

Ahmedabad Next goes global

City's Branding Hailed As A World-Class Success Story

Bharat Yagnik | TNN

Ahmedabad: The city's 600th birthday celebrations have got the thumbs up from a world-wide compilation of 17 case studies of 'city branding' which has featured Ahmedabad as the only Indian entry. 'City Branding — Theory and Cases' is compiled by Dr Keith Dinnie and published in a 239-page book form by Palgrave Macmillan.

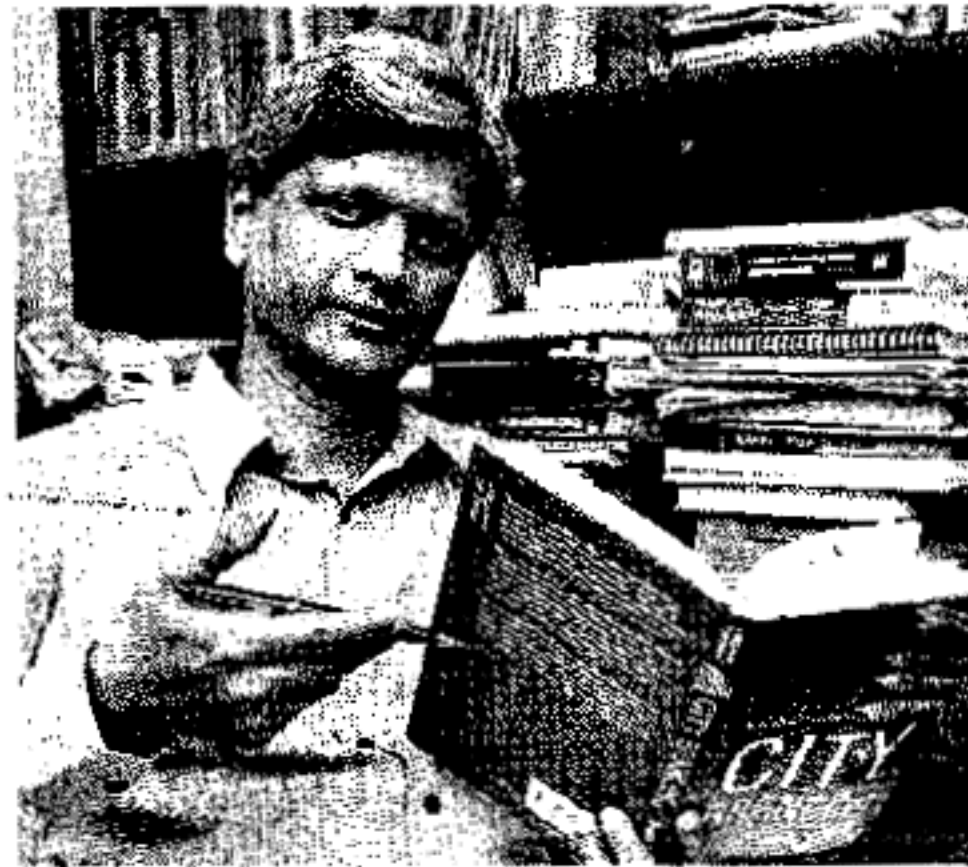
Chapter 13, 'The City Branding of Ahmedabad', is written by Satish K Nair, assistant professor at the Institute of Management, Nirma University, Ahmedabad, who has extensively quoted The Times of India's reports in his case study. He said "the role of the media in the building of a city brand is critical and TOI is playing that leadership role in Ahmedabad".

Nair said he had been approached to carry out the study by Dr Dinnie, one of the world's foremost authorities on place branding.

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Satish K Nair

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT,
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Dr Dinnie, who is also academic editor of the Palgrave Macmillan journal 'Place Branding and Public Diplomacy', has written in the introduction that "A city brand needs to be rooted in reality, rather than a delusion peddled by mendacious marketers. Making exaggerated claims for a city will backfire as soon as target audiences realise that they have been misled. Therefore, cities need to ensure that they have got the tangible evidence to back up their proclaimed strengths."

He goes on to quote Nair's study which, he says; "usefully demonstrates this point by detailing the specific developments that the city has recently undertaken". He says the Bus Rapid Transit System

(BRTS) and Sabarmati Riverfront Project "not only enhance the quality of life of Ahmedabad citizens, they also promote an evidence-based image of the city as environmentally responsible and committed to real improvements to the city's infrastructure".

Nair has traced the success of the Vibrant Gujarat investors' summits, hiring of global lobbying firms to market Gujarat across the world, the move of Tata's Nano plant from Singur to Sanand, and looks ahead at the proposed metro rail and GIFT city projects — citing reports appearing in TOI to prove his point. He also singles out the kite festival and Navratri celebrations as internal events which demonstrates the city's vibrancy.

Proud past, bright future

Hailing the 'Ahmedabad Heritage Walk' as a brand image builder, Nair writes:



"Ahmedabad is home to a plethora of stepwells, palaces, mosques, mausoleums institutions of

national and international fame. Its architectural identity reveals an amalgamation of deep-rooted traditional values with the aspirations of changed times." He goes on to add that with such planning and brand building, Ahmedabad will become a world-class city, not just another metropolis.

In august company

Other cities featured in the book are

Accra, Athens, Barcelona, Budapest, Chong Qing, Edinburgh, The Hague, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Lisbon, Monte Video, Paris, Seoul, Sydney, Tokyo and Wollongong.

