

VIJAYAWADA

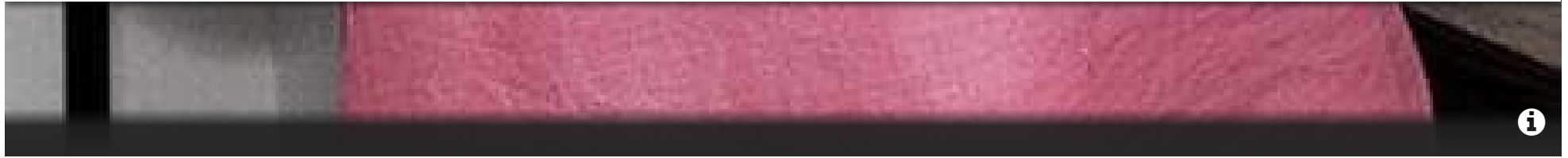
Old Amaravati to get a makeover

THE HINDU



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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 19, 2016 00:00 IST

UPDATED: APRIL 19, 2016 05:53 IST

Heritage and children's centres among the upcoming attractions

: The ancient Amaravati town that has given its name to the new capital of Andhra Pradesh is being revitalised under the National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY).

HRIDAY is a Central government-sponsored scheme which aims to preserve and revitalise soul of a heritage city to bring out its unique character by encouraging aesthetically appealing, accessible, informative and secured environment.

The old town is being transformed into a story-teller's paradise. After cleaning up garbage accumulated for decades across the town, efforts are on to revive its old sheen by developing features like an Amaravathi Heritage Centre, *nandana vanam* (a kids' park), *rachcha bandas* (a village pyol) and separate centres for communities like *kummari* (potter) and *vadrangi* (carpenter).

"The Amaravati museum is in a neglected state and it is being given a facelift. We have started with cleaning up the place which will be properly curated," said curator and international heritage advisor for Amaravati ancient town Amareswar Galla.

He was addressing a seminar on "Curating Heritage Values," organised by the Cultural Centre of Vijayawada (CCV) on the occasion of World Heritage Day, here on Monday.

'Look beyond monuments'

He said five main roads, which would be the five gateways to the town, were being upgraded. "We have a treasure trove which is not being taken care of. Our mentality must change. There is a need to bring about heritage consciousness in people's mind. We protect objects and sites but about values? We need to go beyond monuments," he said. Sharing his experience of working with organisations across the globe that were trying to address the most pressing issues of heritage cities, he said there was a need to work for benefits beyond borders.

Further elaborating, he stressed the need for bridging the gulf between nature and culture, urbanism and sustainable heritage development, integrated planning and indigenous engagement, living heritage and safeguarding outstanding universal value and doing more than the monumental.

Global projects

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referring to the Bamyan valley in central Afghanistan, the most westerly point of Buddhist expansion, he said he worked closely with the local communities.

He then spoke about Vietnam and how the ancient trading quarters of still-thriving craft industries were juxtaposed with grand colonial mansions and the Hoi An silk village.

CEO of CCV E. Sivanagi Reddy, Advisor, fine arts, Balamani, and Sandeep Mandava, CEO of Malaxmi Property Ventures, were present.

