EVKAF

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"Your compassion will bring compassion."

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CYPRUS EVKAF ADMINISTRATION AT MUSIAD EXPO 2026!











The Restoration Process of the Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque and Madrasa Has Been Shared with the Public

An information meeting was held regarding the restoration work on the Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque and Madrasa, which is being carried out in collaboration between the Cyprus Foundations Administration, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, and the General Directorate of Foundations.

At the meeting, organised at the Bora Atun Conference Hall of the Famagusta Municipality, members of the Restoration Scientific Committee – Prof. Dr Ayşe Esin Kuleli, Prof. Dr Bekir Eskici, Prof. Dr Alper İlki and Prof. Dr Recep İyisan – gave comprehensive presentations on the initial documentation of the building, the work carried out in 2016 and the restoration process that began in January.

Speaking at the meeting, Prof. Dr Mustafa Tümer, Director General of the Cyprus Endowments Administration, emphasised that the restoration works signify safeguarding a legacy that has withstood the test of centuries and passing this heritage on to future generations.

Highlighting that the foundation system established with the onset of Ottoman rule in Cyprus in 1571 represented a 'civilisation of benevolence' centred on humanity, Tümer stated that the restoration of the Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque—one of the region's most significant architectural works—serves to preserve historical memory and build a bridge between the past and the future.

Noting that the joint foundation heritage is being safeguarded thanks to the support provided by Turkey, Tümer remarked that these efforts are a significant reflection of the strong bonds of affection between the Turkish Cypriot people and Turkey.

Suat Faruk Giray, Deputy Director General of the Turkish Foundation Directorate, stated that the work being carried out at the Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque is not merely a restoration process, but an expression of respect for history, art and science.

The restoration work, carried out with the support of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, is expected to be completed within approximately 3–4 years.





A Culture of Kindness Carried Forward by Young People

The Director-General of the Cyprus Evkaf Administration, Prof. Dr Mustafa Tümer, visited the Atatürk Teachers' Academy and held meetings with the Academy's management. During the visit, discussions were focused on potential initiatives to encourage young people to play a more active role in charitable and social responsibility activities.

In accordance with a decision taken between the Ministry of National Education and the Cyprus Evkaf Administration, plans are underway to establish a 'Goodwill Platform' within the Atatürk Teacher Academy as a pilot scheme. The aim of launching the platform is to enable students to participate in initiatives promoting mutual aid, solidarity and social responsibility, and to contribute to their local communities and society through these activities.

In this regard, it is also planned to sign a cooperation protocol between the Atatürk Teachers' Academy and the Cyprus Evkaf Administration.

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration attaches great importance to passing on the concept of goodwill, which has been an integral part of community life for centuries within the culture of endowments, to younger generations. The aim of the Goodwill Platform is to help students become individuals who not only talk about goodwill but also practise it in their daily lives and spread it to those around them.



EVKAF Takes Part in MÜSİAD Expo 2026







The Cyprus Evkaf Administration took part in MÜSİAD EXPO 2026, held in Istanbul from 23 to 26 September 2026, to showcase its 455-year-old endowment heritage, the culture of endowments in Cyprus and the work it carries out on this international exhibition platform.

Bringing together businesspeople, investors, public institutions, civil society organisations and representatives from various sectors across different countries in Istanbul, MÜSİAD EXPO 2026 also allowed the Cyprus Evkaf Administration to establish new contacts and strengthen existing relationships. At its stand in the exhibition area, the Cyprus Evkaf Administration showcased to visitors the works of the waqfs—which form a significant part of Cyprus's historical and cultural heritage—along with the administration's activities from the past to the present. In addition to the Hala Sultan Tekke, Selimiye Mosque, Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque, the Tomb of the Prophet Omar, the Kırklar Tomb and other important endowment properties in Cyprus, visitors were also presented with endowment assets, the Evkaf archive and research on the endowment tradition in Cyprus.

The exhibition also featured studies on the endowment history and ownership structure of Closed Maraş, as well as research on the Cyprus Shari'a Registers and historic cemeteries.

During meetings held with various institutions and organisations as part of MÜSİAD EXPO 2026, possible joint projects and new opportunities for collaboration between the Cyprus Evkaf Administration and various civil society organisations were also discussed. In this context, meetings were held with representatives of various organisations, notably the KİM Foundation and the Orphans' Foundation. During the meetings, discussions centred not only on potential joint initiatives in the areas of social responsibility, charitable work, endowment culture and social benefit, but also on the mutual exchange of experience and knowledge.

