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Temples of Talakadu - Karnataka
Temple Architecture
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Introduction

Talakad or Talakadu, an ancient town located towards the left bank of the river Kaveri/Cauvery. It is located at a distance of 185kms from Bengaluru and lies a very short distance of 45kms from Mysuru. It is place of pre-historic settlements. The major portion of this region is covered by sand. Talakadu was once a part of Ganga Empire and then came under the control of Cholas. Later Hoysalas ruled it and then the region fell into the hands of Vijayanagara kingdom for a certain period of time. Further the King of Vijayanagara ruled this region and was taken over by the Wadiyars of Mysuru.

Talakadu is a historical treat for those with a historical bend of mind. The town is famous for several claims. One of the predominant claims is the curse that turned to thriving town into a sandy shore with sand dunes of about 15 meters high. Talakadu, once a wonderful city more than thirty temples was suppressed under sand since 16th century. According to the history the disaster was caused due to the natural calamity during the rule of Wadiyars, but as per the local myth the reason for this phenomenon takes an other dimension which states that the cause for this sandy shore is because of the curse of Queen Alamelu of this region.

Talakadu Name Story:

A forest called Dakshinagasi Gajarna Keshtra (south facing forest with more elephant) early name of Talakadu.

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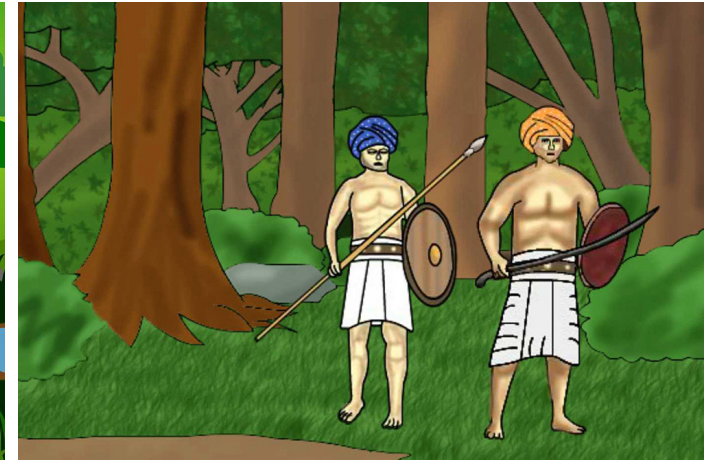
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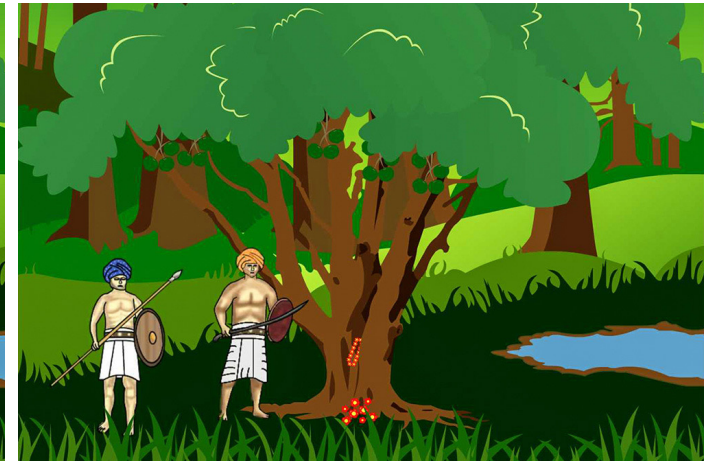
Everyday elephants use to wash the tree and worship the tree.

Hunters Tala and Kada who use to cut trees and hunt animals.

Tala and Kada both saw elephant worshiping the tree.

Tala and Kada wanted to know why elephants are worshiping the tree.

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Tala hits the tree with his weapon.

Tree starts to bleed, Tala and Kada were shocked by seeing the blood.

Lord Shiva apprised from the tree.

Lord Shiva told them to grind the fruits of the same tree and apply it on the bleeding place.

