



BAND-E TORKESTĀN

BAND-E TORKESTĀN (boundary wall of Turkestan), or less commonly Tīrband-e Torkestān, the mountain range in northwestern Afghanistan which runs in a west-east direction for 200 km between the upper valley of the Morḡāb to the south and the plains of the Āmū Daryā to the north. It is a horst of continental Jurassic schists and sandstones, generally dark in color, thrust up in a spectacular way between relatively low-lying plateaus of whitish Cretaceous limestones and calciferous clays. The western part of the north slope borders directly on the Neocene sediments and Quaternary loess deposits of Turkestan. The summits are truncated, having been reduced in probably pre-Miocene times to an erosion surface (3,200-3,300 m; highest point 3,481 m); they perhaps conserve elements of a pre-Cretaceous abrasion surface. The range is severely denuded, but contains sparse colonies of junipers. It has scarcely any permanent human population, but is frequented in summer by inhabitants of nearby villages, mainly Uzbeks on the north slope and Firūzkūhīs on the south slope, and by a few Pashtun groups.

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