Institute to train tribal children in fine arts remains a non-starter
The Worli Tribal Art currently being painted on the compound wall of Adilabad district collectorate and other paintings on the boundary walls of Indira Priyadarshini stadium and the Gandhi park make for a pleasant sight yet, something looks amiss. It is the local touch to the art that is missing.

“IT would have been great had local tribal artists painted these walls. They are natural artists and provide a connect as it has its roots in the life of local people,” opined Kumra Maruthi Rao, a degree student of Adilabad Government College as he watched the collectorate wall being painted.

The Adilabad tribal art, if it can be called that, is limited to the walls of the Adivasi homes where ‘amateur’ artists make paintings of birds, wild animals, flowers and trees by virtue of their association with these.

Their aesthetic sense also comes alive during their festivals, marriages and other religious activities where they are required to play music and dance and decorate concerned premises. The aesthetic sense of the ethnic people in old composite Adilabad district however, is the most neglected and ignored aspect of their ethos.

Though there was an attempt at honing the artistic skills of aboriginal youth way back in the late 1980s, it was insufficient to offer art as a means of livelihood to the Adivasi youth.

Late Guruji Ravinder Sharma of Kala Ashram, Adilabad, trained 20 Kolam students of the Kolam Ashram School in Adilabad in painting and an exhibition of their work was held in Hyderabad. Subsequently, an institute to train tribal children in fine arts under his guidance remained a non-starter around that time and what could have been a success story became a tale of neglect and apathy.

Only two Raj Gond youths from Rasimetta in Jainoor mandal of Kumram Bheem Asifabad district, Madavi Shatrughan and Rajeshwar are undergoing training in fine arts at Hyderabad’s JNTU Fine Arts College.

“We are being trained in tribal art which belong to Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh,” revealed Rajeshwar which also makes it essential to promote Adilabad tribal art so that it is elevated to the status of a genre.

The budding artist also pointed out that the ethnic tribes still retain the knowledge on extracting colours from soil, flowers and leaves.

“This is another strong reason for the government to do something for us in this area,” he observed.