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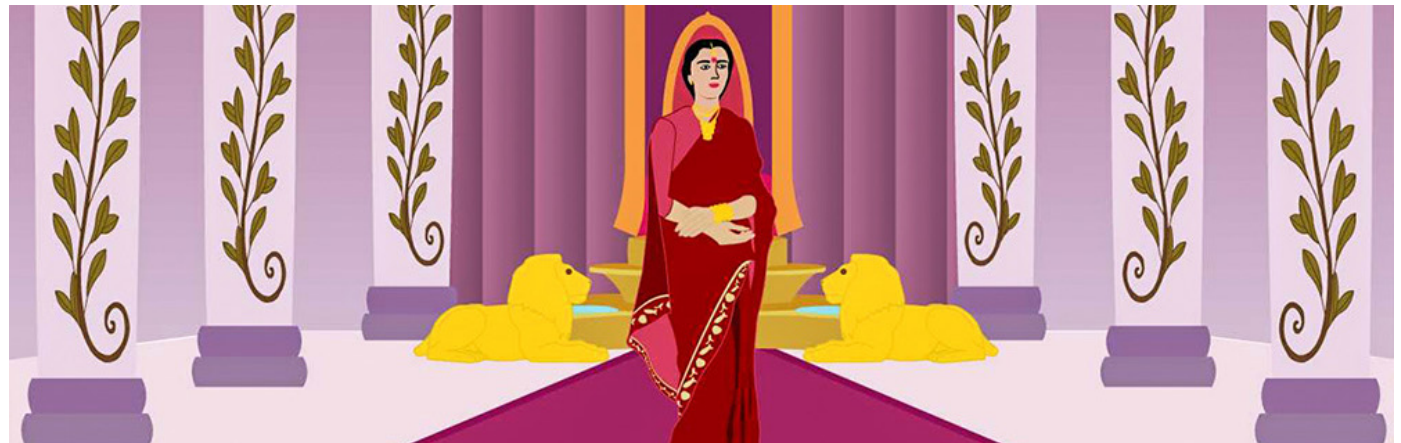Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Rakshitha
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Tala n Kada prepared the medicine.

Medicine was applied on the place were blood was bleeding.

Shiva granted a wish that hunters name should be the place name, Tala and Kada become "Talakadu".

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Alamelamma Curse

The devotees of Alamelu/Alamelamma and many historians believe in the story of greed and the power of curse that led to the present condition of Talakadu. The story is that, during 16th century the King Sri Ranga Raya, the ruler of Srirangapatna and an heir of Vijayanagara kingdom was a victim of an incurable disease. Hence the ruler undertook a pilgrimage to Talakadu hoping to be cured of his affliction. In order to make this journey, the ruler handed over the reins to his second wife Alamelu. Later when she heard the news that her husband is on death-bed and possibly could never return back to his capital, she decided to visit him during his last few days.

Alamelamma being a devotee of Sri Ranga Nayaki, the consort of Sri Ranganatha of Srirangapatna temple used to send all her jewels once in a year to Sri Ranga Nayaki to adorn with those jewels. Later the jewels would be returned to Alamelamma. During the time of her husband's illness she further handed over the kingdom over to the Mysore Maharaja, Raja Wadiyar. Ever since the dynasty was retained by Mysore Maharajas. It appears that once Raja Wadiyar desired to possess the jewels that were the property of Rani given for adorning the Goddess of Srirangapatna. Thus he being unable to obtain them and was eager to seize them at any pretext, he levied his army and proceeded against Rani. Meanwhile Sri Ranga Raya was dead and the widow Alamelamma was harassed. Thus Alamelamma thereupon sent her nose ring to Sri Ranga Nayaki and jumped into the river Cauvery at a place called Malangi, keeping rest of her jewels tied up in a cloth.

It is said that Alamelamma while she was drowning in river uttered a curse as 'Let Talakadu be covered by sand, let Malangi become a whirlpool and the Mysore Wadiyars fail to beget heirs. From then it is believed that once the fertile land of Talakadu became desert like town and got covered by sand, the river Cauvery at that particular point suddenly developed the whirlpool and the Mysore royal family got affected to beget heirs.

A forest called Dakshinagasi Gajarna Keshtra (south facing forest with more elephant) early name of Talakadu.

