



**Dr. Marri Channa Reddy Human Resources Development
Institute of Telangana, Hyderabad**

STUDY TOUR REPORT

**ISTM PHASE-1 Foundation Training Programme for
Assistant Section Officers (Probationer), CSS of 2023
Batch**

Submitted by:

Karan Vijay Datey

Assistant Section Officer

Ministry of Minority Affairs

OT Code – A67

Group – 01

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Acknowledgement:

At the outset, I would like to convey our sincere gratitude to the Department of Personnel and Training for giving this unique opportunity to participate in the mandatory training programme at the MCRHRD Institute of Telangana. I would also like to convey my sincere thanks to Smt. Usha Rani, Course Director, MCRHRD for giving great support.

We are highly indebted to Mr. Sukumar Rao, 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 Tamil Nadu-Puducherry-Karnataka. 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, MCRHRD 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 Tamil Nadu-Puducherry-Karnataka under the guidance of Dr. Sukumar Rao, Senior Faculty (FTP).

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 expose the Trainees to research and development work being done by the NGO;
- 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.

Schedule of Study Tour

The study tour organized by MCRHRD for as part of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of 2023- Batch, from 28.04.2024 to 04.05.2024 at Tamil Nadu-Puducherry-Karnataka as per the following details:-

- **DAY 01: 28th APRIL 2024: HYDERABAD – CHENNAI (BY FLIGHT) – MAHABALIPURAM - PONDICHERRY**
 - Depart from Hyderabad
 - Arrival in Chennai Airport
 - Depart For Mahabalipuram by Bus
 - Enroute Lunch at Local Restaurant.
 - Proceed to Mahabalipuram and visit Sea shore Temple, Five Rathas & Arjuna Penance.
 - Proceed to Pondicherry and check in to the hotel.
 - Dinner at the hotel & Overnight stay at Pondicherry.

- **DAY 02: 29TH APRIL 2024: PONDICHERRY**
 - Breakfast at Hotel.
 - Visit Auroville
 - Visit French Colonies.
 - Lunch at Restaurant
 - Pondicherry Beach
 - Dinner & Overnight stay at Pondicherry.

- **DAY 03: 30TH APRIL 2024: PONDICHERRY – ADIYOGI - COIMBATORE**
 - Breakfast at Hotel.
 - Check out & Departure to Pondicherry Mangrove Forest
 - Visit Pondicherry Mangrove Forest
 - Departure to Coimbatore
 - Lunch at Restaurant
 - Check in to Hotel & Overnight stay in Coimbatore.

- **DAY 04: 01ST MAY 2024: COIMBATORE – COONOOR - OOTY**
 - Visit to Adiyogi.
 - Breakfast at Hotel
 - Departure to Ooty.

- Lunch in Local Restaurant in Ooty
- Check in Hotel in ooty.
- Dinner & Overnight stay at Ooty with Party games & Dinner.

➤ **DAY 05: 02ND MAY 2024: OOTY**

- Breakfast at Hotel.
- Visit Dodabetta Peak
- Lunch at Restaurant
- Visit Tea Factory & Tea Museum
- Boating at ooty Lake.
- Back to Hotel. Dinner & Overnight stay at Ooty.

➤ **DAY 06: 03RD MAY 2024: OOTY – MYSORE**

- Breakfast at Hotel.
- Departure from Mysore
- Lunch at Restaurant
- Arrive Mysore & Check in at Hotel.
- Back to Hotel. Dinner & Overnight stay at Mysore Hotel.

➤ **DAY 07: 04TH MAY 2024: MYSORE – BANGALORE (BY ROAD) / BANGALORE – HYDERABAD (FLIGHT)**

- Breakfast at Hotel.
- Lunch at Local Restaurant & Departure from Mysore.
- Arrive Bangalore & Drop in Airport
- Depart by Air-India Express Airlines to Hyderabad.
- Arrive at Hyderabad Airport.

