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Report on Bharat Darshan(Study Tour)

Karnataka Group



Assistant Section Officers 2023 Batch

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

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We are highly indebted to Mr. Vinod Goud, Senior Faculty and Bharat Darshan Coordinator for his guidance and constant supervision as well as for providing necessary information regarding the project & also for his support in completing the project.

This was a unique experience to work as a group during the visit to Karnataka-Tamilnadu-Kerala. I enjoyed the study tour and learned many things during the NGO attachment and Tea-cum-Chocolate Factory Visit as well.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Director General, MCRHRDIT for providing all necessary support for successful completion of this study tour.

OBJECTIVE OF THE TOUR

As part of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of 2023 Batch, 01-week Bharat Darshan was organized from 28.04.2024 to 04.05.2024 at Karnataka-Tamilnadu-Kerala under the guidance of Dr. Vinod Goud, Senior Faculty .

There were 61 participants from different Ministries participating in this Training Programme. This study tour was part of the Training Programme and has following objectives: -

- To familiarize the trainees with India's rich cultural heritage and arts;
- To develop team spirit, time management, management of crisis and adaptability to various odd situations.
- To expose the Trainees to research and development work being done by the NGO;

The Journey

Days	Place Visited
Days 1	Doddabeta Peak, Tea factory & Chocolate Factory, Ooty lake for Boating
Days 2	Botanical Garden, Pykara Lake & Waterfalls
Days 3	Edakkal Cave, Kappad Beach
Days 4	Abbi Falls, Coorg for Camping
Days 5	NGO(Organization for Development of People), Mysore Palace, Shri Rangnathswami Temple

DAY 1

1. BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE

On our Bharat Darshan tour, the first day unfolded with a captivating journey through a wildlife extravaganza. While we couldn't embark on a safari, the surroundings still offered glimpses into the natural beauty and biodiversity. We Came across Bandipur Tiger Reserve and Mudumulai Elephant reserve enroute via Banglore Airport to Ooty is an unforgettable experience! The lush forests, diverse wildlife, and the chance to spot majestic Deer, Monkey, Elephant in its natural habitat make it truly special



2. Dodabetta Peak (Western Ghats)

On the second day of my Bharat Darshan journey, I went to Doddabetta Peak, located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu, is the highest peak in the Nilgiri mountain range. Geographically, it sits at an elevation of 2,637 meters (8,650 feet) above sea level, offering stunning vistas of the

surrounding landscape. The peak is characterized by its rolling hills, dense forests, and tea plantations, creating a picturesque backdrop for visitors. Its location near Ooty makes it a popular destination for tourists seeking to experience the natural beauty of the region. Doddabetta's geography also plays a significant role in its climate, with cool temperatures and misty conditions common throughout the year, adding to its allure as a scenic destination.



3.Tea Factory at Ooty

As Ooty is renowned for producing high-quality tea, particularly Nilgiri tea, which is appreciated for its brisk and bright flavour profile.

Guided Tours:- There we get an guided tour that provide us with insights into the tea-making process, from plucking the tea leaves to withering, rolling, fermenting, drying and packaging. We witnessed each stage of tea production firsthand and learn about the nuances of tea cultivation and processing.

Tasting Sessions:- Every visitors to the tea factories can indulge in tasting sessions where they can sample a variety of teas produced on-site. This allows them to experience the distinct flavors and aromas of different types of tea and select their favorites to purchase and take to home.

Tea sales:- The tea factory have onsite shops or outlets where visitors can purchase freshly processed tea products, including loose-leaf tea, packaged tea blends. These teas make for popular souvenirs or gifts for families and friends.

Scenic Surroundings:- Many tea factories in Ooty nestled amidst picturesque tea estates, offering visitors the opportunity to enjoy scenic views of lush green tea gardens against the backdrop of the Nilgiri Hills. The serene ambiance adds to the overall tea-tasting experience.



4.Chocolate factory

Handcrafted chocolates:- Ooty's chocolate factories are known for their artisanal approach of chocolate-making. They often produce handcrafted methods, ensuring high-quality and distinct flavours.

We witnessed the various stages of chocolate production, from roasting and grinding cocoa beans to tempering and moulding chocolate into delectable treats. Chocolate factories offer tasting sessions where visitors can sample a selection of chocolates to experience the rich flavours and textures firsthand. These tasting sessions allow chocolate enthusiasts to explore different varieties and discover their favourites.

