

《云居寺石经山藏经洞首次开放》

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The Yunju Temple is a famous ancient Buddhist temple located among the high mountain ridges in the Beijing suburb. Covering more than 70,000 square meters, the site boasts a multitude of historical treasures that also serve to shed light on China's Buddhism culture.

The temple houses a wealth of Buddhism scriptures. There are scriptures written or carved on stones, wood and paper and are collectively referred to as the "three wonders" of the temple. Work on the stone sculptures began in the year 605 A.D. during the Sui Dynasty.

Devout monks continued the work for more than 1,000 years and a series of 1,122 sutras were engraved on some 14,000 pieces of stones. A feat that has been rarely attempted before.



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"These scriptures are among the highest level of its kind in Chinese Buddhism culture. Because ever since Sui Dynasty, carving of these scriptures were directly supported by the emperors, high on their agendas. And so our research has proved their values. It is a miracle in history," said Luo Zhao, a researcher.

The stone scriptures have been playing a very important role in the study of Buddhism history, ancient Chinese politics, society, culture and art. In addition, they are of high calligraphic and artistic values.

"It's a trial run and we have fully prepared for this for some time now. Both the equipment and experts are all in place. We believe presenting these treasures to the public is also a very important form of preservation," said Wang Dejun, from Beijing Yunju Temple.

Beijing's cultural relics authorities are also working on a more comprehensive plan to better preserve these relics at the temple. A heritage park in the works will create more public access to the relics while expanding excavation and research on the historic site.