

Sa'adat School, a cornerstone of education in southern Iran

Iranica Desk

Bushehr, a port city in southern Iran, experienced significant advancements in economic and cultural domains during the Qajar period, earning recognition as the most esteemed commercial port in southern Iran. Consequently, the city emerged as a pivotal hub for cultural metamorphosis. The inception of the first modern school in southern Iran within this port marked a crucial cultural milestone in the region. The renowned Sa'adat School, known for its distinguished alumni, has evolved into a cultural-historical center, boasting a rich legacy and influential role, making it a revered educational institution in the country.



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Historically, Sa'adat School stands as a cornerstone of education in southern Iran, ranking as the fifth enduring school in the country and a key tourist attraction in Bushehr. Given its significance in promoting cultural awareness and progressive teachings among the locals, the school holds a special place among the city's historical landmarks. The architectural charm of Sa'adat School, akin to the captivating allure of Bushehr's

urban fabric, underwent restoration in 2014.

Establishment

Sa'adat School was initially founded by Ahmad Khan Daryabegi, the governor of Bushehr, at the heart of the city. Initially housed in the residence of Haj Mohammad Hossein Safar, the school, initially known as Sa'adat-e Mozaffari, came into being through financial aid from

Mozaffar ad-Din Shah Qajar. The school commenced operations in 1900, drawing intellectuals and students to its premises.

Evolution and impact

Despite facing initial skepticism from the community, Sa'adat School flourished, attracting students and scholars alike. The school's expansion necessitated a more suitable structure, leading to the construction of a

spacious complex outside the city center. This new building, completed in 1901, transformed Sa'adat School into a thriving educational center, accommodating a growing number of students and garnering attention beyond the region.

Legacy and recognition

Over the years, Sa'adat School produced numerous notable figures in politics, literature,

history, and social sciences, solidifying its status as a prominent educational institution of its time. The school's profound impact prompted the people of Bushehr to designate the 9th of March as the National Day of Bushehr in honor of its founding. In recognition of its historical significance, Sa'adat School was officially registered as one of Iran's national monuments on January 31, 2000.

Sections of Sa'adat School

Presently, Sa'adat School comprises two sections: a modern educational wing for students and a historical-cultural section open to visitors. The historical segment showcases rooms adorned with photographs of alumni and notable personalities, while the Sa'adat Art Gallery within the complex offers a glimpse into traditional crafts and artwork available for purchase.

Mysteries of Aspakhu Fire Temple in North Khorasan Province

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Aspakhu Fire Temple is one of the oldest ancient monuments in North Khorasan Province. This historical building is located on a hill, on the road from Bojnourd to Golestan Forest and in the southern part of Aspakhu village.

According to archaeologists, based on excavations and discovered documents, the construction of this fire temple dates back to the Sassanid era. Near Aspakhu village and the fire temple, there is a cemetery that differs in terms of burial and tomb-making from Muslim burials, as the graves are family-based. These evidences indicate that specific Zoroastrian tribes lived in this area and this historical building belonged to them. The reason for this naming is the thriving of horse breeding in this region (in Persian, *asb* means horse). The locals of this area also recognize the Aspakhu Fire Temple as a church, but so far no documents have been found indicating the presence of Christians in this area. The main entrance of the fire temple is constructed in the form of a tall ivan and the dome of the house is embedded on its western side. In the northern and southern walls of the fire temple, there are nine small rectangular

niches. Each niche measures approximately 30 by 40 centimeters and is topped with three sturdy wooden beams sourced from Alborz trees. This temple boasts three entrances and exits, symbolizing the core Zoroastrian principle of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds." Constructed using rubble stone, sarooj, and small wooden beams, the architecture of this fire temple draws inspiration from a fusion of dome and ivan styles commonly found in historical and Islamic structures.

The Aspakhu fire temple features a circular mihrab, a fire pit, and a domed ceiling with vents for smoke to escape.

Due to the presence of a fire pit and smoke outlets in the ceiling, this temple was probably constructed by Zoroastrians. The interior of the fire temple is square-shaped with entrances on the northern, southern, and eastern sides. Noteworthy architectural elements of the Aspakhu Fire Temple include two blind windows on the northern and southern facades of the ivan. The fusion of dome and ivan in this temple serves as a significant architectural symbol of Khorasan Razavi Province during the Sassanid era. Discovered by a team of archaeologists in 1966, the Aspakhu Fire Temple was officially listed on Iran's National Heritage List.

