



RV College of Engineering®

Mysore Road, RV Vidyaniketan Post,
Bengaluru - 560059, Karnataka, India

www.rvce.edu.in
Tel: +91-80-68188100
+91-80-68188111
+91-80-68188112

Unveiling Beluru: A Journey Through Hoysala Heritage

REPORT ON BELUR TRAVELOGUE CAPTURED BY OUR GROUP

PHOTOGRAPHY & FILM MAKING – HS247LH

Semester End Examination

Submitted by

Aayushh K P Naik
Abhinav Krishna Rayachoti
Aditya Sahay
Chirag A Chintaal
Aditya Bhandari

1RV23CS005
1RV23CS008
1RV23CS021
1RV23CS076
1RV23CD003

Faculty:

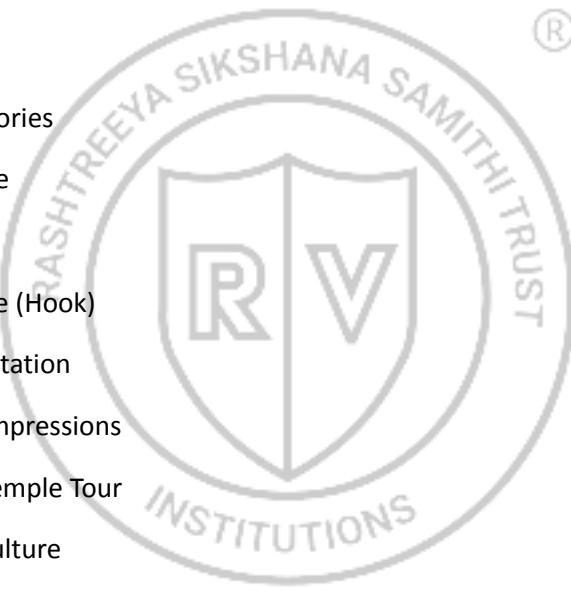
Dr. Shanmukha Nagaraj
HoD, Dept. of Mechanical Engg.

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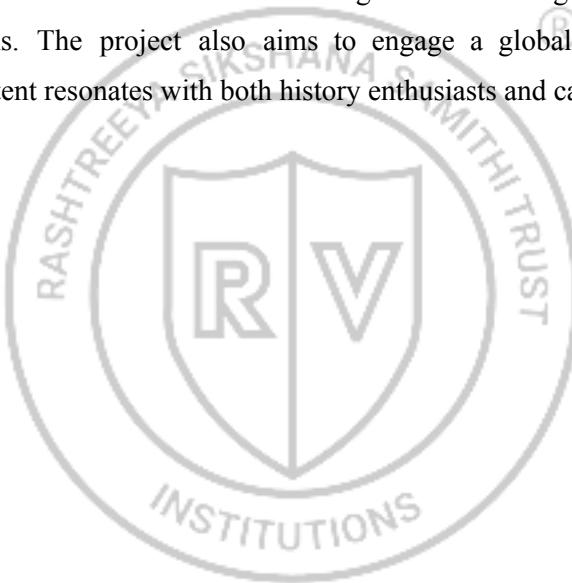
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OBJECTIVE

The primary goal of the "Unveiling Beluru: A Journey Through Hoysala Heritage" vlog is to craft a visually captivating and intellectually enriching narrative that highlights the historical, architectural, and cultural significance of Beluru, with a focus on the iconic Chennakeshava Temple. The vlog aims to transcend the traditional travelogue format by blending immersive first-person storytelling with meticulously researched historical insights, offering viewers a holistic experience that educates and inspires. By showcasing the intricate artistry of Hoysala architecture, the vibrant local culture, and the creator's personal journey, the vlog seeks to foster a deep appreciation for Beluru's heritage and encourage viewers to explore India's lesser-known historical gems. The project also aims to engage a global audience through accessible storytelling, ensuring the content resonates with both history enthusiasts and casual travelers.



PRE-SHOOT PREPARATION

A robust pre-production phase was critical to ensure the vlog's narrative coherence, visual appeal, and logistical success. The preparation was divided into several key areas to streamline the filming process and align it with the project's objectives.

