in various fields of social work and creative activities. All these have whole-heartedly

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backed us in our effort. Special mention must be made of Sri B.D.Ganpathi, Sri D.J.Padmanabha, Prof. B.V.Ramana, Dr.C.Chengappa, Sri Suchetana Swarupa, Sri G.Yadumani, Sri B.S.Gopalkrishna, Sri U.M.Poovaiah, Kamath Brothers of Virajpet (Gopal and Venkatesh) Sri Manu Shenoy, the Arya couple of the Atmiya Institution, Sri Palekanda Aiyanna of Kutta, Sri Cheriya-panda Kashappa of Ponnampet, Dr D.B.Ramachandrachar of Gonikoppal, Sri B.M.Biddaya of Madikeri, Sri Joshi, Curator of Madikeri Government Museum and Sri M.G.Nagaraj of Bangalore - the few among the many who have helped us with all enthusiasim, but the list is in no way exhaustive. We owe them all a deep debt of gratitude. The Members of the Advisory Committee of the Gazetteer have been our sources of inspiration. Sri Yadurakala K.Shankaranarayana Bhatta and Dr.Kalegowda Nagawara who have deep knowledge of the district have helped us to correct many wrong impressions we had about some facts regarding the district. They were also the Members of the Advisory Committee. The list of the Advisory Committee members is published separately.

Sri M.N.Gundu Rao, a retired Senior Officer contributed a note on Jamma land system of the district and it is published in pages 519-22. My colleagues in the department have worked with all enthusiasm as a single team and but for their co-operation, the early publication of this volume would not have been possible.

### A Note on the English Version

The volume in Kannada was released in October 1992. What is in your hand is a translation of the Kannada version. Various scholars have helped this department to translate chapters in the Kannada version into English in a very short time. The department is thankful to them. Their names are included in the contents. Within six months after the publication of the Kannada version, this English version is being released. I am thankful to M/s Parishree Printers for their kind co-operation in bringing out this volume in record time.

We are already compiling the Decadal Supplement for the State Gazetteer which was published in 1982-83 and it will be completed in the course of next three months. After this, the office will take up the publication of the revised version of Dharwad District Gazetteer in Kannada during 1993-94, to be followed by the Gulbarga District volume.

Bangalore

Dt. 12.3.93

Suryanath U.Kamath,

Chief Editor.