

Lotus Mahal, Hampi

Chapter 1

The Glory that is Karnataka



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The sunny face of Karnataka

The Glory that is Karnataka

Karnataka, the land of the Kannada speaking people, is an enchanting state, endowed with an amazing variety of topographic features, verdant forests and rich wild life. Nature's bounty is reflected in its heritage, colourful lifestyles and the pluralistic culture of the people which is characterised by social harmony, generosity and tolerance. In addition to this, there is rich aesthetic creativity reflected in the fields of architecture, sculpture, literature, music, dance and colourful festivals. Every hamlet, village, town and city has its own calendar of events and contributes to religious and spiritual harmony. Karnataka is known for celebrating life in all its infinite variety.

Despite its individuality, Karnataka is considered as a part of the pan-Indian cultural environment. It has been the melting pot for creating a synthesis of the teachings of many religious reformers and their philosophies - *Dvaita*, *Advaita*, *Visishtadvaita* and the *Virashaiva* philosophies. All these flourished in Karnataka and are studied by scholars across the world.

Karnataka's nature and ethos are best expressed in its state Anthem penned by the poet laureate Kuvempu.

Naadageete

*Jai Bharata jananiya tanujaate jai hey Karnataka maate
Jaya sundara nadi vanagala naade jai hey rasa rushigala beede.
Bhoodeviya mukutada nava maniye gandhada chandada
honnina ganiye
Raghava Madhusudhanaravatarisida Bharata jananiya
tanujaathe
Jananiya jogula vedada ghosha, jananige jeevavu ninnaavesha
Hasurina girigala saale, ninnaya koralina maale
Kapila Patanjala Gautama Jinanuta Bharata jananiya
tanujaathe
Shankara Ramanuja Vidyaranya Basaveshvara Madhvara
divyaaranya
Ranna Shadakshara Ponna Pampa Lakumipati Janna
Kumaaravyaasana mangala dhaama kavi kogilegala
punyaraama
Nanaka Raamananda Kabirara Bharata jananiya tanujaathe
Tailapa hoysalaraalida naade Dankana Jakanara nechchina
beede
Krishna sharaavati tunga kaaveriya vara ranga
Chaitanya paramahamsa vivekara Bharata jananiya tanujaathe
Sarva janaangada shaantiya tota rasikara kangala seleyuva
nota
Hindu chraista musalmaana paarasika jainarudyaana
Janakana holuva doregala dhaama gaayaka vainikararaama
Kannada nudi kunidaaduva geha kannada taayiya makkala
deeha
Jai Bharata jananiya tanujaate jai hey Karnataka maathe
Jai Karnataka maathe*

Translation

Victory to you Mother Karnataka, the daughter of Mother India!
Hail the land of beautiful rivers and forests, hail the abode of
saints. You are a new jewel in the crown of Goddess Earth, mine
of beautiful gold and sandal. Victory to you Mother Karnataka
the daughter of Mother India where Rama and Krishna had their
incarnations.

Resonance of the Vedas is your mother's lullaby for you, and your
fervour is her life. Lines of green mountains are your necklaces.
Victory to you Mother Karnataka, the daughter of Mother India
who is hailed by Kapila, Patanjali, Gautama and Jina.

You are a sacred forest where Shankara, Ramanuja, Vidyaranya,
Basaveshvara and Madhvacharya dwell. You are the holy
abode of Ranna, Shadakshari, Ponna, Pampa, Lakshmisha and
Janna. You are the garden of merit of poet-nightingales. Victory
to Mother Karnataka, the daughter of Mother India of Nanak,
Ramananda and Kabir.

This is the land ruled by Tailapa and Hoysalas and affectionate
home for Dankana and Jakkana. This land is the blessed stage
for Krishna, Sharavathi, Tunga and Kaveri. Victory to you
Mother Karnataka, the daughter of Mother India of Chaitanya,
Paramahamsa and Vivekananda.

This is the garden of peace for all communities, a sight that
allures the connoisseurs, the garden of Hindus, Christians,
Muslims, Parsis and the Jains, the abode of many kings that
are like Janaka; the leisure garden of singers and musicians;
the body of the children of Mother Kannada - the house where
Kannada tongue hops in joy. Victory to you Mother Karnataka,
the daughter of Mother India.

Karnataka's culture expresses itself through diverse regional characteristics. It has stood firmly like a huge tree with its roots deep into the earth. Kingdoms and empires have faced several invasions and hundreds of battles have been fought. Religious revolutions have also taken place. Despite this, the outlook and attitude of the local people towards life has not changed. Just as a tree sheds its wilting leaves and sprouts new ones, the culture of this land has renewed itself over and over again, surviving on the strength of its inner vitality.

Karnataka has a high literacy ratio compared to other states. With a large number of educational institutions and centers of research, Karnataka is deemed as the knowledge hub of India. It is also in the forefront in promoting science and technology. The capital, Bengaluru with many multinational Information Technology companies, has earned itself the sobriquet, 'the Silicon Valley of India'. In addition to this, Karnataka has a large number of specialised industries run by the state and private sector. Good irrigation facilities have helped the state to make significant progress in agriculture, industry and commerce.

Terra Firma - Nature's Bounty

Karnataka State is situated between 11° 31' and 18° 45' north latitude and 74° 12' and 78° 40' east longitude and lies in the west-central part of peninsular India. The maximum length from the north to south is about 700 km. and from the east to west, 400 km. It is bound on the north-west by Goa, north by Maharashtra, east by Andhra Pradesh, south and south-east by Tamilnadu, south-west by Kerala and on the west by the Arabian Sea.

Area and Population

The state covers an area of 74,122 sq. miles (1,91,791 sq. km), or 5.83 percent of the total geographical area of India. It is the

8th largest Indian state by area, the 9th largest by population. Kannada is the official and the most widely spoken language. Though several etymologies have been suggested for the name Karnataka, the generally accepted one is that Karnataka is derived from the Kannada words *karu* and *nadu*, meaning elevated land. *Karu nadu* may also be read as *Karu* (black) and *nadu* (region), as a reference to the black cotton soil found in the northern region of Karnataka. The British used the word 'Carnatic' (sometimes 'Karnatak') to describe the whole of peninsular India, south of the river Krishna.

Karnataka has 30 districts

- Bagalkote
- Bengaluru Rural
- Bengaluru Urban
- Belgaum
- Bellary
- Bidar
- Bijapur
- Chamarajanagar
- Chikkaballapur
- Chikkamagaluru
- Chitradurga
- Dakshina Kannada
- Davanagere
- Dharwad
- Gadag
- Gulbarga
- Hassan
- Haveri
- Kodagu
- Kolar
- Koppal
- Mandya
- Mysore
- Raichur
- Ramanagara



- Shimoga
- Tumkur
- Udupi
- Uttara Kannada
- Yadgir

Physiography

Geographically, the whole state can be divided into three distinct eco-regions. On the western most part is the low lying coastal belt situated between the Arabian Coast and the Western Ghats. East of it is the high-rising Western Ghats stretching from the southern tip of Karnataka up to the northern point in Belgaum district. Though this stretch is not more than 30 to 50 km. in width, it provides a distinctive feature with several peaks covered with evergreen forests rising high. While the Western Ghats suddenly rise with several vertical scarps from a lower lying coastal land in the west, they begin to slope down gently on the eastern side. Further east of this hilly region is the vast plateau area bound on the east by a low range of hills of the Eastern Ghats, which runs in a southwest-northeast direction on the eastern border of the state. The plateau can be sub-divided into the southern part which is characterised by chains of low hills and plain flat land between them and the northern part with vast stretches of plain land.

The southern most part of the Deccan Plateau is the major land area of Karnataka. This region varies in elevation from 600-900 metres above mean sea level. The entire landscape is undulating with mountains and ravines. Land, with elevation less than 300 metres above mean sea level, is to be found only in the narrow coastal belt, facing the Arabian



The evergreen forests of the Western Ghats



Sea. There are quite a few high peaks both in the Western and Eastern Ghats with altitudes of more than 1,500 metres. Among the tallest peaks of Karnataka are the Mullayyana Giri (1,925m.), Bababudangiri (Chandradrona Parvata 1,894m.) and Kudremukh (1,895m.) all in Chikkamagaluru district and Pushpagiri (1,908m.) in Kodagu district. There are a dozen peaks which rise above the height of 1,500 metres. The percentage of area coming under different elevations is as follows: less than 150 metres - 5.16 percent; 150 to 300 metres - 1.95 percent; 300 to 600 metres - 43.51 percent; 600 to 1,350 metres - 48.81 percent and more than 1,350 metres - 0.57 percent.

Physiographically, Karnataka state forms part of two well defined macro regions of the Indian Union - the Deccan Plateau and the coastal plains and islands. The state has four physiographic regions:

1. Northern Karnataka Plateau: The Northern Karnataka Plateau comprises of the districts of Belgaum, Bidar, Bijapur, Bagalkote, Gulbarga and Yadgir. It is largely composed of the Deccan Trap. It represents a monotonous treeless, extensive plateau landscape with a general elevation of 300-600 metres from the mean sea level. However, the river plains of the Krishna, the Bhima, the Ghataprabha and the Malaprabha, with intervening watersheds, step-like landscapes, lateritic scarpments and residual hills and ridges break the monotony of this extensive plateau. The general slope is towards the east and this region is largely covered with rich black cotton soil.

2. Central Karnataka Plateau: The Central Karnataka Plateau covers the districts of Bellary, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Dharwad, Gadag, Haveri, Raichur, Koppal and Shimoga. The region represents the transitional surface between the Northern Karnataka Plateau of the Deccan Trap and the gneissic Southern Karnataka Plateau with relatively higher surface. By and large, this region represents the area of the Tungabhadra basin. The general elevation varies between 450 to 700 metres. However, this transitional ground is broken by several sets of parallel ridges mainly made up of the Dharwad range of rocks. The height of such residual hills is about 900 metres above mean sea level. The general slope of this region is towards the east.