Sight Seeing In Tamil Nadu, Puducherry **And Karnataka**

Krishna's Butterball (Mahabalipuram)

- The Krishna's butterball is a giant balancing rock, 5 meters in diameter, perched on a smooth slope, seemingly defying all laws of physics. It weighs over 250 tons and miraculously stands on an extremely small, slippery area of a hill.
- This monolithic granite rock found in Mahabalipuram, India. Its original name is Vaan Irai Kal. In Tamil language, the original language of the land, it means "Stone of The Sky God".
- The rock is balanced upon a 4 feet area of the hill and is perilously resting at an angle of 45 degrees. The base of the rock is firmly attached to the hill below. This rock is bigger and heavier than the monolithic stones of Ollantaytambo, Peru. It is also much bigger than the rocks found in the mysterious Machu Picchu.



- In Hindu mythology Lord Krishna had an insatiable appetite for butter, and as a child, would often sneak a handful from his mother's butter jar. Situated on a hill slope near the Ganesh Ratha this massive natural rock boulder is attributed to a bolus of butter the young Krishna would steal.
- It's a common sight to see visitors placing hands under the stone posing for pics, which looks as though they are holding it! The rock provides welcome shade if you dare to sit underneath it, and local kids have discovered that the slippery nearby hillside also makes a great natural slide.

Pancha Rathas (Mahabalipuram)

- The Pancha Rathas, also known as the Five Rathas or Pandava Rathas, is a collection of monuments located in Mahabalipuram, on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal, in Tamil Nadu, India. These Rathas are remarkable examples of monolithic Indian rock-cut architecture.
- Originally, it was believed that these monuments were carved during the reign of King Narasimhavarman I (630–668 CE). However, historians like Nagaswamy now attribute them to Narasimhavarman II (c. 690–725 CE), based on new inscriptions that have been discovered.



- The Pancha Rathas complex is maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site known as the Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram.
- The Pancha Rathas complex consists of five monuments, each resembling a chariot and carved from a single granite monolith sloping in a north-south direction. Although often mistaken for temples, they were never consecrated due to being left incomplete after the death of Narasimhavarman I.

- Named after the Pancha Pandavas and their wife Draupadi from the Mahabharata epic, the structures include the Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula Sahadeva, and Draupadi Rathas, ordered by size.

Shore Temple: Unveiling the Treasures of Ancient Architecture

- **Location:** The Shore Temple stands proudly on the shores of the Bay of Bengal in Mahabalipuram, a coastal town in the Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu, India. As one of the oldest structural stone temples in South India, the Shore Temple holds immense historical and cultural significance.



- **Built By Whom:** The Shore Temple was built during the reign of the Pallava dynasty, particularly by Narasimhavarman II (also known as Rajasimha), in the 8th century CE. Carved out of granite, the temple showcases exemplary Dravidian architecture, characterized by intricate carvings, intricate sculptures, and elaborate vimanas.
- **Tourism:** The Shore Temple attracts tourists and pilgrims from around the world, drawn by its ancient charm, stunning coastal location, and

architectural grandeur. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a prominent landmark in Mahabalipuram.

- **Cultural Importance:** It reflects the fusion of religious devotion, artistic expression, and architectural brilliance that characterized the era.

In essence, the Shore Temple stands as a symbol of India's rich cultural heritage, a marvel of ancient architecture, and a source of inspiration for generations to come. Its serene coastal setting and majestic presence continue to captivate visitors, leaving an indelible impression on all who behold its splendour.



Auroville (Puducherry)

- Auroville is a universal township in the making for a population of up to 50,000 people from around the world. The concept of Auroville - an ideal township devoted to an experiment in human unity - came to the Mother as early as the 1930s. In the mid1960s, the concept was developed and put before the Govt. of India, who gave their backing and took it to the General Assembly of UNESCO. In 1966 UNESCO passed a unanimous resolution commending it as a project of importance to the future of humanity, thereby giving their full encouragement.
- The purpose of Auroville is to realise human unity – in diversity. Today Auroville is recognised as the first and only internationally endorsed ongoing experiment in human unity and transformation of consciousness, also concerned with - and practically researching into - sustainable living and the future cultural, environmental, social and spiritual needs of mankind.



