



AN AD CONSERVATORY:

An Institute of Arts, Aesthetics,
Cultural Traditions and Development Studies

Sultanpur Lodhi, Punjab
INDIA



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The Vision

The ANÂD Foundation's vision is rooted in the belief that our planet earth is a perennial fount of learning. All regions, irrespective of belief, custom, caste, creed, gender or race, have produced extraordinary people who have left us a legacy that we call our heritage. South Asia, with its history and achievements over thousands of years, has contributed some of the most important religions, philosophical thought, literature, culture, art and music to the world but has not done enough to preserve its heritage.

A singular aspect of this heritage is the idea of unity in diversity, a concept evolved and matured over millennia, which continues to adapt itself to contemporary realities. A diversity of beliefs from the Vaishnav, Sakat, Shaiva to Jain, Buddhist, Sufi, Islamic, Sikh and Christian, all added and contributed to the uniquely rich tapestry of South Asia. Sadly, this tapestry, once the very fabric that held our civilization together, is now slowly decaying through neglect and ignorance.



The ANÂD Foundation's vision is to vitalize the preservation and perpetuation of this tangible and intangible heritage through its most humanistic vision of universal man.

Hence the powerful concept of the ANÂD Conservatory: An Institute of Arts, Aesthetics, Cultural Traditions and Development Studies. Hence too the choice of its location – Sultânpur Lodhi in Punjab. An ancient town, Sultânpur Lodhi is located north of the confluence of the Beas and the Sutlej. Its two-thousand-year history of religious and cultural thought and tradition is a palimpsest of Hindu Vedic-Upanishadic thought layered with Buddhism, Islam and, most recently, Sikhism.

Photo: Some aspects of Indo-Islamic Architecture
by Subhash Parihar



The Project
Sultanpur Lodhi

The inspiration for the ANÂD Conservatory – and indeed for the ANÂD Foundation itself – stems from the gurbâni and the vision of Guru Nânak, and other great sages and reformers who have together enriched and influenced human values and conduct, particularly in South Asia. Gurbâni, the collected wisdom of thirty-six enlightened souls, drawn from various corners of South Asia, at once connects us with semantics, reforms, criticism, compassion, love for humanity, acceptance of diversity, music, universality and power of the spirit through language.

The historical importance of Sultânpur Lodhi is well known. Apart from the sacred connection with Guru Nanak, Sultânpur Lodhi used to be an important centre of learning and has a long tradition of spiritual discourse, hence its ancient name of Sarwamanpur. It symbolizes the spiritual, philosophical, aesthetic and musical quest that started from the land of the five rivers.

The town has many associations with Guru Nanak who lived here for fourteen years. Here is where he was given the Revelation of the Mool Mantra and the Japji, and then devoted his life to preaching his belief in the equality of all humans; from here began the tradition of Gurbani Kirtan as Bhai Mardana struck the first chord on the rabab. And it is from Sultânpur Lodhi that he began his udasis, the epic journeys that took him as far west as Iraq, north into Tibet, east to the present day Assam and south to what is today Andhra Pradesh. The regeneration spearheaded by Guru Nanak spread far and wide in its cultural reach.

Sultânpur Lodhi has a heritage of important historical structures, including the fortified Qila Sarai and Hadira bridge. Its sacred terrain includes several ancient Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh shrines; this spiritual tradition and the history of the town need to be preserved for future generations...





The Idea: The ANĀD Conservatory

...but preserved how? Surely not as a mere museum piece, rather as a glowing, living field of tangible and intangible heritage, revitalized through creative and adaptive re-use of its ancient structures, a centre of activity for the revival of traditional wisdoms, and for explorations in the quest for social, cultural, religious and economic equality.



This is the holistic concept that the ANÂD Conservatory seeks to realize: and the choice of Sultânpur Lodhi is rooted in the town's spiritual past and the belief that it could once again emerge as a cultural centre of world repute; that it could form an important centre for development of inter-religious and philosophical thought for South Asia and beyond, and indeed act as an exemplar for sustainable economic development.

This vastness of scope makes the ANÂD Conservatory much more than just a school of music. It weaves a very wide spectrum of cultural, social, economic and ecological concerns into a cohesive whole. The detailed plan envisions the creative re-use of heritage buildings and tangible assets to spread awareness and knowledge of our intangible heritage. This in turn will inspire a sense of history, pride and cultural dignity among students and faculty members. The fortress of Sultanpur Lodhi, thus, would become the new source of the cultural renaissance of the historical and the geographical Punjab.



In practical terms, the plan for the ANÂD Conservatory unfolds in programmed stages over an initial phase of three years to:

- Preserve the architectural values of the area. The ANÂD Conservatory will centre its activities in the centuries-old Qila Sarai after meticulous restoration of the now ruined structure.

This is a vision shared by the Government of Punjab, who have given their permission for this imaginative and adaptive re-use of Qila Sarai as the site for the ANÂD Conservatory.