3. Southern Karnataka Plateau: The Southern Karnataka Plateau covers the districts of Bengaluru Urban and Rural, Hassan, Kodagu, Kolar, Mandya, Mysore, Chamarajanagar and Tumkur. This region largely covers the area of the Kaveri

river basin in Karnataka. It is bound by a contour of 600 metres and is characterised by a steep slope. In the west and the south, it is enclosed by the ranges of the Western Ghats and the northern part is an interrupted but clearly identifiable high plateau. In the east, the valleys of the Kaveri and its tributaries open out to form undulating plains. The general elevation of the region varies from 600 to 900 metres. However, residual heights of 1,500 to 1,750 metres are found in the Biligirirangan hills of Mysore district and the Brahmagiri range of Kodagu district.

4. Karnataka Coastal Region: The Karnataka Coastal Region, which extends between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea in the west, covers Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada districts. This region is traversed by several ridges and spurs of the Western Ghats. It has varied terrain with rivers, creeks, waterfalls, peaks and ranges of hills. The coastal region consists of two broad physical features: the plains and the Western Ghats. The coastal plains represent a narrow stretch of estuarine and marine plains. The abrupt rise at the eastern flanks forms the Western Ghats. The northern parts of the Ghats are of lower elevation at 450-600 metres as compared to the southern parts which are 900-1,500 metres. The coastal belt with an average width of 50-80 km. covers a distance of about 267 km. from north to south. The average height is generally 75 metres from the mean sea level. At certain places, the crest of the adjoining Western Ghats reaches the sea as close as 13 km. near Karwar.



Both hills and beaches are common in Karnataka



Geology

Geological History and Composition

Karnataka has been credited with having the oldest rocks identified so far in the whole of India. A series of gneissic belts running from Saragur in the western part of Mysore district up to Sringeri in Chikkamagaluru district have now been dated to about 3.4 billion years. Almost close in age are gold bearing schist belts running

roughly from Kolar Gold Fields in the eastern part of the state to Hatti gold mines in Raichur district. These are dated between 3.4-3 billion years ago. Slightly younger to this is the gneissic complex widespread in the eastern parts of the state. They are generally granitic and range in age from 2.7-2 billion years ago.

Younger schist belts, also called the Dharwad Series which are schistose rocks mostly spread in Shimoga, Davanagere, Chitradurga, Gadag and Dharwad districts, are about 2.9-2.6 billion years old.



Some of the oldest geological hills are located in Karnataka

Younger granites, also called Clospet granites extend in north-south direction about 50 km. wide from the eastern part of Mandya district up to the eastern part of Tumkur district. These are believed to be 2.6 billion years old. There are also isolated masses of granites in parts of Chitradurga and Hassan districts. All these are of the Archaean era and are seen in the major part of Karnataka roughly from the southern tip of the state up to about the river Krishna.

There are several dyke formations extruding into the older rocks. These are mainly of doloritic compositions and are younger than 2.4 billion years. The Kaladgi and Bhima group of rocks which are spread in Belgaum, Bijapur, Bagalkote, Dharwad and Gulbarga districts, are elevated sedimentary rocks resting with profound unconformity above the earlier schist and granitic rocks. These mark the end of the Protozoic era. For the next 500 million years, there is no evidence of any geological episode in Karnataka.

The next major geological event, dated to about 65 million years, is the tremendous burst of volcanic activity which spread its lava flows to a wide area in the northern part of Peninsular India. These are generally called Deccan Traps. The southernmost extensions of these are to be seen in the northern parts of Karnataka in Belgaum, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Yadgir and Bidar districts. The Deccan Traps are the result of successive flows of lava and are characterised by a series of horizontal layers. Individual flows range in thickness from 6 to 24 metres. In certain areas, the Deccan Traps are supposed to be about 2,000 metres thick.

Much younger in age are the lateritic formations which are residuals of decomposed older rocks formed by the leaching out of silica and

other harder materials during a peculiar alternating of wet and dry climatic conditions. These are wide-spread in parts of Bidar and Belgaum districts and along the coastal stretch in the Uttara Kannada, Udupi and Mangalore districts. The latest geological history has not been well recorded. However, narrow stretches of riverine deposits on the banks of rivers in the plateau area and estuary deposits in the coastal belts are of the Pleistocene age commencing from 3-4 million years ago.

The geological history of Karnataka commences from the remote past. Scholars from all over the world come to Karnataka for the study of Precambrian geology, i.e., of the earliest land formations on this planet.

Mineral Wealth

Karnataka is endowed with fairly rich mineral wealth distributed more or less evenly over its territory. It has one of the oldest Geological Survey Departments in the country, dating to as far back as 1880 A.D. The state contains deposits of asbestos, bauxite, chromite, dolomite, gold, iron ore, kaolin, limestone, magnesite, manganese, ochre, quartz and silica sand. Karnataka is the sole producer of felsite and leading producer of gold, moulding sand and fuchsite quartzit.

The gold mines at Kolar Gold Fields (KGF, Kolar district), and Hatti (Raichur district) are producing about 2,000 kg. of gold per annum. However, gold deposits are now getting depleted.

There are vast deposits of iron ore in different parts of the state. The iron ores of Bellary-Hospet region are considered to be one of the world's best iron ores. The total reserve of the high grade iron ore available in the state is of the order of 1,000 million tonnes. The Sandur Manganese and Iron Ores Ltd. produces the largest quantity of manganese ore, of about 2,30,000 tonnes from the mines in Sandur area of Bellary district. Kudremukh Iron Ore Company has been engaged in mining iron ore in the Western

Hill ranges of Kudremukh

Ghats but is currently not functioning. Mysore Minerals and Trading Corporation is also an active entity in the mining sector.

About 4,200 sq.km. of granite and granitic rocks area in the state are of ornamental quality. Most of the ornamental granites are found in Mysore, Chamarajanagar, Bengaluru, Mandya, Tumkur, Kolar, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Bellary, Raichur, Koppal, Bagalkote and Bijapur districts.

Production of Minerals in Karnataka

Sl. No.	Minerals	Units	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
<i>I. Metallic a) Ferrous</i>							
1.	Chromite	In '0000 MT	15	18	19	27	27
2.	Iron Ore	in '0000 MT	18902	22595	24044	34107	39693
3.	Manganese Ore	in '0000 MT	219	213	223	359	564
<i>b) Non-Ferrous</i>							
4.	Bauxite	in '0000 MT	50	52	30	58	68
5.	Copper	in '0000 MT	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Gold	in '0000 MT	2140	2475	2705	0	3390
7.	Silver	in '0000 MT	219	275	270	337	399
<i>II. Non-Metallic</i>							
8.	Asbestos	in tonnes	-	-	-	-	-
9.	Clay (other)	in tonnes	-	-	-	-	-
10.	Corundum	in tonnes	-	-	-	-	-
11.	Fireclay	in tonnes	3346	15360	11296	0	0
12.	Kaolin	in tonnes	11877	15781	14978	5827	0
13.	Kyanite	in tonnes	355	230	297	301	635
14.	Magnesite	in tonnes	25536	21214	17179	19693	2653
15.	Ochre	in tonnes	25776	25047	34349	1080	2058
16.	Quartz	in tonnes	10260	6849	2973	62500	67363
17.	Steatite	in tonnes	0	0	1892	671436	0
<i>III. Building Materials</i>							
18.	Dolomite	in tonnes	92780	123025	166967	262051	433298
19.	Lime Shell	in tonnes	53320	89224	87712	92856	101106
20.	Limestone	in '0000 MT	9839	10481	12181	1359	9215
21.	Moulding Sand	in '0000 MT	---	---	---	---	---

River Systems

The rivers and river systems conform to the physiographic divisions, the principal water-divide being the Western Ghats stretching north-south and giving rise to west-flowing and east-flowing river systems. Nandidurg in the east is another source in which three river systems have their origin.

Karnataka accounts for about 6 percent of the country's surface water resources, with 17 lakh million cubic metres (Mcum). About 40 percent of this is available in the east flowing rivers and the remaining from west flowing rivers.

There are seven river basins which drain the state with their tributaries. The names of the river systems and the area drained are as follows:

River System		Drainage area in the state			Estimated average Yield	
No.		000 Sq.km		Mcum	TMC	percent
1.	Krishna	111.74	58.56	27,451	969.44	28.20
2.	Kaveri	36.13	18.97	10,980	387.76	11.28
3.	Godavari	4.43	2.32	1,415	49.97	1.45
4.	West flowing rivers	24.53	12.88	56,600	1,998.83	58.14
5.	North Pennar	6.91	3.64	906	32	0.93
6.	South Pennar	3.76	1.97			
7.	Palar	2.97	1.56			
	Total	190.50	100	97,352	3,438.00	100

Krishna Basin

About 43.74 percent of the Krishna basin lies in the state. The river's course for 483 km. lies in the state. The Tungabhadra, which has a drainage area of 66,237 sq.km. is the largest and the most important of the Krishna's tributaries. Its other major tributaries are the Bhima, Koyna, Panchaganga, Dudhaganga, Hiranyakeshi, Ghataprabha and the Malaprabha. This basin covers 18 districts and about 60 percent of the geographical area of the state.

Krishna: The river Krishna rising in the Western Ghats, at an altitude of 1,336 metres near Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra, flows from west to east for a length of about 1,400 km. through Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The Krishna has a drainage area of about 2.59 lakh sq. km. Together with its tributaries, it flows for a length of 704 km. in the state.

Ghataprabha: The Ghataprabha river rises in the Western Ghats, at an altitude of 884 metres and flows eastwards for a length of 283 km. before joining the Krishna. The river debouches by 53 metres at Gokak Falls in Belgaum district. The total catchment area of the river and its tributaries accounts for 8,829 sq.km. in Maharashtra and Karnataka states.



**The natural force of Godachinamalki Falls,
Belgaum District**

Malaprabha: The river Malaprabha also rises in the Western Ghats, at an altitude of 792 metres in Belgaum District. The river flows first in easterly and then in the north-easterly directions and joins the Krishna at Kudalasangama, about 304 km. from its source. The principal tributaries are the Bennihalla, Hirehalla and the Tas Nadi. The total catchment area of the Malaprabha and its tributaries is 11,549 sq. km., wholly in Karnataka.

