

Sumela Monastery on its way to World Heritage List



The Sumela Monastery, a favorite tourist destination in the eastern Black Sea region, is now counting down the days to open its doors to visitors after four years of restoration.

Following the ongoing restoration work, the journey of the monastery to UNESCO's World Heritage List will begin.

The first section of the magnificent structure, where Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy has accelerated the restoration, will open on May 25, 2019. This section features the area that extends to the first courtyard in the structure.

After all the work is complete in the monastery and its complex, which will be reopened by the Culture and Tourism Deputy Minister Nadir Alparslan, the ministry will initiate procedures to introduce it as a permanent site on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Sumela Monastery closed to visitors on Sept. 22, 2015. The one-year closed period of the monastery, meant to assure that the restorations were

conducted safely, was extended due to the danger of falling rocks and the difficult geographical conditions in the area.

As part of the restoration and environmental planning, the construction of walls on pathways, grouting, wood flooring of staircases and suspension in some parts, including in the kitchen, the priest's room and the monks' rooms, received attention in the monastery. Likewise, the rocky surfaces of the aqueducts and at the entrance have also been cleaned and restored.

Restoration of the sections in the entrance hall and the outer courtyard, such as the aqueducts, toilets and ticket office, have also been completed. As part of the second stage of the measures to prevent falling rock hazards around Sumela, a 1,600-ton rock blockade that can be draped over the entrance gate has been installed and bundled with steel netting.

Maintenance and cleaning of the surrounding rock will also be carried out in the areas where churches and classrooms are located. After that, restoration work will be carried out in the church, classroom and courtyard sections of the monastery.

After all the restoration work planned by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is completed by the end of 2020, initiatives will be launched to add tentative-listed Sumela Monastery to the permanent list of UNESCO sites.



— Source: dailysabah.com