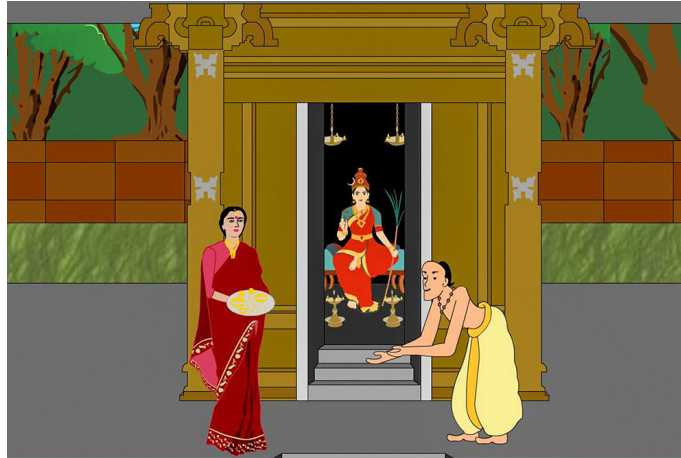Design Resource
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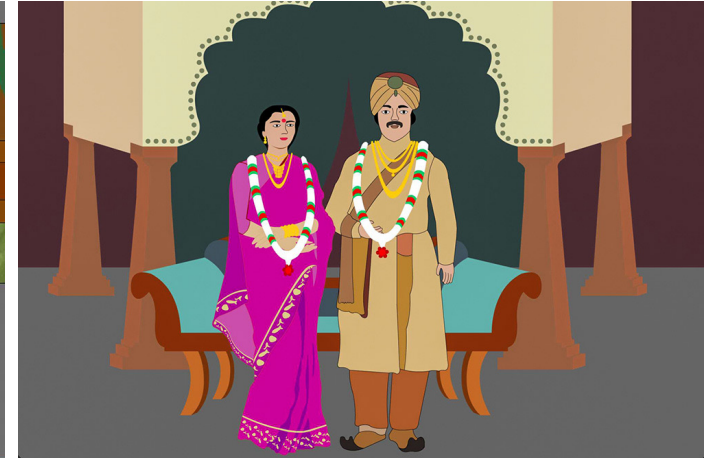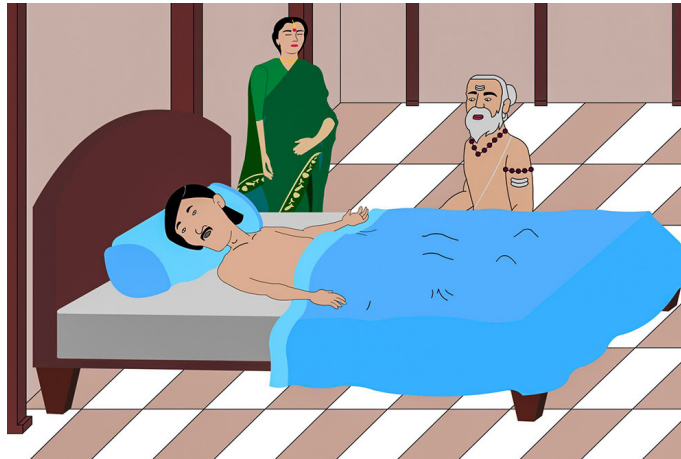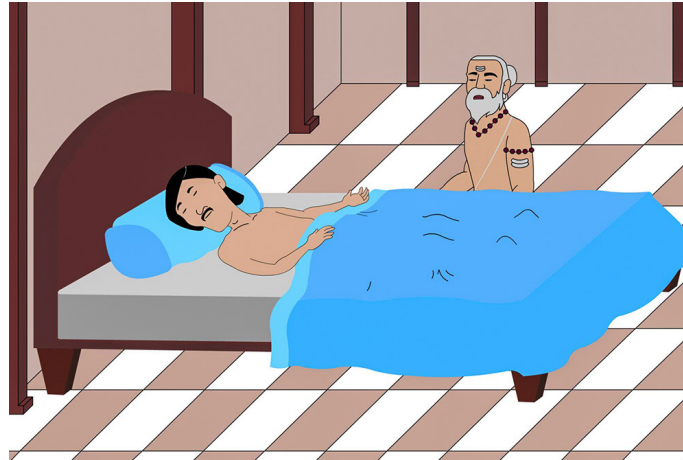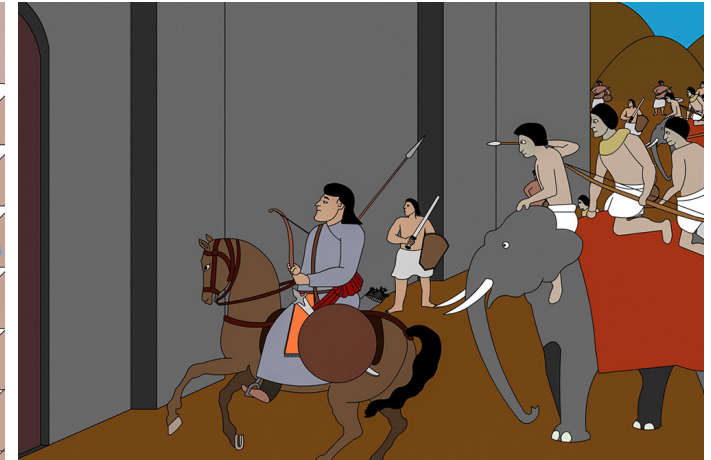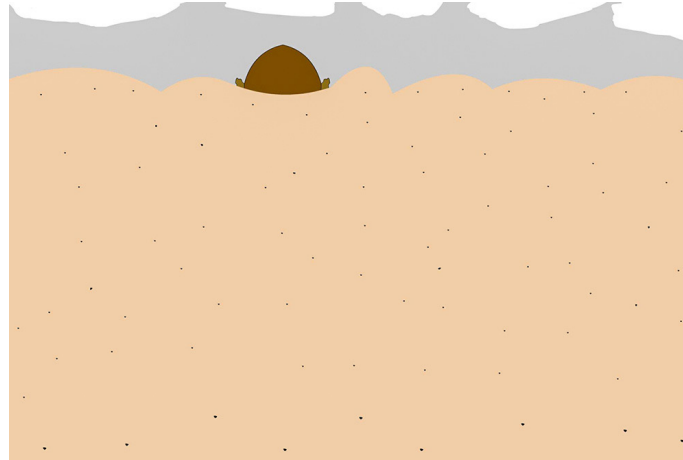NID Campus, Bengaluru

