

Kerman eyes UNESCO status for historic core

Iranica Desk

Deputy governor of Kerman Province for coordinating urban development affair has said that the general 70-hectare boundary proposed for the city's historic fabric has been approved in principle, but a detailed review is required to ensure that the majority of buildings within the area retain authentic historical value.

Speaking at a meeting on the progress of the UNESCO world heritage nomination dossier for Kerman's cultural and historic zone, Aliasghar Zakeri said the province possesses deep civilizational roots, and that any development effort in the region should be seen as part of the revival of an ancient heritage that has not yet received adequate attention, according to ISNA.

He stressed the importance of preserving the visual identity of historic districts, warning that mu-

nicipalities should avoid using incompatible materials and design elements within heritage zones. Even practical urban features such as signage and postal codes for historic buildings, he said, should incorporate identity-based elements such as tilework to help distinguish historic homes from other structures for both residents and visitors.

Zakeri emphasized that the objective is not merely the registration of heritage sites, but the preservation of a living civilization in the Middle East. He added that the provincial government would fully support coordination with Iran's cultural heritage authorities to achieve this goal.

He also called for a shift in public attitudes toward cultural heritage, noting that while official registration is important, the real achievement lies in long-term preservation and management. Experience, he said, shows that ob-



● mehrnews.com

taining national or global registration is easier than sustaining proper conservation, which requires strong determination and careful planning.

Highlighting the role of the private sector, Zakeri urged major economic enterprises and investors to participate in the restoration of the historic

fabric. Such involvement, he said, would not only protect cultural assets but also stimulate tourism and local economic growth. He further described the

restoration of historic buildings as an artistic endeavor rather than a purely technical task, stressing that designers, architects, and project supervisors must bring an artistic sensibility to ensure results that leave a lasting cultural impact.

Referring to Kerman's strong heritage potential, he noted that the city could play a significant national and international role, provided that administrative structures and inter-agency coordination are strengthened.

Zakeri also criticized the absence of a dedicated provincial tourism working group, calling for its immediate activation so that all permits and decisions in the sector can be reviewed within a structured framework.

To accelerate the UNESCO nomination process, he proposed forming a specialized task force under the main tourism committee to handle the docu-

mentation for the historic and cultural zone.

Reiterating the nomination plan, he confirmed that the 70-hectare historic core has been broadly approved, but insisted that the tourism master plan consultant must conduct a thorough reassessment to ensure that most buildings in the area possess genuine historical authenticity. He added that at least 70 percent of structures within the proposed zone must meet heritage value criteria for the nomination to succeed, and that all construction and restoration work must follow heritage standards while maintaining visual coherence.

Finally, he emphasized that any new construction within historic districts must align with local architectural identity, and called for strengthening heritage protection forces to prevent unauthorized destruction or inappropriate alterations in the area.

Kermanshah pushes tourism development in Sarab-e Niloufar corridor

Iranica Desk

The Deputy Governor for Civil Affairs of Kermanshah Province said the Kermanshah-Sarab-e Niloufar (Lotus Lake) corridor boasts exceptional natural attractions and stressed that relevant authorities must provide the necessary groundwork for major tourism projects in the area.

is located along the Karbala highway and is home to major historical and natural attractions such as the Bisotun historical complex and Taq-e Bostan.

He said the corridor's tourism potential is further enhanced by existing infrastructure, including highways, rail links, and an airport.

Despite these advantages,

rialized since then. He said part of the shortcoming lies with the agencies responsible for the sector.

He emphasized that the provincial administration is committed to preserving the corridor's potential and laying the groundwork for large-scale tourism and service investments. Relevant authorities, particularly the Cultural Heritage



● IRNA

Speaking at a meeting of the province's Infrastructure working group, Tahmasb Najafi said Kermanshah Province enjoys significant tourism potential due to its numerous historical landmarks, mountains, foothills, springs, and scenic natural landscapes.

He added that several tourism corridors have been designated across the province based on these capacities, including the Kermanshah-Oramanat, Kermanshah-Sarab-e Niloufar, and Kermanshah-Bisotun routes, according to IRNA. Najafi highlighted the strategic importance of the Kermanshah-Bisotun tourism corridor, noting that it

Najafi noted that no major developments have taken place along the corridor in recent years, adding that the transformative potential of this important tourism route has been seriously neglected.

He described the Sarab-e Niloufar corridor as part of the secondary route connecting Kermanshah to Oramanat, featuring scenic attractions such as Sarab-e Niloufar, picturesque plains, and mountain foothills.

