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# ANDRITZ



# FARADID HONAR

*Faradid Honar is a full-service Advertising Company based in Iran. With many years of valuable experiences in advertising, we offer best solutions for your brand awareness.*

*The essence of our quest is embedded in our name. Relying on our experience, precision and creativity, along with the use of the latest tools, "Faradid Honar" is attempting to meet your demands to bond you closer to your customers and in this way have achieved great victories.*

*We believe that our up-to-date technical facilities, along with our understanding and accuracy in advertising and branding, have provided us with all we need to unconditionally implement a project. That's why we have everything we need to satisfy our customers.*

## ADVERTISING COMPANY

*Although the use of technology is one of our advantages, but the use of creativity also has a very colorful role in the development of Faradid strategies and projects. It can even be said that it is creativity that plays a leading role in our activities.*

*The advertising company "Faradid Honar" has come to work in the field of advertising and branding in a new style and context that, along with the ideas and solutions of the past, also introduces new methods in the field of advertising.*

*We promise our customers that their products and services will become a memorable memory in the minds of the people when they are introduced by the advertising company "Faradid Honar".*

*Our strategy is a positive with path-breaking effect on the audience's mind, through which it can hold the key to the audience's imagination. We help you become a brand to convey the best emotions to your audience, in addition to doing all-out advertising.*

## Strategy

These days, you just have to turn your head around to see all the small and large billboards around you. Televisions, radios, newspapers, and billboards on highways and streets are active day and night to influence the mind of the audience.

All of these advertising methods are valuable and important in their own way, but to create a new transformation in the current advertising market, it is necessary to reuse the same tool with new methods.

"Faradid Honar", which has been working in this field since 2005, can provide your desire to be seen and affect the minds of your targeted audience with a new approach. Presently, the huge digital and internet space has provided a new ground for wider activities.

Our colleagues in the artistic and executive units, along with their technical and technological ability, make your dream of becoming a global and effective brand come true.

The result of our all-round activities in this direction will be advertisements that will definitely bring a smile of satisfaction to your face.

On the other hand, our long term experience in the field of advertising and branding is our main support and, in this way, we should not neglect the support of other customers and business competitors who have helped us to achieve this position. Fortunately, with this set of contributions, we have been able to keep every plan and project entrusted to us in the minds of our customers.

We believe that advertising a brand or promoting it, is more than showing the logo and name of that brand to others. In our opinion branding and advertising mean engraving that brand in people's minds.

We believe that a brand name should be passed down by the people in order to become popular and famous. So, we make sure that your brand is not only quoted by everyone but also recorded in the minds of your audience.

The art of "Faradid Honar" is that it creates a good memory in the minds of people from a brand, so that from now on, it will be the people who will name you wherever they sit.



## "Faradid Honar" Services

- Media: Outdoor Advertising

Outdoor advertising always creates a creative atmosphere that can establish a reliable platform for introducing goods and services or promoting brands.

The billboard, meanwhile, has the greatest number of viewers. City billboards such as Tehran, with the movement of different sections of society in most hours of the day, are considered the most popular outdoor media.

A billboard can be so creative that one may even take a few minutes to grasp the idea behind it. Large companies use this space to engage audiences with their products and services.



Faradid Honar has always tried to provide its city-level media as a colorful product in a service package for its audience. Better at night as well as regular monitoring of the boards are among the most important items for customers, which is also one of the main services of this collection.



## Tehran Media

*Outdoor media in Tehran: The largest city and the capital of Iran*

We are owner of the largest billboard in Tehran.

Undoubtedly, one of the oldest and best ways to engrave a theme in the minds of the audience is outdoor advertising. On our daily road trips in the city for example from home to work and back, we are always bored with the tedious traffic of the city, and subconsciously we may be looking for a way to keep our minds busy.

Faradid Honar owns outdoor media all around the city, now with nearly 60 billboards in strategic places, streets and busy highways of Tehran, as one of the top media in the city is well known.



## Enghelab Complex: The Largest Sport Complex in Iran

Enghelab Cultural and Sports Complex was founded in 1337. The complex currently hosts 12,000 visitors daily. It has also provided the most complete sets of facilities for its members in a variety of sports.

Considering the exceptional facilities and location of the complex, Faradid Honar Company started its activity in the field of outdoor advertising in this complex in 2002, which is now known as its exclusive executor.

The media of Faradid Honar Company in Enghelab Sports Complex are as follows:

### Billboards

- Two-way light boxes for health road
- Light boxes for bodybuilding machines for health road
- Sampling stands - Sampling booths
- Car exhibition space

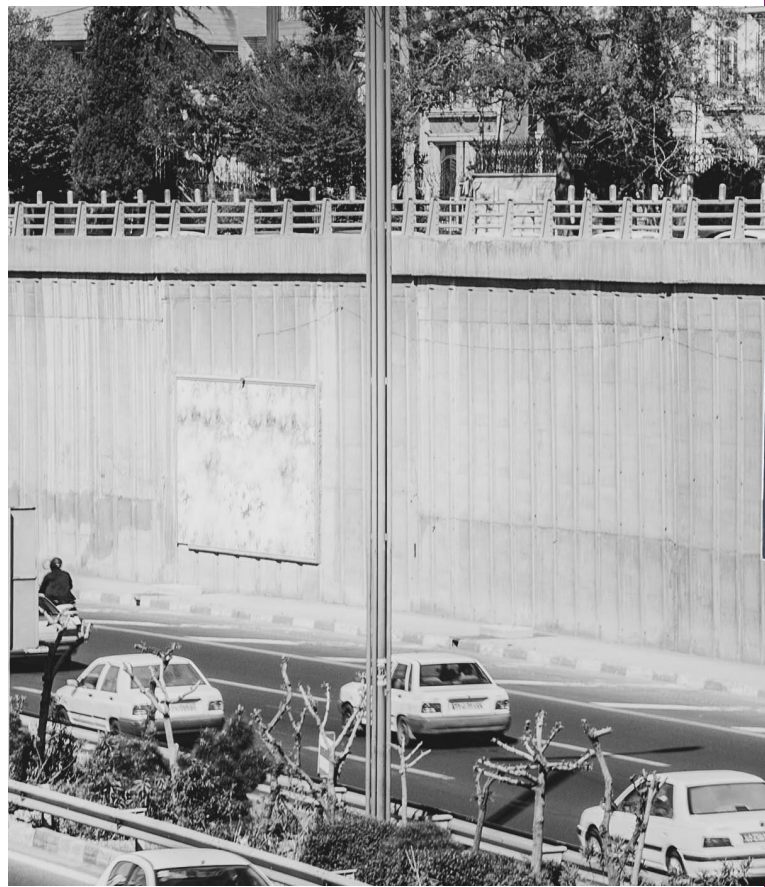
### Printing

Another service offered by Faradid Honar is one-of-a-kind printing. The founders of Faradid Honar Advertising Company have launched their printing unit with modern and up-to-date machines since 1978 in line with their goals, which are to achieve the best quality and speed in printing and providing customer service.

The mission of our printing unit is to improve the customers' tastes and guarantee the quality of its services by using the facilities at its disposal. With our experienced and skilled technical teams and along with the latest and most advanced printing machines in the world that offer unparalleled accuracy and quality is our strength. Doing high-volume printing, speed of operation and quality is what distinguishes the advertising company "Faradid Honar" in the printing industry.



**Join Faradid Honar Today to meet your needs for increased sales, market share, product introduction, brand development, internal marketing and competition with new brands. You can be seen as "special" with "Faradid Art"!**





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# FARADID HONAR





*Job Vision Company is one of the most successful and trusted online job search websites in Iran. In the following we sat down with its two founders to talk about the story of Job Vision and their challenges and experiences in the on-line employment marketplace.*

*Hadi Mohammadabadi, co-founder and head of the Board of Directors at Job Vision, was born in 1988 in Tehran. Mohammadabadi holds a bachelor's degree in mechanics from Amirkabir University and an MBA from Sharif University of Technology. Meghdad Velaei, co-founder and CEO of Job Vision, was born in 1987. Graduating from University of Tehran in electrical engineering with a bachelor's degree, he also has an MBA from Sharif University of Technology.*

**What is Job Vision? What services does it provide and at what level? What are the advantages of using it?**

Job Vision is a knowledge-based employment search engine catering to the younger generations of job seekers, that started its activities in 2016 with the aim of facilitating the recruitment process for both employees and employers. The company provides various employment services to both sides in the form of an online and smart platform. Job Vision's online Job board is a recognized knowledge-based product in the Iranian job market with an official e-job board license from the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare.

Job Vision is the first provider of a comprehensive package of job opportunity listings and employment services. Having a track record of conducting successful job fairs for Sharif University as well as other prominent organizations in Iran, the company's objective is to play an effective role in the recruitment of skilled young job seekers for Iranian companies and businesses of

By: Reza Taeb



all sizes. Intelligent resume matching system with job advertisements, free bilingual CV builder, self-knowledge tests, training courses for applicants to enhance their capabilities and cooperation with the largest and most prestigious organizations for recruitment are distinctive features of Job Vision. Job Vision is not only an online employment marketplace. Since its inception, it has made meaningful connections between employees and employers. And, in addition to job fairs, Job Vision has secured its rank among online employment agencies by providing ancillary services such as pre-employment tests of new recruits for employers and training for practical skills for job seekers. Innovation and creativity are our top priorities, as a distinctive quality of services to both employees and employers.

Job Vision's IMS (Intelligent Matching System), which uses artificial intelligence to better match jobs with applicants, as well as the company's offering of the first and most complete bilingual Persian and English CV builder, and setting up of practical filters for salary and employment location for the first time in the country, have all been a few of the most important innovations of Job Vision during this period.

As far as the internal culture of the company, Job Vision is a friendly yet thoroughly respectful work environment for its team members. Youth and vitality, learning, training and enthusiasm for growth are a common DNA in all Job Vision team members. In Job Vision you will gain new experiences every day because creativity and innovation are part of our work culture. Teamwork is not just a slogan and has taken on the color of reality. We do not set boundaries for ourselves, and we'll never be content with who we are.

Since its inception, it has made meaningful connections between employees and employers. And, in addition to job fairs, Job Vision has secured its rank

## Identifying the 'Right' Recruiter



among online employment agencies by providing ancillary services such as pre-employment tests of new recruits for employers and training for practical skills for job seekers. Innovation and creativity are our top priorities, as a distinctive quality of services to both employees and employers.

**What was the main idea that shaped this platform? What are the reasons for its success compared to other competitors?**

The main goal of job Vision is to fill the communication gap between employees and employers, streamline existing job opportunities and the available human resources, and to help create a healthy job market in the country. From the very beginning, we decided to make Job Vision a bridge between employees and employers, and by providing numerous amenities and services to both sides, we have tried to make the recruitment process shorter and more efficient, resulting in a more pleasant and successful experience for both parties.

Fortunately, Job Vision has been able to become one of the most trusted online job search websites in the employment market in a relatively short period of time. From our point of view, providing free job listing services for applicants, diverse facilities for employers and organizations, strong and comprehensive support for both organizations as well as job seekers, and continuous and constant efforts to improve services are among the reasons for our success.

The trust and confidence of large and reputable organizations and companies and thousands of applicants in Job Vision show that we have fortunately succeeded in this direction, which gives us more motivation to forge ahead and provide even better and more diverse services in future.



### What organizations do you cooperate with? Can you name a few?

Job Vision offers its services to all companies and organizations, small and large, in different fields of activity. We are proud that many large and reputable organizations and companies now depend on Job Vision website to publish their employment ads. Digikala, Snapp Group, Solico- kalleh, Crouse Manufacturing Industries, Irancell, Hamrahe Aval, Cinere, Dana Energy, Petro Pars, Dr. Abidi Pharmaceuticals are just a few of our partner organizations. So far, since 2016 more than 15,000 organizations have used Job Vision services, and just in 2020 over 8,000 people have found employment through Job Vision.

### What features do prominent organizations look for in human resources?

According to organizational policies and job position types, each organization may prioritize certain characteristics for hiring staff. However, what is certain is that organizations steadily pay more attention to soft skills, and in selecting candidates, in addition to specialized skills, they consider having key qualifications for the workplace such as teamwork skills, problem solving ability, time management skills, responsibility and communication proficiency.

### Explain the role of a capable workforce in the success of an organization.

Over time, organizations' view of human resources has changed and the top-down outlook of upper management and the robot-like performance of employees and their immaterial

and content of their resume to create a professional and relevant resume to increase the chances of being hired in reputable organizations.

A strong resume has a standard structure: there are no misspelled words, the writing is clear and concise, and the information about the applicant's educational and career background are



status have become obsolete. Currently, human capital and labor force are the most important and valuable assets of any organization and one of the effective factors in achieving the goals of that organization. In fact, the sustainable competitive advantage of organizations is summed up in their pool of employees. Therefore, empowerment of personnel through continued training and cultivation of their potentials will have an important and effective role in the success and development of an organization.

### What are the characteristics of a strong and successful resume?

The CV is the employer's first encounter with the applicant and his or her capabilities and therefore plays a very important role in the acceptance of the application. Our experience over the past few years has shown that the individual responsible for reviewing resumes in an organization spends 1 to 2 minutes to look over each resume and in the same short time decides whether to invite the applicant to the job interview or not. And this is all because of the high rate of applicants for each job opening.

Therefore, applicants should pay a lot of attention to the format, wording,

clearly stated. Too short and summarized CVs or overly long resumes will also have a negative impact on the selection of applicants.

Job Vision resume builder with its standard and professional format makes it easy for applicants to build an online classic resume in bilingual Persian and English format completely free of charge, and to send this resume to job advertisements directly and confidentially from the site.



**JobVision.ir**



**Are there similar platforms in the world and what are the differentiation points between Iranian and foreign websites for online job searches?**

Yes, the process of digitizing businesses and online job listings are a global phenomenon and similar platforms have been developed in all countries around the world. Websites such as Indeed, Glassdoor, Monster and Seek are among the most popular online job boards in English language.

The Job Vision site has the same mechanisms and, like its counterparts, uses the latest technologies such as artificial intelligence to better serve users. With the difference that in the structure and content, cultural characteristics, and key priorities of the Iranian workplace have also been incorporated, to provide a better and more effective user experience for both the employees and employers.

**Can the creation of infrastructure similar to what Job Vision does have a direct impact on the rising employment rate? How effective has Job Vision been in this regard?**

We launched Job Vision precisely because we felt there existed a gap between employers and the expert labor force. On the one hand, there were employers and organizations that were looking for skilled labor but couldn't find the human resources they sought, and on the other hand, there were many applicants who, despite their skills and work experience, still couldn't find a suitable employment.

This fact, for us, had a semblance of "pseudo unemployment".

Our goal, therefore, has been to fill this gap and create a platform to facilitate the staffing and recruiting process in the modern Iranian labor market. On the Job Vision website, applicants can read the information about job descriptions and working conditions carefully before submitting a resume, become familiar with a company's activities and the breadth of the organization, and then send a tailored resume for the job position if they wish. On the other hand, employers, when reviewing the resumes of the applicants, can also see the employment background, the training courses that the applicant attended, as well as the results of the self-knowledge tests, and choose the best person according to their needs and requirements.

All said, we have been able to create employment through matching of employers and employees, and recruitment of tens of thousands of job seekers to play a small role in increasing employment rate of our beloved country.

**Please state the problems of what you do and tell us what you think should be done to remove these obstacles.**



However way you look at it, there are problems and obstacles in all businesses, and the field of recruiting is no exception. For example, one of the problems that we have encountered has been the disproportionate salaries offered by employers considering the country's economic status and inflation, which invariably results in the unwillingness of the applicant to accept a job offer. Likewise, sometimes the applicants also demand figures that do not fit their job group or their work experience and skill sets.

To resolve this disagreement, we conducted a nationwide payroll survey for a few years and asked employees in different occupational groups about the respective employee salary ranges, and the amount of salary increases expected in the following year. Ultimately, by collecting and aggregating the data on an annual basis, we were able to determine average salaries for various categories of jobs in each occupational group and publish the results for reference by employers and applicants.

In the last few years that this survey has been available, we have received a favorable response by all parties involved. And in the last survey we conducted in

February 2021, more than 40,000 employees in different occupational groups and with diverse specialties willingly participated in this analysis.

Certainly, the high number of participants has increased the credibility and reliability of this data, so that currently many organizations use the results of Job Vision payroll reports to hire and determine the salaries of various jobs.

**Finally, how do you predict the future of these platforms?**

Public access to the Internet has made a dramatic change in the job search and recruitment process and has made it easier than ever to find a job.

Currently, applicants can easily view job advertisements and submit their resumes only with access to the Internet.

This process will be faster, easier and smarter with the arrival of new and modern technologies, and I personally think a very bright future awaits online job listing platforms.

For example, we currently use artificial intelligence technology to match the resume of applicants to the active job opportunities on the website so that the most relevant job openings corresponding to the respective applicants' profiles are displayed with a higher priority to them.

By their nature, job search engines will become more dynamic and these types of pairings will certainly become more accurate and efficient in the coming years.



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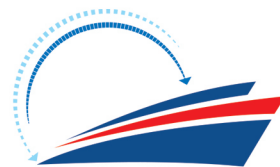


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International Shipping Company

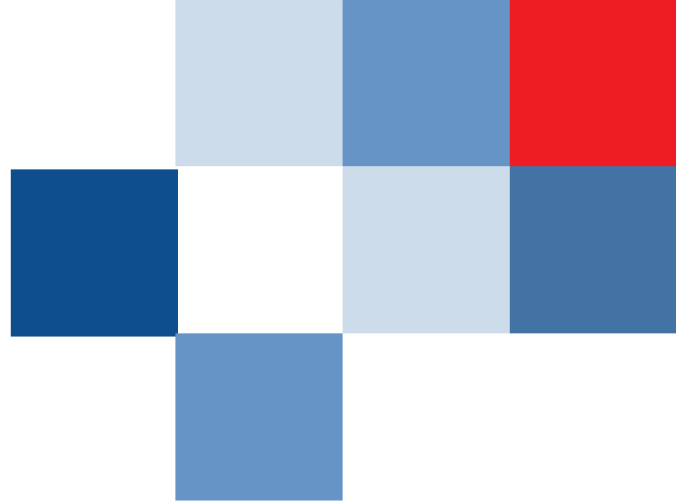
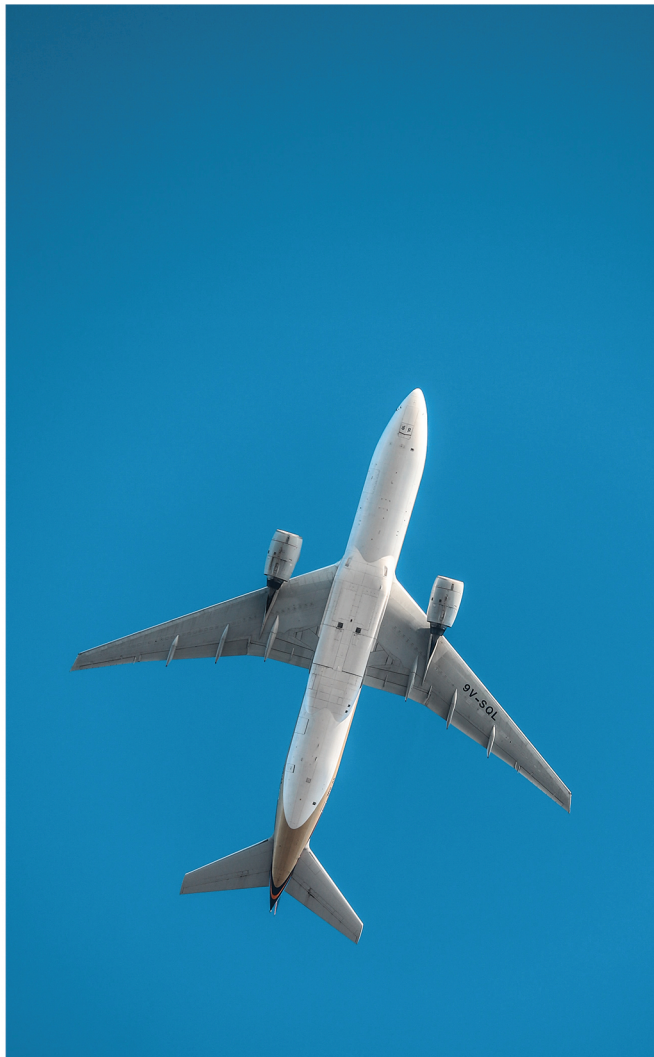


**BREAK BULK INSURANCE POLICY**



**PARS PEYVAND  
DARYA**

INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING COMPANY



### **AIR FREIGHT**

Through our overall specialists we keep you educated of your cargo developments with phenomenal correspondence at all circumstances, giving convenient and exact notice of entries and guaranteeing the most punctual conceivable traditions freedom and conveyance of your merchandise. We generally endeavor to give a brisk and financially savvy airfreight arrangement. Our staffs are prepared to give an assortment of choices including travel time and cost prerequisites to decide the most reasonable strategy for airfreight for your load.

