



EVKAF

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"Your compassion will bring compassion."

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The "Art for Life" Project Begins in Nicosia

The "Art for Life" project, launched in Nicosia in collaboration between the Cyprus Evkaf Administration and the Yunus Emre Institute, aims to bring individuals aged 60 and over together with art. The first workshop organised as part of the project was held on Thursday, 18 September, at the Yunus Emre Institute building.

Sibel Tatar, wife of TRNC President Ersin Tatar, attended the opening of this meaningful event, which aims to make art accessible to everyone, and lent her support. Taking a keen interest in the

participation, Mrs Tatar emphasised the importance of such projects, which encourage individuals to actively participate in social life.

The "Art for Life" project aims to provide participants with new skills and contribute to their mental and emotional well-being through practical workshops such as ebru art, woodblock printing and art therapies.

These colourful gatherings will take place every Thursday from 17:30 to 19:00 between 18 September and 9 October. All materials and transport required

during the event will be provided free of charge by the organisers.

With a limited capacity of 16 participants, this special programme aims to increase participants' productivity and reconnect them with social life through art.

For Information and Registration:

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"Twenty Minutes for Yourself, a Lifetime for Someone Else"

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration Goodness Volunteers Team has launched a new social responsibility initiative to highlight the importance of blood donation and encourage donors. The team recently visited the Blood Bank at Nicosia Dr Burhan Nalbantoğlu State Hospital and the Thalassaemia blood donor recruitment unit, where they presented

thermos flasks and key rings to the authorities for distribution to donors.

The Goodness Volunteers emphasised that blood donation is of vital importance, especially for individuals who need regular blood, such as thalassaemia patients. Stating that they work in collaboration with the Blood Donor Acquisition Unit,

which operates in this field, the team stressed that donating blood is a process that takes only a few minutes but can save someone's life.

They called on all segments of society to donate, saying, "Give yourself 20 minutes, give someone a lifetime."

The Story of Nicosia Municipal Market from Past to Present

BANDABULIYA

Bandabuliya, which carries the deep-rooted history and commercial culture of Nicosia in its heart, is not just a marketplace, but also the living memory of the city. Over the years, this historic structure, which has served as a shared living space for the people of Cyprus, carries the traces of the past into the present, forming a unique cultural bridge in the heart of the city.

One of Nicosia's most established structures, the Municipal Market, also known as Bandabuliya, has been at the heart of the city's commercial and social life from past to present. This market, which has been a shared living space for the Cypriot people for years, was built between 1930 and 1932 during the British Colonial Administration period. Bandabuliya emerged as a modern reflection of the trading tradition that had continued around Selimiye Mosque since the Middle Ages. At that time, this area, which was a meeting point for travelling merchants and villagers bringing goods to the cities, hosted an evolving approach to trade.

The Trading Culture of the Past

Before the proliferation of modern shops and supermarkets, trade was much more personal and based on trust. Travelling merchants who transported goods to villages on donkeys bartered with products such as molasses, honey or halloumi instead of money. This tradition of bartering created a space for social interaction beyond trade.

Female vendors, travelling around villages selling fabrics and jewellery, would also gather information about families and even act as matchmakers. In city shops, credit sales were common, symbolising a strong bond of trust between buyer and seller.

Bandabuliya became a centre where this traditional trade structure met modern urbanism. The inns around the market, seen as open spaces



in the 1912 land registry plans, especially the Deveciler Inn, were lodgings for camels and animal carts. These inns, which later became a stopping point for village buses, added to the liveliness of the market.

Difficult Years and Rebirth

Bandabuliya gradually deteriorated and began to lose its function. After the events of 1963, the Green Line divided the city in two, leaving the market area at the end of a dead-end street. Narrow streets and insufficient parking areas caused trade to largely shift outside the city walls. The rise of supermarkets also played a significant

role in Bandabuliya losing its former charm.

Despite all these setbacks, the historic structure managed to partially retain its function and became a new attraction, particularly for tourists. This situation brought the cultural and economic importance of the structure back into focus. Within the framework of the Nicosia Master Plan, a comprehensive restoration project was launched in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the Turkish Municipality of Nicosia.

Bandabuliya Today

Remaining faithful to the original architecture of the building, Bandabuliya was redesigned to meet modern needs.

Today, Bandabuliya is home to 71 different shops. It includes greengrocers, butchers, gift shops, clothing stores, cafés and shops selling local products.

The revitalisation of Bandabuliya represents not only a physical renewal but also the preservation of cultural memory. This historic structure has created a new living space in the heart of Nicosia, carrying the legacy of the past into the future. Now a focal point for both locals and tourists, the market showcases Nicosia's changing face and its deep-rooted heritage.

Photos:

Kerim Belet & Nicosia Turkish Municipality

A Unique Example of Handicraft Combining Naturalness and Aesthetics in Cyprus

WICKER CHAIRS

One of the unique handicrafts of Cypriot culture is traditional wicker chairs, known locally as iskemle. These chairs are not merely seating; they are unique examples of craftsmanship that combine skill, naturalness and aesthetics. Cypriot iskemle chairs are so durable that a single chair can be used for generations, even for forty to fifty years.



The main material used in the construction of the chair is reeds, which grow in ponds and riverbeds. The wooden parts are made from sturdy woods such as mulberry, hornbeam, eucalyptus or black poplar. The manufacturing process requires great care and skill. First, the frame is prepared: two front legs are cut to the height of a seated person's knees, and two back legs are cut to the height of the shoulder blades. These four legs are carefully joined together.

A flat piece three centimetres wide is placed between the front legs. This is the seat of the stool. Next, six round sticks, called "fingers," are carefully inserted into the holes that have been carefully opened. In the words of the craftsmen, "the magic of the job is not in the glue, but in the precision of the joints." Four of the fingers form the seat, while

the other two are placed on the sides, connecting the legs to each other.

The back legs are supported upwards by three flat sticks called "wings". These parts, which the back rests against when seated, offer both functional and aesthetic balance. To create the seat, cross-stitches are made using reeds called "tono". These tonos can be left in their natural colour or painted to create different patterns and motifs. Sometimes, painted wheat stalks are used to add a cultural narrative to the chair with traditional patterns.

Chairs were found not only in homes but also in every aspect of life across Cyprus, from coffee houses to cinemas, village

halls to workplaces. Even today, it is possible to find these chairs, bearing the traces of time, in some village coffee houses. They are not merely objects to sit on; they are witnesses to an era, a way of life, craftsmanship, and patience.



Photos: Yenidüzen & Haber Kıbrıs



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