

The Art, Dance, Music, Literature and Celebrations of Uttara Kannada District

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Abstract: *The culture, tradition, literature, various celebrations, the flavors of music are the major things in the 'local history' Uttara Kannada district is filled with all these things in it. The richness of culture, the varieties of food, the celebrations of festivals, the humbleness of people, each and everything is something different in this district. There are 11 Taluka places in Uttara Kannada districts. Coastal plain (consisting of Karwar, Ankola, Kumta, Honnavar, and Bhatkal talukas) and Malenadu (consisting of Sirsi, Siddapur, Yellapur, Haliyal, Joida, Mundgod talukas). This research article is an attempt to explore the deepness of North Kanara district. How the local culture, the customs getting a mainstream in the present day, to understanding our rituals, traditions of our ancestor is very important. It will help to get a past knowledge of historical background.*

Keywords: Culture, Customs, Literature, Tradition

Introduction

Uttara Kannada is one of the most exquisite places we can see in Karnataka state. The beauty of culture, tradition, music, literature, beauty of language everything is most eye-catching in this place. The people of different communities are living here. The languages, the customs and the traditions are different from one another. There are so many relaxing places to visit in Uttara Kannada district. The Malenadu and Karavali places of Karnataka state are meant for its beauty. Uttara Kannada district is called North Kanara. The Mauryas, The Satavahanas, and mainly The Kadambas of Banavasi ruled in North Kanara.

This district is surrounded by the most beautiful nature, sea, lakes, and falls. F H. Buchanan has observed that Gokarna is a significant place in India. It is one of the holy places in South India. According to the popular legend, at Gokarna, the Mahabaleshwara Linga is described as the very Atma Linga of Lord Shiva secure by Ravana after severe penance, as per the wishes of his mother. But Lord Ganapati, son of Lord Shiva made Ravana leave the Linga at Gokarna. There is a tallest Shiva idol in Murudeshwara. The peoples from different cities visits this place to seek the blessings of lord shiva. Not even a single good works without starting to seek the blessings of Idagunji Ganapati in the district. Idagunji is famous for Lord Ganesha. This place also invites people with its beauty. It's a belief that whenever we starts a good work to seek the blessings of lord Ganesha. For eg: When someone purchases a new vehicle they definitely visit Idagunji temple. Lord ganesha helps to fulfill their wishes.

The Celebrations in Uttara Kannada District

Uttara Kannada district is meant for the various celebrations of festivals. Whether it's a time of Sankranti, the Jatra Mahotsav, Holi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Deepavali, and other regional festivals like Bandi Habba, Beadara Kunita, Huli Devara Pooja (Chande Kunita). Uttara Kannada people are attached to their root culture in the modern days. That's why the celebrations of every festival look so mesmerizing in this place. The very first festival in the month of January, Sankranti is celebrated with full of happiness. This festival is the beginning of Jatra mahotsava, devotees worship god/ goddess with devotion, they follow the rituals and customs of the villages at the time of jatra mahotsava. Maarikamba Jaatre, Bhatkal's Maariyamma Jaatre (fair) is very popular in Uttara Kannada district.

One of the colorful festivals in India is Holi festival. People burn a pyre to celebrate the story of Holika- a demoness in Hindu Vedic scriptures. Uttara Kannada's Ankola Taluk is best known for its holi celebration and Deepavali festival. The Suggi Habba is very famous at the time of Holi. Groups of men wear colorful costumes and masks. They go house to house, play music, sing and dance making for an entertaining sight. They accept monetary contributions and gifts from their audiences. It is surely one of the cheerful, enjoyable, and full of colors. And also some people

dance 'Karadi Kunita' (Bear Dance). The people wear bear costumes and dance with full enthusiasm. It gives pleasure in the eyes of audiences and children enjoy it very well.

The Halakki Vokkaliga community is very much famous in Ankola Taluk. They call it Holi- Suggi. Gumate Pangu (one of the musical instruments), kolata (holding a stick in hand) and dancing full of joy. This tradition and rituals were inherited with their ancestors. The Suggi Kunita is so colorful and the happiness, the enthusiasm, the passion towards their culture, and celebration we can see in this time.

