Living Heritage Streets

The present case study relates to the initiative of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporations' innovative strategy to improve the aesthetic looks of the city's ugly walls. The city council of Bhubaneswar realized that some of the street walls are smuggled with ugly posters, political slogans, cow dung cakes, unauthorized hoardings etc. It also felt that walls are spaces, which can act as harbinger of culture, tradition & heritage of the city.

The capital city of Orissa in India initiated an innovative approach to improve the looks of ugly walls of the city street by placing Oriya paintings, depicting states culture, festivals, temples & tribal murals. This initiative is unique in nature due to the development of public private partnership model. Today this initiative has been replicated in many other cities of the county.

Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, located on the east coast is one of the fastest growing cities of India. The city was planned by Otto H. Königsberger in 1948 for a area of 16.48 sqkm with a population of 40000 is now covers an area 135 Sq km with more than million population. The city has 47 wards with an elected Mayor since 2003

Situation before the Initiative

Bhubaneswar, the Capital of Orissa is one of the fastest growing cities since its inception in 1948, popularly known as the "temple city" of India. Every year on an average it attracts millions of tourists into the city. Being the gateway city, it is of important that city needs to be kept beautiful of its surrounding particularly major streets. In past the city had tried various options to keep public space free from ugly posters, unauthorized wall-posters and urinals etc. However, the results were not very sound. Very often visitors found it's strange to imagine a city of heritage importance have all such nuisance in its street protecting walls.

- City's efforts to make beautification remains unnoticed;
- The ugly posters distracts children's mind;

Strategy Adopted

It begun to beautify a small patch of water supply system near the Airport Road turn out to be a motivation for the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation to carry forward it to other part of the city. The city council took a decision to beautify its city streets surroundings by putting various wall paintings. In this process City developed a Local Economic Development Plan with following actions:

Junction before Initiative

Problems

Even though law prohibits littering of street, public walls, office premises, compound walls of residence and Govt. buildings etc. In practice it has become a human tendency to use these places as spitting, urinals, putting movie posters, unauthorized hoardings etc. Overall, the problems can be explained as:

- It gives tourists a bad impression about the cities beautification;

Junction after Initiative

- Programme to be undertaken using Public Private Partnership;
- The Local Art College was roped in;
- City council discussed with various Corporate house to adopt some of the identified streets;
- All paintings to be done without any commercial interest;
- Paintings to reflect traditional Oriya Art and Culture;

Results

- The major street walls of the city were transformed to a living heritage.
- The paintings reflect Orissa's ancient history, culture and tradition.
- The images gave the city a new look.
- Income generation options for traditional artists, who otherwise founds difficult to get jobs.
- These street painting sites have also become an important destination for tourists of the city and it also acts as an instant tourist guide.

Lessons Learned

Every programmes has its story to tell but this one is one of the finest innovation of linking Heritage, Culture, Public Private Partnership, Poverty Alleviation and building Living Streets with Living Heritage. On top of it these projects do helps in improving cities public space from a dusty ugly spot to a wonderland of learning heritage, culture, ancient & social life in cities walls.

- One of the best examples to improve cities street image, revitalizing public space.
- Living Heritage also provides opportunity for poverty alleviation strategy.
- Participation of Corporate Sector in to cities beautification drive.

- It was one of the rarest modes of beautifying cities' streets, with no investment from state exchequer.
- Innovation - Small investment can bring big change.

Sustainability

- The paintings were done using weather coats and other modern technology, which ensures permanent looks and maintenance cost starts in the 5th year.
- Being a PPP programmes it has no financial burden on its sustainability.

Transferability

The wall painting innovation of Bhubaneswar City already been replicated in walls of big Indian cities like New Delhi, Kolkatta, Mumbai etc. Similarly many International cities delegates have applauded the initiatives and conveyed to replicate in their cities with own heritage & culture paintings.
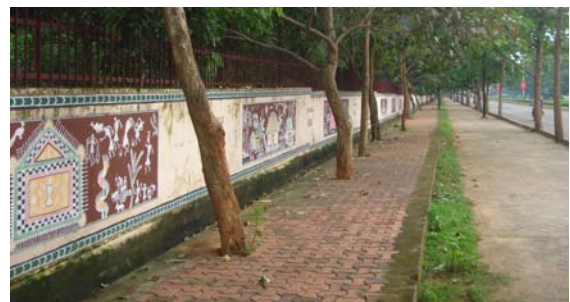
Innovation

- Initiative to beautify street walls using traditional paintings.
- Inclusion of Private sector for Promotion of Streets Heritage & Culture.

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BEST PRACTICES

Living Heritage Streets

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