The Inaugural Pars International Wushu Championship Cup as A Catalyst for Sports Tourism in Zanjan City-Iran

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Introduction

"It is a new era for sports in West Asia. It is the first time that the International Wushu Championship flame will be in West Asia and Zanjan City-Iran."
From 14th to 15th August 2012, Zanjan will be hosting the The Pars International Tournament Cup fourteen Wushu, the first new Games the international tournament Wushu has created in 14 years.

The international tournament Wushu, was created with the goal of inspiring young people to achieve sports excellence and to adopt the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect in everyday life. From being a host venue of several small-scale sporting events, Zanjan has made significant progress in the recent years.

Background

Tourism in Zanjan City-Iran

Zanjan City has been welcoming international visitors to its Traditional centers long before, and especially after the inception of the Iran Tourism Board in 1935 (Established with the Department of Tourism in Iran). Tourists visit the 2 clean and green ‘Gavezang Complex’ for a whole host of reasons such as the multiple award-winning Night Safari, the smorgasbord of local delicacies such as Chelo Kabab and Chicken Rice, Business Travel and Meetings Incentives travel, Conventions and Exhibitions (BTMICE) events, and to enjoy and experience the multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

Sports Tourism in Zanjan City-Iran

Whilst there has been much scholarly debate about the definition of Sports Tourism (Gibson, 1998), most researchers agree upon the general definition of Sports Tourism as travelling
temporarily to another country to participate in sporting activities, watch sporting activities and/or visiting and perhaps paying homage to attractions associated with sporting activities.

Zanjan City has already hosted many great contests. Such as International competition climbing 2011 and International Taekwondo Championships 2010

**The Inaugural Youth Olympic Games 2012 - Why Zanjan City-Iran?**

"International Wushu Championship will celebrate sports and promote the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. We share these values, and believe that Zanjan is a working model of these values in action. Although we are a small, young City, we can offer first class right sized facilities for these inaugural games within the short time frame available. The fully integrated sport, education and cultural programmes will reach out to millions of youth across the world to ignite their passion for sports and unite them with these ideals."

Zanjan's ancient history, the field of sport wushu, Many champions in recent years of the Iran national team in the sport are presented. The city has a lot of young talent in the sport is Wushu.

**Economic and Tourism Benefits of the IWC**

The inaugural Youth Olympic Games is expected to draw an estimates 1,000 overseas participants including athletes, Olympic officials, spectators, members of the media and provide a minimum of 3,000 visitor nights for the duration of the Games (Tourism Board, 2011).

Predictive among the more than 3,000 tickets for sell the game watch, Income from broadcasting the games was estimated at $ 5 million America. It also created an economic boom for the city and its residents with direct and indirect employment to thousands of people were expected.

The expected contribution to Zanjan's GDP is uncertain at this point of time, but one thing for sure is that the increased visitor arrivals during the Games will translate into greater prospects for local businesses (Zanjan 2011b), whether in the hotel industry, food and beverage business, transportation, cleaning or shopping and dining. It will also bring about new opportunities for local establishments to venture into the sporting industry surrounding the International Wushu Championship Cup.

**Future challenges for Zanjan City- Iran in Sports Tourism**

As Zanjan City-Iran gears up with first-class sports infrastructure, she looks to face competition yet again from neighboring countries as sports tourism further develops in Asia and also other parts of the world.
The inaugural International Wushu Championship Cup sets itself apart from other sporting events because of its wide international coverage and novel concept of being dedicated to youth all over the world. It is no mean feat to plan and smoothly execute this event, ensuring that young athletes are kept safe while enjoying the passion of sports, and staying true to the Olympic values (Fair Play). If hosted successfully, however, the inaugural IWC looks to establish Zanjan-Iran as an ideal location for future regional and international sporting events which the world will want to come and be a part of. It will be a viable stepping-stone for the city to build on sports tourism; and with the multiple initiatives of the SYOGOC and supporting agencies, the YOG will be a new means of connecting the youth of the world and generating high interest in the Championship and Zanjan-Iran on an international scale. As such, one can expect her to effectively meet the challenges of this new venture.

References


