

CULTURAL HERITAGE VISIT TO SHRAVANABELAGOLA, BELUR, AND HALEBIDU FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The Office of International Affairs, St Joseph's University, Bengaluru, organised a one day cultural heritage visit to Shravanabelagola, Belur, and Halebidu on Sunday, 15 March 2026. The visit aimed to provide international students with an opportunity to experience the rich historical, architectural, and cultural heritage of Karnataka while fostering interaction and cultural exchange among participants. Students from diverse countries including El Salvador, South Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Tibet, Nepal, as well as NRI students from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait participated in the visit.

The group departed from the university campus early in the morning and reached Shravanabelagola after breakfast on the way. Participants climbed more than 600 steps to reach the summit of Vindhyagiri Hill, where the majestic monolithic statue of Bahubali stands. Rising to a height of approximately 57 feet, the statue represents ideals of renunciation, spiritual discipline, and inner peace. The visit allowed students to learn about Jain philosophy and the historical significance of one of India's most important pilgrimage sites, while also enjoying the scenic views from the hilltop.

After the visit, the group proceeded towards Belur with a lunch break along the way. The next destination was the Chennakeshava Temple in Belur, a magnificent example of Hoysala architecture built in the 12th century. Students closely observed the intricate carvings depicting mythological stories, dancers, animals, and elaborate decorative patterns, gaining insight into the artistic brilliance of the Hoysala period.

The final stop was the Hoysaleswara Temple in Halebidu, another architectural masterpiece known for its detailed sculptures and historical importance. Participants explored the temple complex and spent some time interacting in the surrounding gardens, reflecting on the day's experiences. Overall, the visit proved to be an enriching and memorable experience, offering students a deeper appreciation of India's cultural heritage while also strengthening connections among participants.

The international students expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunity to visit these historic sites and experience the cultural richness of Karnataka. Many participants shared that the visit was both educational and memorable, and they conveyed their gratitude to the Office of International Affairs and the organising faculty Mr. P Venugopal for arranging such a meaningful and well-coordinated heritage visit.

For the Images of the CULTURAL HERITAGE VISIT TO SHRAVANABELAGOLA, BELUR, AND HALEBIDU FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, kindly refer to the Photo Gallery: <https://sju.edu.in/gallery/136>