

**Terms of Reference of the status of some of the malignant, exploitative and offensive to human dignity Superstitions of Karnataka and the change in their status of prevalence in the past 25 years**

**1. Title of the study:**

The study is titled "*Status of some of the malignant, exploitative and offensive to human dignity Superstitions of Karnataka and the change in their status of prevalence in the past 25 years.*"

**2. Background:**

The word "superstition" is the modern form of the middle English word "supersticion", formed from the Latin "superstitiō" or "superstition", which itself is derived from "superstes" or "superstit", meaning *standing over*, signifying that superstitions prevail and override what is rational and logical. It is defined as (a) An irrational belief that an object, action, or circumstance not logically related to a course of events influences its outcome, or (b) A belief, practice, or rite irrationally maintained by ignorance of the laws of nature or by faith in magic or chance or (c) A fearful or abject state of mind resulting from such ignorance or irrationality. They are generally, but erroneously, considered as product of religious matters for religion never changes. The holding and clinging to old unproven matter, which is peculiar to the particular place, time or community, is also superstition. Superstition gives birth to fanaticism and fundamentalism. It is hindrance to progress and development of human beings. It often blackmails the emotions of a person.

It may appear that superstitions should be confined to the illiterate and uninformed, but that may not always be the case. There are many doctors, engineers, leaders and even scientists who are learned people and sufficiently enlightened persons, yet they believe in superstitions. Despite their modern



living using all modern amenities and leading happy life, they are not performing science in practice. In fact these people, when superstitious, propagate superstitions among those whose role models and ideals they are. It is not education but scientific temper that can cure people of superstitious beliefs and followings.

The realization of superstitions threatening to mar the life and dignity of people is not new in Karnataka. Lately, with "Made snana" leading the limelight, attention of the State fell on some of the superstitions that demean the dignity of human beings, subject people to become victims of circumstances than allowing them to take control of the situations, relying on miracles and magic and acts that subject animals to torture in the name of providing some remedies to human suffering.

### **3. Research Objectives:**

The objective of the status study given to the Karnataka Evaluation Authority by the Planning department, Government of Karnataka is-

(A) To document the local belief/legend/history of the following superstitions of Karnataka-

1. Made Made Snana (ಮಡೆಮಡೆಸ್ನಾನ) or Made Snana in which devotees roll over plantain leaves, after food has been taken over it by high caste devotees. It is practiced on certain festive days in Subramanya temples of Karnataka, but has also been performed at Vaishnavite places such as the Krishna Math, Udupi. The practice is actively done in the Kukke Subramanya Temple, and in the Subramanya temples of Kalavara, Kundapura Taluk and Ramanathapura, Hassan District.
2. Mass animal sacrifice in the temples including Marigudi (three temples)during Suggi Maripuja in Udupi, Gokarna in Uttara Kannada, Purdamma in Hassan, Durgambika Devi fair in



Davanagere, temples of Voddarahalli and Machohalli in Bangalore during Makara Sankranti etc.

3. *Ajalu* practice of Dakshina Kannada district which differentiates between Koragas and persons belonging to other communities, treating them as inferior human beings, mixing hair, nails or any other inedible or obnoxious substance in the food and asking them to eat that food and to make them to run like buffaloes before the beginning of Kambala (buffalo race).
4. Throwing of children from a height of 30 feet from the top Digambeshwara temple in Nagrala village of Bagalkot district, to be caught on blankets below.
5. *Bettale seve* (nude worship), which is a service or form of worship rendered in the nude by women to Goddess Renukamba at Chandragutti, Shimoga. Bettale seve is one of the forms of seve performed during the annual *jathre* (festival) at Chandragutti that draws about a lakh of devotees. Mostly women from the Dalit castes perform *Bettale seve* to fulfil a *harake* (vow) undertaken when a calamity has befallen the family (such as sickness or death), or for a wish to be fulfilled (such as a wish for a husband or a child).
6. The *jata* hair (nugget hair) practice where women having an unclean fungus infested clump of hair due to lack of proper care of hair and hygiene, is associated with the women being regarded as a devotional entity ending in the system of *Devadasi* too.
7. The practice of dedicating girls to the service of God (Devadasi) in Yellamma cult in Saundatti, Belgaum district, and in the Uttangi Durga temple on Uchungi Hill, Davanagere district.
8. The practice of *Sidi*, prevailing at Ghattaragi village in Afzalpur taluk of Gulbarga district and also parts of Bagalkot district wherein a man is hung from a cart at a height of 30 feet from his back with



the help of a sharp hook. People believe this helps them overcome the drought problem.

(B) To study and document as to whether belief in superstitions is increasing, decreasing or has remained almost the same in the past 25 years. (In case the superstition is pan district, documentation of inter-district variations may also be done.) What have been the reasons for the increase, decrease or unchanged status of superstitions in this period?

(C) Whether spread of education and greater exposure to the world as a whole has made any impact on the belief of superstitions?

(D) What practices or measures can the government and governance follow to eradicate malignant superstitions and create a superstition free Karnataka?

