



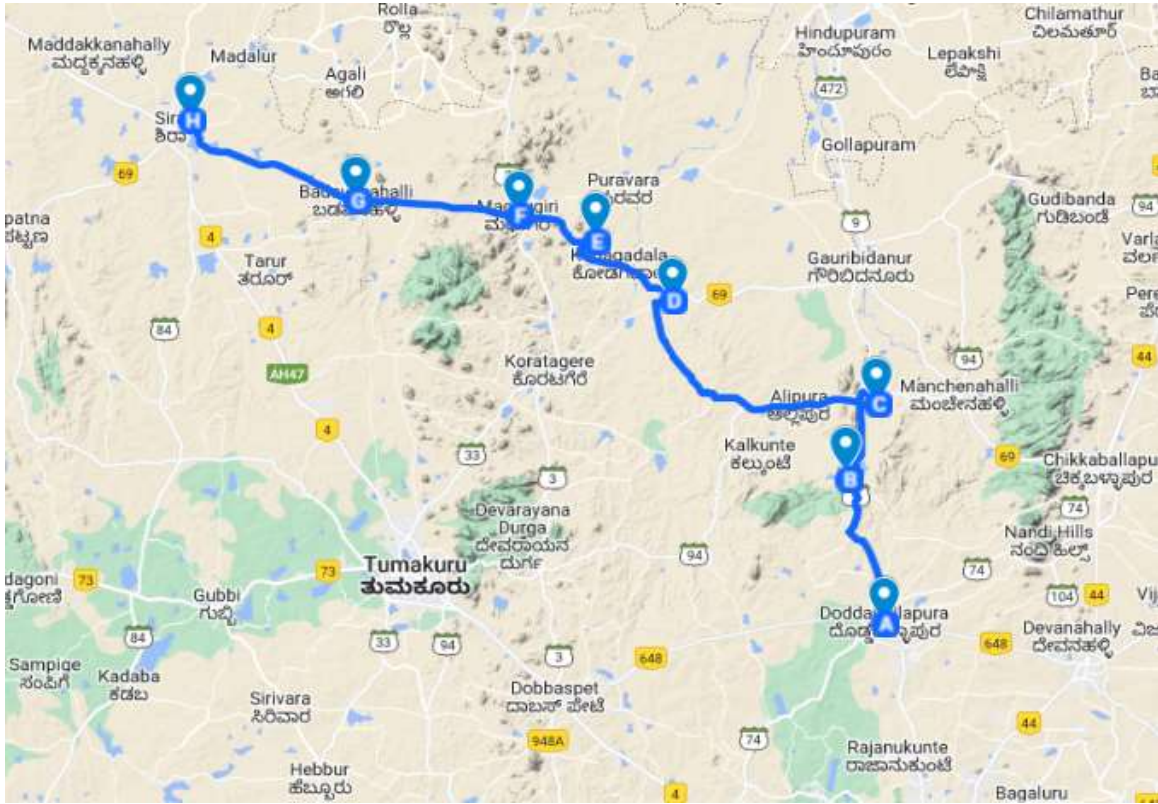
**200 YEARS LATER**  
**RETRACING FRANCIS BUCHANAN'S JOURNEY OF 1800-01**  
**THROUGH PARTS OF SOUTHERN INDIA**

**Chapter VI: Journey from Doddaballapura to Sira**

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**BANGALORE, INDIA**

A. Doddaballapura-B. Makalidurga-C. Thondebhavi-D. Arasapura-E. Byalya-F. Madhugiri-G. Badavanahalli-H. Sira



Route map from Doddaballapura to Sira, as documented by Francis Buchanan

## Doddaballapura

Doddaballapura is now part of the Bangalore Rural district. It has become an industrial town housing several Indian and multinational companies. It is located around 40 km north of Bangalore on the Bangalore-Hindupur highway. The establishment of a huge industrial corridor in this region, with multiple national and international garment factories, employs thousands of local and migrant laborers.

Doddaballapura is famous for its handloom industry, traditionally managed by the Devanga community, although it has now been largely replaced by power loom machines.

On July 19, 1800, Buchanan visited this place and mentioned the various castes present in Doddaballapura, including Gollaru, Vokkaligas, Lali Gundaru, Nagartas, Telugu Devangas, and others, along with their customs. He also noted the commerce in Doddaballapura, where merchants from Tadipatri brought muslin cloths, turbans, and handkerchiefs and took away jaggery and cash.

