

VIJAYAWADA

Heritage education must for a Smart State, says expert



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Galla shocked by lack of knowledge of history among students

If we want tourism to be a major contributor to our GDP, our children must know their history. This is imperative to promote tourism, emphasised Amareswar Galla, Curator of Amaravathi Heritage Town.

Ignorance on the part of school children on the basics of history came as a rude shock to the heritage expert on Friday. As part of the series of workshops he has been conducting for school

students on heritage of the ancient Amaravati town, he posed a few basic queries. The children drew blank leaving Prof. Galla disappointed.

“If we don’t pull up our socks now, we’ll end up becoming a vulgar version of the Disneyland faking everything with a commercial value,” he cautioned.

Students drawn from nine high school students in and around Amaravati sat on the steps of the temple ghat and the foreground of the Mahastupa.

“None of the students knew who emperor Ashoka is or the Mauryans. They could recognise an image of Buddha but had no knowledge of Buddhism; nor any of the history of Andhra; So, what are we promoting as heritage tourism when our children in the hinterland of these valuable resources have no knowledge of their history?” he wondered.

In keeping with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu’s vision of an Amaravathi Heritage Town that would promote a sense of place for Telugu people, Prof. Galla is working in association with the local MLA Kommalapati Sridhar to establish a contemporary schools and educational facility in the new Amaravathi Heritage Centre and Museum.

Engaging the civil society, he is working through a strategic partnership with the local teachers and the Mandal Education Officer to achieve the goal.

“It is envisaged that this heritage town, as an integral part of the AP CRDA region, will have programming that will have a multiplier effect benefiting the entire State, promoting heritage consciousness through museum and culture education among our younger generation. But the premise is that our school system will also teach heritage studies as applied history in future.

“This knowledge-based approach will be the bedrock of a smart State and our sustainable futures as the Telugu people,” said Prof. Galla.