



KURNOOL DISTRICT

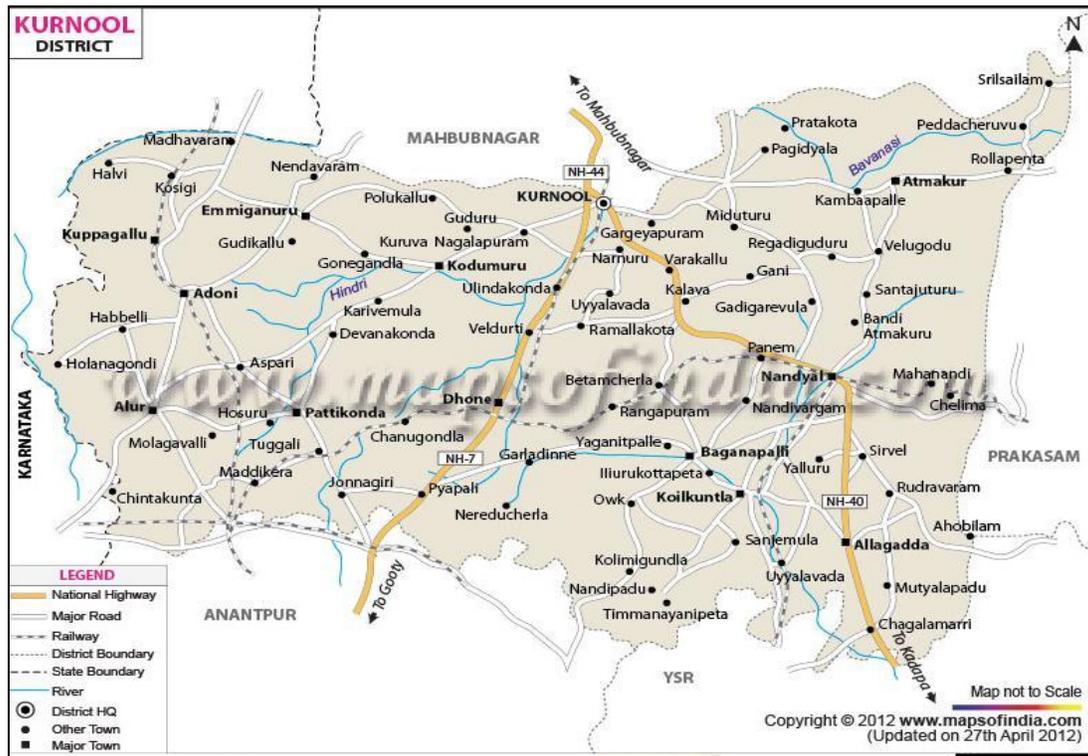
Legend has it that during the 11th century AD, the Odderas, who carted the construction stones for the Alampur temple, camped at Kumool before crossing river Tungabhadra. The town got its name 'Kandenavolu' (town of grease), as the locals supplied oil for greasing carts which subsequently became Kurnool. The temples of Ahobilam, the Jyothirlinga at Srisailem and the Belum Caves, stand testimony to the significance of this district as a pilgrimage center and a tourist destination.

Tourist-Places:

Gundla Brahmeswaram Sanctuary, Adoni fort, Hydropower Project on river Krishna at Srisailem, Madhavaram, Rollapadu Sanctuary and Nagarjuna sagar - Srisailem Sanctuary.

Pilgrimage-Centers:

Sri Brahmarambika Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple at Srisailem, Sri Guru Raghavendra Swamy Sajeewa samadhi at Mantralayam, Mantralayam Panchamuki Anjaneya swamy temple, Yerukalamma temple, Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Ahobilam, Sangameswaram temple, Sri Sai Baba Temple, Mahanandi and Thimmapuram.



PLACES OF INTEREST

- | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| MANTRALAYAM | MAHANANDI | BELUM CAVES | ORAVAKALLU | SRI SAILAM |
| AHOILAM | YAGANTI | SRI SAILAM | ORVAKAL | RALLAPADU |
| KURNOOL | MADHAVARAM | THIMMAPURAM | ADONI | |



KURNOOL TOWN

KURNOOL

Villages have existed at this site 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.^[1]

[Aurangzeb](#), 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.

