



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

CHAIRMAN's SPEECH – AGM 2018

Dear Members

Let me welcome you all to the 33rd Annual General Meeting of your Trust. At the outset, let me convey my best wishes to all of you & your families.

Let me begin by complementing our Vice Chairman, Saryu Doshi ji, for being appointed as an advisor to the President of India for advising him on selection of paintings for the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Dear Members in addition to the present practice of holding Pupul Jayakar Lecture annually on 18th April. It has been decided to institute a shoulder to shoulder award for designers and craftsmen in her memory as well. This will be a first of its kind award encapsulating and honoring her memory and her many contributions to culture and heritage. The specific purpose of instituting a joint award to collaborative efforts between traditional practitioners of craft skills and innovators like designers, NGOs and Institutions are two-fold:

- a) The first aim is to create a level playing field by giving equal recognition to communities, practitioners and tradition-bearers and their collaborative partners in the area of art, culture, craft and heritage.
- b) The Second aim is to create a wave of awareness of the power of collaboration in cultural projects, thus emphasizing the amplified impact of synergizing and cross-fertilisation in successful ventures.

Next a Scholarship worth an amount of Rs. 3 lacs for traditional craftsmanship to undertake high end research relating to building material, textiles, handicrafts handlooms, glass work, inlay work and such other craft works amount has been instituted as part of our existing scholarship scheme. This scholarship is to preserve the memory of the contribution of Mapuji in establishing INTACH, and is named as Martand Singh Scholarship.

The designer of our building at 71, Lodhi Estate, Sh. B.V. Doshi, the legendary Indian architect is being honored with the Pritzkar Architecture Prize, the Nobel equivalent



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

for the field. Sh. Doshi who is 90 now, is the first Indian to receive the honor, the highest in the profession. INTACH is indeed proud of him

Again for the first time, at our initiative at the IAS Academy, 92nd batch of Current Foundation Course comprising of 369 probationers from IAS, IPS, IFS and other services, was shown the INTACH film and a heritage quiz conducted for them. The probationers were informed about the crucial role which they could play in their career in the conservation and preservation of India's heritage and could call upon the various resources of INTACH for community support. I am sure that this initiative will go a long way, to secure the willing cooperation of the administrators in the field to help conserve our heritage.

Dear Members We all know that Rivers in India are in a crisis. For the first time INTACH has prepared the basin plan approach for the conservation of a river - the Hindon River near Delhi was selected for the study. Our plan for the same has induced the UP Govt. to invite us to be knowledge partners for the Hindon River Initiative. With this we hope to change the current exploitative approach to rivers to an ecosystem based rejuvenation approach.

Continuing further on our earlier initiative of documenting River Ganga, we are now embarked on such documentation of our River Mahanadi Godavari, Cauvery & Chambal.

Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has finally been adopted by the Govt. (National Monuments Authority) and INTACH is being approached by various Govt. as well as Pvt. bodies to undertake HIA of the proposed building within the regulated areas of the ASI monuments. This has been long standing demand and is a useful tool especially in the light of recent amendment of AMASAR act vis-à-vis relaxation to the public projects.

A conference on Himalayan Heritage was held with the participants from the Himalayan regions i.e.: Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Hills of West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh.



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The participants comprising scholars, researchers and cultural specialist deliberated over issues like: promotion and development of communities, livelihood generation with sustainability, distinctive sets of indigenous and sacred belief systems within the Himalayan region, exploring and identifying the loss of language, traditional knowledge, performing arts and oral traditions and addressing safeguarding concerns. For the first time the conference was also live-streamed which enhanced the reach of the conference to a wider audience.

Dear Members, it has been always an endeavor to add useful intellectual dimension and direction to our working and Chapters. In this direction,

Barmer Chapter was assisted by Natural Heritage Division obtaining favorable orders from National Green Tribunal for conserving water sources two major fresh water lakes of villages Korna and Gangawas. We had villagers in the forefront to lead the fight to prevent construction of Power Grid station in the immediate catchment of these lakes. In order to honour their this singular achievement and encourage people led efforts to fight for environmental causes, INTACH conferred the AnirudhBhargav Environmental Award to villages Korna and Gangawas. The award ceremony was held in the village itself wherein the villages thanked INTACH for helping them in saving their habitat, water and their agriculture.

(a) This chapter achievement assisted in saving another major salt water lake 5 sqkms in another area of Barmer nearly 160 kms away from being saved from salt water mining & saving important bird habitat.

(b) Gorakhpur chapter last year found some unearthed stone idols in village CHHAU which were of period of approx. 8th century. The idols were later on conserved by INTACH and installed in a temple built by villagers on their own. Seeing vast nos of idols lying scattered in village, and after repeated effort of chapter, U.P.ASI team visited the village. They confirmed the inference of chapter that idols belonged the 8-9th century AD. Most important thing was this created AWARENESS IN VILLAGERS IN CONSERVING THE HERITAGE. Villagers said that they will save and conserve all the heritage of their village since they are now aware of the value of the artifacts. This aware ness is what INTACH has been working for always and a very good sign for us.