- At the centre stands the Matrimandir, the "soul of the city", a place for individual silent concentration, in an oval shaped Peace Area surrounded by a

lake. Radiating out beyond the lake are four Zones - the Industrial (north), Cultural (north east), Residential (south/south west) and International (west) - each focusing on an important aspect of the town's life. Surrounding the township will be a Green Belt consisting of forested areas, farms and sanctuaries.

French Colony

- French influence in Pondicherry remains prominent to this day. The town was designed following a French (originally Dutch) grid pattern, featuring orderly sectors and perpendicular streets. Divided into the French Quarter (Ville Blanche or 'White town') and the Indian quarter (Ville Noire or 'Black Town'), Pondicherry boasts streets with French names and French-style villas, particularly in the French quarter.



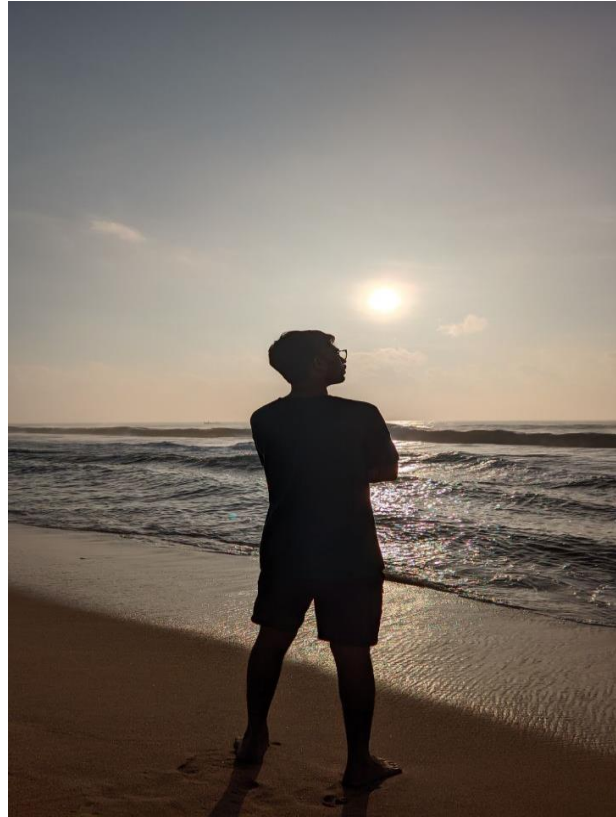
- In the French quarter, colonial-style buildings with expansive compounds and imposing walls are prevalent, while the Indian quarter showcases houses adorned with verandas, large doors, and grills. Preservation efforts by organizations like INTACH ensure the conservation of these distinctive French and Indian architectural styles.
- Additionally, the use of the French language persists in Pondicherry, further reflecting its enduring French heritage.

Rock Beach (Puducherry)

➤ Paradise beach is a great spot to reach early morning and get a view of the sunrise on the eastern coast. A variety of water sports facilities are available here as well. The travellers can try fishing as well. Fishing rods and nets are easily available for rent.

➤ It's a place for family picnics, solo travellers or if you looking for a quiet time by yourself.

➤ The island is very well maintained, the shore is clean and water is calm, with soft waves. There is changing rooms and toilets on the island. Also few shacks serve quick bites and lunch. You can also carry home cooked food.



➤ The shore is quite vast, so do carry things to entertain, good place to play football, Frisbee or just a run.

Adi Yogi (Coimbatore)

Adi Yogi: Unveiling the Essence of Divine Yoga:

- Importance: Revered as the originator of yoga, Adi Yogi is believed to have transmitted the knowledge of yoga to humanity and the path to spiritual liberation
- Engineering Marvel: The Adi Yogi statue is not only a spiritual icon but also an engineering marvel. Crafted from 500 tons of steel, it stands as one of the tallest statues in the world and showcases the ingenuity and craftsmanship of its creators.



- Cultural Impact: Adi Yogi's teachings and the Isha Yoga Center have had a profound impact on global consciousness, promoting holistic well-being, environmental sustainability, inner peace and fostering positive change in society.
- In summary, Adi Yogi's timeless wisdom, spiritual significance, and global impact make it a revered symbol of enlightenment and inner transformation, inviting seekers to embark on a journey of self-discovery and spiritual awakening.

