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Profile

Introduction
Telugu is one of the 15 national languages in India. This South Asian country has a population of more than 1 billion people and great ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity. Telugu is the third-most commonly spoken language in the country and is also one of India’s four classical languages.

The majority of Telugu speakers in India live in the state of Andhra Pradesh, where Telugu is one of the official languages. Andhra Pradesh has an estimated population of more than 83 million people, the majority of whom speak Telugu as either a first or second language.

Although Andhra Pradesh is one of India’s wealthiest states, it is also home to some of the nation’s most disenfranchised tribal people.

The States Reorganisation Act of 1956 merged the states of Hyderabad and Andhra and created a new state, Andhra Pradesh, on 1 November 1956. However, the new state did not unite all Telugu speakers. There are many Telugu-speaking people in the nearby states of Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, and Tamil Nadu, and in the city of Yanam in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

Geography

Area
Andhra Pradesh is located in southeast India on the Bay of Bengal. The Indian states of Orissa and Chhattisgarh border Andhra Pradesh to the northeast. To its immediate north and northwest lies the Indian state of Maharashtra. Tamil Nadu lies to its immediate south, and the state of Karnataka borders it to the west. Its coastline runs 972 km (604 mi). The total area of the state is 275,045 sq km (106,195 sq mi), making it India’s fifth-largest state, a bit larger than the U.S. state of Colorado.

The coastal city of Yanam, a part of the Union Territory of Puducherry, is linked historically to the lands of Andhra Pradesh. The majority of its residents are of Telugu speaking origin.

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2 Although Hindi is the official language of India, each Indian state may designate another language as the official state language. However, this designation does not grant the language official status at the federal level.
However, the Dutch and then the French colonized the city from the early 18th century until 1954. The area of the city is 30 sq km (11 sq mi). The estimated population is 40,987.

Geographic Divisions and Topographical Features

Andhra Pradesh is divided into three geographic regions: Kosta, Rayalaseema, and Telangana. The landscape, demography, politics, and development of these regions are diverse.

Kosta, the coastal region bordering the Bay of Bengal, has three of the five largest cities in Andhra Pradesh and is the most agriculturally productive area in the state. It borders the Bay of Bengal to the east, the state of Orissa to the north and northwest, Tamil Nadu to the south, and the other Andhra regions to the west. It is largely composed of the Andhra Plains, with the fertile deltas of the Krishna and Godavari Rivers in the middle, and the Eastern Ghats serving as bookends to its northern and southern borders. Kosta measures 92,906 sq km (35,871 sq mi), about the size of Indiana. The region is easily the most agriculturally productive in the state. It also boasts three of the five largest cities in the state, and envelopes the city of Yanam, a Telugu city administered by the Puducherry Union Territory. A number of economically and socially disadvantaged tribes live in this region.

Rayalaseema, located in the southern part of the state, is heavily forested and sparsely populated. No major cities of the state are located in this region. It comprises approximately 67,299 sq km (25,984 sq mi), about the size of West Virginia. It lies predominantly in the Rayalaseema Plateau with a few of the Eastern Ghats scattered along its far southern border.

Unlike Kosta and Rayalaseema, Telangana was never part of the British Empire. It was instead ruled by a Muslim Nazim of the Asafjahi dynasty. The capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, and the city of Warangal are located in this region. In 1956, Telangana was merged with the Andhra State, composed of Kosta and Rayalaseema, to create Andhra Pradesh. Today Telangana measures 114,840 sq km (44,339 sq mi), roughly the size of Pennsylvania. A strong, often

violent, secessionist movement exists in the region and intends to create a separate Telangana state.

**Climate**

Andhra Pradesh has a very hot summer, with temperatures of 40° C (104° F) and higher. After the monsoon rains begin in June, the temperatures decline and the humidity increases significantly. Winters are short and mild, with temperatures rarely falling below 16° C (61° F). The state receives rainfall from both the southwest and northeast monsoons. The southwest monsoon usually begins in the second week of June and lasts until September. The northeast monsoon brings rain in October and November.

Kosta receives heavy rains, especially during the northeast monsoon, and is subject to cyclones that devastate both residences and crops. The amount of rain decreases in the south. In contrast, rainfall in the Adilabad district of Telangana is about 1,045 mm (41 in). The Anantpur district in Rayalaseema receives 553 mm (21 in) of rain annually.

**Bodies of Water**

**Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal**

The third-largest ocean in the world, the Indian Ocean, has long been strategically important in relation to geopolitics and trade. It borders all three coasts of the Indian subcontinent, including the east coast of Andhra Pradesh where the Bay of Bengal, an extension of the ocean, provides a number of deep-water harbors that have played a part in the history of the region. Visakhapatnam, the second-largest city in Andhra Pradesh, is situated on the bay and is home to the Eastern Naval Command and the Submarine Command of the Indian Navy. Many of India’s rivers drain into the Bay of Bengal, including the two most important rivers of Andhra Pradesh, the Godavari and the Krishna.

**Godavari River**

The Godavari River, revered by Hindus as sacred, begins northeast of Mumbai in the Western Ghats and follows a southeasterly course through the plateaus of central and east India before

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flowing into the Bay of Bengal in northern Andhra Pradesh, near the city of Yanam.\textsuperscript{22, 23} The river and its tributaries are essential to the Telugu regions because they provide drinking water and water for irrigation and hydroelectric power. The river runs 1,465 km (910 mi) through nearly the entire width of the country and has a watershed of approximately 313,000 sq km (121,000 sq mi).\textsuperscript{24}

**Krishna River**

The Krishna River begins near the west coast of India in the Western Ghats and flows in a generally southeasterly direction, meandering through the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Because of low rainfall levels, its current is not very strong.\textsuperscript{25} Still, the Krishna provides vital waters for irrigation canals and hydroelectric plants.\textsuperscript{26} It spills into the Bay of Bengal, just downstream from the village of Nagayalanka, in the Krishna district.\textsuperscript{27}

### Major Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population (2001)\textsuperscript{28}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>3,637,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>982,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vijayawada</td>
<td>851,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warangal</td>
<td>530,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guntur</td>
<td>514,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanam</td>
<td>31,362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the 2001 Indian census, there were an additional 14 cities with populations of more than 200,000 in Andhra Pradesh. At the time of this writing, the government of India is currently conducting its 2011 census.  

**Hyderabad**

Hyderabad, the sixth-largest city in India, is the capital of Andhra Pradesh. The city is renowned for its picturesque beauty, diverse architecture, and cultural richness. Popularly known as “Cyberabad,” the city is a leader in computer and information technology. Hyderabad is also the cultural center for the Telugu community and serves as the base of the Telugu film industry, known colloquially as Tollywood. It is the third-largest film industry in the world.

**Visakhapatnam**

The second-largest city in Andhra Pradesh located in the northern part of the Kosta region, Visakhapatnam is a vibrant harbor city on the Bay of Bengal. The city’s port is busy with international trade. Visakhapatnam is home to a major Indian naval facility, the Eastern Naval Command and the Submarine Command of the Indian Navy. The city also has India’s oldest shipbuilding yard. In the past 20 years, Visakhapatnam has witnessed exceptional growth, with the population tripling because of the ready availability of high-paying industrial jobs.

**Vijayawada**

Located along the banks of the Krishna River and nestled among the Indrakiladri Hills of the Krishna district, Vijayawada is the third-largest city in Andhra Pradesh. Vijayawada is a center of commerce, largely because it is situated along a major junction of regional railroad lines. The city is a pilgrimage site for Hindus and

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Buddhists and features the Prakasam Dam, one of the earliest modern irrigation projects of the area.36

Warangal
Warangal functioned as the capital of the medieval Kakatiya kingdom, which encompassed much of modern-day Andhra Pradesh.37 Thus, many Hindu temples and other examples of the medieval era’s finest architecture are found in Warangal.38 It is the fourth-largest city in the state and the agricultural center for the Telangana region.39 Warangal is also the center for the Telangana separatist movement that seeks to break away from Andhra Pradesh to form a Telangana state within India.40

Guntur
The fifth-largest city in Andhra Pradesh, Guntur is world-renowned for its chilies. It is a diverse economic center in Andhra’s coastal region. In addition to agriculture, Guntur has transportation, textile, and industrial sectors.41, 42, 43

Yanam
Although neither in Andhra Pradesh nor a major metropolis, Yanam is an important Telugu city outside Andhra Pradesh. It is administered by the Union Territory of Puducherry. Yanam’s long history as a French colony (1725–1954) contrasts with the experience of other Telugu areas.44 Both French and Telugu are the official languages and French architecture prevails in the city.

Important Elements of History

Early History
The Telugu speaking peoples trace their histories back to the ancient epics of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata. However, the earliest historical evidence of an Andhra tribe is from the Aitareya Brahmana, a religious tract dated approximately 800 C.E.45 Furthermore, one does not

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40 Puccalapalli Sundarayya, Telangana People’s Struggle and Its Lessons (New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2006).
find Telugu inscriptions until the third century, under the Satavahana dynasty of the region. Throughout its earliest history, a number of kingdoms that waxed and waned in power ruled the region.

Medieval History
In the 12th and 13th centuries, a local dynasty emerged from the various feudal houses. The Kakatiyas established themselves in the Telangana region, with Warangal as their capital, and gradually expanded their territory to include much of what is modern-day Andhra Pradesh. This era is considered a golden age of the Telugu people, because for the first time they were ruled by people who spoke their own language and shared their lineage. However, by the early 14th century, the dynasty came to an end. With its demise, the kingdom split into several smaller kingdoms, which became vulnerable to the expanding Muslim empires in the north. Successive Muslim dynasties ruled most of the Telugu regions for the next few centuries, until the advent of French and English colonial rule in the early 18th century.

Modern History
The British controlled nearly two-thirds of what is today Andhra Pradesh as part of its Madras Presidency from 1774 until Indian independence in 1947. The Nazim of the State of Hyderabad ruled over the remainder of the modern state as the monarch of an independent Princely State of the British Raj, a nominally independent state that fell under the authority of the British Empire. Britain granted India its independence in August 1947, and left the Princely States to determine whether to join India or remain independent. However, India invaded the Hyderabad state and forcibly annexed it in 1948.

In November 1956, during a reconfiguration of the Indian states, the government merged the Hyderabad State and the Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh. The intent was to combine the Telugu speaking regions into one state. However, Telugu communities in some other states were not part of this merger and remain outside of Andhra Pradesh today.

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48 Barbara N. Ramusack, The Indian Princes and Their States (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 85.
Current Affairs
Even before India’s invasion of the Hyderabad state, communist insurgents waged a war against the governments of the state and India. Called the Naxalites, these communist organizations have merged and splintered repeatedly and claim variant ideologies, some espousing Maoist principles and others Marxist-Leninist. They are active in many of the eastern Indian states. Some pursue their agendas legitimately through the political system, but many engage in terrorist activities. In the past few years, terrorists have orchestrated a number of significant attacks against law enforcement and civilian targets. They increasingly use improvised explosive devices (IEDs), land mines, and other antipersonnel devices. The government of India lists many of these groups as terrorist organizations and is engaged in operations aimed at eradicating them. The state government created elite antiterrorism police units, dubbed the “Greyhounds,” which have successfully used sophisticated technology and intelligence in dealing with the terrorists.

Despite such security risks, Andhra Pradesh has emerged as one of the most economically vibrant and diversified states in India. Still, many in the Telangana region believe that the benefits of economic development have not been evenly distributed. This perception has fueled a growing demand for the creation of a separate Telangana state, which threatens to divide Andhra Pradesh into two, perhaps three, separate entities.

A number of regional political parties actively pursue this separatist path, using street protests, hunger strikes, and other forms of dissent to pressure the Indian government. In December 2009, the government appeared to give in to the demands, stating that Telangana would become the country’s 29th state. However, no time frame was set, and advocates became increasingly frustrated with delays. In early 2011, protestors once again took to the streets, sometimes clashing violently with authorities, insisting that the government take immediate steps toward creating the new Telangana state.

