

Tourist Destinations of Hunagund Taluk

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 04 June 2019

Keywords

historical, architecture, temple, art, patronage.

ABSTRACT

Hunagunda region has been recognised as tourist place because of its historical places. The tourist places like aihole have become famous as the native place of architecture during regime of Chalukyas of Badami this place was famous stock centre because of its forth and architecture more than hundred temples which make to call this place as a cradle of architecture and it is a proud privilege of this Taluka. The historical and architectural importance of this place has been dealt with in detail in this paper.

1. Introduction

Hunagund taluk is located at a distance of 50 kms towards south of Bagalkot district centre. Hunagund taluk is surrounded by Raichur district at the East, Kustagi taluk of Koppal district at the South, Bagalkot taluk at the West and Muddebihal taluk of Vijayapura district at the South. Hunagund taluk is situated at a distance of 435 kms from the state capital Bengaluru. Hunagund is one of the important taluk and administrative centre of Bagalkot district.

Geographically, the area of Hunagund taluk is 1354 sq. Kms. Hunagund taluk comprises of 4 divisions (Hobali) namely Karadi, Aminagad, Hunagund and Ilkal. Taluk includes 161 residential villages, 13 government hospitals 42 private hospitals and 13 Primary Health Centres. River Krishna and Malaprabha flow in this region. Cotton processing is important industry of this region. Likewise, textile loom is an important home industry of this region. Aihole and Siddanakolla, are the historical tourist centres. Likewise, Kudalasangama is an important tourist spot. Chittargi Sri Vijayamanteshwar Samstana Math, Basaveshwara temple of Karadi, Basavadhama Peetha of Kudalasangama, Sri Mahanteshwara Sanstana Math of Chittargi, Nandavadigi etc are the important religious tourist places in the Hunagund taluk.

2. Objectives

- To find out the historical importance of Hunagund taluka
- To understand architectural value of Hunagund taluka

3. Method

Historical and empirical method has been used in this paper. The description of the contribution of the patrons who have struggled for the glorification has been vividly given in this paper.

4. Development of thought

The ancient inscriptions identified in this region have a mention of this place as Ponnagund, Ponagund. The word Ponna means Gold, Yellow Metal, The word Gund means hill. The word Ponnagund has originated from the words Ponna and Kunda¹. Geographically, it is believed that the word

Hunagund has been derived from the word Ponnagund. Another historical source mentions that this region was ruled by a queen named Honnamma. The source also mentions that this queen had constructed a lake which is named after her as Honnamma kere. Presently the lake is extinct and there is construction of Marukeshwara temple in the same place. The Doddappana kere (lake) in Hunagund is much popular. The region includes lakes like Honnammana kere, Ganiger Kere, Kadapatti kere etc.

The Ramalingeshwara temple located in Hunagund is popularly called as Trikuteshwara temple. There are 5 Maruteshwara temples and Vijaya Mahanteshwara temple in the town. The Rameshwara temple situated at the base of the hill is constructed in a Chalukya style. This includes spacious or widespread hallway, its auditorium comprises of 8 pillars and its sanctuary is a installation of Ishwara linga. The Sangameshwara temple has been rejuvenated in 1920; the temple has a sculpture of Shivalinga at the sanctuary. Every year on the eve of last Monday of the Shravana a car festival is organized. The Muddu Maruti temple is located close to Sangameshwara temple.

Ilkal:

Ilkal is a one of the important division of Hunagund taluk and is a Major Commercial centre. Geographically, Ilkal is located at about a distance of 12 kms towards South from Hunagund taluk. Ilkal is much popular for its Saree and pink Granite and is a renowned commercial centre. Ilkal is a second largest populated town after Bagalkot. The Gazetteer of Bombay province has record of this place as "Ilkall". Geographically speaking it is believed that the word Ilkal has originated from the words "Ila" and "Kallu". The name "Ilkal" is found in the land revenue records and is also the present name².

