



**Study Tour (Bharat Darshan) of FTP for ASO of 2023 Batch  
(28.04.2024 to 04.05.2024) for Assistant Section Officer of CSS**

**Report on Study Tour Karnataka (Group-2)**

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**OT CODE- B13**

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## **Acknowledgement:**

I would like to extend my heartiest gratitude to DoPT for giving us 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 and guidance throughout our training.

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.

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

I am also extremely thankful to our group leaders, especially Aditya and Shivam, who even though getting no extra benefit for it, were extremely cooperative and empathetic towards our problems, bearing with all our tantrums with their wonderful management, leading us towards the destined locations.

This was a unique experience to work as a group during the visit to Karnataka Tamilnadu -Kerala. I thoroughly enjoyed the Bharat Darshana Trip and got to learn a lot about governing structures of NGOs and about the daily challenges faces by people living in dense jungles of Western Ghats.

## Objective of Bharat Darshana

India, a land where the echoes of ancient civilizations harmonize with the rhythms of modernity, offers a plethora of landscapes, cultures, and traditions. Every state, every district, bears the imprint of its own heritage, language, customs, and presents its own unique stories.

Embarking on a Bharat Darshan journey with 61 participants, we were fortunate enough to explore Ooty and the beautiful natural grandeur of its surroundings.

The intended objectives of this trip are:

- To expose the Trainees about NGO's:
  - Research and development work being done by the NGO
  - Their governing structures
  - Challenges faced by them during the implementation of the programmes undertaken by them;
  
- To familiarize the trainees with India's rich culture:
  - Different festivals
  - Customs
  - Tribal Culture
  - Temple architecture, etc.;
  
- To develop among the trainees:
  - team spirit and leadership
  - time management
  - crisis management and adaptability.

## Bharat Darshan Group-2

### (Hyderabad-Bengaluru-Ooty-Waynad-Coorg-Mysore-Bengaluru-Hyderabad)

#### Day 0 (28<sup>th</sup> April,2024)

- Reached Bengaluru Airport at 10:30 AM
- Leave for Ooty from Bengaluru Airport at around 11:00 AM
- Had Lunch at The President, Mysore around 3:00 PM
- Visited Bandipur Tiger Reserve from 4:00 PM to 6 :00 PM
- Madumalai Elephant Reserve from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM
- Reached Ooty via Gudalur at around 11:00 PM

#### Day 1 (29<sup>th</sup> April,2024)

- Visited Doddabeta Peak at around 9:30 AM
- Visited Tea Factory and Chocolate Factory at around 1:00 PM
- Lunch in Ooty
- Leave for Boat House to have boating at around 5 PM
- Visited the localities of our hotel to interact with the locals and visit local shops, temples, churches etc.

#### Day 2(30<sup>th</sup> April,2024)

- Visited Botanical Garden at 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM
- Visited Paykara Waterfall at around 2:00 PM
- Visited Neelimalla viewpoint
- Leave for Wayanad
- Reached Wayanad at around 8 PM

#### Day 3 (01<sup>st</sup> May, 2024)

- Visited Edukkal Caves at around 9 AM
- Went to Kappad Beach in Kerala where first Portuguese Traveler, Vasco da Gama, landed for trade in 1498 in India, at around 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM.
- Came back to Wayanad

#### Day 4 (02<sup>nd</sup> May,2024)

- Check out from the hotel in Wayanad and proceed to Coorg
- Visited Abbi Falls at around 3:00 PM
- Forest Camping at night in Madikeri

#### Day 5 (03<sup>rd</sup> May,2024)

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

Day 06 (04<sup>th</sup> May, 2024)

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

## Western Ghats:

Most of our Bharat Darshana trip revolved around the Western Ghats. The Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage Site as declared in 2012, an epitome of biodiversity, home to an incredible array of flora and fauna, including many endemic species found nowhere else on Earth, known for their breathtaking landscapes, with cascading waterfalls, misty valleys, and rugged peaks. It spans six Indian states and we were privileged enough to visit 3 of them during our Bharata Darshana, i.e., Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Kerala, and mainly their trijunction, i.e., the Nilgiri Hills.



