



**200 YEARS LATER**

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

**Chapter XVIII: Journey from Hyder Nagara to Hiriur(Heriu) through the  
principalities of Ikkeri and Chitradurga(Chatrakal)**

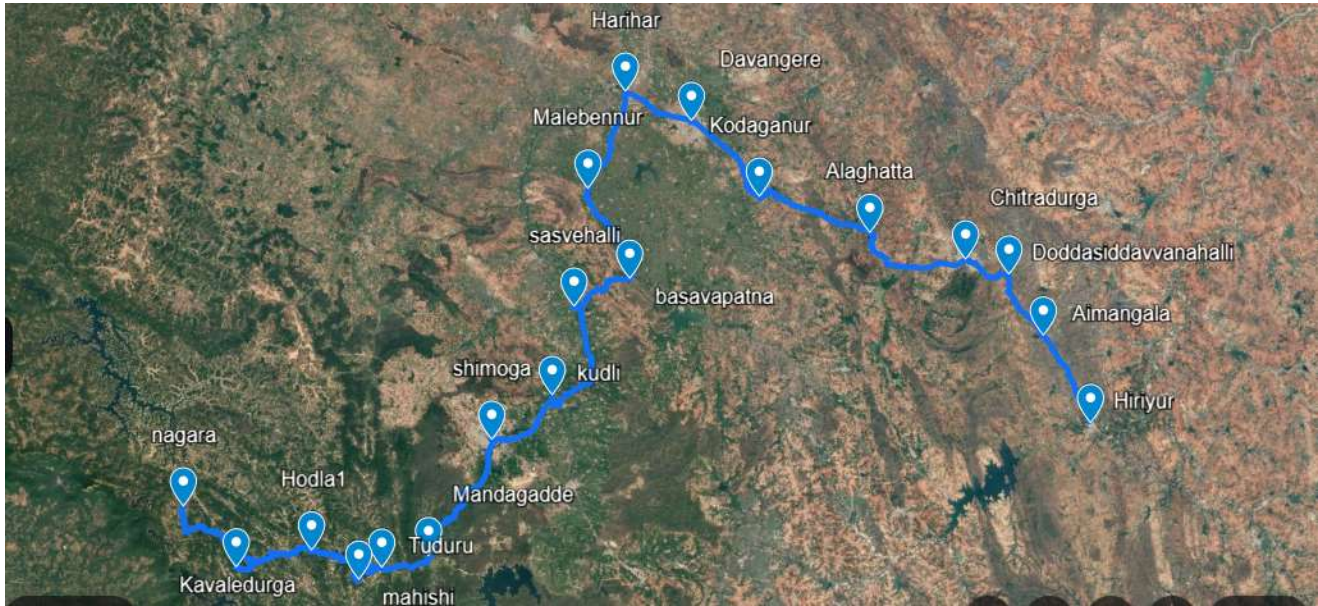
**SHIVA M**

**PROJECT FIELD RESEARCHER**

**FOUNDATION TO AID INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY (FAIR)**

**BANGALORE, INDIA**

1. Bidanur Nagara (Hyder Nagara)
2. Kavaledurga (Cowdurga)
3. Hodla (Hodalla)
4. Tuduru
5. Mallur (Maluru)
6. Mahishi (Mahisi)
7. Mandagadde (Manday Gudday)
8. Shivamogga (Shiva Mogay)
9. Kudali
10. Sasvehalli (Sahsiva hully)
11. Basavapatna
12. Malebennur (Malaya benuru)
13. Harihara
14. Davangere (Davana giri)
15. Kodaganur (Coduganar)
16. Alaghatta (Aligutta)
17. Chitradurga (Chitteldroog)
18. Doddasiddavanahalli (Siddamanahully)
19. Aimangala (Imangala)
20. Hiriyur (Heriuru)



***Nagara (Bidanur Nagara or Hyder Nagara)***



*A view of Bidanur Nagara village from the fort hill.*

*“I went two cosses to the centre of Hyder Nagara, through a fog so thick that I could see little of the country. It is extremely hilly, and overgrown with woods, in which there was many fortified defiles and passes, that are guarded by armed men in the service of Mysore Raja”.*

-Francis Buchanan, Chapter XVII





*North chief entrance gate of Nagara Fort, Nagara*

Buchanan visited Nagara on March 25th, 1801, and stayed for three days. Nagara is now a village located 15 km south of Hosnagara and approximately 86 km from Shimoga city. This place was originally called Bidarahalli due to the abundance of bamboo and woods around the village. There is a main temple shrine of Neelakanteshwara at the center of the village, surrounded by many houses.

The Ikkeri chiefs moved their royal seat from Ikkeri to Nagara under Shivappa Nayaka, the son of Chikka Sankanna Nayaka. Since the village was favorable for trade along the Hosangadi ghat, the revenue expanded rapidly during the reign of the Keladi Nayakas. Shivappa Nayaka was responsible for much of the city's expansion, and his successors ruled this city until 1763 when Hyder Ali captured the fort. At that time, Veerammaji was ruling Bidanur.

Hyder Ali took control of Nagara, seizing enormous wealth from the previous Keladi government, and renamed Bidanur as Hyder Nagara after himself. Hyder also continued to mint money, and a significant amount was coined during his reign. He encouraged merchants and attempted to introduce the cultivation of mulberries and silk, but due to adverse weather conditions and other factors, the initiative met with little success.

At the site of the present church, he built a palace and resided there for three years. However, following an invasion by General Mathews, the palace was burned, and the entire town shared the same fate during an engagement when Tipu Sultan came with his army. Later, Tipu rebuilt the palace, but once again, it was destroyed. The palace had been constructed using mud and timber, and due to excessive rain in the region, no building of that kind could stand for long.

Tipu re-established the mint and arsenal and recalled the people, but many turned back, uncertain about the outcome of the impending Siege of Mangalore.

During the reign of Queen Veerammaji of Keladi, a hundred families of Konkani Christians had settled in Bidanur/Nagara and started a business of distilling and selling spirits. However, in 1784, during Tipu's reign, they were captured and taken to Seringapatnam, as it was suspected that the Catholic Christians were aiding the British.

Today, only a few members of the Christian community remain in Bidanur Nagara village.



The village now appears quiet, with the Bidanur/Nagara Fort, a few temples, and churches — all built during the Keladi period — being the main attractions.



*Top left, clockwise: 1. Basement of the Darbar Hall of Shivappa Nayaka, one of the Keladi chiefs; 2. A defensive bastion in the fort; 3. Drinking water ponds inside the fort; 4. A view of the fort.*

The fort of Shivappa Nayaka is an important monument. The fort is entered through a grand gateway supported by two round bastions. Inside the fort, in the southwest corner, is a large compound containing the ruins of a palace, a powder magazine, a battery serving as an observatory, robust fort ramparts, an octagonal well, a small shrine to Hanuman (the Hindu deity) at the northeastern side of the fort, and other structures that you can still witness today.