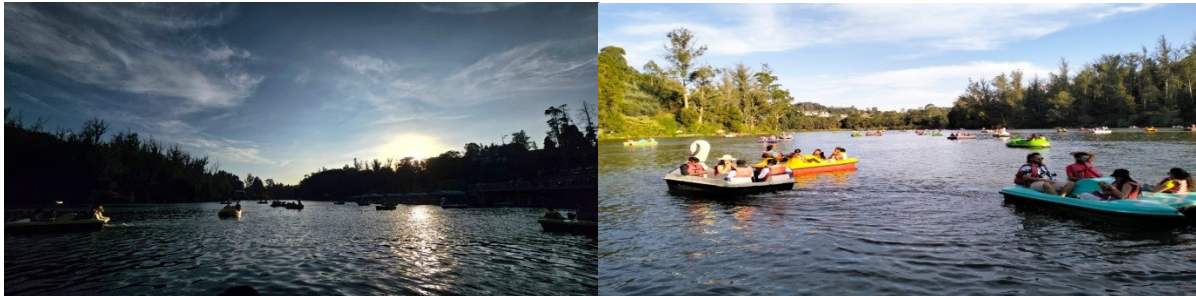
Overall, the chocolate factory offers a delightful experience for chocolate lovers, combining artisanal craftsmanship, flavourful creations





5.Ooty Lake

Now this was the evening of second day of our Bharat Darshan Tour and we already travelled 1 city from Mysore to Ooty. In Ooty, I ventured to the enchanting Ooty Lake, a reservoir of tales dating back to 1824 when it was meticulously constructed by **John Sullivan**. Originally intended for fishing, the lake transformed into a picturesque water body with ferries facilitating travel across its expansive surface. Spanning over 65 acres, Ooty Lake stands as a remarkable highlight in the Nilgiris district.



DAY 2

6. Botanical Garden Ooty

On day three of Bharat Darshan tour, we visited the Government Botanical Garden in Ooty. Established in 1848 on a 55-acre expanse, it was initially a private garden owned by the Marquis of Tweeddale before being taken over by the Government of Tamil Nadu. With a terraced layout, the garden serves the dual purpose of promoting horticulture and conserving biodiversity. Hosting a rose garden, a fern house with 127 species, and a sanctuary for various bird species, the garden also features an Italian Garden crafted by World War I Italian Prisoners of War. Notable attractions include a Conservatory, nurseries with exotic plants, a twenty-million-year-old Fossil Tree trunk, and the Toda hill. The garden comes alive during the Flower Show as part of Ooty's Summer Festival, offering a delightful mix of history, biodiversity, and cultural richness.



7. Pykara Falls

After exploring botanical garden we started our journey towards Wayanad in between we got a chance to visit the Pykara waterfalls. The Pykara is the largest river in the District. It is considered very sacred by the Todas. The Pykara river rises at Mukurthi peak. It passes through hilly tract, generally keeping to North and turns to West after reaching the Plateau's edge. It gets down majestically in a series of cascades; and the last two falls of 55 meters and 61 meters are known as Pykara falls. They are about 20 kms from Ooty.

The Pykara Lake is about 21 kms from Ooty on the Ooty-Mysore road. Boating on the Pykara lake is enjoyable but we don't had that much time to enjoy Boating. Pykara is a favourite picnic location and is very popular with the movie makers of this country.



DAY 3

8. Edekkal Cave

Visiting the Edekkal Caves in Kerala was a fascinating experience that took us on a journey through ancient history and natural wonder. Here's what visitors can expect:

- a). Historical Exploration: The caves are renowned for their ancient petroglyphs, which are prehistoric rock carvings dating back thousands of years. Visitors can marvel at these intricate carvings, which depict symbols, animals, and human figures, offering a glimpse into the lives of early inhabitants of the region.
- b) Scenic Hike: Getting to the caves involves a scenic hike through lush green forests and rocky terrain. The journey itself is an adventure, with breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape and glimpses of local flora and fauna along the way.
- c). Cave Exploration*: Upon reaching the caves, visitors can explore the cavernous chambers and narrow passages, which are formed by massive boulders resting atop one another. The unique geological formation of the caves adds to their allure, creating a sense of mystery and intrigue.
- d). Cultural Insight: The Edakkal Caves hold cultural significance for the local indigenous tribes, who believe that the caves are linked to ancient myths and legends. Visitors can learn about the folklore and traditions associated with the caves, gaining insight into the rich cultural heritage of the region.