In short we offer

Dedicated Center Terminal and Warehouse to Offloading and Depot your cargo, Project Cargo, Machinery and Heavy Lifts. Assembly possibilities with Overhead Cranes and independent Int'l Forwarding Department.

### **FREIGHT ALL KINDS INSURANCE POLICY**

Regard that in FAK (Freight All Kinds) Logistics, all the value of the logistics service depend on complete safety of the cargo, it would be main priority to have safety in delivery of your cargo from departure location to arrival as delivered Loading place. We would guarantee you with creditable insurance policy issued with well-known Insurance Policies to guarantee the safety of the cargo in any route with No Limitation and NO IMPOSSIBILITY in bilateral delivery locations in World-Wide in delivery circumstance proceed

### **TRUCK FREIGHT OUT OF BORDER & INLAND TRANSPORT – TRANSIT**

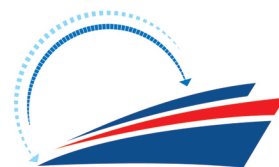
A Transporter is constantly dedicated to serve Logistics service benefits that are in "lock" by developing businesses. Utilizing your inland Transporting preparation with no disarray about how your materials are dealt with or who is taking care of your clients amid the Transportation Time. We reliably coordinate your hardware's size and weight to the perfect transport vehicle. Coordinate World-Wide Logistics is entirely prepared to relegate your greatest gear, Apparatus utilizing the most fitting vehicle sort and transport medium or either transit it through Iran to reach the major sound we will furnish you with one of a kind administration and will beat any difficulties effortlessly and to your aggregate fulfillment.



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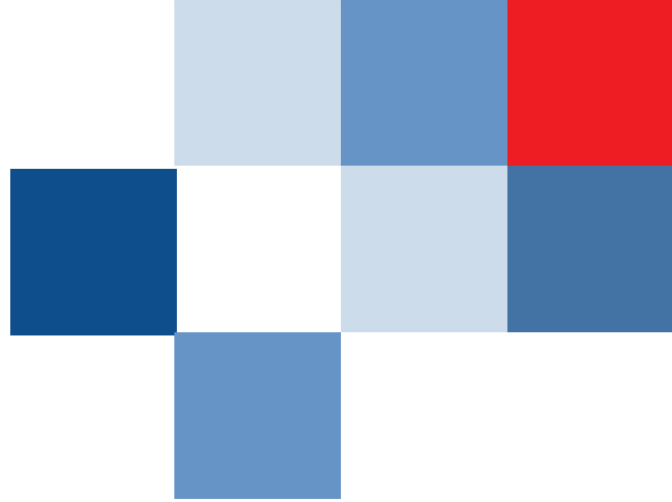
**DOOR TO DOOR  
SAFELY  
DELIVERED**



**PARS PEYVAND  
DARYA**

INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING COMPANY





## SEA FREIGHT

Founded in August of 2005, Sea Rates is a trusted community marketplace for people to send goods around the world. The SeaRates.com helps to arrange the international cargo delivery from 1m3 or 50 kg till shiploads. Thanks to world-class customer service and a growing community of cargo agents, SeaRates.com is the easiest way for people to ship their goods overseas, or to offer free space in the container, truck or vessel to millions of consignors. Regard that in Sea Freight is one of the dense competencies we could handle your cargo delivery to make you satisfy in Logistics services coverage, it would be Sea Freight in both FCL and LCL condition within any kind of 20' or 40' Containers regard to the need of your consignment via Iran to any country in World-Wide or vice versa. FYKI Continuous overcapacity in Sea Freight cargoes bring Shipping rates for all courses keep on declining thus we could support you to have the chance of cargo delivery with creditable vary Shipping Lines in World-Wide and makes your esteemed company satisfied by announcing you the best available Free-Time in departure and arrival locations beside of the most awesome Shipping Time Schedule. We are eminent for our ability in dealing with a wide range of payloads.

Our Air and Street systems connect consistently with all real Persian major seaports for temperate ocean transport of containerized shipments around the globe. We handle all import and fare freedom with a decision of way to entryway. Way to port or port to port administrations which have you secured far reaching and we guarantee that our administration levels and interchanges are kept to the most astounding of gauges both with our clients and our abroad system. We give an entire scope of Sea cargo administrations from container cargo to bulk for a wide range of payload combined shipments full-compartment. Full and incomplete contracts move or move off and freight boatload transportation.

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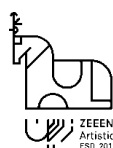
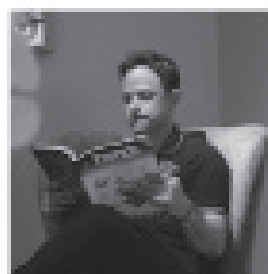
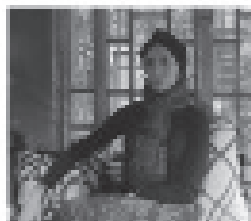
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## Disclaimer:

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ZEEEN  
Artistically From Iran  
ESTD 2013



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After a year of delay due to the worldwide Pandemic, Dubai Expo 2020 was finally open to the world in October 2021 in the United Arab Emirates. Our cover captures the grandeur of the host country's pavilion with futuristic outer structure and interesting exhibits in the inside to match it. The UAE has one most visited pavilions of the entire event, considered a must-see for those interested in science, design and Gulf culture.



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# Editor-in-Chief & Chairman

## MESSAGE



### Welcome to the 4th Issue of Trends!

As we approached the New Year, Iran and the world powers were engaged in new and intense rounds of negotiations in Vienna to, hopefully, revive the Iran Nuclear Deal or JCPOA. Iran, not unexpectedly, took a hardline from the outset, aimed at ensuring that the deal would work and also last this time. Back in 2015/2016 when the original agreement was signed, doing business with Iran did not really become easier for foreign traders and investors as key sanctions, such as the ones on the banking sector, practically remained in place, while very little foreign investment materialized despite massive credit and investment pledges by European and Asian partners.

In fact, Iran argued that the Obama Administration approved the deal on the surface only to go behind its back to key trading partners of Iran, advising them not to do business with the Islamic Republic or otherwise their US businesses could be exposed to risks! The second flaw in the original JCPOA was that the next US President managed to pull his country out of the deal with total impunity and by simply signing an executive order.

The new Iranian negotiating team, having learnt their lessons the hard way from the previous version of the JCPOA, therefore started fresh negotiations from the toughest possible position, by preparing their own draft of the new agreement, signaling that they are willing to even risk and forgo the deal altogether if they have to, unless the other side, mainly the US, can effectively terminate the Trump-era sanctions all at once and without exceptions, and also provide some concrete assurances that no party can leave the deal without severe consequences. The approach, while backfiring at the beginning, may prove to be the right

strategy in order to avoid another dysfunctional agreement. Time will tell whether or not that is true!

The administration of President Raisi is yet to introduce any concrete economic agenda with actual impact on the lives of Iranians, but on the foreign policy front, with regards to the rapprochement between Iran and the United Arab Emirates, there seems to be significant and consistent progress, which is great news for the business community as the UAE is once again becoming Iran's top trading partner.

We cover the extent of such rapprochement and its implication on the Iranian economy in an exclusive interview with the Chairman of Iran-UAE Chamber of Commerce in this issue.

You will also find engaging interviews and interesting facts about Iran and two key countries of India and the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the main theme of this edition of our magazine is Dubai Expo 2020. Although a misnomer (Dubai 2020 event was postponed to 2021 and will continue through the first quarter of 2022), the event opened last October in a new and massive fairground and proved to be a success, despite the ongoing pandemic. We have covered the Iran pavilion and what is behind its design as well as those of Japan and Australia in the Expo section of this issue. Finally, in our lifestyle section, besides cinema, music, fashion, interior design, travel and sports, we have extensively covered fine arts in and outside of Iran, with a number of prominent local and international artists featured in this edition. Enjoy... Happy 2022!

**Amir Cyrus Razzaghi**  
Editor in Chief

**Aram Razzaghi**  
Chairman

# Trends



# Iran's Economic Outlook

By: Farid Atighehchi

There is no doubt that the outcome of the ongoing JCPOA negotiations could have a life-changing impact on Iran's business community and its population; meanwhile there are many other factors affecting Iranians on a daily basis. An unedifying inflation has put a weight on life and business short of choking --while years of unscrupulous environmental disregard is catching up with us, manifested in droughts and irrevocable destruction of an increasing number of ecological landscapes. Higher prices for intermediate goods are negatively affecting supply, and demand is already weakened by pandemics and just bad days. The inflation is much less the government's doing than that of economic sieges and fearful allies. The government and the public both struggle with it but what the new administration plans to do in the name of its control may not only determine the trajectory of prices and purchasing power but also change the political complexion of the country.

must choose. It could and will, of course, use open market operations, started in the previous administration, to sell securities to draw out excess cash. However, that is a corrective measure only meant to adjust policies such as those for short-term interest rates.

The government also must avoid a terrible trap in its taxation and subsidies. With the current and prospective budget deficits, the government inevitably has to experiment with its taxing agenda. And here it might just go after the easier catch: After more than a year and many exemptions to the idea of taxing unoccupied residential real estate assets, that law is not enforced even in its current weakened form. At the same time, the parliament and the government have enacted, regulated and issued memos in a matter of weeks to tax "social media celebrities." As for taxing of income and other sources of earnings, a large number of the population

	2021e	2022f	
Real GDP growth (%)	+2.5	+2.0	IMF
Consumer prices inflation (%)	+39.3	+27.5	IMF. In October, Iran's Statistics Organization reported 45.8% annual inflation.
Exports of goods and services (billion USD)	40	45	According to the Ministry of Industry. That number is within the range of recent years but, for comparison, it is a quarter of that of Turkey --a usual benchmark in Iran.
Unemployment (%)	10.0	10.5	IMF. In October, Iran's Statistics Organization reported 9.6% unemployment rate of the 15+ year-old, active population.
USD/IRR	<p><b>August 2020 to October 2021</b></p>		

More than 100 days into office, it is still not easy to tell straightforwardly what the policies of the new administration are. It may be benevolent that it has not rocked the regulatory scene with radical rules. Or it may be a sign of indecision. Or simply of too much caution. But there is one pattern seemingly emerging in the background and that is the public space inching further towards the private. Here we take a brief look at a few clues. But first, a short overview of the actual conundrum the government faces with its monetary policies.

There are too many variables at work. For example, on paper, if the government lowers interest rates, the banks could go on and not to hurry to get their funds back, and the money can go in capital-intensive investments. But if it does, then that exactly exacerbates inflation. So, the government will be more selective about who gets lower rates and when, and will otherwise keep the rates high for the rest of the market participants. There is severe rationing of resources and a large number of people who seek those resources. This means a selection process is unavoidable. The government

is already under the poverty line and many are teetering on the precipice according to the government. Meanwhile, the new administration may be reluctant to tax the big fish outside a friendly case-by-case setting. What it is doing, instead, is accelerating the groundwork to import vehicles, historically government's second source of revenue. Whatever happens, the government is cooking up new taxing plans that may be ad hoc or more fundamental. The waiting is disconcerting. According to officials, there is an estimated \$60 billion a year in subsidies that are unjustifiable.

The majority of subsidies in Iran go to fuels of all types, residential natural gas and imports. Some voices in business circles are suggesting that if the government wants to reduce these subsidies it should target imports. Subsidies in imports are in the form of dual exchange rates. The gap between few subsidized exchange rates and that of the free market is huge, and whoever has access to such rates enjoys an immense advantage. Dual exchange rate systems are basically transitory. They are not supposed to be there for long periods of time. They are set up by governments to move from one exchange rate regime to another one.

In Iran though, it is part of the landscape. That estimated \$60 billion of subsidies would be a whopping 30% of the country's GDP. That means \$60 billion that could be spent on development projects. At the same time, although subsidies for the essential goods are strategic and welcome, their distortionary effect is otherwise the opposite of public development agendas. But here again the government is in a conundrum. Removing subsidies that directly help or eventually find their way to consumers will put further pressure on demand and in turn on businesses. Going around that would be loosening money supply which then rises inflation.

There are other reasons as well not to expect the dual exchange rate to go away. One reason for having them is to insulate the economy from shocks in the global system. Although statistics indicate subsidies for imports is only around \$7 billion, if the price and supply of strategic goods were to be disrupted that would create major problems. Iran has a small economy and more than a fair share of tensions with neighbors, regional players and superpowers. If that \$7 billion is not insulated, international capital movements that are relatively small for many of Iran's foreign rivals would pose risks to the industrial supply chains and the national



*Saeed Mohammad, head of Iran Free Zones, recently visited Kish Island, where he announced he plans to set up offshore banks, unlinked from the Central Bank, to operate in free zones. This will be accompanied by exchanges that offer securities. He went on stress these are especially to facilitate the 25-year agreement with China.*



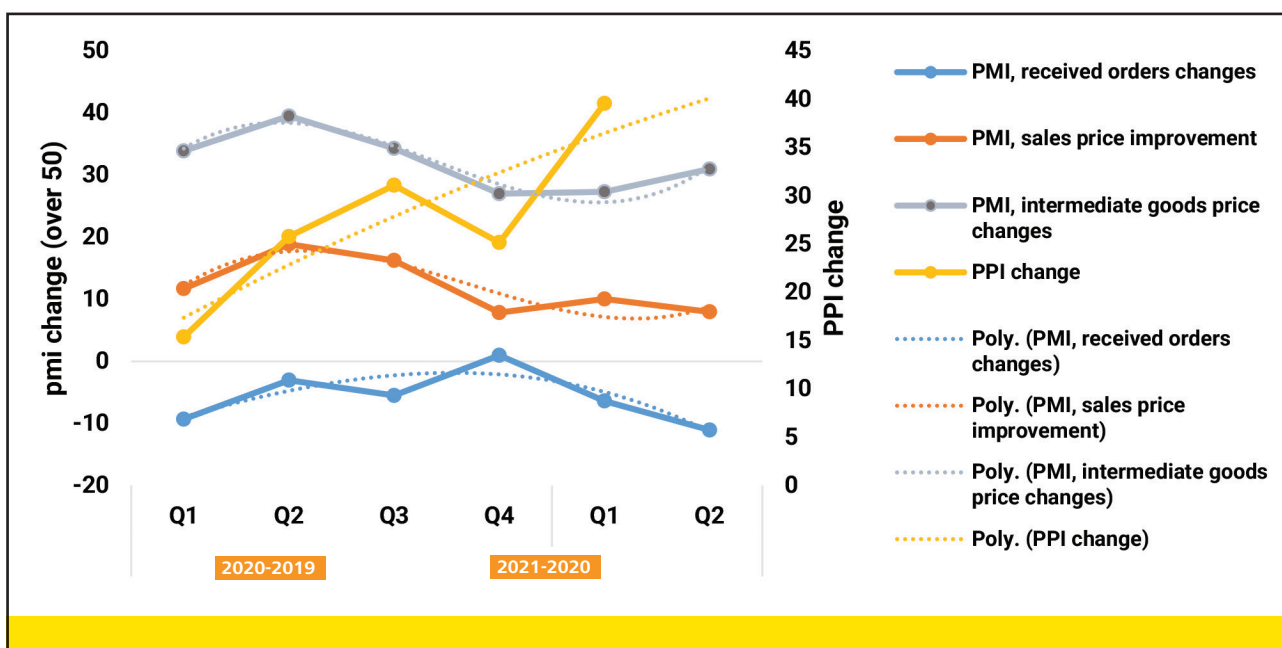
social welfare. What happens with the dual system then depends on a consensus in the state about its perception of vulnerability of the economy to external shocks and its expectations of financial moves against it from the outside. But it is not just some billions of subsidies that make trouble. It is the frenzy of free market exchange rate movements as well. Not only Rial devaluation threatens the value of economic output but its volatility deters investors from putting in capital.

#### **Favouritism as Necessity**

In the meanwhile, there is a dearth of issues with economic policies to redistribute resources and production domestically. It seems that the pace of rising intermediate goods prices is more than that of sales. Subsequently, net economic output has slowed down and the Central Bank is finding itself in a position where it has to put a break on the growth of money supply or see the inflation shoot up. But tightening the money supply will drive capital further away from the industries and lead to further economic slowdown. A real pickle.







The government then needs to make choices as to who will receive investments and how; a kind of political targeting is inevitable. The administration is talking about new mechanisms to go around this dilemma and alternatively "not to use money" for its investments, which implies some sort of a barter mechanism. It is also talking about choosing projects based on economic merit and value, but both these approaches have their limitations. Economic feasibility and efficiency have not been, historically, Iranian governments' forte. There is no reason that would change over-night. There is also so much you can barter with. On both sides. It begs the question as to how much illiquid assets businesses are willing to take as payment and what assets or privileges the government is actually going to barter with. And all this is before the easier political criteria kick in.

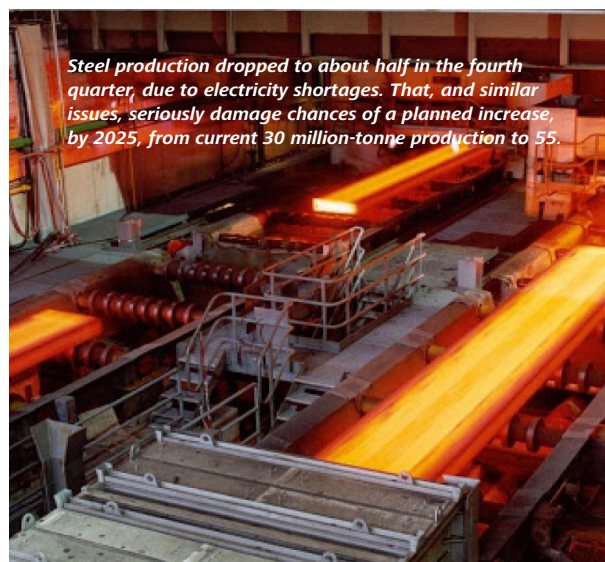
On a side note, one of the assets that the parliament is publicly proposing for barter is crude oil. Last few years have been a feast for private dealers in oil, and their number and wealth has flourished. An ancillary outcome here will be a larger grey market of Iranian oil.

What could dramatically change all this is exports which the government claims is on top of its agenda. Rightly so. It is demanding that all of its branches come up with specific plans to facilitate exports. That is a long shot.

Assuming public offices are competent and up to the task, private businesses, mostly SMEs, and the semi-private businesses, which make up most of the economy, are either already exporting or they are not good at it. It has not been a lack of statements and expressions of intentions from the government that held back others. But maybe the other route the government is taking will help. It says it wants to ensure that the government is not the problem. That is promising but we need to wait and see how they go about it.

Iranian governments have a long track record of inaugurating economically-, at times strategically-, infeasible projects. The new administration claims it wants to do differently. That would be out of necessity, and not as a political choice. Here, however, the close alignment between the parliament and the government might really help. Without conflicts of interest, with personal agendas resolved otherwise, the government may actually be able to be more careful with its spending.

What the government may do is to redistribute decision making that has traditionally been about lobbying a whole governing body, and instead to delegate it to regional centers. For this to happen it would first take a central role in deciding allocations for each region or province and then let the negotiations happen geographically. This would be a radical change and a difficult one to adopt but there are signals that the government will try and evolve on this path. Among these signals is the resurgence of the notion of "spatial planning." For many years floating around, it may actually come handy this time and be put to use, one way or another.



*Steel production dropped to about half in the fourth quarter, due to electricity shortages. That, and similar issues, seriously damage chances of a planned increase, by 2025, from current 30 million-tonne production to 55.*

“ On a side note, one of the assets that the parliament is publicly proposing for barter is crude oil. Last few years have been a feast for private dealers in oil, and their number and wealth has flourished. An ancillary outcome here will be a larger grey market of Iranian oil. ”

## Public-Private Partnerships

In 2017 the government introduced a bill to facilitate public-private partnerships (PPP). The bill proposed that government could use its sources to pay for feasibility studies and then involve whoever is up to the task to engage in a number of schemes such as BOT, BOLT, TOT and buy back. The bill never took off.

