



ILNA :Iranian police have recovered eleven relics from a smuggler in Kuhdasht, Lorestan province, ILNA reported. Objects including a dagger, metal statue, and a metal bowl were found while police forces inspected the house of an illegal antique dealer. The relics have been surrounded by the local cultural heritage directorate for a comprehensive evaluation to find their exact dates, the report said. One suspect was detained and surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation and trial. A region of raw beauty in western Iran, Lorestan was once inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Moreover, Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. Lorestan is famed for its ancient Luristan Bronzes for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, dating from this turbulent period.

11 Historical Relics Recovered by Iranian Police

Award-winning Esfahak Village to be demarcated

Tehrantimes: Cultural heritage authorities are set to define legal boundaries for Esfahak village, which is situated in Tabas county, eastern Iran.

This scenic village has won the TO DO Award 2020, a prestigious prize that is annually presented by the German Institute for Tourism and Development.

Esfahak enjoys a mild climate that is perfect for the growth of any crop, while visiting it almost everywhere looks magnificently lush. Village houses are often built on a floor with domed roofs and small windows.

Old houses were often built by the means of bricks and mud and are mostly one-story. Traditional bathrooms, locally called Khazinehs, are still standing tall in the corners

of the village. Local music is particularly important to the people of the village. Performing local songs and playing the tar (a local stringed musical instrument) is inseparable from celebrations in the village. Dates and saffron from Esfahak village are tasty make sure not to miss trying them. You can also test different types of local soup and postage while in Esfahak.

The original texture of Esfahak was completely brought down to earth in a 7.4 earthquake in 1978, according to local tourism officials. A new village was built following the quake next to the rocked old one with the participation of people who have now refurbished it as a tourist destination with [abundant] eco-lodge units.



Perspective



Extinction Alarm Raised for Persian Bears

The two species of brown and black bears inhabiting Iran are on the verge of extinction due to natural and anthropogenic threats.

There are eight bear species in the world, including polar bears, brown bears, black bears, sloth bears, red pandas, Asiatic bears, spectacled bears, and the giant panda, each of which is in a specific biological environment, such as polar bears are on the verge of extinction due to global warming, and some others like the giant panda, are under serious threat.

The Baluchi black bear is second only to the cheetah in terms of the importance of protection in the country. Baluchi black bear has biological, aesthetic, scientific, and educational values, but is being pushed towards extinction due to habitat degradation and illegal poaching.

Habitat destruction, food shortages, skin trade, taxidermy, and conflicts with humans are among the main reasons threatening their lives.



The Asiatic black bear lives mainly in forested areas, especially in hilly and mountainous areas at altitudes of 500 meters to 2700 meters, and is found in the provinces of Kerman, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluchestan with very low density.

The brown bear is distributed widely in the country (along the Alborz and Zagros mountain ranges), but the existing small populations are highly fragmented due to human activities. This situation, along with the severe conflict between the species and humans that results in their death, causes great concern.

Although the brown bear is ranked as "least concern" in the Red List of the International Union (IUCN), the population of species in Iran and West Asia (Middle East) is definitely not included in this ranking.

In fact, this rank does not match the available evidence and the rapid decline of the bear population in Iran. Bears are ecologically very important. This large carnivore is at the top of the food pyramid and is considered umbrella species for the ecosystem that has created a wide network of relationships with living and non-living parts of the environment. Gholamreza Ebdali, head of the wildlife protection and management office of the Department of Environment said that due to the presence of two species of black bear and brown bear in 25 provinces of the country, the bears' protection plan was implemented in 2016.

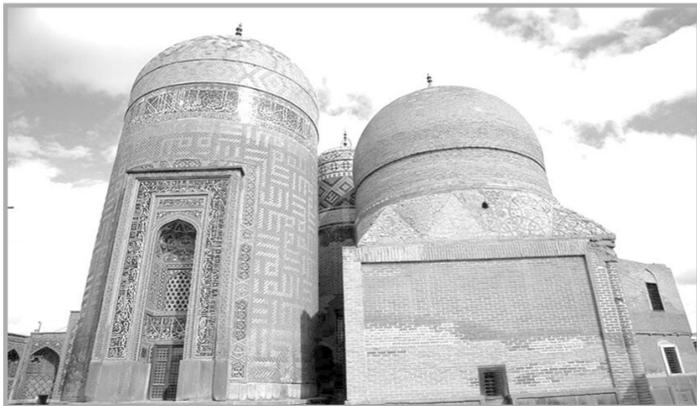
Due to the conflicts between humans and bears, as well as the seasonal changes in the species' behavior, more bears are killed every day. The most important reasons for these conflicts include the destruction of the habitat, lack of proper waste disposal, construction of gardens, and establishment of beehives in the depths of the pristine habitats of the species, and lack of proper care of livestock.

