



## In Case You Missed

### Mirza Kouchak Khan Tomb As Cultural Museum

Mirza Kouchak Khan Jangali's tomb will be transformed into a cultural museum befitting the dignity of the national combatant.

Mirza Kouchak Khan (1880-1921) is considered revolutionary figure and national hero in modern Iranian history.

Announcing this, Gilan governor general, Rouhollah



Qahramani-Chabok, told a meeting of the province's tourism officials that reconstruction of Mirza Kouchak Khan's tomb should be undertaken in a unique manner, IRNA reported.

"Mirza's tomb should be rebuilt in a way that reminds the visitors of his struggles and memories," he said, adding that the tomb should serve as a cultural museum.

Mirza Kouchak Khan was the founder of a revolutionary movement based in the forests of Gilan, which was known as "Forest Movement".

### Bandar Abbas to Host Archeology Seminar

Iran's Tenth Annual Archeology Seminar will be held in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas (in Hormuzgan province) on December 10-13.

Announcing this, Payam Ghorabi, executive secretary of the seminar, said the main purpose of the seminar is to introduce the latest research findings of both Iranian and non-Iranian archeologists.

The official said that after Iran's Archeological Research Center invited the heads of Iranian and foreign archeology departments, 101 preliminary reports on field activities in Persian language and about 12 preliminary reports in English were sent to the secretariat of the seminar, CHTN reported.

The reports will be published in two volumes before the seminar.

#### > Presentations

Ghorabi stated that out of the 113 archeological articles, 40 will be presented in the form of lectures in the four-day seminar.

"More than 200 Iranian researchers and archeologists and 25 foreign guests from the UK, Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, US, South Korea, Republic of Azerbaijan will be attending the seminar," he said.

Ghorabi pointed out that archeological excavations in Yazdgerd Castle, Joubji Archeological Site, Nakhle Ebrahimi Minab Site and relief excavation operations in Galabar Dam will be discussed in the seminar.

He noted that exhibitions on archeology books and history of Persian Gulf will be held on the sidelines of the seminar.

"Other programs of the seminar include the display of 21 reports on archeological research conducted in Hormuzgan province during 1996-2007, as well as a scientific expedition to Hormuzgan province," he said.

The official pointed out that 28 archeological excavations on prehistoric and Islamic sites, as well as 15 joint research projects by Iranian and foreign universities on Iran's archeological sites, including Isfahan Grand Mosque, Gorgan's Great Wall, Persepolis, Kashan's Siak, Jiroft's Kenar-Sandal, Mamasani's Nourabad and Amol's Garmroud, are some of the major plans carried out in Iran.

"Last year, Iran's Archeological Research Center has also held six scientific seminars, published 13 titles and 26 archeological excavations," he said.

### Carpets for Milan Exhibit

The 13th International Milan Handicrafts Exhibition opened on November 30 with the participation of 106 countries, including Iran.

This year's event includes more than 3,000 pavilions. Iran's pavilion set up by the National Carpet Center has displayed precious carpets, IRNA wrote.

The inaugural ceremony of the event was attended by Iran's Consul General Ali Hashemi Kafili.

Addressing the event, Hashemi thanked the organizers of the exhibit and described it as a venue for promoting cultural and artistic exchanges.

Inviting participants to visit the Iranian pavilion displaying Persian carpets, he said carpet weaving dates back to 3,000 years in Iran.

Three million people are expected to visit the exhibit that ends on December 8.

# Astara Little Known To Foreigners

Astara is a border city situated along the western shores of the Caspian Sea and at the utmost northern point of Gilan province. It links Iran with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Astara is bound to the Caspian Sea in the east, Republic of Azerbaijan's Astara in the north, Ardebil in the west and Talesh in the south.

A river by the same name, which flows along Astara-

esting sites.

#### > Abbasabad Village

Abbasabad is one of the largest and most beautiful rural areas of Astara. It is located 2 km to the southwest of Astara and has large rice paddies. The most famous rice of Astara is planted in this village.

Rice milling factory and the famous tea garden are

is made of stone and mortar.

Historians believe that it was the place of residence and headquarters of Babak Khorramdin, who revolted against the Abbas caliphs.

#### > Langeroud Brick Bridge

This bridge is one of the historical structures built on Langeroud River during the Ilkhanid period. Its signifi-



Ardebil Road, separates Iran's Astara from Azerbaijan's Astara. Residents speak Turkish and Taleshi, Safar87 website reported.