## Buchanan's Interaction with Ujjini Swamy (anglicized: Hujiny Swami)



*Keladi Rajaguru Mutt, Bandagadde-Keladi village. The Keladi chiefs were ardent followers of the Ujjini Peetha, and this mutt is one of its branches.*

In Bidanur Nagara, Buchanan frequently interacted with Ujjini Swamy and mentioned him as one of the four great figures of the Sivabhaktar religion. He likely met a pontiff of the Veerashaiva Jangama tradition from the Ujjini Peetha, which was originally located at Ujjini village near Kudligi in Vijayanagara District. It is incorrectly referred to as "one of the four great chiefs of the Sivabhakta religion." It is one of the five Veerashaiva Panchapeethas: Balehonnur (Balehalli), Ujjini, Srisaila, Kashi (Varanasi), and Kedara (Kedarnath). The Keladi rulers were ardent followers of the Ujjini Peetha. In Nagara, Buchanan met with the Rajguru of Keladi, a branch of the Ujjini Peetha at Nagara, and there was also another branch at Keladi— the "Keladi Rajaguru Jangama Mutt."

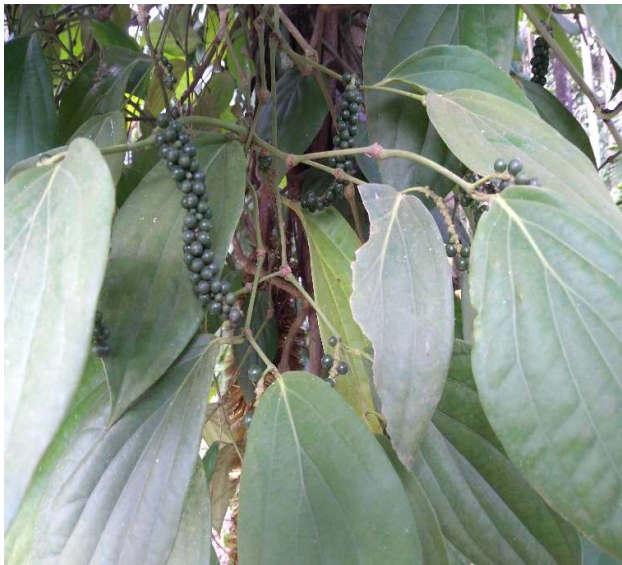
During their interaction, Ujjini Swamy mentioned that his predecessors were the Gurus of the Ikkeri family and had been granted freehold lands amounting to 3,000 pagodas annually. However, under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, this land was gradually taken away, and no allowances had been made since the area was granted to the Raja of Mysore. Ujjini Swamy remarked that while the village was still considered his property, he had to pay rent for it like any other farmer.

Buchanan documented that the last descendant of the Ikkeri family, the brother of Chenna Basavappa was still alive and residing in Maratha territories near Savanuru(Haveri district). Somaashekara, the last adopted son of Queen Veerammaji, had died in Maratha territory unmarried but left behind relatives who were living with the brother of Chenna Basavappa.



Buchanan also recorded an account of the Sivabhaktas' religious traditions — particularly the Veerashaiva (Sivabhaktar) faith and the legacy of Basava, the 12th-century saint and philosopher.

### Commerce at Bidanur Nagara



Top left, clockwise: 1 & 2. Black pepper stored in the godown of a pepper mercantile—pepper remains a prime commodity in this region; 3. An arecanut plantation; 4. A pepper vine with peppercorns.

The principal commodities of Nagara were Pepper, Cardamom, Betel Nut, and Sandalwood, and now only the pepper and Betel nut are the important commercial crops in these regions.

*“The pepper of Nagara is here reckoned better than that of the sea-cost; and a Parsi merchant says, that it sells higher at Bombay than the pepper of Malabar”.*

-Francis Buchanan, Chapter XVII



**Trading commodities at Nagara in 1801:**

Merchants /Regions	Trading Activity	Commodities
Mangalore	Buy	Pepper,Wheat,Chick pea/Bengal gram,tamarind,Capsicum,Cotton-wool,cotton thread,Goni(a cloth made from Jute),cotton cloths,Blankets,Iron and iron works and steel
	Sell	Salt,Rice,Horse gram,Coconuts,oil,turmeric and Sandalwood
Ceded provinces -south of Krishna River (Bellary,Adoni,Kurnool, others)	Sell	Cotton cloths
	Buy	Betel nut,pepper and cardamoms
Chitradurga Principality	Sell	Buffaloes,Sheep,blankets,Ghee(Boiled butter) and Tobacco
Bangalore,Gubbi,sira and etc.	Sell	Cotton cloths,tobacco,Blankets,Goni(Jute cloth),sheep,steel and Iron
	Buy	Betel nut,pepper and cardamoms
Dominions of Arcot	Sell	Cotton cloth,European and chinese goods
	Buy	Betel nut and pepper

*Another important article of export from Nagara was betel nut. During Tipu's reign, merchants were afraid to purchase the goods, knowing obstacles would be put in their way. The whole lot, therefore, fell into the hands of Tipu's collectors at a lower price, as Tipu himself was a merchant and exported the goods on their behalf to Srirangapatna, Bangalore, and other cities in his dominion. Trade with foreign countries was prohibited, and as a result, the cultivation of betel nuts in this region diminished.*







*A group of women planting paddy in the prepared field (Gadde) near Nagara.*

Buchanan documented detailed observations of paddy cultivation in this region, and even today, you can witness many paddy fields growing during the Kharif season.



*Malenadu Gidda cattle—small-sized native cattle of the region, similar to those found below the Ghats. Larger breeds are not common as they do not thrive here.*





The cattle here, like those of the region below the Ghats, are remarkably small. No large ones are brought, as they do not live long.



*Cattle are housed year-round, with green leaves used as bedding during the rainy season. Fresh litter is added daily, but the stable is cleaned only once a week. The collected dung, known as *soppina gobbara* (leaf manure) used for agriculture.*

The cattle are kept in the cattle house all year round. During the rainy season, they are littered with green leaves. Fresh litter is added every day, but the stable is cleaned only once a week. The dung is collected in a pit and called *soppina goabbara* (leaf manure), as Buchanan documented.



*Kavaledurga(angliscized : Cowldurga)*



*Kavaledurga hill fort*





*Shrikanteshwara Temple, located at the hilltop.*







*Clockwise from top left: 1. Path leading to the hilltop fort; 2. Kalyani (stepwell) on the hilltop, likely used by the chiefs; 3. Remains of the palace, including stone pillars and the basement; 4. Lush green paddy fields at the base of the hill.*

Kavaledurga, also known as Bhuvanagiridurga, is situated about 20 kilometers northwest of Tirthahalli town. The village lies at the foothill of the same name and is remotely located amidst dense forests, making access to it challenging.

The name "Kavaledurga" translates to "Guarding Hill Fort." This village served as a taluk until 1882. The Kavaledurga hill stands at an elevation of 969 meters above sea level.

At the foothill and within the village, there are several temples dedicated to deities such as Sri Veerabhadra, Anjaneya (Hanuman), and Marikamba. There is also an old mosque built during the Keladi period, along with other shrines, which can still be witnessed today.

The area has two tanks: Matada Kere (now known as Abbigadde Kere) and Lingamajji Kere (now referred to as Thimanayakana Kere).

The hill fort, constructed entirely from locally available stone, features multiple gates, each adorned with stone carvings of Hanuman. At the top of the hill stands the Shrikanteshwara Temple, a simple structure without daily rituals. Nearby, there are several stone slabs believed to have been part of an old palace. Further up the hill is a fine pond called Shantha Ganga.

At the foothill near one of the tanks, there is a Veerashaiva Mutt, which served as the spiritual center for the gurus of the Keladi Nayakas.

### ***Hodla (Hodalla)***

**Coordinates: 13°44'45.0"N, 75°15'11.3"E**

Buchanan visited a tiny village hamlet, Hodla (Hodalla), on March 30, 1801. It is a small village near Kavaledurga. Further crossing Arga (today's Araga) and the rivers Gopinatha and Kushavathi (Kusawati), Buchanan mentioned that it was formerly the residence of a family of Polygar (Palegars) named Coramar (Korama) of Telinga (Andhra) extraction. They were hereditary flute players to the Kings of Vijayanagara. By the time of the first chief of the Keladi family, they were deprived of their authority but were allowed certain lands exempt from taxes. The family is now extinct.





*Hodla Zamindar's Residence*

I went to Hodla in search of the history of the aforementioned family's existence, but unfortunately, no trace of the family could be found. Even the older generation did not know of them. Instead, they mentioned a Zamindar family from Hodla. I further visited their house, and they belong to the Shivabhaktar community (Mallava Lingayaths), which is possibly linked to the Keladi rule. They might have served as officers in the Keladi government.



*Bandya Zamindar's ancestral residence in Tirthahalli Taluk*

I also visited Bandya Zamindar's residence in Tirthahalli Taluk, approximately 20 km from the taluk headquarters, Tirthahalli. They claim to be descendants of Keladi Shivappa Nayaka and are locally known as 'Bandya Gowdaru.' They also belong to the Mallava Lingayat community. Bandya is a small village in the Kundapura region, and it is believed that their ancestors served in the Keladi military or as governors in that region before returning to the Malnad (above the Ghats) and continuing their legacy.



They still hold a significant amount of land in Tirthahalli, cultivating mainly areca nut, pepper, coconut, and paddy. The ancestral house, probably over 200 years old, provides a glimpse of how the Keladi palaces might have looked.

*Tuduru(Tudur) , Mallur(Maluru),Mahishi(Mahisi)*



*Veerabhadra Temple and a Basavanna(Nandi), located between Mallur and Mahishi.*





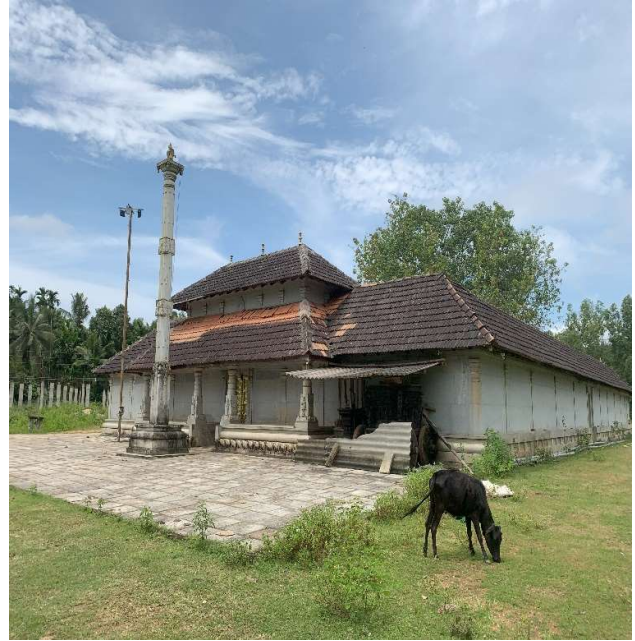
Left to right: 1. A blacksmith family engaged in ironwork; 2. A Sati Kallu near Mallur, on the way to Mahishi.

Through Tuduru, I crossed Mallur and further visited the Mahishi temple, which Buchanan mentioned. Unfortunately, I was unable to trace the Jangama Mutt at Tuduru that Buchanan referred to, nor the location where he pitched his tent during his survey, which was on the left bank of the River Tunga.

Mahishi, a temple built by Hanumanta, is located approximately 6 km by road from Mallur and 16 km northeast of Tirthahalli. Along the way, I found an ancient Veerabhadra temple and, on the left side of the road, several martyr stones (Sati Kallu). Mahishi is situated on the banks of the River Tunga, amidst enchanting paddy fields.







Clockwise from top left: 1. Name board at the entrance to Mahishi village (ಮಹಿಷಿ); 2. Lush green paddy fields on the plains; 3. Ashwatha Narayana Temple; 4. Path leading to Katina Chamundeshwari Temple and the Tunga River.

Buchanan mentioned about Mahishi:

*“On the banks of the Tunga, near Maluru, is a celebrated temple named Mahishi, which signifies the female buffalo. It is supposed to have been built by Hanumantha, who, unwilling to accompany Rama in his expedition against Lanka, assumed for concealment the form of this animal. At this time, he built this temple and dedicated it, of course, to Vishnu, his master.”*

I observed that there are three temples at this location – Katina Chamundeshwari, Ashwatha Narayana Temple, and Kashi Vishveshwara Temple. The Ashwatha Narayana Temple, with its ancient grandeur architecture, is particularly striking and is probably the temple Buchanan referred to as Mahishi.





*The Tunga River originates in the Western Ghats at Gangamoola, along with the Bhadra and Netravathi rivers, in Kuduremukha National Park.*

I observed that the roads generally follow the low hills, and the greater part of the country is cultivated with paddy and arecanut. The River Tunga originates in the Western Ghats, at a place called Gangamoola, which is also the source of other rivers like Bhadra and Netravathi in the Kuduremukha National Park. From its origin, the Tunga flows in a north-easterly direction, passing through the towns of Sringeri, Tirthahalli, and Shimoga. A dam has been constructed across it at Gajanur. After covering a total distance of 147 km, it joins the Bhadra at Koodli near Shivamogga, forming the Tungabhadra River.

