CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL IMPORTANCE OF GUNTUR DISTRICT

Guntur is one of the premier districts of Andhra Pradesh covering an area of 11,391 Sq.Kms. Guntur region shares with the rest of Deccan, the honour of being the home of the first man in India. Paleolithic man roamed about the region as evidenced by the discovery of Paleolithic (old stone) implements. The Kingdom of Prati palaputra (5th century BC), identified with Bhattiprolu, appears to be the earliest known kingdom in Guntur District. We also have an inscriptional evidence to show that king Kubera was ruling over Bhattiprolu around 230 BC followed by Sala Kings. Guntur region was successively ruled over by famous dynasties like Satavahanas, Ikshavakus, Pallavas, Anandagothrins, Vishnu Kundins, Chalukyas, Cholas, Kakatiyas, Reddies, Vijayanagara and Kutub Shahis during ancient and medieval times. Later several subordinate kingdoms ruled the region. These subordinate dynasties also indulged in mutual warfares one of which culminated into a famous battle of Palnadu, which is enshrined, in legend and literate.

During the period of Nizam rule, French occupied Guntur in 1750. Guntur was brought under control of English East India Company by 1788 AD. The Region played a very remarkable role in the freedom struggle and also in the formation of Andhra Pradesh.

There are several opinions rd to the meaning and origin of the word Guntur. The word Guntur owes its origin to words like Gundu (a rock), Gunta (a pond) and Kunta (1/3 of an acre). We are well aware that in Sanskrit Guntur is being called as Garthapuri (Guntlapuri).

The earliest reference to Guntur, a variant of Guntur comes from the Idern plates of Ammaraja - I (922-929 AD), the Vengichalakyan King. Guntur also makes its appearance in
another two inscriptions dated 1147 AD and 1158 AD.

Since the beginning of Buddhist epoch, Guntur was standing foremost in matters of education. Buddhists established universities in ancient times at Dhanyakataka (Amaravathi) and Nagarjunakonda. At present with many educational institutions Guntur leads other Andhra Districts in matters of education.

Some places of historical importance in Guntur District are Amaravathi, Nagarjunakonda, Bhattiprolu, Undavalli caves and Archeological museum in Guntur. Agricultural products like Paddy, Tobacco, Cotton and Chillies are the main agricultural products.

1. HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL BACK GROUND:

Guntur district was formed on the 1st October 1904 with Head Quarters at Guntur after bifurcating Krishna and Nellore districts. Prior to 1859 there was Guntur District with Head Quarters at Guntur but with a different jurisdiction. In 1859, the district was abolished and was divided up between Masulipatnam and Rajahmundry Districts which were renamed as Krishna and Godavari. In 1904, Guntur district was constituted into a separate independent district with the areas of the Taluka of Tenali Bapatla, Guntur, Sattenapalli, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda and Palnadu of old Krishna district and Ongole taluk from Nellore district. Tenali taluk was split on 1-7-1909 into two taluks namely Tenali and Repalle.

This district thus formed in 1904 was retained intact till February, 1970. In February 1970, while forming a new district with Ongole as its head quarters parts of Bapatla and Narasaraopet taluks and the whole of Ongole taluk were taken to Prakasam District leaving Guntur district with only eight taluks namely 1. Guntur 2. Sattenapalli 3. Tenali 4. Repalle

Later, 1980, Chilakaluripet taluk was formed as 12th taluk taking parts from Narasaraopet and Guntur taluks. During 1981-’82, Repalle taluk was sub divided into Pallapatla and Repalle, Tenali into Tenali and Emani, Guntur taluk into Guntur and Prathipadu, Sattenapalli taluk into Sattenapalli, Tyalluru and Rajupalem. Vinukonda Taluk into Vinukonda, Ipuru and Gurazala into Gurazala and Piduguralla thus bringing 19 taluks into existence by the end of 1981-82. Though it was contemplated in 1981-82 to constitute Amrathaluru and Tadikonda also as taluks to coincide with the 21 Panchayat Samith is yet they did not come into existence.

57 Mandals have come into existence with effect from 25-5-1985 in the place of erstwhile taluks and Firkhas. The main objective of the Government in keeping Mandals is to take administration closer to the people and to create more manageable unit of administration.

2. BOUNDARIES:

The district is bounded on the North by Krishna and Nalgonda districts, on the West by Prakasam and Mahaboobnagar districts, on the South by Prakasam district, on the East by Krishna district and Bay of Bengal. It is situated between 15 - 18 and 16 - 50 of the Northern Latitude and 70-10 and 80 - 55 of the Eastern Longitude.

