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## Nagaur Fort among 20 finalists for Aga Khan Award

[Rachna Singh](#), TNN May 8, 2013, 12:16AM IST

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JAIPUR: The 12th century Nagaur Fort, which has been under the private domain's largest architectural conservation, has made it to the shortlisted nominee list for US\$ 1 million Aga Khan Award for Architecture 2013.

The award is conferred in recognition of architectural excellence in the field of historic preservation, reuse and area conservation, as well as landscape design and improvement of the environment.

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"The conservation project at Nagaur Fort shortlisted from 800 nominations is among the 20 finalists. Five to six finalists will then be selected and announced at a ceremony to be held in Lisbon in September 2013," said Karni Jasol, director of Mehrangarh Museum Trust (MMT), Jodhpur.

The fort, after Independence, was used as an office of the district administration, and later by the Border Security Force. These were hardly suitable tenants for historic buildings, and this period marked the nadir of Ahichatragarh's (Nagaur fort) history. The buildings were unsympathetically modified to suit the needs of the tenants, the gardens were neglected and left to die, fresco painted walls were whitewashed, and decayed stonework was left unrepaired, allowing parts to collapse. However in 1985, the fort was placed in the care of the MMT, a non-profit foundation with Maharaja Gaj Singh as its managing trustee, and the conservation of the fort was then entrusted to architect Minakshi Jain.

"Spread over 36 acres, the fort was in a dilapidated condition. Taking over conservation in 1993, we got support from the Getty Foundation of USD 2.50 lakh with an equal amount chipped in by the Mehrangarh Museum. As a matter of policy, Getty Foundation generally does not fund the second phase but after considering the kind of work that was undertaken, it made an exception," Karni said.

The fort has gradually been restored to its former glory with the support of four grants from Getty, two from the British-based Helen Hamlyn Trust and contributions from the Maharajah's charity and MMT among others. Considering the scale of Nagaur with its four main palaces and 50 other buildings, Getty treated it as more than one structure, thus entitling it to multiple grants. It has given a total of USD 7.50 lakh for architectural conservation, with USD 2 lakh being used to conserve the wall paintings. The Hamlyn Trust on the other hand granted USD 4.28 lakh for architectural conservation, gardens and the fountains.

Since the award was launched 36 years ago, over 100 projects have received the award and more than 7,500 building projects have been documented. "An adaptive reuse project, the fort would essentially function as a 'Center of Excellence' in the field of architectural and wall painting conservation and a laboratory for training, workshops and dissemination of what has been achieved at Nagaur over the last two decades," Karni added.

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**Wali Khan** (Jodhpur)  
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Great effort have been put by Mehrangarh Museum Trust.Making to short of AKAA is by itself a great achievement. Congraitulatons to Mehrangarh Museum Trust .