

» TODAY'S PAPER » TAMIL NADU

Published: October 28, 2007 00:00 IST | Updated: April 29, 2011 16:25 IST October 28, 2007

Conservation laboratory in city, a possibility



Apt initiative: Major General L.K. Gupta addressing the inaugural function of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (Madurai Chapter) in Madurai on Saturday.

Staff Reporter

Says expert inaugurating Madurai Chapter of INTACH

MADURAI: Being the heartland of culture and tradition in the State, setting up of a conservation laboratory in the Temple City was a possibility, said Major General L.K. Gupta, Head of chapters division, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), on Saturday.

Inaugurating the Madurai Chapter of the INTACH here, he said that replete with heritage structures and precincts, the city had tremendous potential to host a laboratory and added that at present, people had to travel either to Thrissur (Kerala) or Bangalore (Karnataka) for any work related with conservation laboratory.

Expressing concern over the poor conservation techniques that would enervate age-old structures, he said the laboratory with experts in this field would be able to suggest best conservation practices and how best heritage structures and monuments could be preserved.

Pointing out that in countries like England and United States of America, which were in no comparison to India in terms of the historicity or heritage sites, stress was more on conserving places of historic and heritage value, he said that less than two per cent of the country's monuments and heritage structures came under the protection of law and conserved by the Archaeological Survey of India.

The public had greater responsibility in preserving and conserving sites of rich cultural and heritage value said Mr. Gupta and called for creation of public awareness of the significance of protecting the aesthetic beauty of the remaining vestiges of historic past.

P.T. Krishnan, State Convenor, INTACH, said that heritage was a primary cause and tourism, an incidental benefit.

Thrashing at the popular misconception about conservation and preservation of structures, he said that heritage conservation was more of a grass root movement than elitist.

Aravind Kumar Sankar, Convenor, INTACH, Madurai, T. Chinnaraj Joseph Jaikumar, Principal, The American College, Shankar Vanavarayar, Co-convenor, INTACH, Thanjavur chapter, and members of INTACH, Madurai, took part.

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Printable version | Mar 18, 2016 7:39:47 PM | <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/conservation-laboratory-in-city-a-possibility/article1937693.ece>

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