3. DEMOGRAPHIC PARTICULARS:

The population of the district is 44.05 lakhs with a density of 361 per Sq.Km. The percentage of literacy is 46.35 and the percentage of Urban population to total percentage of literacy is 46.35 and the percentage of Urban population to total population is 28.89.
4. LAND UTILISATION:

The total geographical area of the district is 1132823 Hectares. During the year 1999-2k the area covered by forest is 156151 hectares, which forms to the total geographical area. The net area sown is 636213 hectares forming to the total geographical area. The total cropped area in the district is 866708 hectares.

5. MINERAL RESOURCES:

The district is rich in mineral resources. The principal minerals available are limestone, lime kankar, Napa slabs, Copper and Lead. The cement factories of Macherla and Tadepalli are utilizing limestone. There are copper mines at Agnigundala of Ipur Mandal.

6. CLIMATE:

The normal rainfall of the district is 889.1 M.M. The climate is generally warm in Summer and the heat is very severe in Rentachintala, where the maximum temperature in the State is recorded.

7. RIVERS:

The important Rivers and river lets in the district are the Krishna, the Naguleru, the Chandravanka and Gundlakamma. The river Krishna travels about 250 Kms, through the district along the northern boundary of the district.

8. IRRIGATION:

The two Major irrigation projects in the district are 1) Old Krishna Ayacut, now renamed as Prakasam Barrage with an ayacut of 202032 hectares and 2) Nagarjuna Sagar Project with an ayacut of 254583 hectares. Both the projects are constructed on the river Krishna. A medium Irrigation channel by name Guntur Branch Canal (GBC) having an ayacut of 10823 hectares and the Minor Irrigation sources like tanks, Bore Wells, tube wells
Cattle 13.45 lakh
Baffalows 9.71 "
Sheeps 3.80 "
Goats 5.00 "
Poultry 28.73 "

**MILK CHILLING FACILITIES:**

There are 325 milk collection centres in the district, with average monthly Collection of 52,05,000 Ltrs, the details of which are as under:

**Dairy Development**

1. Milk chilling centres (NO) 4
2. Milk collection centres (NO) 325
   a. Co-op. Societies (NO) 643
3. Average monthly procurement ('000 Ltr.) 5205.5
4. Average monthly sales -do- 2703.1
5. Average procurement price (price per 11.57 lit in Rs.)

**D. TOURISM**

There are pretty many tourist spots in the district. Prominent among them are Nagarjuna Sagar project, Nagarjuna Konda, the temples in Mangalagiri, Amaravathi Ponnur, Pedakakani, Govada near Tenali, Kotappakonda near Narasaraopet and Satrasala in erstwhile Palnadu taluk

The Undavalli caves near Mangalagiri and the Kondaveedu fort near Phirangipuram, the water falls at Ethipotala near Macherla and Guttikondabilam in the erstwhile Palnadu taluk are also of historic prominence.
i) NAGARJUNA SAGAR

The Nagarjuna Sagar Dam is the World’s highest Masonary gravity dam having World’s largest discharging capacity of 20,000 Cu. Secs. (409 Feet maximum height across the river Krishna situated at about 130 K.M.s up to the Prakasam Barrage with a lake capacity of 31.05 million acre.

The State Government is taking steps to develop Nagarjuna Sagar as a place of tourist attraction on the lines of Brindavan and Botanical gardens. This place has acquired special historic importance, by virtue of the association of Sri Nagarjuna, the great Acharya and learned scholar of the historic days, and the museum exhibiting the historic relics depicting the greatness of these days.

ii) AMARAVATHI:

Amaravathi is situated at 35 K.Ms. the North-west of Guntur on the banks of river Krishna. It has many tourist facilities and commands a vast stream of pilgrims through out the year. A large congregation of pilgrims will assemble on ‘MAHASIVARATHRI DAY’ to worship Lord Siva (Amareswara 15’ height) and is one among the famous Shrines of the Lord.