There are Mallikarjuna, Maruteshwara, Banashanakari, Venkateshwara, Basaveshwara and other temples belonging to ancient eras in Ilkal. There are 10 Basaveshwara, 4 Banashankari, 20 Maruteshwara, 2 Lakshmi, a Jain temples and thrones of many eminent religious scholars. Granite trade and weaving are the primary occupations of this land. The handloom saree of Ilkal generally called as Ilkal saree is very popular throughout the state. There is a huge

¹Ambalike Hiriyanna: "Bagalkote, Karnataka Gramacharitre Kosha", (Vol.1), 2015, Karnataka Folklore University, Gotgodi, P.572

²Ambalike Hiriyanna: "Bagalkote, Karnataka Gramacharitre Kosha", (Vol.1), 2015, Karnataka Folklore University, Gotgodi, P.382

global demand for the power loom sarees, blouses and polished Granite stones of Ilkal. There are weavers who are capable of manufacturing more than 2000 sarees per day to meet the global demand. There is a great demand for pink granite of Ilkal not only in India but also at overseas. Since there is good deal of trade, Ilkal is empowering itself as a Trade and economic centre and is blooming out as a commercial centre of the Bagalkot district.

Sri Vijaya Mahanteshwara Samstanamath:

Sri Vijaya Mahanteshwara Samstanamath was established at the midst of Ilkal town by Sri Gurumahant Shivayogi the disciple and devotee of Allamaprabhu in 12th century. Presently, this temple is one of the prominent temple in Karnataka state and is termed as a revolutionary mastermind. The heritage of Sri Math was primarily initiated from Chittargi later extended its heritage in Ilkal. Chittargi Peetha heritage comprises of about 15 gurus.

The present guru Sri Ma.Ni.Pra Mahant Shivayogi took over the charge of Sri Math on 17th May 1970. Scholarly Sri. Ma.Ni.Pra Mahant Shivayogi through his progressive thoughts is striving hard for the social welfare of the society. Guruji has served relentlessly for the eradication of ill beliefs and evil practices from the minds of the people. Looking at the present younger generation indulged in evil addictions and bad habits has extended his deepest concern has started an innovative programme called "Mahantha Jolige" thus has prepared outlines for curbing this social pestilence³.

Contributions towards Education:

The Society under the Ernst chairmanship of Poojya Sri Mahantha Swamiji is systematically running kindergarten, primary schools, secondary schools, high schools, pre-university colleges, degree colleges, Industrial Training Institutions, medical colleges, Education colleges and post graduate diploma colleges⁴.

Contributions towards Literature:

The contribution of Swamiji towards literature is enormous. Swamiji has published several books through the publishers authored by popular scholars. Swamiji has published over 85 books. He has also published 11 books pertaining to vacchanas. Likewise, the maths of Chittargi and Ilkal has a long history of over 500 years.

Likewise, Ilkal town apart from being an ancient town is also a commercial centre. The handloom (weaving) and Granite trade in Ilkal and religious tourism of the town attracts the visitors.

Aihole:

Aihole is a village of Amingad Hobali of Hunagund taluk. The village has acquired the name from the word "Ayyavole" which means stream of Ayyas. Aihole means Brahmins residing on the banks of the streams. The Sanskrit form of word "Ayyavole" is "Aryapura" which means place of scholars and pundits⁵.

³Santosh Davanagere: "Bagalkote Jilla Matha Margadarshana", 2015, Aradhya Publications, Davanagere

⁴R. Gopal, (Ed.): "Directorate of Art and Ancient Architecture and Museums, Bagalkot district.", Mysore, 2015, p. 579.

⁵Ambalike Hiriyanna: "Bagalkote, Karnataka Gramacharitre Kosha", (Vol.1), 2015, Karnataka Folklore University, Gotgod, P.391

The donation of Bennama Somayaji to the chaturvedic Brahmin mentions that the Aryapura (Aihole) is a land of worthy people. The records mentions about Annaprashana, prosperity, chaula, dharana, upanayana, stanza for samaavarthanegalu, marriage, arson, two fireplaces for animal sacrifice, fireplace for the chaturmasyas, eight fireplaces for agnistoma and donations towards the deserving⁶.

