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Experts to survey more NE monuments

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Guwahati: Geologists and GPR experts who carried out the first-ever Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey in the northeast in April have said they will explore more monuments here through the technology.

The GPR survey was carried out at two iconic Ahom monuments in Sivasagar district. It yielded positive readings of hidden sub-structures beneath them.

Javed Malik, geologist and associate professor at IIT-Kanpur, and his team, who had conducted the GPR survey at Talatal Ghar at Joysagar and Ahom's Raja Palace at Garga-

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on, both in Sivasagar district, had found positive readings of existing sub-structures through the survey.

Malik on Sunday told TOI that as his team was interpreting the readings, finalising the overall collected data and preparing a preliminary report in consultation with ASI, there should be a collaborative effort by IIT-K, ASI and the state government to discover more hidden and unexplored monuments.

"I have noticed that such a survey is not carried out in NE frequently. It is important that more GPR surveys are carried out in exploring unexplored monuments in the northeast," said Malik.

GPR survey is a non-destructive tool but an expensive method used by experienced archaeologists' world over to find sub-structures.

The usual method of excavation not only spoils the landscape of a historical site but lea-

ves a permanent scar on it as well as breaking and hammering of floors and walls.

The GPR readings provided by wave signals are denoted in different colours signifying earth, bricks and other substances.

Using state-of-the-art equipment, the survey in Sivasagar involved physical sensory techniques and used different electronic gadgets. The GPR survey is an important tool as it helps locate archaeological sites through imagery and mapping.

"We are willing to reduce the cost for this survey. IIT-K, ASI and the state government can be inclusive in making GPR survey a collaborative initiative in the northeast. People in India

need to know more about monuments in this region," added Malik.

At the existing structure of Talatal Ghar, GPR signals were received till two metres below the existing structure.

However, outside the Ghar but within the surroundings of the structure, towards its left adjacent side near the existing washroom, strong signals denoting existence of massive structures were found at a depth of 1.6 to 1.9 meters. The signals continued till more than four meters.

At the Ahom Raja Palace, a tentative 10 plus kilometres from Talatal Ghar existence of one more floor beneath the present structure was received by the radar.