

# Boosting maritime tourism in Mazandaran Province is vital



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The booming of maritime tourism in Mazandaran Province has become one of the important goals of various administrations over the past two decades. It still remains a prominent strategy for fostering the tourism economy of this province. So far, steps have been taken to make appropriate use of the capacity of the sea and the coast in Mazandaran Province, but it is no secret that the steps taken are far from tapping into the existing potential of the shores of this province.

Over the past two years, there has been a significant increase in efforts to develop maritime tourism in Mazandaran Province. One notable accomplishment

was the launch of a recreational ship in Noshahr in March.

The ongoing endeavors to enhance infrastructure and develop the necessary facilities in the captivating and vital tourism sector of Mazandaran Province are progressing. Moreover, under the guidance of the governor, new initiatives have been launched to outline a comprehensive vision and pursue a strategic approach for the advancement of the province's maritime tourism.

Mazandaran Province's Deputy Governor-General for Coordinating Development Affairs Ahmad Tavakoli said that with regards to the governor's directive regarding the optimal use of coastal areas and the Caspian Sea, continuous meetings have

been held, and a guideline for issuing permits for the establishment of tourist docks and platforms has been developed.

"Our relentless pursuit and ultimate objective are to meticulously delve into every detail and explore all possible avenues. Our aim is to create an environment conducive to prosperity by the year 2031, allowing the coastal city dwellers to fully harness the bountiful opportunities presented by the tourism industry.

"Our goal is to make the economy of Mazandaran Province flourish, which is heavily dependent on the sea. We hope to see a day when the Caspian Sea is filled with commercial and recreational ships, and an economy that positively impacts the coastal

people," he said.

The coastal area from Ramsar to Farahabad stretches for approximately 300 kilometers and is under the supervision of the Mazandaran Ports and Maritime Organization. This region is known as Noshahr port's special economic zone. The remaining coastal areas of the province are managed by the Amirabad Ports and Maritime Organization.

Mazandaran Province is a prime destination for millions of travelers and tourists all year round, thanks to its remarkable position in the field of tourism, natural wonders, and historical sites. According to surveys, around 90% of visitors flock to this lush and verdant province in the north to indulge in the beauty of

its pristine beaches and enchanting Hyrcanian forests.

According to the latest statistics from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization, a huge number of people registered their overnight stays in Mazandaran Province from March 21-October 21. Currently, the adventurers and tourists in Mazandaran are enjoying exciting sea excursions using state-of-the-art marine vehicles such as jet skis and boats. During this year's Nowruz (Iranian New Year holidays, March 21-April 2), more than 20,000 enthusiastic travelers cruised across the majestic waters of the Caspian Sea. This unforgettable experience was made possible, thanks to over 2,000 boats and vessels.

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## Monabat-kari: Timeless beauty of traditional art in Abadeh



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Abadeh, a city located in Fars Province, is renowned for its rich historical and cultural heritage, boasting numerous attractions of significance. The residents of Abadeh possess remarkable artistic skills and are capable of producing a wide variety of handicrafts. One particularly renowned craft of the city is *monabat-kari*, which involves intricate wood carving and has a long and ancient history.

The exquisite *monabat-kari* masterpieces adorning the Marmar Palace (Iran Art Museum) in Tehran were expertly crafted by renowned artists, including the esteemed master Ahmad Amami, hailing from Abadeh. In order to shed light on this precious form of art, an interview was conducted by ISNA with

Behzad Ahmadi Farsani, the deputy head of Fars Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization. He said that there are 44 world craft cities in the world and, luckily, 11 of them are in Iran, with two of them located in Fars Province. Abadeh is the World Craft City of Wood Carving, and it has been registered by UNESCO since 2018. He said the Secretariat of

the World Craft City of Wood Carving has been set up in the old building of Abadeh's City Council, serving as a hub for promoting, advancing, and providing educational classes in the art of wood carving.

"Several educational wood-carving workshops have been organized, and we have provided support to a group of individuals. Additionally, the woodcarvers from this city have been offered a free pavilion at the Tehran Handicrafts Exhibition," he said.

The symbol of wood carving has been placed at the entrance of Abadeh and its boulevards.

Highlighting that the market demand is the primary hurdle for handicraft industries in the province, he said that, unfortunately, all branches of handicrafts are grappling with sales challenges, and we aspire to find a prompt solution to this problem.

He highlighted the presence of 10 collective wood carving workshops in the city, along with the issuance of approximately 4,000 individual wood carving licenses. Additionally, he revealed that an estimated 1,300 women are passionately involved in creating wood carving masterpieces in this city.



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