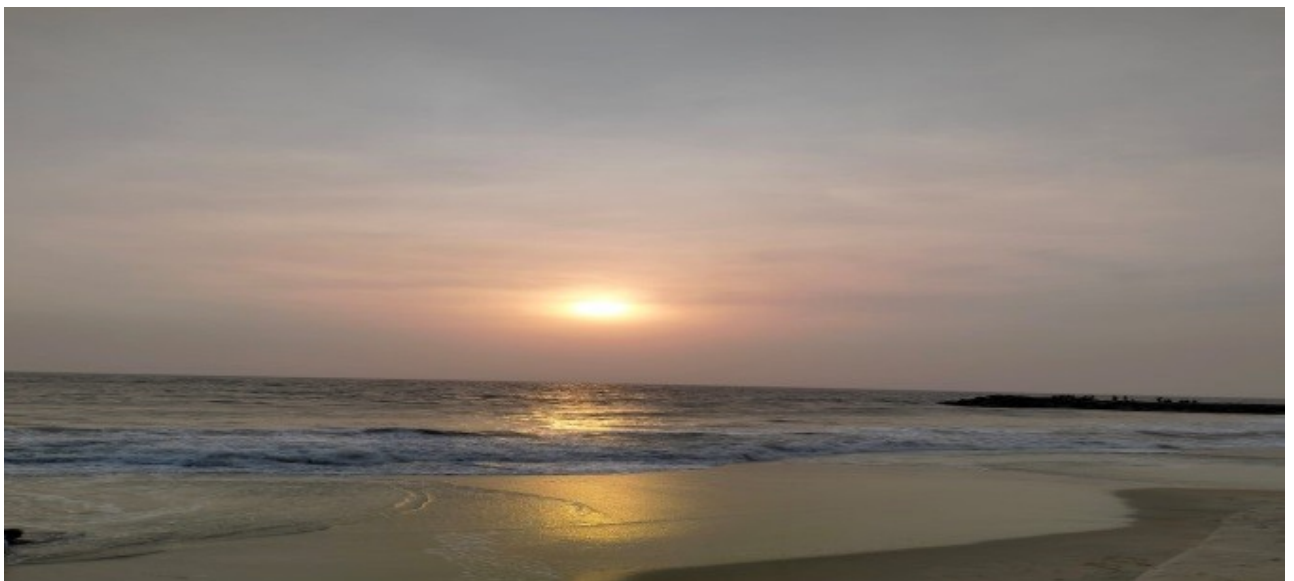
9. Kappad Beach(Kerala)

Kappad Beach holds significant historical importance in India, particularly in the state of Kerala. Here's why:

- a)European Contact with India: Vasco da Gama's arrival at Kappad Beach is considered a pivotal moment in Indian history as it marked the first direct sea route from Europe to India. This contact

between Europe and India had far-reaching consequences, shaping the course of Indian history, culture, and trade.

b) Tourist Attraction: Today, Kappad Beach is not only a historical landmark but also a popular tourist destination in Kerala. Visitors come to enjoy the scenic beauty of the beach, take leisurely walks along the shore, and engage in water sports like swimming and surfing. The historical significance of the beach adds to its appeal, attracting both history enthusiasts and beachgoers alike.



DAY 4

10. Abbey Falls

On day four of Bharat Darshan we visited Abbey falls. Visiting Abbey Falls in Karnataka was a captivating experience that immerses us in the beauty of nature and the power of cascading water. Here's what visitors can expect:

a) Scenic Trek: The journey to Abbey Falls often involves a short trek through lush greenery, providing visitors with an opportunity to soak in the sights and sounds of the surrounding forest. The trek adds to the sense of adventure and anticipation as visitors make their way to the waterfall.

b) Spectacular Waterfall: Upon reaching Abbey Falls, visitors are greeted by the sight of water plunging from a height of about 70 feet into a pool below. The sheer force of the waterfall creates a mesmerizing display of cascading water, surrounded by rocky cliffs and dense vegetation.



11. Ela Camping

Ela Camping Spot, located in Madikeri(Karnataka), offers a unique and memorable outdoor experience for nature enthusiasts. Here's what makes it special:

a) **Serenity and Seclusion:** Ela Camping Spot is known for its tranquil and secluded atmosphere, providing a peaceful retreat away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Nestled amidst lush greenery and surrounded by scenic landscapes, it offers a serene setting for relaxation and rejuvenation.

b) ***Riverside Camping*:** One of the highlights of Ela Camping Spot is its proximity to a picturesque river. Visitors can set up camp along the riverbank, listening to the soothing sound of flowing water and enjoying panoramic views of the surrounding wilderness. Riverside camping adds an element of adventure and connection to nature.

c) ***Outdoor Activities*:** Ela Camping Spot offers a range of outdoor activities for visitors to enjoy. From nature walks and birdwatching to fishing and kayaking in the river, there's something for everyone to explore and experience amidst the natural beauty of the surroundings.

d) ***Campfire Experience*:** Gather around a crackling campfire under the starry sky for a memorable evening at Ela Camping Spot. Campfires provide the perfect opportunity for bonding with friends and family, sharing stories, singing songs, and enjoying delicious meals cooked over an open flame.





12.Namdrolling Monastery

After visiting Abbey Falls we visited The Namdrolling Monastery, also known as the Golden Temple, is a significant Tibetan Buddhist monastery located in Bylakuppe near Kushalnagar in the district of Kodagu (Coorg), Karnataka, India. Here's a glimpse into its history and visiting experience:

History: The Namdrolling Monastery was established in 1963 by His Holiness Pema Norbu Rinpoche, also known as Penor Rinpoche, the 11th throneholder of the Palyul lineage of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.