#### ***Baikshavani Mata- Mandagadde( anglicized: Manday Gadday)***

Buchanan referred to the Baikshavani Mata located on the eastern plain of Mandagadde. It is associated with the Shivabhaktar Jangamas (Veerashaiva Jangamas), and he recorded that the family continues to reside at this Mata. The village is considered their domain, but they pay exceptional taxes to the authorities. They are reliant on the Umblay Guru, who resides near Shimoga. A significant portion of the farmers were Shivabhaktars, and many Jangamas were likely among them. However, they were probably too impoverished to construct any notable religious buildings. Unfortunately, I was unable to find this Jangama Mutt and even the locals were unfamiliar with it.



*Shimoga(anglicized: Shiva-mogay)*



*Backwaters of Gajanur Dam on the Tunga River, between Mandagadde and Shimoga.*



*Shivappa Nayaka Palace in Shimoga.*



Shimoga, a district headquarters with the same name, is situated on the banks of the Tunga River, approximately 274 km southwest of Bangalore. It is also known as the "**Gateway to Malenadu (Malnad)**", providing access to the hilly regions. The city is surrounded by lush green paddy fields, areca nut plantations, and coconut groves.

Buchanan documented his observations on the geography, economy, and society of these areas. One of the key places he described was Shimoga, historically referred to as Shiva Mogay. At that time, Shimoga was a developing center with vast barren lands and limited agricultural activity, primarily producing a single crop annually.

Buchanan noted that he crossed the Gajanur forest on the left bank of the Tunga River. Today, this area has transformed significantly with the construction of the Gajanur Dam, which provides irrigation and drinking water to Shimoga and its surrounding regions. The Shmioga serves as a major transit point for buses traveling between Hyderabad Karnataka (Kalyana Karnataka), central Karnataka, and the coastal belt.

During the reign of Hyder Ali, Buchanan recorded that skilled carpenters were brought from Mangalore to Shimoga to construct lighters of 8-ton burden for navigation on the Tunga River. These vessels facilitated the transport of local produce, including betel nut, pepper, cattle, and other goods. At that time, without a dam across the river, agricultural activity was seasonal, and only a few farmers with reservoirs cultivated paddy and areca nut plantations.

In the heart of Shimoga, one of the significant historical landmarks is the summer palace of Shivappa Nayaka, a ruler of the Keladi dynasty. Additionally, the nearby regions of Shankaragudda and Kumsi were once prime sources of manganese ore, supplying raw materials to Mysore Iron Works later called Bhadravathi Iron and Steel Works before mining operations ceased.

Today, Shimoga has evolved into a district headquarters, playing a crucial role in connecting Karnataka's central and coastal regions. Buchanan's documentation provides valuable insights into the economic, social, and infrastructural transformation of Shimoga over the centuries.

### *Kudali*



*On the left is the Bhadra River, and on the right is the Tunga River—converging to form the Tungabhadra River at Kudali, historically known as Kudalasangama.*

It is the confluence of the Tunga and Bhadra rivers, where they merge to form the Tungabhadra River, located 16 km northeast of Shimoga town. There are ancient temples built during the Hoysala and pre-Hoysala periods, including significant shrines such as the Brahmeshvara, Rameshwara, and Narasimha temples.





*Clockwise from top left: 1. The confluence of the Tunga and Bhadra rivers at Kudali; 2. Kudala Sangameshwara Temple at the confluence; 3. Rameshwara Temple, built during the Hoysala period; 4. Interior of the Rameshwara Temple.*

At the confluence of the two rivers, there is a small shrine dedicated to Sangameshwara, located within the river itself, which becomes submerged during periods of high flow. A Smartha monastery (Mutt) was likely founded here in the 16th century by Narasimha Bharathi Swamy of Sringeri. It received significant support from the Palegar of Santhebennur and the Nayakas of Keladi through land grants. Additionally, there is a Mutt of the Madhva sect near the Narasimha temple at this site.



*Sasvehalli (anglicized : Sahasiva-hully)*



*Clockwise from top left: 1 & 2. The Tungabhadra River below Sasvehalli, bending southwest; 3. Lift irrigation project by Karnataka Neeravari Nigam at Sasvehalli; 4. A paddy field in Sasvehalli.*

Sasvehalli is a village now located in Davanagere district, with Honnali as its Taluk headquarters, and holds no significant importance today. Buchanan described the terrain here as plain land with an open landscape that closely resembles the Mysore region. The cultivators reside in the village and own large, white cattle. They also rear sheep, and the people primarily sustain themselves on dry grains, with about two-thirds of their diet consisting of ragi and tovaray (green pigeon beans/toor dal). Buchanan also documented that most of the tanks in the area have fallen into disrepair.

*“The Amildar says, that by constructing reservoirs much dry field might be converted into rice ground.”*

This region is now well-irrigated by the 'Upper Tunga Project,' which involves a dam constructed across the River Tunga, located 100 meters downstream of the existing Tunga anicut. The Upper Tunga main canal, stretching 258 km along the left bank, is a key feature of this project. It is designed to irrigate 80,494 hectares annually by utilizing 346.60 MCM (12.24 TMC) of water through the Upper Tunga Canal. The project benefits the districts of Shivamogga, as well as the drought-prone regions of



Davangere and Haveri in Karnataka state. Due to irrigation, the land now predominantly grows areca nut and paddy, which are the main crops visible across this region.

Below Sasvehalli, the river takes a bend to the southwest. Nearby, the 'Karnataka Neeravari Nigam' has implemented a lift irrigation project that provides drinking water and recharges groundwater. This project also helps fill 121 tanks across the districts of Shivamogga (Shimoga), Davangere, and Chitradurga.

### *Basavapattana (Baswa-Pattana)*



*Areca nut plantation near Basavapattna*

Between Sasvehalli and Basavapatna lies a steep mountain range with several scattered small hills running in a northwest-to-southeast direction. Buchanan further mentioned, "As I advanced into the open country, I observed that the landscape was very bare and, like the area to the east, was covered with bushes of *Cassia auriculata* and *Dodonaea viscosa* (Hop bush)." Today, the once-barren land is well irrigated and boasts an abundance of areca nut plantations and paddy fields.





*Clockwise from top left: 1. Bhadra irrigation channel near Basavapatna; 2. Arecanut plantation with irrigation from Bhadra River and Sulekere; 3. Bhadra irrigation channel; 4. Paddy fields*

Basavapatna is a small village located to the west of a small hill, through which the Bhadra Right Canal (irrigated) passes. The village is home to two lakes: one to the south of Basavapatna and the other nearby. Buchanan mentioned, "Basavapatna is one of the most celebrated works of this kind, which was erected by a dancing girl from the gains of her profession. It is called Sulekere, similar to the reservoir of Tonnur near Srirangapatna.