Dodabetta Peak

- Doddabetta Peak stands as the tallest summit in the Nilgiri Mountains, soaring to an elevation of 2,637 meters (8,652 feet).
- The name "Doddabetta" originates from the Badaga language, where "Doddabetta" translates to "Big Mountain," signifying its imposing stature.



- **Cultural significance:**
 - Doddabetta Peak attracts avid travellers seeking outdoor adventures like trekking, making it a prime destination for nature and adventure enthusiasts visiting Ooty.
- **Ecology and Biodiversity:**
 - Doddabetta's slopes are adorned with dense shola thickets, unique to tropical montane environments found in high mountain regions. These broad-leaved forests, intermingled with montane grasslands, create a scenic spectacle that delights visitors with its natural beauty and serenity.
- **Tourism and Recreation:**
 - Doddabetta Peak stands as a premier destination in Ooty, captivating nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers alike.

- Tourists move up to the summit to enjoy the inspiring sunrise and sunset.
- Atop Doddabetta Peak, the Telescope House offers a rare chance for celestial observation with its two public-access telescopes, since its inception on June 18, 1983, this observatory promises visitors an enchanting stargazing encounter amidst Ooty's stunning landscape.



The Tea Factory & The Tea Museum

- **Ooty Tea Factory: Unveiling the Essence of Ooty's Tea Heritage:**



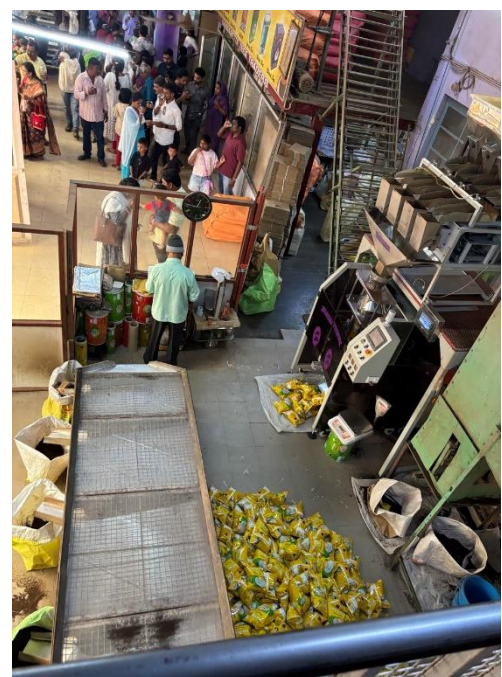
- **Location:** Nestled amidst the picturesque hills of Ooty (Ootacamund) in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India, the Ooty Tea Factory stands as a testament to the region's rich tea heritage.

- **Craftsmanship:** The factory employs traditional methods alongside modern techniques to ensure the highest standards of tea quality. Skilled artisans meticulously oversee each stage of production to preserve the unique flavor and aroma of Ooty tea.



- **Tourism:** The Ooty Tea Factory is not only a hub of tea production but also a popular tourist attraction. Visitors can embark on guided tours of the factory, learning about the nuances of tea processing while enjoying scenic views of the surrounding tea plantations.

- **Cultural Significance:** Tea cultivation has been a significant aspect of Ooty's cultural identity for centuries. The Ooty Tea Factory serves as a living heritage site, preserving and promoting the region's tea-growing legacy.



Ooty Lake

➤ **Journeying Through History:**

- Ooty Lake, created by John Sullivan in 1824, was initially for fishing but evolved into a popular recreational spot in the Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu, India.
- Covering 65 acres, it offers boating activities and serene views, attracting tourists and locals alike.



- Beyond its scenic charm, it serves as a water source for the region and supports diverse flora and fauna.
- Ooty Lake stands as an iconic destination in Ooty, offering tranquility and leisure amidst picturesque surroundings.

➤ **Ecology and biodiversity:**

○ **Flora:**

- The lake's surroundings feature a rich variety of trees and plants, ranging from tropical to temperate species.

- Visitors can explore endless expanses of tea gardens, grasslands, and lush pine, eucalyptus, and Shola forests, home to approximately 650 plant species.

