

## **Chandigarh's Rock Garden creator Nek Chand dead**

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**Chandigarh** : Chandigarh's famous Rock Garden creator Nek Chand died here at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) here on Friday, his family members said.

He was 90 years old and was suffering from diabetes, hypertension and cancer. He was hospitalised for the past few days.

The body will be kept in the Rock Garden on Friday for the people to pay tributes and will be cremated on Saturday in Chandigarh, the family members said.

Nek Chand was the most-exhibited Indian artist ever with his creations being part of leading cities like Paris, London, New York, Washington DC, and Berlin, and numerous books in different languages being written about him. He had been offered the honorary citizenship in various countries.

He was a road inspector in a construction project in Chandigarh in the 1950s and 60s. At that time this city, popularly called "City Beautiful" was being designed by French architect Le Corbusier.

Nek Chand developed the art of creating figures from waste material discarded by people and secretly set up his laboratory in a forested area in north Chandigarh to help his creations get into shape.

He was honoured with the Padma Shri award in 1984 but the Nek Chand Foundation believes his contribution to Indian art deserves a much higher award.

All kinds of waste material like broken bangles, cutlery, chinaware, electrical fittings like switches, plugs and tube-lights, marbles, tiles, household junk, stones, building material waste and other things have found their way into art creations by Nek Chand.

The Rock Garden, located in Chandigarh's Sector 1 on a sprawling 35-acre campus can be best described as a "kingdom" created by Nek Chand which depicts the life and ecology of India, including rural settings and palaces. It also has waterfalls, an open air theatre, and pools.