

Cyprus: MPs urge company not to resume construction above historic cave housing the church of Panayia Chrysospiliottisa



The House Transport Committee on Friday urged a company building a petrol station near a cave housing the church of Panayia Chrysospiliottisa in Kato Deftera not to resume construction until parliament had been fully briefed.

Committee chairman Yiorgos Prokopiou said it would be best if the petrol station was built on another plot nearby. A temporary injunction has been issued by the court suspending construction until June 12 when the case is due back in court.

Before the committee meeting, residents of the area demonstrated outside Parliament calling for the construction to be scrapped.

They say the historic cave is in danger of collapse because of the construction of a

petrol station above it.

They became concerned after vibrations from the use of a road roller machine led to soil falling within the cave.

The church 'Our Lady of the Golden Cave' (dedicated to the Virgin Mary) is believed to date back to the early Christian period, and the shape of this small church inside a cave is very rare in Cyprus.

The decorated walls of the cave have suffered great damage and the frescoes are no longer visible, but a large religious festival is held on August 15, the day of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary.

About 10 years ago, support work was carried out by the Antiquities Department, with grants from the Leventis Foundation and the late former president Tassos Papadopoulos.

– Source: in-cyprus.com