We had a great start to our Bharat Darshana as on our way to Bandipur we first stopped at a temple to seek divine blessings. We even witnessed a sculpture which depicted the very famous



mythological story which says that our country which is a land of courageous individuals, derives its name from the prince named Bharata who as a child made a sport of opening the mouths of tigers and lions and counting their teeth.

## 1. BANDIPUR AND MUDUMALAI TIGER RESERVE

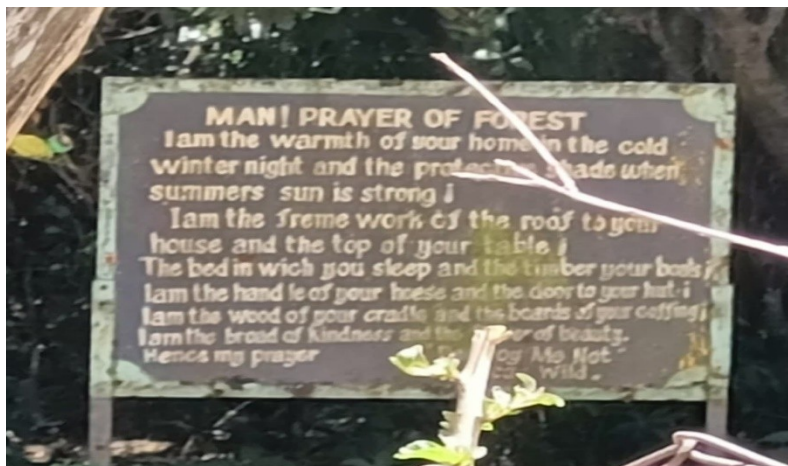
We passed through Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka and Mudumalai Elephant reserve in Tamilnadu while travelling from Bangalore Airport to Ooty. Established as a Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger in 1973, nestled in the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka as a part of Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, these are one of the most renowned wildlife sanctuaries in India, spanning lush forests, rolling hills, and a rich biodiversity, including the majestic Bengal tiger.



We encountered bear, swamp deer, peacock, deer, baboon and a myriad of bird species over there, while travelling to Ooty from Mysore. We had a fantastic sight of elephants at Mudumalai Tiger Reserve where the Oscar-winning “Elephant Whisperers” was filmed at.



We came across this board in the forest which conveys the words of the forest to the mankind. In this message the forest reminds how important it is to the man for his daily survival including the framework of roof of our houses, handle, bed and what not, from cradle to coffin we need forests everywhere, but still in place of preserving it we keep on destroying our ecosystem and forests in the name of infrastructure development and blind commercialization.



## 2. Dodabetta Peak ,Ooty (Tamilnadu)

We had a wonderful experience of having the eyeful beauty of the Queen of Hills , “ **The Doddabetta Peak**”.





The name "Doddabetta" translates to "big mountain" in the local Kannada language, aptly describing its towering presence as the highest peak of the Nilgiris, at 2637 meters and the fourth highest peak in South India. It is located at the junction of eastern and western ghats. The slopes of Doddabetta are covered with thick shola thickets. Shola are a unique type of tropical montane forests that grow on higher mountain regions. These broad-leaved forests interspersed with montane grasslands are a retreat to the eyes of the visitors.

The peak is characterized by its rolling hills, dense forests, and tea plantations, creating a picturesque backdrop for visitors and also a famous trekking destination. Tourists move up to the summit to enjoy the inspiring sunrise and sunset. Bird watching is another activity visitors get engaged in provided they reach the peak early morning.

There were many local shops on our way to the peak which sold the local handicraft items like bags, purse, paintings, etc. There was a glass tower at the top of the hill, called **Telescope House**, an observatory with two telescopes available for the public to view the scenic beauty of the hill and the surrounding valley. It was opened on 18 June 1983 and is run by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC)



### 3.Tea Factory at Ooty

While traveling through Ooty we saw many lush green tea farms which compelled us to visit a tea factory nearby on Doddabetta Road in Ooty, amidst the blue hills of Nilgiris.