Sulekere, also known as Shanthisagara, is the largest man-made lake, located southeast of Basavapatna in Channagiri Taluk, Davangere District. It was constructed in the 11th century by a temple dancer, who, during that time, held a special privileged status and was regarded with the same respect as the king's mistress.



*South east, above two cossees from Baswa-pattana, is one of the most celebrated works of this kind, which was erected by a dancing girl from the gains of her profession. It is called Solicaray- Francis Buchanan, Chpater XVIII*

There are many stories related to the construction of Sulekere, also known as Shanthisagara, but it is ultimately a great boon given by its creator to the people, serving as a source of drinking water and providing irrigation for the region.

Near Sulekere (Shanthisagara), there is a fish rearing and research center, which is operated under the Inland Fisheries Research Institute.



“South east,above two cossees from Baswa-pattana,is one of the most celebrated works of this kind,which was erected by a dancing girl from the gains of her profession.It is called Solicaray,and the sheet of water is said to be three cossees in length,to send forth a constant considerable stream for thee irrigation of the fields.It is bilt on a similar plan with the reservoir at Tonuru,near Seringapatam”

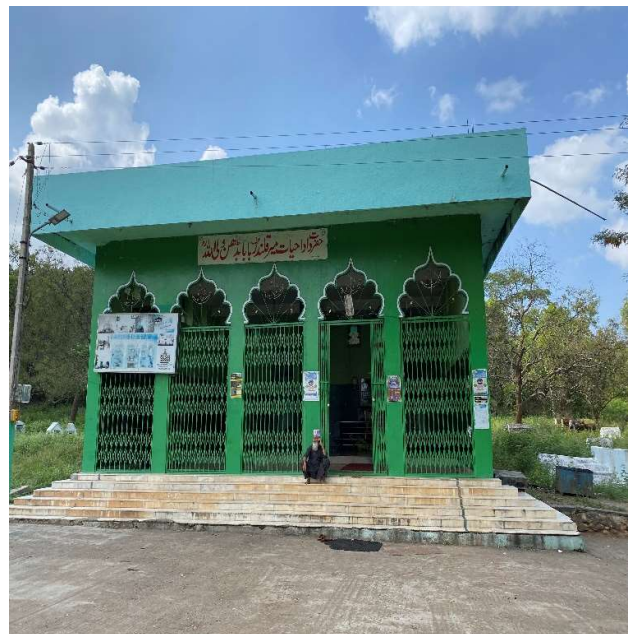
-Francis Buchanan, Chpater XVIII



*Agricultural laborers sorting betel nuts—one of the region's chief produce.*

Near the village of Basavapatna, on the southwestern side, Buchanan mentioned a mosque, noting that this was the first place where Baba Budan took up residence. He later moved and resided on a hill to the south, which is now called Bababudangiri.

I further visited the site, it's a Dargah, not a Masjid, and serves as the shrine of a Sufi saint, which had been incorrectly interpreted. There are two main buildings: the primary Dargah, where Baba Budan meditated, and beside it, the burial site of his sister, Mama Jigani. Additionally, there are several tombs.







The main structures include the primary Dargah, where Baba Budan meditated, and the burial site of his sister, Mama Jigani (Image 3, clockwise from top left), along with several tombs.

Further, I had a conversation with the Cleric or Imam (Muslim scholar) of the Dargah, who told me that this is the place where Baba Budan meditated, and beside it lies the burial site of his sister, Mama Jigani. He also mentioned that from this location, Baba Budan traveled south to a prominent hill named after him, Bababudangiri, and from there, he eventually proceeded to the Krishnapalli Dargah in Tamil Nadu.

Quite interestingly, Buchanan did not mention the history of coffee seed planting by Baba Budan, a Sufi saint who is believed to have smuggled a few coffee beans from Arabia during his holy pilgrimage to Mecca. He brought them back from Mocha, as the coffee trade was a monopoly controlled by Arab traders, and there was a ban on the export of green coffee seeds. Instead, only boiled or dried beans could be carried by foreigners.

At Basavapatna, along with areca nut and paddy, I also noticed a few vegetables being grown while traveling to the Dargah.

### **Malebennur (Malaya Banuru)**



Left to right: 1. Malebennur town on the main Shimoga-Harihara road; 2. A view of Komaranahalli Lake near Malebennur.





*Left to right: 1. Bhadra Canal; 2. Steep mountain range between Malebennur and Basavapatna with scattered hills running northwest to southeast, now topped with windmills.*

In this region, the surname "Bennur" is common among towns and villages, such as Malebennur, Holehonnur, Ranibennur, Santhebennur, and others. The area between Basavapatna and Malebennur features bare hills on the left side of the road. On top of these small hills, windmills have now been installed. The region is well cultivated, with lush greenery, golden paddy fields, and areca nut plantations being the main crops grown here. In Malebennur, paddy cultivation thrives, with significant quantities exported to other regions, and numerous rice mills can be seen throughout the area.

Farmers in this region cultivate two crops of paddy annually, thanks to the abundant flow of Bhadra waters from the right bank canal of the Lakkavali Dam, as explained by a farmer during a conversation about the geopolitical situation of Malebennur. However, concerns were raised about the Upper Bhadra Irrigation Project. Currently, nearly four taluks benefit from Bhadra waters, cultivating paddy on over 68,000 hectares, which far exceeds the allotted area of 40,000 hectares. Farmers fear that the implementation of the Upper Bhadra Project could impact the water share in both Davangere and Harihar taluks.

When I visited the area, the water in the channel had been stopped for the past two days due to recent rainfall. The officials had halted the water flow and planned to resume it when necessary.

Malebennur, now a town, was previously part of Harihara Taluk in Davangere district. Despite its fertile land and strong agricultural income, the road connecting Malebennur and Harihara remains in poor condition and urgently needs improvement. This road serves as a vital link to Shimoga, which acts as a gateway to the Malnad and coastal regions for the Hyderabad-Karnataka and central Karnataka areas.



## Harihara(Hari-hara)



*I crossed a small stream that Buchanan referred to as 'Solicaray Holay' (now Haridra River stream), originating from Sulekere Lake and merging with the Tungabhadra River near Harihara.*

Between Malebennur and Harihara, the land is filled with paddy fields, transitioning into plain land, with many rice mills found along the road.

I crossed a small stream that Buchanan mentioned as 'Solicaray Holay' (Sulekere Holay), which is now referred to as the Haridra River stream. This small stream originates from Sulekere Lake and merges with the Tungabhadra River near Harihara.

The National Highway NH7, connecting Bangalore and Pune (Poona), passes through Harihara. Harihara is now a rapidly developing town in the Davangere district, with many industries emerging in the region. It is also an ancient town situated on the right bank of the Tungabhadra River and serves as the taluk headquarters of the same name. It is located approximately 15 km from its district headquarters, Davangere.

