

# Restoration of Shahzadeh Mahan Garden’s gate begins in Kerman



● IRNA

Iranica Desk

The head of Kerman’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization has announced the commencement of restoration work on the entrance gate of the Shahzadeh Mahan Garden, a UNESCO-recognized site. Morteza Nikrou stated that the restoration planning began following photogrammetric surveys and mapping, aimed at updating existing plans and identifying damages more accurately, alongside geotechnical studies, according to IRNA. He explained that this phase of the project includes restoring and repairing the brick floor-

ing on the gate’s roof, reducing structural load, removing deteriorated bricks, leveling surfaces, and implementing traditional brickwork techniques. Nikrou emphasized that preserving and restoring historical structures in Kerman, especially valuable sites such as the Shahzadeh Mahan Garden, is a national duty and a cultural mission upon which the province’s tourism future depends. He added that this precious heritage not only narrates the identity and history of Kerman’s people but also serves as a global asset contributing to sustainable tourism development. He further noted that, with a responsible approach, the involve-

ment of specialists, participation of local communities, and co-operation of relevant organizations, they aim to maintain these enduring monuments for future generations, ensuring they remain vibrant, usable, and a cornerstone for advancing Kerman’s cultural tourism while safeguarding its historical legacy. A wonderland of greenery and gushing springs amidst arid lands and rugged mountains, the Shahzadeh Mahan Garden is one of Iran’s national monuments and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The garden spans 5.5 hectares in a rectangular layout, with an entrance and gate at the lower end and a two-storey residen-

tial structure at the upper end. The central axis is lined with cascading water fountains, exemplifying the dexterous use of natural land features — a hallmark of Persian garden design. Built in 1850 during the Qajar era and expanded in 1870, the garden features terraced pools and a main residential building. The two-storey structure’s upper floor served as living quarters and a reception area for guests, while smaller rooms are arranged along the garden’s sides. The garden contains a variety of pine, cedar, elm, buttonwood, and fruit trees, nurtured by fertile soil, an underground water canal, and favorable climate conditions.

## Jahanian Mansion of Esfahak registered on National Heritage List

Iranica Desk

The historic Jahanian Hawz-khaneh Mansion, located in the historic core of Esfahak village in Tabas, South Khorasan Province, has been officially registered on Iran’s National Heritage List. Ali Shariatimanesh, Deputy Director of the provincial Organization of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, stated that Esfahak village possesses a unique form of rural architecture with significant historical value. The diversity of architectural styles, combined with the use of local materials adapted to the rocky terrain, has made the remaining structures historically valuable and in need of preservation, according to chtn.ir. He explained that the mansion, dating back to the Qajar era, once belonged to one of the region’s prominent families. Its architectural layout follows the traditional Chahar-Sofeh plan, and key elements include a Hashti (entrance vestibule), Hawzkhaneh (water chamber), windcatcher, ivan, and

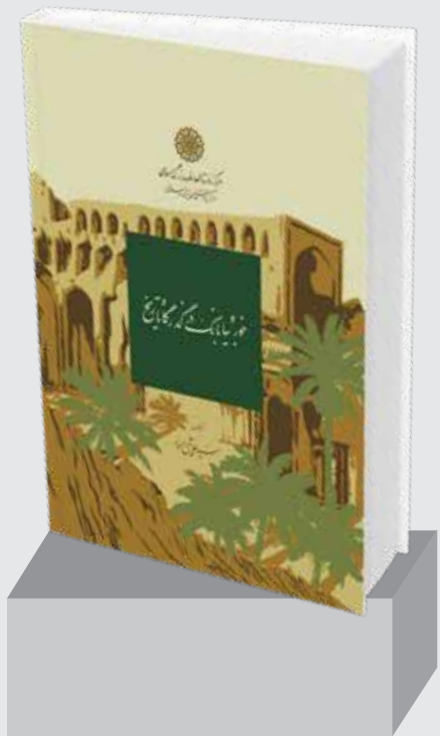
kitchen, chtn.ir wrote. Shariatimanesh emphasized the importance of safeguarding these structures to maintain the historical and cultural integrity of the village, which continues to attract attention for its authentic architecture and traditional lifestyle. Located in the western part of South Khorasan Province, Esfahak village reflects traditional mudbrick construction, vaulted ceilings, interconnected courtyards, and adaptive designs suited to the local terrain and climate. It gained international recognition when it was registered as one of the World’s Best Tourism Villages, highlighting its value as a living example of Iranian rural heritage. The village survived major earthquakes in the past, including the catastrophic 1978 Tabas earthquake, and many historic mudbrick structures remain intact. Local residents have maintained traditional practices, including architecture, handicrafts, and community-based preservation, making it a model of sustainable cultural tourism in Iran.



