



CHAPTER – I

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1.1 Our heritage is what we have inherited from the past, to value and enjoy in the present and to preserve and pass on to future generations. Our heritage comprises of historical sites, buildings, monuments, objects in museums, artifacts and archives. Heritage and Conservation have become important themes in cultural identity and for preservation of history. Monuments with historical and architectural importance must be preserved carefully to build a strong sense of belonging.

Archaeological sites have long been a part of heritage and their display attracts significant tourism. The State of Karnataka has a rich and varied heritage as distinguished ruling dynasties have left behind their indelible impressions through architecture. Innumerable monuments in Karnataka are living testimony of this Heritage. Thus, the preservation and conservation of historical monuments and antiquities is of utmost importance.



Picture No. 1.1: Mysuru Palace, Mysuru.

Some parts of North and Central Karnataka were under the rule of the Nandas and the Mauryas (4th and 3rd century BCE). Fourteen Rock Edicts of Ashoka have been found in Karnataka so far and amongst them are the 13th and 14th edicts found at Sannati in Kalaburagi district. The language used in the above inscriptions is Prakrit and the script used therein is 'Brahmi'. The contributions made by the Kadmbas of Banavasi, Gangas of Talakadu, Chalukyas of Badami and Kalyana, Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra, Vijayanagar Empire and Mysuru Wadiyar are testimony to the rich cultural Heritage of the State.

The diverse architectural riches of Karnataka include many Temples, Forts, Stupas, Palaces along with various inscriptions engraved on rocks, stones, walls, *etc.* The following part introduces one to the rich heritage of Karnataka, which would be useful in appreciating the subsequent Chapters containing

Audit Observations. These sites are being managed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) or by the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage, Government of Karnataka.

Pre-historic sites: These are found scattered on the river valleys of Krishna, Bhima, Malaprabha, Ghataprabha, Cauvery, Hemavathi, Shimsha, Tungabhadra, Manjra, Pennar, and Netravati and on their tributaries. Pre-historic studies in India started with the discovery of ash mounds at Kupgal and Kudatini in 1836 by Cuebold, a British officer in Ballari region, which then formed part of Madras Presidency. Subsequent discoveries have revealed the existence of Stone Age Culture with innumerable Pre-historic sites in Karnataka. The early inhabitants of Karnataka knew the use of iron far earlier than the people of North India as evidenced by the Iron weapons and tools dating back to circa 1500 B.C, found at Hallur in Hirekerur Taluk of Haveri district.

Badami Cave temples: Badami cave temples are a set of Hindu and Jain cave temples located in Badami, a small town in the Bagalkot district in the northern part of Karnataka. The caves are important examples of Indian rock-cut architecture, especially Badami Chalukya architecture and earliest date from the 6th century.

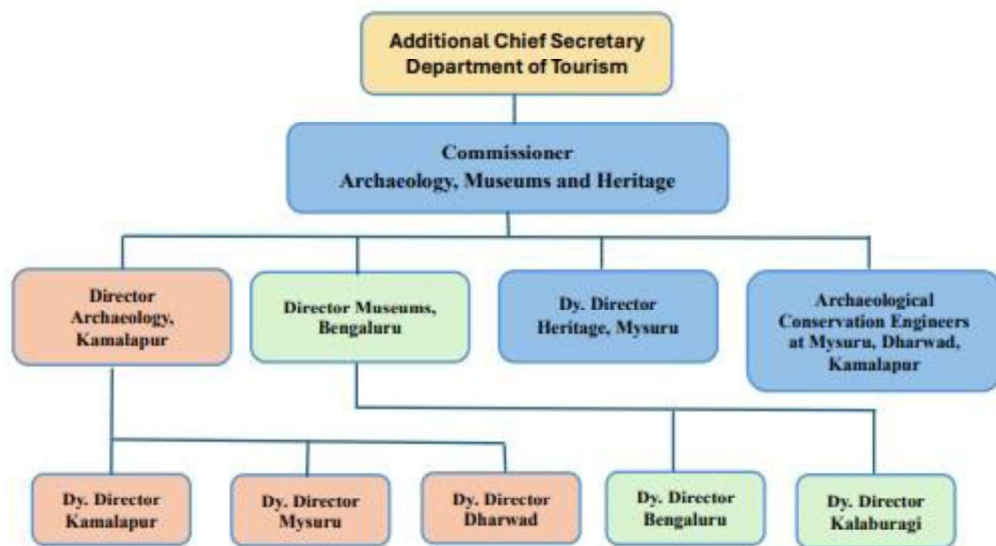
Hampi Monuments: Hampi is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Vijayanagara District, east-central Karnataka. Hampi's ruins are spread over 4,100 hectares and it has been described by UNESCO as an "austere, grandiose site" of more than 1,600 surviving remains of the last great Hindu kingdom in South India that includes "forts, riverside features, royal and sacred complexes, temples, shrines, pillared halls, mandapas, memorial structures, water structures and others".

