



Conservation and Safeguarding of Tombs of Samma Nobles

A highly successful heritage cleaning activity was carried out on Friday 6 April 2012 at the cluster of tombs of the Samma Nobles by 50 student volunteers from Karachi University. The activity was organized under the Cultural Emergency Response of Prince Claus Fund for the conservation of tomb of Samma Noble I, and taken up as a collaborative effort by Heritage Foundation and Department of Culture, Government of Sindh. The dry cleaning activity focused on the tombs of Samma Noble I and II (endangered brick masonry structures) and pavilion tombs of Darya Khan Rahu and one with unique Farsi script. Along with dry cleaning of the four tombs, a collection of stones strewn around the tombs was also needed in order to provide a neater and cleaner appearance to the area.

The participants belonged to different faculties of the Department of Visual Studies comprising fine arts, textile design, graphic design, media arts, architecture and industrial design. They students were lead by Mr. Sarwar Mushtaq, head of Media Arts, due to whose efforts the volunteers were mobilized.

Briefing regarding the importance of the site and a gentle cleaning demonstration of the monuments was given by Ar. Yasmeen Lari, CEO, Heritage Foundation. Only a handful of the students had ever visited the site previously, The participants were explained the importance that Heritage Foundation places in fostering pride in our heritage and developing a stake for heritage safeguarding among the youth.





The students were divided into four groups each with a senior student as a team leader. The participants were provided with caps, masks and gloves and cleaning brushes with nylon bristles in order to carry out gentle and careful cleaning of the historic surfaces. In view of the exposed location and extreme heat, the participants were advised to ensure that they wear caps and drink sufficient water to avoid dehydration. The entire activity was facilitated by Ar. Umer Bhatti of Heritage Foundation and Fareed Anwer and Naveed Anwer of Shah Wali Synergy.

The following tasks were undertaken:

- a. Cleaning brick or stone surfaces with bristle brushes. The loose dirt or mortar between brick joints would also be removed gently.
- b. Collection and stacking historic bricks lying adjacent to walls, ensuring that the bricks were stacked along the wall that they were found.
- c. Stacking round stones in piles that were strewn around the site.
- d. Collecting all the garbage i.e. loose wrappers and other garbage and placing in cartons to be carted away from the site.

The volunteers had also been advised, that after a couple of hours of hard work, they could switch to carrying out visual documentation of the monuments e.g. photography, sketching, video filming, tracing motifs and information about the site. The teams arrived at the site at 9:30 and were able to continue working until 12:30 after which they were served lunch under a shamiana erected on the east of the cluster of Samma Nobles tombs. Record of participants' registration is also being placed on the website. Photographic and video recording of the activity was carried out by Mr. Sarwar Mushtaq and his team, which will also become available in due course.

