

Mumbai's Victorian and Art Deco buildings get World Heritage tag

(Top) The Eros building at Churchgate, Mumbai, is a prime example of the Art Deco architecture, and the Victorian buildings along the Oval Maidan. Vivek Bendre, Arunangsu Roy Chowdhury

The Elephanta Caves and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai now have a companion on the UNSECO World Heritage Site List. The city's Victorian and Art Deco ensembles were given the green light by the International Council for Monuments and Sites, an advisory body to the UNSECO, thus securing India its 37th World Heritage site, and Maharashtra its fifth.

Notable structures

The buildings around the Fort, Churchgate and Marine Drive areas of the city, with notable structures such as the Bombay High Court, Elphinstone College, the National Gallery of Modern Art and CSMT, form a part of the collection of Victorian, Neo-Classical and Indo-Saracenic architecture in the city. Residential buildings along Oval Maidan and around the Cricket Club of India, and the first row of buildings along Marine Drive, as well as the Regal and Eros cinema theatres, are part of the Art Deco cluster. Mumbai's Victorian buildings are amongst the finest and most cohesive 19th century Victorian architecture in the world, and the city's Art Deco buildings of the 20th century make up the second largest homogenous collection in the world.

The Nomination Dossier presented to UNESCO was prepared by conservation architect Abha Narain Lambah, who has been working on this project for 14 years.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "Mumbai's tourism and culture would be hugely benefitted if this nomination succeeds... It would [now] have the unique distinction of being both a financial capital and a World Heritage Site."

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