For one, that bill suggested new contract designs and, in what we may call progressive given where regulation of legal services is headed, arbitration was proposed in a setting jointly accommodating public and private interests. But what actually killed the bill was circumventing the auctioning process to pick the private party. The bill wanted to use private or other third-party companies in credit rating and due diligence to help rate the submissions. That would mean that decision making process would be more transparent and had to be based on assessment outside the dark rooms of government offices. Naturally a large population of semi-governmental businesses rushed to excoriate the bill. It was denounced for how much it would lead to corruption. That is, until this very summer.

Now advertised as a way for the government to relieve its central place in governance, public-private-partnership is finding the spotlight, again. And in a cruel twist, suddenly all the problems have disappeared. MPs are talking about how appropriate that bill is, but they have proceeded to introduce their own plans which propose almost exactly all the issues that were at fault the first time around, including using the project as collateral and the permission for the government to guarantee purchases.

In the proposed plan the state is asserting itself as the priority creditor. This means projects and other credit schemes are expected to pay out to the government until its target interest rate is covered before private stakeholders can take their share. But this is not common practice. Therefore, we could expect that the complexities that most of the economy cannot effectively handle, will lead to undermining such practices, further impairing realized returns the government counts on to receive.

The plan gives new incentives but of course omits the controversial issues. It does one better apparently. It seems to pave the way for public servants to hold executive positions at both their office and the project, which otherwise would be against previous legislature. Consequently, the government may be further embedded in the economic activities of the semi-private businesses. This may help international trade and foreign direct investment to be further shielded from possible sanctions while government furthers its leverage in directing the market.

## Retail and Private Investments

The previous government had its experiment with drawing quick money from the capital markets. We can see how trade volume has plummeted while the total size of the market does not reflect that decrease. The difference comes from the asset revaluation scheme that is just started slowing down recently, while first-time retail investors dropped out of the overblown market.

The weighted average price-to-earnings ratio in Iran skyrocketed throughout last year scoring 20.7 in November 2020 compared to 6.5 the previous year and 8.8 this year. Similar phenomena can be seen in other markets. For example, real estate prices jumped while the actual operating income from such assets barely caught up, driving real estate owners to sell or, either way, eschew from renting out.

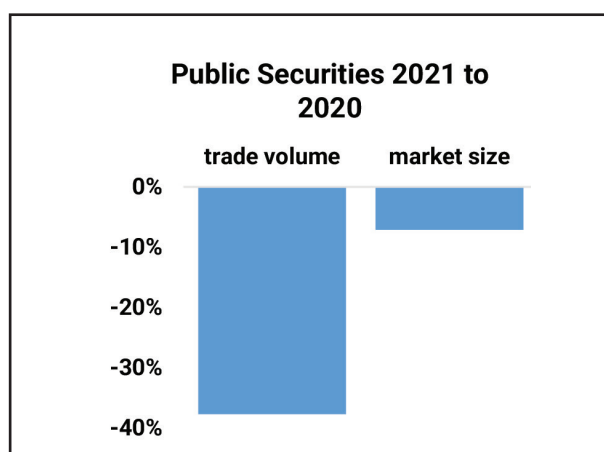


Figure 2 Changes in Tehran Stock Exchange reveal an exodus of mostly one-time, retail investors. They now put their money in gold, foreign exchange and recently in cryptocurrencies. Data from TSE.

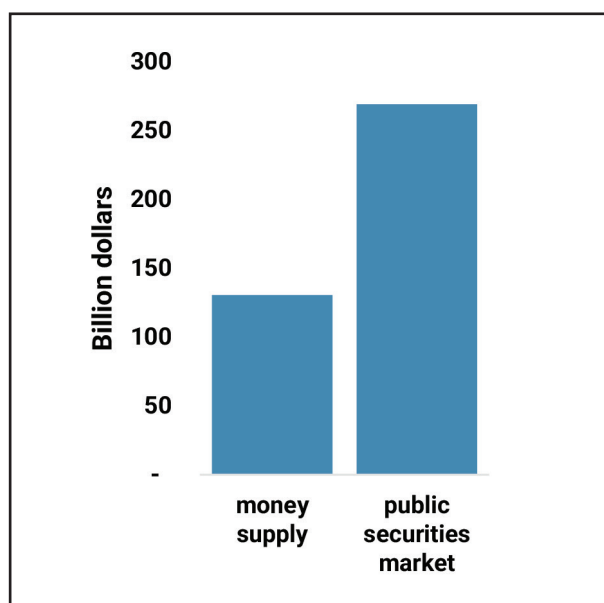


Figure 3 No one is holding cash. Even though TSE is not the only destination of investments, it is still much larger than the money supply. Data from TSE and CBI.

At the moment the money supply is dwarfed by the size of the public securities market. It is interesting to note that holdings are mostly short-term and most of the money is in one-year and short-term investments.



## Money Supply by July 2021

■ near money ■ money

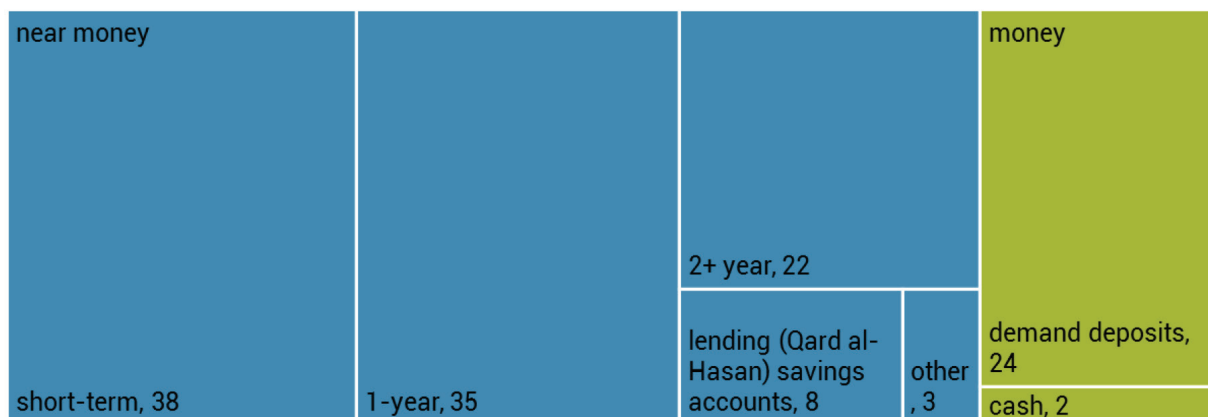


Figure 4 Mix of the money supply based on type. Values in billion dollars. Data from CBI.

A recent, noticeable increase in the 2-year investments indicates a lowered market uncertainty but investments beyond two years are scarcely visited.

Most of the wealth of Iranians is now in gold, foreign currencies, durable goods, even cryptocurrencies and most importantly real estate.

The government will have a hard time convincing people to bring their capital to real economic activities –where they have to race against inflation, uncertain taxes and new requirements demanded by the government. This situation has no easy fix and, as a result, businesses will continue to experience cash-flow problems. Last year alone about 61% of all banking credits went into working cash flows.



## Banking Investment Horizons

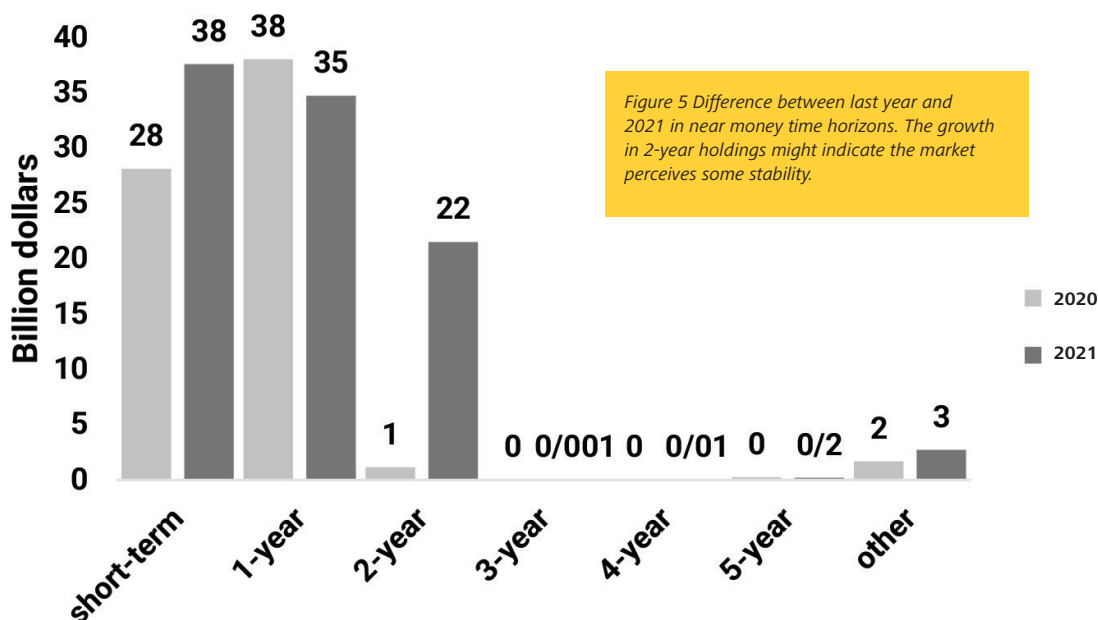


Figure 5 Difference between last year and 2021 in near money time horizons. The growth in 2-year holdings might indicate the market perceives some stability.



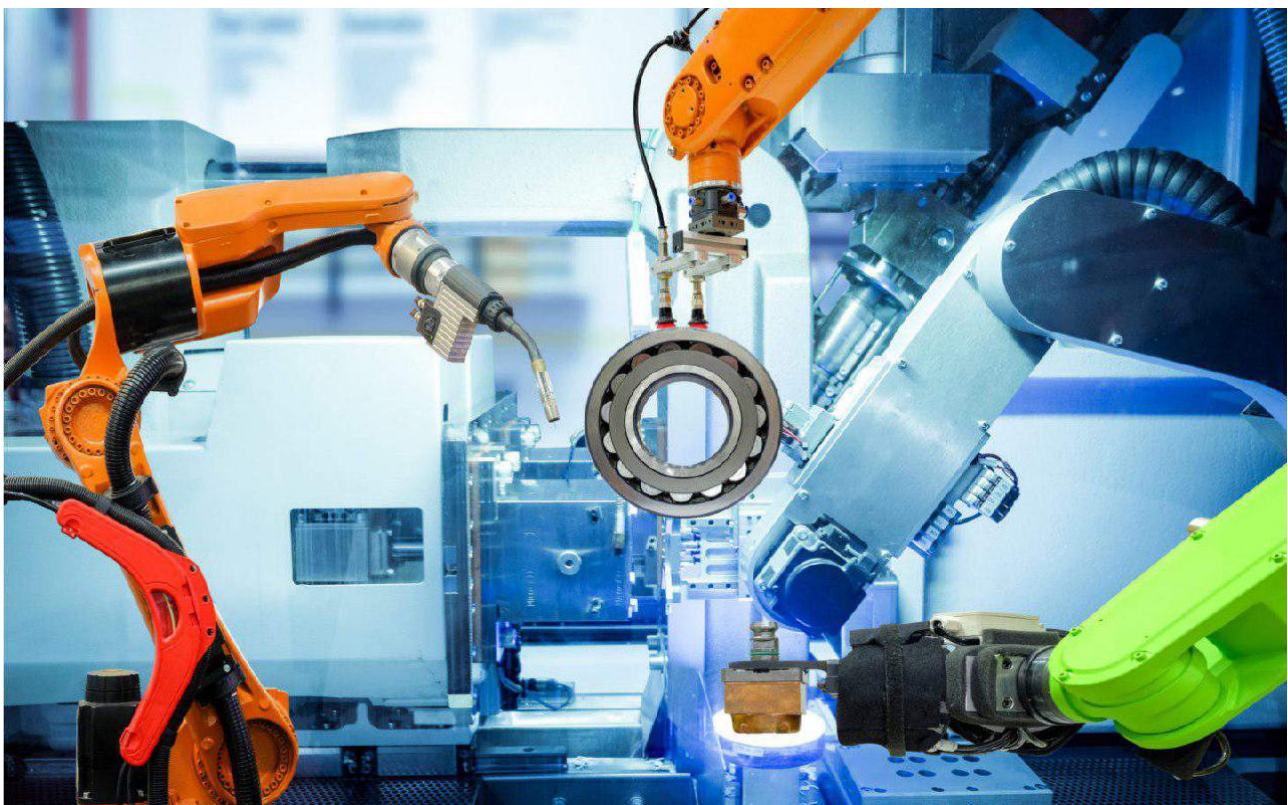
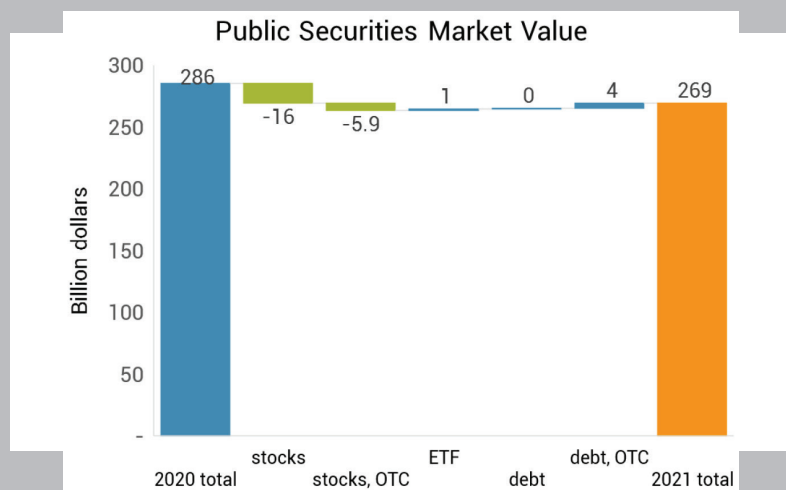
## Looking Ahead

The new investment environment feels like the beginning of a new era where the terms of trade and manufacturing are no longer just negotiated at arm's length between the government and the private and semi-private businesses. The government wants to bring leverage to projects, which combined with expected lowered credit lines, means a necessary favoritism. There is too much fear of the outside world for the state to let the market go free but it also needs the private capital to be put to work.

In this context, one way or another, private and public interests may be further intertwined. This may be more than a short-lived situation. How exactly that will pan out we have to wait and see. For 2022, however, the measures seem congruent with the economic situation and dominant governance values. So, it is unlikely that inflation will go off the rails but the fate of the individual business remains uncertain.



*Ghorbanzadeh, head of Privatisation Organisation, says candidate companies will be privatised incrementally, in block trades and under more strict conditions.*



# Tehran Stock Exchange Overview



TURQUOISE  
PARTNERS

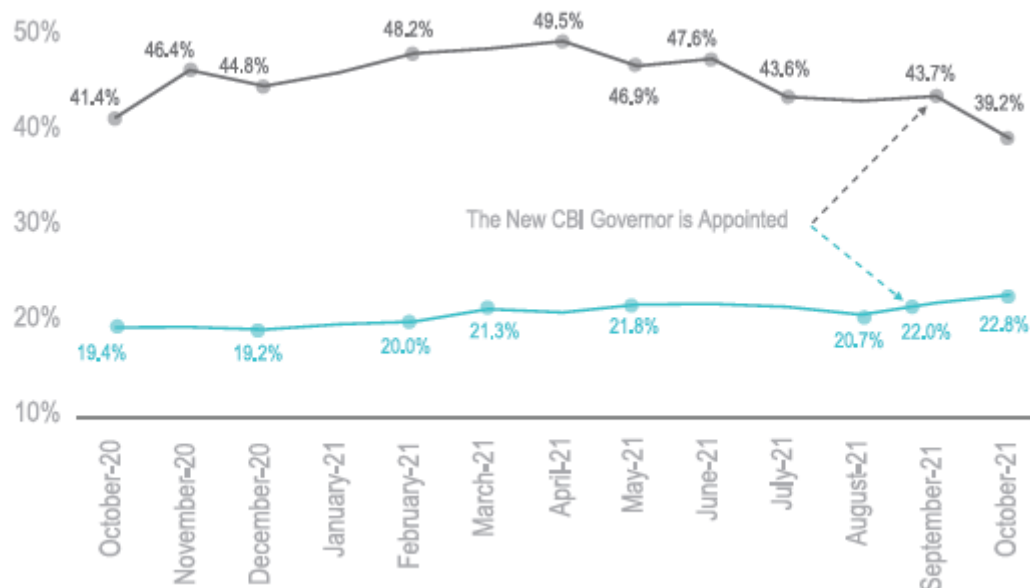
October was the worst performing month in 2021 in local currency terms for the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) since the month of April, with the overall index falling by almost 7%. The TSE tends to underperform when the currency remains flat, with approximately 70% of the index relating to exporters. Therefore, due to the recent stability in Euro vs IRR, the Tehran Stock Exchange experienced a decline of 6.6% in Euro terms in October.

Since the Iranian stock market tends to closely track changes in the currency, the recent appreciation of the official IRR rate has hurt the TSE's performance in local currency terms. Many companies tend to transact business at the official rate when it comes to conversion of their exports to Rial.

In the domestic credit market, the backdrop seems to be tightening as the yields of short-term government debt securities (T-bills) took another jump to 22.8%, the highest level since May 2019.

Rising interest rates for listed debt securities have accelerated recently as the new governor of the Central Bank of Iran reiterated his commitment to combat inflation and reorganize its financial relationship with the administration. Current policies are expected to bring up the deeply negative real interest rates, which are currently still hovering around the -16.4%. The latest inflation readings showed that the year-over-year (YoY) change of CPI has fallen below 40%, after 14 months of a higher than 40% level.

Average Monthly T-bills Interest vs. Inflation



At the sector level, Basic Metals was the best performing sector in October, rising by +1% in Euro terms.

Sub Industries Performance in Euro in October

Basic Metals	1%
Metal Ores Mining	-1%
Diversified Industrial (holdings)	-2%
Chemical & By Products	-5%
Overall Index	-7%
Pharmaceuticals	-9%
Computer & Related Activities	-12%
Monetary Intermediation-Banks	-13%
Motor Vehicles and Auto Parts	-16%
Refined Petroleum Products	-17%
Telecommunication	-17%

The global price appreciation of industrial metals in the first half of 2021 – led by physical and speculative demand from China – has boosted Iranian investors' optimism towards such domestic companies. Considering that commodity related sectors amount to more than 50% of the TSE's total market cap, any fragility in global commodity markets would likely exert some downward pressure on the broader domestic stock market.

Historically, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has raised interest rates on bank deposits and fixed income instruments as part of a planned program to counter inflation. In January 2012, the CBI raised interest rates on bank deposits and fixed income instruments for the first time in six years.

The government made the decision reluctantly and under significant pressure from various economic experts and authorities, including the Iranian Parliament.

The interest rate rise had been much needed for some time for two key reasons. Firstly, the state's expansionary budget had led to a steep rise in the inflation rate and secondly, government borrowing from the CBI had increased sharply. These same conditions of a government budget deficit and excess borrowing persist now.

In August 2021, the CBI said it would revise its policy for interest rate in the interbank market if it learned that inflation expectations were rising through the Interest Rate Balancing System\*. In September, the market witnessed a sharp increase in interest rates in the T-bill market.

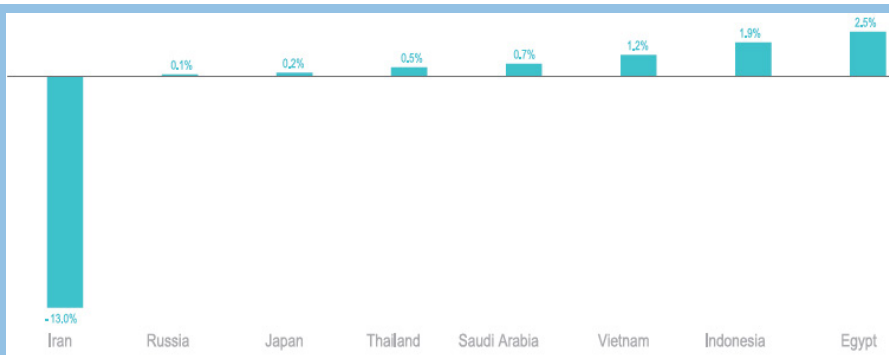
### Interest Rate



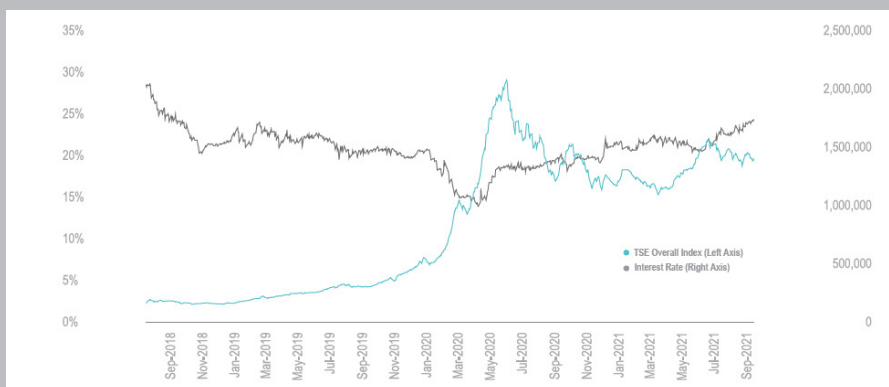
When compared to other emerging and developed economies, the real interest rate in Iran is at a substantially lower level. The chart below illustrates this comparison. Rising interest rates were not well received by stock market

participants as they have hugely benefitted from long lasting negative real interest rates in the past 3 years. The chart below displays the inverse relationship between bond interest rates and equity prices.

