



Bharat Darshan Report (Karnataka Group)

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Acknowledgement:

Firstly, let me express our profound appreciation to the ISTM (Institute of Secretariat Training and Management) for providing this exceptional chance to take part in the Foundation Training Programme (FTP) at the MCR HRD Institute of Telangana. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to Smt. Usha Rani, the MCRHRD's course director, for her excellent support.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Vinod Goud, Senior Faculty and Bharat Darshan Coordinator, for his leadership, ongoing oversight, provision of pertinent project information, and assistance in seeing the project through to completion.

Working in a group during the trip to Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala was a wonderful experience. I had a great time on the study tour and gained a lot of knowledge from the NGO attachment.

Aim & Objective of the Bharat Darshan

Under the direction of Dr. Vinod Goud, Senior Faculty (FTP), a one-week Bharat Darshan course was conducted from April 28, 2024, to May 4, 2024, as part of the required ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of the 2023 Batch.

In this training program, sixty-one individuals from various Ministries took part. The training program included this study tour, which had the following goals: -

1. To acquaint the trainees with the rich artistic and cultural legacy of India;
2. To introduce the trainees to the NGO's research and development efforts;
3. help foster a sense of unity, effective time management, crisis management, and flexibility in a variety of strange circumstances.

Bharat Darshan Group-2 Itinerary

Day 0 (28th April,2024)

- Reached Bengaluru Airport at 10:30 AM
- Leave for Ooty from Bengaluru Airport at around 11:00 AM
- Visited Bandipur Tiger Reserve from 4:00 PM to 6 :00 PM
- Mudumalai Elephant Reserve from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
- Reached Ooty via Gudalur at around 11:00 PM

Day 1 (29th April,2024)

- Visited Doddabetta Peak at around 9:30 AM
- Visited Tea Factory and Chocolate Factory at around 1:00 PM
- Leave for Boat House to have boating at around 5 PM

Day 2(30th April,2024)

- Visited Botanical Garden at 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM
- Visited Pykara Waterfall at around 2:00 PM
- Reached Wayanad at around 8 PM

Day 3 (01st May, 2024)

- Visited Edekkal Caves at around 9 AM
- Visited Kappad Beach in Kerala where first Portuguese Travel came
- Came back to Wayanad

Day 4 (02nd May,2024)

- Check out from the hotel in Wayanad and proceed to Coorg
- Visited Abbi Falls at around 3:00 PM
- Night Stay in camps

Day 5 (03rd May,2024)

- Visited Namdroling Monastery in Piriapatna at around 11:30 to 01:30 PM
- Visited St. Philomena's Cathedral Church in Mysore
- Visited KRS Dam at around 7:00 PM
- Visited Vrindavan Garden (It was closed due to heavy rain)

Day 06 (04th May, 2024)

- Visited Organisation for Development of People, ODP (an NGO in Mysore at 10AM)
- Visited Mysore Palace at 12 noon
- Visited Srirangapatna Temple (Lord Rangnatha Swamy at 4:30PM)
- Reached at Bangalore Airport at 9:00 PM
- Arrived at Dr. MCR HRD IT at around 2:00 AM.

Educational Journey Through Southern part of India: Wildlife, Nature, and Culture

This report details an educational journey through the Southern part of India, encompassing diverse ecosystems, rich cultural heritage, and social initiatives. The trip covered Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, offering firsthand experiences with wildlife, natural wonders, historical sites, and local communities.

Wildlife Encounters

Came across Bandipur Tiger Reserve and Mudumalai Elephant reserve while enroute to Ooty from Bangalore Airport is an unforgettable experience!

- **Bandipur Tiger Reserve, Karnataka:** This protected area houses diverse wildlife, including tigers, elephants, gaur, dholes, and a variety of birds. Jeep safaris through the dense forests provided a glimpse into the intricate food web and the importance of conservation efforts. Learning about the park's role in protecting endangered species and maintaining ecological balance was a valuable aspect of the visit. This is home to tribes like Soliga, Kuruba, Jenu and Betta Kuruba, all of whom were relocated a generation or two ago. These tribes in Bandipur, who lived off the land, plucking and foraging what the forest graced them with, have had to entirely change their way of life.
- **Mudumalai Elephant Reserve, Tamil Nadu:** Home to one of the largest populations of Asian elephants in India, Mudumalai offered opportunities to observe these gentle giants in their natural habitat. Understanding the threats elephants face due to habitat loss and human-elephant conflict was an eye-opening experience. The importance of responsible tourism practices and supporting elephant conservation initiatives became clear.