Tea factory had a museum showing the origin of tea in China and how it got planted in Nilgiris and in Assam. Nilgiris is one of the pioneers in tea production and export. Railway lines were built to transport tea from Nilgiris to Cochin. Today it has become the most chased after beverage of every Indian household.

In the tea factory we got an insight into the tea-making process, from plucking the tea leaves to withering, rolling, fermenting, drying and packaging in different sizes, brands and flavours. We witnessed each stage of tea production firsthand and learn about the nuances of tea cultivation and processing. The exotic aroma of the various flavors of the tea tempted us to indulge in a sip and even purchase it from the onsite shops or outlets. These teas make for popular souvenirs or gifts for families and friends.



#### 4.Chocolate factory at Ooty

The delightful aroma of chocolate serves as a sweet reminder of Ooty's irresistible allure, making it a paradise for the chocolate lovers.

It enticed us to visit the chocolate factory, where we witnessed the various stages of chocolate production, from roasting and grinding cocoa beans to tempering and moulding chocolate into delectable treats. The factory also provided the chocolate tasting sessions where the chocolate enthusiasts like us got to explore different varieties and flavours. We even purchased it from onsite stores to take back home.

#### 5.Ooty Lake

Ooty Lake is an artificial lake, surrounded by groves of Eucalyptus Trees in the Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu, covering an area of 26 hectares, constructed by John Sullivan in 1824. The lake was originally intended to be used for fishing and irrigation. There are never-ending ranges of tea-gardens, grasslands, fine pine, eucalyptus, and Shola vegetation, serving domicile to some 650 species of plants and trees. The lake also has a variety of birds and animals, ranging from the sleepy Indian rock python to the majestic King cobra. Among the mammals, the elusive panther is the most exotic you find here. The forests are rumored to harbor the big cat, tiger, towards the Karnataka side of the forest. The lake has boating facilities, garden, amusement parks, and 7D cinemas. We had a delightful time boating and capturing memories through photos amidst the



serene natural setting.



## 6. Botanical Garden Ooty

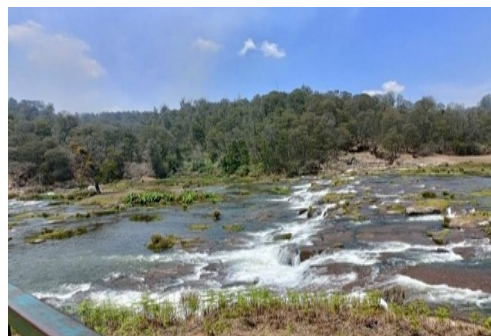
The garden was established in **1848**, spread over an area of **55 acre**, to promote **horticulture** in the region. It was initially a **private garden** owned by the Marquis of Tweedale. The garden was later taken over by the **Government of Tamil Nadu**. It was initially used to grow **exotic plants** from around the world and later to grow **medicinal plants**. The garden is home to a stunning array of exotic plants, flowers, and trees. It has a **rose garden**. Students can explore concepts such as nutrient cycling, water conservation, and sustainable land management practices. We observed different plant structures, reproductive strategies, and adaptations to various environmental



conditions.

## 7. Pykara Falls and Dam

Pykara Falls is a scenic waterfall located near Ooty in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India. It is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the region, known for its natural beauty and tranquil surroundings. 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. captured the beauty of the falls through photography and simply immersed oneself in the serenity of nature, Pykara Falls offers a memorable experience for visitors of all ages. The sprinkles of water falling from a height gave a soothing cold touch to our faces amidst the hot afternoon of Ooty.



## 8. Edakkal Cave

Visiting the Edakkal Caves in Kerala was a fascinating experience that took us on a journey through ancient history and natural wonder. 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. The caves are renowned for their ancient petroglyphs, which are prehistoric rock carvings dating back thousands of years. These intricate carvings depict symbols, animals, and human figures, offering a glimpse into the lives of early inhabitants of the region. The Edakkal Caves hold cultural significance for the local indigenous tribes, who believe that the caves are linked to ancient myths and legends.



## 9. Kappad Beach (Kerala)

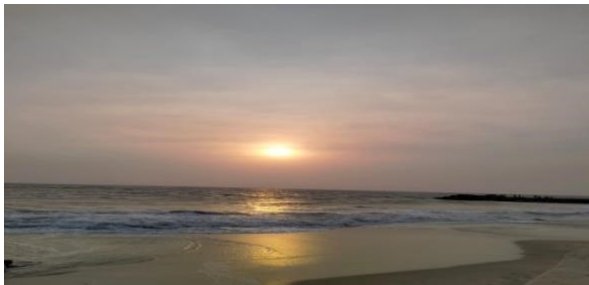
Kappad Beach holds significant historical importance in India. Vasco da Gama's arrival at Kappad Beach is considered a pivotal moment in Indian history as it marked the first direct sea route from Europe to India. This contact between Europe and India had far-reaching consequences ultimately resulting into colonization of our country. Kappad beach is one of the Blue flag certified beach of India known for its cleanliness and safety.



We enjoyed the scenic beauty of the beach, took walk along the shore, and engaged in water sports like swimming and surfing. We even had the surreal experience of watching the sunset on the

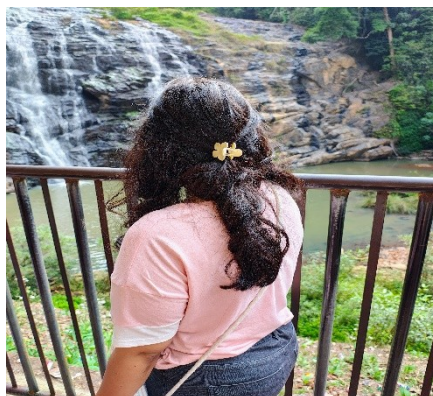


beach.



## 10. Abbey Falls

This was personally the best location for me as I went to the site via ziplining overcoming my acrophobia, over the dense forests of Coorg. We were 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. Forest 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

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.



### **13. St. Philomena's Cathedral Church**

St. Philomena's Cathedral in Mysore, Karnataka, is one of the most majestic churches in India and holds significant religious and historical importance. Here's why:

a) **\*Architectural Marvel\*:** St. Philomena's Cathedral is renowned for its stunning architecture, blending elements of Neo-Gothic and Roman architectural styles. Designed by the French architect Daly, it is one of the largest churches in Asia, standing at an impressive height of 175 feet. The intricate carvings, stained glass windows, and imposing spires make it a sight to behold.

b) **\*Religious Significance\*:** St. Philomena's Cathedral is an active place of worship and serves as the headquarters of the Mysore Diocese of the Catholic Church. It hosts regular religious services,

including Masses, weddings, and other ceremonies, attracting devotees and visitors from far and wide.

c) **Tourist Attraction\***: Beyond its religious significance, St. Philomena's Cathedral is a popular tourist attraction in Mysore, drawing visitors with its grandeur and historical significance. Tourists flock to admire its architecture, explore its interior adorned with statues and paintings, and learn about its fascinating history through guided tours.

d) **\*Community and Fellowship\***: For some, prayer in a church provides an opportunity for communal worship and fellowship. Visitors may join in group prayers or attend religious services, such as Mass or prayer meetings, to worship together with others and share in a sense of community and belonging.



#### **14. Organisation for the Development of People, NGO**

The Organization for Development of People (ODP) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in India, dedicated to uplifting 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 socioeconomic 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

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.





## 16. Local visits

The Western Ghats are inhabited by numerous tribal communities, living there for centuries, each with its own unique culture, traditions, and deeply connected to the region's forests, rivers, and hills, possessing traditional knowledge about medicinal plants, sustainable farming practices, and conservation methods that are vital for LIFE Mission as highlighted by our PM.

We had a great interaction with the locals and were truly touched by their openness and welcoming nature. They offered us fruits and flowers and showed us their locality and houses. During our rest hours we visited the localities of our hotels and took a walk around the streets to witness the exquisite sunrise, local shops, church and temples, and even interacted with the locals.



## 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!