

# 19<sup>th</sup> ASEF Summer University

## Sustainable Urbanisation in Heritage Cities

### Hack Groups

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# #ASEFSU



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# HACK GROUP # 1

## LIVING HERITAGE

### Revival of traditional crafts for livelihood

Led by:

INTACH Pune Chapter

Traditional crafts are a reflection of a way of life and culture, passed from one generation to the other. Rapid urbanisation and global exposure put these crafts at a risk of changing lifestyles and competing with mass-production. This will lead to the craftspeople turning towards alternative means of livelihood and a loss of age-old traditional wisdom and social memory.

Collaboration between designers and craftspeople would help revive, expand market reach, and create higher income for the crafts people, thus leading to conservation of such threatened arts and crafts. There are sporadic efforts by culturally-sensitive and creative designers who have made efforts towards contemporising traditional arts and crafts for today's lifestyle. An integrated platform connecting crafts people and designers can ensure success and sustainability of such efforts. This intervention would encompass social, cultural, ecological, and economic aspects of such craft communities as a whole.

Approach and Methodology for this study:

- 1) Identifying traditional crafts of Pune.
- 2) Present-day scenario/status of crafts.
- 3) Integrating current market demands with traditional craft products and techniques.
- 4) Role of Designer.
- 5) Design Intervention.
- 6) Case-studies: Warsaa and Coppre.

#### Recommended resources:

Coppre

Warsaa Heritage

Dastkari Haat - National Association of Indian Crafts People

Co-hands

[VDO] Coppre Documentary

[VDO] DICRC - Paramparaa - Putting Ideas First

[VDO] DICRC - Paramparaa - Branding and Marketing in the Crafts Sector

*Abstract by: Jui Tawade and Supriya Goturkar-Mahabaleshwarkar*

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Members:**

- 1) Mr Aleksi ILPALA (Finland)
- 2) Ms Theresa BÄRWOLFF (Germany)
- 3) Ms Juhee SUH (Korea)
- 4) Ms Ei SHWE SIN (Myanmar)
- 5) Mr Pedro CASAIS (Portugal)
- 6) Ms Iulia Beatrice LUMINA (Romania)
- 7) Ms Silvia MARTIN (Spain)
- 8) Mr Charoon PONGHAN (Thailand)
- 9) Ms Preeti KAMBOJ (India)

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:**

- 1) Ms Nathalie SAJDA (Sweden)

# HACK GROUP # 2

## BUILT HERITAGE

### Adapting reuse of historic properties

Led by:

Sustainability Initiatives

Capacity building and access to knowledge are prerequisites to any sustainability initiative. Community capacity building aims at helping individuals, groups, organisations and governments achieve development goals by enhancing their abilities. For cultural heritage to be built, the community needs to recognise the values in them and understand the issues at hand. An important part of capacity building is therefore that of constructing and disseminating knowledge. Knowledge needs to be constructed not only by creating new knowledge but also by learning from past experiences of community members and by informed exchange. Spaces in the old city can play an important role in enabling these activities. Adapting buildings and making the people of cities learn and unlearn their past is the third aspect of what we are attempting. All three can potentially form the foundation of a viable sustainability initiative for managing the cultural resources of Pune.

### ASEFSU Hack Team Members:

- 1) Ms Vesselina YONCHEVA (Bulgaria)
- 2) Mr Sokun THAY (Cambodia)
- 3) Ms Anouchka LETTRÉ (France)
- 4) Mr Mauli MISHRA (India)
- 5) Mr Conor DORE (Ireland)
- 6) Mr Marcin SLIWA (Poland)
- 7) Mr Ming Xuan Gerilynn YEE (Singapore)
- 8) Mr Phuc PHAM TAN (Viet Nam)
- 9) Mr Arnab GHOSH (India)

### ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:

- 1) Ms Maneeha CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh)

# HACK GROUP # 3

## HERITAGE ACCESSIBILITY

### Traffic and transportation in the core city

Led by:  
Parisar

Rapid urbanisation has made Pune, like all other growing cities in India, a car dominated city which has little respect for its pedestrians.

A lack of long-term vision for the traffic and transport in a growing city and a non-holistic approach has resulted in several unresolved issues. Furthermore, ad-hoc and short term infrastructural solutions have aggravated these problems.

The old city of Pune, like its counterparts all over India, identifies itself with narrow, winding and human scale streets that act as major public open spaces bustling with activity. These spaces along with numerous historical structures mark the character and charm of the old city. Unfortunately, over time these spaces are lost to vehicular traffic that threatens the unique appeal of the old city.

