

L-G VK Saxena approves declaring 23 heritage sites in Ladakh as “Protected Monuments”

***Move aims at preserving Ladakh's rich cultural and historical
legacy***

***LG says move will lay strong foundation for scientific conservation
and documentation of these protected monuments***



Leh, July 30: In a landmark initiative aimed at safeguarding Ladakh's rich archaeological, historical and cultural heritage, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, has approved a notification for declaring 23 heritage sites across the Union Territory as “Protected

Monuments” under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Ancient Monuments Preservation Act.

The notification has been issued in view of the immense historical, archaeological and cultural significance of these sites, and marks a major milestone in the preservation of Ladakh's unique civilisational heritage. These 23 protected monuments include petroglyph sites, ancient rock carvings, ancient caves, Gompas, caves, forts and palaces among others, that were hitherto lying in dilapidated shape and were under severe threat.

The declaration aims at strengthening heritage conservation efforts in Ladakh by providing legal protection to these historically important sites, facilitating their systematic preservation and restoration, and ensuring that future generations inherit these irreplaceable monuments in their original character and splendour.

"Ladakh's ancient monasteries, forts, caves, petroglyphs and rock carvings are invaluable testimonies to our rich civilisational heritage and cultural identity. Their preservation is not merely about protecting monuments but about safeguarding the collective memory of our people for future generations. By declaring these sites as Protected Monuments, we are laying a strong institutional foundation for their scientific conservation, documentation and sustainable management. This initiative reflects our commitment to preserving Ladakh's priceless heritage while promoting responsible cultural tourism, research and greater public awareness of our unique historical legacy," said LG, Shri Saxena.

With this notification, the identified monuments shall now enjoy statutory protection under the provisions of the Act, enabling the Administration to undertake measures for their conservation, prevent encroachments, regulate activities that may endanger their structural integrity, and preserve their historical authenticity.

The 23 sites notified as Protected Monuments include the Petroglyph Site at Sharnos; Maitreya Buddha Rock Carving at Shey near Sindhu Ghat; Tingmosgang Fort; Ancient Caves at Saspol; Petroglyph Sites at Domkhar, Lehdo, Alchi and Murgi; Stongday Gonpa; Meditation Cave of Onpo at Hunder; Hunder Cave; Dechen Tsomo Khar (Fort); Stampuk Cave; Chamba Rock Carving; Zong Chamba (Rock Carving of Maitreya Buddha); Rock-Carved Buddha Statue at Hunder; Rigsum Gonbo Rock Carvings at Diggar; Chamba Karpo (White Maitreya Buddha) at Diggar; Chamba Rock Carving at Tokpo, Diggar; Folang Singey (Boulder-like Lion Face) at Diggar; Sumoor Fort; Rock Inscriptions at Yourbaltak, Kargil; and the Petroglyph Site at Mangmore, Kargil.