**Buchanan documented that the land on the bank of the Tungabhadra, opposite Harihara, was part of the Maratha dominion.**

*“According to a legend, this spot was the capital or stronghold of a giant named Guha or Guhasura, the limits of whose territory were Uchchangi-durga in the east, Govinahal in the south, Mudunur in the west and Airani in the north. Guhasura, having by his penance, obtained from Brahma a boon of exemption from death at the hands of either Hari or Hara, became troublesome to both gods and men. On a request by the latter, Hari and Hara, in order to counteract the spell, combined themselves into one form of Harihara and destroyed him. The descent of this incarnation was at Kudlur, now Harihara, the place of confluence of the Tungabhadra and Haridra, where the 'god's footprints' are still shown. The giant while dying prayed that the place might be named after him, whence it came to be called Guharanya Kshetra.”*

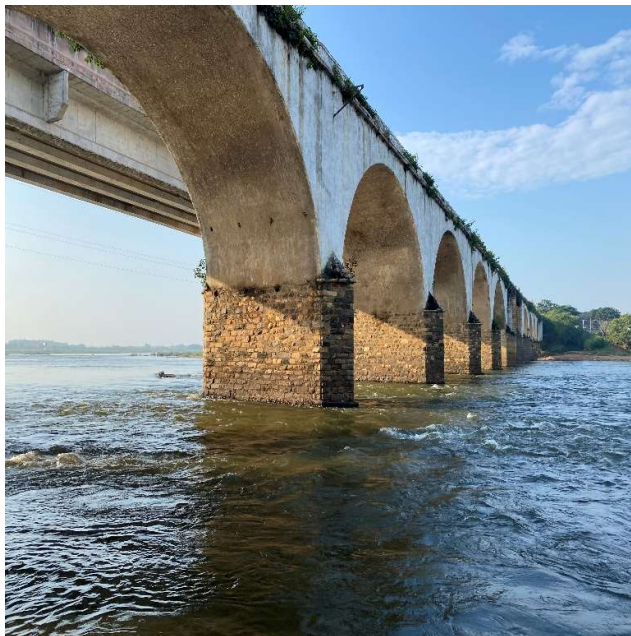
-From Chitradurga Gazetteer, 1967, Chapter 19

This ancient town was governed by several prominent dynasties, including the Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Yadavas, and the Vijayanagara rulers. After the decline of Vijayanagara, the area was captured by the Tarikere chiefs, who constructed the fort. It was later seized by the Nawab of Savanur, who granted it as a jagir to Shir Khan. The temple is believed to have remained intact under these Muslim rulers, with only the roof being converted into a mosque. Harihar was later sold to the chiefs of Bidanur. The Marathas then took control, holding it until it was captured by Haidar Ali in 1763. Afterward, it was reclaimed by the Marathas three times.





*A train crossing the bridge over the Tungabhadra River at Harihara.*



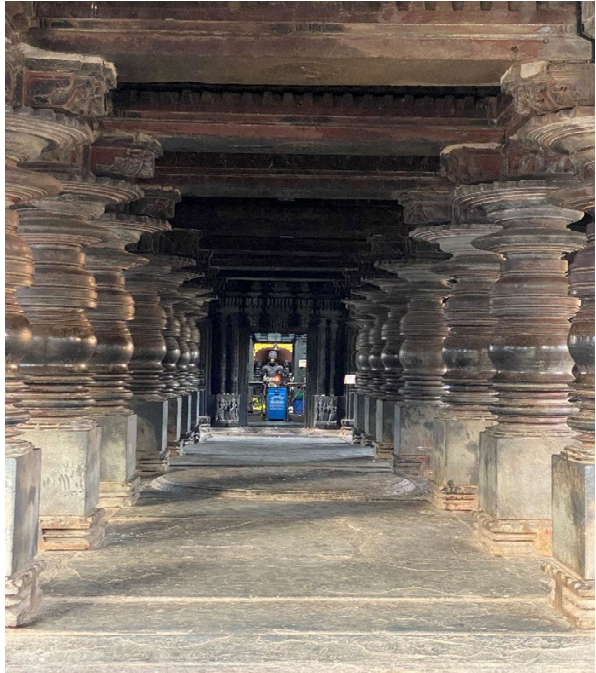




*A 14-arch stone bridge was built over the Tungabhadra for the Bangalore-Dharwar road, with a separate railway bridge. Nearby, Kumarapatnam houses the Harihar Polyfibre plant of Aditya Birla GRASIM on left bank of River.*

Until 1865, an Indian regiment was stationed in the military area, two miles northwest of Harihar. In 1868, a magnificent bridge was completed across the Tungabhadra, over which the main road from Bangalore to Dharwar now passes. It is constructed with stone and brick and features 14 elliptical arches, each with a span of 60 feet. Additionally, there is a separate bridge over the river for the railway.





*Harihareshwara Temple, Harihara.*



The Harihareshvara temple is the most important one at Harihar. It is a large structure built in the Hoysala style in 12~3 by Polalva, a general and minister of the Hoysala king, Narasimha II, and added to later by others.

The statue of Harihara, approximately four feet tall, features its left side depicting Vishnu and the right side representing Shiva. To the left of the temple is the shrine of Lakshmi, which consists of a sanctum, a hall with three entrances, and a veranda surrounding the interior. The shrine has an impressive tower made of brick and mortar. It is believed that corresponding to this shrine, there was a shrine of Parvati located to the right of the temple.

On the left bank of Harihara, an industrious town named Kumarapatnam is home to a Harihar polyfibre company by the Adithya Birla GRASIM group, the first production facility in India to utilize local wood resources with in-house technology. It produces VSF and rayon-grade pulp, the raw material for VSF.

Concerning agriculture in this region, the following crops are cultivated based on the type of soil and irrigation available.

Types of Soil	Agricultural crops
Eray (Black soil)	Cotton, Jowar, Wheat, Millets
Kingalu (Red soil)	Pulses
Note: If Irrigation is adequate	Paddy, sugarcane, plantation crops, Arecanut

### Davangere (Davana-giri)

Where Tradition turns Contemporary!

The Carnatic and Hindustani systems of music for which India is traditionally well known, have many common musicological terms and the musical tradition in India which is mainly oral, passed down 'by ear' from generation to generation.

Likewise the quality cloth produced at our Mills at Davangere have for generations stood the test of time. From traditional cotton, and then finer varieties, we at Davangere now also produce superior blends which offer the best value that money can buy.

**DAVANIO** Tenare Cotton Shirting  
**RAMSON** Tenare Cotton Sacking  
**DAVARIN** Tenare Cotton Shirting

\*Tenare Regd. T.M. of C.M.F.I.

