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BUSINESS

Apr 23, 2006

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Young entrepreneur puts some spice into Bhubaneswar

Sunday April 23 2006 00:00 IST

BHUBANESWAR: He did not want to be the 'run of the mill' kind. He had the ideas, an innate desire to experiment and the guts to take the risks. Today, he has not only scripted success out of his endeavour but also transformed the staid image of Bhubaneswar to one throbbing with life.

Sanjeev Patra's 'Sandy's Square' in its one and half years of existence has become the most happening spot of the the state capital, housing the only hep pub with a dance floor in the city, outlets of international food chains and the top hair-dressing saloon of the country.

Business has crossed Rs 5 crore and is increasing.

'Sandy's Square' has emerged as the most sought after hangout of the city with visitors not confined to teens and college youth but spreading across the spectrum to professionals and executives and even the older generation.

Sanjeev's Sandy journey, though, is laced with events of tragedy and struggle. Son of leading hotelier Ladu Gopal Patra, he had joined the family

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business after completing his MBA in 1994. But he was always raring to be on his own and explore new avenues.

His father's death in 2002 brought him to the crossroads - either to continue with the hotel business or venture into something new.

"I was in a fix. We had already got land at XIMB Square with plans for a five-star hotel. But I was not very keen and wanted to do something very different. I wanted to give Bhubaneswar a new look, with hot hangouts and a pulsating night-life," the 31-year old says.

"The initial phase was very disappointing as I faced rejection everywhere when I tried to persuade companies to join hands with me and come to Bhubaneswar. But it was a chance meeting with internationally acclaimed hairstylist Javed Habib that brought a beginning," he recollects.

Habib's Fair and Beauty unisex saloon was the first to set foot on Sandy's Square and Bangalore-based Cafe Coffee Day chain, Smokin' Joe's pizza chain, and Niknish Gift Shop soon followed.

But the establishment of Sparks, the only stand-alone pub with a dance-floor, jugglers, heavy lights and full-time DJs, changed the way people looked at enjoying life in Bhubaneswar.

"Our primary targets were students, teens and young professionals but soon the clientele base transcended all barriers. Now people from far-off places like Angul Talcher, Barbil, Jajpur and Cuttack are thronging the place," Patra states.

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