Bhima: The Bhima river also rises in the Western Ghats, at an altitude of about 945 metres and flows south-eastwards through Maharashtra and Karnataka. It flows for 861 km. before joining the Krishna near Kudlu in Raichur taluk. The latter 298 km. of the Bhima's course is in the state. It has a drainage area of 70,614 sq. km. out of which 18,315 sq. km. lies in Karnataka.

Tungabhadra: The Tungabhadra is formed north of Shimoga at an elevation of about 610 metres by the union of the twin rivers, the Tunga and the Bhadra, which rise together in the Western Ghats at an elevation of about 1198 metres. The Varada and the Hagari are its important tributaries. It has a drainage area of 71,417 sq. km., out of which 57,671 sq. km. lies in the state. It flows for a distance of 293 km. in the state.



The delightful sight of Shivasamudram Falls in Mandya District

Kaveri Basin

About 42.2 percent of the area of the Kaveri basin (81,155 sq.km.) lies in Karnataka. This basin covers 18 percent of the state area comprising eight districts. Its major tributaries in Karnataka are the Hemavati, Lakshmanatirtha, Harangi, Kabini, Suvarnavati, Lokapavani, Shimsha and the Arkavati.

Kaveri: The river Kaveri (often spelt as 'Cauvery') has its origin in the Western Ghats in Kodagu district: It flows for a length of 320 km. in the state. The river flows generally in a south-east direction. The Chunchanakatte Falls (about 20 m.) and the Shivasamudra Falls (about 100 m.) exist in the state.

Hemavati: The river Hemavati rises in the Western Ghats at an elevation of about 1,219 metres and joins the river Kaveri near Krishnarajasagar. The drainage area is about 5,410 sq.km. and the approximate length of the river is 245 km.

Kabini: The river Kabini (also called 'Kapila') has a total course of about 230 km. and a catchment area of about 7,040 sq.km. It joins the Kaveri river at Tirumakudal Narasipur.

Godavari Basin

Godavari basin has a drainage area of 4,405 sq.km. Only a small part of the Godavari basin lies in the state. The river Manjra is the major tributary of the Godavari and it flows for about 155 km. in the state.



A watchful bird on River Kaveri

Pennar and Palar Basins

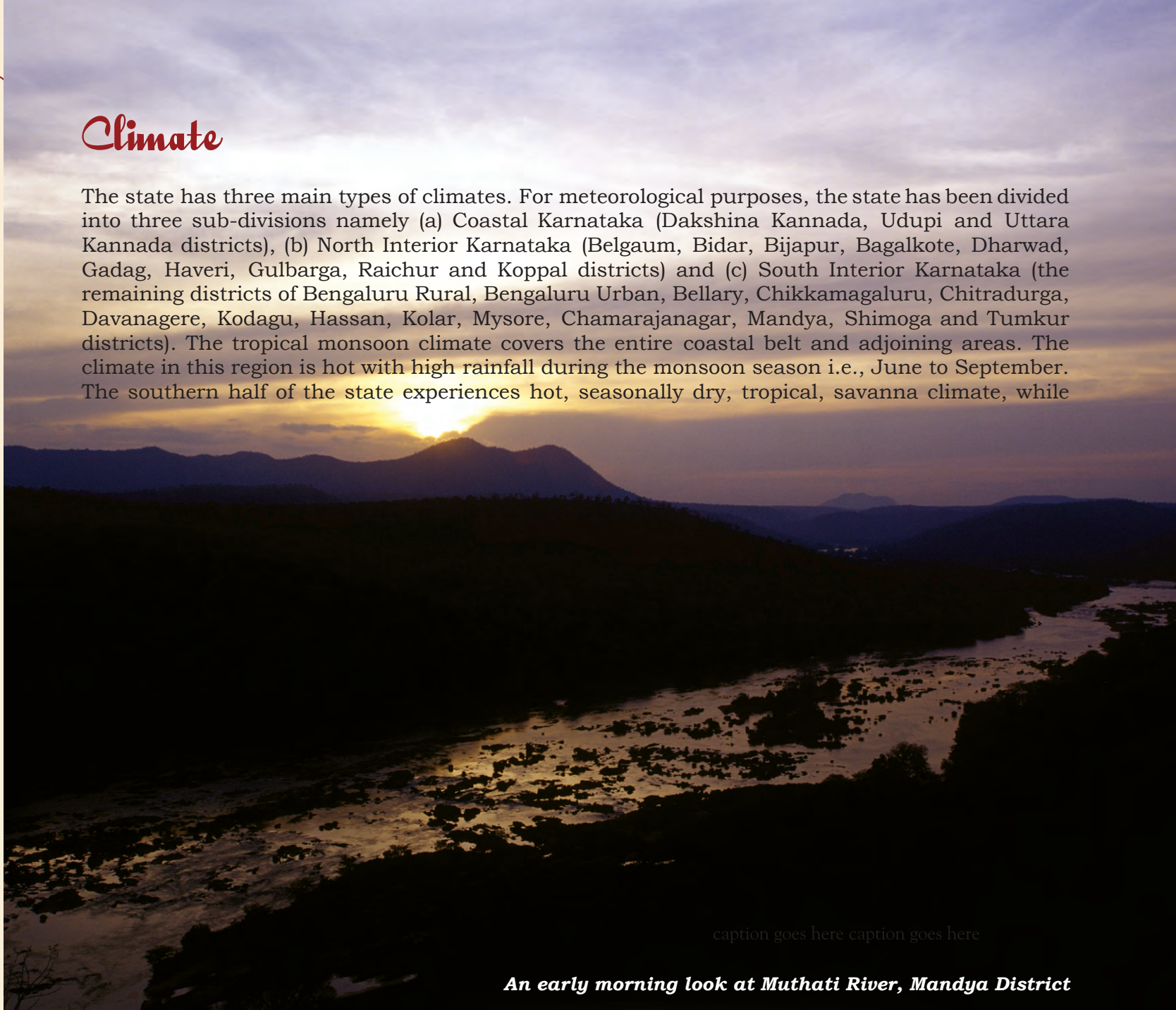
The North Pennar, South Pennar and the Palar rivers drain about 13,610 sq.km. in the state.

West flowing rivers

There are numerous west flowing rivers, chief among which are the Sharavati, Kali, Gangavali (Bedti), Aghanashini and the Netravati. The total catchment area of all the west flowing rivers is 26,214 sq.km. They are mostly harnessed for power generation.

Climate

The state has three main types of climates. For meteorological purposes, the state has been divided into three sub-divisions namely (a) Coastal Karnataka (Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada districts), (b) North Interior Karnataka (Belgaum, Bidar, Bijapur, Bagalkote, Dharwad, Gadag, Haveri, Gulbarga, Raichur and Koppal districts) and (c) South Interior Karnataka (the remaining districts of Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Bellary, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Kodagu, Hassan, Kolar, Mysore, Chamarajanagar, Mandya, Shimoga and Tumkur districts). The tropical monsoon climate covers the entire coastal belt and adjoining areas. The climate in this region is hot with high rainfall during the monsoon season i.e., June to September. The southern half of the state experiences hot, seasonally dry, tropical, savanna climate, while



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An early morning look at Muthati River, Mandya District

most of the northern half experiences hot, semi-arid, tropical steppe type of climate.

The climate of the state varies with the seasons. The winter season from January to February is followed by the summer season from March to May. The months April and May are hot, very dry and generally uncomfortable. Weather tends to be oppressive during June due to high humidity and temperature. The next three months (July, August and September) are more comfortable with lower day temperatures although the humidity continues to be

very high. The period from October to December forms the post-monsoon season. The period from October to March, covering the post-monsoon and winter seasons, is generally pleasant over the entire state except during a few spells of rain associated with the north-east monsoon which affects the south-eastern parts of the state during October to December.

Temperature

Both day and night temperatures are more or less uniform over the state, except in the coastal region and high elevated plateau. They generally decrease south-westwards over the state due to higher elevation and attain lower values at high level stations. April and May are the hottest months. In May, mean maximum temperature shoots upto 40°C over the north-eastern corner of the state, decreasing south-westwards towards the Western Ghats region and the coastal belt. The highest temperature recorded at an individual station in the state is 45.6° C at Raichur on 23 May 1928 which is 6° higher than the normal for the warmest months. December and January are the coldest months. The lowest temperature recorded at an individual station was 2.8°C on 16 December 1918 at Bidar.



