

## About District

**Ratnagiri** is a coastal district of Maharashtra state, situated in the western coast of India. It has north-south length of about 180 km and average east-west extension of about 64 km. Sahyadri hills surround it in the east beyond which there are Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur districts, Raigad district in the north, the Arabian Sea in the west and Sindhudurg district in the south.

Ratnagiri can be physically divided into 3 zones. **Coastal Zone** – This zone extends to about 10-15 km from seacoast and generally has low altitude and about 2500 mm rainfall. Most of the activities in this area are connected with sea. This area contains numerous beaches, creeks, sea forts, harbors, hot water springs, caves, temples and other religious places, places of scenic beauty as well as birthplace of some great personalities. The possible tourist activities include inland and sea water ways, sailing, boating, water sports like water scooter, canoeing, fishing, camping, marinas, coastal resorts and marine parks; but the major problem is the lack of easy accessibility and road network. **Hill area Zone** – This area includes the western slopes of Sahyadri and extends up to about 10-15 km. It generally has medium to high altitude with high rainfall of about 3500 mm. A large area in this zone is covered by forest although it is deteriorating very fast. A substantial drop in temperature is experienced at places exposed to the rising western breeze. This area contains hill forts, ghat roads, forests, wild life, etc. It gives panoramic views at many places. The possible tourist activities include trekking, hiking, forest camps, holiday resorts, bird sanctuaries, wild life safari, etc. **Middle Zone** – This area lies between the coastal and hill areas and generally has a medium altitude. It is more accessible due to the Bombay-Goa-Highway as well as the Konkan railway. However, it contains very few places of tourist interest, mostly religious places and hot water springs.

## History

In 1731 Ratnagiri came under the control of Satara kings; in 1818 it was surrendered to the British. A fort was built during the Bijapur dynasty and strengthened in 1670 by the Maratha king Shivaji, which is located on a headland near the harbour. It is one of the ports of the Konkan coast. It has a palace where the last king of Burma, Thibaw and later Veer Savarkar were confined. It is also believed that the Pandavas having performed their pilgrimage on the 13th year had settled in the adjoining territory of the Ratnagiri district and when the Pandavas and the Kauravas had the famous war at Kurushetra, the king of this region Veeravat Ray had accompanied them there. Ratnagiri district is located in the southwestern part of Maharashtra State on the Arabian Sea coast. The surrounding area is bordered by the Sahyadri Hills on the East and Arabian Sea on the West. It forms a part of the greater tract known as Konkan. This region was under the rule of the Mauryas, the Nalas, the Silaharas, the Chalukyas, the Kadambas, the Portuguese, the Marathas and subsequently the British. In 1948 the independent princely state of Sawantwadi was merged with the Indian union and in 1956 with Bombay Province. In 1960 with the creation of Maharashtra, Ratnagiri became a district. In 1981 Ratnagiri district was bifurcated and the new district of Sindhudurg was created.