



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

Toronto's newest cultural hub, the Aga Khan Park, is opened



Toronto, Canada, 25 May 2015 - Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne today officially inaugurated the Aga Khan Park, a landscaped garden that encompasses the green space between and around the Aga Khan Museum and the Ismaili Centre. The Park, the Museum and the Centre together form Toronto's newest cultural hub.

His Highness the Aga Khan joined Premier Wynne at the opening of the Park, which has become the site for a number of cultural, educational and social programmes designed to foster intercultural dialogue and the exchange of ideas. The Park, created by Lebanon-based landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic, unites two buildings designed by renowned architects: the Ismaili Centre, by Indian architect Charles Correa, and the Aga Khan Museum by Fumihiko Maki of Japan. Moriyama and Teshima are the Canadian architects of record for the entire project.

During his address to the guests, the Aga Khan expressed the hope that “this park will contribute to strengthening Toronto’s already vibrant pluralism, showcasing to the world Canada’s rich example of pluralism in action.”

In her remarks, Premier Wynne said, “The Park brings its own unique style and its own atmosphere to this beautiful corner of the city. This is a true 21st century space, one that’s steeped in history but that speaks to our modern vision of a global, inclusive and peaceful society.”

The Park can be enjoyed all year-round, with trees and plants chosen to thrive in Toronto’s climate. Based on a traditional Persian and Mughal *chahar-bagh* (four-part garden), the formal gardens within the Park provide a place for contemplation as well as areas for public programming or private events.

On July 5, this programming will officially begin with the arrival of the Pan Am Lantern. In addition to a number of events scheduled in the Park itself, both the Aga Khan Museum and the Ismaili Centre will regularly host exhibitions lectures.

The three projects are an initiative of the Aga Khan, the 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, and founder and Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network. The Aga Khan Museum’s mission is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the contribution that Muslim civilisations have made to world heritage. Through education, research, and collaboration, the Museum fosters dialogue and promotes tolerance and mutual understanding among people. The Ismaili Centre joins other Centres in London, Vancouver, Lisbon, Dubai and Dushanbe, and continues a tradition of hosting programmes that stimulate the intellect, encourage dialogue, and celebrate cultural diversity.

Earlier in the day at Queen's Park, His Highness the Aga Khan and Premier Wynne signed an agreement between the Ismaili Imamat and the Province of Ontario that sets a blueprint for cooperation in a number of areas including culture and education.

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