

# Once lush regions turning grey in Golestan Province

The northern province of Golestan in Iran is known for its stunning natural beauty, with lush jungles and picturesque scenery that attract tourists from all over the country and the world. However, concerns have been raised about the threat of desertification to the region and the urgent need for protecting its unique ecosystem.

In the verdant province, especially its lush Khalid Nabi region, an unexpected water scarcity threatens the area's once-thriving greenery. Tourists who marveled at the vibrant landscape just a year ago now struggle to reconcile themselves to the recent images of the region's gray, desiccated terrain, according to Iran Newspaper.

Hamid Salamati, director general of Golestan's Natural Resources and Watershed Management, confirms the alarming transformation, warning that the province's 862,000 hectares of pastures are at risk of desertification. Despite its picturesque Hyrcanian forests, Golestan is not immune to the encroaching drought and desertification phenomenon.

Currently, an estimated 306,000 hectares of desert span the counties of Gonbad-e Kavus, Maraveh Tappeh, Gomishan, and Aqqa. Officials attribute the situation to a significant decrease in rainfall, which has dropped by 40 percent from 250 mm to 150 mm in recent years. As the once-vibrant Khalid Nabi region faces an uncertain future, the stark reality of climate change becomes increasingly difficult to ignore. The consequences of



drought and fine dust air pollution are also concerning. Officials warn that in addition to causing respiratory and lung diseases, they weaken forest trees, making them susceptible to pests, diseases, and illnesses. While climatic disturbance and temperature increase are global issues, they are particularly pronounced in Iran due to the country's geographic location in a dry and semi-arid region.

Despite these challenges, Golestan remains a beautiful and unique part of Iran, with its stunning jungles and diverse wildlife. The province is home to a large portion of the Hyrcanian forest strip in the north of the country, which provides a vital



habitat for many rare and endangered species. The alarming situation of the province's nature is quite strange and unbelievable. Even experts

cannot imagine facing such an utterly-transformed scene within a year. This serves as a call to action for the government and citizens of Golestan Province to take

immediate measures to address these pressing issues and prevent further desertification of the region.

## IRAN READS

### 'The Meaning of Travel' by Emily Thomas

Many people read Byron and Ruskin's enthralling descriptions of mountains and, for some, reading about mountains was not enough. They wanted to see this aesthetic of the infinite for themselves. Alps tourism began in the 19th century, and many people journeyed to the peaks (albeit mostly people with money).



One of Iran's bestsellers this week is a book about travelling, which might come as a surprise. Originally published in 2020, 'The Meaning of Travel: Philosophers Abroad' has been recently translated to Farsi and published in a series that belong to philosophical examinations of different aspects of life.

Emily Thomas, a philosopher and traveler, has delved into the intersection of philosophy and travel in her book. It takes readers on a journey through time, exploring how travel has shaped our perception of the world and ourselves. Thomas weaves together personal reflections with philosophical insights from luminaries such as René Descartes and John Locke. From the Age of Discovery to the present day, Thomas examines how travel has influenced our understanding of the world. She explores philosophical musings on otherness, cannibals, and wilderness from the likes of Montaigne, John Locke, and Henry Thoreau.

The book also delves into darker topics such as the ethics of "doom tourism" and how space travel might impact our perception of human significance in a vast universe. Thomas's personal anecdotes add depth and authenticity to the thought-provoking book. 'The Meaning of Travel' is not just a history of the intersection between philosophy and travel but also a memoir of Thomas's own experiences on the road. It is an enthralling journey that will transform readers' understanding of travel and its profound impact on our lives.

The book is divided into twelve chapters, each focusing on a different aspect of travel with regard to the ideas of one or more philosophers. Throughout the book, Thomas draws on the insights of philosophers such as Francis Bacon, René Descartes, John Locke, Henry More, and Edmund Burke to deepen our understanding of the philosophical implications of travel.

## PIC OF THE DAY



Strawberries are not only delicious but also incredibly healthy. These bright red fruits are packed with vitamins, fiber, and antioxidants that can help improve overall health. Just one cup of strawberries provides more than 100 percent of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C, which is essential for boosting the immune system and reducing inflammation. They also contain folate, potassium, and manganese, all of which are important for maintaining healthy blood pressure and heart health. In addition to their nutritional benefits, strawberries are a versatile fruit that can be enjoyed in a variety of ways, from smoothies and salads to desserts and snacks.

Every year, from late April to June, Golestan Province becomes a hub for hand-picked strawberries. With Ramyan the leading city, Golestan is the third-largest producer of this agricultural product in Iran, following Kurdistan and Mazandaran. With a production of 9,000 tons of strawberries, Golestan Province offers a significant contribution to the country's strawberry industry.

● RAHELE HESARI/IRNA

## Largest school for autistic children opens in western Iran

In a momentous occasion for the western Iranian province of Hamedan, the largest school specializing in educating autistic children has been inaugurated. The opening ceremony was attended by the governor of Hamedan province and several provincial officials.

The school boasts 18 classrooms, a dark room, a playground, and a pool for aquatic treatment, all designed to meet the special needs of students with autism, IRNA reported.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a disability that affects the brain and can lead to difficulties with social interaction, attention, movement, and learning. While ASD can be diagnosed at dif-



● IRNA

ferent ages, its symptoms typically appear during the first two years of life.

The construction of this specialized school is a crucial step towards educational justice for autistic children in Iran. It provides a safe and supportive environment where they can learn and grow without facing the

barriers and challenges that often come with traditional schools.

With the prevalence of ASD on the rise globally, it is essential that more specialized schools like this one are established in our country to ensure that all children have access to quality education and equal opportunities for success.