2.1 Research

Extensive research formed the backbone of the vlog's content, ensuring historical accuracy and cultural sensitivity. The research process included:

- **Historical Context:** Studying the Hoysala dynasty (10th–14th centuries), with a focus on their architectural contributions and patronage of the arts. Key sources included academic texts on Hoysala history, such as *The Hoysalas: A Medieval Indian Dynasty* by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, and online resources like the Archaeological Survey of India's documentation.
- **Chennakeshava Temple Specifics:** Detailed exploration of the temple's construction (completed in 1117 CE under King Vishnuvardhana), its star-shaped platform, and its intricate soapstone carvings. Special attention was given to the 42 Madanikas (celestial damsels) and their symbolic significance, as well as the temple's dedication to Lord Vishnu.
- **Cultural Elements:** Investigation into local traditions, festivals (e.g., the annual Rathotsava), and daily rituals at the temple to capture authentic cultural moments. Research also covered Beluru's modern-day context as a small town in Karnataka, including its culinary specialties like *Mysore Pak* and local eateries.
- **Visual References:** Analysis of existing travel vlogs and documentaries on Hoysala architecture to identify effective storytelling techniques and avoid clichés. This informed the decision to prioritize unique angles, such as the interplay of light and shadow on carvings, to differentiate the vlog.

2.2 Storyboard Development

A comprehensive storyboard was developed to guide the visual narrative and ensure a cohesive structure. The storyboard outlined the following segments:

- **Introduction (0:00–0:30):** A dynamic hook featuring a time-lapse of the journey to Beluru, paired with an energetic voiceover introducing the destination and its historical significance.

- **Journey Clips (0:30–1:30):** A montage of travel moments, including scenic shots of Karnataka's countryside, local transport (e.g., bus or auto-rickshaw), and quick glimpses of roadside eateries to build anticipation.
- **Arrival at Beluru (1:30–2:00):** Wide-angle establishing shots of the Chennakeshava Temple's gopuram and surroundings, with a personal narration capturing first impressions.
- **Temple Exterior (2:00–4:00):** A detailed exploration of the temple's outer walls, star-shaped platform, and iconic carvings, using a mix of wide, medium, and panning shots.
- **Temple Interior (4:00–6:00):** Focus on the sanctum sanctorum, intricate pillars, and ceiling designs, with slow pans to highlight craftsmanship.
- **Cultural Observations (6:00–7:30):** Clips of local priests performing rituals, interactions with visitors, and brief shots of nearby markets or food stalls.
- **Local Cuisine and Interactions (7:30–8:30):** A short segment on Beluru's food scene, featuring a local dish (e.g., *Bisi Bele Bath*) and casual conversations with vendors or guides.
- **Conclusion and Reflections (8:30–9:30):** A reflective narration summarizing the experience, reiterating key historical facts, and delivering a call-to-action (e.g., "Visit Beluru to witness this masterpiece!").

The storyboard was designed to balance visual appeal, educational content, and emotional engagement, with clear transitions planned to maintain narrative flow.

2.3 Permissions and Logistics

To ensure a smooth shoot, logistical preparations were made well in advance:

- **Filming Permissions:** Contacted the temple authorities and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to confirm videography regulations. Commercial filming inside the temple requires prior approval, so necessary permits were secured. Drones were ruled out due to ASI restrictions on aerial photography near protected monuments.
- **Travel Planning:** A detailed itinerary was created, including travel from RV College of Engineering to Beluru (approximately 220 km, 4-hour drive). Accommodation options - mainly for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea were researched to ensure proximity to the filming location.
- **Timing Considerations:** The shoot was scheduled during late morning hours to capture hard natural light, with a secondary session in the late afternoon for golden-hour shots. Weather forecasts were checked to plan for Karnataka's typically warm and dry June climate.



ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

The choice of equipment was tailored to the vlog's dynamic shooting environment, balancing portability, quality, and versatility.

3.1 Cameras

- **GoPro Hero 11 (Primary Camera):** Chosen for its compact size, durability, and wide-angle lens, ideal for POV shots, time-lapses, and dynamic walking sequences through the temple complex. GoPro's 4K resolution ensured high-quality footage suitable for close-up architectural details.
- **Smartphone Camera (Secondary):** A high-end smartphone was used for quick, discreet shots and macro photography of carvings, leveraging its advanced computational photography for vibrant colors and sharp details.