### Inflation-Adjusted Interest Rate



### Interest Rate vs Stock Market



\*The Interest Rate Balancing System is a system for guiding short-term market interest rates towards the central bank's target/policy rate. Under this structure, the CBI sets the floor

and ceiling of policy rates and lets other money market rates, such as the interbank rate, move within this setup.



# Iran and India: Cultural and Trade Partners of the Past, Present, and Future



**H.E. Ambassador Gaddam  
Dharmendra**

*His Excellency Mr. Gaddam Dharmendra was born in 1964 and holds Master of Philosophy in Politics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.*

*Mr. Gaddam Dharmendra joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1990.*

*His Excellency Gaddam's previous diplomatic assignments include High Commissioner to Zambia (October 2013 to July 2017); Consul General to Hong Kong and Macau SAR (September 2010 to October 2013); Counselor in India's High Commission in Dhaka, Bangladesh (August 2003 to June 2007); First Secretary in the Indian Embassy in Washington DC; Second Secretary in the Indian Embassy Dushanbe, Tajikistan (May 1994 to April 1997); and, Third Secretary/Second Secretary in Tehran, Iran (March 1992 to March 1994).*

*During his assignments in the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, His Excellency Gaddam was Joint Secretary (Disarmament & International Security Affairs) and Additional Secretary (Policy Planning & Research).*

**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview despite your busy schedule, we are very grateful... If you were to summarize the state of affairs between Iran and India, in terms of political relations as well as trade activities and cultural exchanges, how would you describe it?**

I will describe the current state of India-Iran relations, as "multifaceted and robust".

This is not only because of our shared two-millennia-old cultural and civilizational connection but also because of the multi-dimensional opportunities of the present.

This is evident from the trend in our ongoing bilateral engagements. These include two back-to-back visits to Tehran by External Affairs Minister Dr. Subramanyam Jaishankar during which he called on President Ebrahim Raisi. There is a clear high-level commitment on both sides to deepen and expand regional cooperation, peace, prosperity and stability.

**Iran and India share a long history of cultural exchanges as well as trade relations developed over centuries. Please tell us about the history of cultural and economic activities between the two countries.**

It is well known that India and Iran share strong historical and civilizational connections. There is substantial evidence in our archaeology, arts and literature that testifies to these bonds. We also have a shared maritime and mercantile history.

Unfortunately, this fact is not as well known. The excavation of seals at Kish, Susa and Ur in Iran give evidence to the existence of trade between the two regions dating back to the Indus Valley civilization.

Moreover, ports along Iran's coast played prominent role in the trade between India's western coasts and the Persian Gulf territories.

There are also inscriptions dating back to the 12th century found in Gujarat's Somnath that refer to the presence of Iranian traders in India while texts of the same period refer to Gujarati traders based in Iranian ports along the Hormuz Strait. These ties continued to expand during the Mughal Sultanates in India and the Safavid and Afsharid empires in Iran. Clearly, these bonds enrich people-to-people relations and our cultural connections also remain vibrant to this day through cinema, art and literature.

**What is the trade volume between Iran and India today? What products and services are still being exchanged, if any?**

**In the future, what sectors/fields could potentially be of interest to India and Indian companies (energy, petrochemicals, mining, transportation, automotive, ICT...)?**



*HE the Indian Ambassador and Trends' Editor-in-Chief during the interview at the Indian Embassy in Tehran*

There has been a slowdown in bilateral trade due to various factors including the global Covid-19 pandemic.

India-Iran trade was traditionally driven by oil imports from Iran to meet our energy needs. We are now expanding into other sectors including light engineering and pharmaceuticals. In 2020-21, our bilateral trade was around US\$ 2 billion. Both sides are, however, committed to restoring trade to the previous existing levels of over US\$ 17 billion (2018-2019).

We encourage chambers of commerce and business entities in both countries to continue to engage and explore mutual trade opportunities and take advantage of the mechanisms in place to facilitate bilateral trade.

From my interactions across Iran, I can attest to the fact that businesses in India and Iran see each other as important partners. At present, India is one of the few countries to maintain banking relations with Iran. Despite the decrease in trade volumes from the previous levels we saw in 2018-19, mainly because of external factors, there has not been a significant drop in non-oil trade. However, I believe there is an opportunity to diversify the trade basket, beyond traditional items. Businesses in both countries are working towards this objective. Historically, both countries had enjoyed great

trade links via land and sea routes. Now, India and Iran are committed to realizing Iran's potential as a connectivity and trade hub, linking East and West, and, North and South.

**What do you see as the biggest hurdles on the way of doing business between the two countries (US sanctions, lack of information among investors and traders, Iran's business environment, commercial rules and regulations...)?**



*The Taj Mahal of Agra*

**What do you see as post-sanctions opportunities and challenges for the two countries in terms of industrial cooperation and trade?**

There are, as always, challenges and opportunities in every scenario. And, as you put it, information is essential and plays a vital role. You will not be surprised to hear me say that businesses are usually ahead of us policy makers. I, therefore, find immense value in interacting with and learning from my counterparts in both countries and from businesspeople in sectors from industries and manufacturing, to agriculture, banking, and other business activities. People engaged in the business world tend to see opportunities where we policymakers may see challenges. I consider our interactions as being of great value to me in my work of promoting India-Iran relations across as wide a spectrum of activities as possible. Moreover, given the high-level commitment on both sides, we are continuously engaged in finding ways to expand bilateral trade and our economic and commercial relations. These also require enabling mechanisms. We have carefully listened and heard from businesses on both sides and we, the officials in both countries, have worked closely together to put such mechanisms in place. These include a Rupee payment system for trade in essential and humanitarian items such as medicines and pharmaceuticals, strengthening of B2B relations, and conducting virtual buyer-seller meets, etc. This is made possible because business entities in both countries have identified multiple opportunities. I share this optimism. As it is well known, India supports the integrity of global supply chains and in this paradigm, Iran occupies a strategic place offering numerous advantages – a growing market, a young, well educated, well informed and highly talented and conscious population, etc. The possibilities for forging closer business ties and deepening people-to-people contact are immense and exciting.

**India is one of the world's top technology hubs. How do you assess India's global place in the ICT sector and to what do you contribute the vast pool of technology talent in India? What does the future hold for India's**

**technology sector? Can you please give any examples of large-scale projects, plans or initiatives?**

India's ICT sector has seen tremendous growth, especially in the last decade leveraging the growth of Digital India, to transform the nation into a digitally empowered and knowledge-based economy.

ICT in India is catalyzing innovations in the delivery of public services (Aadhar, Direct Benefit Transfer. Aadhar is a twelve-digit unique identification number issued to every resident in

India), healthcare (telemedicine, Co-Win platform, and real time hospital supply chain management), financial sector (UPI), property rights (digital land rights management), energy sector and democratizing access to knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship like never before. Both the government and the private sector have been joint stakeholders in the use of ICT as a means of improving quality of life for the Indian public in all areas of life.

India has succeeded in driving international engagement and investment in its startup sector today through its Invest India, Startup India and Innovate India programs. These schemes have incentivized and benefited both high tech startups and micro, small and medium scale industries. India has registered over 50 unicorn companies in 2021. Indian firms are striving to facilitate a sustainable and innovative ecosystem that can deliver public-oriented developments. The globalization of these innovations for the greater benefit of all is keeping with the principle of "Sewa Parmo Dharma" (Service is the highest virtue) invoked by the Honorable Prime Minister Modi at the UNGA (The United Nations General Assembly) this year.





**India's investment in the key Iranian port of Chabahar in the Persian Gulf has seen its ups and downs. How is the project developing now? Given the events in Afghanistan, will India continue to invest in Iran's transit infrastructure?**

As I said earlier, the India-Iran maritime connect is not very well known but it has existed throughout our shared history. We now recognize and view restoring maritime connectivity to play a significant role in our trade relations. This is not just for our bilateral trade but also as a logical step forward in the creation of regional corridors for trade and as driving force for economic relations and exchanges. There is clearly commitment at the highest levels in both countries to deepen and expand cooperation at Chabahar's Shahid Beheshti port. As regards Afghanistan, Chabahar has helped reach much needed supplies of grain, including 75,000 MT of humanitarian wheat supplies and other essential commodities to the people of Afghanistan during 2020. On these issues, India and Iran worked closely together to ensure speedy and timely delivery. We have a Trilateral framework in place for such supply facilitation and also its increase by enabling Afghan businesses to export their products to South and Southeast Asia.

India-Iran cooperation on Chabahar's Shahid Beheshti port remains robust. To date, India has successfully delivered six Mobile Harbor Cranes and other equipment to the Shahid Beheshti port. Both sides remain committed to ensuring that the long-term development of the port continues unhindered and thus will contribute towards growing and thus enhanced regional trade relations. We both also see significant advantages for Central Asian countries by their use of Chabahar and the International North-South Transport Corridor as there will be substantial savings in time and cost.

**The theme of this edition of Trends is the World Expo in Dubai. What kind of presence does India have at the event? Which sectors, companies and/or products will be showcased there? What about cultural events on the sideline of the Expo?**

India has been a regular and long-standing partner in the World Expos over the years and will continue its high-level engagement at Dubai Expo 2020. This year, our pavilion showcases India's civilizational heritage and its current technological and industrial capabilities. The Indian exhibit incorporates art, culture, literature, cuisine and cinema from across India's states and union territories. Over 150 cultural and business events will be hosted for the duration of Expo 2020. India's collaboration with the Dubai Expo not only showcases India's confluence of history and innovation but also the ongoing cooperation between India and UAE.

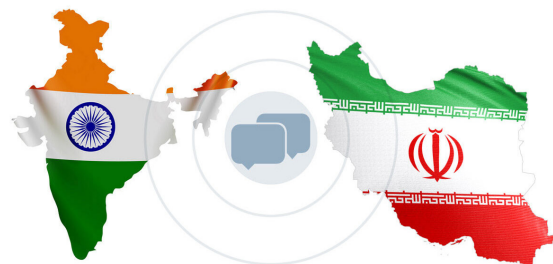
**Are there any business delegations from India and Iran visiting either side any time soon (in person or virtual)? If so, in what sector(s) and when? Are there any major cultural/artistic or sports activities between the two countries planned for the rest of 2021 or in 2022?**

Despite the fact that Covid-19 situation still persists in both countries, a delegation of Indian pharmaceutical companies participated in this year's Iran-Pharma in October. We continue to proactively organize webinars and virtual buyer-seller meets for businesses in both countries.

As India is celebrating 75 years of its independence, Government of India has started "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" initiative to commemorate the same. We are organizing several cultural activities in Iran, including in hybrid mode. As part of the initiative, we wish to call Indian cultural groups

to Iran next year to showcase Indian culture and heritage. Also, we have planned a painting exhibition for 2022. Iranian participation in wrestling and weightlifting are closely followed by large numbers of people in India. The Iranian national football teams and its major clubs like Persepolis and Esteghlal are also well regarded in India.

I have seen Iranians follow Indian sporting stars in Olympics and international championships with similar zeal as well. Iranian football clubs have regularly visited India for friendly games with Persepolis FC playing a highly watched match with FC Goa in the Asian Champions League in April this year.



**India, like Iran and many other countries, also suffered greatly from the Covid-19 outbreak. What have been some of the lessons learnt in India from the pandemic?**

**Is there currently any cooperation happening between the two countries on that front?**

**How can we leverage each other's experiences to better face future pandemics?**

India and Iran have endured tremendous pain and have shown strong resilience in the face of Covid-19 pandemic that affected everyone around the world.

Some of the lessons the pandemic has taught us include the importance of health as a holistic social concern and not just a governmental or medical care challenge, need for 'Aatmanirbharta' or self-reliance in healthcare related industries, the need to have a resilient health care and pharmaceutical infrastructure that is not tied to single source supply chains, and the intervention of innovation and technical knowhow to tackle healthcare challenges and disruptions in a citizen-centric manner.

As the vaccination programs of both countries have reached a degree of self-sufficiency, both countries are considering ways to explore benefits of the potential of collaboration in healthcare including in pandemic preparedness and pharmaceuticals. The two countries will also cooperate through multilateral and international forums on building a more resilient post pandemic society.



How do you view the current situation between Iran and the US? Are you optimistic about the future of the JCPOA? Based on that, can we expect further improvement of relations between Iran and India in the foreseeable future, given the challenges including political climate in the US, sanctions etc.?

At the outset, I must say that India-Iran relations have proven to be robust and resilient despite various external factors. We are committed to the further expansion of our mutually beneficial ties in the future. As you also know, India supports the full and effective implementation of UNSC Resolution



2231 and resolution of issues concerning JCPOA through dialogue and diplomacy. I'm cautiously hopeful of a mutually beneficial resolution with the ongoing talks.



*It is well known that India and Iran share strong historical and civilizational connections. There is substantial evidence in our archaeology, arts and literature that testifies to these bonds. We also have a shared maritime and mercantile history.*

*India-Iran relations have proven to be robust and resilient despite various external factors. We are committed to the further expansion of our mutually beneficial ties in the future.*



## FACTOID



Indian languages like Hindi and Sanskrit belong into a shared language family with Persian known as Indo-Iranian language family. This is the largest language family under the broader Indo-European language family with over 1.5 billion speakers around the world. The languages in this family are all believed to have derived from Proto-Indo-Iranian spoken in 3rd millennium BCE.

Iranian scholars such as Qazi Nurullah Shushtari, Mir Fathullah Shirazi, Hakim Humam, Hakim Abul Fath Gilani, Hakim Nuruddin were an active part of the administration under the Mughals of India. Persian language was introduced in India because of the influx of Iranian scholars, and it became the language of Indian courts and administration under the Delhi Sultanate only to be replaced by English under the British in the 19th century.

Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib (d. 1869 CE), a celebrated Indian poet wrote in Urdu and Persian. Several Indian Sufi saints such as Sheikh Ali Hujwari (1009-1072AD) who wrote Kashf ul-Mahjub also wrote in Persian.

Also, the arrival of chess in Iran from India and the presence of Indian translators in Sassanid Empire followed by the constant arrival of traders at Indian and Iranian ports are other indications of cultural exchange between the two countries.

The commodities exported from Iran to India included Arabian horses, silk, carpets, decorative metalwork, dye-root, madder (runas) cultivated around Ardebil and Astrabad and used as red and crimson dye for Indian cotton, coral, quicksilver, vermilion, lead, gold and silver, rose-water, saffron, fruits preserved in vinegar, and bitter almonds which circulated as small change in western India. The commodities imported to Iran from India were mainly destined for Levantine and European markets, a portion of which was retained for domestic consumption. These included rice (from Barakur), cotton and linen cloths, large carpets, colored cloth as well as spices, pepper, cloves, ginger and cardamoms, sandal-wood and brazil-wood, saffron, indigo, Bengal muslin, rugs, gems, seed-pearls. Also, other exports from India to Iran were carnelians in abundance, madder plant for dyeing, copper, quick-silver, vermilion, gold, cotton fabrics such as nirma, guldar, rupak, atlas, dhoti etc., manufactured by villagers from Agra, Gujarat, Allahabad, Sind and Bihar were also exported to Iran. It should be noted that mutual imports and exports of the same commodities were not that uncommon even back in the old days.



## Rabindranath Tagore's visit to Iran:

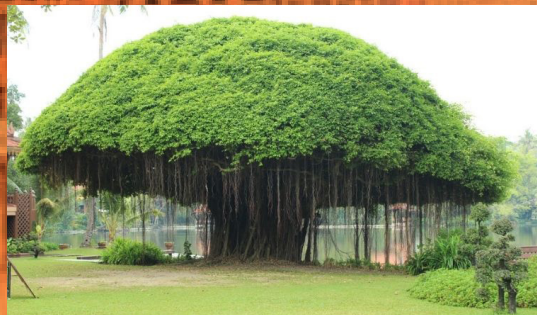
Rabindranath Tagore, Indian polymath, poet, writer, playwright, composer, philosopher, social reformer and painter, visited Iran twice. In 1932 he came at the invitation of scholars like Ali Asghar Hekmat and Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh. Tagore's second visit was in 1934 for Ferdowsi's Millennium and ceremony of Ferdowsi Tomb.

In 1932, Tagore travelled to Bushehr; visited Shiraz and arrived in Isfahan on 24 April 1932. He reached Tehran on his 70th birthday where poet/politician Malek o Sho'ara Bahar dedicated a long poem to him. Tagore stayed in Iran for 34 days and returned via Qazvin; Hamedan and Kermanshah and Baghdad.



## Archaeology:

The Taj Mahal of Agra was constructed by an Iranian architect named Isa Isfahani, as was Takht-e- Tavoos of Shah Jahan which was made by the Iranian architect SaeidShaer Gilani Zargar Bashi. It is also said that the architecture of the Achaemenid's Persepolis has inspired the crafts of Ashoka. The national emblem of India, derived from the Ashoka Pillar, is said to have been influenced by the columns of Takht-e-Jamshid (Persepolis). Likewise, Sanskrit text Panchatantra was translated into the Persian Pahlavi language by Borzoyeh Tabib as Kelilehvademneh. Other examples of archaeological linkage between the two countries include the Hindu Temple and an 800-year-old Banyan Tree in Bandar Abbas, tomb of Ghulamzeera Rasool Shah and other Indian saint figures, Hindu Caravan sarai in Kerman, music and dance styles in southern coastal provinces, Indian fluences in crafts and cuisines which are all manifestations of intangible Indian cultural heritage in Iran.



## Tourism:

Nearly seventy thousand Indian tourists visited Iran each year before Covid-19 pandemic. More than 35000 Iranian tourists visited India in 2018 and visited tourist destinations in the Indian provinces of Rajasthan, Goa, Karnataka, Telengana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.





# What Iran can Gain from a Deeper Relationship with the Dutch



H.E. Ambassador Frank Mollen

*Frank Mollen is the Dutch Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran since September 2021. He previously served as the Dutch Ambassador to the UAE and as Deputy Head of Mission at the Netherlands Embassies in Berlin, Germany and in Canberra, Australia. Earlier in his career Frank Mollen was posted in Kuwait, Kenya, France, Brussels and in different positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. Frank Mollen is married and has four children.*

**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview despite your busy schedule, we are very grateful. If you were to summarize the state of affairs between Iran and the Netherlands, in terms of political relations as well as trade activities and cultural exchanges, how would you describe it?**

The relations between Iran and the Netherlands go back more than 400 years. In the early days, the relationship was mainly a trade-related one: Dutch ships travelling to and from the Far East stopped in Iranian ports to load and unload valuable goods and trade with their Iranian counterparts. Since then, our exchanges have diversified into many other areas, whether economic, cultural or otherwise.

But even old relationships need to be maintained and cherished, or they risk losing their value. Our longstanding relationship offers many opportunities for cultural exchanges, which provide important ways to foster the mutual understanding and appreciation of Dutch and Iranian people for each other's countries. Photo exhibitions for example are a great tool in these difficult times, and we are currently working on a documentary that highlights the similarities between the cities of Isfahan and Amsterdam.

In the economic field, there is a lot more potential than what is currently happening, but different factors are hampering the complete fulfillment of our mutual potential. I hope that during my time here as Ambassador we will be able to take positive steps forward in this regard!

**Please tell our readers about the Netherlands, its history, its people, art, culture and economy, as well as its tourist attractions? Holland also has a very international business culture, why is that?**

The Netherlands is a relatively small-sized country in north-west Europe, and is one of the founding members of the European Union. With 17 million people on an area that is about 40 times smaller than Iran, and with one third of its total land below sea level, the Dutch need to be well-organized to accommodate that population density and to avoid getting wet feet. An illustration of how well we manage that is our position as the world's second largest exporter of agricultural products, after the USA – not bad for our size!