57 “State of the Union—India’s Demand for Telangana,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, 5 February 2010.
Government
Andhra Pradesh is one of the 35 administrative divisions within India—28 states and 7 union territories. It is part of a federal republic, similar to the United States, with power shared between a central government for the entire country and state governments for each of the states and territories. The state has legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. Although the president of India appoints the governor, the position of Chief Minister, which yields the real executive power of the state, is indirectly elected.61, 62

A unique governmental feature of Andhra Pradesh is the existence of regional committees for Rayalaseema and Telangana. Established in 1956 when the Andhra Pradesh state was formed, these advisory committees advocate for particular regions, to insure that the state government gives them sufficient attention. However, because the Telangana regional committee became a lightning rod for the separatist movement, the central government disbanded it in 1973. Telangana separatists have recently demanded that the regional committee be reinstated.63

Media
Although the Indian press is generally protected by constitutional guarantees of free speech, the government has employed the Official Secrets Act to censor security-related articles and to prosecute journalists. State and national governments also have occasionally used other legislation, contempt of court charges, and criminal defamation clauses to restrain critical voices. The Government of India passed a Right to Information Law in May 2005, which requires a prompt reply to inquiries for government information by citizens, including the press.64

In Andhra Pradesh, as elsewhere in India, intimidation of journalists continues. Police and others have attacked reporters attempting to cover the news, and some reporters have been abducted or pressured by various political groups, insurgents, government officials, or criminals.65, 66

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Economy
Because of its rich agricultural and mineral resources, as well as its noninterventionist labor laws, Andhra Pradesh has emerged as one of India’s wealthiest and most dynamic states. According to the Indian Ministry of Finance, the economy of Andhra Pradesh is the fourth-largest in the country. Fueled by robust agricultural, manufacturing, and energy markets, the state’s gross domestic product (GSDP) for 2009 was USD 81.23 billion.

Agriculture
With the water resources of the Krishna and Godavari rivers, Andhra Pradesh is one of India’s top agricultural producers of rice, chilies, and other spices. Agriculture accounts for nearly 26% of the state’s economy. Beans, lentils, peanuts, and tobacco are among the most commonly grown commodities in the state. Nearly 70% of the population is engaged in agriculture.

Industry
Industrial activity in Andhra Pradesh, which accounts for nearly 19% of the overall state economy, includes information technology, automotive parts manufacturing, pharmaceutical production, mining, and tourism.

Imports/Exports
Domestic consumption in the rest of India accounts for much of the agricultural surplus grown in Andhra Pradesh, especially rice. As India’s top spice producer, Andhra Pradesh exports large

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73 Andhra Online, “Agriculture,” n.d., http://www.andhraonline.in/Profile/Agriculture/
amounts of spices each year. The state leads all Indian states in the production of chilies and turmeric, accounting for nearly half the country’s production of these commodities during the 2006–07 fiscal year. Farmers in the state also grow ginger, tamarind, coriander, and other spices. The state is a major exporter of technology. Nearly 25% of India’s software professionals are in Andhra Pradesh. Additionally, Andhra Pradesh produces approximately one-third of India’s pharmaceutical exports.

Energy
Andhra Pradesh meets most of its energy needs through thermal generation and hydroelectric power. The discovery of natural gas deposits in the Bay of Bengal has been a boon for Indian companies and reduced India’s need for imported natural gas. Andhra Pradesh has also explored alternative fuel and power sources, and has set up a number of wind farms.

Services
The service sector—which includes international call centers—accounts for 55% of Andhra Pradesh’s economy. Throughout the first decade of the 21st century, growth in this sector grew steadily. According to the Indian Ministry of Finance, the years 2006–07 saw growth at a rate of 3 to 4 companies per month in the IT industry alone. Hyderabad continues to be a leader in attracting international call centers, an industry in which

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84 “Southern India to Get Bay of Bengal Gas,” *Pipeline & Gas Journal*, 237, no. 5 (May 2010), http://www.pipelineandgasjournal.com/southern-india-get-bay-bengal-gas
it was a pioneer in the latter decades of the 20th century.  

**Ethnic groups**

Andhra Pradesh is home to three major ethnic groups—the Telegana, the Andhra, and the Scheduled Tribes—which are all united by the Telugu language.

**Telangana**
The Telangana—composed mainly of those whose families were citizens of the independent Hyderabad state prior to its 1948 annexation by India—perceive themselves as separate from fellow state citizens. They are separated by their regional identity, politics, and customs, including cuisine, clothing, and folkways.

**Andhra**
The Andhra inhabit the Rayalaseema region, the southern portion of the Kosta region, and Hyderabad. Once governed by European colonial powers, the Andhras have a history distinct from that of the Telangana. Like the Telangana, many different groups combine to form the larger Andhra group.

**Scheduled Tribes**
Scheduled Tribes are tribal populations explicitly recognized by the Constitution of India. They are provided special legal protections and benefits to address established inequalities in their communities. They are believed to be the descendants of the indigenous peoples of India, not descendents of Indo-Aryans or Dravidians who arrived later and now make up the majority of the population. Scheduled Tribes live on lands set aside for them by the government and are restricted in the ways that they can use and sell that land.

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Assessment

1. Muslims make up less than 10% of the population of Andhra Pradesh.  
   **True**  
   Although Muslim rulers once ruled over the Telangana region, Muslims were always a minority in the area; today they account for only 9% of the population.

2. Although there are millions of deities in the Hindu pantheon, Hindus believe that these deities are all merely separate expressions of Brahman, the supreme god.  
   **True**  
   The pantheon of Hindu gods and goddesses—hundreds of millions in Hindu scripture—are all expressions of Brahman.

   **False**  
   The state recently granted Sikhs and Jains minority religious status, which provides the communities with financial assistance benefits associated with education, housing, and business.

4. Visitors to religious sites might need to cover their head before entering.  
   **True**  
   Visitors to some Muslim mosques, Sikh *gurudwaras*, and Hindu temples are required to cover their head before entering. When in doubt, ask.

5. For many in Andhra Pradesh, the most meaningful annual celebration is the festival of a local guardian deity associated with their particular village.  
   **True**  
   While citizens of major cities celebrate the familiar festivals associated with Hinduism, the veneration of local deities carries more meaning for most rural people.
Religion

Overview

Representing more than 89% of the population of Andhra Pradesh, Hindus are the predominant religious community among the Telugu peoples. Although Muslims were once the ruling class in the Hyderabad state, they now make up a mere 9% of the population. (They are the largest religious minority in the state.) Christians and all other groups—including Jains, Buddhists, and Sikhs—account for approximately 2% of the population.94

Major Religions

Hinduism

The core of Hinduism is found in the Vedas, ancient texts describing the religious beliefs and sacrificial practices of the Vedic civilization, which developed in northwestern India during the second millennium B.C.E.95 The Upanishads serve as a continuation of the Vedas and focus on religious knowledge. The great epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, expound on matters related to duty, destiny, and virtue.96

Hindus believe in the reincarnation of the soul (atman) and that the quality of a person’s next life is determined by one’s actions in previous lives (karma). This concept is tied to the caste system, in which people are born into different social strata. To improve their position, Hindus must remain spiritually devout and follow the social and moral guidelines according to their station in life (dharma).97 One can only overcome the cycle of rebirth, known as samsara, through the eradication of desire and ignorance. Liberation from the cycle of rebirth is achieved through monastic or devotional paths. Hindus refer to this liberation as moksha, which is—in some conceptions—a union, or reunion, with Brahman, the eternal and infinite force from which everything else derives.98

The pantheon of Hindu gods and goddesses—hundreds of millions in

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Hindu scripture—are all expressions of Brahman. Thus, worshippers may venerate any of these deities at will.99 Hindus worship these deities according to caste, locality, or personal choice. The major sects of Hinduism are Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Shaktism. Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti are, respectively, the primary deities of these sects.100

**Hinduism and the Telugu Peoples**

Among the Telugu peoples, the most popular Hindu deity is Narasimha, an animal incarnation (theriomorphic avatar) of the great god Vishnu.101, 102 There are numerous temples devoted to Narasimha throughout the three geographical regions of Andhra Pradesh.

The Ahobilam temple, located in the Kurnool district of the Rayalaseema region, is alleged to be the site of the acts of the Narasimha avatar. The site is considered holy to both Vaishnavites and Shaivites because the legends associated with the temple represent the two major deities, Shiva and Vishnu.

The Simhachalam Varaha Lakshminarasimha temple, believed to be the oldest Narasimha temple in the state, is located about 10 miles north of Vishakhapatnam, in the Kosta region of Andhra Pradesh. The temple features many exquisite images of the deity Vishnu, including a hybrid form of two Vishnu avatars, Narasmiha and the boar avatar Varāha.105, 106

The Yadagirigutta temple is located in the Telangana region, about 60 miles north of Hyderabad. This temple is associated with the curing of incurable diseases. Here Narasimha is depicted in a less ferocious, more approachable manner.107

Local tales tell of the deity’s many exploits, including his marriage to a local woman who was an incarnation of Vishnu’s consort, Lakshmi. According to Hindu scripture, Vishnu incarnates himself as Narasimha in order to kill the demon Hiranyakasipu, who had received near

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101 Theriomorphic means a god in animal form.
102 An avatar is the incarnation or embodiment of a god.
immortality from the gods. The demon tortured his own son, who had become a devotee of Vishnu. In answer to the young boy’s prayers, Narasimha slays the evil demon.108

Other Hindus worship Shiva, Shakti, or one of the many other Hindu deities. Throughout Andhra Pradesh, there are many temples and holy sites associated with these deities as well.

Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion, meaning that its followers believe in a single deity. In the Muslim community, or umma, the faithful know this deity as Allah. The Arabic term islam means “to submit” or “to surrender.” A Muslim, therefore, is one who submits to the will of Allah. Muslims believe that Allah revealed his message to the Prophet Muhammad, a merchant who lived in Arabia from 570 to 632. They consider Muhammad to be the last of a long line of prophets that included Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Allah’s message, revealed to Muhammad, is found in the Quran, the sacred text of Islam. Additional precepts are found in the hadith, a collection of the sayings of Muhammad, and the sunna, which describes the practices of Islam according to Muhammad’s example.

The essential beliefs and rites of the Muslim faith are encapsulated in the five pillars of Islam. The first and foundational pillar is the faithful recitation of the shahada, or Islamic creed: “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah.” The remaining pillars include the performing of ritual prayers five times a day; the giving of alms to the poor and needy; fasting during the holy month of Ramadan; and making a pilgrimage to the Islamic holy city of Mecca.109 Muslims believe that Allah will judge them for their actions on earth and that they will spend their afterlife in either heaven or hell.

Islam’s two main branches—Sunní and Shi’a—are the result of disagreements over the succession of authority after Muhammad’s death.110 The majority of Muslims in Andhra Pradesh are Sunnis, but there are Shi’ite communities as well. Sufism, a mystical branch of Islam, also has a presence in Andhra Pradesh, especially in Hyderabad.111

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The Role of Religion in Government

As a nation, India is officially secular, and the constitution allows for freedom of religion. In legal matters concerning personal status, the constitution provides religion-specific laws for the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Parsi (Zoroastrian) communities. It defines Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism as forms of Hinduism, which bothers some members of these faiths.\(^{112}\) Although the constitution officially bans caste-based discrimination associated with the Hindu religion, the caste system still strongly influences social and political relationships.

The government of Andhra Pradesh adheres to the division between state and religion and takes steps to protect religious minorities from discrimination. The state recently granted Sikhs and Jains minority religious status, which provides these communities with the benefits of a new program that offers minorities financial assistance for education, housing, and entrepreneurial endeavors.\(^{113, 114}\)

In 2007 the government of Andhra Pradesh passed an ordinance banning proselytizing at the sites of other religions.\(^{115, 116}\) Thus, for example, a Christian missionary cannot try to make converts on the property of a Hindu temple. Some have decried this ordinance as an infringement of religious freedom; others have stated that one ought to have the freedom to practice one’s religion without fear of encountering proselytizers.\(^{117}\)

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Religion in Daily Life

Hindus may perform puja, the adoration or worship of a deity, several times daily. Depending on the devotee, these observances may involve elaborate, multistaged rites, which can include chanting, singing, and scripture reading. Fasting, meditation, and yoga are also common forms of religious practice and serve to cleanse and focus the mind and body. Because the notion of purity—both physical and spiritual—is important in India, bathing and ritual purification are often performed before or as part of a devotee’s offerings, prayers, or other religious observances. Water, especially in certain rivers, is a sacred element for Hindus. Hindu religious practices are usually performed individually, but they may also be conducted in a public setting, sometimes under the guidance of a priest or guru.