Since 2016, nearly 80 cases of species deaths due to human factors and mostly direct gunfire have been reported from the provinces. The normalization of the presence of wildlife next to people can definitely be harmful to both species and humans. Domestication of animals takes them away from their natural life and takes away the power of the animal's routine based on its inherent nature. Also, the presence of common pathogens between humans and animals is extremely dangerous for humans and can cause irreparable problems. In fact, it is the human who has encroached on the animal's habitat; therefore, the best and most correct thing is to provide solutions to interact with the species. **By Faranak Bakhtiari**

Sheikh Safi Ensemble to Add New Courtyard

CHTN : A new courtyard is being built for the Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble in Ardabil, northwest Iran.

The province's tourism directorate purchased some pieces of land on the north side of the ensemble to make room for a new courtyard, a local official has said. With the completion of the project, more travelers and tourists could visit the historical



complex, CHTN quoted Kamaledin Mirjafarian as saying on Sunday. Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble is a microcosm of Sufism, where arrays of harmonious sun-scorched domes, well-preserved and richly-ornamented facades and interiors, and, above all, an atmosphere of peace and tranquility have all made a must-see stopover while traversing northwest Iran.

The ensemble is named after Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardebili (1253-1334), who was a Sufi philosopher and leader of Islamic mystic practices. It embodies the essence of Sufi traditions by having a microcosmic 'city', which embraces a mosque, a madrasa, a library, a cistern, a bathhouse, kitchens, and a hospital, as well as religious houses amongst others. The place also boasts a remarkable collection of antique artifacts. Developed between the early 16th century and the end of the 18th century, this place of spiritual retreat enjoys the principal elements of traditional Iranian architecture to make the best use of the existing space for accommodating various functions.

Qamsar: An Iranian Town Famous for Its Roses, Rosewater, Rose Perfume

Iran Review : Qamsar is a town in central Iran located about 31 kilometers south of Kashan. Qamsar, together with three other smaller towns of Niasar and Barzook in the Esfahan province, are the main producers of rosewater in Iran for well over 800 years.

of Kashan has a positive impact on the region's economy.

Rosewater is made from a very sweet smelling kind of rose and is used in various traditional dishes and sweets. It is also used as a perfume among Muslims. Although some modern mechanized facto-



Every year during the second half of May, festival of rose and rosewater is being held in Kashan. Many people from different parts of the country and abroad visit Kashan, the hub of Mohammadi Rose in Iran. The season for picking rose and preparing rosewater is from early May to mid-June. In early May, the scent of rose spreads over different areas of Kashan, such as Qamsar Joshqan Qali, Barzak and Niasar. The ceremony for making rosewater in Kashan attracts many tourists. Every day, some thousands of visitors tour various cities of Kashan for this traditional ceremony. The arrival of tourists in the districts

ries are constructed, but still a large part of this, let say industry, is done traditionally. And this traditional rosewater production which is established at homes or gardens attracts tourists to Kashan. Historical monuments and architecture of Kashan adds to the popularity of this festival too.

The people of Qamsar collect roses, boil them in special pots and collect their water in beautiful containers. It is a pride for the city that each year, the most sacred place on earth, Kaaba (Mecca), is washed with rosewater from Qamsar. The ancient city of Qamsar is like a shining star on the central Iranian desert.

Sardasht, A Scenic City West of Iran

Iran Daily : Sardasht, in the southwest of Iran's West Azarbaijan province, has been acknowledged as one of Iran's best ecotourism destinations in view of its scenic nature.

The city is home to 46 percent of the province's total land areas covered with forest. Shalmash Waterfall, Geravan Mineral Spring, Bivaran Plain, dense chestnut forests, and Zaab River are only some of the city's natural attractions. In addition to natural wonders, the unique rituals and ceremonies held by the local people attract large numbers of tourists to the region. Defined as responsible tourists, Eco tourists visit undisturbed natural areas without damaging the environment.

Shalmash Waterfall

Three waterfalls constitute Shalmash Waterfall, which is about 10 meters high. The beauty of the waterfall is enhanced by the green beautiful valley and scattered forests in the surrounding areas which is used as a recreational site. Visitors can swim on the lower reaches of the waterfall.

Standing near the waterfall, one could feel the spray of water droplets on his/her face and body, which is good for those wanting to escape the heat of the city.

Geravan Mineral Spring

Located 15 kilometers to Sardasht, there is a spring, which is said to have therapeutic properties. The water of the spring is bubbling and has high salinity, which makes it undrinkable. However, it is worth visiting as it is surrounded by green areas and chestnut trees. The deposited minerals have shaped a mound as high as 16 meters, which is one of the sources of attracting tourists to Sardasht.

Bivaran and Vazineh Plains

Sardasht is home to colorful plains including Bivaran and Vazineh. Orchard gardens and roaring rivers are found in the plains. Walking through the plains, one can hear the sound of canaries and other birds.

Apple trees and grape vines make up most of the foliage in Sardasht's villages. Plains in Sardasht remind visitors of children's paintings, in which colored pencils are used to create a landscape.

