Fars province, home to a wealth of privileges - 7 /May/ 2008

Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei instructed the authorities in charge of Fars provincial affairs Wednesday to set up a center in the province whose major aim is to grow up talented artists and promote a dedicated art which embodies religious teachings.

"Art stands as an aesthetic aspect of creation per se but could become a very significant phenomenon once embodying a religious essence," Ayatollah Khamenei told an assembly of executive officials in Fars province south Iran.

Ayatollah Khamenei described the people of Fras as talented and virtuous and appreciated them for offering many literary and historical personalities to the world. The IR Leader said the population unlike these great moral and historical traits shuns publicity but these must not cause the authorities to fail their undertaking of living up to the wealth of talents and utilizing it in the progress of the country.

Ayatollah Khamenei said the province is highly privileged for being place to the holy shrines of Ahmad ibn Moussa (S.A.) and several other descendants of the holy messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad (S.A).

"Shiraz, after Mashhad and Qom ranks third among the shrine cities in Iran," Ayatollah Khamenei considered, adding that the national budget makers must earmark a special tranche of credits for the province with the aim of raising awareness about the sanctity of the area in home and abroad.

Ayatollah Khamenei also directed the relevant authorities to broaden their plans to boost tourism in the scenic, ancient province especially considering its tourism attractions including the holy shrines, the tombs of globally renowned men of letter like Sa'adi and Hafiz and other historical sites scattered in the province.

Ayatollah Khamenei said the pre-Islamic sites in the province could be treated from two distinctive different approaches.

"In one view, these sites belong to tyrants and despots of Iran's history and therefore they would lose luster in the eyes of the faithful. However, one must not write off the point that the historical sites either way are built by the dexterous hands, creative minds and magnanimous spirits of the Iranians. The realities cause one to take honor in Takht-e Jamshid (Throne of Jamshid) and other historical sites in Iran," Ayatollah Khamenei reckoned.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that at time when some countries were trying to fabricate historical heritage of their own, the authentic heritage of the Iranian nation was a source of confidence.

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that while the nation takes pride in its pre-Islamic heritage, the imagination of the Iranian nation actually flourished in the post-Islamic era.

"Researches show that the civilization, art and culture of the Iranian people four or five centuries after Islam was never comparable to those of the pre-Islamic era. The rise took place under the auspice of Islam," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Ayatollah khamenei appreciated the people of the province for the hospitable welcome the accorded to him and expressed hope the local officials would procure and implement several ratifications made during the visit in a short time.

The IR Leader reminded the authorities that the opportunity to serve the people was a God's blessing which could be cherished by offering genuine and tireless efforts to the people and respecting them.