in the city with a rock garden, a variety of large plants and flowers-many imported from London's Kew Gardens by a British Superintendent, John Cameron, in the 1870s. He had also initiated the construction of a beautiful glass house in the middle, surrounded by Champaka Trees and Pencil Cedars. It is called Lal Bagh because of a special variety of red roses which bloom here throughout the year. Bangalore, known as the Garden City of India, has many other gardens. Its streets were lined with trees on both sides, some of which were flowering. Its palaces and British-era red-brick public buildings and grounds were decorated with fine trees and well-maintained, flowering gardens.

The city had many local and exotic restaurants and we had meals at Afghan and Tandoori restaurants. The food and decor at these places were excellent by international standards. There are several large, modern shopping malls in the city and due to the predominance in Internet industries of Bangalore (known as the Silicon Valley of India) and the western countries having found Bangalore a good place to outsource all kinds of work cheaply and efficiently, it has prospered much compared to others parts of India. The malls were full of eager shoppers and fancy, export quality goods of all kinds. There were state silk factories for which there were Karnataka State emporiums at different locations in the city. They had impressive collections at reasonable prices of handicrafts of wood, ivory and copper products and of course, high quality silk saris and other garments for which South India, particularly Bangalore and Mysore, were famous. By the way, it was Tipu who had first imported silk cocoons and technology from Bengal and started a dozen silk factories for weaving and exporting silk to other parts of India and abroad.

After our friend returned from his trip, he took us to Srirangapatna and Mysore by car on a day-trip.

We first went to Srirangapatna, which was a two hour drive or more depending on the traffic. Due to the prosperity and rapid development in the state, the roads, including the fine highways, were very congested and slow. We visited Tipu Sultan's garden house in the midst of vast verdant grounds and beautiful trees, all artistically planted and well-maintained. The surroundings were pleasant and soothing even though it was mid-day and the sun was burning hot and the temperature was in the high eighties. The house was made of wood and painted in green. It is now serving as a museum of the Sultan's artifacts, paintings and furniture. Overall, the house was very tastefully decorated.



The Tiger of Mysore – Tipu Sultan (1750-1799).

A visit to Tipu's tomb was an essential obligation for me. The readers might recall that Tipu was surrounded by the armies of the British, the Marhathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad. His army chief had already betrayed and secretly joined in a conspiracy to dethrone Tipu. He did not try to resist the combined attacks. Heavy British canon fire breached the ramparts of Tipu's fort giving access to the attackers to go inside. Tipu refused to get away and fought hard along with his loyal troops till his army was subjugated. He was seriously injured and his soldiers placed him on a stretcher on the floor of a veranda of one of the palace buildings. A British soldier came by and tried to snatch his sword from him. Tipu was the last person to tolerate such humiliation while he was still alive. He struck the soldier with his sword in the leg even in his injured condition. The angry British Soldier shot him in the head with his rifle, killing the Sultan instantaneously. His contemporary and with whom Tipu had corresponded to seek French help against the British- the great Napoleon, had surrendered and pleaded for refuge in England after his defeat at Waterloo. In contrast, Tipu Sultan valiantly fought till the end and died honorably in 1799 defending his fort in Srirangapatna.

The victorious British had allowed a decent burial of Tipu at the nearby mausoleum, which he had built for his parents who lay there. Built in Islamic architectural pattern, the marble mausoleum was very impressive with intricate filigree work all over and slender minarets and a small but