3.2 Stabilization

- **Gimbal :** A handheld gimbal was used with both the GoPro and smartphone to ensure smooth, cinematic footage during walking shots and pans across the temple's intricate surfaces. The gimbal's 3-axis stabilization was critical for professional-grade visuals.
- **Tripod :** A lightweight tripod was used for static shots, time-lapses (e.g., sunrise over temple), and on-camera narration segments to ensure stability and precise framing.
- **Headset :** For some of the shots and videos, a headset was used to fasten the GoPro on the forehead.

3.3 Audio

- **SmartPhone Microphone:** A wireless lavalier mic was used for clear on-camera narration and interviews, minimizing background noise in the temple's busy environment.
- **Go-Pro Microphone:** Attached to the GoPro for capturing high-quality ambient sounds, such as temple bells, chants, or market bustle, to enhance the immersive experience.

3.4 Filters and Accessories

- **Neutral Density (ND) Filters:** ND8 and ND16 filters were used with the GoPro to manage bright daylight exposure, ensuring proper shutter speeds (1/60s for 30fps) for cinematic motion blur.
- **Polarizing Filter:** A polarizing filter was employed to reduce glare on reflective surfaces (e.g., polished stone carvings) and enhance color saturation in outdoor shots.

3.5 Power and Storage

- **Power Banks (20,000 mAh):** Two high-capacity power banks ensured continuous operation of the GoPro, smartphone, and gimbal throughout the day-long shoot.
- **SD Cards (128 GB, Class 10):** Multiple high-speed SD cards were used to handle the 4.5 GB of raw GoPro footage, with backups to prevent data loss.
- **Portable Hard Drive (1 TB):** A rugged external drive was carried for on-site backups of footage, ensuring data security during travel.



SHOOTING INSTRUCTIONS

The on-site execution followed the storyboard closely, with adaptations based on real-time conditions. The shooting plan was structured to maximize visual variety and narrative depth.

4.1 Opening Sequence (Hook)

- **Narration Introduction:** A voiceover (recorded on-site with the lavalier mic) introduced Beluru's historical significance, e.g., "Today, we're diving into the heart of Hoysala artistry at the Chennakeshava Temple, a 12th-century masterpiece!" The tone was enthusiastic yet informative to hook viewers immediately.

4.2 Journey Documentation

- **Travel Montage:** A 60-second montage included shots of the vehicle's interior, passing landscapes, and quick stops at roadside stalls for local snacks (e.g., coconut water or *vada*). The GoPro's wide-angle lens captured the vibrancy of the journey, while the smartphone provided close-ups of food or interactions.
- **Creative Transitions:** Smooth transitions, such as wipes (using passing vehicles) or fades (to simulate time progression), were planned to maintain visual flow between journey clips and the arrival segment.

4.3 Arrival and First Impressions

- **Establishing Shots:** Upon arrival, wide-angle GoPro shots captured the temple's towering gopuram and surrounding greenery, emphasizing its grandeur. A slow pan across the entrance was filmed using the gimbal for cinematic effect.
- **Personal Narration:** An on-camera segment featured the creator standing near the temple entrance, sharing first impressions: "The moment you step into Beluru, you feel the weight of history in every stone." This was shot with the tripod for stability and the lavalier mic for clear audio.

4.4 Main Content – Temple Tour

The temple tour formed the vlog's core, showcasing the Chennakeshava Temple's architectural splendor through a structured sequence of shots:

- **Exterior Shots (2:00–4:00):**
 - Wide shots captured the temple's star-shaped platform and outer walls, emphasizing its symmetrical design. The GoPro's wide-angle lens was ideal for these shots, with the tripod used for stable pans.
 - Medium shots focused on specific features, like the latticed windows or friezes depicting mythological scenes (e.g., Ramayana and Mahabharata).
 - Slow-motion clips (60fps) highlighted the play of sunlight on the carvings, adding a dramatic effect.
- **Interior Shots (4:00–6:00):**
 - The smartphone camera was used for macro shots of the polished pillars and intricate ceiling patterns, leveraging its superior low-light performance in the dimly lit sanctum.
 - A slow, deliberate pan across the Madanika sculptures showcased their expressive poses and detailed jewelry, with voiceover narration explaining their cultural significance.
- **Lighting Considerations:** Shots were timed to capture the soft morning light filtering through the temple's open courtyards, with golden-hour shots in the late afternoon to highlight the warm tones of the soapstone.

