Kurnool, also known as the gateway of Rayalaseema, is the former and the first capital of erstwhile Andhra State.

**Location and Area**

Geometrically, Kurnool city is situated at latitude of $15^\circ 0.48''$ N and longitude of $72^\circ E$ on the banks of sacred river at an altitude of about 900 feet above sea level. The river Tungabhadra bound the city on the North and East. As per the latest records, Kurnool city occupied an area of 49.73 sq.km.

Kurnool lies on the banks of the Tungabhadra River, the Hundri and the Neeva rivers and all these three flow through the city. The K.C. Canal (Kurnool–Cuddapah) (photo pictures 2.1, 2.2) was built by the Dutch for transportation, but later used for irrigation.

Despite being the largest of all the 4 districts of Rayalaseema, it still remains the backward region of Andhra Pradesh. The other 3 districts are Anantapur, Kadapa and Chittoor.
Photo picture-2.1

K.C. CANAL FLOWING IN THE AMIDST OF KURNOOL CITY

Photo picture -2.2

UNHYGIENIC SITUATION OF K.C.CANAL FLOWING IN NEAR BY DHARMAPETA SLUM.
Physical Characteristics

The boundaries of Kurnool district are Guntur and Nellore districts in the East, Bellary district in the west, Mahaboob Nagar district in the North, Kadapa and Anantapur district in the south directions. The total area of the district is 17,658 sq.km which accounts for 6.42 % of total area of Andhra Pradesh and 26.26 % of total area of the Rayalaseema region. There are 920 villages, with 894 inhabited and 26 uninhabited villages, in the district.

Climate

The Climate of the city is normally good and healthy. January, February and March months are usually pleasant with moderate winds from South-East. April and May are hottest months of the year, during these months the wind shifts to South West with increased force and brings welcome showers by the end of May. During the succeeding four months the wind blows from western side and brings fair quantum of rainfall. By the end of September the wind is light and pleasant forecasting the onset of North East monsoon. In November and December the weather is fine, rainfall is rare and wind is light with occurrence of heavy dew.

Andhra Pradesh state is divided into 7 Agro-climatic zones. Kurnool falls under scarce rainfall zone (VI) with a rainfall of 500 mm. to 750 mm. Normal rainfall of Kurnool is 670 mm. Out of which nearly
68% is being received from South West monsoon and 22% will be received during North East monsoon Period.

Rainfall in Kurnool is mostly erratic, insufficient and unevenly distributed. Hence, drought or floods is a common phenomenon. Rainfall data during 1996-1997 to 2005-06 is presented in table 2.1.

Table – 2.1
Rainfall Data of Kurnool from 1996-97 to 2005-06 (in mm)

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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<td>207</td>
<td>61</td>
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<td>408</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>363</td>
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<td>382</td>
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<td>113</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>966</td>
<td>491</td>
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<td>679</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>574</td>
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<td>832</td>
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</table>

Source: Office of the Chief Planning Officer, Kurnool.
Rivers

The major rivers of the district are Tungabhadra, Handri, (photo pictures 2.3, 2.3A, 2.4, 2.4A) Krishna, Kunderu and Gundlakamma. Tungabhadra is the important river in Andhra Pradesh. The river forms part of northern boundary of this district and separates Kurnool from the Telangana region. It falls into the Krishna at Kudli sangam about 29km from Kurnool town. The river Krishna the another major river in the state starts from the Mahabaleswara Hills of Saltar district of Maharashtra state and enters Andhra Pradesh in Makthal mandal of Mahaboobnagar district. The Krishna enters Kurnool district at Kudali sangamam. The river Kunderu starts on the Western side of the Erramalla, taking a northern course for a short distance passes into the Kunderu Valley and flows in the southern direction, collecting drainage all along its course form either side. It flows through Nandikotkur, Nandyal, Allagadda and Koilkuntal Mandals and finally joins into the Pennar near Kamalapuram in Kadapa district. The river Handri which is a tributary of the Tungabhadra flows through the Pattikonda mandal of Kurnool district.
AN OVERVIEW OF TUNGABHADRA RIVER FLOWING ON NORTH SIDE OF KURNOOL CITY

Photo picture-2.3A

AN OVERVIEW OF KURNOOL CITY SETTLEMENT PATTERN ALONG THE BANK OF TUNGABHADRA RIVER
A VIEW OF HUNDRI RIVER FLOWING IN THE MIDDLE OF KURNOOL CITY

ANOTHER VIEW OF HUNDRI RIVER FLOWING IN THE MIDDLE OF KURNOOL CITY
Growth of the Town

The status enjoyed by Kurnool as the Capital of Andhra State enabled the development of the town in a planned manner during 1953-56. The three Official colonies A, B, C Camps which provide residential accommodation to Government officials were constructed during the period. The town gradually extended to the left side of the old thickly populated area. A large number of Christian Missionary Institutions are located in Kurnool The construction of Tungabhadra Industries, location of Special Armed Police Head Quarters and establishment of warehousing facilities by the State Warehousing Corporation enabled the expansion of the town. Kallur Gram Panchayat which is contiguous with Kurnool city was merged in the Kurnool Municipal Corporation in 2002. Thus, the area of the city increased to 49.73 sq.km.