Muslims center their daily religious practice on the five ritual prayers. Traditionally, these prayers are performed at set times around dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening.

Exchange 1: When do you pray?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>When do you pray?</th>
<th>Local:</th>
<th>The next time is at noon.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meeru praardana eppudu chestaaru?</td>
<td></td>
<td>ee saari madyahnamu pannendu gantalaku.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Muslims may perform these prayers alone or with other Muslims at mosques. Friday is the Islamic holy day, when members of the Muslim community meet at the local mosque to participate in group prayer. On this day, the mullahs, or Muslim clergy members, give special sermons.

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Religious Holidays and Events

Hinduism

There are a vast number of Hindu holidays, festivals, and observances. Hindus observe these holidays according to the Hindu lunar calendar, so their dates vary from year to year. For many in Andhra Pradesh, the most meaningful annual celebration is the festival of a local guardian deity associated with their particular village. However, in the major cities and the Telangana region, the more familiar festivals associated with popular Hinduism are also celebrated. The largest and most widely celebrated of these events are the festivals of Vijayadashmi, Maha Shivaratri, and Holi.

From October to November, Hindus celebrate Vijayadashmi in remembrance of the occasion of Rama’s triumph over the evil demon king, Ravana. Hindus also worship the goddess Durga on this day, because Rama had prayed to her for victory. The faithful hold big fairs where they burn effigies of Ravana, his brother Kumbhakarna, and his son Indrajit. Hindus consider this an auspicious time and believe that any venture begun during this celebration will prove successful.

Exchange 2: How do you celebrate Vijayadashmi?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>How do you greet/celebrate Vijayadashmi?</th>
<th>meeru vijayadasamini elaa jarupukuntaaru?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>We celebrate the victory of Lord Rama over the demon king Ravana with a ten-day festival full of worship, fireworks, and re-enactments.</td>
<td>puujalato, tapaasulato, naatakaalato, padi rojula paatu raakhsha raaju raavanudipai sriraamuni vijayaanni pandugagaa jarupukuntaamu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Celebrated between February and March, Maha Shivaratri is a major holiday for the Shaivite community. People maintain an exacting fast on this day; many abstain from liquids as well as food. They keep an all-night vigil and worship the Shiva lingam. Practitioners sing sacred songs and chant, while making offerings. Many Hindus also drink bhang, a derivative of

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marijuana, which they believe to be Shiva’s preferred drink. Devotees attend Shaivite temples to receive darshan, blessings from the image of the deity.

Holi also typically occurs in February or March. It is an ancient festival marking the advent of spring, but it also commemorates the Hindu legend of the death of Holika, an evil demon. Bonfires symbolizing Holika’s annihilation are held on the eve of the festival, and the day is celebrated by throwing colored water and powders on fellow revelers. Because it involves the temporary suspension of traditional hierarchical roles and its ritual requirements are few, Holi is considered one of the most fun and carefree of the Hindu festivals.

Other Hindu festivals of note include Ganesh Chaturthi (August/September), a festival celebrating Ganesha, the god of fortune; Janmashtami (August/September), a celebration of the birth of Krishna; and Diwali (October/November), a joyous holiday representing a time of optimism and goodwill associated with the return of the victorious Rama to his kingdom.

Hindus also frequent a number of pilgrimage sites in Andhra Pradesh, including the Sri Venkateswara temple at Tirupati, in the southern Chittoor district; the Bhadra Kali temple in Warangal; and the Birla Mandir in Hyderabad.

Islam

Muslims observe holy days and festivals according to the Islamic lunar calendar, which changes from year to year. Ramadan, a monthlong fast, takes place during the 9th month of the Islamic calendar and is a major religious event for Muslims. During this time, Muslims are required to abstain from eating, drinking, and smoking during daylight hours. The month of Ramadan is an opportunity for Muslims to demonstrate their piety and devotion to the Islamic faith as they purify themselves.

Other major Muslim holidays include the following: Id ul-Fitr, a three-day feast marking the end of the Ramadan fast; Id ul-Zuha, a feast commemorating the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son out of obedience to Allah; Id-e-Milad, a festival commemorating the birth of the prophet Muhammad; and Muharram, a period

131 Lonely Planet (firm), South India (Hawthorn, Victoria: Lonely Planet, 1998), 30.
honoring the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, Muhammad’s grandson. The latter holiday is particularly significant for Shi’ite Muslims.  

Other Religious Holidays

The major holy days for Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains also are observed as national holidays in India. They include Good Friday and Christmas (Christian); Lord Buddha’s birthday (Buddhist); Guru Nanak’s birthday (Sikh); and the birthday of Lord Mahavir (Jain).

Buildings of Worship

Temples, mosques, shrines (either domestic or public), and other sacred sites are common throughout Andhra Pradesh. Regardless of what type of religious building one is entering, observe certain levels of protocol and decorum. Guidelines for visiting Andhra Pradesh’s many sacred sites vary according to location and the religious affiliation of the temple, as well as that of the visitor. Some Hindu temples may require non-Hindus to pledge an oath of respect for the religion before entering. Often, non-Muslims are not allowed to enter mosques, nor are women of any religious affiliation. Foreigners should inquire about visitation hours and regulations before attempting to enter a temple or mosque.

Exchange 3: May I enter the temple?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>May I enter the temple?</th>
<th>nenu gudiloki pravesincha vachunaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, of course.</td>
<td>avunu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When visiting any religious site, visitors should wear clean and conservative attire. Shorts, sleeveless tops, and other revealing clothing should be avoided. Before entering a sacred building, visitors are required to remove their shoes.

There may be a person charged with looking after visitors’ shoes. One should usually tip these people for

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their services. Visitors to some Muslim mosques, Sikh *gurudwaras*, and Hindu temples are also required to cover their head before entering. When in doubt, inquire.\(^{136}\)

**Exchange 4: Where should I put my shoes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Where should I put my shoes?</th>
<th>nenu naa paadarakshalu ekkada pettaali?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Over there on the shelf.</td>
<td>akkada shelfu paina.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When inside or near religious structures, visitors should maintain a solemn and respectful demeanor. Smoking, loud talking, and public displays of affection are prohibited. Food and beverages are often prohibited.\(^{137}\) Photography is usually restricted, although some places may allow it, if visitors purchase a permit. In any case, permission to take photos of religious buildings, sacred images, or people should be obtained before doing so.

**Exchange 5: May I take photographs inside the temple?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>May I take photographs inside the temple?</th>
<th>nenu gudilo fotolu teeyavachunaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, you may.</td>
<td>teeyavachu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious sites are often filled with sacred imagery and objects that visitors should avoid touching. Visitors also should not point their feet at other people or at sacred imagery, and they should avoid touching anyone on the head or with their feet, as this is considered extremely disrespectful. In mosques, visitors should not walk in front of those who are praying, because doing so is believed to invalidate their prayers.

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\(^{136}\) Chitra Soundar, *Gateway to Indian Culture* (Singapore: Asiapac, 2004), 64.

Assessment

1. Muslims make up less than 10% of the population of Andhra Pradesh.
   **True**
   Although Muslim rulers once ruled over the Telangana region, Muslims were always a minority in the area; today they account for only 9% of the population.

2. Although there are millions of deities in the Hindu pantheon, Hindus believe that these deities are all merely separate expressions of Brahman, the supreme god.
   **True**
   The pantheon of Hindu gods and goddesses—hundreds of millions in Hindu scripture—are all expressions of Brahman.

   **False**
   The state recently granted Sikhs and Jains minority religious status, which provides the communities with financial assistance benefits associated with education, housing, and business.

4. Visitors to religious sites might need to cover their head before entering.
   **True**
   Visitors to some Muslim mosques, Sikh *gurudwaras*, and Hindu temples are required to cover their head before entering. When in doubt, ask.

5. For many in Andhra Pradesh, the most meaningful annual celebration is the festival of a local guardian deity associated with their particular village.
   **True**
   While citizens of major cities celebrate the familiar festivals associated with Hinduism, the veneration of local deities carries more meaning for most rural people.
Traditions

Introduction
Over the last several decades, Indian society has experienced profound social and political transformations. The country transitioned from a post-colonial developing nation into a major regional political and socioeconomic power. The deepening of democratic traditions politically empowered many of India’s people from lower castes and of lower socioeconomic status. Despite many generational and regional differences in culture and attitudes, Indian traditions remain rooted in Hinduism, national and ethnic identities, and family. For the Telugu peoples of Andhra Pradesh and nearby areas, regional identity is also important, especially in the Telangana region.

Honor and Values
Hindu religious values, such as the belief that karma shapes destiny, unite the majority of the Telugu population, 89% of which adheres to Hinduism. According to Hindu tradition, people are born into a certain social caste, which determines their aspirations and relationships with others. Despite popular opposition and official illegal status, the caste system and related beliefs continue to influence people’s lives, both consciously and unconsciously. The tradition is so deeply ingrained in the social fabric that many Indians are reluctant to rebel against their caste status.

For the Telugu people of Andhra Pradesh, 70% of whom live in the rural areas of the state, the interdependent nature of the extended family is an important and defining aspect of daily life. Even in cities, people rely on kinship networks for earning a living and social advancement. Family networks and links to trusted people outside the family also reflect and promote the patronage system. People advance or ensure their social and professional standing by showing

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140 Rajendra Kumar Sharma, Rural Sociology (New Delhi: Atlantic, 2004), 149–163.
loyalty to those higher in rank or authority. This system of patronage permeates society and business and greatly influences the state’s political organizations. Thus, advancement or promotion does not necessarily depend on ability or job performance. In Andhra Pradesh, people who are part of favored patronage networks experience upward social and professional mobility. Those without such political connections traditionally have been labeled “untouchable” and locked into a life of poverty and servitude.\(^\text{142}\)

Hindu belief is that those born into poverty or other adverse conditions are being punished for transgressions in a previous life. As part of this religious belief system, the Telugu people value qualities such as humility and spiritual enlightenment. Many Hindus also believe that kindness to strangers improves their status in successive lives. Most people value education and wealth. Little value, however, is placed on individualism or personal privacy.\(^\text{143}\)

### Greetings and Communication

Ways of greeting may vary according to a person’s religion, caste, and education. Hindus greet each other by pressing their palms together in a prayer-like manner and offering the salutation “namaste” or “namaskaram,” sometimes with a slight bow of the head. These salutations are used interchangeably and throughout the day, regardless of the time. However, when speaking in English, it is perfectly acceptable to use greetings such as “good day,” “good afternoon,” and “good evening.”\(^\text{144, 145}\)

#### Exchange 6: Good morning!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Good morning!</th>
<th>subodayam!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Good morning to you!</td>
<td>meeku kuuda subodayam!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When meeting a group of people, one should first acknowledge the elders or group leaders, using their appropriate titles, if known.


© DLIFLC
Exchange 7: Hello, Mr. Reddy!

| Visitor: | Hello, Mr. Reddy! | namaskaaramu reddygaaru! |
| Local: | Hello! | namaskaaramu! |
| Visitor: | Are you doing well? | baagunnaaraa? |
| Local: | Yes. | baagunnaanu. |

Shaking hands is very common in India. However, when being introduced to someone for the first time, especially to a woman, it is best to wait for the other person to initiate the handshake. Always avoid using the left hand, because Indians consider it unclean.

