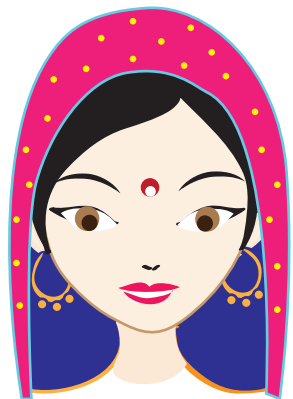
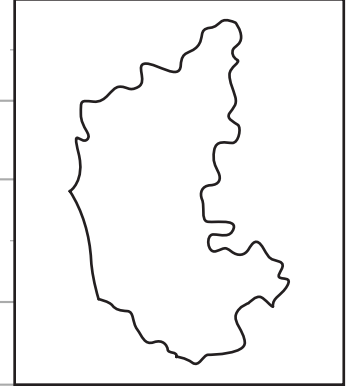


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Bindi

A bindi is a colorful dot that is placed in the middle of the forehead by Indian women, especially Hindus. Hindus attach a lot of importance to this ornamental mark and call it by various names - pottu, bindi, tikka, tilakam, and sindoor. Traditionally, the area between the eyebrows is said to be the sixth chakra, ajna, the seat of "concealed wisdom." The bindi is said to retain energy and strengthen concentration. Red colored bindis also shows true love and prosperity. Traditionally, kumkum (a mixture of turmeric and lime) or chandan (sandalwood) was used to mark a bindi. Kumkum is hygroscopic in nature and can greatly assist to remove excess water from one's head. Turmeric's anti-bacterial properties are helpful, too. Chandan or sandalwood is renowned for its "cooling" properties. For a hot tropic country, application of chandan on forehead (a nerve center) helps to cool one's entire system.