

Summary Report on the Source and Headwaters of the Godavari River, near Tryambakeshwar, India

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Background:

The Godavari originates 80 kilometres (50 mi) from the Arabian Sea in the Western Ghats of central India near Nasik in Maharashtra. It flows for 1,465 kilometres (910 mi), first eastwards across the Deccan Plateau then turns southeast, entering the West Godavari district and East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, until it splits into two watercourses that widen into a large river delta and flow into the Bay of Bengal.

The Godavari River has a coverage area of 312,812 km² (120,777 sq mi), which is nearly one-tenth of the area of India and is greater than the areas of England and Ireland put together.

The river basin is considered to be divided into 3 sections:

- upper (source to confluence with Manjira),
- middle (between confluence of Manjira and Pranhita) and
- lower (Pranhita confluence to mouth).

These put together account for 24.2% of the total basin area. The rivers annual average water inflows are nearly 110 billion cubic metres. Nearly 50% of the water availability is being harnessed. The water allocation from the river among the riparian states are governed by the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal. The river has highest flood flows in India and experienced recorded flood of 3.6 million cusecs in the year 1986 and annual flood of 1.0 million cusecs is normal.

The path of Godavari River



Visit to the source of Godavari, Tryambakeswar – Data collection and Observations:

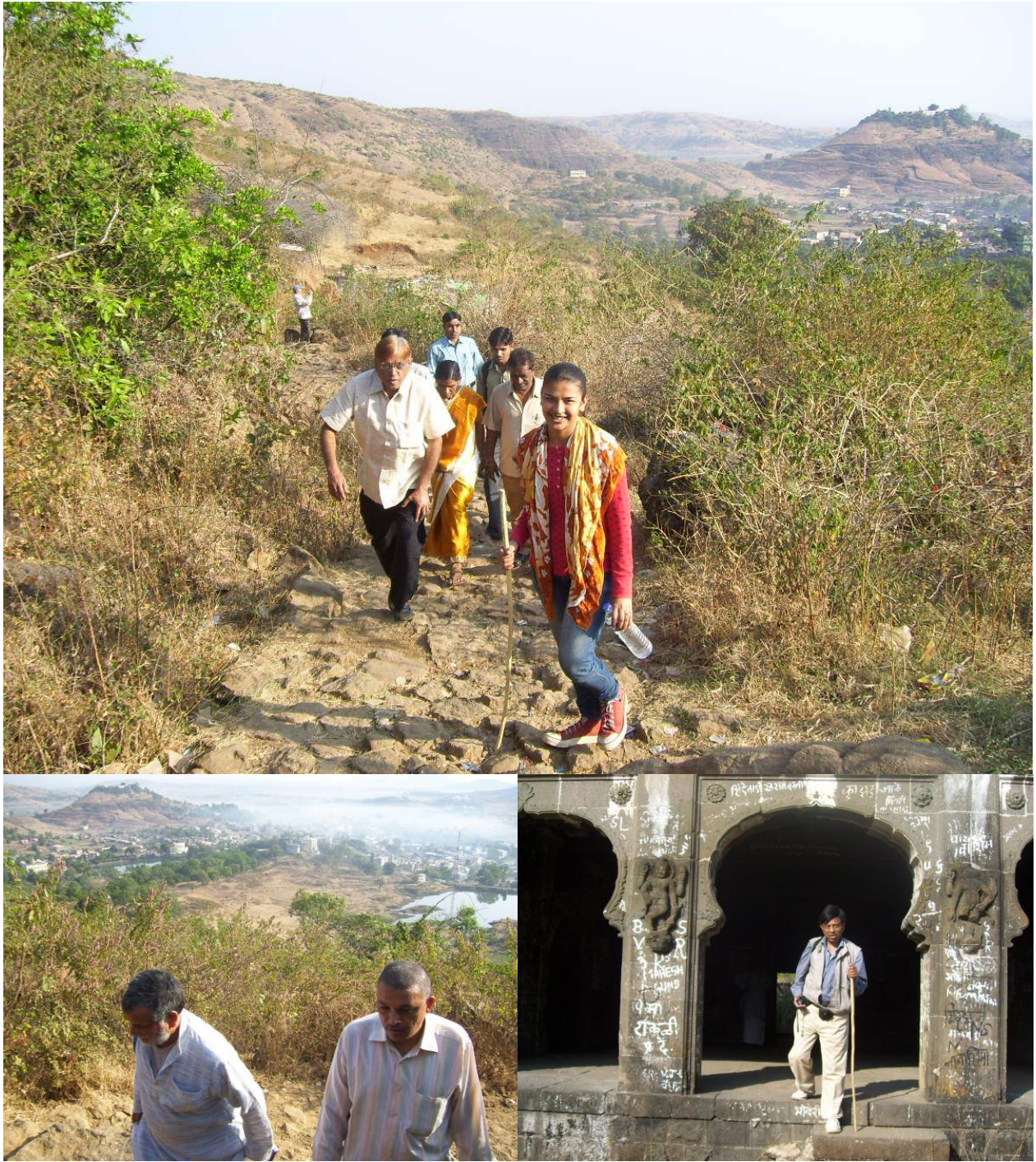
My first visit to the area was arranged during February 10-11, 2011 by Dr. Kamal Taori, IAS, retired executive from the Government of India. Dr. Taori was living in Wardha, Maharashtra at that time. He took me to the famous Gandhi Ashram “Sevagram”, and to a few local streams and rivers. I had the opportunity to attend a one-of-a-kind School program there arranged by his wife, Dr. Sheela Taori, where the students performed a number of dances, songs, and a short patriotic skit.

Dr. Kamal Taori arranged for a train trip to Nasik from Wardah and we traveled to Tryambhaleswar by car from Nasik.

The Tryambakeswar Temple is one of the famous Siva temples (picture below) in India, which we visited first.



To my surprise, the Godavari River was nowhere to be seen when we reached Tryambakeswar. Local people told me that I have to climb up about 2,500 ft. up the hill to the Brahmagiri mountain on the other side of the temple where I can see the source of the Godavari River. The river comes out of several springs from the core of the mountain, where there is a small “kund” or lake at the heart of the mountain peaks. I became curious to see that and started the climb the mountain with a group of people who came with Kamal Taori, and wanted to come along and join the climb.



Dr. Kamal Taori and his friend(above left); Subijoy Dutta at a stopping point going up(right)

We climbed up and up with a few stops and finally reached the top. I am amazed to see the Godavari River coming out of the mountain and flowing below the hills (see picture below).



The Godavari River seen from the Brahmagiri peak (above).

While climbing up I noticed how the trail had a few local vendors selling water, fruits, and snacks. This practice resulted in plastics and other trash all around these small shops in the trail. This was shocking. I talked to the vendors and asked them to keep a small garbage bin in front of their shops where people could throw the trash coming out of the products they are selling. They seem to agree and said that they will arrange. That was then.

I went again on October 14, 2012 with Indrajeet sen from Mumbai who arranged to take me to the Sai temple in Shirdi and then to Tryambhakeswar in his car. It was really a long, but nice drive.

As we climbed up I met the same vendors, a few more, selling various things for the people walking up and down the mountain.



View of Trayambakeswar (above) while climbing to the Brahmagiri

I challenged a vendor and showed her how I could clean the frontage of her shop in 10 minutes, and then asked her if she could do that twice a day.





Indrajeet and a local volunteer (Bajaj) from Nasik were hiking up the trail with me.

Majestic views from the Brahmagiri are captured below.