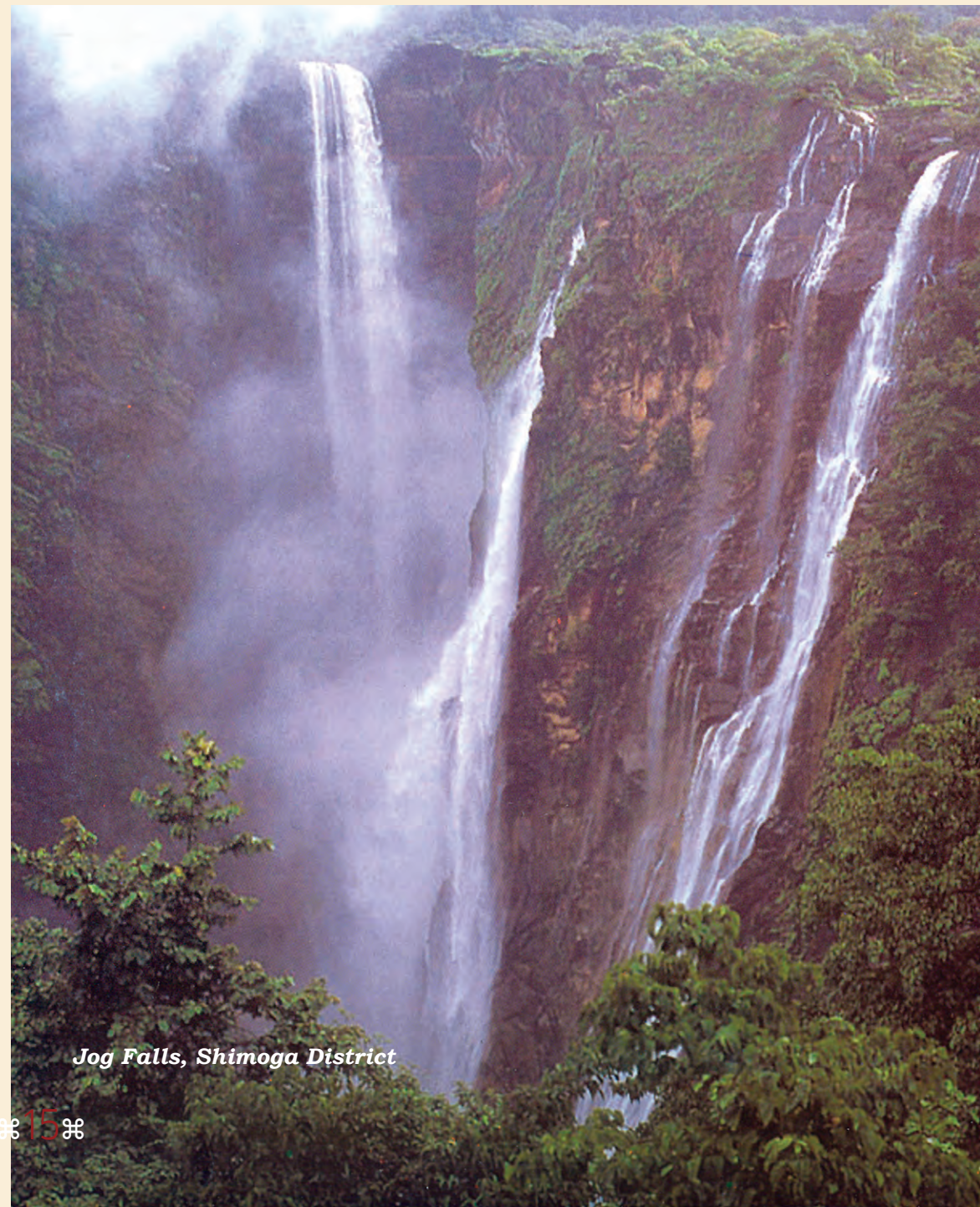
Nature speaks to mankind

Rainfall

The annual rainfall in the state varies roughly from 50 to 350 cm. In the districts of Bijapur, Bagalkote, Raichur, Koppal, Bellary and southern half of Gulbarga, the rainfall is lowest varying from 50 to 60 cm. The rainfall increases significantly in the western part of the state and reaches its maximum over the coastal belt. The south-west monsoon is the principal rainy season (June to October) during which the state receives 80 percent of its rainfall. Rainfall in the winter season (January to February) is less than one percent of the annual total, in the hot weather season (March to May) about seven percent and in the post-monsoon season about 12 percent. South-west monsoon normally sets in over the extreme southern parts of the state by about the beginning of June and covers the entire state by about mid June. The rainy months July and August account individually for about 30 percent and 18 percent of annual rainfall. There are about 26 rainy days (with daily rainfall of at least 2.5 mm.) in coastal Karnataka, and 8 to 11 days in interior Karnataka in each of these months. The withdrawal of the south-west monsoon begins from the northern parts of the state around the second week of October, and by mid October, the monsoon withdraws from the entire state.

The retreating monsoon current i.e. the north-east monsoon (October to December) affects the eastern parts of south interior Karnataka and accounts for about 30 percent of rainfall in this region during that period.

Out of the 14 heavy rainfall stations in India, with an annual rainfall of more than 500 cm., four stations are situated in Karnataka. They are Agumbe, Bhagamandala, Pullingoth and Mokut. Agumbe can be called as the Cherapunji of southern India.



Jog Falls, Shimoga District

Forests

Karnataka state has a geographical area of 1,91,791 sq.km. of which 38,284 sq.km. (19.96 percent) is under the control of the Forest Department. The forests are classified as reserved (28,689.99 sq.km.), protected (3,930.70 sq.km), unclassified (5,230.99 sq.km.), village (1,24.2 sq.km.) and private (308.42 sq. km). The unclassified areas include C and D class lands which are mostly barren, transferred from the revenue department. The percentage of forest area to geographical area in the state is less than the all-India average of about 23 percent and 33 percent as prescribed in the National Forest policy. The area under forests in the neighbouring states is as follows: Andhra Pradesh 62 lakh ha. (9 percent of the total area of the country), Maharashtra 54 lakh ha. (8 percent), Tamilnadu 22 lakh ha. (3 percent) and Kerala 11 lakh ha. (2 percent).

About 2 lakh ha. of forest area have been lost for non-forestry purposes from 1956-87. The details are as follows:

Hydro-electric purposes	22,194 ha.
Electricity lines	1,688 ha.
Roads	330 ha.
Tanks	35,840 ha.
Townships	1,791 ha.
Mining	42,676 ha.
Agriculture	67,217 ha.
Rehabilitation	25,820 ha.
Other purposes	6,357 ha.
Total	2,03,913 ha.

Though 20 percent of the land area is classified as forests (3.86 million ha) in the state, only about 11 percent is well covered. The remaining area is in different stages of degradation.

Flora

Karnataka State has rich and varied vegetation resulting from plant migration conditioned by climate, soil and topography. Biotic factors have in many areas modified the original climaxes evolved through the centuries.

Taking into consideration the topography, bio-climate and soil, the vegetation of Karnataka could be grouped under the following four categories i.e.,

1. Littoral vegetation
2. West coast tropical vegetation
3. Upland deciduous vegetation and
4. Southern tropical montane vegetation.

Littoral Vegetation: There are two types of littoral vegetation in Karnataka. The first is terrestrial on the sand dunes and the second, halophytic along



estuaries. The limitations imposed by the scorching sun, shifting sands and salt-laden winds are overcome by special plants called psammophytes. The dunes above the tide mark are held down by a number of sand binders. Sundews and bladder worts often form a seasonal carpet on the wet sands of the rear beach.

Limited mangrove formations occur in the estuaries where the salinity gradient rises rapidly towards the sea. The best examples of halophytic vegetation are near Kundapur and Gokarna. It is mostly of the *Rhizophora-Avicenia-Bruguiera* type. The trees and shrubs have to overcome the restrictions of a marshy saline habitat with strong tidal currents and fluctuations in water level as well as the asphyxiating conditions of slushy soil. These littoral plant formations have an ecological role in the balance of nature. The psammophytes help in preventing the sand of the beaches from being blown landwards on to agricultural lands and human habitations. They also protect the beaches for their recreational value. Mangroves stabilise the river embankments against erosion. They provide breeding grounds for several fishes and other marine animals.

The verdant green – a sight for tired eyes

The natural vegetation in this region immediately to the east of the coastline is of the secondary moist deciduous type. It is sometimes considered a degraded stage of an evergreen climax.

In the broader coastal low land of Dakshina Kannada, the *Hopea-Syzygium- Holigama* series is usually found with dense understorey of shrubs like *Grewia*, *Ixora* and *Psychotria*. Lianas especially *Hugonia mystax* and *Uvaria riorum* are common. The secondary moist deciduous forests are better preserved towards the foothills of the Ghats. The biotic factor which is high in the vicinity of the coastal urban centres is less towards the Ghats.

West Coast Tropical Vegetation: The lower slopes and valleys of the Ghats present fine examples of the west coast tropical evergreen forests. These close canopy forests are nurtured by the heavy seasonal precipitation to form climax vegetation. Erect buttressed trunks, unbranched for 20 or more metres, fan out to meet the contiguous tree tops. There are several variations in the dominant canopy trees. The most common is the *Eupterocarpus* - *Kingiodendron* - *Vataria* between 70 to 600 metres above mean sea level. There are several other plant forms in these forests. The biological diversity and its spatial distribution within the forest apportions solar energy effectively in the conversion of water and carbon dioxide into life sustaining organic compounds.

Upland Moist Deciduous Vegetation: The decreasing rainfall on the leeward side of the mountain gives rise to another climax type-the upland moist deciduous vegetation. While in leaf, the canopy of these forests is dense. During the dry months, there is a short period of leaf fall to avoid loss of water due to transpiration. Flowering of the trees occurs during the leafless period. This moist deciduous belt from Belgaum to Kodagu is the habitat of the *Tectona-Dillenia-Lagerstroemia-Terminalia* series which include teak, *matti*, *kanagalu* and *nandi*, which are local names. Extensive areas on the eastern fringe of the Ghats were once covered with clumps of bamboos.

Upland Dry Deciduous Vegetation: The bio climate of the eastern part of the *Maidan* permits a climax of dry deciduous vegetation in several protected areas. The canopy is open and the trees are leafless during the driest months. Flowering and bearing of fruits are generally far advanced before the first flush of new leaves appears with the conventional showers in April and May.

There are several parts of Chitradurga, Davanagere, Bellary, Raichur, Koppal, Gulbarga and Bidar districts where broad-leaved deciduous forests give place to armed trees with tiny leaflets. Some remaining patches of these forests are made-up of *Acacia*, *Albizia* and *Hardwickia*. (*Jali*, *Bilwara*, *ennemara* being local names). The *Maidan* is dotted with numerous irrigation tanks usually supporting an interesting aquatic flora.

Southern Tropical Montane Vegetation: An altitudinal variation of the tropical evergreens is found above 1,500 metres especially at Kudremukh, and in the Bababudangiri and Biligirirangan Hills. This vegetation of grassy meadows and low wooded patches forms the southern tropical Montane vegetation. The grassy mountain meadows present a quick succession of herbs that appear in short-lived profusion. A good part of the wet forests has been greatly altered by biotic factors.

The vegetation dynamics in Karnataka indicate several changes in the natural vegetation due to biotic factors especially human intervention. Inhabited coastal areas present a thick canopy of coconut trees. The climax formations of dry types of vegetation with a distinct canopy, an understorey of shrubs and a ground cover of herbs are confined to a few inaccessible pockets or to areas of reserved forests.