According to Najafi, a tourism-oriented vision for the corridor was introduced in the 2000s, but no major investments in tourism or service sectors have mate-

and Tourism Department, have been instructed to submit development plans for the area.

Najafi also criticized unauthorized construction on natural resource lands, saying cases involving illegal land seizures must be pursued and violators held accountable before legal and oversight bodies. During the meeting, officials also reviewed a proposal to ban non-tourism-related construction within a 1,000-meter zone along the Sarab-e Niloufar corridor. Investment proposals in tourism, agriculture, and service sectors were among the other issues discussed.

Sirjan demonstrates rich heritage, expanding tourism potential

Iranica Desk

Kerman Province, as one of the largest and most geographically diverse provinces in Iran, enjoys a four-season climate, a long historical background, and a wide range of natural, cultural, and economic attractions. Thanks to its ancient cities, remarkable deserts, high mountains, and rich cultural heritage, the province is considered one of the key destinations for both domestic and international tourism.

Within this vast region, Sirjan stands out as one of the most important areas in western Kerman Province, with significant economic, logistical, and tourism importance. Covering more than 13,000 square kilometers, Sirjan is strategically located along the transit routes connecting Kerman, Fars, and Hormozgan provinces. This geographical position has turned the city into a key transportation hub in southeastern Iran, playing an important role in economic growth, trade exchanges, and the development of infrastructure and tourism services.

Beyond its economic significance, Sirjan also has a rich historical and cultural background. Over time, the city has been a point of cultural interaction and convergence, resulting in notable social and cultural diversity. The blend of urban life with rural and nomadic lifestyles has given the region a distinct identity, setting it apart from many surrounding areas. From a natural perspective, Sirjan is a diverse, four-season region. Its landscapes range from mountains and vast plains to protected areas and



Sang Castle
● wikipedia.org



Pateh embroidery
● botehjegheh.com

unique ecosystems, forming a valuable foundation for ecotourism and nature-based travel. This geographical and climatic diversity has gradually transformed the city into one of the emerging tourism destinations in Kerman Province, alongside its industrial and economic roles.

Ali Memarnejad, Deputy Head of Kerman Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, recently highlighted Sirjan's exceptional potential in an interview. He referred to the region's nomadic lifestyle, its numerous historical attractions, the Gohar Park recreational complex as the largest tourism village in the Middle East, and the Siah-Kuh Protected Area as a natural treasure. He also described the global registration of Shiriki Pich kilim as a lasting honor for the region.

He described Sirjan as a unique and fascinating destination for tourists, noting that one of its most distinctive features is its

nomadic character. The presence of mountains and suitable migration routes has historically attracted numerous tribes and nomads to the area, making nomadic culture a defining element of Sirjan's identity. He further emphasized the city's rich historical heritage, stating that sites such as Sang Castle, Shah Firuz's tomb, the historical bazaar, Imamzadeh Ali, Imamzadeh Seyyed Ahmad, Haji Rashid House, Sadrzadeh Mansion, and Saeediya Mansion are among the most important cultural and historical landmarks, each reflecting a different chapter of the region's history.

Memarnejad described the Gohar Park tourism village as a green jewel in the heart of Sirjan's desert. Developed with the support of Gol Gohar Mining and Industrial Company, it has become the largest recreational and tourism complex in the Middle East. The site features an artificial lake, amusement park, traditional and modern accommodation units, diverse restaurants, sports facilities, a zoo, advanced cinemas, horse-riding areas, and a Jurassic Park zone, offering visitors a wide range of recreational experiences.

He also highlighted Sirjan's natural attractions, including the Siah-Kuh Protected Area, which spans 45,000 hectares between the Sirjan-Bandar Abbas and Sirjan-Shiraz roads. This area is home to valuable vegetation and diverse wildlife species, making it ecologically significant.

Other natural attractions include the salt desert, Pariz village, and the Kuhpanj region. These features have turned Sirjan into a year-round destination for nature lovers and ecotourism enthusiasts.

He identified the handwoven Shiriki Pich Kilim as the most important handicraft and souvenir of Sirjan. Its traditional patterns and vibrant colors, created through the creativity of local weavers, led to its registration in 2017 on the list of global handicraft cities. He also mentioned Pateh embroidery, Masghati (a soft and transparent confection), pistachios, and Pashmak (a form of Iranian candy floss) as other valuable local products.

He emphasized that Sirjan, with its ancient history, dynamic culture, pristine nature, and modern tourism infrastructure, is fully prepared to host domestic and international tourists.