

Iranica Desk

EXCLUSIVE

When Tehran turned from a not-so-famous village into a small city, it had no more than five neighborhoods, one of which was Sangelaj. A large number of gardens were built in the neighborhood which had a pleasant atmosphere, only a memory of which remains for us.

Sangelaj has always been one of the most important neighborhoods of Tehran; however, numerous building construction projects which have been implemented in the recent decades has helped change its texture.

Since the beginning of its establishment, Sangelaj, situated in the western part of the Grand Bazaar of Tehran, was the residence of the wealthy. Perhaps that was why people rebuilt the neighborhood repeatedly in various periods.

Although the periodic refurbishments have eroded signs of Safavid and Qajar

Visit the remains of old Tehran in Sangelaj neighborhood



Moayer al-Mamalek Mosque
● MOHAMMAD JAVAD FARMANI/IQNA

structures of the old neighborhood is its theater, which is still operating. Many famous Iranian theater directors staged their plays in the theater, which was inaugurated in 1955. It lies in the southern part of Park-e Shahr.

Sangelaj is reminiscent of a large number of important and nostalgic events that are tied to the history of the capital.

The 200-year-old Moayer Garden belonged to Moayer al-Mamalek, who lived there. A palace with a magnificent architecture was in the middle of the garden. It was destroyed later and replaced by another building. The name *filkhaneh* (house of elephants) is seen on the two alleys of Sangelaj located at the beginning of its small bazaar and Edam Square. Apparently, it was the stable of the elephants of Moayer al-Mamalek.

A large number of monuments of the old neighborhood are not open to the public, including Rajabali



Sangelaj Theater
● mojnews.com



Park-e Shahr
● visitiran.ir



Mostofi al-Mamalek House
● wikipedia.org

architecture, it has caused its residents not to leave the neighborhood.

The word Sangelaj consists of two parts. *Sang* means stone, and *raj*, which changed to *laj* over time, means row. In the past, water was divided among

people by stones, and this is the reason for naming the neighborhood Sangelaj, a row of stones.

The first part of this neighborhood was destroyed during the Pahlavi era, when 25 hectares of it were flattened to build the Park-e

Shahr (City Park). Most properties belonged to the two famous characters of the Qajar period, Moayer al-Mamalek and Mostofi al-Mamalek. Perhaps it was their heirs who slowly started to renovate the neighborhood.

That is why the names of these two families are presently on many buildings and gardens of the neighborhood.

Bazaar, *taaqi* (arch), *gozar* (passage), *sabat* (a street beneath it), mosque, school,

zoorkhaneh (a Persian gymnasium in which a traditional sport is practiced), *ab-anbar* (cistern) and many other old elements of the city have been preserved. An association has been formed in Sangelaj to safeguard the cultural and his-

torical heritage of the neighborhood

Tours of Tehran, held in recent years, have been well received by people. Sangelaj is one of the localities visited by those participating in the tours.

One of the most famous

Mosque, St. George Church, Mostofi House, Mayer Mosque and school, and Doostalikhaneh Mosque.

Sangelaj residents believe that opening each of them can help further familiarize the people with the neighborhood.

Efforts underway to turn Sepidan into special tourism zone



Nature of Sepidan
● alaedin.travel

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Tourism is among the most diverse and largest industries in the world which can generate revenues and jobs for many countries. Hence, with regard to the economic and social significance of tourism, it is called the engine of development.

Tourism in Iran boasts many tourist attractions and can become the most important source of foreign exchange earnings. But this requires proper and long-term planning, coupled with foresight.

Fars Province is among Iranian provinces that enjoy various tourist and historical attractions. The development of tourism has been proposed as one of the practical solutions to help the province diversify its sources of income. Planners and policymakers in Fars Province have attached great significance to efforts aimed at promoting the tourism industry, IRNA reported.

Sepidan tourist attractions

The city of Sepidan is lo-

cated in northwestern Fars Province and has considerable potentials in tourism. It is situated in the heart of the Zagros Mountains, which has cold winters and cool summers. Sepidan's ski resort is one of the largest ski resorts in Iran, which covers an area of 500 hectares. The city also has many tourist attractions including waterfalls and museums.

With regard to Sepidan's great potentials, provincial officials have placed plans on the agenda to introduce it as a special tourism zone. The governor of Fars Province has repeatedly stressed that the potentials of the province should be exploited to create revenues and jobs. Mohammad-Hadi Imanieh has also attached significance to introducing Sepidan as a special tourism zone in his correspondence with the first vice president.

Sepidan hosts tourists

Sepidan not only hosts tourists during the Persian New Year holidays,

but at all times of the year. The city has welcomed a large number of tourists since the start of this year (March 21). Sepidan's Mayor Mohammad Rezaei has said that travelers flock to the city in different periods of the year due to its geographical situation and abundant natural resources.

Sepidan MP Mohsen Alizadeh has also told IRNA that the establishment of a special tourism zone in the city is being followed up at the national level.

Alizadeh said efforts are underway to introduce Sepidan as a free zone and special tourism zone. The lawmaker added that the Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Fars Province has sent a proposal to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts to introduce Sepidan as a special tourism zone.

Alizadeh said the provincial governorate has corresponded with universities to encourage master's and doctoral students to present a thesis on tourism.

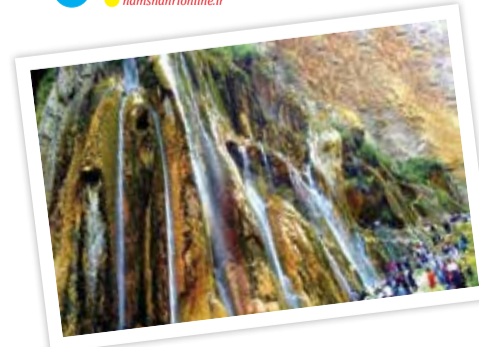
The Sepidan MP noted that promoting tourism will definitely help generate revenues and jobs.



Sepidan's ski resort
● lidomatrip.com



An overview of Sepidan
● hamshahrionline.ir



A waterfall in Sepidan
● alaedin.travel