



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

Historic Cities Programme

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SHANASAZI MOSQUE, KABUL OLD CITY

Following on from the restoration of Shanasazi hammam (see AKTC Newsletter no. 15), which is now in full use, the government of Norway has made available additional funds for the restoration of the adjoining mosque. The first stage of the works entailed removal of the timber wainscoting and ceiling, revealing almost 40 finely-carved timber joists which seem to date from an earlier mosque on this site, where a number of white marble column-bases in the Mughal style have also been discovered. Having documented these finds in situ, the joists have been removed and are being restored, while work continues on restoration of a series of timber columns which, although badly damaged during previous modernization, retain fine lotus-flower decoration that is characteristic of such mosques in Kabul Old City.



BAGHE BABUR

The German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, marked the occasion of a visit to Baghe Babur by planting an apple tree, assisted by Dr. Rangin Spanta, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Eng. Pashtun, Minister of Urban Development, and other dignitaries. Dr. Steinmeier used the occasion to reaffirm Germany's commitment to the future of Afghanistan, as borne out by co-funding the restoration of the 16th-century Babur Gardens among other cultural projects.



AFGHAN CULTURAL PROFILE

As part of a wider international project managed by Visiting Arts, in collaboration with the British Council, AKTC staff are consulting with a range of contacts in order to update the *Afghanistan Cultural Profile*, an online guide to culture in Afghanistan that aims to raise awareness and foster exchange. The updated website will come online in October 2009, replacing a pilot version of the site and paving the way for work on Dari and Pashtun versions. This work has been made possible through funding from the government of Norway.



HERAT UPDATE

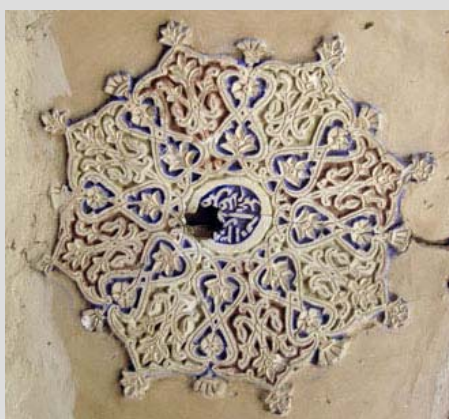
LIVING CONDITIONS IMPROVEMENTS

Residents across the Old City continue to see the impact of AKTC's investments in repairs to drains, which now extend for more than 4 kilometres through the historic fabric. In one neighbourhood in the Bar Durrani quarter families have themselves excavated and removed waste material in preparation for repairs to an additional 250 metres of underground drain, which will benefit some 350 residents. As with AKTC's other upgrading works in the Old City, this project is managed by community representatives.



CELEBRATING MUSIC

Forty-seven students of the AKMICA Herat music school attended a ceremony in the restored Chahar Suq cistern in the centre of the Old City on June 10th, when they performed before an invited audience before being presented with certificates marking their graduation from a course in traditional music. Four master-musicians provide instruction to 104 students of rubab, tabla, delruba, harmonium and voice at the school located in a historic house restored by AKTC in the Old City.



MULLAH MUFTI RASOUL MOSQUE

Work has begun on the restoration of this community mosque in Bar Durrani quarter. Found to be close to collapse during initial surveys, the mud-brick domed structure that makes up the oldest part of the mosque has been stabilized and carved and painted plasterwork carefully documented. Repairs have also been carried out on the enclosed winter mosque to the north and on the perimeter walls.



For more information about AKTC's programme in Afghanistan, contact us at Qala Moeen Afzal Khan, Gozargah Street, District 3, Kabul or Qala Ikhtyaruddin, Herat. information@akdn.org