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

- (c) Thrissur Chapter in Kerala had prepared a Documentation cum-Conservation report on the need to conserve the ancient “Madhom” established in 7th Century AD, where young children are taught to chant Vedas in Sanskrit. The report attracted the attention of the Govt. of Kerala, who have recently invested more the one and half Crore Rupees, to start the process of conservation of the awesome wooden architecture of this institution.
- (d) Wai Panchghani Chapter in Maharashtra has published and heritage of this cultural capital of Maharashtra & has attracted public attention.
- (e) Public Consultation on Master Plan Srinagar (2015-2035) organized by INTACH J&K State and Kashmir Chapter – again a first intellectual exercise by a chapter.
- (f) Jagannath Sadak documentation work completed by INTACH Odisha State Chapter and the Book release function held at Kolkata jointly with West Bengal State Chapter. This was event of import once for INTACH signifying inter-chapter cooperation & net working. Similarly Hyderabad Chapter assisted in training a team from Dharwad chapter in running the INTACH museum at Dharwad. The training was organized at Salarjung Museum & well appreciated.
- (g) Chanderi Chapter in MP became a medium for assisting the Handicraft trade by taking lead in conserving two of their traditional houses & sharing knowledge of conserving – leading to the empowerment of the community.

Dear Members last year at the AGM, I had mentioned three issues of concern i.e.

- i) Chapters need to mobilize more efforts by way of resource persons to carry out listing and documentation of unprotected heritage be it Tangible & Intangible, which is basic to our awareness and conservation programmes.
- ii) Increase networking with other local stake holders.
- iii) To make arrangements for basic connect with not only members and also greater Number of citizens both rural & urban.



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

In order to make a beginning and to take necessary corrective steps in this respect this year I had made an effort to visit as many chapters as possible, visiting nearly 50 chapters, spread across the country and emphasised that

- (a) We need to network with local stake holders & try to involve as many as possible prominent and influential citizens to include teachers & professors & knowledge holders, as Friends of INTACH, even if, they do not wish to become INTACH members.
- (b) To widen the area of operation of the chapter from the District city to all villages & other towns in the District.
- (c) To attract more & more Institutions & student members and to involve them in our activities.
- (d) Members to become conversant with chapter guidelines
- (e) To send more & more members to attend our capacity building courses
- (f) To encourage local talent in research on local heritage by applying for INTACH Scholarships
- (g) To encourage writing on local heritage in local language
- (h) For exponential growth of Heritage clubs in schools, by Teachers Training programmes.
- (i) For arranging more & more "Adaptive Reuse" Workshop for PWD & Municipal engineers by IHA
- (j) To approach local architectural colleges in assisting in listing & documentation as per chapter guidelines.
- (k) To conduct all chapter programmes in local language.

Dear Members, during the year, new chapters were established at Mangalore to cover the Coastal Karnataka, hitherto uncovered by our activities. Similarly a new chapter has been established at Palghat – Kerala at the only opening in Western ghats. It is also known as the puppeteer capital of India, Hissar in Haryana – a significant cultural site in South Western Haryana and at Ramgarh in Shekhawati in Rajasthan – practically a museum of wall paintings. With this, INTACH has now grown into an organization with nearly 200 chapters. For effective management of these chapters, it is important that State Conveners play a significant role. Hence during the State Conveners meet on 1 & 2 Feb. 2018, role of the State Conveners was discussed thread bare. It was indeed a very



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

productive meeting with nearly all state conveners attending it. The following points were highlighted.

- (a) Invite eminent citizens to form a group; Friends of INTACH at the state level to formulate vision, advice and advocacy.
- (b) State Convener should be mentor and guide to the Chapter
- (c) State Conveners may visit Chapters for motivation and guidance.
- (d) Look for opportunities to expand the chapter net work with in the state.
- (e) To Maintain connect with Chapters.
- (f) By 15th Jan. every year, budget for state level passion projects could be projected to the Central Office, for inclusion in the central budget.

Dear Members The key challenges that we face today is to sensitise professionals and the general public towards the problems and potentials of heritage conservation, and make them aware of their rich culture and traditions while their mindset is tuned to the needs and aspirations of a rapidly modernizing world.

Another big challenge is to address the gaps in the functioning of multiple authorities in all cities, and try and bring about some kind of coordination and common thinking for the protection and conservation of heritage in their city. This is an uphill task and INTACH has been walking on this path rather successfully. We have conducted capacity building programmes for the PWDs, State Archaeology and Urban Local Bodies.

My interaction with members, as also eminent citizens who had been invited to INTACH events, I have observed that there are **heightened expectations from the INTACH to conserve the heritage** especially the built heritage. In order to harness this expectations positively, we have launched a programme of providing technical assistance called Saving Heritage at Risk. I have requested chapters to guide needy and render INTACH guidance with the slogan that “self help is the best”. I have also seen a upsurge of a No. of friendly NGO’s approaching INTACH for financial assistance.

Lastly I wish to bring to notice that our income is falling due to fall in bank interest rates from 9.5% to 7.5% as also due to decrease in rental income due to a crash in



INDIAN NATIONAL TRUST FOR ART AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

property prices & over supply. It is going to a very big challenge for us to maintain the tempo of our activities and the standards in the face of fall in income and enhanced costs. If we are still able to manage, it will mean that we are truly on path of stability.