**Hospitality and Gift Giving**

Indians frequently demonstrate hospitality by extending an invitation to dine with their family at their home. When making such a visit, one should wear clean and conservative clothing, and one should remove one’s shoes before entering the home. It is appropriate, but not expected, to bring a gift. Gifts need not be expensive or extravagant, because the hosts will consider the gesture, not the gift itself, more important. Sweets, fruit, or flowers are usual presents. If the family has small children, a toy is an appropriate gift. It is best to avoid leather or pigskin gifts because of potential conflict with religious and dietary practices.

Indians treat elders, such as grandparents, with great respect. Elders should always be greeted courteously. When greeting elders, or when you wish to be formal, bow with your hands together at the chest, as if praying, and say, “Namaste” or “Namaskaram.”

Indians love conversation, discussions, and speech making. Conversational topics include just about anything, from politics, to families or sports. As long as you show a genuine interest in getting to know them, most Indians will accept you without reservation.

Exchange 8: Thank you for your hospitality.

| Guest: | Thank you for your hospitality. | mee aatidyaaniki danyavaadaalu. |
| Host: | You are welcome. | meeku eppduu swaagatame. |

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Sometimes questions may turn personal, which for Indians is simply part of taking a normal and friendly interest in another person. Making inquiries about someone’s personal life or family is considered polite conversation.\footnote{Madhukar Shukla, “India: Conversation—Part 2,” ExecutivePlanet.com, 5 December 2006, \url{http://www.executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=India:_Conversation_-_Part_2}}

**Exchange 9: Do your children go to school?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Do your children go to school?</th>
<th>mee pillalu skuuluku potaaraa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>They go.</td>
<td>potaaru.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eating Customs**

Although dining customs vary according to socioeconomic and religious background, a host always treats a guest with utmost hospitality.\footnote{Editors of Hinduism Today, *What Is Hinduism?: Modern Adventures into a Profound Global Faith* (Kapaa, HI: Himalayan Academy, 2007), 295.} Guests should be aware that Hindus are very sensitive about food. If a non-Hindu or someone of another caste touches the food, Hindus believe ritual pollution has taken place. Thus, guests should drink from separate glasses and wait to be served. This restriction applies to both food and drink.\footnote{Rupa K. Bose, *India: Business Checklists: An Essential Guide to Doing Business* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 56.}

Indian meals are typically eaten with the hands, rather than cutlery. Guests should wash their hands thoroughly before a meal. The host will usually direct guests where to sit. They should not sit until asked to do so. Traditionally, a senior family member—usually a woman—serves the meal.\footnote{Neo, “A Foreigner’s Guide to Traditional Indian Dining Etiquette,” \url{http://neoindian.org/2010/04/23/a-foreigners-guide-to-traditional-indian-dining-etiquette/}} She will circulate, repeatedly offering more food and making certain everyone has enough. In accordance with the social hierarchy, those present at the meal are served in a certain order, with men and guests served first, then children. The hostess usually uses a large spoon to transfer food to individual plates. Guests should accept as much as they like; even if they are not hungry, they should take at least a small amount to show appreciation.

**Exchange 10: What is the name of this dish?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest:</th>
<th>What is the name of this dish?</th>
<th>ee vantakamu peremiti?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host:</td>
<td>It is pulihara.</td>
<td>idi pulihaara.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 11: What ingredients are used to make *pulihara*?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest:</th>
<th>What ingredients are used to make <em>pulihara</em>?</th>
<th>pulihara cheyutaku e padaardamulu vaadutaaru?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host:</td>
<td>Rice, garam masala, coriander seeds, groundnut oil, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, green chilies, jaggery, tamarind, turmeric, asafetida, groundnuts, curry leaves, and salt.</td>
<td>annamu, verusenaganuune, miriyaalu, pachimirapakaayalu, chintapandu, pasupu, inguva, verusenagalu, karivepaaku, uppu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Always show respect and good manners at the dinner table. Compliment the host and hostess on the quality, and even the spiciness, of the food. Do so throughout the meal, not just at the end. If curious about something you are drinking or eating, simply ask what it is. Such an inquiry is a good conversation starter and an opportunity to compliment the hostess.\(^{153}\)

Although cutlery may be asked for, meals are typically eaten with the right hand. Never use the left hand for eating or to pass any items to others, because it is considered unclean.\(^{154}\) One can use bread, in the form of *roti*, to scoop up food. At the end of a meal, it is acceptable to leave a small amount of food on one’s plate. A guest should always remember to thank the person who is serving.\(^{155}\)

Exchange 12: The food tastes so good.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest:</th>
<th>The food tastes so good.</th>
<th>ikkada bojanamu chaalaaruchigaunnadi.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host:</td>
<td>I’m glad you like it.</td>
<td>meekunachindi chaalaa santosham.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cuisine of Andhra Pradesh is primarily vegetarian. Hindus do not eat beef, although some eat other kinds of meat, and seafood is fairly common in the Kosta region. Muslims do not eat


pork. Most Telugu peoples eat vegetables and legumes, such as lentils, and grains such as rice, millet, and maize.\(^{156}\)

**Dress**

Dress varies greatly between urban and rural settings. In Hyderabad and other major metropolitan areas, many people dress in the same way as citizens of any major Western city. In general, women tend to wear more traditional clothing, whereas men are more likely to wear Western clothes. Blue jeans, T-shirts, and Western business attire or high fashion designer clothing are commonplace. However, in rural Andhra Pradesh and among conservative families, traditional attire is usually worn. Women may wear a *sari*, a length of fabric wrapped like a skirt. Men are likely to wear a *lungi*, a span of cloth wrapped around the lower part of the body, instead of jeans or trousers.\(^{157, 158}\)

A foreigner should dress according to the situation. For example, one should dress more conservatively when visiting religious sites. Foreigners, especially women, should avoid wearing revealing clothing such as tank tops, shorts, swimsuits (unless at a hotel pool), low-cut blouses or dresses, or tight garments. Any skimpy or form-fitting clothing should be avoided. Instead, women should wear long skirts or loose slacks and blouses that cover their arms. Men should wear long pants and shirts. The local people appreciate visitors who respect their social norms concerning dress and conduct.\(^{159}\)

Because Andhra Pradesh is generally hot and humid, one should wear light cotton clothing and garments that dry quickly. In the coastal areas, a sturdy umbrella is essential.

**Non-religious Celebrations**

Nationwide, Indians celebrate three major, secular holidays.

January 26 is Republic Day, celebrating the ratification of India’s constitution and the day India became a republic. Communities throughout the country hold parades. The most elaborate one is in the nation’s capital, New Delhi. The parade salutes all branches of the Indian military and includes cultural displays and folk dancing from different regions of India.\(^{160}\)

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\(^{160}\) Festivals of India (firm), “Republic Day of India,” 2011, [http://www.festivalsofindia.in/republicday](http://www.festivalsofindia.in/republicday)
August 15 is Independence Day, commemorating the date on which India achieved its freedom from British rule in 1947. The holiday includes many activities: flag-hoisting ceremonies, kite flying, and the passing out of sweets. In Delhi, at the historic Red Fort, the Prime Minister gives a major speech, similar to the presidential State of the Union address in the United States.161

October 2 is Gandhi Jayanti, celebrating the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, considered to be the “Father of the Indian Nation.” Throughout the country, Indians conduct prayer services and special tributes.162

Additionally, the State of Andhra Pradesh celebrates two other secular holidays: Babu Jagjivan Ram’s birthday (April 5), a celebration of the life and accomplishments of the freedom fighter and social reformer popularly known as Babuji; and Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar’s birthday (April 14), a celebration of the life and accomplishments of the prominent statesman, scholar, and social reformer.163, 164

**Domestic Violence**

Different forms of domestic violence plague society in Andhra Pradesh. Dowry began as a custom of parents providing daughters with gifts when they wed. Today, in many instances, it operates more like a demand from the groom or his family to the bride’s parents for financial incentives, property, or other forms of payment. This demand frequently begins during the period when families are negotiating an arranged marriage. As demands become more extensive, the ability of families to pay becomes strained. Payment is sometimes postponed until after the marriage. Grooms and their families frequently abuse brides whose families are unable to meet their supposed obligations. While this abuse may be only verbal, authorities consider several hundred deaths each year in Andhra Pradesh to be “dowry deaths”. 165, 166

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163 Dr. Ambedkar is considered the Father of India’s Constitution.
Infanticide
Female infanticide and feticide, problems at the national level, are also prevalent among rural populations of Andhra Pradesh. Although these crimes are outlawed by the government, healthcare providers are implicated in their occurrence. Authorities have identified healthcare providers who have informed parents of a baby’s gender before its delivery, which frequently leads to abortion of girl babies.  

Dos and Don’ts

Do show respect to all religious images and representatives.
Do ask permission before entering a religious site: temple, mosque, shrine, etc.
Do bring a scarf if you plan to visit religious sites.
Do remove your shoes before entering a religious site or a home.
Do obtain permission before taking photographs of people.
Do use your right hand, not your left, to eat or drink or to give or receive objects.
Do always use professional titles when addressing people.
Do dress modestly before entering a temple or mosque.

Do not touch anyone on the head or shoulders, including children.
Do not point to a person using your forefinger. Instead, use your upturned hand.
Do not touch a person or a religious symbol with your feet.
Do not wear leather inside a temple.
Do not point your foot or the sole of your foot at anyone, whether seated or standing.
Do not engage in public displays of affection with the opposite sex.
Do not touch other people’s food, drinks, dishes, or cooking tools with your hand, spoon, etc.
Do not lick your fingers after touching food.
Do not initiate handshakes with women.

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Assessment

1. Because most Indians have been exposed to Western culture, it is perfectly acceptable for men to shake hands with women.
   **False**
   Although shaking hands is common in India, when being introduced to someone, especially to a woman, it is best to wait for the other person to initiate the handshake.

2. It is generally appropriate, but not expected, to bring a gift when invited to an Indian home.
   **True**
   Sweets, fruit, and flowers are common presents. If the family has small children, a toy is an appropriate gift.

3. Indians are very reserved at home and are unlikely to engage in prolonged or detailed conversation.
   **False**
   Indians love conversation, discussions, and speech making. Conversational topics include just about anything, from politics, to families or sports.

4. Hindus are very sensitive about food.
   **True**
   If anyone outside their religion or caste touches the food, Hindus believe ritual pollution has taken place.

5. In urban areas, blue jeans, T-shirts, and Western business attire or high-fashion designer clothing are commonplace.
   **True**
   While many Indians continue to wear traditional clothing, it is quite common for people in urban areas to dress in much the same way as Americans.
Urban Life

Urbanization
Andhra Pradesh is primarily an agricultural state. Only 27% of its population is urban.\(^{169}\) Having quickly become an international hub of advanced technology, the capital (Hyderabad) is among the India’s largest cities. Other urban areas of Andhra Pradesh have significant populations and are centers of culture, commerce, transportation, education, science, politics, and government. The jobs created by businesses in the cities of Andhra Pradesh continue to draw increasing numbers of people from the countryside in search of better pay and greater social mobility.\(^{170}\)

Although the major urban centers are cosmopolitan and numerous international franchises are evident, visitors should be aware that acts of political violence perpetuated by Maoist separatists continue to threaten public safety. Because of cultural norms and problematic enforcement of laws, driving conditions on the roadways are not safe. Economic inequalities between the rich and poor, as elsewhere throughout the world, are the primary cause of street crime and contribute to the prevalence of slums in some areas.

Hyderabad
As the capital and cultural seat of the state, Hyderabad continues to attract developers and international investment from many industries, including agribusiness, information technology, education, and entertainment. Referred to as “Tollywood,” Hyderabad is home to the second-largest film industry in India and the third-largest film industry in the world.\(^{171}\) International companies doing business in Hyderabad include Microsoft Corporation, Bank of America, Dell, General Electric (GE), Google, IBM, Motorola, Oracle, and Verizon.\(^{172, 173}\) Several educational institutions are also located in Hyderabad, including Osmania and Vijayawada universities.\(^{174}\) The city has an international airport and transportation links to the rest of India via roads and railways.