Nature's Splendor

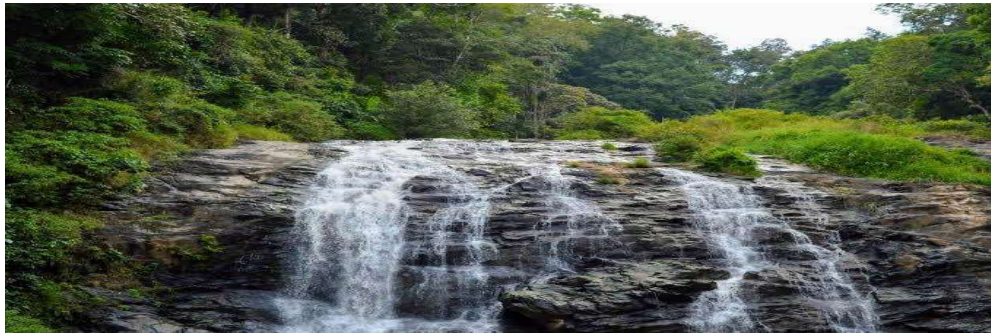
- **Doddabetta Peak, Ooty, Tamil Nadu:** At the highest point in Tamil Nadu, Doddabetta Peak provides panoramic views of the Nilgiri Hills. Learning about the unique flora and fauna of this region, including the shola forests, highlighted the importance of preserving these fragile ecosystems.



- **Pykara Waterfall, Ooty, Tamil Nadu:** The cascading Pykara Waterfall offered a refreshing escape and a chance to appreciate the power and beauty of nature. Understanding the role of waterfalls in the hydrological cycle and their contribution to the local environment was an important takeaway. The waterfall cascades down from a height of approximately 55 meters (180 feet) into a series of pools and streams, creating a mesmerizing sight and a soothing sound.



- **Abbi Waterfall, Coorg, Karnataka:** A Cascading Gem of Coorg, amidst the verdant hills of Coorg, Karnataka, India, lies the picturesque Abbi Falls, also known as Abbey Falls. Though not a giant in height, cascading down a mere 70 feet, its charm lies in its wider flow and serene surroundings. The waterfall graces the early course of the Kaveri River, surrounded by lush coffee and spice plantations. The cascading water creates a mesmerizing spectacle, further enhanced by the sound of rushing water. A hanging bridge offers a stunning vantage point to capture the beauty of the falls but it was damaged due to some unhappening event. While swimming is not permitted, the scenic atmosphere provides a tranquil escape. Interestingly, the falls had different names in the past. Initially called Jessi Falls during the British era, it was later renamed Abbi Falls, possibly after a British planter.



- **Kappad Beach: History and Beauty Collide:**It is located near Kozhikode in Kerala, India, is a place steeped in history and natural beauty.It is believed to be the landing site of Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama in 1498, marking a turning point in India's history by opening the door to European exploration and trade.A stone monument commemorates this event there. It is Known for its wide, open stretch of golden sand. It has Long rocky outcrops and small hills add to the scenic beauty. It is relatively quiet and less crowded compared to other beaches in Kerala. Overall, Kappad Beach offers a unique blend of historical significance and scenic beauty, making it a worthwhile destination for travelers interested in both.



- **Edakkal Caves, Wayanad, Kerala:** Edakkal means "stone in between". Discovered in 1895 by Fred Fawcett, a police officer, the Edakkal Caves have captivated archaeologists and historians ever since. Edakkal boasts a rich collection of petroglyphs (rock carvings) and paintings, some estimated to be over 8,000 years old, dating back to the Neolithic and Mesolithic periods. These intricate etchings depict a fascinating glimpse into the lives of these ancient inhabitants. The cave walls showcase a diverse range of figures – human forms, animals, tools, symbols, and even scripts like Tamil and Brahmi.