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](#). 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 1900.



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. Tangutoori 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

PLACES TO SEE : TOWN, Kondareddy Buruju, Gumbaj etc.



BelumCaves

Situated 110 km from Kurnool, it is the longest cave system in the plains of India. These underground caves are located under a flat agricultural field and have three well like cavities with the central one being the main entrance. The exquisite stalactite and stalagmite formations and the imaginative colour illumination are the main attractions of the Belum Caves, which were adjudged as an "Unique Eco-Tourism Project"-by-the-Government-of-India.
 Phone:08510-236633 Adult: Rs.40/- Child: Rs.25/-



Main Sections of Belum Caves : 1. Simhadwaram — Simhadwaram means lions gate. It is a natural arch of stalactites formed in the shape of a lion's head;



Meditation Hall inside Belum Caves Banyan Tree formation inside Belum Caves Passage in cave

2. Kotilingalu Chamber - This section contains stalactite formations which are akin to shiva lingams. This section has thousands of such stalactite giving it a surrealistic look. It has one huge pillar formed due to stalactite and stalagmite joining together.
3. Patalaganga - It is a small perennial stream which disappears into the depths of the earth. This stream flows from the southeast to northwest. It disappears and is believed to be heading towards a well at the Belum village, located 2 km away from the caves.
4. Saptasvarala Guha or Musical Chamber - Saptasvarala Guha means chamber of seven notes. The stalactite formations in this chamber reproduce musical sounds when these are struck with a wooden stick or knuckles. This section was opened to the public in 2006.



5. [Dhyan Mandir or Meditation Hall](#) - This section is near to the entrance. An interesting formation at Meditation hall looks like a bed with pillow to recline. The local legend has it that in ancient times many sages used to live here. This section was used by Buddhist Monks. Many relics of Buddhist period were found here which are now housed in museum at [Ananthapur](#).
6. [Thousand Hoods](#) - This section has amazing stalactite formations shaped like hood of [Cobra](#). The stalactite formations on the ceiling looks as if thousands of cobras have opened their hoods.
7. [Banyan Tree Hall](#) - This section has a huge pillar with stalactites hanging from the ceiling. This gives a look of Banyan Tree with its aerial roots when seen from below. The locals call it "Voodalamari" since it looks like a Banyan Tree with its aerial roots hanging from the branches.
8. [Mandapam](#) - This is a huge area inside the cave with magnificent stalactite structures on the sides giving it a look of a hall with pillars.

Mantralayam

Mantralayam is a town in [Kurnool district](#) in [Andhra Pradesh](#), [India](#). It lies on the banks of the [Tungabhadra](#) river on the border with neighbouring [Karnataka](#) state. It is also called as Manchale. This town is noted for the holy presence of the Vrindavana of Guru [Raghavendra Swami](#), a Madhwa saint and follower of Sri [Madhwacharya](#). It is believed that Guru Raghavendra Swami is in the Vrindavana from the past 339 years and is believed to be in the Vrindavana for another 361 years. While entering the Vrindavana, Guru Raghavendra Swami stated that he would be there (in the Vrindavana) for 700 years.



Top view of the Temple



Sri Raghavendraswamy moola paduka

The nearest railway station is Mantralaya Road, 16 kilometres away. This station is on the Guntakal - Raichur railway route. There are frequent bus services from [Adoni](#), [Yemmiganur](#), [Kurnool](#) in [Andhra Pradesh](#) and from [Raichur](#) and [Bellary](#) in [Karnataka](#). Mantralaya is about 53 km from [Adoni](#), 24 km from [Yemmiganur](#), 100 km from Kurnool and 250 km from the state capital [Hyderabad](#), 35 km from [Raichur](#) and 120 km from [Bellary](#).



Manchalamma is the presiding deity of the Manchale village and one has to offer prayers to Manchalamma first before they enter Sri Raghavendra Swamiji's(SRS) mutt to get his blessings. The Manchalamma's shrine is located on the left of the SRS mutt and both are on the banks of River Tunghabadra.

