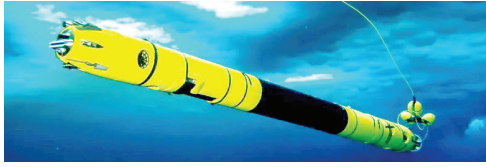




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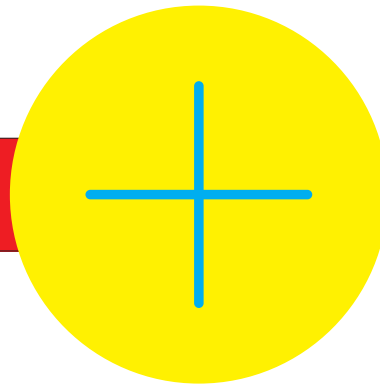
## Icefin underwater robot provides views from beneath "Doomsday Glacier"

Data come from an expedition using the underwater robot Icefin under remote Thwaites Glacier in Antarctica.



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# IRAN

Iranian Morning Newspaper

# Pigeon towers in central Iran



Meybod Pigeon Tower, Yazd Province  
[wikipedia.org](#)



Varzaneh Pigeon Tower, Isfahan Province  
[wikimapia.org](#)



Mardavij Pigeon Tower, Isfahan Province  
[hamgardi.com](#)

When people see dovecote or pigeon tower, many of them think of a military fortification. But it is a structure intended to house pigeons or doves. Dovecotes may be free-standing structures in a variety of shapes, or built into the end of a house or barn. They generally con-

tain pigeonholes for the birds to nest, varzaneh-night.ir wrote.

### Why did people build them?

During the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly around the time of the Safavid Dynasty, Iranians built a large number of

towers to house pigeons. At its peak, the city of Isfahan had about 3,000 pigeon towers. Pigeons were important for their eggs, flesh, and droppings. Most importantly, farmers used pigeon droppings to fertilize their fields. But now, every farmer uses chemical fertilizer. It is also said that

some people used pigeon's eggs to make their babies start talking. For example, when a child was old enough to talk but still wasn't able to, the parents gave him or her pigeon's eggs to eat to help the process of talking. Also, since many robbers were stealing crops, the pigeon tower was a safe place to store them.

### What does it look like inside?

The typical pigeon tower is cylindrical, constructed of unfired mud brick, lime plaster and gypsum. The towers range from 10 to 22 meters in diameter and stand 18 or more meters high. Because many animals prey on pigeons, the towers were constructed

as impenetrable fortresses that could shelter the pigeons from predators. The small size of the entrances prohibits large birds such as hawks, owls or crows from entering. There are many nests inside the pigeon tower so the pigeon couples could live safely and protect their chicks. When the chicks get old enough they go to a new nest and no longer live with their parents. Varzaneh Pigeon Tower in Isfahan Province contains 8,000 nests, which means 16,000 pigeons could live there at the same time. To avoid having a pigeon's dropping fall on the nest below, the tower was built with an incline so the droppings would fall di-

rectly to the bottom.

### What is the white line around the tower?

There were always some snakes around which could easily climb up the tower and get inside and eat pigeons. So, people learned they could paint a wide line around the tower so the snakes were no longer able to climb up. To protect the pigeons from attacking birds, the entrance holes were built so small that only pigeons were able to go through them. For further protection, wolves' or hyenas' heads were hung close to the tower so the attacking birds would be afraid to approach.

Where can we see them? In central Iran, you can see a lot of them near the farms. The great French traveler, Jean Chardin, has mentioned in his book that there were over 3,000 pigeon towers around Isfahan. The environs of Isfahan are dotted with bizarre but very picturesque pigeon towers. In contrast to a European dovecote, which often housed pigeons to be used as meat, in Iran the pigeons were never eaten. Here, pigeon towers were used as guano factories to produce fertilizer for the melons that have always been the pride of the region. The guano was also used in the manufacture of gunpowder.

## Iran's globetrotting 'Adjustment' to be screened in Poland

Iranian filmmaker Mehrdad Hassani's drama 'Adjustment' will participate in the 26th International Film Festival of Zoom - Zbliżenia, which is slated to be held in the Polish city of Jelenia Góra from March 6 to 12. The film will compete with 58 short films, IRNA wrote. Hassani's drama follows Shahrokh, a nine-year-old boy humiliated and pushed away by his family and friends, who makes up his mind to assume a new identity and comes out to the people of his village. Having been through a series of ordeals, Shahrokh, dressed in girl's clothes, shows up at school and confronts his classmates. The film was previously screened at several festivals including the Busan



International Short Film Festival, the Raindance Film Festival in London, the Interfilm Berlin International Short Film

Festival, and the Chicago International Film Festival. It received the Grand Prix at the Busan In-

ternational Short Film Festival and the Best Film Award of the Barcelona Human Rights Festival.



Although the age of cotton-beaters has passed, Haj Kasiri and his son, Nasser, are keeping alive the flames of a nostalgic job, which brought people comfortable sleep and happy dreams.

MEHDI SALEHI/ANA