- **Ooty Lake:** spanning over an area of 65 acres, located in the charming hill station of Ooty in Tamil Nadu amidst rolling hills, India, is a prominent tourist attraction known for its natural beauty and recreational activities like boating. It was Constructed in the early 19th century by John Sullivan, the then Collector of Coimbatore. It Offers stunning panoramic views of the surrounding landscape, making it a popular spot for picnics and leisurely strolls.



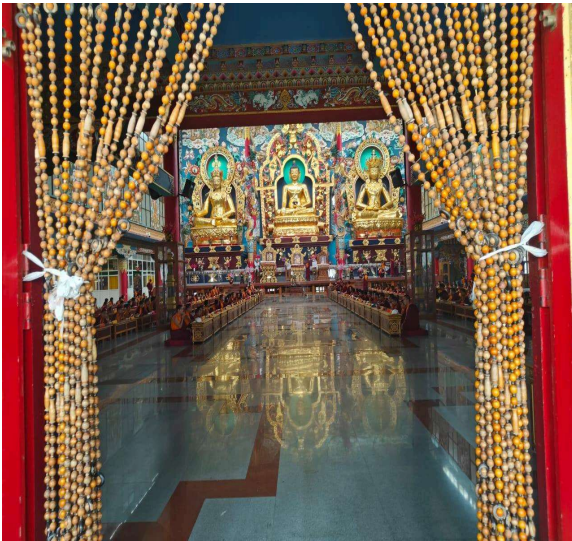
- **KRS Dam** : KRS Dam (Krishnarajasagara Dam) is built across the Cauvery River, the KRS Dam serves multiple purposes. Its construction was completed in 1932, and was driven by visionaries like Sir M. Visvesvaraya and Sir Mirza Ismail. The dam provides drinking water to Mysore and surrounding areas. It generates hydroelectric power at Shivanasamudra and irrigates vast tracts of land. The dam itself is an impressive structure, stretching over 8600 feet in length and reaching 130 feet in height.
- **Brindavan Gardens:** Nestled at the base of the KRS Dam, the Brindavan Gardens boast a beautiful design inspired by the Shalimar Gardens of Kashmir. It was Developed between 1927 and 1932, in an area of 60-acre. These gardens are most famous for their spectacular musical fountain show, synchronized with lights and music, creating a truly magical experience for visitors, especially during evenings and weekends. Unfortunately, It was closed due to heavy rains.

Exploring Culture and Heritage

- **Government Botanical Garden, Ooty, Tamil Nadu:** Sprawling over 55 acres, the garden is a meticulously maintained paradise, divided into various sections like the Lower Garden, New Garden, Conservatory Garden, Nurseries, Fountain Terrace, and the Italian Garden. Each section offers a unique experience, showcasing a diverse collection of plants and trees. Learning about the diverse plant life, their medicinal properties, and their role in maintaining ecological balance was an enriching experience. Palm trees, ferns, ornamental shrubs, and towering trees like the cork tree (said to be the only one in India) and the prehistoric fossil tree estimated to be 20 million years old, add to the captivating spectacle.



- The Namdroling 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. It 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 main attraction is the Golden Temple, which features three towering golden statues of Guru Padmasambhava (also known as Guru Rinpoche), Buddha Shakyamuni, and Amitayus. Visitors to the monastery can experience a sense of peace and tranquility.



- St. Philomena's Cathedral Church, Mysore, Karnataka:** This architectural marvel is an example of Gothic Revival style. Designed by the French architect Daly, it is one of the largest churches in Asia, standing at an impressive height of 175 feet. It is an active place of worship and serves as the headquarters of the Mysore Diocese of the Catholic Church. Exploring the church's history and appreciating its intricate architecture provided an insight into the colonial past and the influence of European styles on Indian architecture.



- **Srirangapatna Temple Complex, Karnataka:** This complex houses the magnificent Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu in a lying posture. Visiting the temple offered a chance to learn about Hindu mythology, rituals, and the significance of pilgrimage sites in Indian culture.



