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PRESS RELEASE

INDIA HERITAGE WALK FESTIVAL 2018

Unravelling grandeur of Gujarati Residential Havelis

Patan (Gujarat), Feb.....: Known for its ornate stepwells and delicately hand-woven Patola saris that generate awe and admiration in equal measure, Patan in Gujarat also boasts of another edifying spectacle -- the grandeur of its residential Gujarati Havelis, famed for their intricate wooden carvings and vibrant symbols.

These iconic havelis will come under a fascinating scrutiny as part of a curated walk series of the ongoing India Heritage Walk Festival (IHWF).

Patan is among 20 cities hosting the month-long, multi-city IHWF 2018 organised jointly by Sahapedia (sahapedia.org), the online encyclopedia of Indian arts and culture, and YES Culture, the cultural division of YES Global Institute, a practising think tank of YES BANK, to encourage citizens to explore the tangible and intangible heritage of their cities and towns.

The two walks, slated for February 11 and 25, will give the local residents a fascinating account of the iconography of residential havelis that are awash with the carvings on wooden façade representing floral patterns, religious symbols, animals, plants and geometrical designs. These carved symbols help people to understand their roots, community, caste and religious festivities.

Bhavesh Patel, a resident of Patan who studied architecture and architectural conservation from School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, will lead the walk around these havelis, detailing before the participants the meaning of these symbols, their expressions and relation to society.

In fact, socio-cultural environment has played a significant role in defining Gujarati residential houses of Patan, an ancient fortified city. The carvings on these wooden houses are markers of the community's past lived in perfect harmony with awesome wooden architecture.

Patel, who has been involved in the restoration process of historic buildings for the past eight years, also teaches architecture students and practises historic core conservation and management projects. He is passionate about working for heritage structures and towards conserving cultural, natural and architectural heritage.

Details about the walks and other programmes of IHWF 2018, map routes and registration information are available on <http://www.indiaheritagewalkfestival.com>

Vaibhav Chauhan, Festival Director (IHWF) and Secretary, Sahapedia, says, "The India Heritage Walk Festival 2018 is a celebration of all that Sahapedia stands for. In an attempt to



create authentic, credible, and exhaustive content on our rich heritage and culture, we are developing a network of cultural practitioners across the country. This festival is a part of this pan-India movement, making heritage spaces more popular, more accessible, and more experiential. This is exactly why the festival tries to involve people from various walks of life with a range of thematic experiences covered through the walks, and caters to as many people as possible.”

Rana Kapoor, MD & CEO, YES BANK and Chairman, YES Global Institute, says “India is blessed with a rich heritage and cultural history, which is abundantly manifested in monuments and architectural sites across our country. “Civil society participation in our Nation’s heritage, aided by activities such as heritage walks, is integral to the preservation and conservation of these sites. Such heritage tourism initiatives, with the wholehearted participation and involvement of local communities and citizens, have the potential to instill immense national pride and further the agenda of heritage development,” ~~he adds.~~

Preeti Sinha, ~~Glocal Global~~ Convenor, ~~YES BANK and Senior President,~~ YES Global Institute, says, “The understanding of heritage in 21st century India has expanded from the protection of historic buildings and monuments to focus on more general understanding of the wider context and preservation of tangible and intangible cultural forms. Through active engagement with built, natural and living heritage through the design of walks, talks, and digital media such as films and social forums, the festival is a touchstone for conscious thinking towards formulating historically-sensitive policy and decision making.”

IHWF 2018, covering 20 cities and towns around the country, features walks to historical monuments and shrines, well-known landscapes, places known for art and culture, cuisine and flourishing trade.

There is an online film festival of documentaries based on cultural themes and lecture series curated as 'baithaks' and Instameets as part of nearly 70 events scheduled throughout the month.