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Come Alive – Be live

When we talk of living heritage it denotes one basic fact it is that heritage that reverberates with life. I feel all the elements of living heritage celebrate life itself be it festivals, music, dance, folk ballads, rituals or the story telling. India becomes Incredible India only because of its vivid living heritage.

Intriguingly for us talking about living heritage is a recent and if I may say an alien phenomenon as our life so far has been deeply rooted in traditions, culture and celebrations.

I have been drawn towards these elements right from my early childhood inheriting many stories and storyboards as we celebrated festivals at home as well as drawn by the traditions of different communities like the puppeteers, mahouts and snake charmers. It was much later that taking tourism as my profession lead me to give a different interpretation to tourism which till that time was focusing on destinations or to be precise the tangible heritage. I was driven by my passion - the live elements of our traditions and culture and the first mile stone was to have come up with the Desert Festival in Jaisalmer.

From designing and presenting festivals and then writing books have been a different experience. Interestingly whatever I did or do today is with the same feeling to reflect on our living heritage which is intangible.

For years the focus has been on the tangible i.e. the structures as against the intangible! So how do we take care of the living heritage that infuses life in and around those structures? How do we inspire the inheritors to inherit or to those who can hand over this invaluable heritage to pass on are questions that loom large before my eyes in today's times where people are centring their lives around social media and gadgets instead of coming alive to celebrate festive occasions and heading for recorded sounds instead of enjoying the live and spontaneous sounds that gave us such an immense repertoire of music and dance...for me my base line is:

Come Alive...Be live!