

Babol creates opportunities for skilled artists in Mazandaran Province



● IRNA

Iranica Desk

Tabaristan, known today as Mazandaran Province, is an ancient land in northern Iran that has long been the birthplace of some of the country's most authentic handicrafts. These arts reflect the history, culture, and lifestyle of the region's people and once played a vital role in the local economy. Today, however, this valuable heritage is gradually being forgotten, losing its place in the daily lives of residents and in the regional economy. While handicrafts are now often seen as decorative or luxury items, they were once central to trade and commerce, forming the backbone of the local economy. Many traditional crafts have now faded into obscurity, leaving behind little more than their names. The few remaining visual and manual arts, created by talented Mazandarani artists, are pursued more as hobbies than as sources of livelihood, ISNA wrote. In the city of Babol, despite the presence of many skilled

artisans active across a variety of artistic disciplines, a permanent marketplace for selling their works remains absent. Numerous proposals have been suggested to address this issue, but the problem persists. Mehran Fallah, head of Babol's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Department, said that a meeting was recently held with several artistic associations and organizations, attended by the head of Babol's City Council, to find a fundamental solution. He said that during a visit by the Minister of Cultural Heritage to Babol, the establishment of a handicrafts marketplace was approved. "If a suitable piece of land is provided, we will act as soon as possible," Fallah added. Highlighting market access as a major concern for artisans, he emphasized: "Creating a marketplace is one of the key methods of sales and marketing that must be given serious attention." Fallah also noted that the department has issued 1,000 professional licenses

for Babol's artists to date, with 41 different handicraft disciplines currently active in the city. Babol City Council head Hamid Ghorbannia echoed these concerns, placing the establishment of a permanent marketplace for artisans among his priorities. He said, "Mazandaran is a hub for tourism alongside agriculture. With proper infrastructure, tourism revenue alone could cover the national budget." Ghorbannia added that eco-tourism areas located deep within the province's forests are ideal locations to introduce handicrafts to tourists. He also stressed the importance of improving interprovincial roads to boost tourism, "We have three main access routes to the provincial capital — Haraz (130 km), Firuzkuh (170 km), and Chalus, including the under-construction freeway (100 km). Completing these infrastructures and properly maintaining the coastal roads of Mazandaran Province will play a key role in attracting tourists."

Restoration revives historic Mamuniyeh Bathhouse in Zarandieh

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The second phase of restoration work on the historic Mamuniyeh Bathhouse in Zarandieh, Markazi Province, has officially begun. This stage focuses on the reconstruction and strengthening of the interior wall plasters following the removal of debris and deteriorated layers.



● jahanememari.ir

Zahra Ranjbar Azad, head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Zarandieh, announced that given the significance of the Mamuniyeh Bathhouse as one of the most prominent architectural monuments of the Qajar era, this phase was launched this year to prevent further damage caused by moisture and natural erosion, chtn.ir wrote. She explained that during this stage, after localized demolition of damaged sections and the complete removal of debris, the worn and decayed plaster layers

of the interior walls were entirely stripped away. The restoration team has now begun reapplying traditional plaster materials that are fully compatible with the original structure and historical texture of the monument. Ranjbar Azad highlighted the bathhouse's special role in the historical identity of Mamuniyeh, stating, "The Mamuniyeh Bathhouse

Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization to ensure the highest standards of conservation. The head of Zarandieh's Cultural Heritage Department emphasized that completing this stage of restoration represents a major step toward revitalizing the cultural and touristic function of the Mamuniyeh Bathhouse. "Once the project is completed, the site will be open for public visits and will serve as a valuable cultural space for the community," she added. Zarandieh, covering an area of 4,150 square kilometers with a population of approximately 70,000, is the second-largest city in Markazi Province by area and fifth by population. It shares borders with the provinces of Tehran, Qazvin, Alborz, and Qom, lying about 80 kilometers from the capital and 240 kilometers from the provincial center, Arak. Historically, Zarandieh is home to several ancient settlements, particularly in Sadrabad, Zarand Kohneh, Mamuniyeh, and Mohamadabad, which archaeologists believe date back to the first millennium CE. Excavations in the city's ancient mounds have revealed gray soil layers rich in iron oxide, suggesting that some of the area's cultural remains may be as old as 3,000 to 4,000 years, underscoring Zarandieh's deep historical and archaeological significance.

not only reflects authentic Iranian architecture and traditional engineering techniques but also holds significant potential as a cultural tourism attraction in Zarandieh. Each stage of restoration is being carried out meticulously and scientifically, aiming to preserve the monument's originality and revive its former splendor." She further noted that in this phase, experienced traditional restorers are working under the close supervision of technical experts from the Markazi Province

Sahneh's hidden valley shining in autumn

Iranica Desk

Nestled among the winding valleys of Sahneh, in Kermanshah Province, near the scenic Bid Sorkh Pass, lies a pristine natural attraction that has remained largely unseen by tourists. Saeed Boroshan, head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Sahneh, told ISNA that a beautiful natural site near Bid Sorkh village has long gone unnoticed due to its dirt access road.

He described the region as "a hidden treasure" that has remained untouched for years. "Most tourists are unaware of its existence, and only local residents visit it," he said. Boroshan noted that the area becomes especially beautiful in autumn, when the waterfall and surrounding orchards display vibrant colors. He added that, beyond this site, Sahneh is well known across the province for its abundant springs and gardens, which take on extraordinary hues during the fall season.

Kermanshah Province in terms of tourism potential. Sahneh is situated approximately 55 kilometers from Kermanshah, on the primary road to Hamedan. The historical structures, buildings, and ancient monuments of Sahneh date back to very distant historical periods. Among these archaeological and prehistoric sites are the rock-cut tombs of Sahneh, carved into the surrounding mountains. These sites have long attracted researchers and archaeologists from across the globe.



"This site is located at the end of a valley, and locals call it Aliabad-e Dartang," Boroshan said. "The area features dense orchards and a stunning multi-tiered waterfall that together create a captivating natural scene." He added that the waterfall lies amid thick vegetation, offering a picturesque view, and that an ancient archaeological site is also located nearby. The official attributed the hidden nature of this attraction to the difficulty of reaching it. "This tourist spot is adjacent to a village that has been abandoned over the years and is now uninhabited," he explained.

He also highlighted the Darband of Sahneh as another major attraction in the area during this time. "Darband, with its natural spring and a river flowing through centuries-old trees, is well known among visitors and remains one of the most popular autumn destinations in Sahneh," he said. Sahneh is located in the eastern part of Kermanshah Province, along the main route connecting Kermanshah to Kangavar. To the north lies Sonqor, while Harsin borders it to the south. The city of Sahneh, along with its surrounding areas, rank among the most abundant regions in

The presence of historical treasures such as the Sahneh rock-cut tombs and other ancient monuments demonstrates that urban settlement and civilization in this region extend back to the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanian periods. In more recent history, the renowned travelogue of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar describes Sahneh as a large village with a thriving population. He praised the fertility of the fields, the abundance of orchards, and the region's pleasant climate. Naser al-Din Shah also highlighted the prosperity of Sahneh's caravanserais and expressed his admiration for the beauty and richness of the area.