Stupas: Kanganahalli, situated about 3 km from Sannati, is an important Buddhist site where an ancient Mahastupa was built. It is on the left bank of the Bhima river in Chitapur Taluk, Kalaburagi district. Kanaganahalli is the excavation site of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Organisational setup

1.2 The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, which was established in the state in 1885 was merged with the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage (the Department) in February 2012. The Department, which is under the administrative control of the Tourism Department, is responsible for protection and conservation of ancient monuments, museums and heritage buildings in the State. The following chart depicts the hierarchy of the Department.

Chart No. 1.1: Organisational structure of the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage



Source: Information furnished by Department

For administrative purposes, the state has been divided into four divisions, *i.e.*, Bengaluru, Belagavi, Kalaburagi and Mysore. The Archaeological Conservation Engineers (ACEs) and the Deputy Directors are further assisted by Archaeological Conservation Assistants (ACAs), Assistant Directors and Archaeological Assistants (AAs) in preservation and conservation of heritage monuments and by Assistant Directors and Curators in maintenance of Government Museums (including one Art Gallery).

Legal framework

1.3. *Article 49* of the Constitution of India makes it binding on the State to protect every monument or place or object of artistic or historic interest (of national importance) from spoliation, disfigurement, destruction, removal, disposal or export, as the case may be.

The Government of Karnataka (GoK) notified The Karnataka Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1961 (Act) and The Karnataka Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1965 (Rules) for preservation of ancient and historical monuments and Archaeological sites and remains and for the protection of sculptures, carvings and other similar objects in the State. The Government had also notified The Karnataka Treasure Trove Act, 1962 and The Karnataka Treasure Trove Rules, 1963 for dealing with acquisition and preservation of treasures. No further revision or amendments took place after the notification of the above acts and rules.

Functions of Department

1.4. The main functions of the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage *interalia* include Archaeological explorations, excavations,

conservation of Ancient Monuments, study of early coins, publications of academic and research books, development and maintenance of Museums and organizing cultural and educational activities, *etc.* The following activities broadly fall under the scope of the Department:

- a. Identifying Heritage buildings and areas on the basis of their historical, architectural, environmental and ecological values and grading them;
- b. Proposing legal provisions regarding Heritage conservation;
- c. Carrying out programs of Heritage conservation in association with public, NGO's, publicity campaign to identify Heritage areas and buildings;
- d. Publications on Heritage towns, arranging exhibitions and bringing out manuals on Heritage conservations and productions of documentary films and arranging cultural programmes;
- e. Creation of Heritage Fund in association with UNESCO, INTACH, Government of India, State Government and other private bodies; and
- f. Preparation of maps pertaining to heritage areas through GIS, Remote Sensing and survey.

In addition, the Department has been carrying out the conservation and developmental works relating to the heritage buildings in six heritage areas¹ because of their historical background since March 2004. In December 2012, 14 more areas² have been declared as Heritage areas and brought under the purview of the Department. Also, the Department carries out conservation works in respect of certain monuments through public private partnerships considering the proposals received from various organisations, trusts, *etc.*

¹ Mysuru, Srirangapattana, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur and Kittur.

² Sannathi, Nagavi, Kamatagi, Badami, Aihole, Bangalore, Lakkundi, Banavasi, Talakadu, Balligavi, Belur, Halebeedu, Malkheda and Melukote.



Picture No. 1.2: Halebidu temple built by Hoysala's, Hassan District.

State Protected Historical Monuments and Antiquities

1.5 There are 1,453 protected monuments in the State as per the Directory of Protected monuments published by the Department. 844 of them are State protected monuments and 609 are protected by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as given below.

Table No.1.1: Statement showing type of classified monuments
(in numbers)

SI. No	Type of Monuments	State protected	A.S.I protected	Total Monuments
1	Temples	497	291	788
2	Mosques/Dargha etc.	47	75	122
3	Archaeological Sites	97	22	119
4	Forts	48	17	65
5	Palaces	7	2	9
6	Heritage Buildings	8	1	9
7	Others	140	201	341
Total		844 (58%)	609 (42%)	1,453

In addition, the Department has been preserving invaluable antiquities viz. ancient sculptures, stone edicts, coins, copper plates, etc. in 17 Departmental Museums³ spread across the State.

