

Taftan's untouched landscapes pave way for ecotourism growth

Iranica Desk

With its untouched landscapes, unique biodiversity and growing tourism potential, Taftan is emerging as a promising destination for nature-based and wellness tourism. Government and local authorities are working to improve infrastructure and transform the area into one of southeastern Iran's emerging tourism centers.

To help retain population in the southern foothills of Mount Taftan in south of Zahedan, the capital of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, and capitalize on the region's vast tourism potential, officials say improving drinking water supplies, upgrading roads, strengthening tourism facilities and paving rural routes — particularly the Torshab to Kand-e Zard road — are among the key priorities, according to chtn.ir.

Torshab village, known for its untouched natural landscapes, apricot, pomegranate, fig and wild almond orchards, as well



as springs and seasonal waterfalls, has significant potential to attract visitors and become one of Iran's emerging ecotourism destinations.

More than 360 species of medicinal, edible and aromatic plants have been identified across the Taftan foothills. Some of these species are unique to the region and have potential for export and industrial use.

Government development plans

include promoting rural tourism, establishing eco-lodges, training local communities, and investing in the packaging and processing of medicinal plants as part of efforts to sustainably utilize the area's natural resources.

The governor of Khash said Torshab village, located in the town's central district on the slopes of volcanic Mount Taftan, attracts large numbers of tourists, nature enthusiasts and



● kojaro.com

mountaineers from across Iran every year due to its diverse natural attractions.

Farshad Gorgich said that natural waterfalls, clear rivers, green valleys, springs and exceptional landscapes, combined with the region's pleasant climate, have turned the area into one of the important tourism destinations in southeastern Iran.

He added that the region's unique vegetation, including

wild almond trees, pistachio trees, wild figs and various plant species, has given Torshab a distinctive natural character and created strong opportunities for nature tourism and ecotourism development.

Gorgich further noted that Torshab's location on the slopes of Mount Taftan and its proximity to other natural and tourism attractions in Khash provide an opportunity to expand the tour-

ism industry, create sustainable employment and increase income for local communities.

He emphasized the need to further promote the area's natural attractions, saying that developing tourism infrastructure, improving access routes, creating visitor facilities and attracting private-sector investment are among the key plans for making better use of Torshab's tourism potential.

He said promoting the natural and historical attractions of Khash at the national level could play an important role in attracting domestic and international visitors and strengthening the regional economy.

He also highlighted that Khash, with Mount Taftan, its green mountain foothills, unique natural landscapes and the rich culture of local communities, has significant capacity to become one of eastern Iran's leading tourism centers.

Khash is located approximately 185 kilometers south of Zahedan, the capital of Sistan and Baluchestan Province.



● chn.ir

Mesr village advances toward global tourism recognition

Iranica Desk

Mesr, a historic village known as a jewel in the heart of Iran's desert, has taken a significant step toward international recognition thanks to its exceptional collection of indigenous handicrafts.

Amir Karamzadeh, Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Isfahan Province, said that traditional crafts including Zilu weaving, Givoh shoemaking, palm-leaf mat weaving, and the production of camel-wool clothing are among the cultural and livelihood traditions of this ancient village that play a key role in its nomination for the UN Tourism's

Best Tourism Villages program, chtn.ir wrote.

He added that these handicrafts, shaped by the creativity, skills, and deep adaptation of local communities to the desert environment, represent far more than economic and practical activities; they embody the cultural identity and centuries-old traditions of the region.

Karamzadeh noted that the distinctive designs and patterns of Zilu textiles, the quality and durability of Givoh footwear, the creativity of mat weaving using locally available materials, and the resilience of camel-wool garments all reflect the community's rich indigenous knowledge and its deep-rooted connection with

the land.

Experts believe that sustainable development and support for these traditional arts will not only contribute to preserving Mesr Village's tangible and intangible heritage but will also create sustainable employment opportunities, boost the local economy, promote cultural tourism, and help safeguard the village's traditional character.

Karamzadeh emphasized that recognition as one of the UN Tourism Best Tourism Villages would offer a valuable opportunity to introduce these remarkable handmade crafts to a global audience while strengthening the cultural and economic standing of the region.

Qajar-Era Ardalan Castle faces urgent restoration crisis

Iranica Desk

The head of Tuyserkan's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has warned that Ardalan Castle, a historic monument in Osharan village, requires urgent restoration due to severe deterioration. The castle is considered one of the valuable Qajar-era structures in Tuyserkan, Hamedan Province.

More than a century after its construction and nearly two decades after its national registration, the monument is now facing serious erosion and an immediate need for emergency conservation work, mehrnews.com wrote.

The castle has long been recognized as one of Hamedan Province's notable historic fortresses. Built in a strategic location on heights overlooking the village and along the old Hamadan-Tuyserkan route, the structure once stood on an important regional communication path. Historical accounts and local documents indicate that Arda-

lan Castle was built during the Qajar period and served both military and residential purposes. The complex features defensive elements, including towers, thick walls and multiple interior spaces, and once played an important role in controlling travel routes and protecting the surrounding area. Its location near Mount Khan Gormez further enhanced its geographic and defensive significance, placing it among the region's prominent historical landmarks.

However, the condition of the monument has significantly deteriorated in recent years. The passage of time, climatic conditions, rainfall and the lack of continuous professional restoration have caused severe erosion in parts of the castle. Field assessments indicate that some walls and structural sections are in critical condition, raising concerns over the possible collapse of parts of the building if deterioration continues.

Although restoration work was carried out on sections of the castle in 2017, the large scale of

the structure and limited funding meant that the efforts were restricted to partial repairs and failed to stop the overall decline. As a result, heritage experts have once again raised concerns and emphasized the urgent need for comprehensive restoration.

Mohammad Ahmadi, head of Tuyserkan's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said that emergency restoration of sections at risk of collapse has been placed on the agenda and will be carried out this year if the necessary funds are allocated.

He added that the proper restoration and revival of the site could help attract tourists and turn Ardalan Castle into one of the main pillars of tourism development in Tuyserkan.

Ahmadi also pointed to the village's broader tourism potential, noting that despite its natural and historical attractions, Osharan currently lacks eco-tourism accommodation facilities. Establishing such infrastructure, he said, could boost



● wikipedia.org

tourism, create employment opportunities and contribute to reverse migration in the area. Experts believe that expanding eco-tourism alongside the restoration of historical sites can play

an important role in preserving the cultural identity of villages and strengthening local economies — a need that has become increasingly important for Osharan. The future of Osharan's his-

toric castle depends largely on securing funding and carrying out immediate restoration measures; failure to act could result in the loss of one of the region's most important heritage sites.