The Dutch are pragmatic, result-oriented and good team players, an outcome of always having had to work together to combat the pressures of the sea and of our rivers over the



centuries. And the Dutch are quite direct and honest, something that is seen as a virtue in the Netherlands, but that can be quite confrontational elsewhere.

In the economic field, the Netherlands has historically been a seafaring and trading nation. As a small country with an open economy, we depend on trade and on friendly relations with our neighbors and with the wider world for our prosperity. Trading and travelling has also opened up our world to international art and culture, thus enriching our understanding of other parts of the world. The Dutch are known to be quite curious and our museums often show international exhibitions. We have, by the way, more museums per capita than any other country in the world. Incidentally, in 2018 the Drents Museum in Assen, Drenthe hosted an exhibition exclusively dedicated to Iran, which turned out to be a big success!

**Despite being small (in terms of land and population) the Netherlands is in the elite group of most successful economies (along with Switzerland and Sweden) and home to some iconic global brands such as Philips, Unilever, C&A and Heineken... It is also a role model when it comes to social equality and sustainability. How did it become an economic and social success story and one of the world's leaders in innovation as well as social welfare?**

The Netherlands has indeed been in the top 5 of many rankings in the field of innovation and competitive growth. And the Dutch are, according to international surveys, amongst the happiest peoples in the world. Why that is, is a complicated question to answer, but let me try and highlight a few things that I think are relevant. First of all, Dutch culture has for a long time had a strong focus on work ethics. Working hard has always been considered important and virtuous, and of course this contributed to our economic position as well. Secondly, the Netherlands has traditionally been an open economy and a trading nation. This has made it easier for our companies to export their products and to grow internationally. Also, our strict adherence to the rule of law is important. Entrepreneurs need clarity about what is allowed and what is not where they operate, so they can make reliable

**tional sectors such as Agri-food and developments in new areas such as water management, renewable energies etc.)?)**

Our trade relations date back to the 17th century, when the Dutch East Indies Company traded with, and even had a presence in, Iran. Ever since then the trade between our two countries has continued, although there have of course been ups and downs. For the current year, in the first six months of 2021, the Netherlands has exported 241 million euros worth of goods to Iran. Imports from Iran were unfortunately much lower and currently stand at only 7 million euros. These relatively low statistics show there is room for improvement. Our bilateral trade with Iran takes place in many different sectors, but of course the agricultural

The hurdles you mentioned are indeed big ones, that need to be overcome. But there are other aspects that come into play as well. Iran is a large, important country with wonderful economic and cultural traditions. Dutch people are full of interest for this exciting country, and that in itself already provides a fertile basis to further develop mutual relationships. Also, the expertise we have developed in areas like agriculture, water management and innovation in general, could very well be paired with Iranian demands. And vice versa of course, as our relationship must be based on mutual respect and friendship. But the biggest area of future cooperation should, in my mind, be sustainability: the goal of preserving our planet for future generations. There is so much work that needs to be done to achieve that goal, and it can only be



future plans for their activities. And they also need to know that when a business dispute arises, clear rules and regulations will prevail. Finally, the Netherlands tries to provide an open space for creativity to flourish, where new and innovative ideas can originate and where intellectual property rights are duly protected. There is much more that can be said about this, but let me leave it at this for now.

**Please tell us about the history of trade between the two countries. Also, what is the trade volume between Iran and the Netherlands today? What products and services are still being exchanged, if any? Do you see any major emerging trends/patterns - for example, expansion of trade beyond activities in tradi-**

sector is a very important one for us, given all the knowledge and experience we have. The Dutch economy however is not static and continues to innovate, so new areas of expertise will always arise and with it come new opportunities for trade. Currently a lot of innovation is taking place in renewables and sustainability and hopefully we will see this reflected in our trade as well!

**What do you see as the biggest hurdles on the way of doing business between the two countries (US sanctions, lack of information among traders on both sides etc.)? What do you see as the opportunities and challenges for Iran in 2021/2 and beyond (economically, geopolitically, internationally...)?**

done together – no one can do it alone.

**The Netherlands is very innovative in many areas such as water management, agricultural efficiency and sustainability.**

**These sectors are also not under severe sanctions. Is there a chance for Iran and the Netherlands to cooperate in such areas regardless of the fate of the nuclear negotiations and the JCPOA?**

Yes, definitely. In fact, trade and knowledge exchange in these sectors are ongoing, although I agree with you that there is much more potential than what is currently being exploited.



And I do believe that an agreement on nuclear issues could have an additional positive effect on trade and economic cooperation in general, not only with the Netherlands but also with many other countries.

**Are there any business delegations visiting either side any time soon? If so, in what sector(s) and when? Are there any major cultural/artistic or sports activities between the two countries planned for 2021 and 2022?**

**What are your views about the much-talked-about 25-year agreement between Iran and China (yet to be finalized and signed)? Does looking at the East by Iran create any concern for the EU or for the Netherlands in particular?**

My country has a strong, open economy with a number of competitive advantages. I have more than enough confidence in the quality of what we produce to not be afraid of competition.

The Netherlands is a strong supporter of non-proliferation and disarmament. We therefore sincerely hope an agreement will be possible. It would, I think, be an important step towards intensifying our trade relations again, as we saw happening after the initial agreement was concluded in 2015 as well.

**Dubai Expo 2020 is finally on, after a one-year delay due to the pandemic. What do you think about the World Exposition this year? What is being showcased in the**



We do not have any visiting business delegations planned at the moment, but privately organized business visits still take place. Of course the Covid-19 pandemic is not yet over and this continues to make international travel difficult. Luckily there are many digital alternatives these days, as demonstrated by for example successful webinars on subjects like the water-energy-food nexus, energy and agriculture. But of course nothing can be more effective than face-to-face interaction, so I hope we will be able to restart mutual visits sooner rather than later - in all fields of cooperation between Iran and the Netherlands.

Competition is healthy, our open economies thrive by it. And don't forget, China is an important trading partner for the EU as well.

**How do you see the ongoing JCPOA talks impacting relations between Iran and the West? In your opinion, can the JCPOA be revived and make Iran again a possible trade and investment destination for Dutch companies? Can we expect further improvement of relations between Iran and the Netherlands in the foreseeable future, given the existing challenges including political climate, US sanctions etc.?**

**Dutch pavilion? Have you/will you be personally visiting it? If so, what are your expectations and which pavilions will you be visiting?**

I have previously served as Dutch Ambassador in the UAE, so in an earlier stage I was personally involved in the preparations for the Dubai Expo. I am really looking forward to seeing the end result! The Dutch pavilion focusses on the nexus between water, energy and food, all sectors that are extremely important to this part of the world. In the pavilion, we showcase innovative answers to global issues like water scarcity, food security and the energy transition. For example, we extract water from the desert air to create an indoor climate in which we grow food products such as mushrooms. We also did our best to reduce our ecological footprint, by taking a circular approach to the design of the pavilion. Where possible, we used local materials. After the Expo, the building materials will be used again or recycled locally. The same goes for the interior of our pavilion: all materials used are either bio-based and biodegradable (such as floor tiles made from a combination of fungus and straw) or will be reused elsewhere. When I visit the Expo, I will surely have a look at the Iranian pavilion as well, I am very curious to see what it has to offer!





### **History of Delftse Poort**

*Delftse Poort is one of best-known buildings of The Netherlands and functioned as the headquarters of Nationale Nederlanden up to 2015. Finalised in 1991 and designed by architect Abe Bonnema, the building, together with the Rotterdam, the Maastoren and the Millenniumtoren, defines the skyline of Rotterdam. The imposing image of the building can be linked to the (corporate) strategy of influential companies and brands in the 80's and 90's of the previous century.*

*These days it is more about transparency, sustainability, social awareness, sharing and relevance. The CBRE Dutch Office Fund sees that Delftse Poort, with large (column-free) office floors, excellent accessibility and robustness, seamlessly connects to the wants and needs of modern-day tenants and users. To attain this, functional changes and procedures are required in the current structure and image. Delftse Poort will then grow into a multifunctional building with the best user experience in a multifaceted and lively location such as Rotterdam Central District.*

THE DELFTSE POORT, NATIONALE NEDERLANDEN BUILDING  
IN ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS.



# The last episode of "Domus Eyes on Iran" at Villa Namazee by the Italian Embassy in Tehran

The renowned Italian magazine on architecture and design "Domus" issued a special booklet entirely dedicated to Iran and specifically to the project "Domus Eyes on Iran" by the Italian Embassy in Tehran.

The booklet, which was attached to the November issue of Domus magazine and distributed in 89 countries for an expected total of 50,000 copies, has been presented on the occasion of an exclusive event which took place in the gardens of Villa Namazee.

Villa Namazee is a residential building located in the Niavaran district of North Tehran, designed by the great Italian architect Gio' Ponti between the 1950s and the 1960s. It is in fact one of only three residential buildings (the other two being in Venezuela) designed by Gio' Ponti, existing outside of Europe.

The booklet on "Domus Eyes on Iran" is the outcome of a high-profile initiative aiming to highlight the special role played in the last 70 years by Iranian architecture and design on the world stage and the successful cooperation established with Italian architects.

Commenting on this special issue, the Italian Ambassador to Iran, Giuseppe Perrone, stated that bilateral cultural relations between Italy and Iran have traditionally been built upon a solid foundation of confidence, familiarity and mutual respect, adding that Villa Namazee embodies this extraordinary history of collaboration and exchange between the two countries.

Making reference to the unique role played by Domus magazine in its almost 100 years since its birth, throughout which it represented the most eminent voice on architecture and design on a global scale, Perrone thanked all Iranian and Italian architects, researchers and professionals who have made it possible for this initiative to become one of the most successful examples of cultural cooperation between Rome and Tehran.

The initiative features 10 episodes which bring viewers back in time to discover the main stories featuring Iran published by Domus magazine over the last seven decades. Each episode focuses on a different work realized in Iran by Iranian or Italian architects and designers, thereby highlighting the importance of Iran in the history of modern architecture and design and its continuous and fruitful relationship with Italy. During the event, the 10th and last episode of the series "Domus Eyes on Iran" was screened, featuring Villa Namazee itself.

As indicated in the episode by Salvatore Licitra, Ponti's grandson and curator of the Ponti Archives, Villa Namazee represents one of the freest and most complete expressions of Ponti's architectural production.

In the same interview, Licitra recalls the special interest shown by the famous Italian architect towards the Islamic world and the crucial role he assigned to dialogue between different civilizations as the highest expression of culture, as is evident from the resonance gained throughout the years by the spectacular works, he has made in countries like Iran and Pakistan.



# The secrets of the Italian Cuisine unveiled at the Espinas Palace Hotel in Tehran

The Espinas Palace Hotel in Tehran hosted the kick-off event of the sixth edition of the Week of Italian Cuisine in the World, organized by the Italian Embassy in Tehran in collaboration with the Italian Trade Agency's (ITA) Office.

The initiative, organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation with the support of Italian Embassies and Consulates around the world, aims at promoting the uniqueness of the Italian culinary tradition and the use of original Italian ingredients and products.

The event was attended by a selected public of entrepreneurs, artists, influencers, and celebrities to try the Italian cuisine's simple and, at the same time, sophisticated taste in a culinary experience with Roman chef Maurizio La Masa. The show featured Italian made products still available on the Iranian market, and a seminar on the benefits of the



Mediterranean diet and the importance of fresh produce coming from the territory.

In his introductory speech, the Italian Ambassador in Tehran, Giuseppe Perrone, explained the special meaning of food in Italian culture as well as its being an integral part of the Italian identity and lifestyle.

He also underlined how the Mediterranean diet represents a typical feature of Italian cuisine, which makes it not only of a high quality in terms of taste but also extremely healthy, as proven by the figure reached by Italians in life expectancy,

one of the highest in the world.

The event, held in full compliance with Covid-19 prevention protocols, has also brought to light the commonalities between the Italian and the Iranian culinary traditions, as part of their respective cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the event hosted at the Espinas Palace Hotel, the Italian School in Tehran "Pietro Della Valle" has also celebrated the Week of Italian Cuisine in Iran by organizing a cooking day with the school's students.



# Afghanistan's Economy and Trade: A New Era What Next?

By : Arjan Capital Ltd., London



*Arjan Capital Ltd. is a financial advisory company in multidisciplinary sectors and industries focusing on payment solutions. Headquartered in London, we are authorized and regulated by the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). We assist international companies with their transactions and dealings around the globe, including complex markets like Afghanistan, Iran and the like.*



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Part of our routine is to unravel opacities like what the Afghan nation is currently experiencing. Not long ago, new rulers took over all levels of politics, government, and society. Our job is about analysing financial issues of all sizes and subjects for the benefit of our clients' businesses and the enhancement of our proprietary investments in the region.

The following summary is crafted to closely examine and describe the current commercial environment, financial opportunities, and obstacles in Afghanistan. This report should be neither read nor interpreted as opinions of the writers on political, strategic, or religious issues of Afghanistan or countries named herewith.

The worsening of Afghanistan's steadily declining economy is everywhere in the headlines after the Taliban took control of the country's affairs in mid-summer of 2021.

Afghanistan was already heavily affected by insecurity, corruption, drought, and government mismanagement, resulting in declining revenues. The Afghan economy is now facing further challenges after the Taliban takeover and the international community's withdrawal of aid and assistance.

It will be primarily the actions of the newly formed Government of Afghanistan that will decide the fate of the economy of Afghanistan going forward and, most importantly, the international community's winners and losers in this scenario.



*The Taliban of August 2021 is trying hard to smooth talk the world that it is a reformed organization with a different mindset from 20 years ago.*

## A few bullet points of facts:

- The conquest of Afghanistan by the Taliban led to:
- Countless Afghan people fleeing the country,
- Freezing of approximately USD 9bn of the nation's foreign reserves by a multilateral group of governments and the United States of America,
- Halting of crucial development projects impacting the country's economy.



-The country's lithium reserves - a key component in batteries (mobile phones, cars, renewable energy) - and its exporting industries, agriculture and minerals are of strategic interest to compete for by industrialized economies from West to East.

-There are long lines of depositors concerned about current banking operations and restrictions

- Weekly withdrawals are limited per account to 20,000 Afghanis (ca. US\$ 200) to control the country's dwindling domestic cash reserves.

-Dr Fawaz Gerges, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics (LSE), commented

on BBC News :

-“It doesn't matter if you have Afghani currency because that money has lost most of its value. And the central bank, the resources, and the assets that helped sustain the Afghani currency have been frozen.”

-“It seems that the Western powers and the US are willing to do what is called conditional engagement - that is, that the Taliban have to behave for the

international community to unfreeze Afghanistan's foreign reserves and allow the Taliban access to Afghanistan's central bank's assets.”

-“I think it's in the self-interest of the Taliban to provide goods and services for the Afghan people, to show that they are now in control, that they are a functioning government, and that they mean it when they say that they have changed.”

Taliban spokesman Zabihulla Mujahid said recently that the group wanted to make Afghanistan a “narcotics-free country” and appealed for international assistance to “revive our economy.”

## Assessing the overall situation in Afghanistan under the current conditions

A nation is considered aid-dependent when at least 10% of its GDP comes from foreign aid. In Afghanistan, this number is around 40%, which confirms the fragile economic condition of the country even before the shift in power on August 15th, 2021, when after 20 years, the Taliban took back control. Although they don't face any immediate military opposition, the current humanitarian crisis can further worsen with an economy and a financial system on the brink of collapse.

### Foreign Reserves

Afghanistan's foreign currency reserves are deposited outside the country. Vital for Afghanistan's economic survival, they are, at least for the moment, not within reach of the new Taliban government. The Taliban of August 2021 is trying hard to smooth talk the world that it is a reformed organization with a different mindset from 20 years ago. Their claims picture a new tolerant and inclusive government replacing the harsh rules and draconian punishments of the Taliban that the world remembers from 1996. Only time will tell, of course, and the world community is, for now, watching closely how this narrative unfolds.

### The financial sector and its issues

Afghanistan features high on the list of the most dependent countries on foreign worker remittances. Many Afghan families have depended on these international money transfers sent home by their migrant working members for decades. The loss of institutions like Western Union or MoneyGram that helped the circulation of remittances is a severe blow to a failing economy and can further accelerate its collapse. According to the World Bank, 50% of Afghanistan's population lived below the poverty line before the regime change. With the foreseeable collapse of the economy, this figure is expected to rise sadly.

### Comments by Dr. Nasser Saidi, Middle East economic expert, about the current situation in Afghanistan

● "Macro-economic stability cannot be maintained in the short term [in Afghanistan]. In the medium to long term, if there is a political settlement and relations are re-established with the US, Europe and the Gulf states, they can begin to stabilize."

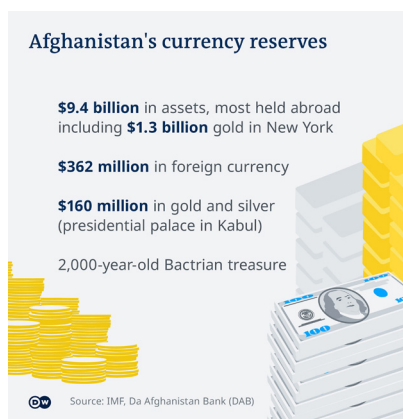


Figure1: Afghanistan: Taliban face a financial squeeze from West

debacle of the US withdrawal,"

- "It will not come in the form of aid, but investments [will be] in infrastructure and exploitation of natural resources. If Afghanistan is linked to the Belt and Road Initiative, the economic situation could improve dramatically."

### How will Afghanistan's economy be impacted in the foreseeable future?

Decades of occupation and war, wrapped in exuberant foreign aid during that period, distorted Afghanistan's GDP and seeded a fertile swamp for corruption and unclear economic expectations. An entire generation was raised on a financial

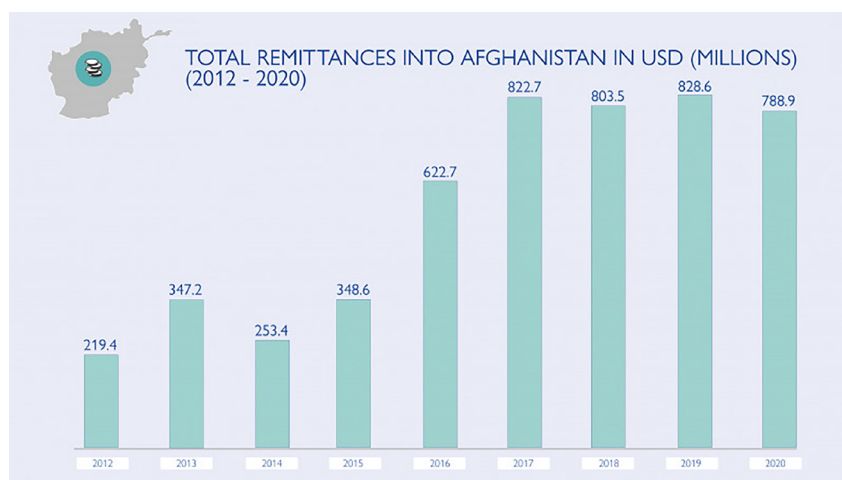


Figure2

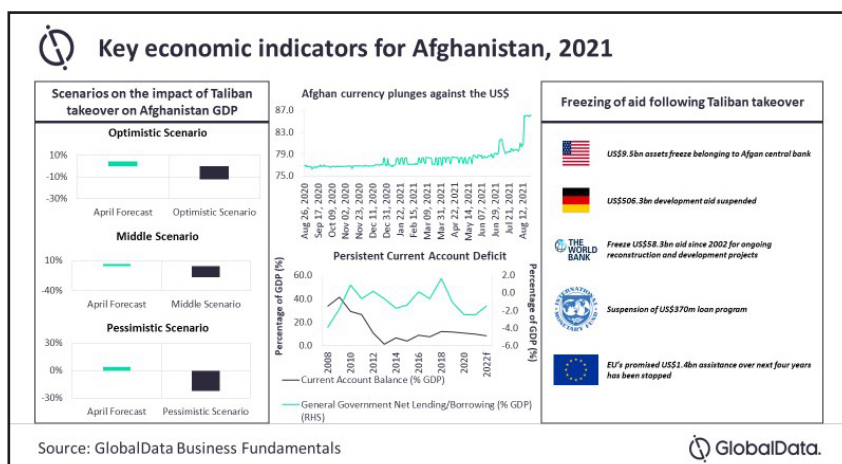


Figure3

● "China and a few other Eastern countries are most likely to seize financial and strategic advantages under the new Taliban Government. Reliable payment systems are vital to functioning business and trade."

● "With reserves frozen, remittance channels disturbed, paper money limited and running out, a lot of uncertainty prevents regular business for the time being."