Ganesh Chaturthi festival is showcasing the indigenous beauty and cultures of Uttara Kannada district. It is a belief that Lord Ganesh was born during the Chaturthi Tithi of Shukla Paksha of Bhadrpada month (August or September). During this time devotees worship the idol of Ganesh, the god of wisdom and fortune, and seek his blessings for a prosperous and happy life. Ganesh idol making is the job of some people. The very Bhandari community in the village of Karki, Honnavar Taluk of Uttara Kannada. A family manufactures Ganapati- idols during the season of June to August for Chaturthi festival.

Navaratri festive celebration in this district is celebrated with garbas, burning the idols of Ravana. Nine days devi pooja in the temples depicts the victory of good over evil. The Deepavali or Diwali festival (the lighting festival celebrated in India). In Uttara Kannada district also it is celebrated with full of lights and different communities celebrated this festivals in a different way. Like for example the Komarpanth community 'Honde Habba': Komarpanth community is considered as Kshatriyas. In this community at the day of 'Balipadyami' (the 1st day of Deepavali) they celebrates this 'Honde Habba' according to this community people this brings prosperity in their society.

Sirsi is one of the beautiful places in Uttara Kannada. In this taluk there is a village called Saraguppa's Karoor, in that place they celebrate 'Bingi Kunita' or we can call it a traditional folk dance of the Kare Vokkaliga community. They celebrate this colorful deepavali festival with full happiness for six days. First two days in their house they celebrates Boorehabba and Balindra's Pooja, for the third day Goupooja after this pooja the groups of male and children holding 'Diyas' (lights) in their hands and they visits houses in the village, sings a God Balindras songs. This is a typical folk art of North Kanara district.

The tribal tradition in North Kanara is filled with uniqueness. For the Halakki Vokkaliga community Deepavali is not just a celebration. It is connected with the roots of their culture. They decorate their homes with Rangoli designs, flowers, and lights. They celebrate deepavali by singing folk songs and doing folk dances. On the other part of this deepavali celebration, on the day of Balipadyami they marry two boys (the one boy is dressed as Balindra and the other boy is dressed as Bhoodevi). It's a unique way of celebrating the diwali festivals in their culture. This type of marriage practice only happens during the festivals. The event is filled with happiness and entertainment. Though, it's an old ritual, practice but Halakki peoples now also gives importance is kind of appreciable one.

The occasion of deepavali for the fisherman community in this district is a more precious one. Especially the Lakshmi pooja. On that day, they had a holiday for their work. The hard working peoples worship goddess Lakshmi and decorate their boats. Lakshmi Devi in India is known for wealth and prosperity. It's an old belief that goddess Lakshmi gives us prosperity and happiness. Tulsi pooja is another eye-catching festival in Uttara Kannada. While traveling in this district, each and every Hindu home has its Tulsi in front of their homes. Tulsi pooja for this district is the last festival in every year. It is celebrated on two different days; one at Dwadashi time and another at Amavasya time. In some communities, in some places the Tulsi puja is celebrated in Dwadashi and some people celebrate it at the time of Amavasya. Lord Tulsi Devi's idol is decorated with Sugarcane, lights and flowers. Everyone celebrates it with joy, burning firecrackers, eating puffed rice, sugarcane, dates and lots of fruits. Uttara Kannadigas enjoy each and every festival full of joys. It's the beauty of this district.

Uttara Kannada is known for its charm. The people from different communities, caste, gender, religion, profession live with full of happiness. the occasion, celebrations, practices which gives a more color to the society.

The Art Dance and Music of Uttara Kannada

It is obvious that having all the different celebrations, customs and rituals Uttara Kannada is also famous for its art forms, dance and music. Oral literature or folk literature is the main literature form in North Kanara.