4.5 Interaction and Culture

- **Local Engagement:** With prior consent, brief interviews with a temple priest or local guide were filmed, providing insights into the temple's history or ongoing rituals. The lavalier mic ensured clear audio despite background noise.
- **Cultural Moments:** Spontaneous footage of devotees lighting lamps or participating in rituals added authenticity. A short clip of a local festival preparation (if encountered) was included to showcase Beluru's living heritage.
- **Market and Food:** A 30-second segment captured a nearby market stall selling *Mysore Pak* or *Filter Coffee*, with the smartphone used for vibrant close-ups of food preparation. Casual interactions with vendors added a relatable, human touch.

4.6 Conclusion and Reflections

- **Reflective Narration:** The vlog closes with the creator outside the temple Gopuram, reflecting on the experience: "Beluru isn't just a place; it's a testament to human creativity and devotion." This was shot with the GoPro Headset for a steady frame.
- **Historical Recap:** Key facts (e.g., the temple's 1117 CE completion) were reiterated via voiceover, paired with lingering shots of the temple's silhouette against the sunset.



EDITING GUIDELINES

Post-production was approached with precision to transform raw footage into a polished, engaging vlog that adhered to best practices for online video content.

5.1 Continuity and Transitions

- **Seamless Flow:** Clips were arranged to follow the storyboard's narrative arc, ensuring logical progression from journey to temple exploration to reflection.
- **Transitions:** Smooth transitions, such as cross-dissolves for time progression or match cuts (e.g., aligning a carving's curve with a road's bend), were used to maintain visual continuity. Apple's iMovie was planned for editing, leveraging their robust transition libraries.

5.2 Background Music

- **Music Selection and Sound design:** Royalty free calming music (e.) were chosen to complement the temple's serene ambiance and the drizzling weather at the temple. The music volume was kept low during narration or ambient sound segments to avoid overpowering key audio.

5.3 Historical Pop-ups

- **Educational Overlays:** Brief text overlays were inserted during introductory shots, using a clean, sans-serif font (e.g., Montserrat) in white with a subtle drop shadow. These were kept concise (3–5 seconds) to avoid distracting from the visuals.
- **Placement:** Pop-ups were strategically placed in less busy areas of the frame (e.g., top-left corner during wide shots) to maintain focus on the carvings.

5.4 Duration Management

- **Target Length and pacing:** The final vlog was edited to a duration of 8–10 minutes, aligning with YouTube's optimal engagement metrics for travel content. Unnecessary footage (e.g., redundant walking shots) was trimmed to maintain pacing. Fast-paced cuts were used for the journey montage to convey energy, while slower cuts and longer holds were employed for temple shots to emphasize grandeur and detail.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- **Challenge: Rain at the temple**
 - **Solution:** Waterproof GoPro Hero 11 was used for primary filming and drops of water connected on camera were periodically removed.
- **Challenge: Bright Lighting Conditions**
 - **Solution:** ND filters and polarizing filters were used to manage exposure and reduce glare, with post-production color grading to enhance vibrancy.
- **Challenge: Crowds at the Temple**
 - **Solution:** Filming was scheduled during the afternoon to minimize crowd interference, with additional shots taken from unique angles (e.g., low-angle shots of carvings) to avoid capturing bystanders.
- **Challenge: Audio Noise**
 - **Solution:** Audio was removed during editing, due to irreparable noise in the footage, of people talking, wind blowing and similarly other disturbances.



OUTCOMES & CONCLUSIONS

- **Viewer Engagement:** Attract history enthusiasts, travel vloggers, and cultural explorers through compelling visuals and storytelling.
- **Educational Impact:** Increase awareness of Hoysala architecture and Beluru's cultural significance, encouraging viewers to explore similar heritage sites.
- **Knowledge Growth:** Get a strong sense of practical-knowledge and hands-on learning on the various techniques and methods to implement video vlogs and using various video editing softwares.

The "Unveiling Beluru: A Journey Through Hoysala Heritage" vlog represents a meticulously planned and executed project that successfully blends immersive storytelling, historical education, and cultural exploration. Through thorough pre-production research, strategic equipment choices, and a structured shooting and editing approach, the vlog captures the grandeur of the Chennakeshava Temple and the vibrant essence of Beluru. Overcoming challenges like lighting and crowd management, the project delivers a polished, engaging video under 10 minutes, designed to resonate with history enthusiasts and travelers alike. The vlog is poised to drive viewer engagement, promote appreciation for Hoysala heritage, and inspire visits to this architectural marvel, contributing to the growth of knowledge and cultural storytelling legacy.