From 1951 to 2001, the development and urbanization of Hyderabad more than tripled. Thus, as in other major Indian cities, poverty, pollution, and traffic congestion persist as modern-day problems.\(^{175}\)

\(^{172}\) Bharat Website, “About Hyderabad,” n.d., [http://www.bharat.co.in/about-hyd.html](http://www.bharat.co.in/about-hyd.html)
Visakhapatnam
The population of Visakhapatnam—the second-largest city in the state—increased from 108,042 in 1951 to an estimated 1,065,395 today, representing a nearly tenfold increase in a 60-year period. The surge has made Visakhapatnam India’s 37th-largest city, quite a feat in a country with numerous major metropolises. Situated along a key corridor between Kolkata and Chennai, Visakhapatnam has three universities, a nuclear research center, and a major airport. The state government is focusing on the city being the next major information technology hub. Additionally, the city could be made the capital of the Andhra state or Union Territory, should the Telangana region be separated.

From its humble origins as a small fishing village, Visakhapatnam has emerged as a major commercial and naval port, and as a popular tourist destination. Industries supported by the city’s port facilities include steel mills, agribusiness, and petroleum and ore extraction. Employment in these industries has drawn large numbers of people from the countryside and contributed to the city’s growth.

As do most major cities in developing nations, the city experiences ongoing problems related to insufficient infrastructure, inadequate affordable housing and sanitation, and lack of potable water.

Vijayawada
Initially inhabited because of its fertile farmland, Vijayawada emerged as a significant urban center during the British colonial period. The city’s emergence was due in large part to railway development. It is now the third-largest city in the state, located along a critical railway junction in South India. With an estimated population of

985,733,184 Vijayawada ranks 44th among Indian cities.185 Much of the city’s industrial development revolves around agriculture. Crops associated with the Vijayawada market include rice, chilies, and sugarcane.186 Rice and sugar mills are major parts of the city’s industrial base.187

Other Metropolitan Areas
Other major cities in Andhra Pradesh—such as Warangal, Guntur, Nellore, and Rajahmundry—have, to a lesser extent, followed similar patterns of growth. The largest of these four cities, Warangal, is about 60% the size of Vijayawada.188 With the exception of Warangal, each has been named as a potential capital for the Andhra state, if Telangana secedes. Warangal also has the distinction of being a destination for pilgrims. Thus it derives much of its income from religion-oriented tourism.189, 190

Daily Urban Life
The largest cities of Andhra Pradesh are densely populated, congested, noisy, polluted, and lack clean water, electricity, adequate sanitation, and housing. It is not unusual to see extremely poor housing directly beside luxury apartment buildings and the streets filled with pedestrians and various types of vehicles. Contrary to popular belief, one does not find livestock wandering the main streets of major cities. Livestock is, however, a common sight in the surrounding slums and in smaller cities.

Andhra Pradesh has taken progressive action in dealing with its slums. In 1999, the government launched an initiative, the Andhra Pradesh Urban Services for the Poor, and maintained the program through March 2008. The project aimed to reduce poverty, enroll people in benefits programs, and assist in the delivery of state and private services.191, 192 Although the government
and international observers deemed the program a success, extreme poverty and slum-dwelling remain significant problems in the cities of Andhra Pradesh. Private entrepreneurs are also engaged in trying to remedy the situation. For example, the Birla group, a conglomerate of businesses owned by the Birla family, has funded housing projects for Hyderabad’s slum-dwellers.

**Urban Healthcare**

Adequate to excellent medical care is available in the major cities of Andhra Pradesh, but historically these services have been limited or cost prohibitive in the slums surrounding the cities and in rural areas. However, Andhra Pradesh has emerged as an innovator in government-sponsored healthcare.

Funded by the World Bank and launched in 2000, the Andhra Pradesh Urban Slum Health Care Project (APUSHCP) aims to provide primary care to those living in urban slums in major cities. Over the past decade, the project created nearly 200 Urban Health Centers throughout the state. These centers are a joint venture between the state government and private enterprise. The centers are located in the slums, among the people in need.

**Exchange 13: Is there a hospital nearby?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is there a hospital nearby?</th>
<th>daggarilo aasupatri unnadaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>It is in the center of town.</td>
<td>vuuri madyalone unnadi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Andhra Pradesh Vaidya Vidhana Parishad is an independent corporation created by the state government and funded by donations from private individuals, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations. The project plans, builds, and operates commercial healthcare facilities and provides fee-based health services.

**Exchange 14: Can you take me there?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Can you take me there?</th>
<th>meeru nannu akkadiki teesikoni pogalaraa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>I can take you.</td>
<td>aa tesikoni pogalanu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


Over the last few decades, Andhra Pradesh has made significant strides toward improving the health and quality of living for its people. Diseases that were once common in the state have been eradicated, including smallpox and Guinea worm disease. Cases of other diseases have dropped precipitously. However, the threats of malaria, tuberculosis, filariasis, and other diseases remain significant.\textsuperscript{197, 30}

\section*{Education}

In 2002, the 86th amendment to the Indian constitution specified that elementary education is a fundamental right for all children ages 6 to 14. Furthermore, this and subsequent legislation mandated that the government provide \textquotedblleft free and compulsory education\textquotedblright{} for those students.\textsuperscript{198, 199}

India divides its educational system into pre-primary, primary (elementary and middle schools), secondary (high school), and higher education. Primary school children (ages 6 to 14) are typically in grades 1 through 8. High school students (ages 14 to 17) are in grades 9 through 12.\textsuperscript{200}

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Official:} & \textbf{Is there a school nearby?} & \textbf{daggara skuulu undaa?} \\
\hline
\textbf{Local:} & There is. & haa unnadi. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

In 2008, the Government of Andhra Pradesh replaced Telugu with English as the language of instruction for students in grades 6 and 7. The change affected 6,500 state schools.\textsuperscript{201, 202}

India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world. Higher education includes technical schools, colleges, and universities. Andhra Pradesh has many well-respected

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{197} Health, Medical and Family Welfare Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, \textquotedblleft About Us: Health Status in the State,	extquotedblright{} n.d., \url{http://health.ap.nic.in/hmfw_aboutus.html#E}
\bibitem{30} Health, Medical and Family Welfare Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, \textquotedblleft About Us: Strategies,	extquotedblright{} n.d., \url{http://health.ap.nic.in/hmfw_aboutus.html#C}
\bibitem{198} Legislative Department, Government of India, \textquotedblleft India Code: The Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2002,	extquotedblright{} 12 December 2002, \url{http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/amend/amend86.htm}
\bibitem{199} UNESCO, \textit{Reaching the Marginalized} (Paris: UNESCO, 2010), 204.
\bibitem{200} Wintelligence Systems Private Limited (firm), \textquotedblleft Education in India,	extquotedblright{} \url{http://www.studyguideindia.com/Education-India/}
\bibitem{202} \textquotedblleft Mother Tongue as Important as English,	extquotedblright{} \textit{The Hindu Online}, 16 December 2010, \url{http://www.hindu.com/2010/12/16/stories/2010121654910500.htm}
\end{thebibliography}
institutions of higher education, including Osmania University and the Indian Institute of Technology in Hyderabad; Andhra University in Visakhapatnam; and Kakatiya University in Warangal.  

Although the state produces world-class engineers and other tech-savvy workers, a recent study by the International Institute for Population Sciences found that, for the age group of 15 to 49 years, nearly half of all women and almost a quarter of all men in Andhra Pradesh have never attended school. Furthermore, according to the 2001 government census, the state’s literacy rate was 61%.  

However, research shows some improvement in school attendance. For example, data released in 2008 show that 90% of urban children, ages 6 to 10, regularly attend primary school. Although the number drops to 73% for ages 11 to 14 and to 39% for ages 15 to 17, these figures still represent a positive development in the education of children in Andhra Pradesh.

Restaurants
Indian cuisine is considered some of the best in the world, on par with French and Chinese. There are significant differences among the regional diets and foods of India. The Telugu people tend to be vegetarian; however, people along the coast often include fish in their diet, and Muslims are likely to include meat. Hyderabadi cuisine is considerably different from cuisine in the rest of the state. It is heavily meat-based and reflects a strong Muslim influence.

Food establishments range from gourmet restaurants to small cafes to roadside stalls. Most urban restaurants are air-conditioned and offer services that meet international standards. There are international food chains in India as well.

Exchange 16: I’d like some hot soup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer:</th>
<th>I’d like some hot soup.</th>
<th>naaku vedi suupu kaavaali.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiter:</td>
<td>Okay.</td>
<td>sare.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indians customarily eat with their fingers. However, most restaurants have cutlery available. Restaurants also provide finger bowls filled with warm lemon water, specifically for washing hands before and after a meal.  

Restaurant prices are typically fixed. Although a service charge is normally included, it is standard practice to tip waiters. Ten percent of the bill is acceptable.  

**Exchange 17: Do you have dessert?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer:</th>
<th>Do you have dessert?</th>
<th>meeru dessertu istaaraa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiter:</td>
<td>Yes, we have ariselu. (a fried rice cake treat)</td>
<td>avunu, eevaala ariselu istaamu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many upscale establishments accept credit cards, but one should keep cash on hand, in case they do not. Smaller restaurants and roadside stands are likely to accept only cash.

**Exchange 18: Put this all on one bill, okay?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer:</th>
<th>Put this all on one bill, okay?</th>
<th>idantaa oke billulo kalapandi. sareena?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiter:</td>
<td>Okay.</td>
<td>sare.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Markets**

Although a national chain opened a supermarket in Hyderabad in 2006, smaller, neighborhood grocers and street vendors are far more common in most Indian cities. Smaller stores carry a limited range of imported food. Frozen foods are not common because their storage and transportation can be challenging. Ice cream, however, is readily available.

Local produce can be purchased in the markets, which tend to be crowded. Because Indian homemakers prefer to shop daily, some suburbs have small vegetable and fruit roadside stands.

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Exchange 19: Is the bazaar nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is the bazaar nearby?</th>
<th>bajaaru daggarilo unnadaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, over there on the right.</td>
<td>avunu, daggarilo kudi prakkana unnadi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haggling is an accepted practice in the local markets. To get the best prices, one must learn to bargain skillfully. 214

Exchange 20: May I examine this close up?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buyer:</th>
<th>May I examine this close up?</th>
<th>nenu idi daggarinundi chuudavachunaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seller:</td>
<td>Sure.</td>
<td>tappaka.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transportation

An extensive road, rail, and bus system—along with coastal canals—connects the cities of Andhra Pradesh with each other and the rest of India. Airports in Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Tirupati, and Vishakhapatham are also important for international and domestic travel. The international port at Vishakhapatham is another key part of the state’s transportation infrastructure. 215

Roads and Urban Traffic

Following independence in 1947, the government began to invest heavily in developing modern roads throughout India. In the 1980s, many of these roads were widened, and major bridges were built. 216 In 2001, the state government of Andhra Pradesh began a major project to improve roads and national highways. 217

With the rapid growth in population and increased use of vehicles, traffic jams are common. Visibility on congested roads is poor, and warning signs are inadequate. Jaywalking is common. The accident rate has increased in proportion with the rise in population.  

Although the government continues working to improve public safety, urban traffic in Andhra Pradesh, as elsewhere in India, can be dangerous. Drivers are frequently reckless, exceed speed limits, try to overtake others, cut in front of other vehicles without signaling, and frequently honk their horns. Vehicles dart between lanes. Traffic signals do not always work. More than 80,000 people in India die annually from traffic-related accidents; more than 1.2 million are seriously injured, and approximately 300,000 are permanently disabled.

To avoid road accidents in India, the best strategy is to drive defensively and assume that other drivers will not follow traffic regulations. Large vehicles are likely to ignore traffic signals and merge directly into traffic without regard for who or what is already in a given lane. Using the car’s horn and headlights to alert others to your presence is highly recommended.

Although fuel is readily available in metropolitan areas and along major roads, one should carry extra fuel when traveling in rural areas, where the distance between fuel stations may be uncertain.

