

Development of handicraft sector in South Khorasan Province, a must

Iranica Desk

The revival, development and preservation of handicrafts, most of which are indigenous and unique to a particular region, have always been regarded as an effective and low-cost way to generate employment. In fact, handicrafts have a great potential for entrepreneurship in various parts of the country.

Experts believe that both the production and sale are of great significance for developing the handicraft sector. They say all available means should be employed to introduce various handicrafts of the country, which are of great cultural, artistic and economic importance, according to IRNA.

Due to its cultural and historical richness, the eastern province of South Khorasan, which is home to many historical and natural attractions, can play a very significant role in the field of handicraft production and growth.

Out of 299 fields of handicrafts currently practiced across Iran, 120 are produced in the province. Thanks to efforts undertaken by the craftspeople of the province, a number of forgotten handicrafts, such as *pelas-bafi* (weaving a type of traditional floor covering), and *giveh-douzi* (sewing a type of traditional footwear) have been revived during the past two years. Moreover, *tow-bafi* (towel weaving), a popular handicraft of the province, mostly carried out by local women, has many customers abroad.

South Khorasan is famed for its exquisite rugs and carpets woven in its various villages according to know-how inherited from generation to generation.

However, lack of branding is the main challenge faced by those engaged in the handicraft sector of the province. This is while a major number of craftspeople are locals who have no knowledge of marketing practices. Masoud Shojaeian, a handicraft artist who is active in the field of *mo-araq-kari* (wood engraving), referred to the livelihood condition of those living in the province and said that the handicrafts, which are presently classified as luxury goods, are not among the basic needs of people.

He noted that efforts should be made to promote the culture of using handicrafts in the community, pointing out that granting loan facilities to those involved in the industry is another strategy which should be adopted to boost the sector.

Abulfazl Hassani, another craft artisan engaged in *qalam-zani* (engraving) said that supporting handicraft producers for marketing their products is among the most important steps which should be taken by the officials. He noted that craftworks have not adequately been promoted in the community, pointing out that handicraft production alone is not cost-effective; a market must be found to supply them. He noted that *qalam-zani* is among the most popular arts of the country, which is presently facing marketing and sale problems.



Moaraq-kari
mehrnews.com



Pelas-bafi
eneshat.com



Giveh-douzi
tasnimnews.com



Tow-bafi
visitiran.ir

Mangrove Forests, a popular tourist attraction in southern Iran

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Mangrove Forests, also known as Hara Forests, covering the southern shores of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, are among the unique attractions of the country.

Along with the Hyrcanian forests, mountain ecosystems, pastures and deserts, Hara Forests are the most popular natural attractions of Iran, drawing a large number of tourists from across the world, IRNA reported.

The green mangrove trees, with their wooden stems and branches, have emerged from the blue waters of the Persian Gulf. Unlike other trees, they have roots in salt water of the sea and, consequently, feed on it. They also stand, like a strong dam, against sea currents and winds. Tides occur once every six hours in the area. At low tide, it looks like that the trees have grown on dry land, but during high tide, they go under water. During low tide, the water

height is 1.5 meters, while at high tide, the sea water rises so much that it covers the trees and the influx of fish makes the area a suitable fishing spot. Unlike other forests, mangrove forests, having numerous six-meter tall trees, are green in all seasons of the year. However, due to the warm climate of the region, the best time to visit is from mid-autumn to May. Interestingly, this type of mangrove tree absorbs salt water and then produces fresh wa-

ter; in fact, they act like a water softener. This unique feature, created over millions of years, has made them well-adapted to their environment. In addition to various plants, about one-third of Iran's 550 bird species live in the mangrove forests of the Persian Gulf. The area is home to various native and migratory birds including herons, storks, coots, sea ducks, seagulls, as well as some animal species such as crabs, sea snakes, and various types

of frogs. Mangrove forests, with their unique functional and structural features, lie in the coastal, tropical and subtropical areas. Having 736 hectares of mangrove forest, Bushehr Province ranks in the country after Hormuzgan and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces in this respect. Head of Bushehr Province's Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization Siavash Kalbi said that mangrove forests play an im-

portant role in protecting the coastal areas of the province against storms and waves, reducing marine pollution and moderating the temperature. They are not only a fishing spot but also a suitable environment for birds and aquatic animals to lay eggs and reproduce. Compared to other tropical areas, the forests have three to five times more heat absorbing power, and this will help reduce the negative effects of climate change.



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