

Shahrak-e Hezarani village brings growth to Ilam’s rural landscape



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Shahrak-e Hezarani village, situated in the heart of Ilam Province, holds a strategic position enriched by a deep historical background and significant agricultural and livestock resources, establishing itself as one of the key centers for rural development in southwestern Iran. Ilam Province, known for its diverse climate, rich cultural tapestry, and historical significance, encompasses numerous villages, each telling a unique story of the region’s identity. Among these, Shahrak-e Hezarani — the largest village in Abdanan — stands out as a prominent example of these attributes. This village not only captivates with its stunning natural landscapes and historical monuments but also plays a vital role in supplying the needs

of the region through an economy primarily based on agriculture and animal husbandry. This report aims to detail the geographical, social, economic, and tourism-related features that define this vibrant village. Shahrak-e Hezarani is administratively part of the Central District in Jaber Ansar Rural District and is located eight kilometers east of Abdanan, positioned along the main route connecting Abdanan with Dehloran and Andimeshk. The village rests at an average elevation of 735 meters above sea level and experiences a moderate and humid climate. Its distinctive geographical setting, close proximity to the regional airport, and location on a critical communication corridor between Ilam and Khuzestan Provinces impart a strategic significance to the village.

With a population exceeding 2,860 individuals distributed among 828 households and 885 residential units, Hezarani is recognized as the largest village within Abdanan and functions as a central service hub for surrounding villages. The village’s name reflects the ethnic diversity of its residents, stemming from various tribes and communities settled in the area. Omid Esmaeili, an expert from the Ilam Province General Governorate told ISNA that the availability of abundant water resources — such as the Abdanan and Hezarani rivers — and the presence of fertile agricultural lands have been crucial factors contributing to the establishment and growth of this settlement. Esmaeili further emphasized that agriculture and livestock

farming continue to be the primary sources of livelihood for the village inhabitants today, with 44 percent of the active workforce engaged in farming and animal husbandry, while 56 percent are employed in the service sector. Among the village’s 600 hectares of farmland, 590 hectares are rain-fed, and only 10 hectares are irrigated. The main agricultural products include wheat and barley, with a limited cultivation of rice. Despite water limitations, horticulture thrives on 5.5 hectares, featuring crops such as grapes, figs, olives, pistachios, almonds, and pomegranates. Livestock farming prospers in Hezarani due to the availability of suitable pastures on the slopes of the Dinarkuh and Kabirkuh mountains.

Esmaeili explained that the village also has promising developmental potentials including beekeeping, home-based mushroom cultivation, medicinal plants, narcissus flowers, ornamental plants, and agricultural processing industries. These sectors offer attractive opportunities for investment and employment generation within the community. Farzad Sharifi, Director General of Ilam Province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization, highlighted that in addition to the village’s economic potentials, Hezarani is home to one of the province’s significant historical landmarks — Hezarani Castle. Constructed from stone and plaster, the castle dates back to the Sassanid era. It is situated atop a natural hill north of the

road leading from Abdanan to Murmuri. The castle’s architectural layout includes rectangular corridors, large rooms, vaulted arches, and watchtowers. Sharifi added that visiting this historic castle offers a valuable opportunity to connect with history and appreciate the architectural heritage left by ancestors. Tourists visiting the castle can also include a visit to the nearby Siah Gav Twin Lake, enjoying the pristine and unspoiled natural beauty of the area. Shahrak-e Hezarani village, with its unique combination of history, nature, and productive capacity, embodies the dynamism of Ilam’s rural communities. It stands as a striking example and potential model for sustainable rural development and tourism in western Iran.

Plan autumn trip to Baliran Spring, nearby meadows

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If you are an experienced tourist who enjoys forest trekking, head to the heart of the Hyrcanian forests in Mazandaran Province to discover the beautiful Baliran Spring. Also known as Lalehzar Spring, this stunning natural wonder features captivating turquoise waters and is located just five kilometers from the nearby village, attracting many visitors. As previously mentioned, the spring is located beside a village named Baliran, a forested region positioned at an elevation of 150 meters above sea level. This village is encircled by a

natural boundary composed of rivers, forests, and mountains, classifying it as one of the notable tourist villages. Baliran lies 80 kilometers from Sari, the provincial capital, and 20 kilometers from Amol. For travelers coming from Tehran, expect over three hours via Haraz road and less than five hours via Chalous road. Emerging from the ground at an altitude of 240 meters above sea level, this spring contains a high concentration of sulfur. Owing to the strong sulfurous odor around the spring, camping or setting up tents nearby is not permissible. Hence, if camping is planned, forested areas lo-

cated slightly before the spring offer suitable spots for resting and dining. Swimming and diving can be enjoyed in the spring’s turquoise waters, which reach a depth of about 80 centimeters and maintain a temperature of 34 degrees Celsius during autumn. The sulfur content in the water aids in treating ailments such as joint pain, rheumatism, and skin conditions. It is recommended to undertake this trip in groups, with family, or as part of nature tour groups, while also taking advantage of the beautiful forests and lush meadows surrounding the spring.

The best time to visit Baliran Spring is from mid-April to mid-November. As temperatures decrease, the water temperature also drops, making swimming less feasible with seasonal changes. Furthermore, by late autumn, the visual appeal of the season fades, paths become slippery due to heavy rainfall, and the opportunity to enjoy wild fruits such as wild plum, medlar, hawthorn, and barberry diminishes. ● Due to fog in the Baliran forests, it is essential to use a local guide. ● On rainy days, when paths may be slippery and muddy, it is advisable to avoid visiting the hot spring due to potential

hazards. ● Using off-road vehicles along the route harms the nature and forests of Baliran. The best practice is to walk and appreciate the area on foot. ● Employing special trash bags is vital to protect the environment. ● If setting up a tent and cooking near Baliran spring, be sure to gather dry wood along the route to use for firewood. ● Because of water pollution and the sulfur content in the spring, it is advisable to bring your own drinking water.

Baliran Forest

As part of the Hyrcanian forests, Baliran Forest is a scenic and

beautiful area housing various plant species alongside natural and therapeutic springs. Visitors can enjoy a rich diversity of vegetation, including elm, maple, oak, and beech trees, accompanied by the birdsong that fills the forest. Traveling through a traditional village and dense forests, crossing the picturesque banks of a river, listening to the birdsong in this natural setting, and enjoying numerous springs such as Baliran hot spring constitute the best recreational and travel experience during the cool autumn days. So, pack your bags and prepare yourself for this natural delight.



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