According to the mythological story Purusharama after slaughtering Kartyaveeryarjuna and other Kshatriyas tore the bloodshed axe from south to west and washed the bloodshed axe in the Malaprabha river flowing from east to west, thus making whole of the river water red. Women of Aryapura watching the red waters of the Malaprabha river was astonished and started screaming Aihole, Ayyahole. The screaming of a lady as Ayyahole later became Aihole⁷.

Out of the 130 ancient temples at Aihole most of the temples are extinct and many are in a state of destruction. Presently only 25 of the temples are open for the visitors. Shivaram Karanth watching these temples at Aihole has rightly called Aihole as "Cradle of Sculptures amongst Indian Temples", "Laboratory of Sculpture"⁸. Though we cant watch the 25 temples it is very important to watch the seven temples at Aihole. If not the travel to Aihole would be incomplete. The seven such temples at Aihole are as follows:

Durga Temple (7th Century AD)

There is a most artistic, aesthetic beautiful temple in Aihole. Soon we think about Aihole, the fort model of the parliament house at New Delhi comes to our mind. The word Durga doesn't mean goddess but it means a fort. The Durga temple includes the towers decorated with very micro carvings mounted on the several pillars. The Durga temple in Aihole is really an added feather to other artistic temples in Aihole. The sanctuary, surrounding clockwise path, Auditorium, the porch, and every porch is surrounded by clockwise path. At every step around the Durga temple is rich with beautiful carvings. The gates of porch includes two inscriptions of Chalukya period. The internal and external walls and ceiling stonewalls are surrounded by carvings of Shiva, Vishnu, Varaha, Mahisasura Mardini and Harihara sculptures.

Hucchimalli Temple:

Hucchimalli temple was constructed in the year 708 AD. The temple has acquired the name Hucchamalli because it is believed that a mad lady named Malli used to stay in this temple. Even in this temple we find the Chalukya style micro and tender carvings. The ceiling of the porch has a sculpture of Mother Bhuvaneshwari and at the centre there is sculpture of Kartikeya.

Rawalaphadi Cave:

The Rawalaphadi cave has a magnificent history of over thousand three hundred years. The constructing of Rawalaphadi cave is in itself is a phenomenal. The cave is constructed by carving the huge rock. This cave temple attracts the visitors. The cave temple represents Jainism, Buddhism

⁶Devarakondareddy: "Bagalkote Jilla", Kannada University Inscription No. 9, Kannada University, Hampi, 2006, p. 351

⁷V.S. Kumar: "Nodana Banni Kannada Nadu", 2012, Vasanta Publications, Bengaluru, p. 195.

⁸H.N. Siddanna: "Dakshinapatheswara", Chalukya Utsava Samiti, Bagalkot, 2002, p. 24

and *vedic* cultures. This cave temple includes the sculptures of dancing Nataraja, Apsaras in the vicinity of Nataraja, the Saptamaathrukes Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Varaahi, Indrani, Vaishnavi and sculptures of Ganapathi, Shanmukha. The carvings of the idols are gorgeous. Moreover, the Shivalinga in the sanctuary and the sculptures of Mahisasura Mardini, Varahamurthy, the idol of Gangadharamurthy on mediation standing on a single leg and idol of goddess Parvati are manifested in a great way.

Meguthi Jeenalaya (634 AD)

This is a Jain temple. This temple was constructed in 634 AD by Ravikeerthi who was the court poet of Pulikesi II. This temple is in a Dravidian style. The temple is categorized into three parts namely the porch, auditorium and a sanctuary. There is a clockwise path surrounding the sanctuary. There is a huge sculpture of Lord Mahaveera in the sanctuary. Over this sanctuary there is another sanctuary. The most of the parts of temple are free from stones. There is a popular inscription mentioning the heroics of Immadi Pulikesi at the wall situated to the west of the temple. In the vicinity of the temple there are some stone tombs. Dr. B.R. Gopal has described the Meguthi Temple as cave temple. This temple is also called as Melina Gudi⁹.

Ramalinga Temple:

Ramalinga temple is located at a distance of half a mile from Aihole on the banks of river Malaprabha. Ramalinga temple is Trikuta styled temple. The temple includes three sanctuaries. There are idols of Siddeshwara, Ramalingeshwara and Goddess Parati in these sanctuaries. There is an sculpture of Lord Nandi opposite to Ramalingeshwara idol. There are three Dravidian styled peaks over the sanctuaries. Presently, Ramalingeshwara temple is the only temple which is worshipped by the people.

