

Hegmataneh keeps unveiling Iran's ancient past

Iranica Desk

Hegmataneh's ancient history stretches back to the dawn of civilization in the region. The Aryans are believed to have chosen the area as their home, while the Medes later made it their summer capital. Neither could have imagined that Hegmataneh would one day be recognized as one of Iran's oldest centers of civilization and gain global renown. Known throughout history by names including Hegmataneh, Ecbatana and Hamadan, this ancient city has maintained an urban character since its earliest days. From the era of the Aryans and the Medes to the present, it has endured countless upheavals yet remained standing through the passage of time.

The Hegmataneh archaeological site was inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List in 1931. Since then, generations of archaeologists, researchers, and cultural heritage specialists have worked to uncover its hidden secrets. Over the past decade, the sustained efforts of heritage experts and conservationists have also paved the way for the site's inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Each excavation at ancient



● IRNA

Hegmataneh has revealed remarkable discoveries from this enigmatic city. Archaeologists believe the site still holds many untold stories and countless secrets waiting to be uncovered.

Hegmataneh is widely regarded as one of Iran's most magnificent archaeological landscapes and a powerful

symbol of the country's ancient history. Scientific excavations and archaeological research have uncovered evidence spanning several millennia, reflecting the civilization, culture, and achievements of the people of present-day Hamadan. It has justifiably earned the title of the "mother of the ancient

cities of Persian civilization." Like many of Iran's historic sites dating back to the Median period, Hegmataneh possesses distinctive characteristics that have attracted some of the most prominent archaeologists in Iran and around the world.

Yet Hegmataneh is far more than an archaeological site. It is one of Iran's most important living archaeological laboratories, where each excavation season has illuminated another chapter of the previously unknown history of the Iranian Plateau. Research and excavations indicate that the settlement was built according to a

highly organized and advanced urban plan, with surviving sections of its city layout offering researchers an exceptional glimpse into ancient architectural planning.

Among Hegmataneh's most significant features is the discovery of a carefully organized network of architectural spaces arranged according to a clear and systematic plan. Straight streets, uniformly sized architectural units, and the city's geometric layout point to a sophisticated urban planning system that has few known parallels among contemporary sites in the Middle East. This unique characteristic has given Hegmataneh exceptional importance not only from a historical perspective but also in the fields of urban planning and architectural studies.

Archaeological excavations carried out across different parts of the site have uncovered the remains of massive mud-brick walls, residential quarters, workshops, and sections of urban infrastructure. These discoveries demonstrate that Hegmataneh was not merely a political and administrative center but a vibrant city with complex social, economic, and cultural dimensions.



Ahrar Cable Car offers scenic views of Lahijan

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Ahrar Cable Car, also known as Lahijan Green Roof Cable Car, is one of the most popular recreational attractions in Lahijan, Gilan Province. Located in the Green Roof Complex on the slopes of Sheytan Kuh (Sheytan Mountain), the cable car offers visitors panoramic views of the city, tea plantations, rice fields and Lahijan's colorful rooftops. The cable car is part of the Green Roof Complex, a popular destination that is easily accessible from the city center. Visitors do not need to travel far outside Lahijan to reach it. The complex is about 48 kilometers from Rasht and 15 kilometers from Langarud, according to kojaro.com. Ahrar Cable Car was developed through a joint project between Lahijan Municipality and Ahrar Company and began operating in 2005. Since then, it has become one of the city's best-known attractions, drawing many visitors each year.

The cable car route begins at the Green Roof station and travels approximately 1.5 kilometers to its final station in an area known as Taj-e Khrous. The round trip takes about 20 minutes. Along the way, passengers can enjoy sweeping views of Lahijan, its famous lake, surrounding rice paddies and lush tea plantations. The system has five towers and 33 cabins, each with a capacity of six passengers. Its route passes over green tea fields and provides a different perspective of Lahijan's landscape.

Ahrar Cable Car is also considered one of the most technologically advanced cable car systems

in Iran. It is equipped with a hydraulic traction system, motion-control equipment, a system for measuring the distance between cables, and a powerful generator for use in emergencies. The Green Roof Complex surrounding the cable car provides a range of amenities, including parking, restrooms, a prayer room, restaurants, cafes and pic-

er recreational area offering several other attractions. One of them is an amusement park near the cable car station. Its Ferris wheel, located on the slopes of Sheytan Kuh, is considered one of the tallest in northern Iran and offers particularly attractive views of Lahijan at night. The amusement park also features rides and activities such

as a Frisbee ride, bumper cars, a sled ride, a haunted castle, an escape room and a children's train. An indoor children's entertainment center known as Bazino is also available.

Another popular attraction is the zipline. The approximately one-kilometer course begins along the pedestrian route on Sheytan Kuh and ends near the

Jahangardi Hotel on the edge of Lahijan Lake. The route passes above tea gardens and part of the lake, providing visitors with a distinctive view of the area. It is regarded as one of the largest ziplines in Iran and the Middle East.

Hiking route

The pedestrian route leading

while the surrounding pomegranate and walnut trees add to the appeal of the walk. However, the numerous steps can be tiring for older visitors and young children.

Near the lake, visitors can also stop by Lahijan Waterfall, an artificial waterfall that has become a popular spot for photographs. Another, somewhat longer walking route connects the Green Roof Complex with the second cable car station. Hiking enthusiasts can take this route uphill and return to the first station by cable car.

Best time to visit

Spring is widely considered the best time to visit Ahrar Cable Car and Lahijan. The city is known for its extensive rice fields and tea plantations, which take on a particularly lush and vibrant appearance during the spring months.

Summer can bring high humidity and muggy weather to Gilan, but the elevated location of the cable car and the cooler air around Sheytan Kuh make the area a popular summer destination as well.

Autumn offers another attractive experience, particularly along the forested routes leading to the cable car. The cooler weather and colorful landscape make hiking especially pleasant, while a cup of locally produced Lahijan tea can add to the experience. Winter is generally colder around the Green Roof Complex, but visitors who are prepared for the weather can still enjoy the views and recreational facilities when the complex is operating.



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