

TAMAN MINI Representing Indonesia's Nusantara



Welcoming dance at North Sumatra Pavilion. Presenting and promoting diverse traditions and forms of welcoming from across Andhra will accord respect and recognition for our cultural and linguistic/dialect diversity without overwhelming it with the emerging monoculturalism of Tollywood.

Pics : Taman Mini



Performance of Sutasoma Dance Drama. 39th Anniversary of TMII at Bhineka Tunggal Ika Theatre. There is an extensive repertoire of performing arts based on the recensions and renditions of the two great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana across Andhra and the rest of South and Southeast Asia. Indonesians have safeguarded the theatre traditions based on the two epics and present different episodes in heritage tourism through theatre, poetry, puppetry, rituals and festivals. Kavya Traya or the Trinity of Telugu Literature Nannaya, Tikkana and Errana are the composers of the Andhra Mahabharata that contextualizes the great epic in the Telugu Language and cultural context. How could we present and safeguard their unique creativity and nuances within a contemporary idiom and aesthetic to underline the significance and uniqueness of our Andhra culture?



Anna Tutuarima from Sumatra has developed and worked in the Sumatran Pavilion and Museum since 20 April 1975. She brings the first voice representing Sumatra and has credibility for directing cultural education from the province. In AP, there are regional variations almost at district and mandal level. It is envisaged that this diversity will be represented and that the cultural custodians will benefit from inclusive developments in the new People's Capital of the state.

HERITAGE MATTERS

The first urban formations or growth of cities were in Mesopotamia, West Asia and Indus River catchment area about five millennia ago. In the past decade we crossed another critical threshold in the history of humanity. More than half the population of the world is now living in cities and towns. Every day over 200,000 people are moving into an urban centre across the world.

In the Republic of Korea, the situation is even more dramatic. By the year 2020, nearly 90% of the population will live in about 20 cities. In Australia, an almost comparable situation has been forecast for some time. Oslo is the fastest growing city in Northern Europe. The rapid growth of the world economy is accelerating the pace of urban development everywhere.

In this context, liveable cities means developing strategies for wellbeing of stakeholder populations. Competition for attracting investment finance and knowledge capital characterize the context for smart cities. The focus on planning and infrastructure has been concerned with roads, sanitation, airports, railroad links and electronic communications. But the cultural dislocation resulting from rural urban migration is a major concern that is rarely addressed.

Jakarta, a multicultural and multi-ethnic metropolis has developed an innovative approach. It assumed responsibility through creating a unique civic space in the service of Jakarta's culturally diverse community groups — Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII). This Miniature Theme Park was constructed in East Jakarta in the 1970s as a 150 hectare facility with the diverse flora and fauna of Indonesia.

A lake with miniature islands of the Indonesian archipelago is now surrounded by provincial pavilions, cultural centres, museums and recreation units. These pavilions have traditional houses containing heritage objects including costumes, handicrafts and musical instruments. Each pavilion is a space for activities and education in the culture of the respective province that sponsors it.

It caters to needs of immigrant workers and their families from the provinces. The layout of Taman Mini symbolizes the cultural diversity of Indonesia. Representative tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the country's 34 Provinces and 498 districts and municipalities are featured. This cultural space is a window to Indonesia and appreciated by visitors from across the world. Most importantly, it is a weekend retreat for the next generation of people born in Jakarta to immerse themselves in provincial culture of their parents and grandparents.

Taman Mini was conceived to create a balance between physical-economic and mental-spiritual

well-being. Indonesia has the policy of five pillars of development: Spiritual, Education and Culture, Technology, Economy and Welfare. Taman Mini aims to promote appreciation of Indonesian culture through research and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage transmitted from generation to generation. It presents a place of recreation and education through living heritage elements to the people of Jakarta, Indonesia and the rest of the world.

Multicultural awareness is important in an archipelagic state like Indonesia, with over 500 ethnocultural groups. Taman Mini is based on the concept of the Indonesian archipelago, Nusantara, as a socio-cultural unit. It embodies the aspiration that cultural and heritage diversity should be maintained, appreciated, enjoyed and promoted by all, respecting the Indonesian motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika, Unity in Diversity. This is presented as a basis of intercultural engagement among the people of Indonesia as envisaged in the UNESCO 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.