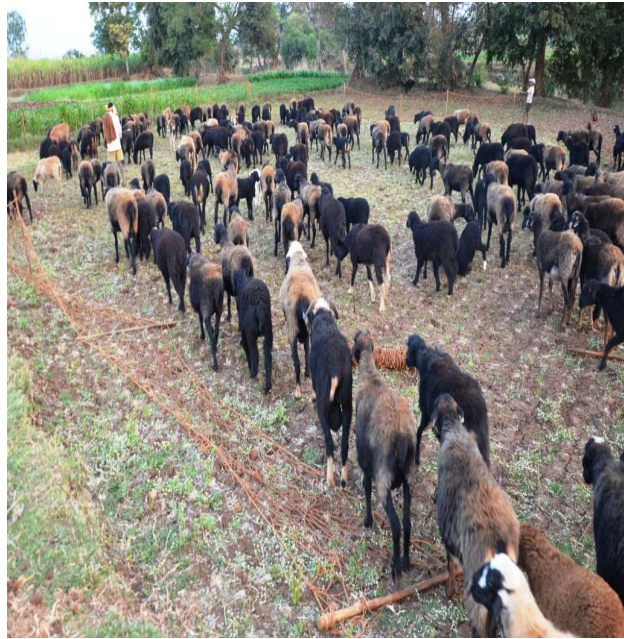
**Ma**  
a note suggesting  
the whoop of a crane

**DAVANGERE**  
The quality that endures

THE DAVANGERE COTTON MILLS LIMITED, DAVANGERE, KARNATAKA







*Clockwise from top left: 1. An old newspaper ad for Davangere's famous cotton mill (source: Internet Archive); 2. Davangere is known for its coarse cotton cloth and cumlies made from natural sheep wool; 3 & 4. A herd of sheep near Davangere.*

Davangere is a district headquarters with the same name, located approximately 267 km from its state capital, Bangalore. It is situated in the center of Karnataka. Earlier, it was a taluk under Chitradurga district and became a separate district in 1997.

As Buchanan mentioned, Davangere is famous for its coarse cotton cloth along with cumlies from natural wool. Historically, Davangere was a major hub for the cotton industry, earning it the title "Manchester of Karnataka." Today, it thrives as a center for commerce, education, and agro-processing industries.

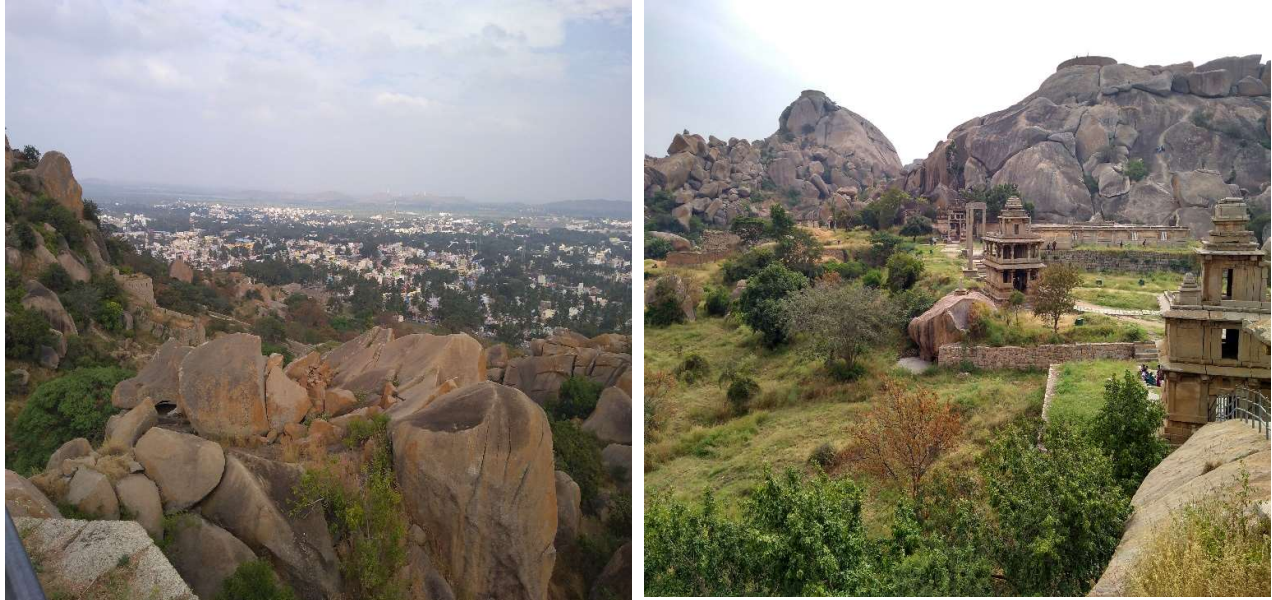
The southern and western parts of the district are irrigated by the waters of the Bhadra reservoir, while the rest of the region is semi-arid, relying on borewells and rainwater for agriculture. The agricultural practices here are similar to those in Harihara.

In earlier days, as Buchanan noted, the principal produce of this region included jaggery, cumlies from natural wool, and chana (Bengal gram). The region served as a trading center for goods exchanged with neighboring areas such as Nagara (Bednore Nagara), Bangalore, the Ceded Districts (Rayadurga and others), the Mysore principality, the Maratha territory beyond the Tungabhadra River, the Arcot region, and others.

### *Chitradurga(anglicized: Chitteldroog)*







*Clockwise from top left: 1. Akka Thangi Honda (pond) atop Chitradurga Fort; 2. Dilapidated mint from the Palegar period; 3. Gaali Mantapa; 4. View of Chitradurga town from the fort hill.*

Francis Buchanan crossed Kodaganur (Coduganar) and Alaghatta (Aligutta), then crossed the Bhimasamudra reservoir before reaching Chitradurga.

Chitradurga, the district headquarters, is located approximately 203 km northwest of Bangalore. It is well connected by the Bangalore-Pune highway. Chitradurga is historically significant, known for its majestic fort and numerous historical sites in and around the city.

The present name of the place, Chitradurga, meaning 'Picture Fort,' appears to be a relatively recent one. Earlier names found in inscriptions include Bemmattanakallu or Bemmattanuru, Sulgal, Perumalepura, and Chitrakal-durga. In addition to these, the place has also been known as Hidimbapattana during the Mahabharata era; Mallarayanadurga, a name given by Vira Mallanna Wodeyar in the 15th century; Farrakabad, a name bestowed by Tipu Sultan but not retained after his rule; and Chinmuladri, a name with possible religious significance still used by the Swamis of the Murugharajendra and Kudali Sringeri Mathas.

It is believed that the present name is derived from Chitrakal-durga, meaning 'spotted' or 'picturesque castle,' or from Chatrakal, meaning 'umbrella rock,' referring to a prominent, lofty hill of this shape in the southwest. However, the name Chitrakal itself may have evolved from the earlier name Sulgal (or perhaps Suligal), with 'Suli' in Kannada referring to a figure, movement, whorl, or outline.





