



livelihoods

today and tomorrow

November 2017

‘Kshetram’

Dakshina Kannada

Dakshina Kannada, located in the state of Karnataka in India, is sheltered by Western Ghats on the east and surrounded by Arabian Sea on the west. It is bordered by Udupi district to the north, Chikkamagaluru district to the northeast, on the east by Hassan district, and in the south by Kodagu and Kasargod districts in Kerala. The region's geographic area is 4859 Sq.km, constituting about 2.53% of the total geographical area Karnataka.



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Important towns in Dakshina Kannada include Mangalore, Ullal, Bantwal, Vittal, Puttur, Sullia, Surathkal, Moodabidri, Uppinangady, Belthangady, Venur, Mulki, Dharmasthala, Ujire and Subramanya. The district is known for pristine beaches, red clay roof tiles (Mangalore tiles), cashew nut and its products, banking, education, healthcare and exotic cuisine.

Historically, prior to 1860, Dakshina Kannada was part of a district called Kanara, which was earlier under a single administration in the Madras Presidency. During British era, South Kanara was retained in Madras Presidency and North Kanara was made part of Bombay Province in 1862. During the Reorganization of states in 1956, Kasargod was split and transferred to the newly created Kerala state and Dakshina Kannada was transferred to Mysore state. In case of South Canara, which was earlier under British Empire, included the present Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Kasargod districts and Amindivi islands. Dakshina Kannada became a district of Mysore state in 1956, which later was renamed Karnataka in 1973.

Population of Dakshina Kannada as per 2011 census was 2,089,649, having a density of 457 inhabitants per square kilometer (1,180 /sq mi). Dakshina Kannada’s population growth rate over the decade of 2001-2011 was 9.8% and sex ratio was 1018 females for every 1000 males, with Belthangady having highest sex ratio of 962. Mangalore had the lowest sex ratio of 941. The literacy rate in the region was 88.62% (the highest in the state) and while Mangalore city stood at 94%. As per 2011 census, the district has 16.66 lakh literate. Dakshina Kannada, as per 2011 census, ranked second in per capita income, second in HDI, first in literacy and third in sex ratio among all districts in Karnataka.

Dakshina Kannada features a Tropical Monsoon climate and average annual rainfall is 4,030 mm. Mostly, rainfall varies from 3,796.9 mm at the Mangalore coas; 4,530 at Moodabidri; and 4,329 at Putturnear in Western Ghats. Humidity average is 75% and peaks in July at 89%. District is blessed with one of the highest rainfall from south-west monsoon. Belthangady has the highest rainfall (4509 mm) and Sullia taluk has the lowest rainfall (3593mm). On the coastal strip, particularly in the northern most part of Byndoor region, the rainfall is much heavier than in the southern portion of the coast as well as interior hilly tracts. May is the hottest month of the year. Dakshina Kannada has two important agro-climatic divisions namely; coastal region, which consists of Mangalore and Bantwal taluks and other being Malnad region, comprising of Belthangady, Puttur and Sullia taluks.

The forests comprise of different types of evergreen, semi-green, moist deciduous, day deciduous, scrub forests. The forests are abounding in medicinal plants as well. There are 13 wildlife sanctuaries located in and close to Dakshina Kannada- Kudremukh, Someshwara, Bhadra, Pushpagiri, Coorg, Shetihalli, Dubare, Pakshipathalare, Wayanad, Nagarhole, Begur, Kabini and Rajiv Gandhi National Park. The total geographic area under forest in 1.29 lakh ha. Belan has the highest geographical area under forest (49837 ha) followed by Sullia (43282 ha) and Puttur (27386 ha). The district has good flora and fauna, which is luxuriant and complex. There is dense vegetation containing valuable timber species largely evergreen and deciduous. Rattan cane and bamboo are found commonly in the forests.

Soil structure contains three types- sandy alluvial soil, yellow loamy soils, and red laterite soils. The texture of the soil varies from fine to coarse depending on location. Soil in valley is loamy and in upland plains is coarse type. The water retention capacity of the soil structure in general is very poor. The region is endowed with mineral resource potentials. Laterite and granite stones are available all across the district.