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Taman Mini is easily accessible throughout the year for the residents of Jakarta, visitors from other provinces and international visitors. Since the opening in 1975, it has received over 150 million visitors. In 2017, it received over 5.2 million visitors, mostly families and students. Visitors here are not casual but they actively seek quality experiences and immersions.

Taman Mini facilitates intergenerational transmission of Indonesia's diverse living heritage values through 27 training workshops with over 1,350 students at any given time. Providing space for diverse cultures addresses a critical challenge associated with rapid urban development. It also addresses the dislocation of migrant cultural practitioners from their villages, towns and source communities. They often find migration to cities leaves them with no space conducive for expressing and transmitting their creativity and intan-

gible heritage. The foundation and ongoing development of Taman Mini has been through strategic collaborations. The main sponsors and actors are community groups, NGOs, and central and local governments. The carrier and transmitter communities of heritage values play the lead role in designing and implementing cultural activities with the support of local and provincial governments.

I was privileged to be an invited guest of Taman Mini and provide feedback for its continuing development. It is run by the Management and Development Body under the Harapan Kita Foundation. Its sustainability is ensured through a strong sense of ownership by the stakeholders as it represents the cultural aspirations of all ethnocultural communities. It is supported by the three tiers of local, provincial and central governments of Indonesia. Provincial authorities are primary sponsors and people migrating from the respective provinces are the main visitors.

Civic spaces like Taman Mini can enhance their role as knowledge centres of activity and cultural representation of urban populations and the cultural fusions that emerge. They foster a sense of place and self-esteem for diverse peoples. They provide the focus and resources for community cultural development activities and social learning spaces. They interpret the natural and cultural heritage of the urban formations. They are centres for the preservation, presentation, continuation and management of artistic, cultural and heritage endeavours of diverse peoples. They are an integral part of the broader cultural industry and economics of sustainable urban environments.

Cultural spaces promote creativity and provide fertile grounds for contemporary arts movements, festivals and events of significance. Adaptations of classical performances of dance and opera are illustrations of working with living and dynamic intangible heritage. The voices, values and traditions of communities in the broader environment foster sustainable development. Younger generations seek meanings in not only the heritage of their parents and ancestors but most importantly in contemporary creativity and across art forms.

Sustainable cultural spaces are based on systematic cultural mapping and planning. Balanced urban development requires consideration of a range of cultural, social, economic and environmental imperatives. Inclusive cultural spaces enable broad audience participation by being accessible, versatile and resourceful through participatory practices. They are valuable for sustainable tourism development.

We could develop a cultural space in the Tourism District of the new Amaravati, our People's Capital. It could skirt the River Krishna. Culture, creativity and all forms of heritage could be profited from the 13 districts of AP. Respective local and district administrations, artists and NGOs could take responsibility for the establishment, maintenance and ongoing cultural programming in partnership with the AP Capital Region Development Authority. New residents of the People's Capital from different parts of AP could inculcate in their children those distinct elements that the parents grew up with back in their home villages and towns.

The Tourism District could present and interpret to the visitors the rich and diverse inheritances of Andhra people. It could be an antidote or more aptly provide the human face to the homogenising forces of globalisation.



Traditional Theatre of East Java in Traditional Theatre Festival at Candi Bentar stage. Andhra has a rich intangible heritage of festivals that are vibrant and constantly reinterpreted in a contemporary socio-cultural context. Can a mix of Andhra, national and international theatre be hosted in the Tourism District?



Asmat sculptor in the Museum Exhibition at Sasano Utomo. In AP Lepakshi is presenting live demonstrations of the crafts skills of Andhra people and these were appreciated on several occasions at the Amaravathi Heritage Centre and Museum in Amaravathi Heritage Town. Such showcasing also raises awareness among the audiences about the value of Andhra's crafts and sculptural traditions as at present people are buying more of imported machine-made items rather than hand craft works that encode values of our cultural systems.



Miniature cultural space or TMII is a park of 150 hectares with a lake and miniature islands of the Indonesian archipelago. The waterfront of River Krishna is amenable to a comparable creative space for heritage tourism that could represent the unique cultural and creative diversity of Andhra.

NEXT WEEK

Heritage Matters will profile the Korean success in safeguarding village atmosphere or Palleturi Vathavaramam.