A Centuries-Old Endowment Heritage in Larnaca: *The Zuhuri Tekke and Mosque*

The Zuhuri Tekke and Mosque, which holds an important place within the historic fabric of the city of Larnaca, is situated to the north-west of the Cami-i Kebir; they together form a complex comprised of a mosque, a mausoleum, a madrasa, a primary school and tekke quarters. Operating under the auspices of the Çorlulu Ali Pasha Foundation, this complex attracts attention with its cut-stone masonry and monumental appearance. Whilst differing in certain respects from traditional Ottoman tekke architecture in terms of its architectural features, the building also reflects certain characteristics of historic church architecture in Cyprus.

Among the information regarding the history of the Zuhuri Tekke, its connection to the Bektashi tradition holds a significant place. Historical sources indicate that the tekke operated as a Bektashi lodge for a period and was one of the major centres in Larnaca for the artisan organisation known as the Zuhuri branch, which was particularly associated with the arts of theatre and shadow puppetry during the Ottoman period. This demonstrates that the tekke was not merely a religious building; it also fulfilled a specific function in the social and cultural life of the time.

Following the closure of Bektashi tekkes in 1826, the Zuhuri Tekke was also affected by this change. It is understood that the damaged sections of the tekke were repaired in subsequent years and that a comprehensive renovation was carried out during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz, around 1860. During this process, a single-balcony, double-arched minaret was also added to the building. It is known that the tekke operated in accordance with the Naqshbandi tradition in the subsequent period and that Hafız Hüseyin Efendi was appointed as its sheikh in 1869. In later periods, the building was also associated with the Mevlevi tradition.

There is a legend, which has been passed down amongst the local people to the present day, concerning the discovery of the mosque and the adjacent mausoleum. According to the legend, whilst the foundations of the mosque were being dug, an undamaged human corpse, wrapped in a shroud, was found beneath the ground. An enquiry was made in Istanbul to determine the identity of the individual and to whom the grave belonged, but no records

could be found. Consequently, as the body had emerged from the ground, the person was given the name "Zuhuri Dede" or "Zuhuri Baba", and a mausoleum was built right next to the mosque, where the remains were laid to rest.

The fact that the tekke is known as the "Zuhuri Baba Tekke" is also linked to this legend. The complex of buildings, arranged in a north-south direction, is accessed via the arched passageway to the north-west. The mausoleum and mosque are covered by domes of varying sizes resting on octagonal drums. The mausoleum houses a cut-stone tomb, believed to belong to Zuhuri Dede, and a wooden sarcophagus topped with a turban-shaped cap. In the past, this was a place visited by the public, where traditional practices associated with wishes and votive offerings were carried out.



The mosque's prayer hall features a simple mihrab and an ornate minbar, one of the building's most striking elements. The minbar, constructed from plaster and white limestone slabs, is adorned with floral motifs, rosettes, tulips, stars and geometric patterns. The traces of multicoloured paint on its surface reflect its original decorative style. It is thought that the two-storey section to the north-west of the mosque was used as a women's gallery. As for the minaret, which was added to the building at a later date, the section below the balcony level was shortened when it came under threat of collapse due to seismic activity over time.

Ottoman archival documents reveal that significant expenditure was incurred between 1849 and the 1860s on the construction and repair of the mosque, mausoleum, school and other sections. Although some sections were not yet completed by 1865, the tekke's fundamental religious functions were maintained through the establishment of the tomb custodian's and the sheikh's quarters. Under the 1866 Evkaf regulations, allocations were set aside for the lighting of the mosque and the tomb, as well as for other necessities.

The complex also has a long history of education. According to records, a primary school had been in operation here since the late 16th century. The school was rebuilt in 1690; as it had fallen into disrepair over time, it was rebuilt again in 1829–1830 during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II.

The two-story Zuhuri Madrasa and primary school, situated to the south of the mosque and the mausoleum, were extended in the second half of the 19th century. Renovations completed in 1908, carried out to enable the school to function as a secondary school, created a more comprehensive space for education. By the middle of the century, the traditional functions of the tekke had largely ceased, and certain parts of the buildings began to be used for different purposes. Following the closure of the madrasa and primary school, public uses such as a municipal market and a Marriage Registry Office emerged; some sections were utilised for waterworks services and, later, as a library.

Subsequent restoration works have played a significant role in the preservation of the building. Restoration of the traditional 19th-century shops in the tekke courtyard began in 1986, whilst maintenance and restoration of the mosque commenced in 1989; the works were subsequently extended to include the mausoleum.

The Zuhuri Tekke and Mosque is an important endowment heritage site that brings together the religious, social and cultural traces of different eras. With a history spanning from Sufi traditions to Ottoman educational institutions and various public uses, it reflects the social and architectural memory of Turkish-Islamic culture in Larnaca.

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