Also documented are the main agricultural products in Doddaballapura, which includes sugarcane, followed by radish, onions, garlic, capsicum, and maize. Additionally, there is sugar manufacturing, with the art of sugar making being a secret kept by certain Brahman family members.

There are many clay brick factories in the vicinity of Doddaballapur on the Chikkaballapur road. Due to the abundance of clay soil from the lakes, this industry is profitable for the people because of the high demand for construction materials from Bangalore city, driven by rapid urbanization.



*Inside the power loom factory, Doddaballapura*



*A Hero stone near Rajghatta lake*



*Inside of the Brick baking area in a Brick factory*



*The women laborers working inside a Brick factory*

## Makalidurga:

The hill fort situated around 60 km from Bangalore, Makalidurga Fort, stands at the top of a huge granite hillock, nestled amidst a chain of hills forming a valley near the Ghati Subramanya Temple, a well-known pilgrimage centre. The fort is located at a height of 1,117 meters.

Now, this place has become a hotspot for Bangalore residents for weekend trekking.



*A Train Passing near Makalidurga Hill*



*Tippana Halli Lake near Makalidurga*

## Thondebhavi

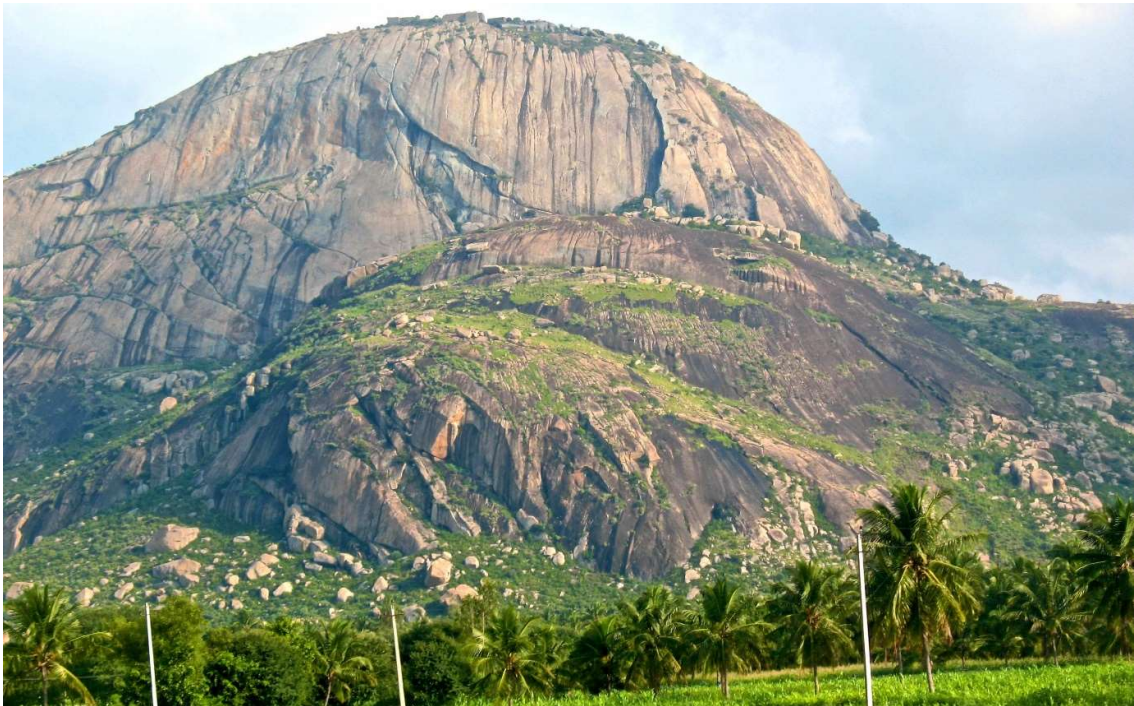
Thonde Bhavi is a small village near this cement plant operated by ACC Adani, a manufacturer of cement and ready-mix concrete. The plant employs locals and migrant workers, especially from the regions of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Bihar. Agriculture is the main occupation for the people.

Buchanan passed through Madhugiri town via Arasapura (Assauru) and Byalya (Dodda Byalya), a landscape with rugged terrain. Near Byalya, the Jayamangali River flows to the north. On the bank of the Jayamangali River near Madhugiri is a famous Blackbuck conservation reserve forest.



