

Sistan Anthropology Museum transporting visitors to bygone eras

Iranica Desk

Sistan Anthropology Museum, situated in a historical building in Zabol, the capital of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, showcases a remarkable collection of ancient artifacts that transport visitors to bygone eras. Culture enthusiasts can journey back 5,000 years through the museum's exhibits and gain insight into the vibrant heritage and civilization of the Sistan people, particularly those of the Burned City (Shahr-e Sukhteh). Originally constructed during the Qajar era in 1898 CE as the English Consulate by local architects, the building was entrusted to the Cultural Heritage Department of Zabol in 1989.

Over the span of 17 years, from that year until 2006, extensive restoration work was undertaken, leading to the establishment of the Sistan Anthropology Museum. Located on Ferdowsi Street in Zabol, the museum sits on a 4,000-square-meter plot of land with a building area of 1,125 square meters.

The architectural design and construction of the edifice integrate aspects of administration and military, drawing from traditional and indigenous methods. The museum houses over 32,000 historical pieces from Dahan-e Gholaman, a pivotal Achaemenid hub and archaeological site, and Burned City, one of the earliest known civili-



zations in the world.

The structure comprises a series of interconnected small and large rooms linked by corridors, featuring a variety of domed ceilings across all spaces, with skylights and chimney pipes

discreetly positioned behind the roof. In total, the museum encompasses 20 rooms interconnected by two primary corridors, with mud bricks and clay serving as the predominant building materials.



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Archeology section

In this section, a valuable collection of cultural objects such as various types of pottery, wooden objects, clay figurines, fabrics, ropes, and ceramic items from the Burned City, including multicol-

ored, red, gray, and chickpea pottery (consisting of jars, bottles, bowls, cups, vases, and more) are on display.

Graves

Two reconstructed graves are showcased in the museum to il-

lustrate burial practices in the Burned City. Each grave consists of a vertical pit, followed by a chamber or niche next to it, with pottery objects and vessels included as offerings due to beliefs in the afterlife. By examining the differences in objects and items inside the graves, the quality and types of materials used in their construction can help identify the degree of poverty, wealth, social class, and, in some cases, occupation.

Residential room

The layout of this room is roughly quadrilateral, with construction materials including adobe, bricks, wood, and thatch used for flooring and shades, along with mud plaster adorning the walls. The room features a door, doorway, ceiling, hearth, and ceramic vessels for storing grains and food.

Anthropology section

In this section, the architecture of the building has been utilized to create various scenes, along with the display of wax statues and dioramas depicting customs, ways of life, economy, various ceremonies, food, and clothing, showcasing the authentic and traditional culture of Sistan. Some of these scenes include wedding galleries, agriculture, hunting and fishing, and jewelry. Visitors can learn about the way of life of the people of Sistan by observing various musical instruments, weapons, ancient paintings, tools, and antique vessels displayed in the museum.

Biodiversity and cultural riches of Parvar Protected Area in Semnan Province



Parvar Protected Area, located about 35 kilometers north of Mahdishahr (Sangsar) in Semnan Province, is a significant part of the region's conservation efforts. It encompasses the vast Aras and Hirkan forests, showcasing the diverse natural wonders of the area. With a perennial river originating from Mount Nizva beyond its borders, Parvar Protected Area serves as a sanctuary for a wide range of flora and fauna, blending various climatic zones seamlessly.

Despite its size, Parvar is rich in natural resources, boasting a diverse landscape of expansive plains surrounded by lush mountainous terrain. The protected area consists of three distinct conservation zones: Sidua, an open plain; Roudbarak, a forested area; and Sartange, known for its striking tall rocks and narrow passages. Its proximity to the Bolland Protected Area, Doudange

Wildlife Sanctuary, and Kiasar National Park underscores the importance of Parvar's ecosystem within the country. Parvar benefits from a semi-arid to cool temperate climate, with elevations ranging from 1,190 to 3,300 meters, fostering a remarkable biodiversity within its plains and mountains.

Ecological diversity

Parvar Protected Area features three climatic zones that contribute to its ecological diversity. The forested regions boast lush greenery, providing a home to a variety of plant and animal species. The mountainous terrain offers rugged beauty and unique wildlife encounters, while the semi-desert area showcases a stark yet beautiful landscape where resilient species thrive.

Faunal diversity

Within Parvar Protected Area,

there are 39 mammal species spread across 35 genera, classified into 14 families within five orders. This area plays a crucial role in the conservation of wildlife, as it accommodates six out of the seven mammal orders found in arid regions, representing a significant portion of the country's mammalian species. Notable species include Maral deer, wild goat and ibex, Persian leopard, brown bear, lynx, and various others, contributing to the area's rich biodiversity.

Maral deer

The Maral deer, or Persian red deer, is a captivating species found in Parvar. Spotting one can be challenging, and the locals refer to it as Gavor or Gavkoohi.

Wild goat

The wild goat and ibex, known as "Pazan," add to the allure of the

area, often visible near the roads during the day.

Avian and reptilian life

Parvar also serves as a haven for diverse bird species such as the black partridge, eagles, pheasant, and various reptiles like snakes, Persian toads, and geckos. Notable reptiles include the Jafari Snake, known for its defensive mechanism, and the Persian Horned Viper, the largest venomous snake in southwestern Asia.

Cultural and water resources

Apart from its natural beauty, Parvar is steeped in cultural heritage, with charming villages offering insights into local traditions. The area boasts essential water sources, including rivers, springs, and aquifers like the Sefidroud River, Roudbarak Spring, and Marno Waterfall, adding to its allure.

