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Bharat Darshan Report



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Summary

This report is a compilation of the events, places visited, activities, our learning and findings during one week study tour of Kerala, organized and funded by Govt. of India under veteran umbrella of ISTM & Dr MCR HRD institute of Telangana. This tour was scheduled from April 28, 2024 to May 04, 2024. We were a group of 61 Officer Trainees (OTs) and one wonderful Faculty namely Sri Vinod Gaud. For efficient communication and streamline decision making, five OTs from us were selected as Group Leaders. We selected Akshaya India Tours & Travels (P) Ltd. package due to their expertise in crafting comprehensive itineraries and ensuring a hassle-free experience for all of us without worrying about logistics.

Aim & Objectives of this tour

- ❖ Understanding Diversity
- ❖ Insight into Local Issues
- ❖ Assessment of Government Schemes
- ❖ Promoting Collaboration
- ❖ Building Empathy
- ❖ Cultural Exchange
- ❖ Personal and Professional Growth

Introduction

- India is a unique nation, whose fabric has been woven by diverse linguistic, cultural and religious thread, held together into a composite national identity by a rich history of cultural evolution, coupled with arousing freedom struggle.
- Being employed and posted in Delhi, and mainly from the part of North India, it was a privilege to get training in Telangana. I got to know about the food, climate, culture etc of here. Bharat Darshan gave a golden opportunity of knowing more about South India. Since, my route covered three states i.e. Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. So, this training gave a great exposure of South Indian trends.
- Our PM also gave the idea of sustained & structured cultural connect between denizens of different regions.

Day 1- 28th April, 2024

- We started our journey at 5:30 AM from our institute Dr MCRHRDIT. Then we reached the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport Hyderabad for our flights to Kempegowda Bengaluru Airport.
- Our group reached Bengaluru and bus arrangements were done for seven days. We started our journey from Bengaluru towards Ooty. The travelling was an amazing experience as the route was all completely through the hills and the beautiful amazing scenes were just breathtaking.
- On the way, We stopped at Mysore for lunch. Also, In the evening we reached the Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE

- It is a national park covering 868.3 sq. km in Chamaraj Nagar District in Karnataka. It was established as a Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger in 1973. It is a part of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve since 1986. The Maharaja of the Kingdom of Mysore created a century of 90 sq. km and named it "The Venugopala Wildlife Park".
- The National Highways NH 181 and NH 766 pass through Bandipur National Park.
- Then lately at night we reached ooty and experienced a very pleasant weather of somewhat cold that too in the month of May.

Day 2 – 29th April, 2024

- We took our Breakfast at Hotel and departed for wonderful experience of having the eyeful beauty of the Queen of Hills, "***The Doddabetta Peak***".

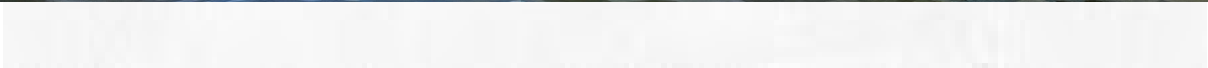
THE DODDABETTA PEAK



- It is the highest mountain in the Nilgiri Mountains at 2367 meters. It is the fourth highest peak in South India next to Anaimudi, Mannamalai and Meesapulimala. The word Doddabetta is derived from Kannada word which means “Big Hill”. It is at the junction of eastern and western ghats. We had a magnificent panoramic view of landscape and the whole of the district.
- After this significant praise of nature’s beauty, we proceeded for the “Tea and Chocolate Factories”. Significant tea farms can be seen all around the way to Doddabetta in the form of slant farming which definitely puts a cherry on the beauty of Ooty and Chocolate Factory can’t go unnoticed by any of us because of the variety of chocolates available over there.
- **In the Tea factory**, the history, the Procedure and the process of making the daily used tea in our houses from the tea leaves from farms was understood and the smell of tea made all of our OT’s attracted to have a sip of that peculiar taste of tea. The various flavours of tea available over there fascinated all of us to make our pockets loose.
- **In Chocolate factory**, the various types, Flavours and appealing combinations seduced all of us to buy a lot and have a great taste of Ooty’s Popular Chocolates.
- After having this wonderful experience and lunch, we moved towards one more amazing site of Ooty i.e **Ooty Lake**

OOTY LAKE

- It is an artificial lake near Ooty in the Nilgiri’s District of Tamil Nadu. It covers an area of 26 hectares constructed in 1824. It is surrounded by groves of Eucalyptus Trees. The lake has had continuous problems with rapidly proliferating weeds i.e Water Hyacinth. The officials are working over it. We all enjoyed boating and photo session there very much and the sunset view can’t be just threaded in words. It is a must see view for any Indian.
- After this we reached our hotel and the day didn’t end here. A DJ night was being arranged at hotel and we had a memorable night over there which we all can never forget in our life.



Day 3 – 30th April, 2024

- We took breakfast at Ooty Hotel Windsor heights and then departed from these for the visit of Botanical Garden.

GOVERNMENT BOTANICAL GARDEN, OOTY

- It is located in Udhagamandalam, Ooty(Tamil Nadu). It was laid out in 1848. The garden is divided into six sections- Lower Garden, New Garden, Italian garden, Conservatory, Fountain Terrace and Nurseries that covers an area of around 22 hectares and lies on the lower slopes of Doddabetta Peak. This garden has a terraced layout and maintained by the Tamil Nadu Horticulture Department. There are about 650 species of both exotic and indigenous plants in this garden including the Cork tree, Paper bark tree, Monkey Puzzle tree. Its architect was William Graham Melvor. It was established by a subscription of Rs. 3 per month amongst the European residents for the purpose of supplying vegetables at a reasonable cost. Earlier it was not that much maintained, but after the formation of committee, East India Company, converted the upper portion, which was a forest and the lower portion, which was a swamp into a beautiful garden.



