

Session – II
Public Participation in Heritage Conservation
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I am not a technical man. I think Mr. Palanivelu has chosen me on this topic because I have implemented underground sewerage under public-private participation and it was the first of its kind in Asia. So the public are ready to participate in any project, provided awareness is created among them. As Mr. Suresh rightly pointed out and many of us came to know this afternoon that the Taj Mahal Building is about to be demolished. But for the awareness and the people's participation that monument has been safeguarded and it is a historical monument. Likewise all that heritage buildings can not be taken care of by the Government because I think the heritage buildings can be classified as remunerative and non remunerative. The GPO is occupied by the Postal Department, State Bank, where they run their own office, University, they are running University Office, PWD likewise there are many heritage buildings which can be taken care of by themselves but there are certain heritage buildings which needs the care. Some of the pictures shown in the screen we find that grass is coming up because of the negligence. What is the reason for negligence? Number one is finance and Number two, there is no due importance is attached to it. Therefore, now luckily atleast now, we have got the beginning to think about the conservation and preservation of the heritage buildings in Chennai. Some of the buildings, when I visited as a member of this Committee, we found that many of the buildings should be preserved because of its historical value though unless and until public participates in these attempts, projects can not succeed. If you see the roads in Tamil Nadu and India - 'Golden quadrangles' grown, we never dreamt in twenty years back, if you want to go to B'luru by express road way we can reach within 5 hours and no body bothers to pay Rs.200 or Rs.300/- as a toll to save time. Everyone is first time reluctant. Without public's participation many of the projects would not have come true so far as in my experience in Alandur, I was Municipal Chairman, and Alandur Municipality is the first municipality in Tamil Nadu to take up the Underground Sewerage Scheme under public private participation. When we go to people whether to continue pay the tax sum, Rs. 5000 as Deposit that too non refundable, we are able to collect Rs.5 Crores as Deposit. Our secretary Madam Tmt. Malathi, she gave me a moral courage and she said, "you can do it in Alandu". Because In Alandur 80-90% people are educated and many of them are residents settled down in Chennai so they will know the importance of underground sewerage and definitely you can collect. I had to collect Rs.5 crore from the public within 3 months from the date of issue of a Government Order, I collected Rs.5 Crore from the public and the project cost was about Rs.32 crores then

in 2001; luckily because of people's co-operation and participation in the scheme it was possible for us to complete it in 2005. To-day Pallavaram sewerage project cost is ,Rs. 150 crore ,for laying the sewerage in Tambaram it is Rs.174 crore .To start with it may be difficult. To-day in Tamil Nadu, more than 42 municipalities are implementing the underground sewerage under public participation so that I would like to request CMDA authorities to relax the rule. Recently, Pallavaram people are in panic because some of the colonies have been issued notices. Luckily a hill is there. They say, it is a heritage building and notices have been issued to the people who are living around the quarry. The quarry now in question is termed as heritage and notice has been served to the people who are just residing in and around there .All things should be taken into consideration. I would suggest to the CMDA, if you want to safeguard the buildings, heritage buildings which is non-remunerative you can collect the taxes as heritage tax while approving the building that is constructed within 100 M, 100 m I do not think , it is needed. Cess system should be brought in like education cess and it should be practical. To get a planning permission, one has to go to Central Government, by that time a person will be affected and will die. Therefore, indirectly, collect the heritage cess, like education cess, that funding can be included in the property tax while we prepare the scheme. In this way the heritage building can be safeguarded. So these are the simplification of rules, definitely, make the people's participation in the conservation of heritage buildings. Therefore, I would like to request the authorities to kindly consider requests and the problems faced by the people in and around the area of Pallavaram. I have no way connected to Pallavaram. People are harassed and they do not know neither the CMDA or ASI doing the thing. Therefore this should be explained to the people. So the awareness is the main thing. I took my partner, private consultant with myself and met every body in each and every street and explained what are the difficulties faced to get the underground sewerage. I displayed the names of the person who has paid the money and they were put on the notice board. An IAS officer, who was out of station for a long time, his name was not found on the board and immediately started bombarding and so on. What you can do if I have not paid the money. I told him that the names have been written on the board who have paid the money. In the absence of their name, people started to think to pay and to see their names in the board. Therefore, the people thought, the very next day itself; so the awareness should be created in such a way that it is acceptable by the people and this should be implemented for heritage also.

Thank You.
