CHAPTER - 4
PROFILE OF CHIKMAGALORE DISTRICT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This fourth Chapter of the Thesis presents the profile of Chikmagalore District of Karnataka State - the study area.

4.2 GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The historicity of Chikmagalure has been reliably traced back to the prehistoric times. It was a naturally resourceful region and has ancient holy shrines. The area around Kudremukh is very rich in mineral resources, especially iron ore. A large portion of the district lies in the Malnad region, hence, it is referred to as ‘Malnad district’ also. The talukas of Mudigere, Sringeri, Koppa and Narasinha Rajapura (N.R.Pura) lie in the Malnad region, while the talukas of Kadur, Chikmagalure and Tariyere also have some dry lands.

‘Motherland of Coffee’ is another name of Chikmagalure district because coffee is the main commercial crop of this district. Coconut and arecanut are the other commercial crops. This region has substantial dense forests because of the heavy rainfall. The rainy season lasts from June to September.

Chikmagalure district is situated in the south-western part of the State. Prior to 1947, it was called ‘Kadur’ district and was later on, renamed as Chikmagalure district. It lies between 12°4’ to 13°54” North latitude and 72°22’ to 74°04’ East longitude. Its east-west length is 136 kms and north-south breadth is 55.5 kms. It is bound by Hassan and Chitradurga districts on the east, Dakshina Kannada and Udipi districts on the west, on the north and south, it is bound by Shimoga, Davangere and Hassan districts, respectively. The district’s total area is 7201 sq.km., which is about 3.75% of the total land area of Karnataka State.

There are a number of historic places in Chikmagalure district, such as Amruthapur Temple, Khandya Temple, Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Belavadi Narayana Temple, Balehonur Rambhapuri Peetham, Kalasa Temple, Horanadu Annapoorneshwari Temple, and Dattapeetha. Baba Budangiri is a holy place for both the Hindus and Muslims. Kemmanugundi Hill Station, Kudremukh Western Hills, Mutthodi Animal Game Area and Devanuru (the birthplace of poet Lakshmish) are also popular among tourists.

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Map 4.1

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The main language is Kannada, but some people may also speak Tulu (a local language) and Tamil and Malayalam by the people who have migrated from other States. Hinduism is the major religion, but there is some population of Muslims and Christians also.

4.3 **TOPOGRAPHY**

**River Valleys**: The district is a birthplace of numerous rivers in the region. The Tunga and the Bhadra are the main rivers, the others are the Hemavathi, the Vedavati, the Netravati and the Yagachi. The Tunga originates at Ganga Moola in Sringeri taluka and passes into Shimoga district. It has the cleanest drinking water in the region, so a saying goes, “the Ganga for bath and the Tunga for drink”. The Bhadra also flows through Kalasa, Balehonnur, Lakkavalli and meets Tunga near Koodli in Shimoga district to reach the Arabian sea on the west. The Yagachi starts from Mullainagiri and reaches Hassan district. It supplies drinking water to Chikmagalure City. Mullainagiri is the highest mountain peak (1219.2 metres) in Karnataka State. It is followed by Baba Budangiri (1060 metres). Seethalayanagari is also situated in Chikamagalure district.

**Climate**: The climate of the district is generally cool or humid. In summer, the temperature reaches as high as 35°C, while in winter, it goes down as low as 8 to 10°C.

**Rainfall**: The district gets an annual rainfall of around 1886 mm. (1941-1992 average). In 2006, it was 2067.4 mm. The total number of rainy days is around 85. A total of 47 rain gauge centres are working in the district. The relative humidity is around 40% in February and around 80% in August-September. The soil of the district is reddish in colour and contains traces of aluminium and iron.

**Minerals**: Kudremukh has large iron ore deposits, so also Kemmannugundi.

4.4 **DEMOGRAPHY**

**Population**: According to Census-2001, the population of the district is 11.41 lakhs (5.75 lakh males and 5.66 females).

**Rural-Urban Divide**: About 9.18 lakh (80.50%) people live in rural areas and the remaining 2.20 lakh (19.50%) people in urbanizing city and town areas.

**Population Growth**: In Census-2001, the population growth was recorded as 11.98 over the previous Census-1991. It was around 10.05% over the Census-1981.

**Sex Ratio**: According to Census-2001, there are 984 males for every 1,000 males. The ratio is 989:1000 in rural areas and 965:1000 in urban areas.

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Education and Literacy: According to Census-2001, the literacy rate of Chikamagalore district is 72.20% (80.30% for males and 64.00% for females). There are 1,774 primary schools, 267 high schools, 67 pre-university colleges, 18 degree colleges, 1 engineering, 3 polytechnic institutes, 1 Ayurvedic medical college and 1 pharmacy college.

Health: There are 8 government hospitals, 52 primary health centres and 36 private nursing homes and 8 community health centres.

Transport System: A broad gauge railway length of 95 kms. runs through the district’s Kadur and Tarikere talukas, which have a total of 11 railway stations.

The public road network of 8,175.39 kms. is maintained jointly by the Zilla Panchayat and the Public Works Department.

Banking: The district has 110 branches of commercial banks, 30 cooperative banks, 1 urban cooperative bank and 1 women’s cooperative bank. The total bank deposits amount to Rs.1,50,903 lakhs and total loans to Rs.1,46,849 lakhs.

Electricity: 100% electrification work has been completed in all the urban and rural places in the districts. Electricity has also been provided to 897 electric pumpsets. During the year 2007, the total electricity consumption was 3,013.14 lakh units and the revenue generated amounted to Rs.5,113.81 lakhs.

Industry: During the year 2007, a total of 391 industrial units were working in the districts, out of which 9 were chemicals units, 59 engineering units, 48 textile units and 275 miscellaneous units. The total number of 6,895 small scale industrial (SSI) units were registered, in which 26,452 workers were engaged.

Cultivable Land and Land Holdings: Out of the district’s total geographical area of 7.22 lakh hectares, 2.00 lakh hectares were under forests 0.71 lakh hectares was non-cultivable land and 0.19 lakh hectares was cultivable land. According to 2005-06 Agricultural Census, there were 1,18,736 land holders with less than 1.0 hectare holding; 26,065 holders with 2.0 to 4.0 hectares holding, 9,951 holders with 4-10 hectares holding, and 2,025 holders with above-10 hectares holding.

4.5 Coffee

The major commercial crop in Chikmagalure district is coffee. Around 72,756 hectares are under coffee cultivation. Among other commercial crops, coconut commands an area of 37,760 hectares, arecanut 18,192 hectares, banana 1,505 hectares, tea 1,653 hectares, mango 2,271 hectares, pepper 23,120 hectares, and miscellaneous condiments and spices are on 11,324 hectares.

Coffee Curing Works: Curing means hulling of coffee seeds.
There are 14 functional coffee curing works in the district, while 7 works have closed down for financial and technical problems. From the district, exports of cherry and parchment coffee are made to Italy, Australia, Russia, Gulf Countries, Germany, Egypt, the USA and UK.

References: