

Historic, natural wonders of Zeyd village

Iranica Desk

The Zeyd village, situated along the Ilam to Darreh Shahr route and approximately 25 kilometers from Darreh Shahr, is recognized as one of the prominent villages in Ilam province. This village holds special significance due to the presence of the historic shrine of Zeid ibn Ali, a descendant of Imam Musa al-Kazim (peace be upon him), and has long maintained a cherished place among the local population. One of the most remarkable features of Zeyd village is its expansive and astonishing valleys, which remain largely unexplored. According to local residents, there are more than five to six such valleys. Owing to their vast size and the challenging nature of the terrain, visiting these valleys requires proper mountaineering equipment and careful preparation, ISNA wrote. Zeyd village, with a population of approximately 800 people living across around 100 households, is among the settlements where the “Hadi Plan” (village



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development plan) has been implemented only partially. The villagers point out that paving the streets and installing curbs are among their primary needs. Despite these ongoing developmental challenges, the village's historical relics embedded within the cliffs continue to attract tourists, historians, and enthusiasts alike. Among these relics are more than 30 ancient wheat storage

structures, which, according to local accounts, date back between 700 and 800 years. Constructed from a combination of clay, stone, and wood, these storages were ingeniously designed to preserve wheat for up to three years without spoilage. Beyond their functional purpose, these structures were strategically built with security considerations in mind to protect against potential raids.

The placement of two opposing cliffs highlights the builders' attention to defensive needs. Additionally, at the far end of the village, an old house remains that appears to have been historically linked to these storage facilities. Farzad Sharifi, Director General of Ilam's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization, stated that a comprehensive study of the his-

toric texture of Zeyd village in Badreh has recently been conducted. He noted that the village contains vast valleys and cliffs where these ancient wheat storage structures have been carefully constructed, ensuring the preservation of wheat for up to three years. Sharifi emphasized that, since no prior measures had been taken to study or protect the historic texture of the village,

conducting this study was an essential step, which has now been successfully completed. He described the initiative as a significant move toward identifying and safeguarding the historical fabric of Zeyd village. Based on the findings of the study, practical measures have now been put in place to organize, maintain, and protect the village's existing historic structures.



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Hamdollah Mostowfi's mausoleum reflects Qazvin's architectural heritage

Iranica Desk

The mausoleum of Hamdollah Mostowfi, the renowned historian of the Ilkhanid period, continues to hold a special place in the cultural memory of Qazvin residents. Owing to his popularity among the people of the city, a mausoleum was built over his grave after his death, which later became known as Gonbad-e Deraz (the Tall Dome). Gonbad-e Deraz is a high conical brick structure topped with an azure blue dome. The exterior of the building is adorned with fine and delicate tilework, reflecting

the elegance of traditional Iranian architecture. The mausoleum was originally part of the Ameneh Khatun Cemetery, which over time was separated; today, the complex covers an area of about 280 square meters, while the conical mausoleum itself occupies approximately 40 square meters. The building consists of two stories. The lower level, or basement, is the original burial chamber and is not open to public visits. The upper story, a small and pleasant space, is decorated with simple turquoise tiles. Architecturally, the dome is

classified as a Rok Dome, a traditional Iranian style featuring a double-shell structure — melon-shaped on the interior and conical on the exterior. Another notable feature is the use of Se-Konj (Filpoosh), an architectural technique that skillfully transforms a square base into an octagonal, then multi-sided, and finally circular form to support the dome. The mausoleum has two walnut-wood doors, one inscribed with verses from the Holy Qur'an and the other featuring Surah Al-Insan. These are not the origi-

nal doors; they replaced the originals around 80 years ago. One of the original doors was destroyed in a fire, while the other is preserved at the National Museum of Iran. An additional inscription in the courtyard provides a brief account of Hamdollah Mostowfi's life and works. The courtyard also contains a historic household cistern, which is open to public viewing. Gonbad-e Deraz is located on Taleqani Street (formerly Malek Abad Street), in Mostowfi Alley, in the city of Qazvin, and remains one of the city's valuable historical monuments.

Reading Room

Role of historical, cultural heritage in contemporary life



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OPINION

Historical buildings, urban and rural textures, archaeological sites, tangible and intangible cultural artifacts, and especially the remnants of past eras, are not merely relics of bygone times — they are reflections of history, culture, and human presence in the world. These treasures bear witness to human experience, creativity, and the ways in which people have existed and engaged with their environments throughout history. Cultural heritage, whether material or immaterial, carries messages and values that allow contemporary humans to gain a deeper understanding of their own existence and humanity. Artistic and archaeological works, such as the prehistoric cave paintings in Altamira and Lascaux, remain vibrant and inspiring from an aesthetic and artistic perspective, regardless of their original ritualistic or magical meanings. They demonstrate that human creativity and beauty transcend time, sparking reflection and inspiration in today's world. The discovery

and interpretation of ancient civilizations — from Egypt and Mesopotamia to Iran, India, China, and ancient Rome—enable modern humans to better comprehend the course of human history and confront their understanding of themselves and society. Despite these insights, one of the pressing issues for contemporary societies, especially in Iran, is the inability to preserve and safeguard this invaluable heritage. The destruction of historical buildings and urban textures, leveling of archaeological sites, looting of artifacts, and lack of historical awareness reflect widespread historical neglect. Such destruction not only erases cognitive and cultural resources but also severs the living human connection with the heritage of previous generations, depriving future generations of the opportunity to learn from historical experiences and values. Regional examples, such as the Taliban's destruction of heritage in Afghanistan or the devastation of cultural sites in Iraq and Syria, underscore the vulnerability of historical and cultural assets in the modern era. In the modern West, the establishment of museums and heritage preservation organizations has enabled the protection of significant portions

of historical artifacts, while archaeology has developed as a method to understand history, culture, and human development. These efforts highlight the importance of systematic and informed approaches to cultural heritage and demonstrate how modern humans can distance themselves from everyday life to engage with the past as both a source of knowledge and inspiration. Today, humans and societies face rapid modernizing transformations, accelerated lifestyles, and technological advancements, which have created a profound distance from the past and historical heritage. Many populations, from East to West, have become disconnected from their ancient roots, responding to cultural, social, and technological changes with little reflection. This detachment from cultural heritage increases vulnerability to crises and diminishes historical and cultural awareness. In Iran, the significance of historical and cultural heritage is particularly evident. Historical sites, old urban fabrics, and archaeological complexes not only preserve collective memory and identity but also symbolize the creativity, knowledge, art, and lifestyle of past generations. The destruction of these assets —



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through looting or demolition — carries broad cultural and social consequences, depriving future generations of the benefits of historical experience. The Holy Qur'an also emphasizes the importance of preserving the legacy of previous generations, illustrating that respect for history and past monuments is a fundamental human and cultural value. In summary, historical and cultural heritage, both in Iran and worldwide, is not merely a repository of knowledge and art but a living link to history, culture, and human existence.

Protecting this heritage and fostering historical awareness enables contemporary humans to better understand their identity, creativity, and place in the world while passing on the experiences of previous generations. Neglect and destruction of this heritage, in addition to eroding historical values, render contemporary society and culture more vulnerable and underscore the urgent need for responsible and intelligent stewardship of history and culture.

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