



A rural area in Sistan-Baluchestan province

Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan Province Is Country's Poorest

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Economy & Environment Iran

Latest figures show Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province has the country's lowest annual income.

The province, with a population of around four million, including around 700,000 Afghan nationals, has undergone some of the worst poverty during the current economic disaster facing the regime, including bread and fuel shortages, limited access to drinking water, severe droughts and mass unemployment.

The data was revealed by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) which reported that from March 2022-March 2023, the province was Iran's poorest.

According to the SCI report, the average income of rural households in the province, where the majority of the population is Sunni, was just over \$900 annually, which is 55.3% lower than the average income of rural households across Iran.

Meanwhile, the annual average income of urban households in the province was nearly \$2,200, marking more than a 35.4% deficit compared to the national average income for the past year.

Despite repeated pledges to improve the situation, successive administrations have made limited efforts to invest in the region, create job opportunities, build suitable housing, or establish decent schools.

Narcotics smuggling from Afghanistan also poses a significant problem in the area, leading to hundreds of small-time traffickers facing execution each year under Iran's stringent criminal laws.

During the last year's protests that followed the death of Mahsa Amini in custody, Sistan and Baluchestan witnessed the highest number of casualties among all 31 provinces.

The Islamic Republic has been grappling with high inflation since 2019, but the inflation experienced in the past Iranian year was markedly more severe than in previous years. According to the SCI report, inflation in the food and beverages sector reached 87% in certain months.

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