● chtn.ir

### Introduction to the book:

## Khur and Biabanak in the Passage of History Uncovering heritage of Iran’s desert region



The book Khur and Biabanak in the Passage of History, authored by Seyyed Ali Aledavoud and published in 2024 by the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, presents an extensive study of one of Iran’s historically significant yet often overlooked regions. In his foreword, Kazem Mousavi Bojnourdi, head of the Center, wrote, “Every corner of Iran holds untold stories of history, culture, and art. Together, these stories have shaped the nation’s cultural identity over a long and eventful history, leaving a legacy for future generations. It is our responsibility to learn more about this valuable culture and civilization and to emphasize the significance of each part accordingly. In this context, there is hope that the neglect and potential destruction of lesser-known areas can be prevented as much as possible. Among

Iran’s remarkable points, the desert region of Khur and Biabanak stands out — a land whose surprising secrets captivate any visitor. Throughout history, this region has produced great figures and holds a unique place in Iranian culture and civilization. Seyyed Ali Aledavoud, who has devoted at least half a century to exploring Iranian literature, culture, and history through his writings, now presents the results of his extensive research on the history and culture of his ancestral homeland for scholars and interested readers alike.” In the preface to his book, Aledavoud explained, “The study of cities and regions of Iran, from ancient periods and when the country encompassed wider territories, has always attracted the attention of authors and researchers of various eras. Valuable historical records from cities such as

Neyshabur, Sistan, Qom, and other regions reflect the dedication of their learned writers to their native lands. The extensive and useful information contained in these works is not only important for understanding those cities, but also provides insights into the general history of Iran and the lives of scholars, poets, and writers who emerged from these places.” Aledavoud continued, “My birthplace — Khur and Biabanak — is a desert region that has remained largely unknown. Situated almost in the center of Iran, at the edge of the central desert, it is remote and isolated. Historical anecdotes illustrate its obscurity: when Mohammad Shah Qajar requested precise information about the poet Yaghma Jandaqi’s hometown, Yaghma described it in various ways, yet the Shah could not grasp its exact location. Finally,

Yaghma added that if Iran were compared to a reclining lion, its head would be in Jolfa, its tail in Chahbahar, and Khur and Biabanak would lie at its center.” Due to its remoteness and desert surroundings, Khur and Biabanak is rarely mentioned in classical texts. However, 3rd- and 4th-century geographers noted that the road from Isfahan to Neyshabur passed through three villages — Biyazeh, Garmeh, and Ardib — collectively called “Seh Deh” (Three Villages), with a population of about a thousand. The geographer Al-Muqaddasi, who likely passed through the area, described its prosperity and abundance, particularly in Garmeh. Over the centuries, travel routes shifted, and Jandaq became the main north-south passage, surpassing other villages in prominence. Until the late Qajar period, local figures and

scholars identified themselves as Jandaqis. Today, however, the region has emerged from isolation: the road from Khur to Tabas has opened, and the caravan route from Jandaq to Semnan has been paved. Hundreds of cars and buses now pass daily, boosting local economic activity but reducing the previous tranquility of the area. The book is structured into multiple sections, and its appendices include four scholarly treatises. Aledavoud noted that this work is not exhaustive, and he hopes that younger researchers and enthusiasts of the region will conduct broader field studies to produce a more comprehensive account. He encourages further research to cover topics not fully addressed in this volume and to provide a deeper understanding of this desert region’s history, culture, and heritage.