● "I anticipate agreements with China to exploit Afghanistan's natural resources. In that case, China will benefit from the

The above table features the countries and organizations that, having supported Afghanistan for decades, are now either freezing its foreign assets or suspending aid to the country.

concept of aid and assistance rather than production of goods and services. Similarly, the brutal suspension of that same foreign aid created a tectonic shift for the economy. This void will disorient and deprive a large part of the population of their livelihood in a country which is in serious debt for servicing the needs of its former foreign occupants. Afghanistan requires a new economic raison d'être and a fresh start removed from the poppy seed industry,

which grew out of hand under US occupation.

Nature abhors a vacuum, concluded Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. Aristotle's inference was that religion could fill such a vacuum. In the absence of European support, Afghanistan's financial emptiness echoes not so much of faint Chinese economic tunes but rather of religious siren songs.

### What are investors looking for?

In general, the behaviour of a government, the rule of law and containment of corruption are decisive factors for any institutional frontier market investor. This holds even more true in current-day Afghanistan, with an unknown government ruled by inexperienced administrators.

### Afghanistan's mineral wealth

According to a recent US geological survey, Afghanistan has significant untapped resources and vast copper, iron, and cobalt deposits.

The economic ace up the Taliban sleeve is the country's rich mineral and mining resources. Economists value these deposits between US\$1- 3 trillion. Over the last twenty years, several geological surveys have been concluded according to which the country is rich in minerals and natural resources like copper, gold, oil, natural gas, uranium, bauxite, coal, iron ore, rare earth elements, lithium, chromium, lead, zinc, gemstones, talc, Sulphur, travertine, gypsum, and marble. This is undoubtedly a tempting list for foreign political, military, and private sector interests.

The US Department of Defence did a geological report in 2010 that described the country as the "Saudi Arabia of Lithium."

### The way forward: a chance to save Afghanistan?

The Taliban of 2021 well understand that today's Afghanistan is a different country from that of 1996. During the past 25 years, Afghanistan's people enjoyed some form of freedom under US protection, and an entire post-war generation grew into adulthood with high hopes and expectations. For the new rulers of the country, a collapsed economy, ongoing rampant humanitarian crisis, and most importantly, lack of foreign private sector investments will not cement political power.

Coverage of current conditions in Afghanistan points in only one direction. The fact is that the UN must

intervene and work on human rights agreements and assure that the Taliban fulfil the commitments they made after taking power in that country. Education for girls, women empowerment, and human rights are high on the list, as unlikely as they may sound under a rigid Islamic regime.

As a trade route that links the country with Southeast Asia, Afghanistan certainly has a chance to become economically viable. The Chinese Belt & Road initiative is the most likely lifeline for Afghanistan when it most needs foreign trade and commerce. Trade today already contributes to more than 50% of Afghanistan's GDP.

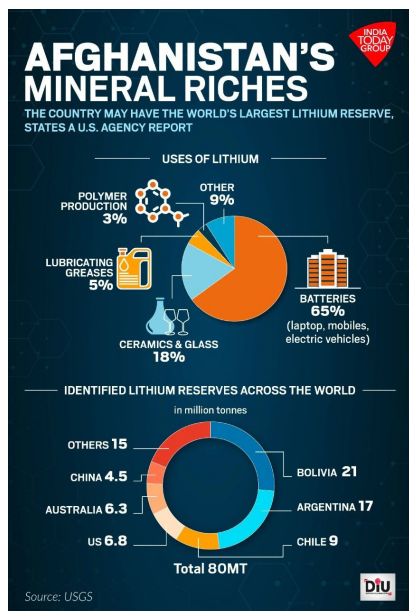


Figure 4

In 2020, India traded \$1.5 billion worth of goods with Afghanistan.

This included 85% of India's dry fruits which come from Afghanistan. At the same time, Pakistan is the largest trade partner of Afghanistan, while China's trade with the country is only about 11% of Pakistan's trade with Afghanistan.

### Importance of Managing trade and imports

-Afghanistan's economy is not balanced. The main problem is the country's near-total dependence on imports.

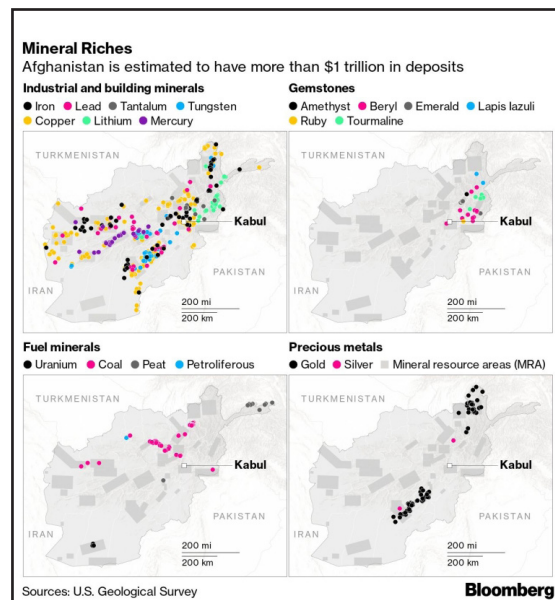
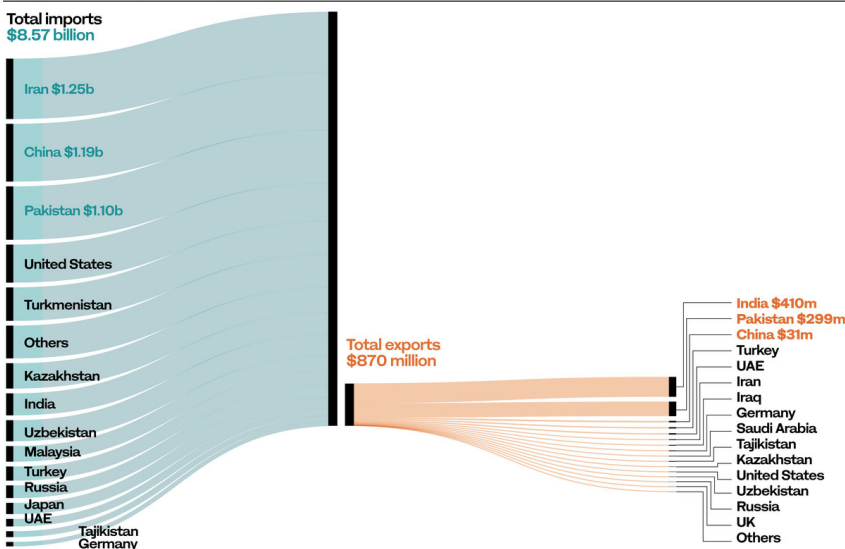


Figure 5-1

### AFGHANISTAN'S TRADE BALANCE

Top partners for imports and exports, 2019



Source: World Bank/WITS

Figure 5-2



-The country does not have much domestic manufacturing. Most fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) are imported.

-Afghanistan must rely on food imports even to feed its population.

-80% of total electricity consumption is imported.

Such dependence on imports is a strategic worry for any leadership.

The way to secure a minimum of economic stability and contain humanitarian crises is a stable trade flow.



Figure6

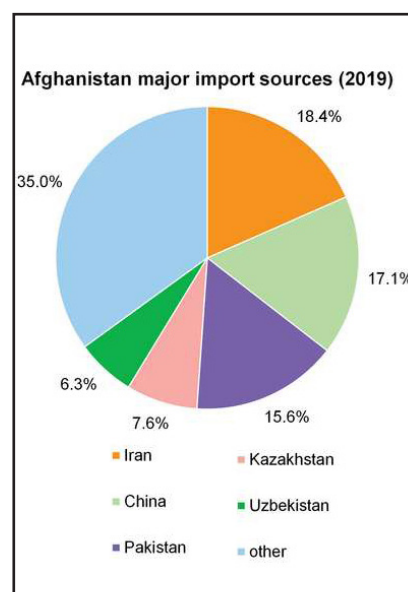


Figure7



Figure8

### The winners and losers in Afghanistan today

-Shortly before the Taliban took over Afghanistan in mid-August, most West European countries closed their embassies in Kabul and evacuated their staff.

-Embassies of regional countries like Pakistan, Iran, Qatar, Russia, and China remained open.

-The biggest winner of the current situation, Pakistan, announced an economic and trade framework with Afghanistan on September 9th, 2021.

-Pakistan is openly showing its great interest in bilateral trade with Afghanistan - and will ideally impose its currency on Afghanistan.

-China is preparing to invest in Afghanistan's infrastructure and mineral-related projects.

-Western countries and foreign aid partners have backed off from Afghanistan. Asian partners are ready to step in and help Afghanistan come out from the deep economic and humanitarian crisis at a yet unknown cost to Afghanistan.

### The practical and commercial side of the crisis

Afghanistan is a firmly cash-based society where entire truckloads of high-value commodities like oil change hands against suitcases full of banknotes. Bartering, or non-cash business, may look like an option but it demands high-value exports to be made logistically practical.

Cash shortage, meanwhile, is a severe economic fallout in a politically

unstable environment that requires immediate remediation. When the US invaded Panama in 1989, for instance, they tried hard to dry up the supply of US dollar banknotes which is the country's de facto legal tender, and is locally called Balboa (one Balboa is still equal to one USD).

As a result, millions of dollars of cash left homes and businesses, stashed outside the country to be safely protected from the official banking system which served only as a money laundering medium for the rich and powerful. Likewise, billions of Deutschmarks from the pre-Euro times are still hoarded in German households, remaining valid legal tender forever.

One could expect similar amounts of Afghani notes and probably US dollars stored in Afghan homes and institutions. In the short term, to remedy the shortage of physical cash, Afghanistan can turn to its neighbours for an instant print of Afghanis. But the issue of inflation will need to be addressed in this context.



Arjan Capital proposed to the previous government to organize a commodity-backed bond with assets secured in a reputable bonded warehouse in Dubai or Switzerland as physical collateral against investors' money. The most fungible asset is gold, and Afghanistan has plenty of it.

Gold enjoys worldwide predictable demand at an established market price. In instances of non-payment, the investor can swiftly liquidate the gold asset and recover the investment, including the agreed margin. Other commodities like gems, of which Afghanistan also owns a good quantity, are possible though more complex to lend against and liquidate in non-payment cases.

Afghanistan provides an opportunity for the long-term strategic investor to buy into industrial manufacturing, FMCG production and distribution of renewables once feed-in tariffs and payment systems are reconfirmed. For the immediate, Arjan Capital's favourite choice of investment remains collateralized short term trade financing. Even today, there is some credit insurance available for Afghanistan.

### The Iran-Afghanistan relationship

- Iran almost went into war with the previous Taliban government back in 1998. The situation is no longer the same.
- Today Iran is one of the largest and most important trading partners of Afghanistan, holding talks with the Taliban.
- After the US departure from Afghanistan, Iran's application to become a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization got approved. This approval of membership, where Afghanistan has observer status, is crucial for Iran to play its role in dialogues on regional security, especially after the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan.
- With Iran still suffering from US sanctions, maintaining a good trading relationship with Afghanistan helps Iran get much-needed currency.
- Iran hosted millions of Afghan refugees in previous years. It is now getting more reluctant to take this burden. It is the new Taliban government's responsibility to maintain peace within Afghanistan.
- According to various news insights, Iran's initial expression after the US left Afghanistan was celebratory on one side while at the same time keeping a close eye on the actions of the newly formed transition government, which will decide on the strengthening or weakening of the current relationship.



- Most importantly, Iran is taking a substantial interest in collaborating with China and Russia in Afghanistan, which are keen to fill the void that the US left to harvest economic benefits from trade routes and mineral extraction.

### Concluding thoughts

Most will agree that the proverbial Afghan glass looks very much half-empty at best. Where can one find the optimism to see it half-full? Hope dies last, and with Afghanistan, hope must not die. The Afghanistan banking system is suspended due to the abrupt internal power shift, not unlike what Iran is experiencing from international sanctions. In Afghanistan, the doomsday scenario is that the lack of funds will freeze the economy, provoking a default of the current financial system with a meltdown of the local banks as a final consequence. Social unrest will undoubtedly follow. This scenario may be averted due to the significant commercial interest in Afghanistan from India, China, and Pakistan. Pakistan, and maybe China, will also prevent such a meltdown of the Afghanistan financial system in their own interest. The price tag for Afghanistan of such economic help is unknown yet but might come cheap in the long run if it guarantees peace and stability. It remains to be seen how much of such support the new Afghan government wishes to accept.

Afghanistan's Hunger Index

Figure 9



### Arjan's immediate next steps

Arjan Capital continues to assist international companies with their businesses in Afghanistan (and Iran). Together with its Swiss Pharma partner, Arjan prepared a mission to Afghanistan in 2021 to donate and distribute much-needed medication. Arjan Capital will continue to provide updates on Afghanistan, from time to time, on its trade website [www.artistradeinvest.com](http://www.artistradeinvest.com)



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# Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce Has a Mission for Expo 2020 Dubai and Beyond



*Dr. Farshid Farzanegan was appointed as the Chairman of Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce in 2019. He has degrees from Oklahoma City University in Strategic Management and Post-Doctoral of Business Administration from Management and Economics Faculty of Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran.*

*Dr. Farzanegan's current mission is to improve the business relationships between Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates by representing Iranian producers, traders and businesspeople in the private sector, and by promoting mutual trade relations with active Iranian businesses within the UAE.*

**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview despite your busy schedule, we are very grateful. If you were to summarize the current state of business/trade between Iran and the UAE, how would you describe it?**

Trade between Iran and the UAE has always been associated with ups and downs. If I want to discuss in general terms the state of affairs from 2012 to the signing of the JCPOA, and then from the current US administration assuming control to date, I can actually say that Iran's exports to the UAE have gone through a positive trend. During the JCPOA negotiations years between 2012 and 2017, and subsequently after we signed the agreement, we reached the peak of exports with an amount equal to \$6.7 billion. Unfortunately, after that, for a variety of reasons including Trump's oppressive and unilateral pressure and sanctions, this upward trend slowed down. In fact, exports from Iran to the UAE in 2019 declined to approximately the same levels as in 2011-2012 era. With respect to the import process, due to the restrictions imposed on Iran, among them the foreign exchange matter, trade with the UAE has generally had a downward trend in recent years. On the other hand, the trade balance between Iran and UAE has always benefited the UAE. UAE is mostly an exporter of goods to Iran making Iran the importer from the UAE. The diagram below (Figure 1) shows the peak volume of Iranian exports to the UAE equal to approximately \$6.7 billion. At the same time, the largest volume of Iranian imports since the beginning of 2012 reached more than \$17 billion.

**Please tell us about the history of economic activities between the two countries. What is the trade volume between Iran and the UAE today? What products and services are still being exchanged directly or indirectly?**

Iran and the UAE have always been good trading partners for each other over the years. The UAE has been the second largest trading partner of Iran and Iran places among the top ten trading partners of the UAE. Considering Iran's potential in relation to the United Arab Emirates as a developing country, Iran can use its mature capacity and resources to supply raw materials and provide efficient manpower to the UAE for growth.

Between 2014 and 2018, Iran had the highest exports to the UAE with \$7.4 billion in 2016. This indicates that the two countries have almost no problem in achieving Iran's target export figure to the UAE, which is about \$ 7.5 billion. There is however a need to address matters such as unilateral U.S. sanctions and resolve transaction and banking issues related to Iranians accounts.

Overall, trade in 2019 between Iran and other trading partners shows China in first place with \$20.7 billion in total exports/imports, and the UAE and Turkey with \$13.4 billion and \$9.9 billion, respectively, in next positions.

In 2019, the UAE recorded economic growth of +14% and industrial production growth of +4.2%, and among exporters of goods to Iran, it ranked higher than China, Turkey and Germany. Also, among the importers of Iranian goods, the name of this country is after China and Iraq for the same year.

Iran's total trade volume during the 12 months of 2020 was \$34.5 billion in exports and \$38.5 billion in imports, adding up to \$73 billion.

To expand on the above, the amount of trade imports between Iran and its international trading partners in 2020, in order of priority was with China at \$9.7 billion in the first place, UAE with \$9.6 billion coming next, followed by Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion and lastly Germany with \$1.8 billion of trade deals.

Similarly, the amount of trade exports between Iran and its other partners in 2020, in order of priority, still shows China with \$8.9 billion in the first place, Iraq with \$7.3 billion ranking next, followed by the UAE with \$4.6 billion, then Turkey with \$2.5 billion and finally Afghanistan with \$2.2 billion.

In 2020, the volume of trade between Iran and the UAE increased significantly, despite all the issues, including sanctions and Covid-19 pandemic. This trend is also seen in the second quarter of the current calendar year and seems to be regaining momentum.

More importantly, in the first 3 months of the current Iranian calendar year (which happens to be the second quarter of 2021), the UAE has been able to make itself the main exporter of goods to Iran by pushing China aside, and this volume of export is likely to increase significantly in the coming years. It should be noted that Iran's most important export destinations in the 3 months of spring this year were China, Iraq

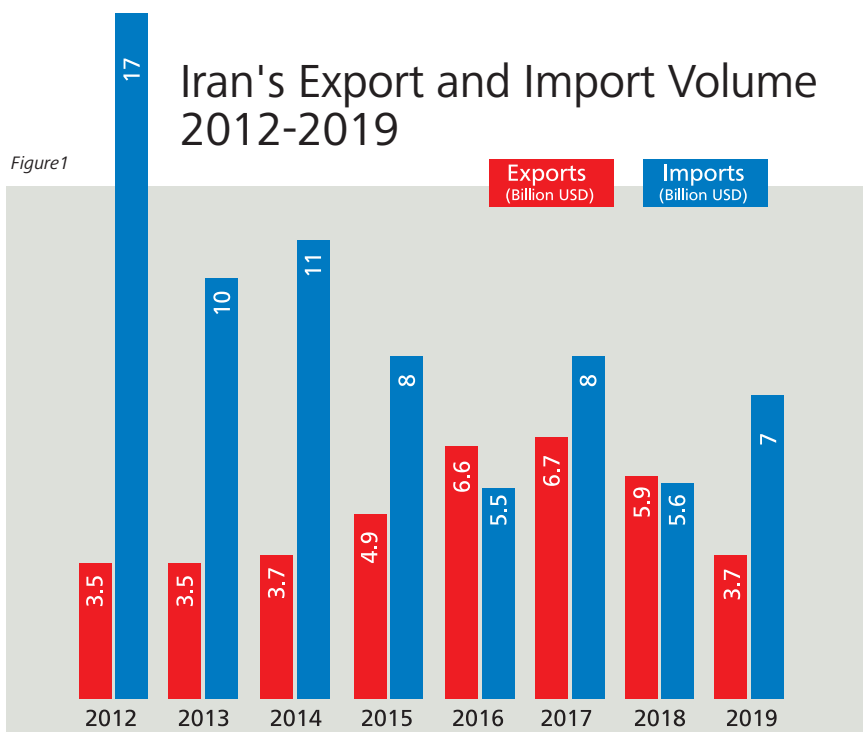


, UAE, Turkey and Afghanistan, in that order. For example, 3.4 million tons have been exported from Iran to the UAE, amounting to approximately \$1.3 billion in trade. In fact, about \$400-420 million a month in goods is currently being exported from Iran to the UAE.

Among the most important import countries to Iran, in the 3 months of spring, the UAE by far outperformed other countries. To be precise, during this period imports in tons to Iran in order of volume were: the UAE 2.5 million tons, China 683 thousand, Turkey 888 thousand, Germany 239 thousand and Switzerland 472 thousand tons. This is while the UAE has injected \$3.2 billion, China \$2.2 billion, Turkey \$1 billion,

respectively. Overall potential in 15 countries within neighboring reach of Iran is very high for import, and Iran should theoretically use this potential optimally and increase its exports with countries in the region. However, Iran's exports to neighboring countries amounted to a mere \$24 billion in 2018. This is while the market has a depth of \$1,160 billion, which unfortunately shows Iran's underperformance in the export field.

The volume of UAE imports from other countries is higher than the global average. We were expected to export at least \$7 billion to that country in 2020, but this forecast did not materialize. However, we would like to see Iran's exports to



*Iran and the UAE have always been good trading partners for each other over the years. The UAE has been the second largest trading partner of Iran and Iran places among the top ten trading partners of the UAE.*

Germany \$414 million and Switzerland \$384 million in liquidity to Iran. These statistics indicate that the UAE has been fully able to replace China.

