



## AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

### **Bala Hissar Citadel in Kabul, Afghanistan to be restored by AKTC**



**Kabul, Afghanistan, 26 October 2020** - Bala Hissar citadel site, which is a registered National Monument and the largest open space in the Kabul, will be transformed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) into a public archaeological park. The works follow a decree in 2018 by His Excellency President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and funding by the ALIPH Foundation.

When completed, interventions will ensure that one of the most significant historic sites in the country is protected for posterity. Visitors are expected to be able to understand and appreciate Afghanistan's rich history and cultural heritage while they take advantage of the site's recreational, social and cultural activities (such as those taking place at Babur's and Chihil-sitoun Gardens).

"The site will become Afghanistan's first public archaeological park and a critical source for better understanding of its rich history and diverse heritage for tens of thousands of Afghans," said Ajmal Maiwandi, Chief Executive Officer at Aga Khan Trust for Culture Afghanistan.

Based on a Memorandum of Understanding between AKTC and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan -- endorsed in 2016 during the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan - AKTC committed to addressing critical conservation and archaeological issues at the site. It started works with internal resources in 2017 when a programme for emergency structural stabilisation was instituted to prevent the collapse of the historic fortification.

The four-year project, funded by the ALIPH Foundation, will be conducted by AKTC under the remit of the Minister of Information and Culture, and in collaboration with the Departments of Historic Monuments and Archaeology, the National Museum, and international expert organisations including the French Archaeological Delegation. It is expected that hundreds of Afghans will be engaged directly in the intensive works, providing essential employment and training opportunities for a wide range of craftsmen and professionals.

This announcement follows the award of a grant by the Government of India for complementary works at the Bala Hissar citadel focusing on the structural consolidation of existing above-ground fortifications.

#### **For more information:**

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Read online: <https://www.akdn.org/press-release/bala-hissar-citadel-kabul-afghanistan-be-restored-akte>