*Chandravalli Lake behind Chitradurga Hill Fort, Chitradurga*

There are many inscriptions on the hill belonging to the Chalukya, Hoysala, Vijayanagara, and Nayaka periods. To the west, among a rugged and picturesque group of hills, lies the Ankli Matha near the Chandravalli stream. Excavations at Chandravalli have uncovered earthen pots, painted bowls, and coins from Indian dynasties such as the Vijayanagara, Satavahana, and Hoysala, as well as denarii of the Roman emperor Augustus Caesar and a coin of the Chinese Han dynasty Emperor Wu Ti, dating back to the 2nd century BCE.

The hill containing the Matha is known for its long series of subterranean chambers, which are now reinforced with masonry and thickly covered with plaster. A saint from Ankalagi (present-day Belagavi) is believed to have meditated and lived here.

About three miles south of Chitradurga lies Jogi Matti (or Maradi), one of the highest points in the district, standing at 3,803 feet above sea level.

In Chitradurga town, there is a renowned matha—Murugarajendra Matha—the residence of an eminent Lingayat guru. It is a large, well-built, two-storied edifice with a grand mahadwara (outer gate) known as Anebagilu or 'Elephant Door.' The chief object of worship in the Matha is the Gaddige (tomb) of Immadi Murugi Swami, who is regarded as its founder. The name of the Matha is said to be derived from 'Murugi,' representing the three 'gi's—Yogi, Jogi, and Bhogi.

One section of the Matha features an ingenious water wheel. The original structure of the Matha was located on Chitradurga hill, in front of the Hidimbeshvara temple. This too is a spacious and impressive stone structure, with a grand pillared hall built during the reign of Bharamanna Nayaka (1689–1721).

*Buchanan did not document much about Chitradurga, as he and his team suffered from severe health issues during their visit. He described the place as inhospitable, possibly because he visited during the peak summer season in April, when the weather in Chitradurga was unfavorable for him. As a result, little information was recorded about Chitradurga, its fort, and the surrounding areas.*



### *Doddasiddavvanahalli(anglicized: Siddamana-hully)*

Doddasidhavanahalli is a village located between Chitradurga and Hiriyr, beside the NH4 highway, with no significant historical or commercial importance. As Buchanan mentioned, the soil here is black, and the region is primarily inhabited by an agrarian community. Currently, the people here grow pulses, including Kadale (*Cicer arietinum*), similar to what Buchanan documented.

Doddasidhavanahalli is also the birthplace of Siddavanahalli Krishnasharma, an eminent Kannada writer and freedom fighter.

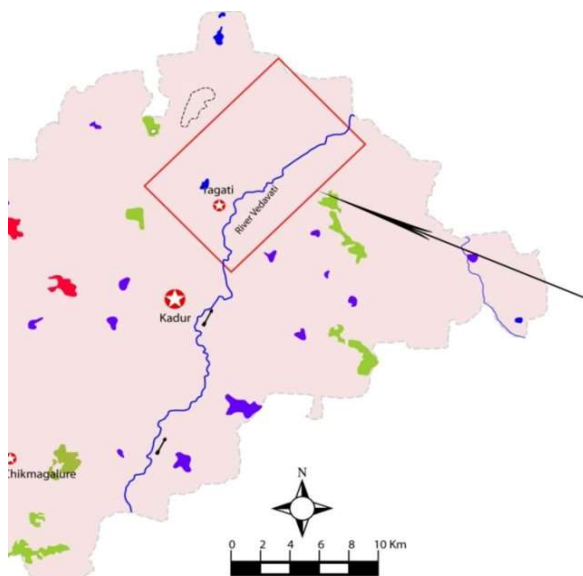
### *Hiriyr(anglicized: Heriuru)*



*Hiriyr's weekly sheep market, held on Saturdays, is a key hub for farmers and traders.*

Hiriyr is a town and taluk in Chitradurga district, strategically positioned along the Bangalore-Pune National Highway (NH-4). It lies approximately 160 km from Bangalore and serves as a key agricultural and commercial hub in the region.

The town is situated on the banks of the Vedavathi River, which exhibits a substantial flow primarily during the monsoon season but experiences a significant reduction or complete depletion during the dry months. The river basin, however, is heavily polluted with debris and domestic waste, necessitating urgent remediation efforts to eliminate pollutants and restore ecological balance.



Vedavathi is one of the tributaries of the Tungabhadra River. In Bellary district, as well as in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh, the river is locally referred to as Hagari.

The river originates from two streams, Veda and Avathi, both of which emerge on the eastern slopes of the Sahyadri Hills near Bababudangiri in the Chikmagalur district. These streams converge near Pura village to form the Vedavathi River. As it continues its course, the river traverses Kadur taluk before entering Chitradurga district through Hosadurga taluk.





*After merging with the Suvarnamukhi, the Vedavathi River flows north into Anantapur districts (AP) and Bellary districts, where it is called Hagari.*

The Vedavathi river basin extends across the taluks of Hosadurga, Hiriyyur, and Challakere in Chitradurga district. Among its tributaries, Suvarnamukhi is a prominent one, merging with Vedavathi at Koodalahalli (Sangameshwara temple built) in Hiriyyur taluk. After passing through the Chitradurga district, the river enters the Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh via Challakere taluk, where it is locally known as Hagari.

To harness the river's water resources, the Bhairavanithippa Medium Irrigation Project was constructed in 1961 at Bhairavanithippa village. This project was developed considering the catchment yield from an area of 14,386 sq. km, positioned between the Vani Vilas Sagar Dam and the Bhairavanithippa Project.

Hiriyyur receives low to moderate rainfall and is categorized as one of the drought-prone regions in the state. The region exhibits diverse soil types, including deep and shallow black soil, mixed red and black soil, red loamy soil, and sandy soil, particularly in the Hiriyyur region.





*Rear view of Terumalleshwara Temple, Hiriya.*

A prominent religious site in the town is the Teru Malleshwara Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva. This temple is highly revered by the local community and is renowned for its annual Rathotsava (chariot festival), which draws a significant number of devotees from surrounding areas.

Hiriya also has a notable Tamil-speaking population, primarily due to migration during the construction of the Vani Vilasa Sagara Dam. Many Tamil laborers who were employed in the project eventually settled in the town, contributing to its demographic and cultural diversity.

In Hiriya, the sheep market is customarily held on Saturdays. This weekly marketplace serves as a vital center for local farmers and traders, facilitating the exchange of sheep and other livestock. Renowned for its dynamic environment, the market offers a diverse selection of sheep breeds, attracting buyers and sellers from surrounding regions.

\*\*\*\*\*