Round brush is used to paint on the bottle.

Artisan painting patterns on bottle using turquoise acrylic paint.

Artisan is drawing black outlines to make the bottle more interesting.

Warli designs are painted on bottle to fill up the white space.

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Cloth is wrapped over the glass bottle using glue.

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Panchalinga Darshan

Talakadu once famed for temples are now drowned under the sand dunes, yet there are few temples. Among all these temples are five temples dedicated to Lord Shiva are famously known for Panchalinga darshan, is believed to be very auspicious. The temples are namely:

• Vaidyanatheshwara Temple
• Vasukishwara or Pataleshwara Temple
• Saikateshwara or Maruleshwara Temple
• Arkeshwara Temple and
• Mallikarjuna Temple

These five temples are believed to be the five faces of Shiva famed as Pancha pathi. In honor of these five Shiva temples a fair is held called Panchalinga darshan. It is conducted during an auspicious period according to Hindu Panchang. It is believed that taking the darshan of these five Shivling darshan during the certain period of auspicious time helps in attaining peace and prosperity. This pancha linga darshan is usually held once in twelve, seven, five or three years at Talakadu where devotees undertake the darshan to fulfill their desires. Depending on the astrological calculations, the darshan in twelve years cycle is broken. But usually the occasion is held every once in twelve years on a new moon day of Karthika maasa (On a monday when the planet Sun is in the zodiac sign of scorpio). Devotees start the ritual by dipping in the dawn at Gokarna theertha. Then they start worshipping Gokarneshwara, Chandikadevi and then the main deity Vaidyanatheshwara. Then the devotees start bathing in northern, eastern, southern and western stretches of the river Cauvery and continue to worship Lord Arkeshwara, Lord Pataleshwara, Lord Maruleshwara, Lord Mallikarjuna accordingly by returning to Vaidyanatheshwara temple after each worship. And finally by worshipping Lord Keerthinarayana, devotees conclude the ritual of the day.