Fauna

Wild animals that are found in Karnataka include the elephant, the tiger, the leopard, the gaur, the sambar deer, the chital or spotted deer, the muntjac, the bonnet macaque, the slender loris,

the common palm civet, the small Indian civet, the sloth bear, the dhole, the striped hyena and the golden jackal. Some of the birds found here are the great hornbill, the Malabar pied hornbill, the Ceylon frogmouth, herons, ducks, kites, eagles, falcons, quails, partridges, lapwings, sandpipers, pigeons, doves, parakeets, cuckoos, owls, nightjars, swifts, kingfishers, bee-eaters and munias. Wildlife in Karnataka is threatened by poaching, habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflict and pollution.

The state of Karnataka has a rich heritage of flora and fauna. The hill chain of Western Ghats is the only part of the state to retain some semblance of its natural biological heritage. This last refuge of the native fauna is being subjected to rapid decimation with the setting up of several hydro-electric and irrigation projects, mining, the accelerated pace of forest exploitation and the increasing demand of land for plantation and crop husbandry. The area under forests in Karnataka today amounts to 38.72 lakh ha. i.e. 20 percent of the total land area of the state. With the notable exception of the bonnet macaque, which is under widespread religious protection throughout the state, the larger wild mammals are almost confined to the forest areas. The wildlife bearing forest areas of Karnataka are divided into six regions i.e., coastal region, crestline of the Western Ghats, Malnad, old Mysore plateau, Kollegal hills and the Maidan. The natural distribution of animals is largely determined by vegetation.

Region I - Coastal Region: The district of Uttara Kannada and parts of Belgaum constitute the northern-most sector of the hill tracts of Karnataka. These hilly tracts have vegetation ranging from evergreen to dry deciduous types. Due to the Kali river hydroelectric project and a great deal of iron and manganese ore mining, the habitat is highly fragmented and the forest cover is greatly denuded. In this region, the gaur are scattered, sambar are much more widely distributed. Wild pig is most abundant and spotted deer is seen in a majority of areas. Elephants are found scattered over a wide region. Carnivores such as the tiger,

panther and wild dog are rare now. This region was once extremely rich in wild life, especially the tiger and the gaur.

Region II - Crestline of Western Ghats: This region lies south of Uttara Kannada. There is a narrow belt of forest following this crestline of the Ghats. The vegetation ranges from evergreen to moist deciduous. Most of the major animals exist in this region but their population on the whole is low. Only a few isolated herds of elephants are found here. The gaur and sambar are frequently seen while the spotted deer appears sporadically. Barking deer and sloth bear are also reported to be present and the wild pig is omnipresent. The Carnivores such as the tiger, panther and wild dog are rare. This region is a poor habitat for most large herbivores and consequently, for carnivores as well.

Region III - Malnad: This region is characterised by dry and moist deciduous vegetation. The area is marked by conspicuous hills like the Bababudangiri range. This region has one of the best wildlife concentrations, second only to Mysore plateau in the state. It harbours populations of elephants, gaur, sambar, spotted deer, wild pig, etc. The anthropogenic pressures over this area are much less and hence the wildlife is slightly less molested. The presence of perennial rivers, reservoirs and plenty of bamboos, grass and other fodder species along with moderate rainfall, makes this region an ideal habitat for elephants.

Region IV - Mysore Plateau: The western edge of the Mysore plateau, flanked on three sides by the southernmost ranges of the Sahyadris, Nilgiris and eastern spur of hills towards the Biligirirangan Hills, is an undulating plain and is covered by moist and dry deciduous forests. This area has the richest wildlife concentrations in



A display of strength

south India. Large herds of elephants, spotted deer, wild pig, wild dog, sloth bear, gaur, sambar and occasionally tigers and cats can be spotted here.

Region V - Kollegal Hills: This hilly area is an eastern spur of the Western Ghats. Apart from the moist deciduous or semi-evergreen forests on these hills, the rest of the region is covered by dry deciduous forest mostly degraded into scrub. Elephant, sambar, spotted deer and wild pig occur throughout this region. The wild dogs have fairly extensive distribution but the tiger, gaur and panther are much more restricted. Almost all the wild life species occur in this region in small numbers except for elephants.

Region VI - Maidan: There is very little forest in the *Maidan* areas on the Deccan Plateau and whatever is left is in a highly degraded state. Ranebennur is notable for the occurrence of large herds of black bucks. Wolves are becoming rare but have been reported from several places in the plains.

A rich canvas of animal species



Demography

Population

According to the 2011 census, Karnataka with an area of 1,91,791 sq. km. has a population of 6,11,30,704 with 3,10,57,742 males and 3,00,72,962 females. Karnataka state ranks 9th amongst the 28 States and seven Union Territories of the Indian Union, both in respect of area and population. Karnataka's population constitutes 5.1 percent of India's population.

Density of Population

The number of persons for every square kilometre area is called the density of population. The density of population in the state was 235 in 1991 as against 194 in 1981 which is less than that of the country which was 267 in 1991 as against 230 in 1981. Among 35 states and Union Territories in the country, Karnataka occupied the 20th position in density of population in the census of 1991 and 2001.

Sex Ratio

The sex ratio is defined as the number of females for every 1,000 males in a given area. Karnataka's sex ratio does not differ much from the Indian average. The sex ratio of the population in 2001 was 965.

The Ethnic Mosaic

Geographically, Karnataka occupies the centre tableland of the Deccan Plateau. At times, it has been termed as an anthropological museum, where people of different racial traits are seen. The pattern and diversity of racial and ethnic composition of

Karnataka is essentially in part a consequence of the racial matrix of greater India.

The range and extent of racial diversity in southern India is not sharply evident. Later migrations did not penetrate deep into the south so there was not much impact. The racial composition of this region is, thus, derived mainly from the primary intrusions of Negrito racial elements followed by Proto-Australoids, with generally less impact of recent Caucasoid and virtually no impact of Eastern Mongoloid racial elements. The pristine Negrito element has altogether disappeared except sporadically in a few jungle tribes. Traces of Negrito element are found in *Kadar*, *Palayan* and *Irula* tribes chiefly found in the Cochin and Waynad areas of Kerala and Tamilnadu, also encountered sporadically in the remote areas of Mysore and Kodagu districts of Karnataka. The Palaeo-Mediterranean race, the prototype and ancestral stock for all Australoid races of India and Southeast Asia, closely followed Negrito.

The state of Karnataka presents a homogeneous and unified picture with the adjoining states of south India, in its ethnic composition, racial affiliation and structure of society. The people of this state are characterised by a mixed spectrum of different racial strains in a broad range of variation. They are generally short to medium statured, dark skinned, medium to dark brown, dolichocephalic (long-headed). The brachycephalic (broad-headed) are found in the west coast and Kodagu and they display mesorrhiny; i.e. moderately long noses with a depression at the root and not too broad nostrils. Body hairs are generally plenty with a tendency to curl.

The tribal population of Karnataka are the archaic inhabitants of this state. They are more often short-statured, long-headed (dolichocephal) with short noses and generally broad nostrils. They have been classified variously as Veddoid, Proto-Australoid, by different scholars. Tribes of southern districts include the tribes of Mysore, Kodagu, Dakshina Kannada districts i.e., *Jenu Kuruba*, *Betta Kuruba*, *Hasalar*, *Malaikudi*, *Maleru*, *Soligaru*,

Yerava, Koraga, etc. Their distribution is mainly in Karnataka and thus they can be classified as native tribes of this state. *Palliyan, Pulayan, Kattunayakan, Iruliga* and *Kadar* are tribes of Kerala and Tamilnadu. *Konda Kapu, Chenchu, Tohoti and Koya* are the tribes of Andhra Pradesh and are encountered mainly in the districts of Bellary and Tumkur sparsely. In the northern districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwad, Uttara Kannda and Gulbarga are found the tribes that show ethnic links with the tribes of Central and Northern India, i.e., *Barda, Bavacha, Gond, Bhil, Noikda, Pardhi, Vitolia, Koli Dhor*, etc. Tribes of southern districts are classified as *Malid-Malai*, referring to the hill, and that of the northern district as *Gondid*. The former category is characterised by the typical primitive Proto-Australoid features, the important feature being broad nostrils (brachyrrhiny) and long heads (dolichocephalic). Gondid racial features are shared with the Malid type in many respects albeit with refinements in nose shape and size of nostrils exhibiting a tendency towards mesorrrhiny (medium). The wide jawbone gives a triangular look to the face of the people of this type.

Apart from the indigenous population, the land has notable strains of other categories too. The Muslim dynasties that ruled over the region attracted considerable number of Turks, Afghans and other people from the Middle-East. Proximity to Goa attracted many Negro slaves escaping from that region and they are believed to have come and settled down on the territory bordering Goa, especially in Uttara Kannada and these people are called *Siddhis*. Some places on the coast like Bhatkal has people of Arabic origin and who are locally called *Navayats*, having settled down there for centuries. Of late, two settlements of the Tibetans have also come into existence (Bailakoppa, Mysore district and Mundgod, Dharwad district).

The Christian population here has a considerable strain of European element in it, as the Portugese in Goa had married local women and considerable sections of Goan Christians have migrated to Karnataka. The contact that the coastal people had



Tall churches hold up the sky

with the Arab traders helped in their mingling with the local population. The various racial elements including the indigenous, have helped in evolving the Karnataka culture which has shaped the life of the people.

The Linguistic Mosaic

Languages: Kannada is the principal language of the state. According to 1991 census, the language break-up of the state population is as follows:

Kannada	66.22 percent
Urdu	9.96 percent
Telugu	7.3 percent
Tamil	3.84 percent
Marathi	3.65 percent
Tulu	3.07 percent
Hindi	1.97 percent
Malayalam	1.68 percent
Konkani	1.75 percent
Coorgi	0.21 percent

Mother Tongue: According to the 2001 census, there are 123 mother tongues in the state. The following table gives the distribution of population of the state according to the mother tongue as in 2001.

The first nine languages cover nearly 99 percent of the population.

