

Economic and cultural significance of Behbahan's Narcissus Festival

Iranica Desk

Holding tradition-based and local events is an effective strategy for showcasing the untapped capacities of Khuzestan Province and its cities.

According to Mojtaba Gaheshtooni, a journalist, events play a significant role across various fields worldwide, and one of the key outcomes of organizing such events is the transformation in different economic sectors.

Notably, these events are characterized by their expanding scope and diversity each year, which helps attract larger audiences. This increased interest leads to substantial investments in the region, ultimately resulting in significant transformations in the area's infrastructure.

The Behbahan's Narcissus Festival is a prime example of this phenomenon. After several successful iterations, this festival has established itself as a staple event. This season, it is anticipated that Behbahan will yield approximately 80.5 million cut flowers. The festival has the potential to evolve into a creativity-driven event that serves as a catalyst for tourism development in the region.

The Behbahan Narcissus Festival presents an excellent opportunity to promote this event on both provincial and national levels, enhancing the visibility of Khuzestan and Behbahan.

The festival aims to complete the value-added chain by supporting the local community and encouraging investments in processing and packaging industries.

Currently, the Narcissus Festival is being organized with minimal funding, and it is crucial to ensure that the benefits of such events reach the narcissus growers, local stakeholders, and active members of the tourism industry.

Tourism officials in Khuzestan Province, along with provincial and city authorities, must recognize that a tourist destination can only stand out and succeed when it offers unique and innovative experiences to travelers. While similar events can effectively mitigate the seasonal effects of tourism and contribute to a more equitable distribution of resources, event-driven tourism is a modern form of tourism that is interconnected with other types. This market consists of travelers who specifically seek to see or participate in events.

In the narcissus fields of Behbahan, four distinct types of narcissus have been identified. These flowers find applications in various industries, including ornamental plants, perfumery, traditional medicine and herbalism, cosmetics and hygiene, as well as pharmaceuticals and medical fields. Behbahan is home to some of the oldest narcissus fields in Iran, with a



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long history and it is crucial to prioritize their preservation. The narcissus flower thrives in the plains and foothills of the Zagros Mountains across several provinces, including Ilam, Lorestan, Khuzestan, Fars, and Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad

provinces. In Khuzestan Province, while Behbahan remains a major cultivation hub, smaller quantities are also grown in other cities.

According to several local flower growers, the area dedicated to narcissus flower farms in Be-

hbahan has drastically declined from over 700 hectares in 1971 to around 70 hectares today. Notably, in the 1960s, Dutch visitors to Behbahan's narcissus fields took bulbs back to the Netherlands for propagation and cultivation, showcasing the

flower's international appeal. On each stem of the Behbahan narcissus, one can observe between two and ten blossoms, with some stems producing over twenty. The Dutch people, who have a particular fondness for this flower, even named one of their streets "Behbahan" in its honor. If attention is given to the cycle of employment and investment surrounding this flower, "flower tourism" could emerge as a viable sector. However, several challenges hinder the recognition and true value of the narcissus flower, including the multiple occupations of producers, inadequate marketing efforts, a lack of government purchases, high costs imposed on farm owners, neglect of tourism aspects, and the absence of a supportive research institution focused on the narcissus flower. Addressing these issues could help elevate the status of this beautiful flower and its associated industries.



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Architectural wonders of Tizno House in Dezful

Dezful, a city in Khuzestan Province, is one of those cities that has preserved its original form, earning it the nickname "Museum of Brick." When you explore the old districts, you feel transported back in time, near the calm yet roaring Dez River.

In the historical district, you'll find the grand Tizno House, located just steps from the new bridge along the coastal street. This house, the most famous in Dezful, belonged to a merchant named Tizno Beig and was originally built during the Safavid era, later restored and reconstructed in the Qajar period, visitiran.ir wrote.

The grand entrance features *kha-jeh neshins* — stone stands on either side of the door, historically used for sitting and socializing with neighbors or resting for passersby. Upon entering, you

find the *hashti*, an entryway designed to conceal the inner parts of the house.

Descending the stairs leads you to two basements. The first, the *shabestan*, is situated one and a half meters below the yard and has three entrances. The second, the *shovadoun*, is a hallmark of Dezful architecture. Dug by hand, shovadouns are slightly deeper, helping residents escape the summer heat. In Tizno House, the shovadoun is 25 stairs below the yard.

Inside, several rooms feature grid windows, and from the roof, you can enjoy a stunning view of Dezful and the bridge. The house is nationally recognized and open to the public on select days during Nowruz.

Another attraction in Dezful is the Souzangar House, located just five minutes from Tizno

House in Kalantarian Alley. The best times to visit this southern city are during Nowruz, autumn, or winter.

Traveling from Tehran to Dezful takes about eight hours by road. The journey begins on the Tehran-Qom highway, reaching Borujerd after passing Arak. After two hours of driving from Khorramabad, you'll see signs for Dezful. Alternatively, air travel offers a more convenient option.



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