Sri.Appanacharya was the prime student of Swamiji. Swamiji stayed with Sri.Appanacharya in Bikshalaya(aka Bichali) for 13 years. This place is also located on the banks of River Tunghabadra and it is 20 km from Mantralayam.

Route to Panchamukhi Anjaneya Temple and Bikshalaya (Bichali): From Mantralayam Temple to Panchamukhi Anjaneya Temple & Bichali, you can easily hire Shared Autos outside of the temple. Panchamukhi Anjaneya Temple is 23km(Approx.) First, you have to pass through Madhavaram village. From there, take a right turn and proceed till you reach R.Tungabhadra. The roads are very bad and a permanent bridge is under construction. After you pass this, you enter the Raichur District of Karnataka. Proceed further and you reach Chiksugur camp junction. The road to the right leads to Panchamukhi Anjaneya Temple and left goes to Bichali. The road to Panchamukhi Anjaneya Temple is worst. The Temple is open for Darshan from 0530Hrs and closes at 1300Hrs. Again it opens in the evening and closes at 2000Hrs. From here, it is 18km to Bichali and you have to pass through Chiksugur camp Junction and proceed straight. The road from Chiksugur camp Junction is very good. Bichali is on the banks of R.Tungabhadra and you can see this from the Rail bridge after Mantralayam Road station towards Raichur. This spot is very serene and scenic and worth the time you spend. You can take bath in the River as it is shallow. But exercise care, as the bed is very rocky. Even today, the Appanacharya generations are performing the poojas daily. Visiting here in the month of August can be difficult as floods are common during monsoon. After the 2009 floods, the 400 years old Appanacharya's house has been completely washed off and it is currently being renovated. Due to lack of funds, the pace is slow.

Lakhs of devotees come here to have a glimpse of the Brindavana or Vrindavana every year.

There are lot of hotels around the mutt and getting accommodation is not difficult. Summers are hot here and winter season is pleasant. Winter mornings may be very chilly.



MAHANANDI



The legend says that, Nanda one of the Kings of Nandyal, once wished to perform Abhisekam to Lord Siva, with milk. He ordered for the supply of milk for Pooja. One of the cowherd of Gopavaram village, who in charge of this duty observed that one of the cows coming empty every day. In order to find out what is happening to the milk of this cow, he followed the cow to forest and hide himself in a thick bush. The cow as usual reached an ant-hill grazed around for a while and began to empty its milk. A young lad was sucking the milk. The cowherd who was astonished at this sight, conveyed the news to the King. The King was amazed and decided to ascertain the fact. The next day, he followed the cow-herd and hide himself in the thick bush. As usual the cow began to give her milk on the ant-hill. The young lad began to drink the milk, when the King was over enjoyed at the sight, God disappeared immediately and the cow in its hurry trampled the ant-hill. The hooves of the cow are deeply marked on the ant hill. Lord Siva appeared in the dream of the King and told the him to worship him at that place. The King constructed a temple.

Till today the marks of hooves are clearly visible on the Siva Lingam. The Shivalingam is being touched and worshipped by one and all. The story of King Nanda, the building of the temple may appear to be of mythological interests to the present day historian, But inscriptions on the stones a round Mahanandi Temple speak about the antiquity of the temple. A mention is made of this place as Mahanandi Theertha on the copper plate inscriptions of King Krishna Devaraya of the Vijaya Nagaram Empire. King Narasimha Devaraya of Vijayanagaram Dynasty made valuable Gifts to this temple.

The temple is declared as an ancient protected monument and notified as monument and archaeological sites and remain in Act 60 Vol.II of 1960 U/s 30 (1) of the act. The Vimana Gopuram over the sanctum sanctorum is of Chola Style constructed with sand stone having much architecture and engraved with flowers and creepers.

Lord Mahanandeswara is SWAYAMBHU. The Goddess is Sri Kameswara Ammavaru. There is a Pushkarini in front of the temple within the compound and this is called Rudra Gundam, the water in Pushkarini is crystal clear always. There is a outlet from the Pushkarini at 405 feet height so that the depth of the Pushkarini is always maintained at constant level. It is believed that spring water with good speed flows underneath the Lingam and falls in the Pushkarini. The spring water here is very famous for its medicinal value because it is curing several diseases besides enabling a worshipper to secure spiritual enlightenment. Pilgrims have to take holy dip in this Pushkarini in which there are Pancha Lingams. The lingam in the centre is called Varuna Lingam. The water which comes out from the outlet of the Pushkarini perennially is utilized for irrigating the lands around the village.

Besides the traditional "Sthalapuranam", this temple has a very good historical background as seen from the inscriptions, construction of the temple and the peculiar type of beautiful nagara style, Vimanam in red sand stone. The holy shrine of Nava Nandi Mandalam situated in this valley of panoramic beauty is attracting pilgrims in large numbers. The shrine Mahanandi is located at a distance of 15 Km. from Nandyal Town. The Nandyal town is located on N.H.7 Highway Road from Hyderabad to Chennai. The nearest town to this shrine is Nandyal. The distance between Nandyal and Mahanandi is 15 Km. The A.P.S.R.T.C. authorities are flying No. of buses for every 15 minutes from Nandyal to Mahanandi. The nearest and prominent Railway Station reaching for the temple is Nandyal, which locates in between Guntur to Bangalore line



Oravakallu



Oravakallu is a miniature Grand Canyon, 60 km from Kurnool, filled with water bodies and sandwiched between exotic rock formations. Experience pure bliss, lazing around and gazing at nature's architecture, untouched by man. A true adventure site, Oravakallu has everything that makes for a perfect picnic spot.

Mahanandi



80 km from Kurnool and 14 km from Nandyal, amid dense forests, is the noted pilgrimage center of Mahanandi. It is famous for its Mahanandishwara temple that dates back to the 7th Century. Another attraction is the Pushkarni temple tank, where the crystal clear waters show up even a tiny pin at the bottom.

Srisailam



Serene Srisailam, 232 km south of Hyderabad is situated on the banks of river Krishna. The 512 metre long Srisailam dam located here is an amazing structure. On the south bank of the Krishna river, in the Nallamalai forest, on a 457 metre high hill is the Bhramaramba Mallikarjunaswamy temple. It is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas, and one among the 18 Mahashakthis in India. It is said that Vrishabha, the sacred bull of Lord Shiva performed penance here. Lord Shiva appeared before him, with his consort Goddess Parvati in the form of Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba.

A massive fort, with 6 metre high walls encloses the temple. A cluster of minor shrines within the temple enclosure include the Sahasra Linga, Panchapandava temples and Vata Vriksha. The most appealing feature of this temple is that anyone of any caste and creed can touch the deity and worship here. At Sikharam, the highest of the Srisailam hills, is Sikhareswara Swamy temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, and also a beautiful Sri Ganapathi temple.

The nearest airport to Srisailam is Hyderabad at a distance of 237 km. The nearest railhead is Nandyal on Guntur-Hubli broad gauge line, at a distance of 158 km. AP. Tourism conducts a package tour from Hyderabad (See center page). Srisailam is well connected by state buses with all important towns in the state.

Mantralayam



Madhwa Saint, Sri Raghavendra attained his Samadhi at Mantralayam near Kurnool some 300 years ago. A large number of followers and devotees of all religious sects throng this little town located on the banks of river Tungabhadra all through the year.

The nearest airport to Mantralayam is Hyderabad, at a distance of 351 km. The nearest rail head is 'Mantralayam Road', on Madras-Raichur route at a distance of 15 km from Mantralayam. A.P. Tourism conducts a package tour from Hyderabad. Buses are available to Mantralayam from Kurnool and Hyderabad.

Ahobilam



Ahobilam is at a distance of 74 km from Nandyal and 360 km from Hyderabad. This place is known as Singavelekundram and is dedicated to Lord Narasimha, the man-lion form of Lord Vishnu, which he took on in order to kill the demon Hiranyakashyapa. Only at Ahobilam are all the nine forms of Lord Narasimha i.e. Nava Narasimha worshiped.

As soon as the foot of the hills is reached there is the temple of Prahaladavarada Narasimha, the form of Lord Narasimha blessing Prahalada. This temple lies in the center of three Prakaras, which are built in Vijayanagara style. About a furlong from this temple is the Alwar Koneru, a drinking water lake. From the foot of the hills one has to ascend the hill to reach what is called upper Ahobilam. The hill path is about 9 km and is cut across virgin hills and forests and is served by several cascades of exquisite natural beauty.



Accessible airports to Ahobilam are Tirupati and Hyderabad, located at a distance of 232 km and 363 km respectively. Nandyal town on Guntur - Hubli railway line is the convenient rail head at a distance of 74 km and Cuddapah on Madras - Bombay line is at a distance of 118 km. Ahobilam is 34 km from Allagadda, state buses connect Allagadda with Hyderabad, Tirupati, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Nellore and Madras.

Yaganti



Sri Yagantiswamy Temple in Banaganapalle mandal of Kurnool district, is a popular Lord Shiva Temple, which is located 17 km away from Banaganapalle. Every year, Shivarathri is celebrated here and a large number of devotees from all over Andhra Pradesh visit Sri Yagantiswamy Temple. An amazing feature at this temple is its Pushkarini. No one knows how the water flows out from the bottom of hill to the Pushkarini in all the seasons. Devotees consider that a bath in the holy

Pushkarini is highly beneficial before paying tributes to Lord Shiva.

Yaganti Umamaheswara Swamy temple was constructed and completed by the first Vijayanagara Sangama king, Harihara Bukkarayalu in the 15th century. It was built according to Vaishnavite tradition. Umamaheswara Swamy, Parvati Devi, and Nandi (Basavanna). According to Potuluri Veera Brahmam, the Basavanna of Yaganti will come out and shout when Kaliyuga ends. People believe that the stone Nandiswara (Basavanna) is increasing in its size. Saint Agasthya came to this place and took a bath in Agasthya Pushkarini and worshipped Lord Shiva. The water in this Pushkarini is fresh and sweet, as it comes from the hills.

Bus facility is available from Banaganapalli to Yaganti twice per day at 7:00 am and 3:30 pm.

Rock Garden at Orvakal



These igneous rock formations, spread over approximately 1000 acres are located on the NH-18 highway road from Hyderabad to Chittoor, about 20 km from Kurnool city towards Tirupati. At this site, there is an APTDC run natural "Rock Garden Restaurant" to facilitate to highway tourists.

Rollapadu



Rollapadu Bird Sanctuary is located in Kurnool district and extends over an area of 614 sq km. The sanctuary is covered by dry thorny forests scattered with dry cereal crops, cotton, groundnut and castor. Rollapadu Bird Sanctuary is home to Black Buck, Bonnet Macaque, Indian Bustard, Indian Roller, Sparrows and Mynas. Russell's Viper, Indian Cobra, Jackal, Wolf and Indian Fox also can be spotted in the sanctuary.

Sanctuary

The Bird Sanctuary is about 60 km from Kurnool and is near Nandikotkur. Best time to visit is October to February. Tourists can stay at the forest rest house in Kurnool and the inspection bungalow at Nandikotkur. State transport buses operate from Kurnool and Nandikotkur at regular intervals to the sanctuary.

Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Sanctuary



The largest of India's Tiger Reserves, the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Sanctuary (3568 sq km.), lies in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The terrain is rugged and winding gorges slice through the Nallamalai hills. Adjoining the reserve is the large reservoir of the Nagarjunasagar Dam on the River Krishna.

This dry deciduous forests with scrub and bamboo thickets provide shelter to a range of animals from the tiger and leopard at the top of the food chain, to deer, sloth bear, hyena, jungle cat, palm civet, bonnet macaque and Pangolin. In this unspoiled jungle, the tiger is truly nocturnal and is rarely seen during the daytime.