



SHRI ANKEGOWDA M



Shri Ankegowda M is a renowned bibliophile and knowledge conservator from Pandavapura Taluk, Mandya District, Karnataka, who has devoted his entire life to the preservation, collection, and free public dissemination of books.

2. Born on 8th January, 1949 in Chinakuruli village, Pandavapura Taluk, Karnataka, Shri Ankegowda holds a Master's degree in Kannada Literature. He served as a Time Officer at Pandavapura Sahakara Sakkare Karkane Ltd. (PSSK Ltd.) for 32 years and opted for voluntary retirement in 2005. From his college days, he nurtured a deep passion for reading and collecting books, which gradually transformed into a lifelong mission of national importance. Over a period of nearly five decades, he has created one of the largest private personal book collections in the world, making a significant and unique contribution to the promotion of education, literature, and cultural heritage in India.

3. Shri Ankegowda has personally collected more than 20 lakh books over the last 50 years, using his entire personal earnings for this purpose. His collection includes books in Kannada, English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and several other Indian languages, covering diverse subjects such as literature, history, art, culture, philosophy, spiritualism, music, geography, science, and social sciences. The collection is preserved at his residence, popularly known as "Pustakada Mane" (House of Books), which functions as a free public library. The library is open free of cost to students, researchers, competitive examination aspirants, and the general public, thereby promoting inclusive access to knowledge irrespective of socio-economic background.

4. Shri Ankegowda manages this vast collection without any paid staff, with support only from his family. He continues to expand the collection even today and resides within the same premises, dedicating his entire life to the upkeep and safeguarding of books. His contribution is unparalleled in the field of knowledge preservation and public education. His life exemplifies selfless service, simplicity, and unwavering commitment to the dissemination of knowledge.

5. Recognizing the exceptional scale and public value of his work, Shri Ankegowda has received several honours, including the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award (2014) and recognition by the Limca Book of Records (2017) for his extraordinary personal book collection. The Government of Karnataka has also extended infrastructural support to accommodate the growing collection, acknowledging the societal importance of his lifelong service.