The objective of this programme is to explore the various possibilities that would enable the people of Pune to reclaim these open spaces (designated as well as incidental) in the old city from the growing number of vehicles by understanding the larger traffic and transportation issues that are present today.

### ASEFSU Hack Team Members:

- 1) Mr Benoît MASSET (Belgium)
- 2) Mr Khairul Hazmi ZAINI (Brunei Darussalam)
- 3) Ms Neeraja BALACHANDRAN (India)
- 4) Ms Caitlin BAHARI (Indonesia)
- 5) Mr Hidemine TAKEUCHI (Japan)
- 6) Mr Thanavorakit KOUNTHAWATPHINYO (Lao PDR)
- 7) Ms Kamile KLAPATAUSKAITE (Lithuania)
- 8) Mr Karst BRON (Netherlands)
- 9) Mr Mateo GUDIĆ (Croatia)

### ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:

- 1) Mr Channa LY (Cambodia)

# HACK GROUP # 4

## NATURAL HERITAGE

### Traditional water sources and systems as resources

Led by:

Gomukh / Centre for Environmental Education

Urbanisation is probably the fastest, most widespread and deepest impacting socio-economic-geographical process of the humanised world. By year 2010 over 55 % of the world's population was living in urban areas. India differs a bit by having about 35 % of its population living in urban areas.

Biodiversity can refer to genetic diversity, to species diversity or to the ecosystem diversity/diversity of environments or habitats. Some believe that it has simply replaced the terms "nature" or "wilderness". Biodiversity, a contraction of the phrase 'biological diversity' covers many aspects of biological variation. In popular usage, the word biodiversity is often used to describe all the species living in a particular area. In a broader sense, biodiversity includes not only living organisms and their complex interactions, but also interactions with the abiotic aspects of their environment.

Urban areas and even megacities like Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata are homes to various kinds of plants and animals - wild, semi-wild, domesticated and introduced. Biodiversity in an urban context is crucial for a number of reasons. One is that it is a key concern for sustenance of our cities – socially, environmentally, ecologically and economically. It adds to the quality of life of our cities and reflects the city's health as well as the physical and psychological health of its people. It helps reduce the environmental problems which are created due to cities' functions as economic engines. Problems like pollution, depleting water table, heat islands, increasing landfills, health concerns etcetera can be controlled through an increase in our tree cover and increase in bio-diversity.

Pune is situated in a saucer shaped basin surrounded by hills from all sides and rivers and lakes in the basin, broadly located on the borders of the Western Ghats of India and the Deccan plateau around 60 kilometres from the coastal line. Pune's urban area is very rich in biodiversity and species – it has 600 herbs, 300 trees, 15 snails, 69 fish, 14 amphibians, 50 reptiles, 300 birds, 105 butterflies and 65 mammals. Almost 2/3rd of Deccan's biodiversity has been reported to be from the Pune urban area. The Pune urban area is approximately 700 squared kilometres, which has grown by around 400 % since 1950 and has almost doubled in the last 10 years. Its human population has increased by more than 60 % in last 10 years.

Pune city with its multidimensional role of educational hub, IT centre, Industrial centre and cultural centre emits 0.78 million tons of Carbon per year, of which 25% is contributed by the vehicular pollution. Pune's trees can sequester only 2% of these emissions. It is estimated that carbon emissions may get doubled

in next 10 years. Pollution, heavy harvesting and exotics are the major causes. The condition of ground water resources is also worrisome. More than 50 % of wells have Chloride level above 30 ppm. It is estimated that 15 % more fish species may disappear from Pune's waters in the next 10 years and the number of mammal species may decrease by 50 % if proper urban management measures are not taken. The number of people living in urban areas is always increasing. The impact of urbanisation and industrialisation on biodiversity and ecosystem is far greater and deeper than is anticipated.

Pune's urban biodiversity includes the natural as well as the human-made environment with its associated flora, fauna and also human beings along with their domestic animals. Its character changes according to the character and evolutionary stage of the Urban Environment. Urban biodiversity cannot be sustained without a holistic development approach and appropriate environmental mitigation of problems. This is a very complex issue and needs an integrated approach.

Conservation Approach may include sensitising urban planners and including the conservation of natural areas in planning process, landscape designing by considering regional ecology in recreation and aesthetics, plantations suitable to local biodiversity, efficient strategy for proper disposal of garbage, sewage, industrial effluents, greening of institutional and industrial campuses, developing urban ecosystems for ecotourism, encouraging terrace gardens, terrace farming, herbal gardens, encouraging use of renewable energy, encouraging nest boxes, bird tables, etcetera.

It is essential to properly manage the urban ecosystems for maintaining the balanced condition of our growing cities and to continue to provide ecosystem services to our cities. We should remember that nature does not need us, rather we need nature and it is therefore our prime responsibility to conserve and protect it and integrate it into our urban cities.

*Abstract by: Shubhada Kamalapurkar and Mukul Mahabaleshwarkar*

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Members:**

- 1) Ms Angelika KOEPF (Austria)
- 2) Mr Syed Ahmad NAFISUL ABRAR (Bangladesh)
- 3) Mr Zihao CHENG (China)
- 4) Ms Gabriela KABOTOVÁ (Czech Republic)
- 5) Mr Giacomo CRIVELLARI (Italy)
- 6) Mr Chuck Chuan NG (Malaysia)
- 7) Ms Margrethe Beate HAMMOND ROSBACH (Norway)
- 8) Ms Priynaka AGARWAL (India)

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:**

- 1) Ms Elena MOZGOVOYA (Russia)

# HACK GROUP # 5

## INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

### Cultural and intangible heritage (traditional festivals)

Led by:

Centre for Development Studies and Administration, INTACH Pune

The importance of intangible cultural heritage is not the cultural manifestation itself but rather the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted. Festivals represent the mass expression of living heritage. Festivals are potent grounds to breed exchange of ideas, concepts, believe and keep traditions alive.

Ganesh Festival is one such intangible heritage that has been practiced and kept alive by the city of Pune. The annual festival in honour of Ganesh or Ganapati, the elephant-headed deity who is known as the remover of obstacles and the god of auspiciousness, has been observed for at least 250 years, and perhaps even since the twelfth century. It falls on the fourth day of the bright half of the lunar month, "Bhadrapada" (August - September). People buy Ganesh idol "murti" made from clay to keep in their houses as a divine guest for five to ten days. The murti is then taken out ceremoniously and immersed into the river, sea or well. It is called Visarjan.

The modern history of the Ganapati festival dates back to 1894, when an Indian nationalist, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, gave it a distinct political face. One of Tilak's achievements was to make the Ganapati festival as the vehicle to speak for the aspirations of the Indian who desired independence from British rule.

The innovations introduced by Tilak consisted of making the Ganapati festival into a community-based enterprise. Subscriptions for the purchase of large idols of Ganesh were collected on behalf of a residential area, market, or organisation, which were then placed on pavilions (mandaps) and made the object of collective worship. Various song-and-dance parties were attached to each mandap, and more often than not, the songs had strong political overtones.

In its present form, the Ganapati festival, which is best observed in Pune and Bombay (now Mumbai), retains to a very large degree the characteristics with which it was celebrated earlier. The festival is observed for ten days, and immersions of the deity are carried out over the last twenty-four hours of the festival.

The funds for the public festival are collected from members of the association arranging the celebration, local residents or local businesses. The Ganesh and accompanying statues are installed in temporary shelter called mandap or pandals. The local Festival Committees vie with each other to put up the biggest statue and the best pandal. The festival is also the time for cultural activities like singing and theatre performances, orchestra and community activities like free medical check-up, blood donation camps, and charity for the poor.

The increasing scale of festivities are aggravating Pune's existing issues of river pollution and waste management. Continuous efforts are being made for awareness regarding noise pollution, idol immersion in rivers and appropriate treatment of "Nirmalya", wet flower and leaf waste offered to the god.

Sustainability Initiatives did a study to estimate the magnitude of waste generated and the findings were appalling. The study showed that the average waste collection increased by 200 tonnes/ day in the ten days. There is also a large amount of waste and discarded material that is not collected by PMC and thus unaccounted in this data. Fresh flowers are the most popular decoration material and a Mandal uses around 250 kg of flowers which end up in the trash after just a few of hours. Though the Municipal Corporation has made arrangements to collect the Nirmalya, much of it collected in plastic bags, the segregation of which is one added task.

Sustainability of any activity is related to the context and time in which it is placed. An act can be sustainable in one context or a set of conditions but can be rendered unsustainable in another. Ganesh festival celebrations transformed from being "Private" to "Public" 200 years back.

There seems to be a need to relook at the way this festival is celebrated so as to sustain the benefits the festival offers in terms of strengthening the community life with an opportunity of exchange of ideas, beliefs and oral traditions and at the same time minimize the adverse environment impacts which may render this living culture unsustainable.

