



BĪNĀLŪD, KŪH-E

BĪNĀLŪD, KŪH-E, mountain range in northeastern Iran between Mašhad in the east and Nīšāpūr in the west with elevations of up to 3,211 m. Geologically, the Bīnālūd ranges are of special importance as the orographic link between the Paropamisus mountains (belonging to the Hindu Kush system) and the [Alborz](#) of northern Iran. Due to this function, the Kūh-e Bīnālūd (together with the [Alā Dāg](#) and the Pošt-e Kūh) is extremely subject to earthquakes and related tectonic activities. The Kūh-e Bīnālūd has also played an important role in connection with the discussion of the problem of pluvial periods during the Pleistocene. While Scharlau (1958) argued that geomorphological evidence from the Bīnālūd mountains (esp. fluvial terraces in the Ṭorgeba valley near Mašhad) tends to prove the existence of a pluvial climate, Bobek (1963) and others consider the Pleistocene cold periods to be identical with rather dry periods.

Economically, the Bīnālūd mountains are of minor importance. Forming a natural barrier between the Khorasan trench in the north and the highlands of central Iran in the south the southern edge of the range constitutes a major traffic connection (road, railway) between Mašhad and central Iran. The mountains serve as nomadic grazing areas, while both forelands are agriculturally used with irrigation from *qanāts* and wells. The turquoise mines of Ma'dan, approximately 36 miles/55 km northwest of Nīšāpūr, however, are of national importance, forming the basis for considerable mining and of remarkable handicraft activities in Nīšāpūr, Mašhad, and Tehran.



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