#### > Rise to Prominence

In the distant past, there were numerous sand hills, marshes and reed beds in the region which made walking very difficult. Therefore, the area was called 'Ahesteh Ro' or 'Aste Ro' (literally meaning walking slowly) in Taleshi dialect. Gradually, and with the increasing migration of Turkish-speaking people to the region, especially from Ardebil, the name evolved into Astara.

Astara was not that important until the reign of the Safavids. It gained importance due to expansion of trade as well as its geographical and military position.

In present-day Astara, the village named 'Dahaneh-Kenar' flourished during the rule of Qajar dynasty because of exports of goods and expansion of trade. This allowed European civilization to influence the area be-

located in this village. The garden is the only place for growing tea in the entire district and dates back to tens of years ago.

The village is among the main villages of Virmoon Rural District. Some people say that Virmoon was Astara's capital in olden times and reflects the political, social and even military history of Astara in different eras. Despite the extensive migration of Virmoon's residents to Astara, Virmoon's population has continued to increase.

#### > Estil Marsh

Among the natural attractions of Astara one could refer to the marshes of Estil and Abbasabad, which is located 5 km from Talesh-Astara Road. Estil Marsh extends over 138 hectares and its average depth is one meter.

Due to construction activities on Talesh-Astara Road, migratory birds no longer frequent the marsh. The common alder has grown in some of the more

cance is also due to the fact that bricks are the main material used in its construction.

The bridge is located in the middle of the city and remains in use. Its shape also appeals to architects and tourists alike.

#### > Darband Village

Darband Village, situated 7 kilometers southwest of Astara, is one of the most beautiful villages of Astara. It is bound by Estil Marsh, the green slopes of Talesh Mount and rice paddies.

The village is famous for containing Estil Marsh. The only historical site remaining in the village is a cemetery.

A five-star hotel is located in the village.

#### > Sheikh Mahmood Khivi Mausoleum

This mausoleum is located in a forest area some 5 kilometers from Astara-Ardebil Road.



fore any other regions of the country.

Concurrent with the establishment of Darolfonoun School in Tehran, Sadeqieh School was established in Astara. This gave rise to a surge in educated people.

#### > Tourist Attractions

Astara's Bazaar is the largest border market in the northwestern strip of the country. It brings an influx of traders and locals from neighboring areas for doing their weekly shopping, raising the economic profile of the city.

Kilim and jajim are among the major handicrafts of this region.

The city is recognized as the tourist attraction of Gilan province because of its beautiful landscape, border market and historical sites.

What follows is a brief account of Astara's most inter-

est sections of the marsh, but now they remain shallow of the water.

#### > Kootah Komeh Village

Kootah Komeh Village is located 20 km southwest of the city of Astara and 9 km from Londvil. The village is verdant and surrounded by dense forests, making it one of the famous tourism attractions of the region. It has a hot spring with therapeutic applications.

Walnut and medlar grow in abundance in the forests.

#### > Shindan Castle

This castle is located on Shindan Mount. It is one of the most important historical edifices dating back to the pre-Islamic period.

Astara Governor Hamzeh Khan Talesh revolted against the Safavid monarch, Abbas, in this castle, which

The main construction material used in this building is stone. It is frequented by locals who offer prayers and seek their wishes through the mystic's intervention.

#### > Gisom Shore

Gisom is a beautiful resort, which is famed for the linking road that passes through the forest like a tunnel. There are not many trees near its shore and tourists are obliged to erect tents on sand.

Gisom is about 100 km from Astara.

Officials should build amenities at places with potentials for accommodating tourists. They should further publicize Astara to foreign tourists, as it remains a little known place.

And the most unflattering thing one can say about Astara is that tourists will not be disappointed.



## 79 Recreational Complexes in Mazandaran

Mazandaran province has 79 recreational complexes run by the private sector, deputy head of the province's Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department said.

Mohammad Reza Shidfar also told

IRNA that 4,953 private accommodation centers have been identified in the province, of which 896 have received licenses.

Speaking in a meeting for organizing accommodation centers in Ramsar, he

said experts from Gilan, Golestan, Ardebil, Tehran, Qom, Isfahan, Khorasan Razavi, Hamedan and Fars provinces attended a seminar on Nov. 30-Dec. 1.

The seminar, which was aimed at increasing the capacity of Iran's accom-

modation facilities, began its activities in five subgroups of villa, suite, room, rural houses and apartment last year.

Shidfar stated that the department manages 16 representative offices and 150 reservation centers.