*Abstract by: Poorva Keskar*

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Members:**

- 1) Ms Anjali ROBERTS (Australia)
- 2) Mr Panagiotis CHATZIMICHAIL (Cyprus)
- 3) Mr Martin Storkholm NIELSEN (Denmark)
- 4) Ms Klára NAGY (Hungary)
- 5) Ms Malika SHAMBULOVA (Kazakhstan)
- 6) Ms Liva DUDAREVA (Latvia)
- 7) Mr Purevjav TUMENDEMBEREL (Mongolia)
- 8) Ms Mojca LORBER (Slovenia)
- 9) Ms Lorna REED (United Kingdom)

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:**

- 1) Ms Claudia BUSETTO (Italy)

# HACK GROUP # 6

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

### Linking local economies, livelihoods and lifestyles with heritage at the core

Led by:

Symbiosis International University

#### Abstract

The Asia-Europe Foundation in collaboration with INTACH and the Symbiosis International University is conducting a two-week long summer school which will focus on the theme of “Sustainable Urbanisation in Heritage Cities”. The initiative brings together architects, urban planners, designers, academics and students, amongst other stakeholders, to deliberate on various aspects of the chosen theme.

The aim of this case study which focuses on the ancient art of copper crafting in the city of Pune is to establish linkages between local economies, sustainable livelihoods and lifestyles with heritage at the core.

#### Context

Pune, a city well-known for its historical heritage, one of India’s fastest growing cities today. The city has grown exponentially in the past few years. The Oxford of the East, as Pune is also known, grew from a quiet town filled with students and retired residents to one of the biggest industrial hubs in western India. The influx of corporates and heavy industries brought with it a sudden onset of migration of skilled and unskilled workers, who made this city their home. Over a period of time Pune’s heritage and customs have gradually ebbed due to rapid modernisation.

The city was once the seat of the vast Maratha Empire. Tambat Ali, in Kasba Peth has housed generations of copper-smiths since the time the Peths were created by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1627-1680). During the rule of the Peshwas (AD 1750-1858), the coppersmiths made the currency coins, horseshoes for the army and utensils of the then ruling power. With the onset of industrialisation, as manpower became expensive, stainless steel and plastic slowly took over thus leaving many of the coppersmiths out of work. Today, a handful remain who have carried forward knowledge and art from over a century ago.

#### Framework for the Study

This case study could be embedded in the following UN frameworks:

##### **1. Draft Sustainable Development Goal # 11**

The set of 17 draft sustainable development goals includes a stand-alone goal on sustainable cities and human settlements. Draft SDG # 11 and related targets which emphasise the need to “make cities and

human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” will bring the spotlight on urban issues in the post-2015 process. One of the targets to be met by 2030 is to “safeguard the world’s natural and cultural heritage”.

## **2. UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)**

The UNESCO-led and advocated Historic Urban Landscape approach with regard to the management of heritage urban landscapes encompasses urban heritage conservation, economic and social goals. The HUL mechanism sees “urban heritage as a social, cultural and economic asset for the development of cities”.

The HUL aims to preserve the physical environment as well as tangible and intangible heritage and seeks to “increase the sustainability of planning and design interventions by taking into account the existing built environment, intangible heritage, and cultural diversity, socio-economic and environmental factors along with local community values”

### **Objectives**

1. Study the impact of urbanization on the copper-smiths of Tambat Ali , Pune
2. Explore the changing face of Indian lifestyle
3. Explore ways to revive traditional practices to create sustainable livelihoods

### **Methodology**

The data for this study will be sourced primarily through interactive sessions with the coppersmiths and their families via a brief literature review, interviews, videography, and photographs. The study will focus mainly on qualitative analysis and if desired could be expanded into a quantitative framework.

### **Expected Outcomes**

1. Solutions for sustainability, scalability and replicability of the copper craft
2. A framework for social innovation and entrepreneurship

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Members:**

- 1) Ms Johanna ÖHLÉN MESCHKE (Sweden)
- 2) Mr Peter STREICHER (Slovakia)
- 3) Ms Liliya FATYKOVA (Russian Federation)
- 4) Ms Blessy Joy NAVAL (Philippines)
- 5) Mr Faraz AHMED (Pakistan)
- 6) Ms Elizabeth TJAHJANA (New Zealand)
- 7) Mr Jerry HILGERT (Luxembourg)
- 8) Mr Christoforos PAVLAKIS (Greece)

## **ASEFSU Hack Team Facilitator:**

- 1) Mr Vincenzo DI MARA (Italy)