- **Mysore Palace, Karnataka:** This opulent palace also known as Amba Vilas palace is renowned for its stunning Indo-Saracenic architectural style, a symbol of the Wodeyar dynasty, showcased the grandeur and craftsmanship of Indian royal architecture. Understanding the palace's history, its architectural styles, and its role in Mysore's cultural heritage was an enriching experience.



Experiencing Local Communities

- **Tea and Chocolate Factory, Ooty, Tamil Nadu:** As Ooty is renowned for producing high-quality tea, particularly Nilgiri tea, which is appreciated for its brisk and bright flavour profile. Visiting these factories provided insights into the production process of tea and chocolate, highlighting the importance of local industries and agricultural practices. Understanding the economic significance of these sectors and the challenges faced by local farmers was valuable.



- **Ela Camping:** Ela Camping Spot, located in Madikeri (Karnataka), offers a unique and memorable outdoor experience for nature enthusiasts. It 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. 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. 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. : 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.



- **Organisation for Development of People (ODP) NGO, Mysore, Karnataka:** The Organization for the Development of People (ODP), also known as the Mysore Diocesan Social Service Society, is a non-profit organization established in 1984. Based in Mysore, Karnataka, ODP works for the upliftment of underprivileged and marginalized communities across four districts: Mysore, Mandya, Kodagu, and Chamarajanagar.

Mission and Vision: ODP's mission is to promote "integrated human development" for the socially and economically disadvantaged. They focus on empowering individuals and communities to become self-reliant through a participatory approach. Their vision is a society where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources for a better life.

Areas of Focus: ODP works across various sectors to achieve its mission.

- **Women Empowerment:** ODP empowers women through skill development programs, microfinance initiatives, and leadership training.
- **Natural Resource Management:** They promote sustainable practices for land and water resource management, including soil conservation and rainwater harvesting.
- **Capacity Building:** ODP provides training programs to help individuals and communities develop skills and knowledge to improve their livelihoods.
- **Good Governance:** They advocate for transparency and accountability in governance, promoting participation in local decision-making processes.
- **Health and Sanitation:** ODP works to improve access to healthcare services and sanitation facilities in rural communities.
- **Livelihood Enhancement:** They provide support to individuals and families to develop sustainable income sources through micro-enterprises and vocational training.
- **Academics:** ODP promotes access to quality education for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Impact and Achievements: ODP has a significant presence, working in over 1281 villages and 123 urban slums. They have empowered numerous individuals and communities through their various interventions. Some key achievements include:

- Providing skill development training to thousands of women and youth.
- Facilitating the formation of self-help groups, promoting financial independence for women.
- Implementing rainwater harvesting and soil conservation techniques to improve agricultural practices.
- Advocating for better healthcare facilities and sanitation infrastructure in rural areas.
- Supporting children from underprivileged backgrounds to access education.

Challenges and Future Directions: Despite its successes, ODP faces challenges such as limited resources, increasing competition for funding, and the complex nature of social issues. Looking ahead, ODP aims to:

- Expand its outreach to reach more marginalized communities.
- Develop innovative solutions to address emerging social challenges.
- Advocate for policy changes that promote social justice and equity.
- Foster stronger partnerships with government agencies and other NGOs to create a more impactful network.

The Organization for the Development of People (ODP) is a vital force in empowering marginalized communities in the Southern part of India. Their focus on holistic development, community participation, and sustainable practices makes them a valuable resource for the region. By continuing their work and adapting to evolving challenges, ODP can play a significant role in creating a more equitable and prosperous future for the communities they serve.



Conclusion

This journey through the Southern part of India was a stimulating and enriching educational experience. Witnessing the natural wonders, experiencing the rich cultural heritage, and engaging with local communities provided valuable insights into the complexities and beauty of this region. By delving deeper into the identified areas for further research, one can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the Southern part of India.

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.

The study tour was a valuable and enjoyable part of our cadre training programme. I am also thankful to my fellow participants for making this tour fun and friendly. I hope to apply and share my learnings and experiences from this tour in my future work and life. I also hope to visit these places again and explore more of our incredible India.