

H.H. AGA KHAN IN ZANZIBAR



Coastweek -- His Highness the Aga Khan and President Karume of Zanzibar review plans for the restoration of Zanzibar 's seafront with Luis Monreal, General Manager of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

U.S. \$ 2.4 MILLION REVITALISATION OF FORODHANI PARK IN ZANZIBAR'S HISTORIC STONE TOWN

EXCLUSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM ZANZIBAR COURTESY - AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK AND ZAHUR RAMJI

Coastweek -- The US\$ 2.4 million restoration of Forodhani Park in Zanzibar 's Historic Stone Town has been completed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC).

The revitalisation project has transformed the heavily used park - one of the last open spaces in this densely populated World Heritage Site - and upgraded social and recreational amenities in the historic Park.

Works included the restoration of the walkways, landscape improvements, infrastructure upgrading including lighting, sewage, drainage and civic amenities and the rehabilitation of the seawall fronting the Park.

Speaking during the inauguration ceremony of the Park, His Highness the Aga Khan noted:

"This work has been a great partnership - an example of what can be done when people come together, with a common purpose, and share their knowledge - from the public and the private sector, from the local, national and international level, from civil society and many different professions."

The Park, once the location of the main port and a landing point for the former Sultans of Zanzibar has remained a central meeting place for civic discourse, leisure and entertainment.



Coastweek -- His Highness the Aga Khan and Her Excellency Madame Shadya Karume, First Lady of Zanzibar, at the inauguration ceremony for the completion of Stone Town's Forodhani Park.

In the last decade, stresses caused by the popularity of the Park took a toll.

It was clear that an important part of the patrimony of Stone Town was in need of revitalisation.

The rehabilitation project was first proposed by the Trust in 2001 as part of a programme for comprehensive seafront rehabilitation in Stone Town. It was intended to be a logical extension of the work already completed by AKTC in Kelele Square.



Coastweek --His Highness the Aga Khan visiting the gardens of Forodhani Park, Zanzibar. The Park was restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

Following meetings between President Amani Abeid Karume and His Highness the Aga Khan, agreements for the restoration of the Park were signed.

The Aga Khan added:

"In Cairo, in Damascus and Aleppo, in Delhi and Lahore, in Kabul and Bamako, in Mopti, Djenne and Timbuktu, and along the ancient Silk Route, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, through its Historic Cities Programme, has worked to restore a series of major cultural landmarks.

"We undertake these projects, in part, because they can reinforce a sense of identity within proud communities, providing gateways to cultural understanding for local citizens and for visitors alike. But there is more to the matter than that.

"These cultural initiatives, in each case, have also been accompanied by a social and economic rationale, so that the entire project works to improve the well being of the people who live in these areas."

The Trust has been active in Zanzibar since 1989, successfully completing the restoration of the Old Dispensary, now renamed the Stone Town Cultural Centre, and the old Customs House, as well as the rehabilitation of Kelele Square.

Eleven buildings in Stone Town - many of them on the point of collapse - were restored as part of a programme to show the building and restoration techniques needed to preserve this World Heritage Site.

The Trust has also worked with the Government and international partners - such as the Government of Sweden and the Ford Foundation - to provide training workshops on conservation practice and traditional construction methods for craftsmen, building professionals and Government officers.



Coastweek -- His Highness the Aga Khan reviewing the restoration works on the seawall that fronts Zanzibar's Forodhani Park with architects from the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

The restoration of Forodhani Park is intended to be part of a larger seafront rehabilitation programme, encompassing:

construction of the seawall; underground infrastructure including water, storm and sewer lines; and, the creation of a pedestrian promenade, including planting, street lighting and street furniture along the sea side.