Indeed, an auspicious start has already been made. In May 2011, ANÂD Conservatory was given access to the abandoned structures of the Qila Sarai to begin work; and though we continue to share the Qila premises with the Police Station, two flats have been vacated by the police for use by ANÂD. As a first step, the Qila's crumbling walls reverberated with the music of the Gurumat sangeet as Bhai Baldeep Singh, head of the ANÂD Foundation, conducted classes in a hall packed with students. A Faculty has already been appointed for training in Gurbani Kirtan, Rudra Veena, Sarod, Rebab, Taus, Saranda, Dhrupad and Pakhawaj.

In addition, the venue for the 6th ANÂD Kav Tarang poetry festival held on May 17, 2011 was the Darbar Hall lawns of the Qila in which over 30 poets took part. It is important to note the whole-hearted participation of the community in these endeavours to re-connect with its roots.

- Set up, within the Qila – and spread over other restored heritage structures – a major project undertaking of the ANÂD Conservatory: the ANÂD Faculty of Arts and Cultural Studies. Here, resident students will pursue education in the fields of music, literature, scriptures of the world, traditional arts and crafts under the guidance of a Faculty which draws heavily from traditional gurus and holders of knowledge.

Similar masters of traditional knowledge have been termed by UNESCO as “Living Treasures”, a title which honours their status as preservers of various forms of intangible heritage which are now in danger of dying out. The transmission of these forms to young students is not only vital, but a matter of urgency given the age of most masters. It is a matter of pride for the ANÂD Conservatory that in May 2011, it was Bhai Gurcharan Singh Ragi, age 96, an eleventh generation exponent of Gurbani kirtan, who began the classes with the first notes of music.

In addition, cultural events such as seminars, workshops, forums and festivals will form an integral part of both the students' education as well as the town's renaissance.

- Activate teaching programmes and training facilities in the fields of conservation and restoration: architecture and landscape conservation, restoration of musical instruments, ancient crafts, and other antiquities.

The logical outcome of teaching and engaging local youth in such skills is to make them the keepers of their own inheritance and to inspire a sense of ownership and pride in identity and heritage.

- Institute laboratories and training facilities for studying issues related to socio-economic aspects of sustainable development. Most pertinently: traditional and innovative forms of agriculture; practices related to water conservation and use; alternative sources of energy and its efficient use; innovative solutions for transportation and services.

This aspect would seek to involve another 100 acres of landholding for larger local participation and knowledge inputs.

- Develop an appropriate blue-print for the active promotion of foreign and Indian tourism. Visitors will be drawn as much for the restored heritage structures as for the proposed cultural events.



In short, this project envisages a resurgence and renaissance of Punjab with its centre at Sultanpur Lodhi. The immediate beneficiaries would be the local people, who would be essential participants in the sharing of traditional skills and the absorption of new learning, whether in the field of conservation, music or resource management.

Yet local is the wellspring for global; the approach of the ANĀD Conservatory will have a wider ripple effect. In keeping with the historical heritage of the site, the concept encourages exchanges between young people, scholars, specialists from across the world: offering a space for discourse and dialogue: always expanding beyond geography to recognize and embrace the sources and links with the whole of South Asia, with Arab culture, with Central Asia, China and Japan.



The ANĀD Conservatory: Implementation

A project as vast, as visionary as this is dependent for its success on many elements. The two key elements are expertise and funds.

Bhai Baldeep Singh, Chairman and Founder, the ANĀD Foundation, has set up the ANĀD Scientific Advisory Committee (ASAC), see opposite page, a multi-disciplinary group of internationally recognized experts from different countries who have worked on similar projects. Their contribution towards the development and monitoring of progress of the ANĀD Conservatory project will be immense. All of them have accepted this responsibility and expressed their pleasure at being associated with the project.

The Committee's distinguished Chairperson, Professor Paolo Ceccarelli, made a field trip to Sultanpur Lodhi, and writes:

“...a policy of conservation must be able to blend together traditional elements, new technologies, contemporary solutions, and anticipations of the future. I believe that Sultanpur Lodhi offers exceptional opportunities to do this. And this in turn will make it a model for many other places where knowledge is transferred”.

ANĀD Scientific Advisory Committee (ASAC)

- Bhai Baldeep Singh**
Chairman and Founder, The ANĀD Foundation, New Delhi, India.
Convener, ANĀD Scientific Advisory Committee
- Professor Paolo Ceccarelli**
Chairperson, ANĀD Scientific Advisory Committee
UNESCO Chair in Urban and Regional Planning for Sustainable Local Development
President, International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design (ILAUD), Milan, Italy
- Professor Suad Aimiry**
Director of Riwaq, Architecture Conservation Centre, Ramallah, Palestine.
- Professor Claudio Allessandri**
Professor of Structural Conservation and Restoration, University of Ferrara, Italy.
- Professor Randy Hester**
Professor of Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning, University of California, Berkeley, USA.
- Amarjeet Kalsi**
Director, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP), formerly Richard Rogers Partnership, London, UK.
- Sajjad Kausar**
Architect and Conservator, Lahore, Pakistan
- Masood Ahmad Khan**
Architecture, Planning and Conservation, Needham, Massachusetts (USA).
- Professor Marcia McNally**
Adjunct Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- Professor A G K Menon**
Professor of Urban Design and Urban Conservation, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University and consultant of INTACH, Delhi, India.
- Professor Kamil Khan Mumtaz**
Architect, Educator, Author and a pioneer in the movement for Conservation of Architectural Heritage, Lahore, Pakistan.
- Professor Ashok B Lal**
Architect and Educator
- Professor Daniel Pini**
Professor of Urban Design, University of Ferrara, Italy.
- Professor Wu Quingzhou**
Professor of Urban and Architectural History, South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China.
- Professor Shigeru Satoh**
Professor of Environmental Design, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan.
- Professor Rabindra Vasavada**
FIIA FRAS, Professor and Head of Centre for Conservation Studies, CEPT University, Ahmedabad, India.
- Professor Fernando Perez**
Professor of Architectural Conservation, PUC, Santiago de Chile, Chile.