Transportation

Kurnool is considered as the Gateway of Rayalaseema as one must pass through Kurnool to reach Kadapa or Chitto or Anantapur districts while travelling from Hyderabad. Kurnool is having the third largest bus station in Andhra Pradesh after Hyderabad and Vijayawada. Kurnool is connected to most cities and towns in Andhra Pradesh as well as to Bengaluru and Chennai by the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) and the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC). National Highway 7 connects Kurnool
to Hyderabad (210 km), Anantapur (140 km, three hours), Hindupur (245 km, 5.5 hours) and Bengaluru (360 km. The State Highway 51 connects to Srisailam, Vinukonda, Guntur, and Vijayawada. The National Highway 18 Kurnool-Chittoor connects the city to Panyam, Nandyal, Allagadda, Ahobilam , Mahanandi, Maidukuru, Kadapa, Rayachoty Pileru, and Chittoor (Fig.2.1).

Figure-2.1

Road and rail Network of Kurnool District
Kurnool lies on the Hyderabad – Guntakal/ Gooty railway line. There are also frequent passenger trains to Hyderabad, Delhi, Chennai, Chittoor, Tirupati, Guntur, Jaipur, Madurai, Shirdi and Bengaluru. The nearest airport is Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, at Hyderabad, three and half hour’s drive from Kurnool City.

**Trade and Commerce**

The most important commodity manufactured and exported is groundnut oil while the most important commodity imported is pulses. Kurnool city is a trading centre for agricultural products like groundnut, cotton, corn, etc.

**Types of Soil**

The soils in the district are classified as clay, loamy and sandy soils. The black cotton soils are predominant in the mandals of Pattikonda, Nandyal, Allagadda, Koilkunta, Nadikotkur and Adoni. In the eastern part of the district, red soil of a poor quality largely predominates. These soils although, generally poor in fertility, yield a very good crop with a minimum rainfall. Regar soils are predominant in the mandals of Kurnool and Pattikonda. The availability of alluvial soil is quite small and is confined to a few villages near the Banavasi and the Krishna.
Industries

In Kurnool district, there are large scale and medium scale industries with an investment of Rs. 51,017.72 lakhs. The number of small scale units are 18,852 providing employment to 46,465 workers with an investment of Rs. 19,757.72 lakhs. There are 777 factories with a working capital of Rs. 6,206 lakhs.

Political administration

It is the headquarters of the mandal, the revenue division and the district of the same name. From 1 October 1953 to 31 October 1956, Kurnool was also the capital of Andhra State (not Andhra Pradesh), which was carved out of Madras State in 1953. Tanguoori Prakasam Pantulu was the chief minister of Andhra State during this period. The present day District court buildings were used as premises of state Assembly. At present the district consists of 54 mandals/tahasils. The map of Kurnool district with Mandals has been given in the figure 2.2.
Tourism

The important religious centres in the district are Srisailam, Mahanandi, Ahobilam, Yaganti. The historic places are Konda Reddy Buruju at Kurnool town and Belum Caves in Banaganapalli mandal and Rolla Padu Sanctuary which attracts a number of tourists in the district are the major tourist centres in Kurnool district.

History

Palaeolithic era

The Ketavaram rock painting’s are dated back to the Paleolithic era (located at a distance of 18 Kilometer from Kurnool). Also the
Jurreru Valley, Katavani Kunta and Yaganti in Kurnool District have some important rock art's and painting's in their vicinity, may be dated back to 35,000 to 40,000 years ago.

**Medieval era**

Hamlet's existed around Kurnool for more than 2,000 years. The Chinese traveller Xuanzang, on his way to Kanchi, passed through Kurnool. In the seventeenth century, Kurnool was part of the sultanate of Bijapur, under the governorship of a hereditary line of jagirdars of African origin, who were among the most powerful nobles at the court.