Ladkhan Temple:

This temple was constructed in 450 AD, it is believed that a Muslim saint named Ladkhan resided in this temple. Hence this temple is called after him as Ladkhan temple¹⁰. The temple comprises of a Shivalinga and a some inscriptions mentioning the heritage of Chalukya kings.

The above mentioned famous temples of Aihole including Durga temple can be reached by travelling through auto rickshaw and mini carrier vehicles. It is very convenient to travel in own vehicles. Apart from these temples there are Goudar temple of 5th Century, Chakragudi, Suryanarayana temple, Buddhist temple, Charantimath Jaina Basadi, Jyotirlinga temple, Sri Ramalingeshwara temple and Galaganath temple and other temples. It requires at least a day to visit all these temples at Aihole. The vast and widespread grasslands and gardens at Durga and Ladkhan temples attract the visitors. The Archaeological museum at Aihole is worth visiting.

Aihole is located at a distance of 65 kms from Bagalkot district centre and is only 35 kms away from Badami and world heritage spot Pattadakallu is just 13 kms away from

Aihole. The Badami taluk is 26 kms away from Hunagund taluk. There is good transportation facility at Aihole. After watching the tourist spots at Aihole one can travel to Badami through Auto Rickshaw or Tom tom and also can watch the tourist spots of Badami, Pattadakallu and Sri Mahakuta.

Kudalasangama:

Kudalasangama is located at a distance of 22 kms from Hunagund taluk. Kudalasangama is a place of union of two rivers Krishna and Malaprabha. There is historically renowned Sri Sangameshwara temple at Kudalasangama. Sangamanatha is a Basavanna's revered god. The meaning of Kannada word "Kudala" means "Sangama(Union)" is derived from a Sanskrit word. The meanings of both these words are the same in meaning. The 1160 AD inscription has references of the donation of people of Kudala Kappadi Sangama of Sarvanmasyada Agrahara. The inscription mentions that the people has donated each of 12 Acres of land to Chunchinadishetty and Aruvattugolu Kaleshwara along with Acheshwara Devaru. Aravottakalu and Alla Ganigers together give up oil mills. Apart from this they donated flower garden, shop and one oil mill for the people to manage them. The people were entitled as the blessing of lord Sangameshwara¹¹.

Sangameshwara temple:

It is believed that Sangameshwara temple was constructed in 11th century during the reign of Kalyana Kalachuri. The Linga at the sanctuary is termed as self originated Linga. Thus originated Sangameshwara was the god of worship of Basavanna. There are few craftsmanship in the temple. At the backwaters of river Krishna at Basavasagara of Narayanpur and at the point of union of Malaprabha river and to the opposite of Basavanna's Samadhi facing towards east direction is located a Sangameshwara temple. The outer structure of Sangameshwara is much attractive. The temple is surrounded all over by waters of river Krishna and Malaprabha. The landscape of Sangameshwara temple is added feather to the overall environment of the Kudalasangama. The sculptures carved on the pillars inside the temple are attractive. Though the walls at the interior of the sanctuary are short it includes the beautiful idol of Lord Ganesha and the wall at the left of Sangameshwara there is a attractive sculpture of Basavanna in a posture of writing vacanas. Likewise on the wall at the right there is a beautiful stone sculpture of Akkamahadevi.

Distinctive Constructions at Kudalasangama Region:

Mahadwara (Main Gate): The Mahadwara of Sangameshwara temple is visible from a distance of 2 kms and this gate welcomes the visitors from a far distance. The writings on the Mahadwara "Kudalasangama Sharanara Baruvege Prana Jeevalavayya" heartily welcomes the visitors. The sculpture on the Mahadwara reminds us of the Chalukya style architecture. The Mahadwara measures 100 fts in width and 100 fts in height. The construction of Mahadwara is identical when viewed from both East and West directions. From the Mahadwara to the Sangameshwara temple there is 100 ft wide and 1.6 kms long two lane road. The expenditure incurred for the construction of this Mahadwara is one Crore rupees.