**Buses**

Users of public transportation in Andhra Pradesh face many of the same challenges found in other urban environments around the world. Buses are overcrowded. Some passengers ride on the outside of the vehicles. Buses must negotiate extremely congested, narrow streets, with no clearly defined right of way, and contend with obstruction caused by other vehicles, pedestrians, and vendors. Severe roadway congestion frequently slows buses to a crawl.

**Auto Rickshaws**

An auto rickshaw is a three-wheeled, enclosed contraption that resembles what a jeep might look like if it were sawed in half and the rear-seat section attached to the back of a motorcycle. Hiring one of these motorized tricycles is similar to hiring a cab. Auto rickshaws have
a meter that is reset for every fare. Make sure you establish a price before getting into a rickshaw. Passengers should be aware that rickshaw drivers may charge extra for travel to and from remote areas.\textsuperscript{225}

While convenient, auto rickshaws are among the most dangerous vehicles in India. The drivers tend to be reckless and will brazenly challenge much larger vehicles for positions in traffic. In major cities throughout India, there are daily news reports of multiple fatalities involving these vehicles.\textsuperscript{226, 227, 228}

**Exchange 21: Will the bus be here soon?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Will the bus be here soon?</th>
<th>bassu ikkadiki tvaralo vastundaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>It will come.</td>
<td>vastundi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Railroads**

India’s railroad system is the government’s largest public industry. Its route length extends 63,327 km (39,350 miles). In 2007, Indian trains carried nearly 17 million passengers and about 2 million tons of freight daily.\textsuperscript{229} A number of important railroad junctions converge in Andhra Pradesh in cities such as Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam, making the state a vital part of the national railroad system.\textsuperscript{230}

Because of the enormousness of the rail system and its strategic and economic importance to India, security is a great concern. Terrorist organizations, political demonstrators, and other agitators frequently target the system. The central government has tasked the Railway Protection Force provide security for passenger trains and the rail infrastructure.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{225} Maria Teresa Burwell, *Fodor’s India* (New York: Fodor’s Travel Pub., 2008), 480.
Exchange 22: Is there a train station nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is there a train station nearby?</th>
<th>daggarilo railu steshanu unnadaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>There is.</td>
<td>unnadi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Airports and Maritime Ports

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (also known as Hyderabad International Airport) serves as the foremost international airport for the state of Andhra Pradesh. It began operations 23 March 2008, replacing Begumpet Airport as the state’s international facility.\(^\text{232}\) The government recently announced that a second international airport will serve the state: Tirupati Airport is to be expanded.\(^\text{233}\) Government and business leaders have discussed similar plans for the airports in Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada.\(^\text{234}, \text{235}\)

Exchange 23: Is this airline safe for domestic travel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is this airline safe for domestic travel?</th>
<th>ee airu lainu desamlopa prayaanaaniki manchidenaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, it is safe.</td>
<td>avunu, manchide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Port of Visakhapatnam, situated halfway between Kolkata and Chennai, is Andhra Pradesh’s principal port. It is well connected to the country’s rail system and roadways, which makes it an essential part of the state’s economy.\(^\text{236}\)


Crime and Terrorism
In 2009 and 2010, the most commonly reported crimes in Hyderabad were ordinary theft, cheating, burglary, snatching, kidnapping, rape, and murder. During this period, an increase in cybercrime also was reported.237

Petty Crime
Petty crime—such as pick pocketing, purse snatching, and passport theft—is quite common, especially on public transportation. One should be vigilant about personal property when in crowds. Avoid rash displays of cash or high-tech gadgets; such actions may draw the attention of potential thieves.

Sexual Harassment
In South Asia, “eve-teasing” is a form of sexual harassment in which young men give young women unwanted verbal and physical attention that ranges from wolf whistling to actual groping. Other sexual crimes, including rape, are among the fastest growing offenses in India.238

National authorities named Andhra Pradesh as one of five states in which dowry harassment is most prevalent, and indicated that more women, mostly mothers- and sisters-in-law, are being convicted of such crimes.239

In 2009, Visakhapatnam recorded the highest crime rate, but Hyderabad reported the highest incidence of crimes. Warangal, a hotbed of political dissidence, reported the highest figure for rioting. It also reported the highest rate of dowry deaths. Hyderabad and its surrounding communities ranked high in most other crime categories. Authorities project a continued decline in ordinary crimes but anticipate that urbanization will lead to an increase in organized and white-collar crimes, and terrorist activities.240

Terrorism
Significant terrorist attacks have occurred in several major cities in India, including Hyderabad. Terrorists frequently target sites associated with international tourism. Such attacks often “involve multiple, consecutive explosions.” The communist Naxalite insurgents, who are active

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in Andhra Pradesh and other Telugu-speaking areas in neighboring states, have previously kidnapped, injured, or killed civilians as part of their ongoing antigovernment operations.\(^{241}\)

On 25 August 2007, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, an Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organization, conducted a major attack against multiple targets in Hyderabad. Two bombs, one at a popular amusement park and another at a famous restaurant, killed more than 40 civilians and wounded another 50. Security personnel disabled two other bombs, and discovered 19 more at various locations throughout the city.\(^{242}\)

Ongoing violence associated with the political unrest of the Telangana separatist movement remains a security concern in Andhra Pradesh. Demonstrations and riots associated with this political movement have become increasingly violent and hazardous to anyone present. However, one indication that the situation may be improving is that in 2010, state police reported a decline in crimes related to the Maoist insurrection.\(^{243, 244}\)


Assessment

1. Urbanization in Hyderabad has been stagnant since Indian independence and the annexation of the Andhra State into the Union.
   **False**
   Hyderabad witnessed significant growth from 1951 to 2001. The city more than tripled its population in that 50-year period.

2. One can find high-quality healthcare in Andhra Pradesh.
   **True**
   Adequate to excellent care is available in the major cities, but such care has been limited or cost prohibitive in the slums and in rural areas.

3. One should tip waiters in Indian restaurants.
   **True**
   Although a service charge is normally included, it is standard practice to tip waiters.

4. India’s ultramodern public transit system is a safe, reliable means of traveling in the cities of Andhra Pradesh.
   **False**
   Buses are dangerously overcrowded. Auto rickshaw drivers drive recklessly; auto rickshaw fatalities occur daily. Tens of thousands of people die annually from traffic-related accidents on India’s roads.

5. Terrorism is a major concern in Andhra Pradesh.
   **True**
   Terrorism carried out by communist insurgents and Islamic fundamentalists has long plagued the state, and recent attacks have left many dead.
Rural Life

Land Distribution/Ownership
About 73% of the population of Andhra Pradesh is rural. While land ownership in Andhra Pradesh is common, the land parcels tend to be minuscule and offer little hope of significant productivity. Recent research indicates that about 10% of rural households are landless. Of rural households that do own land, one-third own less than half a hectare (less than 1 acre), and only 6% own more than 2 hectares (5 acres).²⁴⁵

To address this situation, the state gave tenant farmers permanent rights to the land they worked.²⁴⁶ In an effort to help the poor realize their property rights, the government has also initiated a program to train locals as paralegals and surveyors.²⁴⁷

The government of Andhra Pradesh also grants surplus government lands to those who qualify. Plots are up to 1 hectare (2.5 acres) of wetlands and up to 2 hectares (5.0 acres) of dryland.²⁴⁸

Numerous different tribes live in the state. The government has set aside lands for these people, so that they may continue to practice their traditional ways of life. While these lands have been established for tribal use, the form of ownership (i.e., personal or communal) varies according to specific tribal customs.²⁴⁹

Rural Economy
Most of the rural people of Andhra Pradesh work as subsistence farmers, growing only enough to feed their families, with little or nothing left to sell at market.²⁵⁰

Consequently, rural poverty prevails in Andhra Pradesh, as it does in most other Indian states.

To address this situation, the state government has partnered with national authorities and nongovernment agencies to sponsor several economic initiatives.

²⁵⁰ Andhra Online, “Agriculture,” n.d., http://www.andhraonline.in/Profile/Agriculture/
Exchange 24: Do you own this land?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Do you own this land?</th>
<th>ee buumi mee sontamanaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>avunu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 25: What crops do you grow?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>What crops do you grow?</th>
<th>meeru e e pantalu pandistaaru?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>I grow rice, chilies, and mangoes.</td>
<td>nenu vari, mirapakaayalu, maamidikaayalu pandistaanu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project

The goal of this six-year program, which was implemented by the state government in 2003 and concluded in 2009, was to assist the rural poor in improving their lives by investing in community development, education, occupational diversification, and connecting citizens with other government resources. One major success of the project was the creation of self-help groups aimed at pooling the resources of targeted groups to help fund commercial ventures and loan acquisition.251, 252

Andhra Pradesh Community-based Tank Management

Another government program, launched in 2007, hopes to remedy a situation caused by the mismanagement of tanks, large manmade lakes used for agricultural irrigation. Although tanks have been utilized for many years in the state for irrigation, government departments charged with the maintenance and management of the tank system in Andhra Pradesh have grossly mismanaged the system over the past few decades. The government program to redress the situation aims to restore thousands of tanks that have fallen into disrepair and to enhance agricultural production by improving the quality and management of the state’s water resources.253, 254

Rural Transportation
In rural Andhra Pradesh, as elsewhere in India, traditional modes of transportation, such as horse-drawn vehicles, exist alongside cars, buses, trains, and other modern forms of transportation. However, the road system in most of the countryside is not adequate for modern vehicles. Creating a modern, all-weather road system in the rural areas would be expensive, but such a system would bring economic and social benefits.  

Exchange 26: Is there a gas station nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is there a gas station nearby?</th>
<th>daggaralo petrolu banku unnadaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>There is.</td>
<td>unnadi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health Issues
In the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh where people have limited access to modern health services, many rely on traditional remedies provided by and herbal medicine and folk healers.

People in the rural areas experience significant health risks, the lack of clean water being foremost. Rural dwellers are also more susceptible to many of the diseases that plague the state, including malaria, tuberculosis, guinea worm disease, and filariasis. The state government recently enacted a Child Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) aimed at providing better care for students enrolled in government-supported schools in the rural areas. Authorities issue qualified children a Students Health Card, and those in need of additional care are transported to and treated at government healthcare facilities.

Exchange 27: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Is there a medical clinic nearby?</th>
<th>daggarilo medikalu kliniku unnadaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

Local: Yes, over there. aa, akkade unnadi.

**Exchange 28:** Is Doctor Reddy in, sir?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is Doctor Reddy in, sir?</th>
<th>daactaru lopala unnaaraa andee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>lenu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education**

In 2002, the 86th amendment to the Indian constitution specified that elementary education is a fundamental right for all children, ages 6 to 14. Furthermore, this and subsequent legislation charged the government with providing “free and compulsory education” for those students. \(^{260}\) \(^{261}\)

India divides its educational system into pre-primary, primary (elementary and middle schools), secondary (high school), and higher education. Primary school children (ages 6 to 14) are typically in the grades 1 through 8. High school students (ages 14 to 17) are in grades 9 through 12. \(^{262}\)

**Exchange 29:** Is there a school nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Is there a school nearby?</th>
<th>daggara skuulu undaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>There is.</td>
<td>haa unnadi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A recent study conducted by the International Institute for Population Sciences found within the age group of 15 to 49 years, nearly half of all women and almost a quarter of all men in Andhra Pradesh have never attended school. \(^{263}\) Furthermore, according to the 2001 census, the state’s literacy rate was 61%. \(^{264}\) This problem is exacerbated by the prevalence of child labor in the rural areas. Because

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\(^{260}\) Legislative Department, Government of India, “India Code: The Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2002,” 12 December 2002, [http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/amend/amend86.htm](http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/amend/amend86.htm)


of long work hours, many children, especially girls, do not receive a proper education.\textsuperscript{265}

**Exchange 30: Do your children go to school?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Do your children go to school?</th>
<th>mee pillalu skuuluku potaaraa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>They go.</td>
<td>potaaru.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A consortium of international businesses and nongovernment organizations recently adopted 375 rural schools in Andhra Pradesh and the neighboring state of Karnataka. Their aim is to improve the literacy rate in the region.\textsuperscript{266}

**Nomadic Way of Life**

Although the nomadic way of life is far from the norm, there are a number of nomadic tribes in Andhra Pradesh. They include the Davaluru, Budgajangam, Balasanta, Viramushtivar, and others. These tribes roam from town to town and make a living by selling goods, singing ballads, and maintaining genealogies for particular families.\textsuperscript{267}

**Daily Life in the Countryside**

Those who live in the countryside of Andhra Pradesh are predominantly poor. They work on other people’s property for very little pay, and they struggle to make ends meet for their families. The workday is typically from sunrise to sunset. Activities vary and revolve around agricultural seasons.