The various rivers in Dakshina Kannada flow westward and join Arabian Sea and they are:

Netravati, Kumaradhara, Gurupuror Phalguni, Nandini or Pavanje, Shambhavi, Pangala, Udyavar, Swarna or Suvarna, Seetha, Panchagangavalli, Sowpamika, Varahi, Chakra rivers.

Tuluva people are distributed among the Billava, Mogaveera, Bunt, Kulala and Devadiga communities which are the largest ethnic group in the district. The Konkani people, Bhramins, Holeyas, Vokkaligas, the hill-tribes (Koragas), Muslims, Mangalorean Catholics and Arebhashe Gowdas, comprise rest of the population. The Brahmins belong chiefly to the Chitpavan, Shivalli, Saraswat, Havyaka, and Kota sub-sections. The major languages spoken in Dakshina Kannada are Tulu, Konkani, Kannada and BearyBhashe.

The region is home to Koragas, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribe (PVT) and till date they are involved in food gathering, shifting cultivation, terrace cultivation, herding, fishing, basketry, and lead nomadic and semi-nomadic ways of life.

Dakshina Kannada people follow traditions, customs and rituals and have deep spiritualism attached to them. Kambala, a form of buffalo race, is conducted on the muddy tract in the paddy field. Cock fight is another important festival of rural agrarian people. Yakshagana is the popular folk art practiced in Tulu Nadu with great fanfare. Unique forms of folk dances such as Pilivesha (Tiger Dance), Karadi Vesha (Bear Dance) are performed during Dasara. The traditional Hindu festivals are celebrated.

The major characteristic of the region in relation to economic resources are fisheries, forestry and plantation. Agriculture and horticulture together constitute the backbone of the rural economy. The region essentially being an agriculture district had close to 62.2% of the population dependent on cultivation for their livelihood. Cultivation of betel leaf is common throughout the region. The main crops of Dakshina Kannada are Paddy, Coconut, Arecanut, Black Pepper, Cashew, Jackfruit and Cocoa. Rubber, Banana and Vanilla crops are also cultivated in the Sullia Taluk. Rice is cultivated during three seasons in a year (May-October, October-January and January-April). During October-January period, Urad or Black gram is grown in some areas. Cashew is a highly cross-pollinated crop.

The various livelihoods in the region are fishing, working in various industries, agriculture and its allied activities, dairy and livestock rearing. In case of fishing, fisherwomen do fishing in coastal Karnataka and they supplement family income through their incomes. The coastal belt has backwaters, estuaries, mangroves, salt marshes, lagoons and creeks and these provide good scope for fisheries. The entire

coastal area has fishing activity. There is need for employment generation by providing modern marketing facilities for improving the status of fisherwomen.

Agriculture is another important livelihood activity, a total of 72378 ha. is under irrigation, which is mainly done through wells, tube-wells and Lift Irrigation (LI). Sesame is the only oilseed that is grown in the district. In the recent past, there has been land acquisition for promotion of SEZs and Industrial development. Historically, the region is known for red clay tiles, processing of cashew nuts and beedi rolling industries.

Horticulture is also another important activity in the region and the major fruits grown are mango, banana, pineapple, sapota, lemon and guavava. Puttur, Belthangady and Sullia are the main taluks growing horticulture crops in the district. Dairy is also another important livelihood activity and milk collection is more than two lakh litre per day. Rearing of small ruminants is another important livelihood activity. The various small ruminants reared are poultry (mostly backyard), goat, sheep rearing and piggery.

For many small and marginal farmers, agriculture has become unviable and they have taken to other livelihoods. The younger generation is not interested in agriculture and its allied activities. Agriculture, which was once a major occupation of people of Dakshina Kannada, has taken a back seat due to influx of money from natives settled in other cities, states and countries. Thus, farms and field are being converted into residential plots and commercial complexes. Horticulture has made some strides and measures have been taken to improve the fruit plantation sector.

In the current scenario, the coastal belt is very eco-sensitive and promoting reckless development will pose serious environmental consequences. The region is also facing near drought conditions every year. Reckless development is also adversely affecting farmers and fishermen in the region. Industrialization has led to urbanization, which in turn is creating problem of drinking water, sanitation and solid waste management. Majority of the youth are showing disinterest in practicing farming. Youngsters are migrating to towns and cities in search of education and for better job opportunities. ❖