Mother tongue	Number of speakers	Percentage to total population
Kannada	1,93,20,023*	65.94
Urdu	26,06,678	9.00
Telugu	23,94,274	8.17
Marathi	11,86,417	4.05
Tulu	10,41,746	3.56
Tamil	9,83,952	3.36
Konkani	5,72,828	1.96

Mother tongue	Number of speakers	Percentage to total population
Malayalam	4,13,282	1.41
Lambani/Lambadi	3,40,512	1.16
Hindi	1,28,043	0.44
Kodava	70,985	0.24
Banjari	31,884	0.11
Gujarathi	26,956	0.09
Kshatriya	24,310	0.08
English	16,931	0.06
Marwari	14,203	0.05
Yerava	10,867	0.04
Tibetan	8,982	0.03
Sindhi	8,611	0.03
Bengali	7,056	0.02
Punjabi	6,943	0.02
Arabic/Arbi	6,909	0.02
Rajastani	4,284	0.01
Kuruba/Kurumba	4,091	0.01
Koracha	3,473	0.01
Vadari	3,223	0.01
Korava	2,832	0.01
Kongar	1,886	0.01
Brijabhasha	1,639	0.01
Gorkhali/Nepali	1,605	0.01

* 8,247 persons speaking dialects like Badaga, Harnshikari, Koracha, Kuruba / Kurumba are not included in this figure.

Dialects and Scripts: From ancient times, Karnataka, being a vast area, has developed unique regional variations in dialects, influenced by several factors, including the languages of the neighbouring states. In the present times, one can notice at least

three well-defined regional dialects popularly known as Mysore-Kannada, Dharwad-Kannada and Mangalore-Kannada, coinciding with the three cultural centres. Even within these regions, numerous dialectal subdivisions are flourishing.

The Havyaka community, mostly concentrated in Uttara Kannada district and its border regions, speaks a type of Kannada which has retained some archaic features and developed some others, thus, differentiating it from that of the common run of Kannada. The Havyaka dialect has, in itself, many regional variants. The Kota Brahmanas of Dakshina Kannada speak a Kannada dialect which is slightly different from that of the Havyaka. The Badaga form is definitely the most important dialect of Kannada and is to be found almost exclusively in the Nilgiri district. Badaga seems to be more ancient than ordinary Kannada and, in several points, agrees with the language of the old literature. The Badagas are called so by the Tamils, to mean the 'Northerners' and they were the Kannada people who had migrated to the Nilgiris several centuries ago. Nadavara Kannada is also a dialect of Kannada spoken by Nadavaru (Nadavas) who are agriculturists of Uttara Kannada district. There is one more dialect of Kannada spoken by Kannada Vaishyas of the same district. Harikantras, who are fishermen and cultivators, speak Kannada with a distinct accent. Halakki Kannada is another dialect of Kannada, spoken by the Halakki Vokkals in Uttara Kannada. Kannada spoken by Mukris, a scheduled caste



Tribal choose the forests for their habitats

group, contains some words which differ in accent with those found in Kannada and spoken by others. This is partly similar to Halakki Kannada. Kannada spoken by Halleer Vajantris, the scheduled caste people in Uttara Kannada and Belgaum districts, is mixed with Konkani words. They also use some peculiar code words which are not found in any other language. Their language is similar to that spoken by Mukris and Halakki Vokkals. Koosas, another scheduled caste group of Dakshina Kannada district, while conversing among themselves, speak colloquial Kannada which sounds like a separate dialect altogether. The Kannada dialect spoken by the Koragas, a scheduled caste group from

Dakshina Kannada, is peculiar and it has been described by one scholar as a distinct language of the Dravidian group.

Iruligas, a scheduled tribe, speak a dialect which is a mixture of Kannada and Tamil. They generally use the regional language both at home and outside. Sholigas of Biligiriranganabetta seem to have been using an old dialect of Kannada. There is also a mixture of Kannada words in the language of the Todas. Koramas and Korachas speak a peculiar gipsy language which appears to be a dialect of Tamil, Telugu and Kannada. Thus, there are more than ten dialects apart from Kannada proper.

The Kodava dialect is almost wholly confined to Kodagu district in the state. Konkani, which was also known as 'Kanzvi' (Canarin) language, is an Indo-Aryan language. It is prevalent in the Konkan strip along the west coast and uses the Kannada script. The Navayats of Uttara Kannada district speak a distinct dialect of Konkani, known as Navaiti which is at times written in the Arabic script. The Roman Catholics in the coast speak Konkani which is akin to Goan Konkani and is interspersed with Portuguese and English words. They however write the language in Kannada script unlike those in Goa who use the Roman script. The accent



A proud Coorgi looks into the distance

and style of speech of the Sonars and Sonegars of Uttara Kannada district, differs from the Konkani spoken by others.

Kshatriya Ladars, whose occupation is business and petty trade speak Chowrashi, a mixture of Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati. It has no script. The language of Kudubis, (a hill tribe) is Konkani mixed with Marathi. In the Khanapur-Haliyal belt, Hengadi, a mixture of Konkani and Marathi, is spoken. The language of Somavamsha Sahasrarjuna Kshatriyas is a mixture of Hindustani, Gujarati, Marathi and Hindi. It is akin to Hairani (Ahirani) spoken in the Maharashtra-Gujarat border area. Marathi, as spoken and written in Karnataka and as found in manuscripts, bears considerable influence of Kannada. Tulu, the original and ancient language of Tuluva and commonly spoken by Brahmanas, Bunts, Jainas and others in Dakshina Kannada, is a language of the Dravidian group and is written in Kannada character.

Special Dialects

In Karnataka, languages or special dialects are often associated with some of the castes. The dialects used by them are generally known by their caste names. The number of persons speaking the Banjara dialect is more than those enumerated as Banjara and Lambani. In all other cases, the population of each caste is greater than those speaking the corresponding language that goes by the caste name. This is evident in the aggressive tendency exerted by the major mother tongues which tend to get retained as the mother tongue rather than the languages that go by caste names. This process is the result of better communication between the various social sections and the gradual spread of education in major languages.

Bilingualism: Some persons speak one or more languages in addition to their mother tongue. Among the people in the state who speak Kannada as their mother tongue, English, although a foreign language, takes the place of the first subsidiary language, Telugu comes next, and Hindi takes the last place. Among those

who speak nine major mother tongues other than Kannada, Kannada occupies the place of the first subsidiary language. Even among those who use Urdu as their mother tongue, the subsidiary language is Kannada. This is also true of those who speak Kodava as the mother tongue.

The Social Mosaic

Religious Mosaic

Karnataka is a land where many religions are practised. Every religion has contributed in its own way in shaping the life and activities of the people and promoting the culture of Karnataka. A majority of people in Karnataka practise Hinduism; other major religions of the state are Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Islam and Sikhism.

According to 2001 census, the population and the percentage of the total population of different religions are as follows :

Religion	Population	Percentage
Buddhists	3,93,300	0.74 percent
Christians	1,00,9164	1.90 percent
Hindus	443,212,79	83.86 percent
Jains	4,12,659	0.78 percent
Muslims	6,46,3127	12.23 percent
Others	1,15,60	0.22 percent
Sikhs	15,326	0.02 percent.
Religion not stated	1,20,247	0.23 percent



A Hindu Saadhu

Tribes and Castes

There are several tribes and castes, which are generally endogamous groups. In ancient India, including Karnataka, not much distinction was made between the two categories. While the people of various castes lived together in towns and villages, the tribal groups lived in isolated habitats in hilly tracts. There was continuous interaction of these groups with the larger society. History is filled with instances where many Indian royal dynasties rose from tribal roots. As most of the tribals were hunters adept in using the bow and arrow and other weapons, they were specially recruited to the royal armies. Tribe and caste distinction is a modern anthropological concept, now widely adopted by the government as well.

A tribe is a social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands and sub-groups having a definite geographical area, a separate language, a distinct culture and a common political organisation or a feeling of common determination against strangers. Scholars have described tribes as aborigines or aboriginals or Adivasis. The tribal groups generally live away from the civilised world in inaccessible regions in the forests and hills. They belong to one of the three stocks: Negritos, Australoids or Mongoloids. They speak the same tribal dialect. Traditionally, they profess Animism in which the worship of ghosts and spirits is the most important element. Now, most of the tribals profess Hinduism. They follow primitive occupations such as gleaning and gathering forest produce and are largely meat eaters.

According to the 2001 census, there are 49 tribes in Karnataka. All these have been included in the scheduled tribes list as per the Constitution. The tribes include *Yerava*, *Saligaru*, *Naikda*, *Maleru*, *Kadu Kuruba*, *Jenu Kuruba*, *Iruliga*, *Hasalaru*, *Korama*, *Koracha*, *Kudiya*, etc.

The caste system is a peculiar feature of the Hindu society. Almost every caste is an endogamous unit. Many castes are further splintered into sub-castes and even sub-sub-castes. Their



Tree-lined avenues are common in Karnataka

concept of status and distinctive inter-relationship with others, makes the whole system intricate and difficult to analyse. Literary sources and inscriptions, while explaining the social set up in ancient Karnataka, speak of 18 traditional castes (*hadinentu jati* or *samaya* or *ashtadasha prakriti*)

The four *varnas* spoken of in Vedic tradition and about 14 other castes are mentioned in some of the literary works. At a later date (in a 17th century work), the Lingayats are also mentioned as one of the 18 castes.

Though the divisions in society on the basis of *varnas*, was introduced in Karnataka perhaps from about 600 B.C., caste differences do *not* appear to be the legacy of the *varna* systems alone. Some local classes or groups which were not exposed to the *varna* idea, would also try to fit into the hierarchy of castes. This shows that social differences existed. Many of the castes in Karnataka are tribal in origin and have nothing to do with the classification introduced by the *varna* system.

Among the 18 castes, Brahmanas are mentioned first who engaged in priestly and academic pursuits. There does not appear to be a definite exclusive caste of Kshatriyas in ancient Karnataka. Any successful soldier was dubbed as Kshatriya.

The next caste, Vaishyas, was also a loose group where all people following the profession of traders were taken into account in ancient Karnataka. There were also small groups known as *Banajigas*, *Balijas* or *Balanjus*.