In general, the most important export items of Iran in 2020 to all countries of the world, in order of priority, are gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane and finally pistachio nuts. As the UAE is itself oil rich, most of its direct imports from Iran have been items such as shaped iron, cement, lead, vegetables and fruits, nuts, raisins and saffron. Trade transactions are also conducted in the Free Zones, and there too refinery and petrochemical products lead the way. What UAE sends to Iran, in terms of variety of goods, is as follows: cigarettes, sugar, coffee, cocoa, malt, semi-prepared food, perfumes and colognes, international books and magazines, air conditioners, and home appliances. In addition to refinery and petrochemical products, other goods such as synthetic fibers, machinery including motor vehicles and automobiles, auto parts, and air conditioner, a variety of process control devices such as level gauges and tools, as well as coconut, tomato paste, and cooking oil are exported from Dubai to Iran. Currently goods such as computers and monitors, tires, refrigerators and washing machines which were previously imported from UAE are no longer available for import due to Iranian government restrictions.

In general, the UAE is one of the destinations with the most potential in the region for attracting goods. Specifically, goods absorption potential in order of capacity in the neighboring countries around Iran, aside from UAE at first place with \$261 billion are, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iraq, Kuwait and Oman with \$238 billion, \$233 billion, \$135 billion, \$60 billion, \$53 billion, \$36 billion and \$34 billion

the UAE reach \$ 6 billion in 2021. At its most optimistic, it is predicted that if sanctions are lifted, and we don't have to deal with JCPOA or FATF, Iran could export at least \$ 11 billion. On the other hand, it is predicted that in 2025, the volume of trade between Iran and the UAE, which is currently about \$14-15 billion, will reach \$20 billion and in 2030 will grow to \$30 billion.



**What do you see as the biggest hurdles on the way of doing business between the two countries (US sanctions, geopolitical issues, lack of information among investors and traders, Iran's business environment, commercial rules and regulations...)?**

*Obstacles and problems of foreign trade development are:*

- Draconian rules of the UAE Central Bank on bank accounts held by Iranians
- Deficiencies in the infrastructure of land, rail and sea transport fleets
- Shortage of fleets of refrigerated shipping containers for road transport of temperature-sensitive and perishable cargo
- Lack of sufficient cold storage infrastructure at Iranian ports to preserve agricultural products for export markets
- Lack of stability in the Iranian regulations processes and legislative environment in terms of proposed policies and rules and regulations for export of products
- Lack of reliable monitoring of the target market for competitive conditions, and comparative advantage of goods against other competitors
- The need for securing and exercising preferential and free trade agreements
- Restrictive policies and directives of the Central Bank of Iran
- High customs base valuation for some goods for return of foreign exchange from exports
- Lack of necessary incentives to exporters during the Expo event
- Poor implementation of the barter mechanism and the related models

*Proposed foreign trade development solutions are the following:*

- Facilitating the travel of economic stakeholders
- Strengthening of collaborations between Melli and Saderat Banks of Iran with several Emirati banks
- Holding permanent or seasonal exhibitions and markets to introduce and showcase Iranian products
- Encouraging a strong presence of Iranian manufacturers and traders (private sector) in the Expo 2020 Dubai
- Facilitating of exports at the time of Expo 2020 event by the Ministry of Industry, Trade Promotion Organization and Customs through removal of current strict export regulations
- Adopting active economic diplomacy to reduce hostility with the southern neighboring countries of the Persian Gulf (UAE, Bahrain, especially Saudi Arabia with \$135 billion in goods absorption potential)
- Establishment of an economic section of the IRI Embassy in Dubai or Abu Dhabi in connection with the joint chamber of commerce
- Setting up an industry and commerce desk in connection with the joint chamber of commerce and Iran chamber of commerce at the Embassy
- Expansion of Iran's tourism and handicrafts industry during the Expo 2020
- Joining the FATF for financial transfers for Iranian bank branches based in the UAE

**Iranian businesses and entrepreneurs experienced some issues in the past few years with regards to their residency, work permits and business licenses in the UAE. Are those issues resolved? Is business for Iranian expats in the UAE returning to normal?**

Unfortunately, what you say is right. In the past, the UAE for unknown reasons has deported, or ordered the departure of a number of Iranian businessmen and their families from the UAE, even some who had lost businesses and homes and were not guilty of any offense. Sadly even a number of Iranians who were going about their normal lives and were busy

with their daily work and respected the rules of the country were affected by these unwarranted and draconian laws.

We seek to prevent this from happening again because many Iranians know and respect international rules. It is generally expected that when laws are enacted and clearly communicated anywhere, those who are serving and contributing to the progress of their social environment should not be disenfranchised simply because of their nationality and passport. Iranians are a very civilized social group in the UAE and most of them have university education and have participated in the development of the UAE.

We are trying to clear up matters in our meetings with authorities, and we're hoping to establish the fact that just because someone has an Iranian passport, they should not be restricted.

Iranians have a right to be treated like any other nationals, and foreigners living in any country should not be oppressed simply because they are not citizens of the host country.



**Please tell us about the Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce. When was it established? What is the mission and vision and main activities of the Chamber? How is that different from IBC (Iran Business Council)?**

The Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce was established in June 2008 after obtaining approval from the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines, with the aim of expanding trade relations between Iran and the UAE. Strengthening the business environment and expanding economic activities of the two countries were the primary goals of the formation of this Joint Chamber.

*Similarly, the most important tasks of the Chamber of Commerce are:*

- Preparing an up-to-date database of UAE economic partners and stakeholders for members of the Joint Chamber in accordance with the field of activity and requisitioned enterprise
- Holding business-to-business (B2B) meetings in person or virtually
- Introducing interested investors of the two countries to one another for commercial projects and to invest in production and trade of goods



- Providing guidance to applicants of both countries interested in registering their manufacturing, commercial or investment company
- Cultivating and educating stakeholders in the general principles of trade and commerce through compilation of educational materials and holding training workshops, seminars and use of virtual education
- Cooperation with the Trade Promotion Organization in order to implement developmental and promotional programs
- Regular communication with public and private organizations, parliamentary friendship groups, Iran-UAE friendship associations and other institutions of the two countries for better mutual understanding
- Identifying obstacles and rules and regulations preventing the development of economic relations between the UAE and Iran and pursuing their revision or elimination by decision-making authorities
- Announcing and promoting calendars of trade exhibitions in the UAE and advertising the economic conferences of Iran and the UAE

**What have been some of the Chamber's recent activities and events during the Covid-19 pandemic? Are there any business delegations visiting either side any time soon (physical or virtual)? If so, in what sector(s) and when?**

Yes, we have had many good meetings, and we have perceived the Dubai Chamber of Commerce as an independent and professional Chamber that aims to develop business with little inclination to be tainted with political views. We also believe that conversations and dialogue between us and the UAE with a focus on the private sector will lead to closeness of hearts and mutual cooperation. The private sector, regardless of political issues, trades in an impartial and non-partisan way. Similarly, we seek a very friendly and stable business relationship environment with the UAE and the expansion of these relations. Our meetings have been free of political stigma, and we have tried emphasizing cooperation between the two countries. We maintain that all future regional development must be in the shadow of peace and security,



Khalifa Port

- Cooperating with international arbitration centers in order to effectively pursue claims of businesspeople, companies, and Emirati and Iranian institutions and creating a robust environment for business relationships.

Due to the importance of the goals of the Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce for the development and expansion of commercial and entrepreneurial relations of Iran with its southern neighbor, a more active presence and participation of members will guarantee achievement of our goals and implementation of planned programs. We therefore ask all economic stakeholders to enlist in and cooperate with this joint Chamber and be part of a promising venture.

There are a significant number of Iranian businesspeople who trade with the UAE, and it is a fact that they encounter numerous problems doing business there. The Iran-Emirates Chamber, which focuses on solving the problems of the mentioned traders and manufacturers, is planning to hold regular meetings with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce. We have formulated a program of four meetings with specific topics of dialogue between the two Chambers to explore business issues. During these meetings we will negotiate methods of communication and dialogue between the two Chambers to review, discuss and resolve obstacles that impede resolution to these problems.

and that the more trade is conducted between the two countries and their peoples, the greater the peace, security and friendship between the two nations. Ultimately this is what the Dubai-Iran Chamber of Commerce puts a special emphasis on.

**Please tell us about your membership program. How many members do you have? Who can apply to become a member of the Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce and what services and benefits do they receive?**

Yes. In fact, the Iran-Emirates joint Chamber membership consists of Iranian companies and Iranian parties that have presence in both Iran and the UAE. Iran-Emirates Chamber advocates for the proprietors of these companies and acts as their voices in the Administration and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Chamber also looks after these stakeholders to make sure their business and individual rights are not violated. We are the voice of the private sector in the Government, and in this respect, we seek to ensure that legislative rules and regulations approved and adopted for that sector do not adversely affect either the Iranian or the Emirati nationals. To facilitate such business-friendly regulatory environment we will be interacting with the government

and policy makers through our channels in the Chamber of Commerce. In this way we hope to prevent any violation of rights of our respected members.

Another area that we believe can help the Chamber's members is the assimilation of accurate and reliable import/export statistics with respect to UAE markets to be provided to our member traders and merchants. Also, we are currently monitoring the needs of the UAE market to increase Iran's exports to the UAE in a meaningful way. To help strengthen the capacity of our private sector, we are providing necessary training and dissemination of information to our members and responding to all questions regarding import and export to the UAE. We also try to clear the way for a friendly and seamless trade environment for our trade counterparts in Iran. For example, if an Emirati businessperson has a grievance about a relationship with Iran on an issue, we will take the necessary steps to resolve it. Likewise, we will smoothen the way to help developing sectors move along to achieve their ultimate business goals. To achieve all of this we have had several meetings at the high levels of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to point out the importance of the UAE for our national trade, and how to use the UAE's infrastructure to develop Iran's trade and thus strengthen healthy trade between the two countries.

**Are you optimistic about the revival of the JCPOA? What would be some of the business opportunities between Iran and the UAE be if that becomes a reality? What would be some of the ongoing challenges if we go back to the original deal? Can you perceive any scenario when even the banking sanctions are terminated?**

In the case of the JCPOA, it is my opinion that the Islamic Republic of Iran must join regional agreements and regional systems and continue its relationship with the outside world constructively. The private sector's dealings with the international business community have given us accurate and reliable information about the difficulty of working outside Iran. Many Iranian businesspeople have been economically pressured at some point or another, and their rights have been violated. Through contacts with the Iranian government and the Emirati side, we are trying to facilitate and resolve these problems and trying to expand healthy trade between the two countries. The private sector of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce has emphasized that Iran should return to the negotiations operationally and to accordingly advance its relationship with the business world. They have stressed the need to join all international tariff systems such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Financial Task Force (FATF), and to resume a constructive relationship for trade with countries on the southern edge of the Persian Gulf.

Iran has various capacities and potentials such as its highly educated human resources, agricultural, food, food conversion industries, industrial products, petrochemicals, chemicals, polymers, refining, plastics, cement and all kind of minerals. These are all produced in Iran at a most affordable price for trade purposes. Furthermore, no country can be as effective as Iran in the objective of developing the economies of countries in the Persian Gulf region. We have always pointed out to our neighboring states that Iran has a unique capacity in this regard.

*Potential capacity of Iran's economy can be itemized as follows:*

Natural Resources and policies:

- Oil and gas: Ranked second for gas reserves and fourth for oil reserves
- Rich Ore resources with 60 types of ore products. Ranked 15th globally and among the first 10 countries for tin, iron, copper and zinc reserves
- Variety of minerals including high-consumption minerals, trace elements, precious, decorative and valuable stones
- Strategic geographical location
- Point of transit and transportation with high demand from neighboring countries
- 24 international road border outposts, 5 rail border stations and more than 11 small and large commercial ports
- Provides routing for about 40% of the world's oil through



the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf daily:

- Situated on the paths of international transit corridors
  - Fields of Science and Technology
  - Ranked first in the region and 16th in the world for submission of scientific articles and research papers
  - Ranked 13th in the world and first in the region in 2017 in the field of biotechnology
  - Ranked 17th in terms of the number of top universities in the Times ranking system
- We anticipate Iran's cooperation with the UAE to have potential for expansion in the following areas:
- Supply of raw materials for production
  - Joint investment for production and employment in both countries
  - Positioning the two countries in the financial supply chain as well as the value creation chain
  - Identifying and promoting experts and professionals in the required fields at reasonable costs
  - Production of variety of fresh fruits in all four seasons at high quality (organic) with reasonable shipping costs
  - Production of a variety of high-quality food products with the right diversity and at fair shipping costs



**Expo 2020 Dubai is ongoing as we speak. Please tell us about it. What are some of the opportunities for Iranian companies at the event?**

Certainly Expo 2020 happening in such proximity of Iran is a great opportunity. A 50-year-old country is hosting a 170-year-old event, so we commend and congratulate Dubai and the UAE for holding this magnificent event. We know what hardships they have endured since 2015 to be able to carry out a very good planning. We Iranians are very proud to be attending the Expo 2020 and congratulate all those involved and agents of this event in Dubai for their success. Expo is a unique opportunity to illustrate the stance of a country on the global scene, and to allow it to demonstrate what plans and approaches it will engage in to deal with the



world's problems and issues, and the more specific macro strategies it has developed for facing these issues in the following 5 years. The Expo is also a great chance for different export enterprises to transform international community's mind about the production capabilities of a country, and to introduce national brands to global visitors - and the Islamic Republic of Iran is no exception. There is also an opportunity for manufacturing and exporting companies to supply goods and products needed by at least 25 million expected visitors during the 6-month period of the Expo 2020. The Expo 2020 Dubai is where these companies can attend conferences along with their international counterparts to introduce their goods and brands, and attract foreign investors, send their business delegations to participate in B2B meetings and benefit from UAE's advanced business infrastructure.

Governments are responsible parties for holding or participating in the Expo. In Iran, the National Headquarters of Expo is headed by Dr. Hassan Zamani, Chairman of the Board and Managing Director of the Islamic Republic of Iran International Exhibitions Company and Commissar General of the Iran Pavilion in the Expo 2020 Dubai. The Iran-Emirates Chamber of Commerce will naturally also provide the necessary assistance to achieve the goals of our delegation.

**What are some of the activities of the Chamber with regards to the Expo such as organizing delegations, B2B meetings and so on?**

Iran-Emirates joint Chamber will be taking advantage of the B2B policies of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, sending trade delegations, holding specialized conferences in line with the country's trade development policies, holding seminars and webinars, meetings and gatherings, and learning about the Dubai trade infrastructure, all of which are in principle the explicit tasks of the Iran-Emirates Joint Chamber. It is worth noting that this Joint Chamber, in accordance with its inherent duty, is aware of the importance

of the presence of artisans and manufacturers in the multi media space and encourages them in their endeavors.

Iran-Emirates Joint Chamber invites manufacturing and commercial companies to present their goods and products during the 180-day Expo 2020 period in the form of introductory videos to be projected on the video walls or as interactive pages to communicate with the audience in a few minutes. Advertising should be done in a variety of ways with systematic and state of the art approaches. In fact, what is expected from the delegates and participants of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Expo 2020 is to showcase Iran's new industries in the field of science to the international community in attendance and demonstrate to all what to expect in the future. We would like our business representatives to show to their trade counterparts the many ways of benefiting from available business opportunities, economic stimulus programs, production potentials of Iran, and the country's range of international brand openings.

Sending trade delegations to other pavilions and creating B2B dialogue opportunities during public visits to the pavilion of each country, introducing our country's tourism potentials, taking advantage of the media space in the Iran pavilion, increasing and promoting the growth of international trade exchanges are some of the activities we will be engaging in during the Expo 2020. The implicit marketing of goods with relative competitive advantage, introducing climate diversity of the country, familiarizing visitors with the ethnicities and rich culture of our country are also among the great opportunities that will be given to us at Expo 2020.

As final word, I mentioned before that the UAE is Iran's second largest trading partner after China and in the fourth quarter of last year it was the largest exporter of goods to Iran. At the same time the volume of exports from Iran to the UAE was ranked third. That means the UAE is in the third place for Iran's exports while it is the largest importer of goods to Iran.

The goal is to increase the trade volume between Iran and the UAE to \$20 billion in 2025 and \$30 billion in 2030. Currently the two countries are working hard to strengthen their trade relations, and in fact, according to the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and their counterparts in the United Arab Emirates, governments of both countries are determined to achieve this goal. Naturally the Chambers of Commerce of both countries also follow the policy adopted by their respective government officials, while our duty is to also follow up on demands of the private sector and seek an operational roadmap for all.

We warmly shake hands with all member Chambers of Commerce in UAE and seek the expansion of relations with other Chambers in the seven emirates of the country, specifically the Dubai Chamber of Commerce.

We also hope that the strategy pursued by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Al-Maktoum in the expansion of economic relations with all countries, especially neighboring ones, will be adhered to and that an operational strategy will be developed for the enhancement of relations with Iran. In our country, the previous president and the current president, Mr. Raisi, both emphasized on expanding relations with neighboring countries and the United Arab Emirates, reflecting the exact wishes of the Supreme Leader with respect to relations with all countries. We are interested in the relations between the two countries reaching the level of an embassy, and to reach this target the economic sector, along with the Chamber of Commerce, make all necessary efforts in the expansion of trade relations between the two countries.

# "Where Ideas Meet": Japan Pavilion at The Expo 2020 Dubai

## Theme

The theme of Japan Pavilion at the Expo 2020 Dubai is "Where ideas meet".

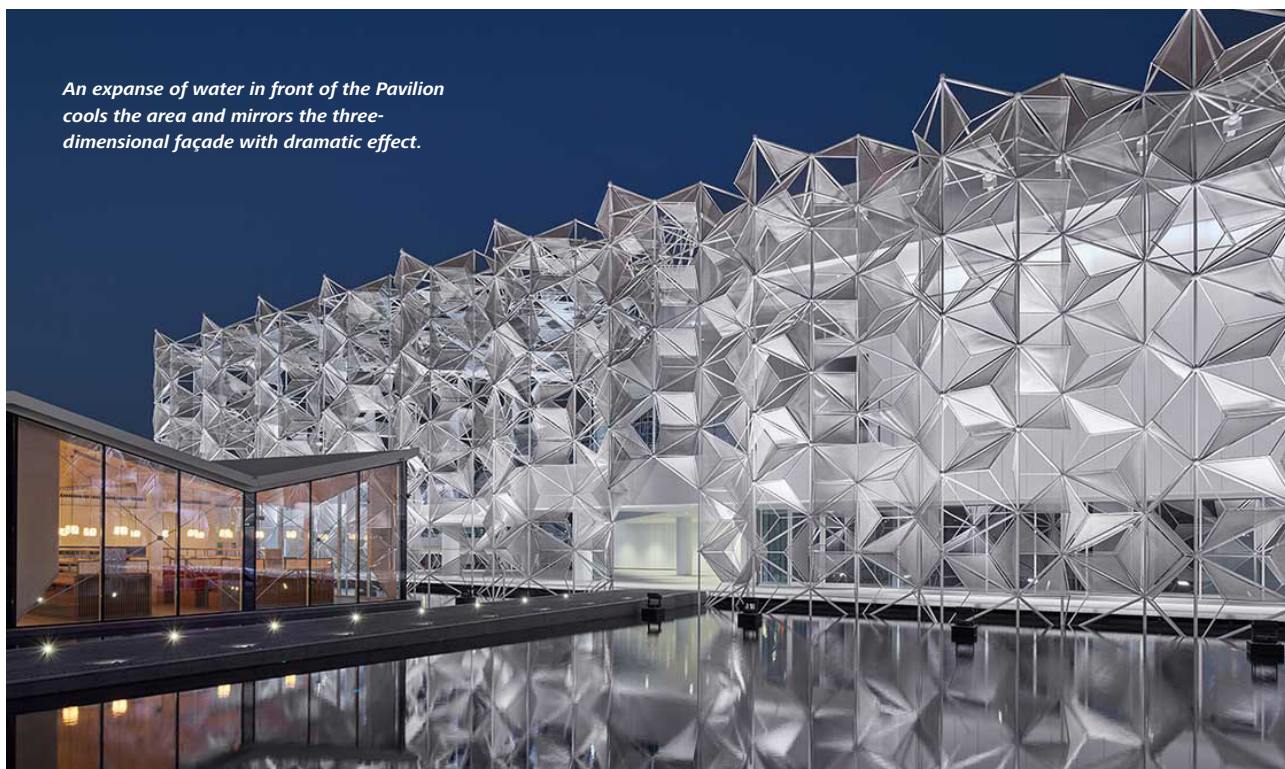
Since ancient times, encounters with external influences have played a key role in the development of Japanese culture and learning, as ideas from the outside have been embraced and reinterpreted to create something new and uniquely Japanese. Moving towards the future, Japan will continue to be a place where ideas from around the world meet. And by bringing these ideas together to spark new innovation, Japan will work to create a better tomorrow.