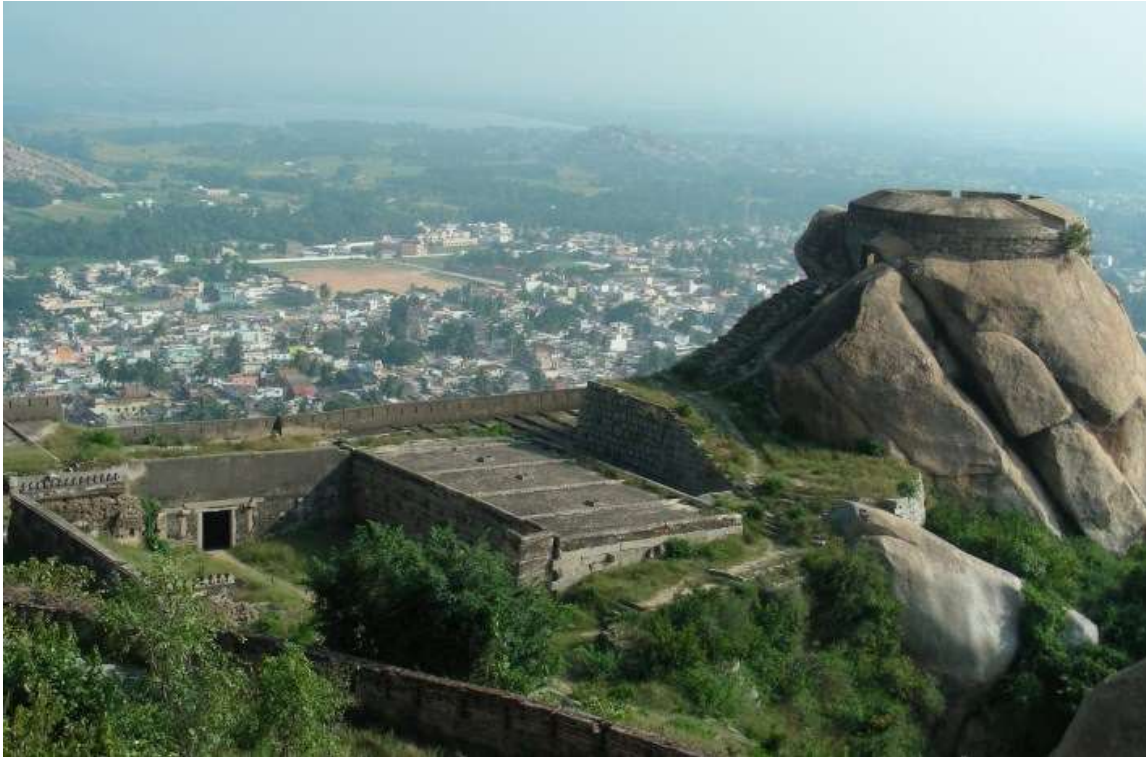
*Jayamangali Blackbuck at Maidanahalli, Near Madhugiri (Photo Credit: Vishwanath S)*

## **Madhugiri:**



**Madhugiri Hill**

Madhugiri is a municipal town in Tumkur district, located around 43 km north of Tumkur on the Tumkur-Pavagada road. The town is said to derive its name from Madhu-giri (Honey Hill), as it is situated at the northern base of the hill. The Madhugiri Fort is one of the finest forts in the state, and the hill, which is the second-largest monolithic hill in Asia, is made up of a single stone boulder that attracts trekkers.



A Hilltop Fort in Madhugiri

The original fort was erected by the local poligar, Raja Heere Gauda, of the Gowda family under the Vijayanagara Empire. It was later annexed by the Mysore Kingdom, the Marathas, and then by Hyder Ali.

The fortifications were greatly expanded during the period of Hyder Ali. The town once had a considerable trade in brass and copper vessels, but now we primarily see a trade in steel and aluminium cooking vessels in Madhugiri.

Buchanan mentioned the agricultural practices of sowing paddy, ragi, Jola (jowar), hotay godi (wheat), and millets such as korle (foxtail millet), Navane (little millet), and barugu (proso millet). However, now only ragi is grown in this region; the other millets have disappeared.



*The Farmer in the Ragi Kana (Separating Edible Grain from the Straw of the Ragi After Harvest), Near Huliyaar*

He also mentioned pulses like uddu and huruli (horse gram), and vegetables like maize, turmeric, capsicum, onions, garlic, and hemp, which were used only for intoxication. But now, only ragi, paddy, garden vegetables like capsicum, maize, horse gram, mango trees, coconut palms, areca, and jackfruit trees are still cultivated in this region. The other varieties mentioned are no longer farmed.