- In the centre of the garden, lies a fossilized tree trunk estimated to be 20 million years old. After visiting the botanical garden, our tour started moving towards another state Kerala (Wayanad).
- In between the route, we visited the Pykara Dam and Lake. It is located on Pykara River which is the largest river in the District. The Pykara river rises at Mukurthi peak. It is located about 20 kms away from the Ooty.

- Their proceeding towards Wayanad, we visited one more place ie. Chembra peak, Neelimala view point. It was a great point for all of us as there was a trekking of about 1 Km that too very steep to reach that point. It tested our physical and mental ability to reach the destination. We enjoyed a lot during the trek and the final point was a very beautiful view to see.
- Late at night we reached Wayanad. The Resort was very beautiful but we felt the change of climate from hilly region of Tamil Nadu to somewhat humid area of Kerala.

Day 04 – 1st May, 2024

- In the morning we enjoyed the beauty of the wooden Resort of Wayanad along with some good fun time with fellow OT's in pool. The Resort was a complete blend of modernization with the natural beauty of environment of Kerala.

EDAKKAL CAVES

- Edakkal caves are two natural caves at a remote location at Edakkal in Wayanad district of Kerala. They lie 1200 m above sea level on Ambukuty mala. Inside the caves are pictorial writings believed to date to atleast 6000 BCE from neolithic man indicating the presence of prehistoric settlement in the region. The history denotes its probable links with Indus Valley Civilization. It can be identified from a depiction “man with jar cup” – which is the most distinct motif of the Indus valley Civilization.
- To reach the top we need to go through a steep trek of about 1 km then 380 steep steps inside the caves. It was the finest experience of trekking in hilly terrain. After this tiring trek, we revert back to hotel for rest and lunch. After that we departed for one new experience of our Bharat Darshan trip i.e The kappad Beach.

KAPPAD BEACH – KOZHIKODE

- It is the Kappad Beach, in 1498, where Vasco-da-Gama landed with his 170 men. His epic landing set in motion waves of change that would rewrite the socio- cultural and political landscape of Kerala forever. Kappad was to be the gateway of European merchants who flocked in for the spice trade, which eventually ended up in colonial rule.



- It is remarkable for its wide and open beaches. The long stretch of rocks and hillocks and occasional migratory birds offer a pleasing experience to beach lovers.
- It was a very fascinating and interesting part for all of us as South India is famous for its beaches and we have not seen any one from the beginning of our trip. We all enjoyed a lot near the beach, the sunset view was just amazing and can't be described for its beauty in words. After this we returned to hotel in Wayanad.

Day 05 – 2nd May, 2024

After breakfast in morning, we departed from Wayanad (Kerala) to another state i.e. Karnataka (Coorg)

COORG (KODAGU)

- Kodagu is located in the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats. It is known for its dense forest cover & exotic flora. It is famous for its spices plantation mainly pepper production. We visited the Abbey falls there which is a scenic waterfall 5km from Madikeri. The waterfall is on the early reaches of the river Kaveri.
- After having an adventurous experience of Zip line at Abbey falls and a trekking, we were astonished by the beauty of the Waterfalls. Then we went to the most happening thing of the Whole Bharat Darshan i.e The Camping.
- We reached in a jungle literally with zero mobile networks. We were taken to the Ela Glamping via a Jeep and the whole experience was just one in a life. We had a bonfire at night with tents, projector and

music set up. We enjoyed a lot there having dance, music and various games that made our night memorable.

Day 06 – 3rd May, 2024

- We departed late from our camping site having a panoramic view of the river and breakfast; we then departed towards our way to Mysore.
- In the midway we visited the **TIBETAN MONASTERY** at Kushal Nagar. The Namdroling Monastery, popularly known as 'The Golden Temple' is one of the largest Tibetan settlements in India. It is home to about 1600 refugees' and 600 monks. The 40 ft. tall Buddha statue is the major attraction of the Monastery. The walls of the temple are decorated with colourful paintings depicting gods and demons from Tibetan Buddhist mythology.
- After that we reached Mysore and were welcomed by a heavy rainfall. Then we went to Brindavan Gardens and water fountains which spread across an area of 60 acres, It is at the bottom of the Krishnaraja and Sagar Dam across the river Cauvery. We admired the endless expanse of green dotted with colourful blooms, the terraced gardens and symmetrical designs.

Krishnaraja Sagara Dam – It was made by engineers with many objectives in mind like providing drinking water to Mysuru, to supply water to hydroelectric power station at Thivasamudra and for a continuous supply of Cauvery water for irrigational purposes.

Day 07 – 4th May, 2024

- This was the last day of our trip and we visited **NGO-Organisation for the Development of People (ODP)**, it is established on 4th Jan 1984 and registered under the Karnataka societies Registration Act 1980. It works to capacitate the community through SHG's, watershed committees, Gram Panchayats, Elected Women Representatives, federation and FPC members, volunteers and representatives from like-minded organizations by involve in development programs strengthen self-confidence according to the need based capacities. Its vision is to create a society of love, peace, justice, prosperity and ecological harmony.



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- After this we visited Mysore Palace, also known as Amba Vilas Palace, is a historical palace and a royal residence of Wadiyar Dynasty and the seat of the kingdom of Mysore. It was built in 14th century designed by Henry Irwin, the style is that of Indo-Saraseenic architecture.
- Then we visited Srirangapatnam Temple and after this we reached Bengaluru Airport and from there we departed for Hyderabad. In this way our Bharat Darshan Trip concluded.



Conclusion

- 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
- 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 learning and experiences from this tour in our future work and life.