An 11th century literary work describes agriculturists as the *Shudras*. However, a later literary work speaks of the *Vokkaligas* as a separate caste. Among the other castes mentioned in the traditional list are the *Panchalas* (smiths, sculptors and carpenters), the *Agasa* (washerman), the *Navida* (barber), the *Jeda* or *Deva* (weaver), the *Chippiga* (tailor), the *Telliga* (oil monger), the *Kumbhara* (potter), the *Mochchiga* (shoemaker), the *Meda* (basket-maker), the *Golla* (cowherd), the *Tambuliga* (betel-leaf seller), the *Domba* (acrobat) and the *Uppara* (mason).

At present, there are far more than 18 castes, owing to further subdivision of the traditional 18 castes on the basis of geographical association, varying social and economic status and so on. The number of castes enumerated in Karnataka by anthropologists is more than 200.

The *Adikarnatakas* who are supposed to have been the original inhabitants of this territory, are mostly agricultural labourers, though by tradition they are leather workers. They also often act as village messengers. There are several endogamous and exogamous sub-divisions among them.

The *Agasas* call themselves by various names such as *Madivala*, *Sakalavada*, *Rajaka* and *Dhobi*. Their hereditary occupation is washing of clothes. Besides this, some of them are agriculturists. During marriages of other communities, they are the traditional torch bearers. There are both Saivas and Vaishnavas among them. Mailara is their chief deity. They have no priesthood among



Religious minorities are a very special segment of the population

them. Followers of Veerashavism venerate Madivala Machayya, a contemporary of Basaveshvara. They invite a Brahmana or a Lingayat priest to officiate over religious ceremonies. Traditionally, widow marriage was not permitted. They generally bury their dead.

The *Banajigas* are essentially traders found all over the state. The caste is known by various names such as *Naidu*, *Baliya*, etc. The *Banajigas* speak Telugu but some sections speak Kannada. They have several endogamous and exogamous divisions. There are distinct groups among the *Banajigas* such as *Panchama Banajigas* *Jaina Banajigas* and *Telugu Banajigas*. They do not

intermarry. The *Panchama Banajigas* are Lingayats. The *Telugu Banajigas* are either Saivites or Vaishnavites. Widow marriage and divorce are generally not permitted among them. The dead are generally buried.

The *Bedas* call themselves by different names in different areas of the state, i.e., *Byadar*, *Naik Makkalu*, *Valmiki*, *Talwar*, *Berad*, *Nayak* and *Palayagar*. The *Palegars* of Chitradurga, Shorapur, etc. belong to this caste. They were traditional hunters and fowlers. They are engaged in agriculture as tenants and labourers. They speak Kannada language and profess Hindu religion. Their popular deity is Hanuman and they also worship other local deities. There are both Saivas and Vaishnavas among them. They have endogamous divisions such as *Uru Bedas* and *Myasa Bedas*. They have exogamous sub-divisions known as *Bedagu*. They had been practising dedication of girls as *Basavis*. The girls were normally dedicated to the Goddess Yellamma. However, this practice has been banned by the government. The priestly duties are usually undertaken by the Jangamas among them. The *Uru Bedas* bury their dead whereas cremation prevails amongst the *Myasa Bedas*.

The *Bestas* are known by different names in the state, i.e., *Gangakula*, *Gangamata*, *Gangemakkalu*, *Gangaputra*, *Gowrimata*, *Ambiga*, etc. Their traditional occupation is fishing. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted among them and the dead are buried.

Among *Brahmanas*, there are three main sections (i) Smartas, who are followers of Advaita Philosophy of Sri Shankara, (ii) Vaishnavas who are followers of Dvaita Philosophy of Madhvacharya and (iii) Srivaishnavas, who are the followers of Ramanuja. Each section contains a number of sub-sections. Among the Smartas, mention can be made of the Kotas (who hail from the place of the same name in Dakshina Kannada and speak Kannada), the Aiyars (mostly Tamil-speaking), Mulukanadu (Telugu-speaking),



Rituals and traditional practices are an integral part of the local culture

Badaganadu, Siranadu, Babbur Kamme and Uluchu Kamme (all Kannada-speaking), Sanketis (speaking their own language which is a combination of some Dravidian languages), Havyakas (from Uttara Kannada - Shimoga region called Havye; Kannada-speaking), and Chitpavans and Karhads (Marathi-speaking). The most prominent among Srivaishnavas are the Aiyangars, mostly speaking Tamil and some Telugu. Among the Madhwas, Tulu-speaking Shivalli (Udupi) Brahmanas, Konkani-speaking Gowda Saraswats (a large percentage of them), Marathi speaking Deshasthas and a good number of Kannada-speaking Madhvas are prominent. In each of these sections, there are *Vaidiks* and *Laukikas*. *Vaidiks* are those who attend to the priestly duties.

Laukikas are those who are businessmen, contractors, government servants and private workers. In recent years, *Vaidiks* are also taking up various occupations and professions. Some of these Brahmanas like Havyakas and Chitpavans tend to arecanut gardens and the Sanketis have taken to agriculture, while the Brahmanas who formerly owned lands, have now taken to white collared professions and trade (including hotel business) and are mostly concentrated in urban areas. They perform annual *shraddha* ceremony in honour of the dead. The married ladies worship the *tulsi* plant. Widow marriage and divorce is not permitted traditionally and the dead are cremated.

The *Bunts* constitute the major caste of cultivators in Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada districts, though they are heavily concentrated in Dakshina Kannada. They were formerly warriors. There are two sections among them distinguished by the language spoken by them-the Nadavas living in the northern parts speak Kannada, while those living in the southern parts speak Tulu. Three

main subdivisions are found among them; (i) the *Masadika Bunts*, (ii) the *Nadava Bunts*, and (iii) the *Parivara Bunts*. Most of them formerly followed *Aliya Santana* (inheritance through the female line). The *Bunts* of late, give their daughters in marriage to the Vokkaligas of Mysore area. There are several *Balis*, or sects among the *Bunts*. They cremate the dead.

The *Devangas* as a whole have weaving as their occupation but generally engage in agriculture as well. Some of them have taken up trade, carpentry, masonry and other occupations. They have several endogamous divisions. They are Saivas who also worship



The first teacher

village Gods and Goddesses, Mariamma, Marammanishvara. Their tribal Goddess is Banashankari (whose main shrine is near Badami). Some of them worship both Vishnu and Shiva.

The *Ganiga*, *Gandla* and *Sajjana Ganiga* are traditionally occupied in oil pressing and oil mongering. *Ganigas* were a very prosperous community during historical times as oil was the only fuel used for lighting. At present, they are working as agricultural and other labourers. In Karnataka, there are mainly four sub-sects among *Ganigas*, i.e., *Jyotipana*, *Jyotinagaraeva*, *Devaganiga* and *Sajjana Ganiga*. The people belonging to the first three sections are found in Mysore area; *Sajjan Ganigas* are chiefly found in Belgaum area. They worship both Saivite and Vaishnavite Gods. *Sajjana Ganigas* have embraced Virashaivism. Divorce and widow marriage are prevalent among them and the dead are buried.

The *Halakki Vokkals* constitute an agricultural caste who work mostly as cultivators and agricultural labourers. They are also fishermen and hunters. They are concentrated in the coastal areas of Uttara Kannada district. They live in small thatched huts. They have a strong caste organisation. They speak a dialect of Kannada called Halakki Kannada. The leader of the community officiates as the priest. It is a totemistic community and its totems are known as *Bali*. Since ancient times, the members of the *Bali* neither cut the totem to which they belong if it is a tree, nor eat it, if it is a fish or an animal. Their harvest dance (Suggi Kunita) is in honour of God Karidevaru. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted among them. The dead are cremated.

The *Idigas* call themselves as *Halepaika*, *Devaramakkalu*, *Billava*, *Namdhari*, in different parts of the state. The term *Halepaikaru* denotes that they were old infantry or foot-soldiers, as some of them were enlisted in the armies. Most of them have taken to agriculture and trade. They are mostly Vaishnavas. Toddy tapping is their hereditary occupation. They have several totemic divisions known as *Bali* which are exogamous. The term *Billava* (as in Dakshina Kannada) literally means a Bowman. The *Billavas* of Dakshina Kannada also officiate as priests at the temples of village deity Mariamma and are therefore also called Pujaris (literally a priest). In Tulu, they are also called *Biruvass*, meaning bowmen. *Baidya* is another Tulu name for them. The Tulu-speaking *Billavas* follow *Aliya Santana* (inheritance through the female line).

The *Kurubas* are traditional shepherds and blanket weavers. Many have taken to agriculture. They are divided into three endogamous divisions: *Halu Kurubas*, *Hande Kurubas* and *Kambli Kurubas*. Each of the three divisions is further divided into

several exogamous sects named after plants, trees, animals, *etc.*, which are of totemic nature. Saivism is professed by many but their common deity is Beeredevuru. The caste is well organised and being divided territorially, the head of each section is known as a *Gowda*. Divorce and widow marriage are allowed among them. The dead are usually buried. In Belgaum area, the Marathi-speaking section is called *Dhanagar* and they worship Khandoba (Mailara Martanda). *Halumata* is another name for the *Kurubas*.

The term *Lingayat* refers to a religious tradition. As a protestant faith, being opposed to the ritualism of Vedic religion, it drew followers from a number of castes. *Lingayats* are found in all parts of the state. These various sections of *Lingayats* still maintain their identity. Though previously inter-marriages were not viewed with favour, the boundary between one section and another is now often blurred due to intermarriages. *Lingayats* are engaged in agriculture, trade and commerce. Some of the main sections are: (i) *Jangamas*, who constitute the priestly section, are considered superior to others; (ii) *Panchamasa* or *Panchacharyas* (iii) *Banajigas*, (traditional traders) and (iv) *Sadaru* (traditionally agriculturists). *Goudars* and *Nonabas* are agriculturists and labourers, the latter found mostly in Tumkur and Chitradurga districts. There are also sections of *Lingayats* in other major occupational and service castes. They abstain from meat and liquor.