⁹ K.N.A.: "Samagra Karnataka Ithihasa", Lakshmi Publications, Bengaluru, 2014, p. 145

¹⁰ A.B.Shankaranarayana: "Idu Karnataka Yella Jillegala Samagra Parichaya", Samartha Publications, 2019, p. 64.

¹¹ Devarakondareddy: "Bagalkote Jilla", Kannada University Inscription No. 9, Kannada University, Hampi, 2006, p. 97

Dasoha Bhavana (Dining Hall)

At Kudalasangama and attractive Dining hall has been designed. The dining hall comprises of construction pyramid structure over four pillars. This Dining hall building measures an area of 14,500 sq. fts and is a square structure. The dining hall is surrounded by a 13 ft wide corridor. The dining hall has a capacity to serve food for 1500 people at a time. This dining hall building is constructed by the expenditure of 131 Lakhs. Everyday food is distributed to the devotees both at noon and at night¹².

Restaurant:

Kudalasangama being the globally popular religious visiting spot is attracting large number of visitors and devotees every day. For the comfort of the visitors there is well equipped vegetarian restaurant constructed in a Japanese architectural style. The greeneries surrounding this restaurant attract the visitors. This restaurant is constructed at an expense of 38.5 lakhs. This restaurant is managed and maintained by private stakeholder.

Yatri Nivas:

Kudalasangama attracts the visitors from every parts of the nation and worldwide. Kudalasangama the land of Chalukyas is popular for its art and architecture. Recently, the Alamatti and National Highway No. 50 has progressed into a eye-catching centres for the visitors. The Yatri Nivas is all set ready to provide accommodation to large number of visitors visiting Kudalasangama and other tourist spots nearby. The three divisions of Yatri Nivas are named as Ghataprabha, Malaprabha and Krishna. The Malaprabha division comprises of 15 vast Rooms, Ghataprabha division comprises of 25 rooms and the Krishna division comprises of 35 rooms for the accommodation of visitors.

Likewise, at Kudalasangama there is a Library and Administrative office, Auditorium, International Centre of Basava Studies, Basava Circle, Jagadguru Mate Mahadevi homage. Thus today Kudalasangama has bloomed out as one of the international tourist destination.

Karadi Basaveshwara:

Karadi Basaveshwara is situated at a distance of 20 Kms to the west of Hunagund taluk. Karadi is one of the four divisions (Hobali) of Hunagund taluk. The inscription identified at Karadi has a mention of word Karavidi 30. In 1475 AD Ramaraya the representative of Vijayanagara king Sadashivaraya to gain the blessings of the people and on the request of Navindss Timmoja, Badroja and Kondoja of Mudugal Province Revenue Committee withdrew all the cess imposed on the Navindas. There is reference of Dombadageri is identified in inscription¹³.

There is a belief that in 15th Century during the Rakkasa-Tangadgi battle, Ramaraya had restored his army in Karadi. Four donation inscriptions are identified here. Most of the inscriptions are ruined. The volume 9 of inscriptions of Bagalkot District published by Hampi Kannada University has a

mention about this place. The reference of Karividi -30 appears frequently in the cultural descriptions of Nolambas.

The Karadi Basaveshwara temple is very popular. It is believed that the statue of Basavanna here, has been originated from dump. It is assumed that this temple was constructed during 7-8th Century. The temple is constructed at a great height and the platform is very wide. This is a clockwise path. The temple comprises of artistically carved pillars sculptured in Kalyana Chalukya style. The spacious temple consists of Sanctuary, half porch, auditorium and a porch. There is a very rare styled statue of Lord Vishnu in the Hanuman temple located near the Basaveshwara temple. On passing under the private Kulkarni colony of the town we find the ruminants of vast buildings of Chalukya period¹⁴.