Vaidyanatheshwara Temple

Pataleshwara Temple

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Maruleshwara Temple

Arkeshwara Temple

Mallikarjuna Temple

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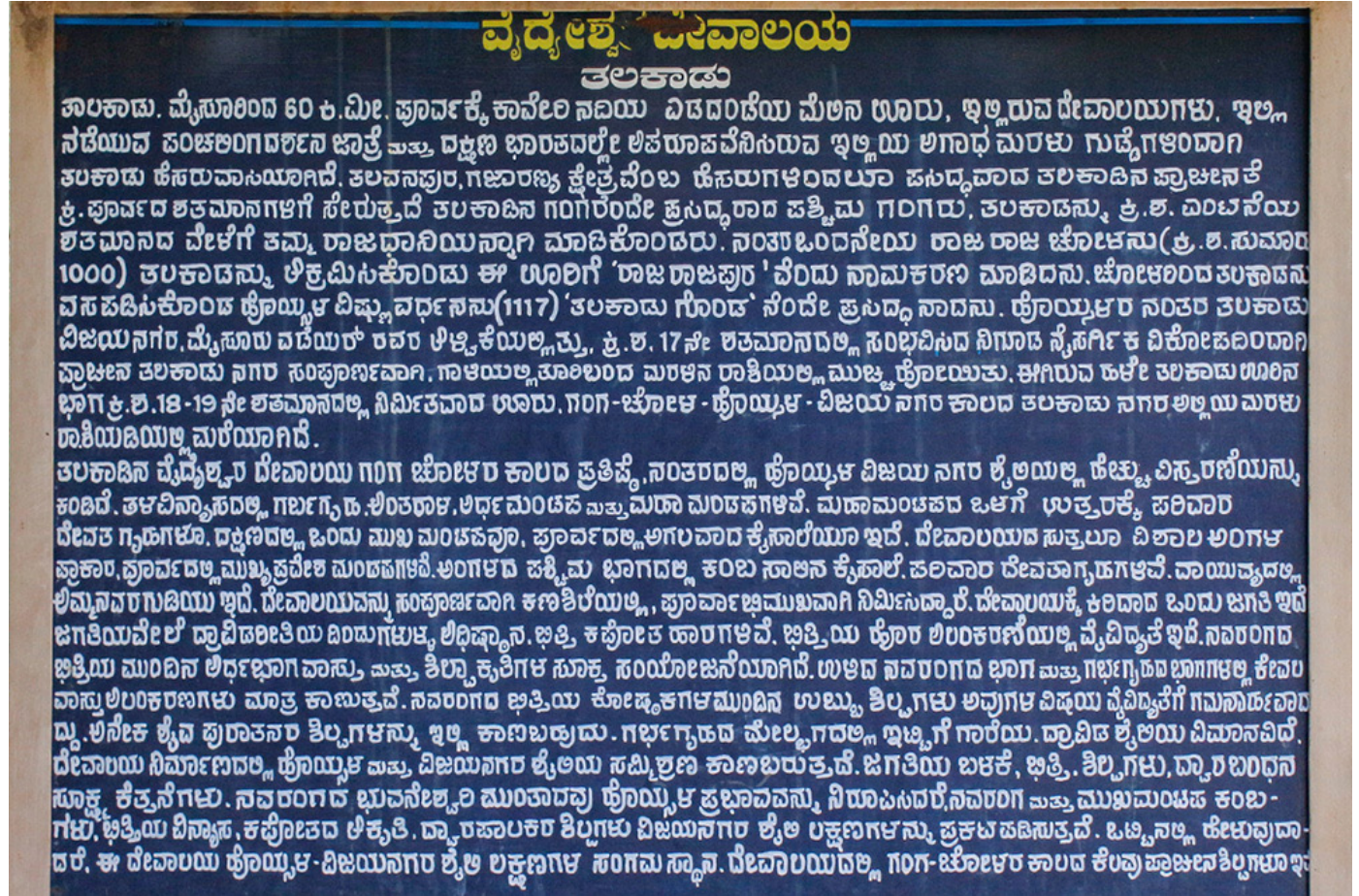## Temples of Talakadu - Karnataka
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Vaidyanatheshwara Temple

Vaidhyanatheshwara temple being located at Talakad has an interesting history that is situated in Chamarajan-agar district of Karnataka. The temple is a famous pilgrimage in South India and is one among the panchalinga sthalas (places). Lord Shiva is worshiped here. It is believed that one who takes the darshan of five Lingas will be forgiven from all their sins.

The Vaidyanatheshwara temple was constructed in 14th century during the reign of Chola kings. The temple was built in Dravidian style and have two huge beautifully structured dwarapalakas standing on the either sides of the entrance to the main shrine. The doorways of the temple are intricately carved and the outer walls are engraved with magnificent sculptures. There is a figure of Lord Ganesh riding on his vehicle, the mouse towards the right direction and also a statue of Nandi installed at the entrance. In the inner mandapa there are idols of Lord Nataraja, Goddess Durga, Goddess Badhrakaali, Goddess Kaali and Goddess Sharada. The walls are decorated by the depictions of various forms of Lord Shiva and Vishnu. On the either side of the main sanctum are the idols of Lord Ganesh and Lord Subramanya. And the main goddess worshipped here is Manonmani. On one end of the outer roof a beautiful chain of granite rings are sculpted and are hanged from the roof with no joints. These are an outstanding example of magnificent workmanship of artisans who has created such wonders using only chisel and hammer.

Mythology of Vaidyanatheshwara Temple:
As the legendary narrates, a puritan named Somadatta with his disciples was killed by a herd of elephants while they were doing their penance when they were on the pilgrimage to this temple. In the turn of rebirth they were born as elephants in the same region/forest and continued to worship Lord Shiva in the form of a tree in the forest. This tree is supposed to be a silk cotton tree. Once the two hunters named Tala and Kadu watched these elephants performing the rituals to this silk-cotton tree and attempted to cut down this tree out of curiosity. But immediately found the tree bleeding and heard a divine voice proclaiming that the tree was the form of Lord hence the hunters were advised to stop cutting. Thus the hunters stopped cutting and covered the wound with fruits and leaves to heal. Later the blood miraculously turned into milk and got healed completely. The hunters Tala and Kadu attained salvation here, from then the place was known as Talakadu. As the Lord in the form of tree healed himself, he got to be known as Vaidyanatha or Vaideeshwara. The word vaidya in Sanskrit means doctor and the Lord Vaidyanatha became the lord of doctors!

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Board indicating the rulers and their empire in talakadu.

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A brief history of Sri Vaidyanatheshwara temple.

The chariot which is used to take god on procession.