The monastery was founded as a center for the study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism and to preserve the teachings of the Nyingma tradition.

Over the years, the monastery has grown in size and significance, becoming one of the largest Tibetan Buddhist centers outside of Tibet.

Visiting Experience:

a) Architecture: The Namdroling Monastery is renowned for its stunning architecture, with intricate designs, vibrant colors, and traditional Tibetan motifs adorning the temple buildings. The main attraction is the Golden Temple, which features three towering golden statues of Guru Padmasambhava (also known as Guru Rinpoche), Buddha Shakyamuni, and Amitayus.

b). Spiritual Atmosphere: Visitors to the monastery can experience a sense of peace and tranquility as they explore the temple grounds and witness monks engaged in prayer and ritual ceremonies. The serene atmosphere and the sound of chanting create a conducive environment for meditation and reflection.

c) Cultural Insight: The monastery offers visitors a glimpse into Tibetan Buddhist culture and traditions. Visitors can observe monks performing religious rituals, participate in prayer sessions, and learn about the significance of Tibetan Buddhist symbols and practices.

d) Shopping and Dining: The monastery complex includes shops selling Tibetan handicrafts, religious artifacts, and souvenirs, and take home mementos of their visit.



DAY 5

14. Organisation for the Development of People, NGO

On fifth and the last day of our Bharat Darshan we visited the Organization for Development of People (ODP), a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in India, dedicated to upliftment of marginalized communities and promoting sustainable development. Here's an overview of ODP:

a) Mission and Vision: ODP's mission is to empower disadvantaged communities, especially women, children, and marginalized groups, to improve their quality of life and achieve socio-economic development.

b) Areas of Focus: ODP works across various sectors to address the multifaceted needs of communities. Their programs typically focus on areas such as education, healthcare, livelihood development, women's empowerment, child welfare, environmental conservation, and disaster response

c) Advocacy and Awareness: In addition to direct service delivery, ODP engages in advocacy and awareness-raising efforts to address systemic issues affecting marginalized communities. They advocate for policy changes, social justice, and human rights, while also raising awareness about key issues such as gender equality, environmental conservation, and healthcare access.

Overall, the Organization for Development of People (ODP) plays a vital role in promoting sustainable development, empowering communities, and fostering positive social change in India. Through their holistic approach and commitment to grassroots participation, ODP continues to make a significant difference in the lives of those they serve.



15. Mysore Palace

After visiting NGO we visited the grand Mysore Palace. Visiting the Mysore Palace was a captivating experience that immerses visitors in the rich history, culture, and architectural grandeur of Karnataka, India. Here's what visitors can expect:

a) Architectural Marvel: The Mysore Palace, also known as the Amba Vilas Palace, is renowned for its stunning Indo-Saracenic architectural style. The palace boasts intricate carvings, vibrant paintwork, and domes adorned with intricate designs, showcasing a blend of Hindu, Islamic, Rajput, and Gothic influences.

b) Historical Significance: Visitors can explore the opulent halls, royal chambers, and private quarters, learning about the palace's storied past and the royal family's legacy through guided tours and informative exhibits.

c) Royal lifestyle: Visitors can learn about court etiquette, royal ceremonies, and the daily lives of the royal family through displays of artifacts, furniture, and personal belongings. Overall, a visit to the Mysore Palace offers a multi-faceted learning experience, encompassing history, architecture, culture.



CONCLUSION AND LEARNINGS

The study tour was a memorable and enriching experience for all of us. We learned a lot about the diversity and unity of India, the history and culture of different regions, the ecology and biodiversity of different ecosystems, the development and governance of different states, and the challenges and opportunities of different sectors. We also developed our skills and competencies in team work, time management, crisis management and adaptability. We also made some lifelong friends and memories.

Some of the key learnings from the tour are:

- India is a land of contrasts and contradictions, where the ancient and the modern, the rural and the urban, the rich and the poor, the traditional and the contemporary coexist and interact.
- India has a rich and glorious history and culture, which is reflected in its monuments, temples, forts, palaces, museums, art, literature, music, dance, festivals, cuisine and customs.
- India has a diverse and rich ecology and biodiversity, which is manifested in its forests, mountains, rivers, lakes, deserts, islands, coasts, wetlands, grasslands and wildlife.

The study tour was a valuable and enjoyable part of our cadre training programme. We are grateful and thankful to the MCR HRDIT, the Course Director, the Study Tour Committee, and Officials for making this tour possible and successful. We are also thankful to our fellow participants for making this tour fun and friendly. We hope to apply and share our learnings and experiences from this tour in our future work and life. We also hope to visit these places again and explore more of our incredible India. Jai Hind!