There are steps to Basaveshwara temple. On the coil like establishment there are carvings of pillars on the steps. The sanctuary is square shaped, and there is 5-6 ft tall stone sculpture of Lord Nandi. The Nandi is facing towards east. There is Dravidian styled peak over the sanctuary. There is a sculpture of stories depicting Girijakalyana (Parvati Marriage) at the back of the peak, on the west of the peak there is a sculpture depicting the story of Samudra Manthana (Sea churn). There are also various sculptures depicting the religious and mythological stories. The pillars appear as twisted. In front of the temple there is lamp stand. There are two inscriptions near it. Every year, 10 days after Ugadi festival Basaveshwara chariot festival is organized. Also Basavanna Karthik is observed every year. People from Karadi and surrounding villages gather to observe chariot festival and Karthik festival. The farmers visiting the fair purchase the required things and also sell their produces. Dramas are exhibited during the fair. Karadi is both historical and religious tourist spot.

Siddanakolla:

Siddanakolla is the village in Amingad revenue division of Hunagund taluk. It is believed that the scholarly men used to rest here. As saints and scholarly men came here for observe meditation and achieve special powers from god this place has got the name Siddarakolla. Over the time the place was called as Siddanakolla¹⁵.

Siddanakolla is 7 kms away from Aihole. Since this place is surrounded by natural rocks and valleys it is called as Siddanakolla. There are two temples at Siddanakolla. One is Siddeshwara temple and the other is Sangameshwara temple. These temples were constructed during the Rashtrakuta period.

Siddeshwara Temple:

This temple is small and the temple is facing towards Northeast. The temple is neatly constructed using stones. At the centre of the sanctuary there is sculpture of Gajalakshmi. There are stone sculptures of Ganapathi, Mahishasura Mardini, Bhairava and Ardhanarishwara in front of the temple. There are also Nagarakallu (Snake Stones) placed in front of the temple.

¹²Mahesh Tippashetti: "Kudalasangama Samajo-Dharmika Adhyana", Sharana Saahitya Parishattu, Mysore, 2016, p. 54

¹³Devarakondareddy: "Bagalkote Jilla", Kannada University Inscription No. 9, Kannada University, Hampi, 2006, p. 435

¹⁴V.V. Shankaranarayananarao: "Idu Karnataka, Yella Jilgalaga Samagra Parichaya", Samartha Publications, Bengaluru, 2010, pu. 435

¹⁵Ambalike Hiryananna: "Bagalkote, Karnataka Gramacharitre Kosha", (Vol.1), 2015, Karnataka Folklore University, Gotgodi, P.546

Sangameshwara Temple:

Sangameshwara temple is located at just 50 feet from Siddeshwara temple. The temple comprises of a three divisions namely face porch, pavilion and Sanctuary. The art and architecture of the Sangameshwara temple is of Badami Chalukya style.

Sapta Maatrukeyaru: At the right of Sangameshwara temple there are two temples of Saptamaatruke and Mallikarjuna, Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamundi¹⁶.

Hence, Hunagund taluk is an important taluk of Bagalkot district. Hunagund taluk comprises of several tourist spots. Hunagund as the Historical spot, religious spot, Religious spot, industrial spot, cultural spots attracting large number of visitors. Hunagund taluk immensely contribute for the Bagalkot district to progress and gain popularity as a tourism industry.

5. Conclusion

Hunagund called in description description as Penuconda due to the hill behind the town. There is a scientific opinion that many of the hills of the town contain Sulphur in the water. It is also said that the town acquired the name as the hill possesses yellow coloured mica that resembles gold. There is an opinion that the area inside the fort had ruins of Jain temple. The pillars of a temple are believed to have been square massive and well decorated. The temple is mostly in ruins now. There is a Ramalinga temple at the lower portion of this hillside the forth and is built in chalukya style. It has spacious enclosure with 16 pillars in Navranga. According to the inscription of 1074 on the roof of Navranga records the land gift made by the Arya pandit a disciple of Surat jane pandit Arya Nandi. At the capital 30 administrative division during the rule of someshwara second names of several officers have been mentioned in this group description it has a good literary style sanctum of the ramalingeswara temple is below the ground level and stone near it was probably due built during the chalukyan era the town has sangameshwara temple with santram openly Padma Krishna there is Raghavendra Swamy mutt . There is Jumma Masjid near Pushkarani said to have been built in 1870 the town has another mask also

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¹⁶A.M. Annigeri: "Karnatakada Saamskrutika Stalagalu", p. 109