³ Two in Bengaluru and one each at Raichur, Kalaburagi, Shimoga, Chitradurga, Hovinahadagali, Madikeri, Hassan, Basavakalyana, Athani, Gadag, Mysuru, Srirangapatna, Yalanduru, Kittur and Mangaluru.

Audit objectives

1.6 The Performance Audit was undertaken to ascertain:

- i. The efficiency and effectiveness of institutional mechanism to identify, preserve and conserve the State protected monuments and antiquities;
- ii. The efficiency of functioning of museums in the State and adequacy of efforts to preserve and showcase the monuments and antiquities.

Audit criteria

1.7 The main sources of audit criteria for the performance audit were:

- The Karnataka Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1961 and Rules, 1965;
- The Karnataka Treasure Trove Act 1962 and Rules 1963;
- National Policy for the Conservation of the Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Remains – 2014;
- Annual action plan and Annual Report of the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage, Zonal Regulations (Amendment) 2020;
- Karnataka Financial Code and Karnataka Budget Manual;
- Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999 and Rules, 2000, Public Works Departmental manuals/circulars;
- Orders/ Notifications/ Circulars/ Instructions/ Guidelines/ Manuals issued by State/Central Government/ASI from time to time.

Audit Scope and methodology

1.8 The period covered by the Performance Audit is 2017-18 to 2021-22. Out of 1453 Historical Monuments and archaeological sites identified in the State, 609 monuments, which are protected by Government of India through ASI, are outside the scope of Audit. Thus, 844 State Protected Monuments under GoK were considered for selection of sample. Audit Sample was drawn using simple random sampling method. The details of selected sample are given in *Appendix 1*. The following table depicts the sampling methodology adopted:

Table No. 1.2: Sampling methodology adopted

Sl. No.	Category	Sample size
1	District	Eight out of 29 districts ⁴ in the State <i>i.e.</i> 25 per cent of Districts (two each in Bengaluru, Belagavi, Kalaburagi and Mysore divisions).
2	Monuments	94 out of 356 State Protected Monuments in eight Districts <i>i.e.</i> 11.14 per cent of the total monuments.
3	Museums	All eight Museums in selected Districts, <i>i.e.</i> , 50 per cent of the total Museums.
4	Works	23 out of 154 conservation works (monuments) and 22 out of 46 conservation works (museums) executed in selected Districts based on expenditure.

Audit scrutinised the records maintained at the Tourism Department, GoK, Office of the Commissioner, Offices of the Directors/Deputy Directors/Assistant Directors, Archaeological Conservation Engineers involved in protection and conservation of monuments and Curators. Audit methodology also involved joint physical verification of 94 of monuments and eight museums along with departmental officials.

The Entry Conference was held in May 2022 wherein Audit objectives, criteria, scope and sample were discussed with GoK. The Draft Performance Audit Report was issued to the Government/ Department in June 2023 and was discussed in the Exit Conference held in July 2023. The Government had agreed (August 2023) to all the audit recommendations and the replies have been suitably incorporated in the Report.

Audit Constraints

1.9 Despite repeated requests, the following records and information were not furnished to Audit:-

- Correspondence with Administrative / Finance department seeking budget allocation (estimates), submission and approval of action plans
- Inventorisation of protected monuments and unprotected monuments enumerating details of site, heritage conservation committee recommendations.
- List of monuments notified during 2017-2022 with copy of notifications and list of monuments yet to be notified.
- Work files related to museums and e-document works.

⁴ Excluding Bangalore Rural District (being identified with Bengaluru Urban District) and Vijayanagara District (being identified with undivided Bellary District).

In absence of these records/information, Audit could not comment comprehensively on the budgeting/fund allocation processes and on certain issues in conservation and protection of monuments and museums.

Audit findings

1.10 This report contains five Chapters and audit findings are organised in the following chapters, viz.

- **Chapter – II:** Planning and Financial Management
- **Chapter – III:** Identification and Assessment of Monuments
- **Chapter – IV:** Preservation and Conservation of Monuments
- **Chapter – V:** Functioning of Museums

Acknowledgement

1.11 Audit acknowledges the cooperation and assistance extended by the Tourism Department, GoK, Department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage for facilitating the conduct of Performance Audit.