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The main entrance of Sri Vaidyanatheshwara temple.

Full view of the temple.

Bronze gajastamba of the temple.

Portray of lord Shiva and trishula on gajastamba.

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Dwarapalaka of the temple.

The chest and stomach of the dwarapalaka resemble as cow's face.

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Beautifully carved main entrance of the temple.

Devotees visiting the temple.

Priest performing Pooja near the gajastamba.

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Beautifully sculpted pillars of the temple.

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Idols sculpted on the walls of the temple.

Detailing on different pillars of the temple.

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Different animals portrayed on the walls of the temple.

Huge nandhi statue inside the temple.

Rings carved out of single stone.
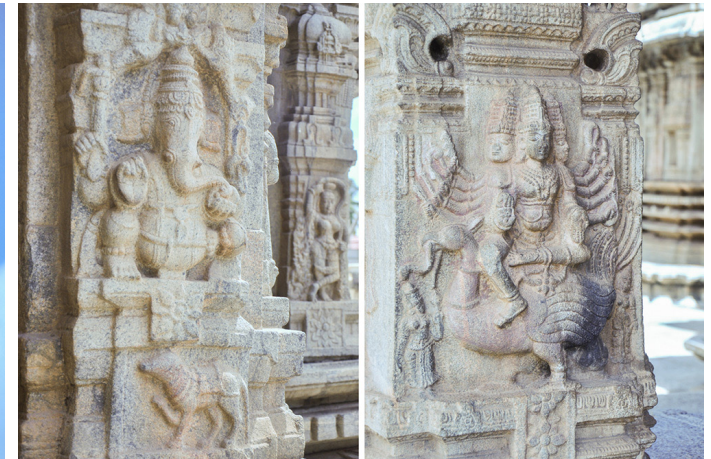
Idols of lord Ganesh and lord Subramanya on the pillars of the temple.

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Lord hanuman idol worshiped inside the temple complex.

Statue of nandhi being place according to vasthu sashtram.

Prasadam sold in the temple premises.

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Tulasi katte inside the temple.

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Beautiful floral designs on the temple pillar.

Dance of Shiva portrayed on the temple wall.

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Ornamental item used during procession.

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Pataleshwara Temple

Pathaleshwara temple is considered to be the oldest rock cut temple carved during 8th century in Rashtrakutas period. The temple is famous for its uniqueness of Shivling installed at this temple. The Shivling of Vasukishwara or Pataleshwara changes its color. By morning Shivling appears to be red, black in the afternoon whereas at night it changes its color to be white.

Towards the north direction of this temple is the Keerti Narayana temple located. Currently this temple belongs to neighboring state.

Sand covered way leading to the lord Sri Pathaleshwara temple.

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Patheleshwara is one of the panchalinga.

Sacred offerings at the temple.

Main sannidhi of lord Sri Pathaleshwara.

Path leading to the main sannidhi.

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Different types of linga in the premises.

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Maruleshwara Temple

Maruleshwara temple is also said to be one of the oldest temples as the temple was built by the Ganga kings. Half a mile towards the north direction of Keerthi narayana temple is the Maruleshwara temple situated. The Shivling here is considered to have been installed and worshipped by Lord Brahma. There are idols of Lord Maheshwara, Lord Surya, Lord Ganesha, Lord Subramanya, Lord Veerabhadra, Goddess Thirumala, Goddess Ambika and navagrahas in the mandapa located at front.

Sri Maruleshwara is also known as Sri Sikateshwara in Sanskrit.

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Sand covered stretch leading to the temple.

Special pooja offerings for the god being sold.

The shiva linga here is around 5ft.

The shiva linga hear is bent towards its left.

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Arkeshwara Temple

Arkeshwara temple is slightly isolated. The idols found in this temple apart from Arkeshwara Shivling are Bhaira-va, abhayangara linga and goddess Durga. The temple has a rock at the entrance with Vaastu yantra. It is believed that the deceased cows are cured when they are tied to this rock.

Full view of the temple complex.

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The main entrance of the temple.

Carvings indicating the tradition.

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Priest performing abhisheka to lord Shiva.

One of the linga's present inside the temple.

Mallikarjuna Temple

Mallikarjuna temple has a small Shivling with the idol of goddess Brahmaraambika. The temple belongs to Mudu-kuthore, which is very close to Talakadu. The Shivling seen here has the footmarks of Kaamadhenu on it.

Stairs leading to the hill top.

One of the panchlinga Sri Mallikarjuneshwara which is on hill top.

The main entrance of the temple.

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It is being told that everyday a cow used to give milk to lord Shiva.

Different types of Lingas present inside the temple.

Entrance to the sanctum.