- **Fauna:**

- Ooty Lake's ecosystem supports diverse wildlife, from the tranquil Indian rock python to the awe-inspiring King cobra.
- The Ooty region boasts sightings of the elusive panther, a coveted experience for wildlife enthusiasts. Rumors persist of tigers roaming the Karnataka side of the forests, adding to the area's mystique.
- Certain areas of the Western Ghats near Ooty serve as crucial elephant corridors, safeguarded and off-limits to visitors without forest officials' accompaniment.

- **Tourist Attractions:**

- The lake has boating facilities, garden, amusement parks, and 7D cinemas.



Mysore Palace

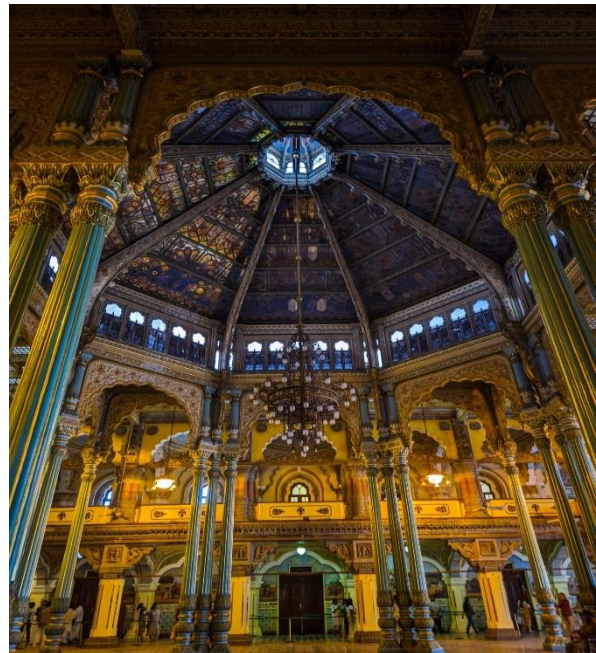
➤ Journeying Through History:



Mysuru Palace, also called Amba Vilas Palace, is a historic royal residence. It served as the official home of the Wadiyar dynasty and the seat of the Kingdom of Mysore. The original palace, built in the 14th century inside the Old Fort, was destroyed by fire and rebuilt several times. The present structure, also known as the New Fort, was constructed between **1897** and **1912** following the destruction of the old palace.

➤ Craftsmanship:

- Mysuru Palace is a majestic three-story building made of gray granite. It follows Indo-Saracenic style and has a tall tower with a golden dome on top. The whole palace was finished in 1912 after costing around Rs 41,47,913, which would be like \$30 million today.



➤ Strategic significance:

- Positioned in the heart of Mysore, the palace overlooks the Chamundi Hills to the east.

- Mysore is commonly described as the 'City of the Palaces', and there are seven palaces including this one.

➤ **Genesis:**

- The palace stands on land that was once called Mysuru, meaning a "citadel".

➤ **Cultural significance:**

- Mysore Palace is one of the most famous tourist attractions in India, with more than six million annual visitors.



Conclusion and Learnings

- The study tour proved to be an unforgettable and enriching journey for all of us, fostering deep insights into the diversity and unity of India. We delved into its rich tapestry of history, culture, ecology, and governance, gaining invaluable lessons along the way.
- Key learnings illuminated the contrasts and harmonies within India's fabric, where ancient traditions intertwine with modernity, and rural simplicity coexists with urban vibrancy. We marveled at India's storied past, reflected in its myriad monuments, art forms, and culinary traditions.
- Exploring India's diverse ecosystems, from lush forests to arid deserts, underscored the nation's ecological richness and biodiversity. This firsthand encounter with nature's wonders left an indelible mark on our understanding of our country's natural heritage.
- Our gratitude extends to the MCR HRDIT, Course Director, Study Tour Committee, and officials for facilitating this enlightening experience. Equally, we cherish the camaraderie shared with fellow participants, fostering bonds that transcend the tour itself.
- As we return, we carry with us not just memories but also newfound skills in teamwork, crisis management, and adaptability. With a pledge to apply and disseminate our learnings, we look forward to future endeavors, fueled by the spirit of exploration and a deep love for our incredible India.

Jai Hind!