

Behbahan, a hidden gem of Khuzestan Province

Iranica Desk

Behbahan is a picturesque city in Khuzestan Province, situated 205 kilometers southeast of Ahvaz and boasting a history dating back 10,000 years. It is noteworthy that the oldest narcissus garden in Iran is

located in Behbahan.

Legend has it that the golden hue and rich fragrance of the narcissus flower are so abundant that they reach the nostrils of every passerby. Known as the city of firsts, Behbahan is home to several pioneering landmarks, including the first oil well in

Iran, the country's inaugural water treatment facility, the first golf club in Iran, the first official football field in the nation, the first squash club in the country, and the first gypsum factory. With its diverse array of tourist attractions, Behbahan is a must-visit destination.



Arjan Bowl

One of the most significant discoveries in this historical area, which is considered a top tourist attraction in Khuzestan, is the Arjan Bowl. The bowl shape resembles that of a blue water lily and carries many mythical messages. It is believed that the origin of this ancient artifact dates back to the 8th century BCE.

● ilna.ir

Imamzadeh Abazar

The shrine of Imamzadeh Abazar is situated 40 kilometers south of Behbahan. The paintings, lattice works, and gypsum decorations of this building are reminiscent of the works of Shirazi masters during the Zand and early Qajar periods.



● gardeshgari724.com

Golab Castle

Golab Castle is a historical edifice in Khuzestan Province, located in the village of Cham-e Boostan in Behbahan, near the southern coast of the Zohreh River. This castle dates back to the Sassanid period and has also been used during the Islamic era.



● safarzon.com



● borna.news

Chahmari Lake Dam

Chahmari Lake Dam, standing at a height of 10 meters can store more than 700,000 cubic meters of water. It was built to prevent floods, erosion, sedimentation, and to store water for agricultural purposes. The area around this dam offers views of various plant species.



● hamgardi.com

Bekan Bath

The historical Bekan Bath, situated in the ancient city of Arjan and dating back to the Sassanid era, is located next to the Marun River. The architectural design of this bath consists of four ivans, although its layout is obscured today by debris from collapsed ceilings and rocks along the valley's edges, making it difficult to discern.

Bekan Bridge

The Bekan Bridge, a relic from the Sassanid era, spans the Marun River in Behbahan. This bridge stands as one of the earliest registered monuments in Behbahan, yet unfortunately, it is currently facing the threat of destruction.



● hamgardi.com

Behbahan Museum

Behbahan Museum commenced its operations in November 2003 with the collection of artifacts for the ethnography section. Within

five months of its inauguration, a diverse array of items including decorative objects, agricultural tools, traditional attire, and utensils were amassed in the museum through contributions from

the people of Behbahan and the surrounding villages. The Behbahan Museum was officially inaugurated in 2005, featuring two distinct sections: archaeology and ethnography.



● kojaro.com



● lastsecond.ir

Bat Cave

The Bat Cave (Khofash Cave) is situated in Tang-e Takab of Behbahan. Local residents and inhabitants have numerous stories and legends associated with this cave. A historical inscription can be found on the right side of the cave's entrance. The depth of the Bat Cave is estimated to be around 20 meters.

Importance of Hormuz and Kish in ancient maritime trade of Iran



● britannica.com
● Strait of Hormuz

Of the whole coast of Persia (Iran), only the littoral of the Persian Gulf has had any importance in history, although adequate bays and anchorages are also found further east. The Strait of Hormuz, separating the Persian Gulf from the ocean, received this name from the famous harbor that, down to the fourteenth century, lay on the mainland, somewhat to the east of the modern port of Bandar 'Abbas. One day's journey was reckoned between Hormuz and the village of Suru, where fishermen lived and through which passed the road from Fars to Hormuz. In the tenth century, Hormuz was the port of the province of Kerman, although it did not have a large population. Subsequently, maritime trade with India centered principally on two points, Hormuz and Kish, the latter on an island of the same

name in the Persian Gulf. Because of commercial rivalry, there were always hostilities between the rulers of Kish and Hormuz; each tried to harm his rival and stop his ships, to the great detriment of trade. At the close of the twelfth century, when the Ghuzz led by Malik Dinar took possession of Kerman, the ruler of Kish begged him to cede Hormuz to him, promising to pay every year the sum of 100,000 dinars and to send fifty Arabian horses. The commercial importance of Hormuz and Kish continued under the Mongols. According to Marco Polo, the main articles of export from Hormuz, Kish, and other points to India, in exchange for Indian goods, were horses. Marco Polo also informs us that the ruler of Hormuz acknowledged himself a vassal of Kerman, but that he was often remiss in paying

the tribute and waged war against his suzerain. He also ruled over the Arab coast and harbor of Qalhat to the southeast of Masqat, whither he withdrew whenever the ruler of Kerman sent an army against him; he would then seize the ships sailing into the Persian Gulf. The ruler of Kerman suffered such a loss of revenue that he was forced to conclude a peace. The rulers of Hormuz were clearly of Arab origin, for the name of the dynasty's founder was Mahmud Qalhati. The Aryans of Central Asia could not quite overcome their fear of the sea, while the natives of the Arab littoral, Oman, were always daring sea rovers. Only the mightiest rulers of Persia, such as the Buyyids in the pre-Mongol period (especially 'Adu al-Dawla) and the Seljuks were able to extend their authority over Oman.

The above is a lightly edited version of chapter titled 'Quhistan, Kerman, and Makran,' from a book entitled, *An Historical Geography of Iran*, written by W. Barthold and published by Princeton University Press, Princeton.