The *Tigalas* call themselves by different names, such as, *Vahni Kuladavaru*, *Shambhu Kula Kshatriya* and *Agnikula Kshatriya*. They are the descendants of Agni Banniraya. They are chiefly found in Mysore and Mangalore areas and Dharwad and Uttara Kannada districts of the state. Their traditional occupations have been kitchen produce and horticulture. Many of them have now taken to agriculture and other avocations. They speak either Kannada or Tamil. They are also known as the devotees of Dharmaraya. They are both Saivas and Vaishnavas. They worship Maramma, Kollapuramma, Yellamma and Siddedevaru. They have two main endogamous divisions. The caste is divided into

a number of exogamous divisions, each of which takes its name from a particular patron deity. Their distinctive festival is *karaga*. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted among them and they bury their dead.

The *Vishwakarmas* constitute an artisan caste and are known for their traditional skills. *Panchala* is a collective name for five artisan groups. Among them there are different sections like *Akkasale*, *Achari*, *Sonar*, *Pattar*, *Sutar* and *Kammar*. They usually work with gold, silver, copper, iron and brass. They are also engaged in carpentry and sculpture, while some have taken to agriculture and related pursuits. They have five *gotras* and many sub-divisions among these *gotras*. Some of the *Panchalas* have their own priests. Otherwise, they utilise the services of Brahmana priests. Widow marriage and divorce are not in vogue among them. They cremate their dead.

The *Voddas* are also known as *Bovis*. They have three main divisions: *Kallu* (stone) *Voddas*, *Mannu* (earth) *Voddas* and *Uppu* (salt) *Voddas*. Each of these has several exogamous sub-divisions. They must have originally belonged to the Telugu-speaking region. They are found in all parts of the state.

Normally, stone quarrying and masonry are their traditional occupations. In the past, they used to be recruited by kings for building tanks, forts and palaces. They are employed in sinking wells, construction of roads and digging of tanks. A few have taken to agriculture and trade. Their family deities are Maruti, Durgavva, Dyamavva and Yallavva. They specially venerate Venkataramana of Tirupati. Their patron deity is Gorappa. They also believe in spirits. The personal names among them represent the names of the various deities that they venerate, like Gidda, Hanuma, Naga, Dyama, *etc.*, for men, and Halagavva, Nagavva, Durgavva, *etc.* for women. During marriages and other important ceremonies, the role of their headman known as *Kattirani* is recognised. Widow marriage and divorce are permitted among them and they bury the dead.

The *Vokkaligas* have sections such as *Hallikar*, *Kunchitiga*, *Reddy*, *Kapu*, *Kammas* and *Moram Vokkaliga*, etc. The term 'Vokkaliga' in Kannada means cultivator, and they are also called *Gowdas*. Besides agriculture, *Vokkaligas* are involved in other occupations as well. In the Shimoga district, *Vokkaligas* have surnames like *Nayak* and *Heggade*. Most of them speak Kannada and the *Kapus* and *Reddys* speak Telugu.

The *Vokkaliga* caste is not a homogeneous group. There are many sections among them. Some of them are *Saivites* and others are *Vaishnavites*. *Gangadikara* (inhabiting Gangavadi region of historical times) have two main sub-divisions: *Pettigeyavaru* and *Bujjanigeyavaru* which are endogamous. *Bhaire Devaru* of Chunchanagiri in Mandya district is the family deity of *Gangadikaras*. They adhere to the *Adichunchanagiri Matha*. Brahmanas are also invited to officiate as priests by the *Vokkaligas*. Divorce and widow marriages are rare among them, and the dead are generally cremated.

Some of the other caste groups are *Ambalavasi* (those engaged in temple management), *Arasu* (land lords and cultivators; former ruling class in Mysore), *Baniya* (traders), *Bunde Besta* (fisherfolk), *Chaptegar* (Konkani carpenters), *Gabit* (sea-farers, fisherfolk), *Gauriga* (bamboo workers), *Gosavi* (religious mendicants), *Gurav* (temple servants; musicians), *Helava* (bards, agriculturists), *Hoovadiga* (*Hoogara*, flower growers and vendors), *Kaniyars* (astrologers, ayurvedic practitioners) *Kasar* (manufacturers of brass, copper vessels), *Ladar* (*yelegar*, cavalrymen, dealers in horses), *Mudali* (traders), *Nagarta* (agriculturists and traders), *Natuva* (professional dancers) *Parivara* (agricultural labourers), *Patwekari* (*pattekars*, silk lace weavers; traders), *Shuddha Saiva Shivarchakka Thammadi* (priests in Shiva temples), *Soma Vamsha Arya Kshatriya* (*chitragara*, carpenters, painters, smiths), *Soma Vamsha Sahasrarjuna Kshatriya* (silk weavers, petty traders), etc.

Muslims

Among the Muslims too, there are several divisions but there is no caste system and most of them are endogamous. There appears to be a pronounced tendency among the Muslims to concentrate in urban areas. Most of them speak Urdu, except the *Mapillas* (*Moplahs*) speaking a dialect of Malayalam, the *Navayats* speaking Konkani and a small number of *Labbes* speaking Tamil. Though the two main divisions among the Muslims are *Sunni* and *Shia*, there are numerous classes among each of them carrying titles like *Syeds*, *Sheikhs*, etc. There is a particular section of Muslims in Uttara Kannada district, especially found around Bhatkal, who are known as *Navayats*. They speak Konkani. The *Navayats* and *Mapillas* are *Shafis* whereas most of the Urdu-speaking Muslims are *Hanafis*. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted among the Muslims. They follow the Mohammedan Personal Law. They bury their dead. There is a separate religious group called *Siddhi Muslims* in Uttara Kannada district.



A soothing place for prayer



Smiling Karnataka

Christians

Among the Christians there are both Catholics and Protestants. Dakshina Kannada district, where the earliest influence of the missionaries was felt, has the highest concentration of Christians. They are Konkani-speaking Catholics, mostly migrants from Goa, and are active in agriculture and industry. They have surnames of Portuguese origin, such as D'Souza, Fernandes, Lobo or Paes. Divorce is rare and widow marriage is prevalent among the Christians. They bury their dead. There is a separate religious group called Siddhi Christians in Uttara Kannada (see also under Siddhi). The Protestants in Dakshina Kannada speak Tulu. Christians in other parts of the state, both Protestants and Catholics, speak Kannada and Tamil.

Anglo-Indians

The Anglo-Indians are to be distinguished from the Christians, who form a distinct community although they too follow the Christian faith. The majority of them are found in Bengaluru City and in Mysore, Hubli and Kolar Gold Fields. They have adopted a western style of living and they speak English.

Jains

The Jains constitute a very small minority, consisting of 0.75 percent of the total population of the state. A large number of Jains live in rural areas of the state. The heaviest concentration of Jains is in Belgaum district. They are an influential section in Dakshina Kannada, where

they speak Tulu. Most of them follow *Aliya Santana*. In other areas they speak Kannada. There are two main sects among the Jains i.e., the *Digambara* and the *Svetambara*. In many cities and towns, there are *Svetambara* Jains, mostly from Gujarat and Rajasthan who have their own priesthood and cremate their dead. Divorce and widow marriage are not generally practiced among them.

Buddhists

There are very few Buddhists in the state. In 2001, there were 3,93,300 Buddhists in the state. Many of them are Neo-Buddhists (converts from the Harijans) mainly found in Belgaum and Gulbarga areas. The Tibetan refugees in the two rehabilitation camps at Mundgod in Uttara Kannada and at Bailkoppa near Hunsur in Mysore District are followers of the Buddhist faith. They have their own separate monasteries run by the Tibetan monks, known as *lamas*.

Sikhs

They are mostly concentrated in Bengaluru district. There are Sikhs in Nagamangala, Krishnarajpet and Channarayapatna taluks. Originally from Punjab, they settled down here during the days of Haider and Tipu. They speak Kannada. The majority of Sikhs are businessmen. Divorce and widow marriage are permitted among them. They cremate the dead.

Migration

Adding to the colourful mosaic of Karnataka's population is the incidence of migration. As per the 2001 census, there were :

- 5,82,799 immigrants from Andhra Pradesh,
- 5,47,156 from Tamilnadu,
- 3,87,567 from Maharashtra,
- 2,83,764 from Kerala,

- 79,730 from Rajasthan,
- 38,679 from Uttar Pradesh,
- 31,060 from West Bengal,
- 29,898 from Bihar,
- 25,375 from Gujarat,
- 16,840 Orissa,
- 4,664 from Punjab,
- 4,664 from Jammu and Kashmir,
- 1,02,925 from other states and
- 44,305 from outside the country.

Likewise from Karnataka there were:

- 12,67,421 emigrants to Maharashtra,
- 2,88,862 to Andhra Pradesh,
- 1,32,882 to Goa,
- 1,19,993 to Tamilnadu,
- 55,685 to Kerala,
- 28,098 to Gujarat,
- 16,309 to Delhi,
- 12,262 to Uttar Pradesh,
- 10,432 to Madhya Pradesh,
- 9,077 to Bihar,
- 8,294 to Rajasthan,
- 5,327 to West Bengal,
- 4,042 to Punjab,
- 3,293 to Haryana,
- 2,697 to Uttaranchal,
- 2,635 to Chattisgarh,
- 2,274 to Jharkhand,
- 2,023 to Pondichery,
- 1,830 to Chandigarh,
- 1,822 to Orissa,
- 1,452 to Jammu and Kashmir,
- 1,438 to Assam and
- 40,671 persons to other parts of the country.

Floating Population

An interesting feature of Karnataka is the steady influx of floating population from all over the world. This includes a substantial number of professionals associated with Karnataka's trade and industry, who often stay weeks to months and a large number of students who spend a few years here enrolled in various professional colleges which are numerically large and qualitatively better than similar institutions elsewhere. Tourists also form part of the floating population.

Karnataka's social mosaic is varied, highly complex and it takes time to understand the intricate details. Despite the variety and complexity, the general attitude of tolerance is notable, as well as peaceful coexistence. Many social and religious fairs and functions bring people of different castes and groups together.