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Keerthi Narayana Temple

Sri Keerthi Narayana temple is dedicated to the Lord Vishnu being considered as one of the five Vishnu temples, famously known as Pancha Narayana temples. It is established at the behest of Shri Ramanujacharya during 10th century and was constructed later in Hoysala style during the reign of the Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana. It is believed that the Hoysala ruler constructed this temple to represent their victory over Cholas during 12th century and it is the only Hoysala architecture found in Talakadu today.

During incessant rains and subsidence of the soil the outer wall of the Garbhagriha of the temple collapsed. By the timely temporary support provided by 'The Archeological survey of India' the damage to the idols were prevented and restored slightly away from the original place. But the major portion of the temple is still covered under the sand. Earlier the sanctum had a place for worshipping Sundaravalli goddess to the south of the main idol. Since the whole of the idol was covered with sand, only the main idol was installed in the navaranga mantapa. The temple that is seen in present days is excavated from under the sand during 1911.

The sanctum has an eight feet tall idol of Keertinarayana (Lord Vishnu) on garuda peeta. The lord is seen holding shankha (conch) in upper left hand, Chakra in upper right hand, lotus in his lower left hand and mace in his lower right hand. It has an intricately carved mandapas with the idols of Ramanujacharya, Vedhantha Desikar, Nammazhwar in Navaranga mandapa and the figure of Ugra Narasimha in Ardha mandapa. Garuda Kamba and few more inscriptions are the other attractions of this temple. Recently during the time of excavation, the archeologists have discovered some of the structures linked with this temple that belong to the earlier days of Hoysala.

Name board in front of the temple.

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A brief description of keerthi Narayana temple.

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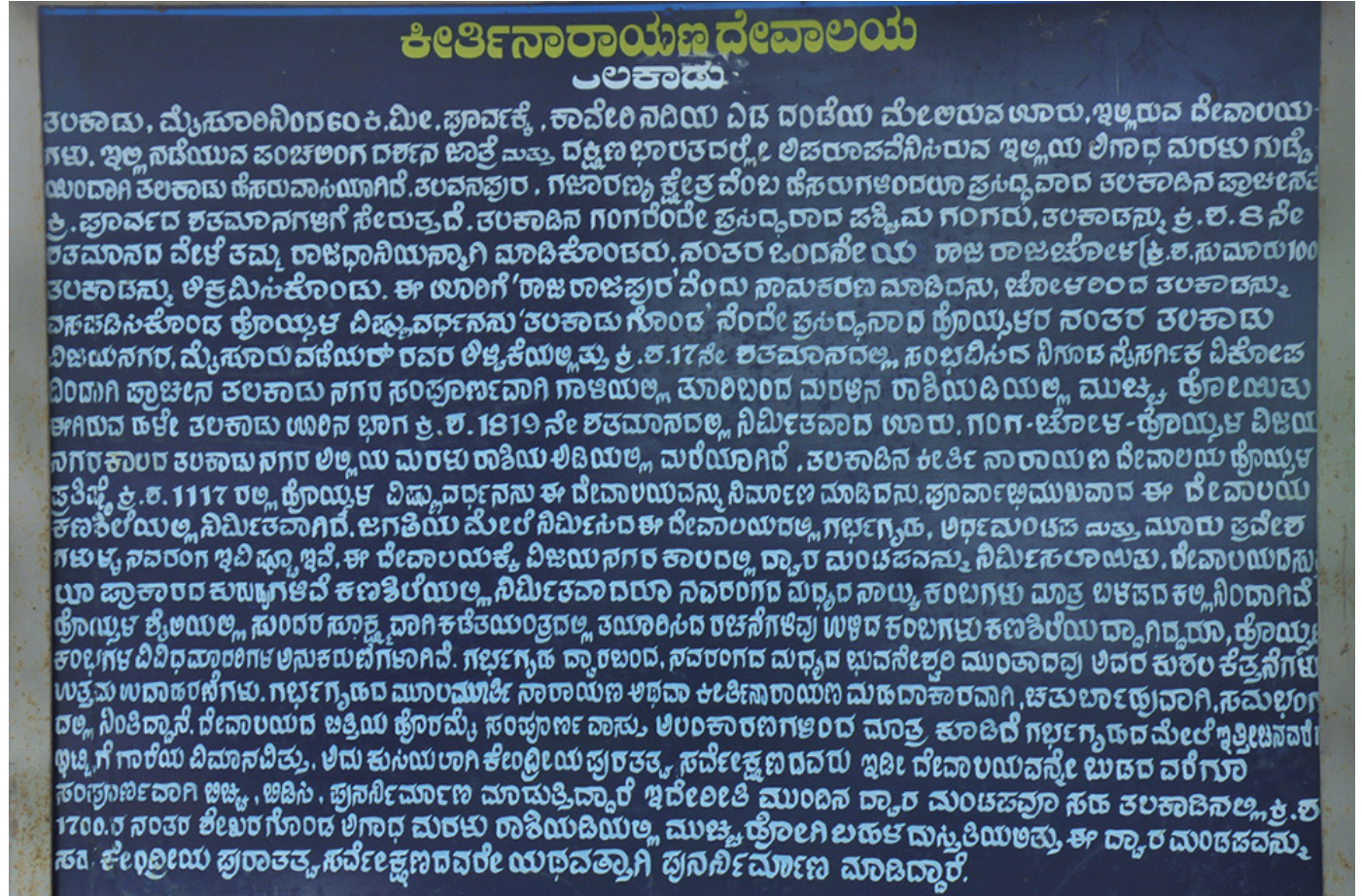## Temples of Talakadu - Karnataka
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A Grand view of the temple.

