



Pondy Photo 2014 and INTACH: trying to preserve the architectural heritage

Description



Ajit of INTACH (right) with a guest at the presentation

On the evening of 28 March, as part of Pondy Photo 2014, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, Pondicherry (INTACH) hosted a presentation to shed light on the importance of preserving the old architectural heritages of the city.

Ajit of INTACH pointed out that this presentation even though a part of Pondy Photo 2014, was not really about photography. It was rather about heritage preservation. The photographs were not shot by professional photographers. Though it was a part of the photo exhibition, the principal intention was to give a message.

The photographs in the presentation all focused on the daily features of the city of Pondicherry; the streets we visit every day, the buildings we pass by every now and then. The photographs were all clicked on desolate and empty streets thus adding the focus on the architectural structures on the streets.

Ajit of INTACH pointed out that the authorship of the photographs is of little importance. The photographs speak of the architectural culture of Pondicherry, both Tamil and French. In the last 15 years, in Pondicherry itself, 1200 heritage buildings of the Tamil style were demolished and converted into more contemporary structures. This type of development is something INTACH tries to object to.

The office of INTACH in Pondicherry was located on the French part of the town. Not more than eight years ago the office of INTACH used to be in the French part of the town. But now they sit in a traditional Tamil building. "Even when people talk about saving the heritage of Pondicherry, they talk about the French part. And we say, what about the Tamil? It is the most endangered architectural heritage in the city." That is when INTACH decided to change its office from the French part to the Tamil part.

To Ajit the buildings are extremely beautiful, have a nice atmosphere, have a personality and are unique in nature. Another idea for the changing the location of the office was to bring in and invite more people to come and see what a traditional Tamil building feels like.

Most of the traditional Tamil buildings are lost. And restoring them and preserving them is not an easy task. And it does not come cheap. But INTACH believes in preserving the old architectural heritages of the city and they believe that preserving the heritage is beneficial to all and in the end always worth it.

Photos: Tintumon M

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Category

1. On the wings of the muse
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