

Telangana temple gets World Heritage tag

In a diplomatic triumph, 17 countries back India's proposal despite ICOMOS verdict

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In a major diplomatic triumph, the 13th century Ramappa temple in Palampet, Telangana, was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Sunday. At the ongoing online meeting of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) in Fuzhou, China, the decision was reached after a consensus, with Norway opposing the inscription while Russia led an effort for the immediate inscription of the temple at 4.36 p.m. IST.

A consensus with 17 countries backing the move ensured the inscription.

The nomination for a World Heritage Site for the Ramappa and Kakatiya temples was made in 2014. The site was in the reckoning for inscription in 2020 but the WHC meeting



Valuable site: The 13th century Ramappa temple in Palampet is known for its exquisite craftsmanship. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Built by Racherla Senapati Rudrayya, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapatideva, in the 13th century, the main temple is flanked by the collapsed structures of the Kateshwarayya and

Kameshwarayya temples in Palampet, about 220 km from Hyderabad.

The temple, known for its exquisite craftsmanship and delicate relief work, is a savvy blend of technical know-how and materials of its time. The foundation is built with the “sandbox

technique”, the flooring is granite and the pillars are basalt. The lower part of the temple is red sandstone while the white gopuram is built with light bricks that reportedly float on water.

Earlier, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) cited nine shortcomings at the site after an initial visit in 2019, but on Sunday a majority veered round to India's view about the site's outstanding universal value.

Norway was the only country which opposed the move citing ICOMOS's conclusion.

India mounted a diplomatic offensive to ensure the World Heritage Site status for the Ramappa temple by reaching out to other countries whose representatives were to vote on the proposal.