



## GONĀBĀD

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**GONĀBĀD**, a town and a sub-province (*šahrestān*) in the province of Khorasan. The sub-province, situated to the northeast of the mountains Kamarzard (peak, 2,578 m), Kalāt (peak, 2,446 m), and Siāhkuh (peak, 2,857), is bounded on the north by the sub-provinces of Torbat-e Ḥaydariya and Kāšmar, on the west by Ferdows Sub-province, on the east by K̄vāf Sub-province, and on the south by the sub-provinces of Ferdows and Qā'enāt; it comprises the towns of Bajestān, Gonābād, Bidokt, and Kākk, as well as several rural districts (Wezārat-e kešvar, p. 10; Markaz-e āmār-e Irān, *Naqša*). The brackish river Kālšur flows in the north of the sub-province throughout the year and sinks into the Salt Desert (Kavir-e namak). Irrigation is by wells, *qanāts*, and spring waters (see **ĀBYĀRI**). Its principal products are wheat, barley, cotton, sugar beet, legume, grains, saffron, and fruits. Its handicrafts include carpet and kelim weaving, as well as mosaic and ceramic production (Wezārat-e defā', s.v. "Gonābād"). The region is also rich in gypsum, marble, fireclay (*kāk-e nasuz*) deposits, as well as a variety of herbs used in traditional medicine (Wezārat-e ma'āden, pp. 66, 96-97, 114, 193). Its population, all Shi'ite Muslims, has risen from 87,341 in the late 1940s to 101,981 in 1991, of which 43,144 lived in the urban and the rest in rural areas (Razmārā, *Farhang IX*, p. 368; Markaz-e āmār-e Irān, 1993a, p. 25).

The town of Gonābād is situated at 34° 20'N and 58° 42'E at an altitude of 1,150 m, 265 km southeast of Mašhad; it had a population of 24,708 in 1991 (Wezārat-e rāh wa tarābari, 1987, pp. 168-69; idem, 1991; Sāzmān-e hawā-šenāsi, p. 143). It is mentioned in early sources as Yonābad (Eṣṭakri, pp. 273-74,



284; Ebn Ḥawqal, p. 446, tr. Kramers, pp. 431-32; Moqaddasi, pp. 351-52), Bonabeḡ (*Hodud al-‘ālam*, ed. Sotuda, p. 90, tr. Minorsky, p. 326), and Jonābaḡ and Gonābād (Balāḡori, *Fotuhā*, p. 316; *Nozhat al-qolub*, ed. Le Strange, p. 144, tr. Le Strange, p. 142). According to Eṣṭakri (p. 274), water was provided by underground channels (*qanāts*). In the 14th century, it had a fortified lofty castle, whose foundation was popularly attributed to a son of Gōdarz (q.v.). The town was further protected by two more castles, Qal‘a-ye Kavāšir and Qal‘a-ye Darjān, one on either side of the town. Its products were cereals and fruit; a great deal of fine silk was also manufactured here (*Nozhat al-qolub*, p. 144, tr. Le Strange, p. 142-43).

Monuments include the 13th-century congressional mosque (Godard, p. 145), now mostly in ruins, and the Solṭān-Moḥammad ‘Ābed shrine, built during the reign of the Safavid Shah Ṭahmāsb (930-84/1524-76), lying 24 km south of the town. The latter suffered some damage during the 1968 earthquake, but it has since been repaired (Meškāti, pp. 92-93).

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