#### **5. Research Methodology:**

The following methodology and research tools will be employed during the assessment.

- ***Literature Review***

The Consultant Evaluation Organization will have to review the existing literature that may exist in the Gazetteers of the districts of Karnataka (particularly those written in the British period) and news items reporting about the superstitions, and essays, theses or research papers on superstitions available. The review should also include documentation and review of the formal and informal measures taken by the government, district administration and society at large to counter superstitions and what was the result of these?

It is indicated that the book "Omens and Superstitions of South India" written by Mr. Edgar Thurston, CIE, first published in 1912 and recently republished in 2013 (on line available at [www.gutenberg.org/files/35690-h/35690-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35690-h/35690-h.htm)) may be referred to in literature review. Another book titled "Superstition-A Rational Discourse" written by Yadnyeshwar Nigale and

translated by Ms. Suman Oak, published by Lokbhumi Prakashan, Panaji, can also be found relevant in parts.

- ***Interviews with key persons***

The Consultant Evaluation Organization will have to interview the following types of persons-

- Those who have suffered themselves in person, or at one member of their family suffered, as a result of a superstition forced upon them in which they did not wish to be a part of.
- Those members of society, who have opposed any of the aforecited specific superstitions for documenting the nature of their efforts, the support they received (or did not receive) from the society or State/ District administration in their efforts and the result of it?

- ***Focus Group Discussions(FGD)***

The Consultant Evaluation Organization should conduct FGD of groups each consisting of 10 to 15 participants. Separate FGDs should be conducted for men and women. The FGDs should focus on documentation of the aforecited superstitions prevalent in the area and on points (B) to (E) of Research Objectives detailed above.

## **6. The Final Report :**

The Consultant Evaluation Organization shall document the assignment in a final report; which should be in English and Kannada. The report shall include:

- Executive Summary (say about 1500 words).
- Details of the Assignment methodology and analysis.
- Findings and Recommendations.
- Lessons learned from the study.
- Annexures including questionnaire.

## **7. Time Schedule :**



On the basis of the proposed time schedule outline in these Terms of Reference, the consultant organization shall prepare a brief work plan. The work plan should set out the Consultant Organization's approach for conducting research activities. The period for the consultancy should not exceed 6 months starting with day of signing the agreement. They are expected to adhere to the following timelines and deliverables or be quicker than the follows.

- a. Work plan submission : One month after signing the agreement.
- b. Field info Collection : Three months from date of Work Plan Approval.
- c. Draft report Submission : One month after field data collection.
- d. Final Report Submission : One month from draft report approval.
- e. Total duration : 6 months.

**9. Qualifications of the Consultant Organizations and method of selection:**

Consultant Organizations should have and provide details of evaluation team members having in depth knowledge of the issue, have had done previous studies and written publications in this or relevant subject with support team having fluency in Kannada and English and skills in research methodology having technical qualifications/capability as including as follows:

1. Masters in Sociology.
2. Masters in Psychology.
3. At least graduate in Medicine and Surgery.
4. Masters in Women's Studies or Graduate in Law.

**Consultant Organizations at least three of the above appropriate kind of personnel will not be considered as competent for the status study.**

**10. Cost and schedule of budget releases:**

Output based budget release will be as follows-

- a. The **first instalment** of Consultation fee amounting to 30% of the total fee shall be payable as advance to the Consultant after the approval of the Work Plan, but only on execution of a bank guarantee of a scheduled nationalized bank, valid for a period of at least 12 months from the date of issuance of advance.
- b. The **second instalment** of Consultation fee amounting to 50% of the total fee shall be payable to the Consultant after the approval of the Draft report.
- c. The **third and final instalment** of Consultation fee amounting to 20% of the total fee shall be payable to the Consultant after the receipt of the hard and soft copies of the final report in such format and number as prescribed in the agreement, along with all original documents containing primary and secondary data, processed data outputs, study report and soft copies of all literature used in the final report.

Taxes will be deducted from each payment, as per rates in force. In addition, service tax will be paid as prescribed by law.

**11. Selection of Consultant Agency for Evaluation:**

The selection of evaluation agency should be finalized as per provisions of KTPP Act and rules and the Empanelment Manual of KEA.

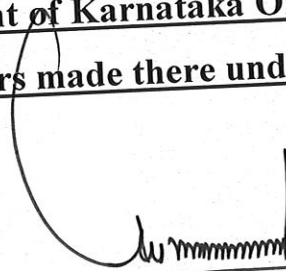
**12. Contact person for further details:**

Sri. B.K.Dikshit, Chief Evaluation Officer, Karnataka Evaluation Authority, No. 542, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gate, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, M.S.Buildings, Bangalore. Phone number 22032561 and Sri.S.A.Katarki, Consultant Evaluation, phone number



22032189, will be the contact persons for giving information and details for this study.

**The entire process of study shall be subject to and conform to the letter and spirit of the contents of the Government of Karnataka Order no. PD/8/EVN (2)/2011 dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and orders made there under.**

  
Chief Evaluation Officer 11/06/11  
Karnataka Evaluation Authority