The Costs

The financing of a project on such a scale calls for the involvement of multiple agencies – the Government as well as international institutions, foundations and private donors.

The Government of Punjab has already made a start with a Capital Grant of Rs 2 crore to the ANÂD Foundation for “setting up an Institute dedicated to study of devotional music at Sultanpur Lodhi”. This commitment was made in the 2011-2012 Budget presentation of Dr Upenderjit Kaur, Finance Minister, Punjab, in Chandigarh on March 14, 2011.

Further, as mentioned earlier, the work of the ANÂD Conservatory has already commenced with music classes at the Qila Sarai which received a warm local response.

However, the requirement for financing runs into the long term, as – in addition to project costs – there will be recurring operating expenses. For this reason, it is essential to tap other resources to maintain a corpus fund to cover such expenses, and half of the monies collected will be used for this purpose.

Therefore, it is our aim to collect Rs 100 crore through institutional and private funding, half of which will be spent in the first phase of the project, the balance to be set aside for the corpus.

The project cost disbursements are envisaged as follows:

Phase I: Three years

Total estimated cost: Rs 49 cr

Year 1:

1. Conservation: Specialist research, design and construction documentation
2. Conservation: Start of reconstruction and restoration of heritage structures:
 - North and South Gates, Fort Wall, Prison Building at Qila Sarai
 - Shahi Bridge
3. ANÂD Conservatory: Start construction of audio-visual studio and Luthiery workshop
4. ANÂD Conservatory: Engagement of Faculty for the ANÂD Conservatory and provisions of scholarships for students
5. ANÂD Conservatory: Instruments, Education and Office Equipment

Year 2:

1. Conservation: Specialist research, design and construction documentation continues
2. Conservation: Reconstruction and restoration of heritage structures:
 - Parikrama, Mosque and Town Hall at Qila Sarai
 - Shahi Bridge
3. Conservation: Development of routes/walks connecting heritage buildings
4. Conservation: Building works within Qila Sarai for Administration, Conservatory and provision of Services
5. Conservation: Design Consultancy and Project management fees.
6. ANÂD Conservatory: Construction of audio-visual studio and Luthiery workshop completed
7. ANÂD Conservatory: Engagement of Faculty for the ANÂD Conservatory and provisions of scholarships for students continues
8. ANÂD Conservatory: Completion of equipment installation, set-up of infrastructure for promotional activities

Year 3:

1. Conservation: Specialist research, design and construction documentation continues
2. Conservation: Reconstruction and restoration of heritage structures:
 - Hadira
 - Shahi Bridge completed
3. Conservation: Development of routes/walks connecting heritage buildings continues
4. Conservation: Building works within Qila Sarai for Administration, Conservatory and provision of Services continues
5. Design Consultancy and Project management fees.





Be a part of this vision

In our country, it is a sad fact that in the past, most attempts at conservation of tangible and intangible heritage have been initiated by people from outside. Is it not time to reverse this trend and take charge of our own assets? The Government of Punjab has made a start, as already mentioned, through its Capital Grant of Rs 2 crore. But much more needs to be done.

Surely no investment can be as fulfilling as that which revives and nourishes the values so dear to our ancestors and so vital for posterity. It is an investment in our future, a pledge to our coming generations, a marker of their identity and their pride. That is the compelling reason for asking for your financial assistance by way of a grant or donation.

Helping to fund this project gives you a concrete opportunity to contribute towards the saving of a legacy, and the establishment of unique and open institutions of learning where excellence will be supreme, where the best talent will learn from the best mentors. All of us then become stake-holders in specific programmes that tackle issues of cultural conservation within the contexts of practical economic development.

We see this project as a heritage area without borders, expanding beyond geography to embrace and welcome links and dialogue with the larger world of humanity. And we invite you to join hands with us on this journey.

Should you require more information,
please contact: anad@anad.in
or visit us at
www.anadfoundation.com



Please support this cause by giving generously. All donations enjoy tax relief under Section 80G vide order No DIT (E) 2008-2009/T-1184/1659 dated 5th September 2008 of the DIT(E) New Delhi of the Income Tax Act. The use of your donation for the works listed above is monitored by RS Ahuja Co. and audited by Gaurav Kapoor and Rupal Jain.

We request you to issue your cheque to:

THE ANĀD FOUNDATION

C-26, Nizamuddin East, New Delhi 110013, INDIA