Pedestal inside the temple complex.

Wooden carriage used for processions.

Elephants on the sides of the stairs leading inside the temple.

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Beautifully carved temple walls.

Carvings on the doorway leading to the temple.

Entrance of the temple in Hoysala style architecture.

Majestic view of the keerthi Narayana temple.

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Carvings on the walls of the temple.

Keerthi Narayana temple conveys Chola style architecture.

Carving showing dance posture.

Remains of a building found during excavation.

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Tulasi katte inside the temple.

Architectural remains found during excavation.

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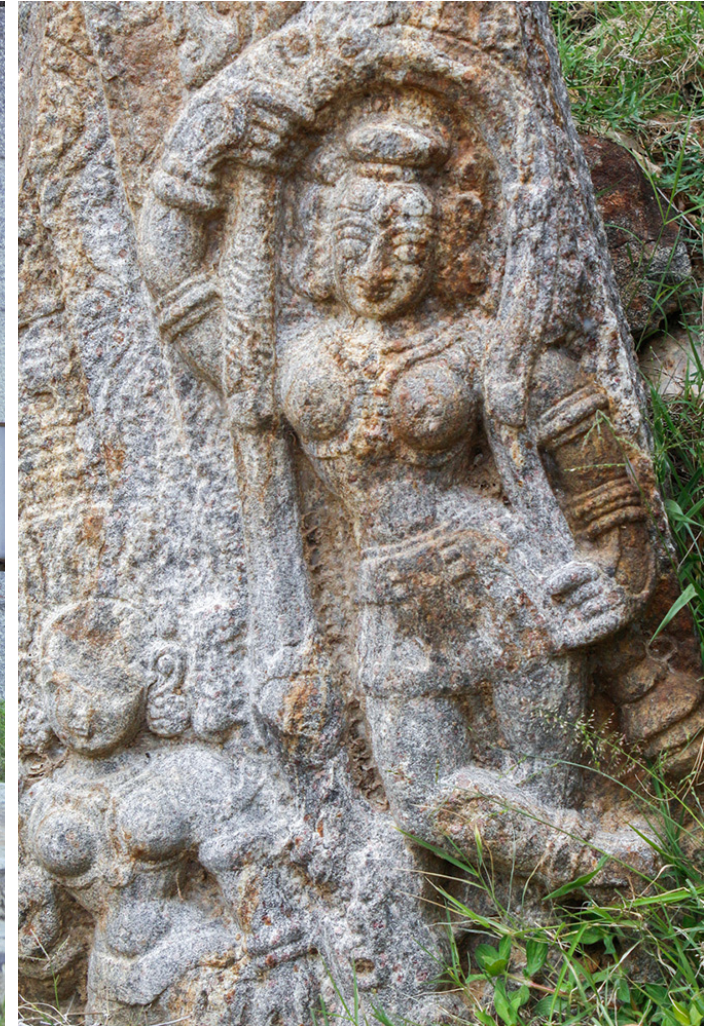Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Rakshitha
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Inscriptions on the stones found inside the temple.

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Remains of a broken nandhi statue.

Rear view of the Keerthi Narayana temple.

Sand removed during excavation.

Keerthi mukha sculpted above the doorway.

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Source:
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Cauvery River

People enjoying near the banks of the river.

A scenic view of river Cauvery flowing in Talakadu.

Monkey having a snack near the river.

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A deity under a tree near the banks.

People playing in the river.

People playing kabaddi on the banks of the river Cauvery.

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Source:
http://www.dsource.in/resource/temples-ta-lakadu-karnataka/video

Video

Talkadu Temple Architecture - Part 1

Talkadu Temple Architecture - Part 2

Contact Details

This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Bara and Rakshitha at NID Campus, Bengaluru.

You can get in touch with
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