As is the case worldwide, the rural people of Andhra Pradesh are far more conservative than those who live in urban areas. They adhere more rigidly to the caste system that has long defined India’s social stratification.\textsuperscript{268} The central and state governments have initiated progressive policies aimed at empowering members of the lower castes, including providing quotas to elected bodies of governance. As a result of these efforts, power at the local level frequently does not reside in the hands of the upper castes.\textsuperscript{269}

\textsuperscript{265} Thomas James, *Encyclopaedia of Technical and Vocational Education* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2005), 874–875.
Still, the practice of bonded labor continues to plague rural areas. Indebted to property owners and companies, people are forced to sell their labor for extended periods to obtain loans, seeds, or money, the latter frequently being used to pay off other debts. Parents also hire out their children under similar terms, pulling them from school out of economic necessity. This arrangement often becomes cyclical, because those owing money must repeatedly indenture themselves and their families to pay off continuously revolving debt.270

Over the last two decades, a disturbing trend has arisen among the rural populations in Andhra Pradesh and neighboring states. Distressed by drought, indebtedness, and hopelessness, tens of thousands of farmers have committed suicide. In just one month of the year 2010, 36 farmers in the Ranga Reddy District took their own lives.271, 272

Who’s in Charge
At the village level, a gram panchayat, or village council, serves as the local administrative body. Recognized by the state government, these local bodies are subordinate to township and district-level authorities, who also form panchayat councils. In Andhra Pradesh, the township-level councils are referred to as Mandal Praja Parishad, and the district-level councils are referred to as Zila Praja Parishad and Zila Abhirudhi Sameeksha Mandals.273 Indians call this three-tiered system of local and regional governance the panchayati raj.274

People elect panchayat members by popular vote. Whereas men once almost exclusively held these positions, in 2009 the government of Andhra Pradesh passed legislation reserving 50% of the seats for women. Thus, the number of women serving in this level of government has increased substantially in recent years.275, 276

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273 Sweta Mishra, Democratic Decentralisation in India: Study in Retrospect & Prospect (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1994), 63–65

© DLIFLC
Scheduled Caste, and other Backward Class members are also represented, to some extent, in local leadership. The leader of the village council is known as the *sarpanch*. He or she likely lives in the immediate vicinity of the village.  

**Border Crossings and Checkpoints**

Given that the state of Andhra Pradesh has no international borders, there are no border crossing zones in the state. Neither are there any permanent checkpoints. However, security forces routinely set up temporary checkpoints, in both rural and urban areas, in an effort to control violence associated with political agitation.  

**Exchange 31: Is this all the ID you have?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guard:</th>
<th>Is this all the ID you have?</th>
<th>mee daggara unna gurtimpu kaardu idenaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>avunu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, one might encounter a situation in which authorities expect one to present identification and submit to an inspection of one’s vehicle and belongings. In such situations, one should always cooperate fully with the authorities.

**Exchange 32: Please get out of the car.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guard:</th>
<th>Please get out of the car.</th>
<th>meeru kaarunundi bayatiki randi.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver:</td>
<td>Okay.</td>
<td>sare.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Land Mines**

Although India refuses to sign the Mine Ban Treaty, it is party to the Convention on Conventional Weapons, including Protocols II and V, which place certain limits on land mines. Most of India’s mines are deployed along its borders with Pakistan and China, and the central government continues to claim that the weapons are a legitimate defense for states with long,  

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difficult-to-defend borders. India is one of only a handful of states that continue to manufacture antipersonnel mines.²⁸⁰, ²⁸¹

Exchange 33: Is this area mined?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor:</th>
<th>Is this area mined?</th>
<th>ee praantamulo gani mandu paataralu unnaayaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>There are.</td>
<td>unnayi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, government land mines are not the problem in Andhra Pradesh. Rather, the most pressing matter in the state is the use of such weapons by terrorist and insurgent groups. These forces use land mines as an integral part of antigovernment ambushes. In 2003, Maoist insurgents orchestrated a land mine attack that nearly killed the state’s chief minister.²⁸² Several government sources claimed that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an international terrorist organization based in Sri Lanka, had provided the weapons and associated training to the insurgents. If true, the 2009 conclusion of the Sri Lankan Civil War and the resultant destruction of the LTTE may well eliminate the main source of such weapons.²⁸³

Assessments

1. The vast majority of the Telugu peoples live in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh.
   **True**
   Although the state is home to one of India’s biggest cities, about 73% of the population of Andhra Pradesh is rural.

2. Modern all-weather roads connect rural Andhra Pradesh with the rest of the state and facilitate the use of motorized vehicles.
   **False**
   Rural roads are scarce and poorly constructed. Thus, traditional modes of transportation, such as horse-drawn vehicles, are common and exist alongside modern forms of transportation.

3. In the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh, people have limited access to modern health services and rely on traditional remedies provided by herbal medicine and folk healers.
   **True**
   Rural people are more susceptible to the diseases that plague the state; modern health services are limited, and people rely on traditional healing practices.

4. The caste system continues to define social hierarchy in rural Andhra Pradesh.
   **True**
   The rural people of Andhra Pradesh are more conservative than those who live in urban areas, and they adhere more rigidly to the caste system.

5. Land mines are not a security concern for the state of Andhra Pradesh.
   **False**
   Insurgents and terrorist forces regularly use land mines as part of their arsenal in attacks against government and civilian targets in Andhra Pradesh.
Family Life

Typical Household and Family Structure
Telugu families trace their genealogy through the paternal line (patrilineal descent). One typically belongs to a family and to a clan that shares the paternal family name. The clan is then further divided among sub-clans within one’s paternal line of descent. Finally, within this system, one belongs to a caste. Thus, a complex socio-hierarchical network permeates Telugu society and largely dictates social interactions throughout life.\(^{284}\)

Nuclear families—consisting of a married couple and their children—are the norm in Andhra Pradesh. Joint families spanning multiple generations comprise a small fraction of the population.\(^{285}\) However, it is common practice in Andhra Pradesh to maintain a joint-family arrangement in some situations. For example, the sons of a family remain together with the parents until each of the sons is married or until the father is deceased. The sons then separate into their own nuclear families. If the parents are still living after the sons have started their own nuclear family, they will choose to live with the family of one of their sons.\(^{286}\)

Exchange 34: Are these children part of your family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official:</th>
<th>Are these children part of your family?</th>
<th>veellu, ee (pillalu) mee intilo vaarenaa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>avunu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The traditional practice of consanguineous marriage, the marriage of two related people, remains common, mostly in rural areas. The practice aids families in keeping property and wealth within the family.\(^{287}\) In Telugu culture, these arranged marriages are typically between cross cousins (first cousins from parental siblings of opposite gender) or uncle-niece relationships, wherein a


woman may marry her maternal uncle. However, such arrangements are less frequent than they once were; even interethnic and intercaste marriages are steadily increasing.

While women shoulder most of the responsibility for maintaining the household, a majority of them also work outside the home. An increase in women’s educational levels and their entry into the workforce have definitely helped redefine gender roles in both the private and public realms within the last few decades. Men, once predominantly the breadwinners and detached from child rearing, now increasingly share in domestic chores and active parenting.

**Status of Women, Elders, Children, and Adolescents**

**Women**

The government of Andhra Pradesh has long been innovative in social engineering. For example, the 1986 state amendment to the Hindu Succession Act (1956) gave equal inheritance rights to women and served as the model for a 2005 amendment to the national law. Thus, daughters are now able to claim an equal share of their family’s property. While enforcement has proven difficult, statistics seem to indicate that many are claiming what the statute allows. The law however, does not apply to Muslim women.

Although women continue to suffer from lower wages, workplace discrimination, and lower levels of education, living in one of India’s most progressive states has assured women a steadier progression toward social parity than is afforded many of their peers in other parts of the country.

In 2009, the government of Andhra Pradesh passed legislation reserving 50% of local government seats for women. Thus, the number of women serving in this level of government seats for women. Thus, the number of women serving in this level of government

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has increased substantially in recent years.\textsuperscript{296, 297} This development serves as a fairly good benchmark for the direction of women’s rights in the state.

\textbf{Elders}

India has close to 90 million senior citizens, the second-largest elderly population in the world. Eighty percent of the elderly live in rural areas, and the majority live below the poverty line. The National Council for Older Persons (NCO\textsuperscript{P}), a central government-operated group, seeks to ensure better healthcare and financial security for the elderly.\textsuperscript{298}

Elderly family members who are no longer in the seat of authority remain well respected and cared for by their families. They often participate actively in child rearing, and leaders frequently seek their advice and support in decision-making processes.\textsuperscript{299}

Indians show respect for their parents, elders, and teachers by touching their feet. This practice is a sign of respect for age, maturity, nobility, and spirituality, which the elders represent. Touching the feet symbolizes recognition of their love and the sacrifices that they have made.\textsuperscript{300}

\textbf{Children}

Children’s roles differ according to their age, gender, and economic status. Children of poor families quickly learn they are expected to help with all aspects of work in the house and fields. As they grow older, children often seek employment to help the family, frequently becoming bonded laborers to propertied farmers. In fact, such servitude “often acts as the only source of economic security for the poorest households.”\textsuperscript{301}

Boys are preferred over girls because sons are likely to stay with their parents and provide for them, whereas daughters leave the family when they marry and may require the expense of a dowry. However, all children


\textsuperscript{297} Pamela Philipose, “Making the 50–50 Formula Work for Women,” \textit{OneWorld South Asia}, 17 September 2009, \url{http://southasia.oneworld.net/opinioncomment/making-the-50-50-formula-work-for-women}


are valued for their role in family life. Children learn at an early age that roles consistent with their gender are expected of them. They participate in daily household activities and work, helping both their fathers and their mothers. Parents expect their older children to help care for the younger children and elderly members of the family.\textsuperscript{302}

Younger children are encouraged to participate in numerous rituals that emphasize family ties. One such occasion is \textit{Raksha Bandhan}, a festive day when Hindu sisters bless their brothers and symbolically request their protection throughout life by tying a \textit{rakhi}, a bracelet of thread, on the wrist of their brother.\textsuperscript{303, 304}

\textbf{Adolescents}

Adolescents in India have many of the same interests and preoccupations as their peers in the United States and the West. However, they operate under a much more stringent set of social constraints that prohibit many of the behaviors prevalent among their American counterparts. Perhaps the most obvious example is that of dating. While dating is common among adolescents in the West, such activity is, typically, strictly prohibited by Indian parents. Even lenient parents are prone to curbing such behavior, for fear of reprisals from more conservative elements in their society.\textsuperscript{305}

Teenage marriage has long been a government concern. Andhra Pradesh is one of the few Indian states that offer financial incentives to girls and their families for postponing marriage until later in life. These incentives are part of the government’s attempt to eliminate a perceived social problem and alleviate overpopulation.\textsuperscript{306} However, Andhra Pradesh continues to be one of the top two states with high numbers of child marriages.\textsuperscript{307} Families sometimes force girls who have yet to reach puberty to marry much older men.\textsuperscript{308, 309}

\textbf{Married Life, Divorce, and Birth}

\textbf{Married Life}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{302} Digumarti Bhaskara Rao et al., \textit{Status and Advancement of Women} (New Delhi, A.P.H. Publishers, 2000), 73–74.  \\
\textsuperscript{303} “Raksha Bandhan’ Celebrated,” \textit{The Hindu Online}, 25 August 2010, \url{http://www.hindu.com/2010/08/25/stories/2010082559930200.htm}  \\
\textsuperscript{304} Prem P. Bhalla, \textit{Hindu Rites, Rituals, Customs & Traditions: A to Z on the Hindu Way of Life} (Delhi: Hindoology Books, 2009), 182.  \\
\textsuperscript{305} Lori Shores, \textit{Teens in India} (Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2007), 44–45.  \\
\textsuperscript{308} “Child Marriage Rampant in Andhra,” \textit{Chennai Mirror}, 2006, \url{http://www.chennaimirror.com/News/Home/151106/TopStories_5.html}  \\
\textsuperscript{309} “Child Marriage: Father of Minor Girl Killed,” \textit{The Hindu Online}, 22 May 2009, \url{http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/22/stories/2009052260350600.htm}  \\
\end{flushright}
Although traditionally subservient in marital relationships, Telugu women have long advocated for greater rights within the familial as well as the political sphere. The state government’s propensity for social engineering has greatly aided this feminist movement over the past several decades, most recently with the development of self-help groups. These groups have helped women achieve financial standing within their families, which has provided women leverage in negotiating their status within the family.