Yakshagana is a famous performing art form in Karnataka state. Mostly famous in Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada and Kasaragod. Performing arts are one of the oldest forms of expression. Creativity is known for providing people a means of self-expression and dancing is one such creative art. Traditionally, yakshagana used to start late in the night and run the entire night. Bhagavatha, the background singer is also the director of the story and controls the entire proceedings on stage. The actors wear colorful costumes and enact various roles in the story forms. The famous Yakshagana artists are Sri Chittani Ramachandra Hegde, Kondadakuli Ramachandra Hegde, Gopal Achari Theerthahalli, Ramesh Bhandari Murur.

Art is a naturally inherited skill that exists among any age of people. Art works in villages help women to develop their skills. The carving of sandalwood (class of woods) is famous in Mysore, Uttara Kannada, Shimoga and Bangalore. This wood carving works provides jobs for helpless people. The different designed pot making is also one of the main works of Uttara Kannadaigas. Suggikunita, Hulivesha, Siddi community Dance are famous folk forms of arts. Celebrations of different Grama Devaru (Village god/ goddess) festivals we call it in Kannada as 'Bandi Habba' is an amazing example of folk culture. Different communities celebrate different village deities. It's their belief that the village goddess gives strength. Farmers seek blessings before the big sowing months during monsoon.

Bedara Vesha is a folk dance performed days before Holi night in Sirsi town of Karnataka. It is also known as 'Hunter Dance'. People of Sirsi celebrate this unique folk dance every alternate year. It attracts a large crowd from different parts of the state. It comes under the category of unique folk dance with a legend of 300 years. Bedara Vesha is performed in the Sirsi town of Karnataka. Another folk dance 'Dollu Kunita' is also performed during Bedara Vesha.

Literature and the Literary Figures of Uttara Kannada

Kannada literature is one of the most well known literature in India. The contributions of literary figures like Kuvempu, Bendre, Maasti Venkatesha Iyengar, Gopalkrishna Adiga, U. R. Ananath Murthy, Karnad, Siddalingaiah, Devanuru, K. S. Narasimhaswamy and many others. Uttara Kannada is not much developed in the field of literature. It's because of lack of resources, more interest in scientific things compared to art and literature, modern generations less interested in literature or some other reasons. In my opinion having no University in Uttara Kannada is also one of the reasons that people are not even want show some interest in literature and arts field. And the modern age parents also think that opting arts as a career is an end of life. So having all these types of big issues Uttara Kannada has not progressed much in this field.

But I want to mention having all these issues, there is one good thing that is the tribes of North Kanara which helped our next generations the wealth of stories and folk culture preserved in memory, and passed down through word – of – mouth. One of the folklore expert Savita Uday has taken on the herculean task of keeping the aural culture alive by compiling the stories that Gopi Siddi, Nugli, Padmavathi and Sukri Bommu Gowda recited to children at the Government School in Uttara Kannada into books in Kannada and English. It really feels bad when folk art and culture is not getting much importance compared to other western literature. Oral or folk literature is our own literature; it has a connection with our soil. It connects us to the roots of our culture. But with the help of some great scholars like Sukri Bommagowda (Sukrajji), Sharada Moger and many others folk arts are still alive somewhere.

The contributions of Dinakara Desai, Gourish Kaykini, Yashwant Chittal, Jayant Kaykini, Vitthal Bhandari, N R Nayak, Shripad Shetty, H.S. Anupama and many other writers who made Uttara Kannada rich in literature. though it is gaining its popularity day by day in this field. But the lack

of interest towards the literature field of the younger generation, the growth of this field is not moving forward fast.

Conclusion

Uttara Kannada is a very attractive place in Karnataka state. This district is not getting enough resources. And there is not even a single political party that works for this district. There is not even a multi specialty hospital available and if the students of this district want to study in University, there is not a single university in this district. The people from this district are not that much poor compared to other backward districts in Karnataka. But, the people are not having a rebellious nature to fight for their rights, and most of the well educated people are going to search for jobs outside the district, lacking a good politician to solve the problems of people. All these are the main problems Uttara Kannada is now facing.

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