There is a world famous Buddhist stupa depicting sceneries from the life of Buddha, inscribing there in various Buddhistic anecdotes symbols etc. in Pali script in addition to well organized museum.

iii) KOTAPPA KONDA:

Kotappa konda hamlet of Kondakavuru is situated about 13 K.Ms. south-west of Narasaraopet town. The Presiding Deity of this place is Trikoteswara Swamy situated on the
hillock and is one of the noted pilgrim centres attracting thousands of visitors on Sivarathri day. The State Government is taking steps to develop Kotappa konda as a tourist and pilgrim centre by creating more facilities and a ghat-road.

iv) MANGALAGIRI:

Mangalagiri is situated on the Vijayawada-Madras trunk road at about 10 K.M. from Vijayawada and is famous from the prehistoric times. Mangalagiri is a hill of bliss by virtue of the location of the famous temple of Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is popular for his consumption of $\frac{1}{2}$ of the quantity of jaggery water offered by the devotees leaving the remaining half as Prasada and that not even a single and is found around, which is conspicuous. As such the Lord is otherwise popularly known as Panakala Narasimha Swamy or Panakala Swamy.

v) PONNUR:

Ponnur is located at a distance of 29 K.Ms. from Guntur on the Guntur- Chirala state high way and it is famous for its Bhavanarayana Swamy temple, attracting large number of devotees. Among the other temples, Sri Anjaneya Swamy temple and that of Garutmanta are noted for the giant size (about 30' in height) and rare statues of the deities.
The following table shows in detail tourist attractions in the district.

**Tourist Attractions:**

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<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Tourist Spot</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Amaravati</td>
<td>Buddhist Centres</td>
<td>Amaravati</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Amaravati Museum</td>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>Amaravati</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Amaravati Temple</td>
<td>Pilgrim Centres</td>
<td>Amaravati</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Bapatla Beach (Suryalanka)</td>
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<td>Bapatla</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bhavanarayanaswami Temple At Bapatla</td>
<td>Pilgrim Centres</td>
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<td>Chebrole</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Guthikonda Caves</td>
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<td>Kondaveedu</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Kotappa Konda</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Mangalagiri Sarees</td>
<td>Handlooms</td>
<td>Mangalagiri</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Mangalagiri Temple</td>
<td>Pilgrim Centres</td>
<td>Mangalagiri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17 Mary Matha - Phirangipuram

18 NTR Manasa Saovaram Leisure Spots Guntur

19 Nagarjuna Sagar Dam Leisure Spots Nagarjunasagar

20 Pedakakani Pilgrim Centres Pedakakani

21 Sitanagaram Pilgrim Centres Sitanagaram

22 Sri Laxmi Chennakesava Swamy Temple Macherla

23 Tenali Temples Pilgrim Centres Tenali

24 Undavalli Cave Caves Undavalli

25 Uppalapadu Birds Sanctuary Leisure Spots Uppalapadu

IRRIGATION PROJECTS:

The two Major irrigation projects in the district are 1) Old Krishna Ayacut, now renamed as Prakasam Barrage with an ayacut of 202032 hectares and 2) Nagarjuna Sagar Project with an ayacut of 254583 hectares. Both the projects are constructed on the river Krishna. A medium Irrigation channel by name Guntur Branch Canal (GBC) having an ayacut of 10823 hectares and the Minor Irrigation sources like tanks, Bore Wells, tube wells etc., are providing irrigation.
E. MARKET YARDS AND SPECIAL MARKET OUTLETS:

There are 15 Agricultural Market Yards at Guntur, Tenali, Duggirala, Ponnuru, Chilakaluripet, Narasaraopet, Sattenepalli, Piduguralla, Repalle, Vinukonda, Bapatla, Chilakaluripet, Narasaraopet, Sattenepalli, Piduguralla, Repalle, Vinukonda, Bapatla.

F. COLD STORAGE UNITS:

Guntur district is one of the major producers of Chilies, Cotton and Spices. Guntur District had 63 cold storage units.

G. PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES IN GUNTUR DISTRICT

Guntur District, with its vast resources and socio, economic, cultural background, has emerged into a major Industrial Growth Centre on the East Coast. The Entrepreneurial abilities and the Geographical location have contributed to the large volume of Exports of Spices, Tobacco, Cotton, Food grains, etc., The Agri, Marine and Mineral potential have substantial impact on the economy of the District. It has Trade links with the entire Globe and earning considerable Foreign exchange The historical reasons and its inherent strengths have transformed the region into a major Industrial Base. The Infrastructure, Transport and Communication network, have enhanced the choice to be an Investor friendly region.
1. IV.1  Map of Andhra Pradesh

1. IV.2  Map of Guntur District and Location of Sangam Dairy