Many modern Telugu families share the responsibilities of child rearing and domestic chores, much the same way that most Western families do. This sharing of responsibilities is due in part to the necessity of dual incomes. It is also reinforced by depictions in Indian movies of the devoted modern husband and father as a copartner in the marital relationship.

Still, in more conservative areas of the state, women continue to suffer social and economic oppression both within the family and in society in general. A major contributor to marital problems in the countryside is the ready availability of cheap, potent liquor. In response to this problem, many women have become active in a temperance movement dedicated to banning alcohol in the state.

**Divorce**

Beliefs and practices concerning divorce vary greatly among the different Telugu peoples. Factors contributing to these variations include religion, caste, tribe, and socioeconomic status. Generally, the highest castes strictly prohibit divorce. Some castes permit divorce only if no children have been born to the couple. Other castes are very liberal in their approach to divorce. People who have adopted Western lifestyles, primarily those in the major cities, have also adopted Western attitudes toward divorce.

Just as there are negotiations, agreements, and exchanges of gifts between the families when a couple marry, similar understandings are arrived at when they divorce. Wedding gifts and

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property may be returned. Divorce may also necessitate the drafting of official documents releasing the individuals to remarry.\textsuperscript{316}

Muslims are able to dissolve their marriages much more easily. No judicial process is required. Although the processes for other religious minorities—Sikhs, Christians, or Zoroastrians, for example—vary from one another, all require a couple to proceed through the legal system.\textsuperscript{317}

Birth

Families celebrate a baby’s birth with welcoming rituals and gifts. Astrologers prepare horoscopes, which will help determine the baby’s name and will be used to chart auspicious and inauspicious points in the child’s life. Parents also use these horoscopes later on to help screen potential partners for arranged marriages. Soon after a birth, parents will enter the baby’s name into the family’s genealogical records. These records are frequently maintained by certain castes within the nomadic peoples of Andhra Pradesh.\textsuperscript{318, 319}

One ritual associated with newborns is \textit{Uyyalalo Veyadam} (the cradle ceremony). On the evening of the 21st day following a baby’s birth, parents place a new silk cloth, decorated with flowers, inside the baby’s cradle. At a predetermined auspicious moment, they place the baby in the cradle. The family then writes the baby’s name in rice that has been spread beneath the cradle. Family and friends who have been invited offer blessings to the baby.\textsuperscript{320, 321}

The preference for boys continues to be part of Indian culture, but statistics indicate that the desire for smaller families is influencing this preference to some degree.\textsuperscript{322}

Family Events, Rites of Passage

\textit{Rites of Passage}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{316} Bruce Elliot Tapper, “Countries and Their Cultures: South Asia: Telugu: Telugu—Marriage and Family,” \textit{EveryCulture}, 2011, \url{http://www.everyculture.com/South-Asia/Telugu-Marriage-and-Family.html}
\textsuperscript{317} Bureau of Consular Affairs, United States Department of State, “Country Reciprocity Schedule: India Reciprocity Schedule,” 2011, \url{http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_4881.html?cid=3582}
\textsuperscript{318} Margaret A. Mills et al., eds., \textit{South Asian Folklore: An Encyclopedia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan Sri Lanka} (London: Routledge, 2003), 432.
\textsuperscript{319} Margaret A. Mills et al., eds., \textit{South Asian Folklore: An Encyclopedia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan Sri Lanka} (London: Routledge, 2003), 144–145.
During her first menstruation, families seclude a girl in her room for up to a week. On the final day of her seclusion, her paternal aunt offers her sweets, food, new clothes, and other gifts.\(^{323}\) Upon emerging from seclusion, the parents parade a girl before the assembled family and friends. First, they dress her in a *langa voni*, a traditional dress worn mainly in South Indian states by young girls between puberty and marriage. A *langa voni* is also known as a two-piece or half sari. It consists of a *langa* that is tied at the waist using string and an *oni*, a fine, translucent cloth draped diagonally over a *choli*, a closely fitted blouse of cotton or silk. The girl is then dressed again in a full sari and adorned with jewelry. This ritual signifies her transformation from a girl to a woman. Those in attendance provide her with blessings for a bright future.\(^{324}\)

**Weddings**

Arranged marriage remains a common practice in Andhra Pradesh, especially in rural areas. The preliminary stage of such an arrangement involves meetings and discussions between the elders of the two families. The families discuss horoscopes, dowry, and other conditions of alliance. Once the two parties reach a preliminary agreement, they select an auspicious day, on which the prospective groom and his family visit the home of the prospective bride and bring gifts for her and her family. The bride and groom and their families participate in a number of rituals prior to the wedding.\(^{325, 326, 327}\)

A covered structure with pillars, known as a *mandapa*, is constructed for the wedding. A Hindu priest officiates at the rituals in this structure. A series of rituals, each highly symbolic within the Hindu faith and for the couple’s future as husband and wife, culminates when the groom ties a pendant of gold strung on a thread, called a *mangala-sutram*, around the bride’s neck.\(^{328}\) The couple then walk around the sacred fire while offering prayers for their married life. Guests offer gifts to the couple and to their family members during this part of the ceremony.

**Exchange 35: Congratulations on your wedding!**


Following the ceremonies, the groom takes the bride to his family’s home for the ritual of *Griha Pravesh*, which signifies her first crossing of the threshold of a new house.\(^{329, 330, 331}\)

**Funerals**

As with other rituals, the funeral rites of the Telugu peoples vary significantly depending on their religion and, to a lesser extent, region. Hindus consider death to be ritually pollutant. Thus, because the death of a relative is believed to pollute living family members, conducting the proper funeral rites is a prescribed act of cleansing.\(^{332}\)

A principal mourner, typically a son, is designated. Following a ritual bathing of the body, mourners drape the body in a shroud and carry it to the cremation grounds, typically near a river, to musical accompaniment. There the body is burned, and the mourners return home to bathe. For several days thereafter, the family refrains from lighting fires, including cooking fires. On the third day following the funeral, the family gather the charred remains and cast them into the river.\(^{333}\)

After the prescribed period of mourning, which varies by caste and region, the family is reintegrated into society through numerous rituals and feasts.\(^{334}\) Hindu funeral rites vary according to the social status of the deceased. The body is treated differently depending on gender, age, and other factors. For example, men are cremated facing upward, whereas women are cremated facing downward. Adults are cremated; children are buried.\(^{335}\)

**Exchange 36: I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.**

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Muslim funeral rites are substantially different from those of Hindus. For Muslims, a family member of the same gender or a spouse must bathe the deceased three times. Then the body is wrapped in a clean, white shroud and scented with perfumes. Standing before the body, one offers the funeral prayers. A silent procession through the community to the cemetery follows, with mourners walking ahead and to the side of those carrying the body. The body is gently lowered directly into the earth, as a mourner recites the shahadah prayer into the ears of the deceased. A firm covering is placed above the body to keep the dirt off. Then mourners fill the grave. 336

Mourners retreat at least 40 paces from the grave. Over the next few days, family members provide food to the family of the deceased, who refrain from lighting any fires. 337

Names

By convention, Hindu Telugu names are commonly composed of three parts. Contrary to Western standards, the family name comes first. The given name, which may include multiple elements, follows. Historically, the caste name comes last. However, since the twentieth century, many people have ignored this convention and replaced the last name with a second given name that has no caste association whatsoever. The name of the famous Telugu scholar Velcheru Narayana Rao is explained below. 338

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Velcheru</th>
<th>Narayana</th>
<th>Rao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Name</td>
<td>Given Name</td>
<td>2nd Given Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not surprisingly, Muslims and other religious minorities in the state follow their own naming customs.

Assessment

1. It is common for Telugu peoples to marry their first cousins.
   True
   Marriage between two related people, typically cross cousins, remains common, mostly in rural areas.

2. Women are well represented at the local level of governance in Andhra Pradesh.
   True
   In 2009, the government of Andhra Pradesh passed legislation reserving 50% of local government seats for women.

3. Telugu people frequently place their elderly in state-run retirement homes.
   False
   Elderly family members who are no longer in the seat of authority remain well respected and cared for by their families. The elderly also participate in child rearing.

4. Young children are encouraged to participate in the numerous rituals that emphasize familial ties.
   True
   One such occasion is Raksha Bandhan, a festive day when Hindu sisters bless their brothers and symbolically request their protection.

5. Telugu weddings are typically simple and short ceremonies.
   False
   Telugu weddings are highly ritualized and elaborate.
Final Assessment

1. The establishment of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 united all Telugu speakers under one state. 
   **True or False**

2. Andhra Pradesh can be divided into three different regions. 
   **True or False**

3. The state capital, Hyderabad, is among India’s major cities. 
   **True or False**

4. The Naxalites are becoming more sophisticated in their terrorist attacks. 
   **True or False**

5. Elements within the Telangana region advocate the creation of a separate Telangana state. 
   **True or False**

6. Among the Muslims of Andhra Pradesh, one finds only Shi’ite communities, which is unusual among Muslim communities in India. 
   **True or False**

   **True or False**

8. Because Indians celebrate Hindu and Muslim holidays according to their occurrence in lunar calendars, the dates of the holidays change from one year to the next. 
   **True or False**

9. One should feel free to touch the images of Hindu deities at temples, because doing so is a form of respect. 
   **True or False**

10. Friday is the Islamic holy day. 
    **True or False**

11. Hindu religious values unite the majority of Telugu people. 
    **True or False**

12. Indians treat elders, such as grandparents, with great respect, and one should always greet them courteously. 
    **True or False**

13. A good time to show respect and good manners is at the dinner table. 
    **True or False**
14. Meat—including lamb, chicken, and beef—is the main part of most meals in Andhra Pradesh.
   True or False

15. Female infanticide and feticide remain significant social problems plaguing Andhra Pradesh and much of the rest of India.
   True or False

16. Poverty is a major issue in the cities of Andhra Pradesh.
   True or False

17. Recent trends appear to indicate a significant improvement in the Indian educational system.
   True or False

18. There are no shopping malls or supermarkets in Andhra Pradesh; one must instead shop at local bazaars.
   True or False

19. India’s government has tasked that the Railway Protection Force protect the country’s rail system.
   True or False

20. Visakhapatnam is an important commercial and naval center.
   True or False

21. The majority of the Telugu peoples work in the agricultural sector.
   True or False

22. Most rural people in Andhra Pradesh are economically prosperous.
   True or False

23. Child labor is a social problem significantly affecting the education of children in rural Andhra Pradesh.
   True or False

24. The *panchayati raj* is the system of local governance in Andhra Pradesh.
   True or False

25. State security forces maintain permanent checkpoints and border crossings throughout Andhra Pradesh.
   True or False
26. Joint families are the normal arrangement in Andhra Pradesh.  
   True or False

27. In Andhra Pradesh, Hindu women are entitled to the same inheritance rights as men.  
   True or False

28. The tradition of preferring boy babies to girls remains strong among the Telugu peoples.  
   True or False

29. Dating is just as common in Telugu society as it is in the West.  
   True or False

30. Muslims are able to divorce more easily than others in Andhra Pradesh.  
   True or False