The region was also known for its pomegranates of good quality and a superior variety of rice called Chinnada-salaki (golden stick), which was traditionally cultivated here. However, this rice variety has now disappeared, and even the elderly no longer recognizes it.

**Buchanan mentioned the natural colouring process used for the preparation of areca nut kernels:**



*Areca kernels are boiling in the steel drum near Gubbi*

*“The nut after being peeled is cut into seven or eight pieces and put up in heap. Then take one seer of of the nut, one seer of cut of, or Terra japonica (Catechu), and a hundred leaves of the piper beetle, beat them together repeatedly with water, and strain the juice thus obtained into a pot. Take 20 seers of bark of the cari jali (Mimosa indica) and boil it during a whole night in a large pot, with forty seers of water. With this decoction mix the juice expressed from the former materials, and boil it gain. While it boiling, put in the arecanut, after it has been cut, until the pot be full. Immediately after, take it pour with a ladle, and put in more, till the whole is boiled. In order to dried it must be three days exposed on mats to the sun, and then its fit for sale.”*

*-Francis Buchanan, A journey form Madras through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar Vol VI*

Now, the process is similar, except that farmers can buy catechu (an extract of the acacia tree) in crystallized form and add it while boiling. In the Malenadu region, the farmers use ingredients such as teak tree bark, lime, betel leaves, oils, etc., which are added to the water during boiling to achieve the colour.

Buchanan was recording the situation in a feudal system. The land belonged to the king, and the farmer was just a worker who had to share the produce with others, including the poligar (local feudatory), who in turn had to give a share to the king. Buchanan mentioned the distribution of grain after the harvest among different classes of people as follows:



<b>Total Produce</b>		
<b>Heap of Paddy: 20 Colagas or 1920 Seers</b>		
<b>Share (in Seers)</b>	<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Notes</b>
6	Pujari	Taken for the gods and distributed among the Pujaris of the village temples
5	Two Jangamas and Daseri	
1.5	Panchanga	
144	Gowda, Shanboga, Iron smith, Tallari, Totay, Watchman, Washerman, Barber, Carpenter, Potmaker	Divided equally among them
26	Nirguntty (Conductor of water)	
96	Madiga (Tanner who makes the capily)	
12	Shanboga (Accountant)	
12	Gauda(Gowda)	Village Hereditary Head
66	All above-mentioned persons	A scramble takes place and is divided among each of them
368.5	<b>Total Allocated</b>	
1551.5	<b>Cultivator and Renter</b>	The remaining seers are divided between the cultivator and the renter



*Harvest of paddy in the kana (a place where the grains are cleaned from their straw) and the ritual process before packing, Photo clicked from Shikaripura.*

Tipu Sultan and later the British got rid of the Palegars. Tipu brought the farmers directly under his control and appointed Amildar's as land revenue officials (Collectors). The British further established the Ryotwari system, giving farmers ownership of the land.

Now, land-owning farmers hire laborers on a daily wage basis, providing breakfast in the morning, lunch at noon, with a daily wage of Rs 600 to Rs 650 for men and Rs 400 to Rs 450 for women.

Buchanan documented the extraction of palm juice, known as Henda or Kallu (toddy), from the Phoenix sylvestris(Ichala mara), which grows wildly in this area. The Idiga community in this region descended from Telugu ancestors, is involved in extracting juice from this tree; however, they are prohibited from drinking the palm wine by their customs.

Earlier, they used to make palm jaggery, but now it is only used for making an intoxicating drink. Currently, the Government of Karnataka has banned toddy tapping and the sale of palm juice, except in two districts of the South Canara region of Karnataka.



**Images:** Clockwise from Top left-  
1. Palm Juice extraction from Phoenix sylvestris(Ichala mara).  
2. A Tree of Phoenix sylvestris(Ichala mara).  
3. Toddy selling: The photo was taken in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, near Madakasira.

He also documented the Golla community of Madhugiri, focusing on the number of cows, the quantity of milk produced, their lifestyle, and the preparation of milk products such as ghee, curd, and buttermilk.

Now, only a few families engage in this traditional occupation; some have moved to agriculture, while others, particularly the educated, have migrated to Bangalore for different occupations. A few are involved in the trading business.



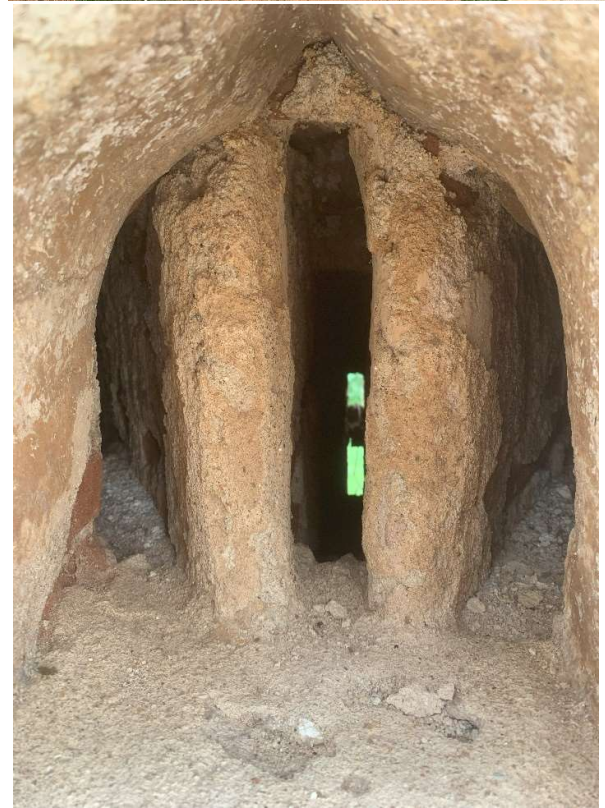
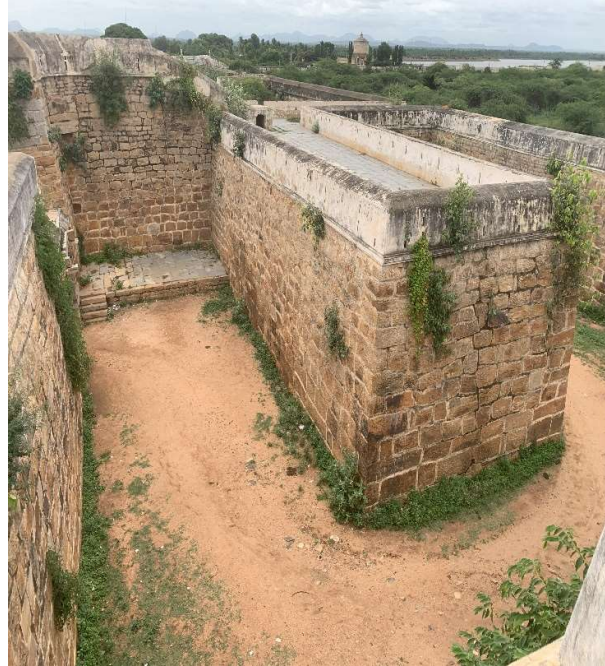
*A Mysore breed bull in a cattle shed, with its red colour contrasting with other black cattle and cows of different breeds, near Anekal, Bangalore*

## **Sira**

*It's a municipal town situated approximately 51 km northwest of the district headquarters, Tumkur. This town lies on the Bangalore-Poona Highway and is now rapidly developing in the Tumkur district.*

*Sira, the city, was founded by Kasturi Rangappa Nayaka, a chief of Ratnagiri, which is now in Andhra Pradesh and shares a border with the Sira region. Before the completion of the fort, it was annexed by Ranadulla Khan, a general of the Bijapur Kingdom. Later, this fort was conquered by Aurangzeb(Mughals), who made Sira the capital region below the Tungabhadra River. During Dilawar Khan's rule, a fine garden named Khan Bagh was established, which inspired Haidar Ali to set up Lal Bagh in Bangalore.*

*During Tipu Sultan's reign, he forcibly transported many families from Sira to a new town called Shahar Ganjam on the island of Srirangapatna.*



*Images: Clockwise from top left:*

- 1. View of Sira Fort enclosed by a moat*
- 2. View of the northern gate and defensive fort structure*
- 3. Embrasure with three angles for musket fire*

#### 4. *Malik Rehan Tomb, Sira*

*The present fort, now called Kasthuri Rangappa Nayaka Kote, is enclosed by a moat for defense purposes. It is an architectural marvel, renovated by Tipu Sultan with the addition of bastions around the fort area. You can still witness its grandeur, and it is preserved by the ASI department.*

*Regarding agriculture, ragi is the main staple food crop, and groundnut is also grown here. The agricultural activities are entirely dependent on the southwest monsoon, which usually commences in mid-June and lasts until August.*

*In the Sira region, a lot of Beedi (a local cigarette) is locally produced, usually from cut tobacco rolled in a leaf. It is an unorganized industry in the Sira region, typically a cottage industry done by women in their homes.*

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