Little was known about Kurnool Town before 11th Century. The earliest knowledge of this settlement dates back to 11th Century. It is developed as transit place on the southern banks of the river Tungabhadra and was commonly known as ‘Kandenavolu’. It was a greasing place for the carts which used to transport stone for the construction of temples at Alampur from which the name ‘Kandenavolu’ was derived. It was ruled by Cholas and later by Kakatiya kings in the 12th and 13th Centuries. Later on it became an independent part of the country under Jagirdars. Late it came under the influence of Vijayanagar Kings and it was during the 16th Century that Achyuta Raya built the Kurnool Fort. During the 17th Century it was ruled by Gopal Raja. Abdul Wahab conquered king Gopal Raja and ruled over the country for 16 years. The town came under the influence of Moghal Emperor Aurangazeb in 1686. Later the town was ruled by Nawabs
from Dawood Khan to Gulam Rasool Khan (1823). In 1839 the British Government took over control. In 1858 it was made over to a Collector under the General regulations. The British rule continued till 1947 during which period, Kurnool town was a part of Madras presidency. After separation of the 11 districts of Andhra from the composite of Madras state in 1953, Kurnool became the state Head Quarters on October 1, 1953. The Telugu speaking areas of erstwhile Hyderabad State were merged with Andhra Pradesh and then Andhra Pradesh State came into existence in November 1956, and the State Capital was shifted from Kurnool to Hyderabad. Kurnool has remained as District Head Quarters.

Aurangazeb, the last Mogul King to rule India, conquered the Deccan in 1687 and left his governors, the Nizams, to rule the Andhra centres of Hyderabad and Kurnool. Both the Nizam of Hyderabad and Nawab of Kurnool declared independence and became sole rulers of their territories. Nawab Alaf Khan Bahadur was the first ruler of Kurnool and his descendants ruled it for over 200 years. In the early 18th century, the Nawabs joined hands with the sultan of Mysore and fought the British Empire.

In 12th century AD, the Odder, who carted stones for the construction of the temple at Alampur, Mahaboobnagar District, on the left bank of the River Tungabhadra, used the site where the town now stands as a stopping place before crossing the Tungabhadra. They greased their cart wheels with oil supplied by local oil merchants and
called the place 'Kandanavolu' which in course of time came to be known as Kurnool.

Of historical interest are the ruins of a royal fort dating back to the medieval kingdom of Vijayanagar, which flourished from the 14th to the 16th century. Several Persian and Arabic inscriptions which throw light on various aspects of historical interests are found here.

In Kurnool there are 52 dargahs (shrines) located around the Tungabhadra and Hundri rivers. A very famous and lengthy K.C. Canal starts in Kurnool and ends in Cuddapah. It is around 300 kilometers long. In Kurnool city there are a number of ancient temples, churches and mosques. Kurnool city, known as the gateway to the Rayalaseema, on N.H.7 (Kanyakumari to Varanasi) on the banks of the Rivers Thungabhadra and the Hundri was the capital of the first linguistic state in free India, Andhra State from 1 Oct. 1953 to 31 Oct. 1956. As such it has some historical buildings.

**Name of the City**

There are many theories about the origin of the name Kurnool. According to A Manual of the Kurnool District in the Presidency of Madras, the name Kurnool is derived from Kandenavolu or Kandanavolu (a Telugu name by which it is referred to in the inscriptions and literature of the past), pronounced as karnooluu. The site on which the city now stands was a resting place before crossing the Tungabhadra river to Alampur, during the time of Chalukya's. Here,
they greased their cart-wheels with oil. They called the place Kandenametta or kandanavolu (Kandanam means grease).

The strategic position led to the formation of a small settlement on the spot which subsequently came to be known as Kandenapalli, Kandenolu and Kandenavolu, the city of Kandena or grease. The site which was used as a halting place is still known as Bandla Metta (Bandla means carts and Metta means headquarters or halting place). There is a street in the Old city known as "Bandimetta".

Some scholars argue that Kurnool derived its name from Kallu which means stone and Nadu which means territory. Yet, others say the name Kurnool has been derived from Skandanavolu, the city of Skanda or Kumaraswamy. The worship of Skanda in Andhra Pradesh dates back to ancient times. The cities were also named after Skanda, the chief God of War of the Devas.

Kurnool District is a district in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India, located in the west-central part of the state on the southern banks of the Tungabhadra and Handri rivers. The town of Kurnool is currently the headquarters of the district. It had a population of 3,529,494 of which 23.16% were urban as of 2001.
AN OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN JUNCTION IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

Fort Konda Reddy Buruju

There is a bastion named *Konda Reddy fort*, constructed as a strategic watch tower by the rulers of the Vijayanagara Empire. Underneath lies a passage (tunnel) which connects the fort to Gadwal which is 52 km away. The specialty of this tunnel is it crosses under the river Tungabhadra and reaches Gadwall which was ruled by Nalla Somanadri who was the one built an excellent fort in Gadwal. Stories tell that the ruler of Gadwal Kingdom utilized this tunnel to escape from
the Muslim conquerors in 17th century. The government of Andhra Pradesh closed the tunnel somewhere around the 1901.

**Photo picture-2.6**

AN OUTER VIEW OF KONDA REDDY FORT
FORT KONDA REDDY BURUJU – A HISTORICAL MEMOIR OF

VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE