I. KOLHAPUR DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

Map of Kolhapur district

1. LAND OF VALOUR

* Arts, Aristocracy and graciousness, a legacy of valour combined with a culture steeped in spiritualism, education and modernism. Kolhapur with its myriad images emerges as a city with a multi-faced personna and rich culture, historical and mythical past. Ancient texts such as the Padmapurana and the Skandapurana speaks in glowing terms of Karveer or Dakshin Kashi which is in fact modern day Kolhapur on the banks of river Panchaganga nestling among the Sahyadri ranges.
A journey through the past reveals that Kolhapur has lived through the regimes of various rulers from the mythical past to the modern age. The Hindu era lasted till 1347, followed by the Muslim rule which was from 1347-1700. The magnificent temples of Kolhapur were built during the glorious periods of the Satavahana kings and the Shilaharas. The Marathas controlled this area from 1700 to 1849. In 1849, the British took over and Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was installed as the ruler of Kolhapur.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj’s reign lent a progressive spirit to the city and he extended his patronage to theatre, films, music, painting, sculpture, wrestling and crafts. As result, the city has a rich cultural ethos. In 1945, archaeological excavations close to a hill named Brahmagiri on the banks of the river Panchaganga revealed the existence of an ancient town dating back to the Roman times. Today, Kolhapur combines its artistic past with a dynamic present and is a modern industrial city.
About Kolhapur City

Kolhapur, city of southwestern India, in Maharashtra State. In the Hindu mythology, the city of Kolhapur has been mentioned with the name of Karvir. In about the 3rd century BC, Kolhapur was an important Buddhist center. There are entries in the old religious texts showing that once upon a time this city was center of religion, religious power and trade. It has been also referred to as Dakshin Kashi.

Kolhapur is also well known in the world for some products like jaggary, leather goods, jewellery, Pheta, agro-machinery, engines etc. This city is getting its fame in the 20th century as an industrial city.

Jaggary
Leather goods (Kolhapur Chappals)

Jewellery

Agro Products

Kolhapur is endowed with extremely fertile soil, plenty of water and hard working labour class, the town has quickly progressed from a predominantly farming town to a major industrial city. The town at present has per capita income, which is probably one of the highest in the country.
II. Sight seeing Places of Kolhapur

1. Bhavani Mandap

Glory of the city, being the biggest & oldest building, it has historical importance. When Kolhapur became self-governed, in the reign of Shivaji Maharaj (1785-1800 AD) this place was built. It has fine and sound construction with 14 squares. In 1813 the Muslim King Sadatkhan invaded the palace and a part of it was burnt. After repair, 7 squares survived.

At the center is the temple of Kulswamini Tulja Bhavani. Near the hall there is a statue of Shahu Maharaj. During 1926-30 a tall & splendid main Hall was constructed. Special ‘Zumber’ (cluster of lights) from Italy was fixed. Visitors can see the entrance hall (daily 10 am-6pm) by passing under a pillared porch that extends out into the town square. This was once used for wedding ceremonies for the poor, financed by the Maharaja. Inside, overlooked by the private apartments, a large courtyard contains a shrine to the family deity, Bhavani. On display are sundry stuffed creatures and a statue of the late Maharaja, Shri Shahu Chhatrapati.
2. Rajashri Shahu Khasbag Maidan

Kolhapur is famous as a center for traditional wrestling (Kusti). On leaving the palace gates, turn right and head through the low doorway in front of you, from where a path picks its way past a couple of derelict buildings to the sunken wrestling ground.

The capacity of ground is 20-25 thousands. There is a bandroom also. The instrumental music (‘Halagi’) used to inspire wrestlers. The area is worshipped and after salute the match begins.

In 1918 Imambaksha & Mohiddin fought on the ticket system for the first time. Many Muslim and Punjabi wrestlers used to come here.

Respectable wrestlers have graced this ground. Sadashiv Waskar, G.Shinde, D.Kasabekar, S.Chavan, Ganapat Andalkar, Maruti Mane, Dadu Chougule, Yuvraj Patil, Vishnu Joshilkar gained reputation here.
3. The New Palace (Chhatrapati Shahu Museum)

The New Palace in Kolhapur houses the Shahaji Chhatrapati Museum a weird array of the former Maharaja's possessions. British architect Charles Mant designed the New Palace in 1881 in the Indo-Sarcenic style.

4. Rankala Lake

Rankala Lake is located at distance of half a kilometer from the famous Mahalaxmi temple in Kolhapur with a circumference of 2.5 miles. This was an extensive mine of black stone that has witnessed many historical events. The earthquakes during 800-900 AD transformed the mine into big holes where the underground water is collected.
5. **Panhala Fort**

Panhala fort is located 18 km north west to Kolhapur. Although it has legendary connection with God Parashurama, this fort was probably founded by the king Raja Bhoja in the late 12th century. Carrying a rich heritage, Panhala forms the largest of all the Deccan forts, built between the years 1178-1209 A.D, this is the only fort where the great ruler himself, Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is believed to have spent more than 500 days.

6. **Dajipur Wildlife Sanctuary**

Dajipur wildlife sanctuary is located in between the areas of the major reservoirs viz. "Shahu Sagar" and "Laxmi Sagar" in Kolhapur district. The entire protected area is undulating with steep escarpments. The soil is reddish and lateritic. High percentage of bauxite ore is found in Plateaus "Sadas". It is well known for Bison, which is the tallest and the most splendid of living Wild Oxen. Tourists can spot bull and calf running with its mother a large herd grazing in the jungles. Other animals, sheltered in the sanctuary
are Leopard, Sloth bear, Wild Bear, Barking Deer, Mouse Deer, Sambar, Giant Squirrel, Wild Dogs, counted among some of the major animals found in the protected area.

7. Khidrapur

The Kopeshwar, Ancient & artistic temple situated on the bank of Krishna is a fine example of ancient sculpture. It was built in 11-12 century by Shilahar. In the interior you see first Vishnu(Dhopeshwar) and Shivling facing north. But there is no nandi who has separate Mandir. Separate Actor-Pendal, hall, old pillars, carvings of Gods & male-female artists in various poses are attractive. The ceiling is semicircular with matchless engravings. On the outside complete 'Shivaleetamrit' is carved. When sati Parvati jumped into Daxa's sacrifice, Lord Shiva was angry. He got peace of mind in this temple. From entrance to Shivaling, we feel peace, coldness and dark. In Shravan, on Monday & Shivratri the mandir is crowded. The palanquin celebration is simply spectacular.
8. Religious Places

a. Mahalaxmi Temple

This is one of the most respected and worshiped temple of Maharashtra. The Goddess Mahalaxmi is popularly known as Goddess Ambabai. The grand temple of Mahalakshmi is constructed facing to the west. The idol of the Devi is made of precious stone, weighing about 40 kgs. It contains matter mixed with Hirak bits. It contains many pillars with artwork on them. In the premises of this temple there are 35 temples of other Gods and Goddesses. The adjoining Pendal is known as Garudpendal.

The festival of Navaratri is celebrated here in the month of Ashwin. This time thousands of devotees come here for Darshan. At the dawn Kakad Aarati is performed. At 9.00 a.m. Mahapooja is performed. At 11.30 a.m various other pujas are performed at the end of which the Mahaprasad is offered to the Goddess. In this manner various types of religious rites are performed in the service for the deity.

A special type of festival is celebrated known as “Kirnotsav” i.e. the festival of sunrays. This is celebrated because on certain days the rays of the sun directly fall on the idol of the Goddess Mahalaxmi. These days are from 9th of Nov. to 11th of Nov and 31st Jan to 2nd of Feb.
b. **Jotiba Temple**

This temple is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. This is also called Kedarnath of Wadi Ratnagiri. Mythology says, God Jotiba helped Mahalaxmi in her fight with the demons. He founded his kingdom on this mountain. He belongs to the Nath cult. He was born in the hands of Vimalmbuja, the wife of the sage Pougand, on Chaitra Shukla 6. This God is avtaar of Guard (Bhairav). Jotiba killed demon Ratnasur who troubled civilians. With this incidence name of village was Wadi Ratnagiri. Instead of taking such long name public accepted this place as the name of God ‘Jotiba’ and this name became famous.

It is situated to the north of Kolhapur in the deep, surrounded by green mountains and black precipices. The original temple was built in 1730 by Navajisaya. It is 330' high from sea-level. The interior is ancient and the idol is four-handed. There are other temples and Light-towers. On Chaitra Poornima (appr. In Mar-Apr.) a big fair is held, when lacs of devotees come with tall (Sasan) sticks. Due to scattering of 'Gulal' the whole mountain is turned pink.

Decorated bamboo sticks called as SASAN KATHI are attraction of this fair. Not less than 2000 sticks are traditionally involved in fair. Sequence of these sticks is a convention. It is not changeable. A colorful procession of SASAN KATHI is main attraction of fair. Devotees from abroad and various parts of country take part in this procession.

Except this fair there are some other celebrations in temple. Sunday is a preferable visiting day. Naturally it is a crowded. Devotees from
local areas prefer other weekly days except Sunday. On the full moon day a Palkhi procession is carried out.

There is other temple of Goddess ‘Yamai’ on the northern part of hill. She is believed to be sister of Jotiba. Sunday is sacred to Jotiba.

c. Narsinha Wadi

In ancient times, there was a thick forest here. Narasinha Saraswati Swami is one of the 16 descents of Lord Datta. Kurundwad was his spot of penance. Wadi has during 1034-1982 tradition of Ramchandra Yogi, Narayan Swami, Mouni Maharaj, Tembe Swami & Mhadaba Patil whose tombs are seen. The original Mandir on the confluence of the Krishna Panchganga has a tradition of 500-600 years.

In the daily routine from the dawn. "Maha-pooja with eating leaves and golden crown is worth-seeing. Except Chaturmas (4 Rainy months) every night the palanquin is taken out before which various hymns are sung. The auspicious, religious atmosphere created is impressing.

The Mandir is managed by Devotees' Mandal under West Maharashtra Devasthan committee. There are shops with Datta Cult-things & sweet marts. Saint Eknath got the Ghat built as per Paithan's. On purnima & Kanyagat big fairs are held. It is 40 Kms. from Kolhapur. Adilshaha was a devotee and donated lands. Yearly 10 Lakh Devotees visit the temple.
In 1935 Celibacy Resort was established and named after the sage Bahubali who mediated here about 300 years before. His tomb is here, with 4 towers. Further under the guidance of Gurudeo 108 Samant Bhadra Maharaj many resorts & schools were built 75 years before.

**Mulnayak :** Nearly 850 cms high, white-colored idol of Bhagawan Bahubali in the Khadgasana posture.

**Historicity :** The tirth is the land of penance of many ascetics. According to Digambars, this kshetra is regarded as an Atishay Kshetra. Nearly three hundred and fifty years ago, great and learned Digambar Acharya Samantabhadraji Maharaj Saheb practiced here severe penance. On this hill, there are ancient temples but the new idol was recently installed here under the auspices of His Holiness.

**Other temples :** In the compound of this temple, there are beautifully and artistically made splendid and fascinating replicas of the Siddhakshetras and samovasaran. A shvetambar temple and a Digambar temple are there on this hill.

**Works of Art and Sculpture :** Among the hills in the forest, this temple looks very beautiful and delightful. The idol of Bahubali, with 2 elephants at entrance are splendid and wonderful. The construction of the Samovasaran displays artistic skill. In this temple, the hearts of devotees are filled with joy of devotion.
9. Amboli

It is located in Sindhudurg district at an altitude of 690 m. Amboli is the last mountain resort before the coastal plains begin in the southern ranges of the Sahyadri Hills. Submerged by dense forests and steep valleys, this tranquil mountaintop offers some of the best panoramic views of the Konkan coast.
III. Co-Operative movement in District

Kolhapur is one of the leading district in Co-operative movement in Maharashtra. Co-operative movement made revolutionary developments in various fields of the district. There are about 13815 Co-operative societies in the district. The total no. of members of these societies are 32.31 Lakhs. The total no. of shares of these societies is 661.40 crore rupees. Out of which 44.235 crore rupees is Govt. share capital and 338.32 crore is their own funds. These societies have deposits of 2865.23 crore rupees.

Among various Co-operative societies the Co-operatives sugar factories, Co-operative milk societies, Co-operative Banks, Co-operative Marketing Societies, Co-op. Spinning Mills are playing major role in prosperity of Co-operative movement in the Kolhapur District.

1) Co-Operative Sugar Factories

There are 17 Co-operative sugar factories in Kolhapur district. The total number of membership of these co-op. Sugar factories are 3.03 lakhs. These sugar factories have 209.48 crore rupees share capital and 320.38 crore rupees working capital. Total crushing capacity of these sugar factories are 60,700 per day and total sugar production is 119.506 lakh metric tons.

2) Co-Operative Milk societies

In Kolhapur district there are two renowned Co-operative Dudh Sanghas Viz. Kolhapur District Sahakari Dudh Sangh (Gokul), Gokul Shirgaon, Warana Sahakari Dudh Sangh, Warananagar. There are about 4401 Milk producers co-op. societies.
3) Co-Operative Banks

There is Kolhapur District Central Co-operative Bank (KDCC) having 191 branches all over the district. It has 10947 society members and 710 individual members. The KDCC has share capital of 13030.28 Lakhs rupees and working capital of 30297.90 laks rupees. The total deposits are 212635.29 laks and 150084.17 Lakhs, 20888.59 Lakhs and 7556.18 laks rupees short, medium and long term loans respectively.

Besides this there are Co-operative Urban Banks, Wage earners Credit Societies, Urban Credit Societies in various parts of the district

4) Co-Operative Marketing Societies

Besides this there are 460 Co-operative Marketing Societies in Kolhapur district. Share capital of these societies are rupees 79.37 crores out of which Government share capital is Rs. 7.96 corres. Sales of these marketing societies are of Rs. 135.24 crores. Besides assisting farmers to get recent data on demand and price trends in distant markets and purchasing their produce, these societies also distribute fertilizers, seeds, implements and other agriculture related goods.
IV. Climate & Main Crops :-

The climate of the district is temperate in plains and cool in Western Ghats. The Eastern region represents dry weather and it experiences hot winds during April and May. The nights over the whole district are generally cool due to the influences of the sea Breezes. The Kolhapur district receives its major rainfall from the South West monsoon winds, it also gets some rainfall from thunderstorms during the month of April and May. The rainy season is from June to October. The Western Ghats receives the heavy rainfall and Gaganbavada which receives 5000 mm average rainfall is known as the Cherapunji of the Maharashtra. Shirol and Hatkanangle talukas record scanty rainfall around 500 mm.

2. Forest Land Area  :-  1,35,580 Ha.
3. Total Crop Area  :- Kharif - 3,90,000 Ha.  
                      Rabi - 41,000 Ha.

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<tr>
<th>Main Crops of the District</th>
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<tr>
<td>Crop</td>
<td>Area (Hactres)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A] Kharif Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Rice (Paddy)</td>
<td>87,441</td>
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<td>2) Jowar (Kharif)</td>
<td>5,414</td>
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<td>3) Ragi (Nagali)</td>
<td>17,525</td>
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<td>4) Other Cereals</td>
<td>2,073</td>
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<td>5) Other Pulses</td>
<td>2,029</td>
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<td>6) Groundnut</td>
<td>40,822</td>
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<td>7) Soybean</td>
<td>45,187</td>
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<td>8) Other Oil Seeds</td>
<td>334</td>
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<td>9) Sugarcane</td>
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<td>10) Cotton</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<th>B] Rabi Crops</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Jowar (Rabi)</td>
<td>8,561</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Wheat</td>
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<td>3) Gram</td>
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<td>4) Other Cereals</td>
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<td>5) Other Pulses</td>
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