## Logo and Emblem

The logo of the Japan Pavilion represents a diverse group of people transcending differences in race, age, and gender by joining their hands and empathizing with one another. The curved oval lines come together to represent flexible thinking and expansive imaginations.

The triangles of various shapes and sizes in the four corners of the logo represent people opening both their hands and then joining hands with others to form a circle. This is a new Japanese concept of transcending race, age, and gender

*An expanse of water in front of the Pavilion cools the area and mirrors the three-dimensional façade with dramatic effect.*



Expo 2020 Dubai is the first International Registered Exposition to be held in the Middle East/Africa region. The theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future" emphasizes cooperation and partnership to create a better world.

*The Japan Pavilion goals for Expo 2020 are to:*

- Strengthen Japan's voice in the global community
- Develop and promote Japanese industry
- Increase inbound tourism
- Continue and add to the legacy of the Expo
- Empower the next generation of younger people with greater opportunities to realize their full potential.

Through the key word "Connect," the Japan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai will communicate to the world a clear vision of her potential in leading a future society based on the spirit, techniques, culture and other essential elements unique to Japan.



**JAPAN**  
EXPO 2020 DUBAI

*"A gentle image of Japan, formed by people joining hands."*



by bringing people together and sharing their feelings. The soft circle in the middle expresses the flexibility that matches the increasingly diverse Japan of the future, the ideas that emerge from refining and uniting people's thoughts to achieve this future, and their expanded visions.

It is the Japan Pavilion organizers' hope that this symbol can serve as a testament to the way people can come together for one collective purpose.

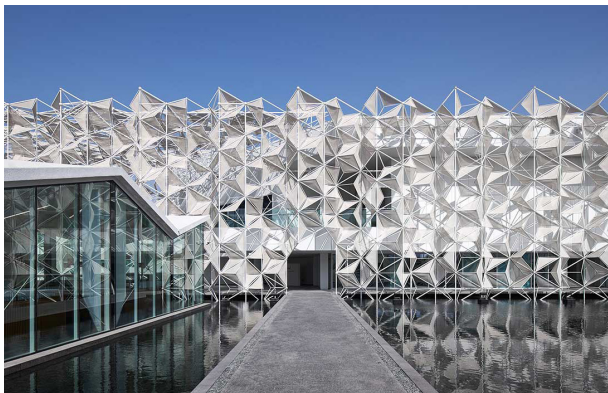


## Architecture

Through forging crossing paths from a global and future-oriented perspective between technologies, people and ideas, and then allowing these to fuse together, Japan aspires to contribute in meaningful ways to the processes that improve our world.

As a nation that has taken on many challenges in the history of its progressive development, Japan has already mastered the means for resolving various national issues. Building on this know-how, Japan is now posing new questions to the world, encouraging compassion and taking the initiative in seeking solutions with global themes.

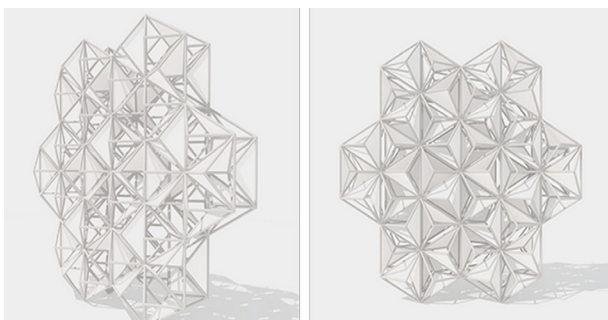
At the Japan Pavilion, visitors will experience examples of its encounters with external influences and learn about empathy and active involvement. The objective of the Japan Pavilion is to impart some insight on an individual basis which can hopefully translate into every person's participation in solving global issues and living in harmony in tomorrow's world.



Three-dimensional expression of Japanese Origami shapes. ▲

In the same spirit, the design of the Pavilion's facade combines traditional arabesque and Japanese asanoha patterns to represent the long history of connections and crossing of cultures between Japan and the Middle East.

Guests are welcomed at the pavilion with Japanese traditional Origami shapes that symbolize the respect shown to others through the Japanese art of Origami gift wrapping. With the same subtlety, a soft and thin layer of material similar to the Japanese traditional paper is used in the three-dimensional façade and protects the pavilion from the sunlight.



▲ Soft layer material- Installation system

Traditional Arabesque and Asanoha patterns  
-Structure ►



## Uniforms of the staff and hosts at the Japan Pavilion

Made with environmentally friendly and high-performance materials, the Japan Pavilion official uniform reinforces the Expo 2020 Dubai theme of connections between people, minds, and cultures. The uniform's jackets, sneakers, and bags feature a retro reflective print that looks white in regular conditions but transforms into an intricate pattern when hit by light.

This motif brings together shapes symbolizing diverse individualities (circles, triangles, and squares) to form a network of heart shapes, which in turn coalesce into a fusion of Middle Eastern arabesque and traditional Japanese patterns.

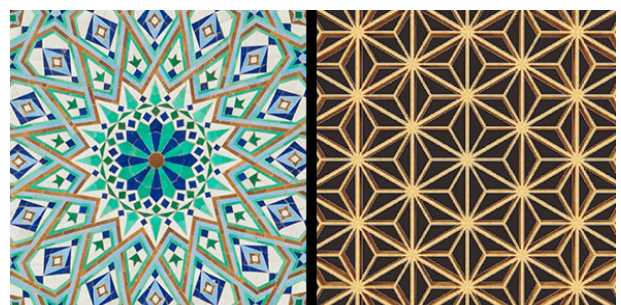
Designed by Morinaga Kunihiro of the globally recognized brand ANREALAGE, the outfits will be sponsored by leading global materials company Toray Industries, Inc.

Japan Pavilion uniform has been designed to fit a genderless shape. This unique approach makes the outfits accessible to a diverse range of body types, regardless of gender or size. The Japan Pavilion hopes that the Pavilion uniform will transcend all boundaries to connect people and minds at the international cultural crossover represented by the Expo.

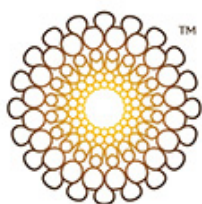
## Restaurants

Visitors from around the world will also be able to discover the joys of the quintessential Japanese dish, sushi, with prime ingredients and first-class service courtesy of a leading kaiten (conveyor belt) sushi chain Sushiro.

With 540 stores across Japan, as well as restaurants in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, this will be Sushiro's first venture in the Middle East, with the chain's first halal menu. The Japanese-themed dining area, combining traditional cuisine with leading-edge technology, will provide a place for diners from the Middle East and beyond to mingle and enjoy Sushiro's famous quality dishes together.



# "Blue Sky Dreaming": Australia at The Expo 2020 Dubai



EXPO  
2020  
DUBAI  
UAE



AUSTRALIA  
EXPO 2020 DUBAI  
BLUE SKY DREAMING

OFFICIAL PARTICIPANT

for the first time in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia region, Expo 2020 Dubai will be taking place 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The event will have 193 participating nations, with over 70% of its visitors expected from overseas. For stakeholder nations, this mega event facilitating global trade connections will focus on post Covid-19 economic and social recovery.

The Australian Pavilion is one of the largest national pavilions at Expo 2020 Dubai. Located in the Mobility District, the 3,500 sqm Australian Pavilion will maximize commercial trade opportunities for Australia, showcase their cultural assets and innovations, and tell the Australian story.

The Pavilion's theme, Blue Sky Dreaming harnesses the Australian national spirit of optimism and original ideas. This theme celebrates Australia's embracing openness where diversity, harmony, and collaboration thrive, and envisions a worldview founded on 60,000 years of indigenous connection to land, sea, and sky. The Australian Pavilion journey will link visitors to the country and invite all to share in the Australian stories of change that are connecting and mobilizing communities across the globe.

## Sustainability at the Australian Pavilion

Sustainability features prominently in the Australian Pavilion: Australian-made composite laminated timber using a game-changing manufacturing technique creates a product with superior structural and thermal properties. The world-first technique is a creation of The Hermal Group, and is manufactured by CLTP Tasmania.

Caroma Australia, whose products are installed in the pavilion toilets, will help monitor water use at the Australian Pavilion in real time.

Green Eco Technologies will be recycling the Pavilion's kitchen & table waste on site using their innovative WasteMaster system. The WasteMaster converts organic waste into a reusable residue without using additives or water, reducing waste weight by up to 80% and preventing greenhouse gas emissions from disposal to landfill.

Adhering to the main Expo site policies, the Pavilion will not be utilizing any disposable plastics for public use.

## Interesting aspects of Australia's participation

- The Pavilion will house Australian food and beverage outlets, a retail store, a VIP function room for hosting 150 guests, and an entertainment arena in the forecourt area.
- Some of the key programming themes are technology and innovation; diversity and inclusion; gender equality; and sustainable development goals.
- Australia is the co-lead on Education and the main lead on Sports themes at Expo 2020 Dubai.
- An Aussie Health & Fitness Sports Park will be located adjacent to the Pavilion where interactive and immersive programs will be available for all to enjoy. The sporting activities will promote gender equality and social inclusion. Australia will play a coordinator role at the 5,400 sqm Sports Park and run an ongoing base program over the six-month duration of the Expo. The Sports Park will be accessible to all international participants to host sporting events and to use as part of their National Day celebrations.
- Australia will also be showcasing its cultural excellence through a program of activities that increases awareness of Australia's diverse creative arts sector, and celebrates the richness of its Indigenous arts and culture. Performances, workshops, film screenings, and presentations will take place at the Pavilion forecourt over the six-month period.
- An interactive visitor experience tunnel designed by Accolade Event Management in collaboration with Josh Muir, a proud Yorta Yorta/Gunditjmara Indigenous member and Victoria-based multi-media artist, will take visitors on a journey of Australia's history through contemporary storytelling visuals.






## Over 120 events in 182 days

The Australian Pavilion will have an extensive and diverse events program spread across six months of Expo 2020 Dubai. The formats will be Interactive panel discussions; Conferences & symposia; Investor briefings; Roundtables; Workshops; Public talks and presentations; Cultural Performances; National day celebrations, and various collaborative activities with other participating nations.

The programs have been scheduled around the Expo Theme Weeks, major national events in the UAE region, and important celebrations in Australia, in coordination with key partners.

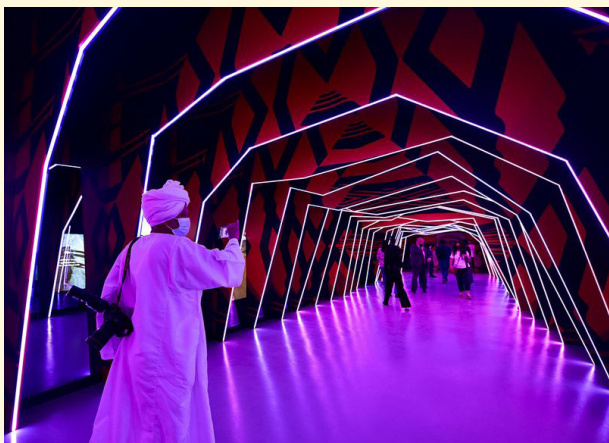
 Australia will also be holding ongoing workshops with partner nations to develop joint business programs during the Expo period.



## Australia's Business Program at the Expo 2020 Dubai

Expo has been positioned as the 'Business Olympics' for post Covid-19 global economic recovery. Australia's business program provides two deliverables: support for Australia's market diversification by promoting international B2B and B2G opportunities; and appeal for productive Foreign Direct Investment. Austrade (The Australian Trade and Investment Commission) is leveraging industry partners and large international commercial exhibitions taking place at the Expo 2020 Dubai (such as Gulfood, Arab Health, MENA Mining Show, WETEX, Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference), in order to deliver hybrid (in-person and virtual) activities. Australia's business program has been developed in consultation with numerous national stakeholders and is consistent with the Expo themes.

The major exhibitions at the Australian Pavilion target key sectors such as Healthcare, Resources & Mining, Education, Energy, Advanced Manufacturing and Food & Agribusiness. The priority Expo theme weeks for Australia that fit with



Austrade's sectors are Space (October 2021), Urban & Rural Development (November 2021), Knowledge & Learning (December 2021), Health & Wellness (February 2022), Food & Agriculture (February 2022), and Water & Infrastructure (March 2022).

Australia is also co-hosting a series of events and panel discussions with the Expo Organising Committee, the Women's Pavilion and other international partners, including events showcasing indigenous capabilities, mega science projects, future "AgTech" innovations, urban development as well as competence in sports and high-performance activities.

Australia will also be holding ongoing workshops with partner nations to develop joint business programs during the Expo period.



# A Candid Conversation with Nashid Nabian, Lead Architect of Iran Pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2020

By: Ghazal Mostafa



*Nashid Nabian and Rambod Eilkhani, who is her partner both in life and work, are the lead designers and founding partners of a Tehran-based architectural studio called "[Shift] Process Practice". The couple have been professionally practicing architecture and urban planning in Iran for over 20 years, and they are the designers of the Iranian pavilion at Dubai Expo 2020.*

**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview. Please introduce yourself and tell us about your field of activity and background.**

I'm an architect by education and profession. I did my master's in Architecture in Iran at Shahid Beheshti University, previously known as National University. I finished my graduate studies in 2000 and in 2003 I migrated to Canada and got a master's degree in Urban Design at the University of Toronto, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design. After graduation, from 2005 to 2006 I was in an urban research program as a senior researcher at University of Toronto. In 2006 I entered a Doctor of Design program

I award for pavilions at Expo 2020 I am competing with my supervisor!

From my second year in 2008 at Harvard, I started my teaching career as well. Along the way, I have taught at University of Toronto, Northeastern University, Rice University, MIT and of course my alma mater, Harvard. From 2010 until 2014 when I returned to Iran permanently, I was teaching at Harvard as a faculty member, and meanwhile researching on smart cities. At the time, I was also heading a joint program between University of Bergamo in Italy and Harvard Graduate School of Design on Smart Cities. In 2014, as I mentioned earlier, I came back to Iran.



at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, and so for the next four years I was doing my doctorate. My field of research during that time was digital augmentation of spaces, and it involved a lot of coding and reading about digital culture. In 2010 after getting my PhD from Harvard, I started a 2-year post-doctoral fellowship on Smart Cities at the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) SENSEable City Laboratory.

The SENSEable City Laboratory's research focuses on studying and predicting how digital technology is changing the way we describe, design, and occupy cities. I completed my fellowship under the supervision of Professor Carlo Ratti, who is incidentally one of the designers of the Italian pavilion at the Dubai 2020 Expo. So I guess in terms of the architecture

At the same time that I was busy with my academic tourism, if I may call them that, my husband Rambod and I were managing our newly set up architectural studio "[Shift] Process Practice" in Iran as well. Rambod never moved to the U.S or Canada, as he didn't believed in leaving Iran so I was going back and forth while he was based in Iran, essentially running the office. Of course, during the times that I was here in Tehran I would help him as well.

In the course of our 20 years of professional practice, Rambod and I have designed many projects, and moreover, we have imagined many projects. Some of the architectural designs that we conceptualized were built and some were not, as it is with all other architects. A few of the projects that were built have been recognized on national and international platforms, as were some architectural designs that remained





unbuilt. To date, [Shift] Process Practice is the recipient of 7 of Iran's Memar Awards which is the most prestigious architectural award for built projects in the country. On a global level, our projects have been showcased on Aga Khan Award for Architecture, World Architecture Festival, and World Architecture News, which are prestigious international architectural awards and venues. In the meantime, I have personally been contributing to many domestic and international architectural magazines and journals and I have also published books on architecture and smart cities.

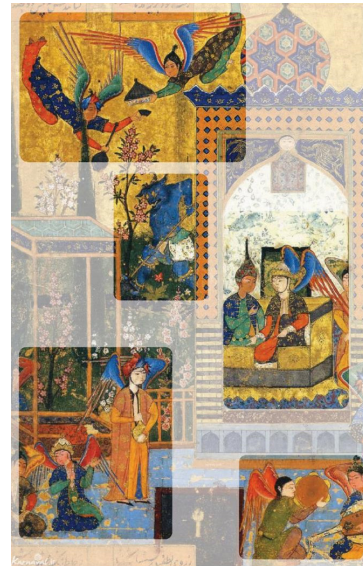
As for Rambod, he did his master's in Architecture in Iran at Shahid Beheshti University as well. He started his professional practice way before me, so he has been a practicing architect starting back in 1995 but we established our first office together around 2000. Rambod has been teaching in different educational venues in Iran including Azad University.

**Tell us about [Shift] Process Practice and its field of activity?**

Aside from Rambod and I who are founding partners of [Shift] Process Practice, we have a junior partner who joined us a couple years ago and her name is Dorna Mesrzadeh.

If I want to give you a short description of our office as professional practice, ours is a mid-size architectural design office. We are very much into the concepts of research-by-design and design-by-research. For each project, there is a lot of interdisciplinary research that our office engages in. In fact, [Shift] Process Practice has a research and development branch named Tehran Urban Innovation Center (TUIC), dedicated to research and architectural education.

We do our architectural research through this proxy office. We offer free classes, and all the knowledge that is being produced within the framework of TUIC activities, is published in an online series called TUIC101, also with open access on the TUIC website, [www.tuic.ir](http://www.tuic.ir). On each area of inquiry in architecture and urban planning that TUIC is engaged in, we



have published something on TUIC101 which is basically a collection of 101 points in that field of inquiry. I think we have, to date, published a total of 11 or 12 booklets on various topics. So that sums up our professional practice and research agenda.

**Tell us about some of your award-winning projects please.**

For Aga Khan Award for Architecture, we were shortlisted for a project called "Dowlat 2", which is a four-story, small-scale residential apartment, built in Tehran. It was quite a bit of an achievement for our office because although it was a very small project, the way that we were dealing with the problems pertaining to architectural design in a metropolitan area of a very complex city like Tehran was basically being acknowledged by Aga Khan jury in 2009.

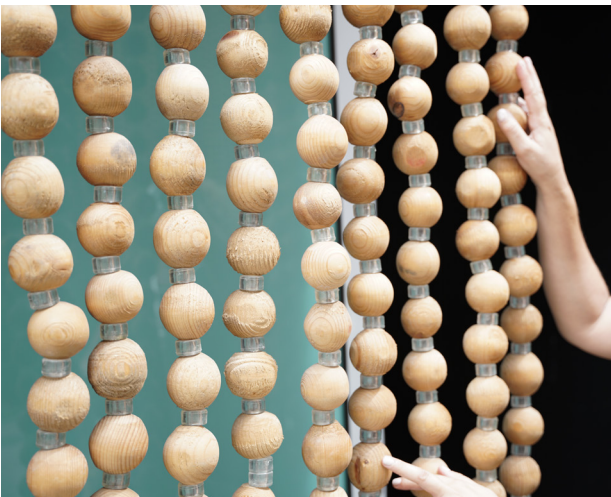


In 2012, our office building which is called “2 brothers-2 offices” and is our design and we built it ourselves, was shortlisted for World Architecture Festival. This is a small-scale office building in Tehran as well, and it is built out of exposed concrete with lots of complex detailing. Then in 2018, we had 2 projects shortlisted for World Architecture Festival; one of them was a villa called “inside-out” which is designed for Falahatian family in Isfahan.

At a conceptual level, the White Gallery functions as a Cabinet de Curiosités (Cabinet of Curiosities) which is this 19th century European construct for westerners who would visit the Orient. They would collect these exotic items on their trips and take them back to the West. From the beginning of 19th century, these “curiosity” cabinets emerged in the western version of domestic spaces as furniture items which would house the exotic objects and souvenirs of the Orient. You would open the cabinet and it would open your view to a horizon, oriental horizon, if I may say so. In a way, the White Gallery is very much inspired by this idea of Cabinet de Curiosités. It's a very introverted building, a very discreet presence. When you look at it from outside it looks like a fortress, but it seeks to merge into the residential background of Zafaraniyeh district in Tehran and not stand out. In a way it tries to hide itself between the punched facades of the residential apartment buildings.

Yet, once you get into the space, it has a very complicated area. The Gallery itself is built on a very small urban lot. Although the lot is just 140 square meters in size, I remember that when we were doing the photography of the Gallery, the photographer, Parham Taghioff, commented “Nashid, this is very interesting. I can see that it's a very small project, but I get lost in it!” That is because the sectional connections of the White Gallery are designed in complicated arrangements. In 2019, the design of “40-bagh” which is a high-end large-scale residential complex in Fereshteh neighborhood of northern Tehran got a memorable mention in World Architecture News, as the runner-up in residential category. The project was an attempt to reproduce urban villas on elevated platforms. Each and every residential unit in this project has a dedicated courtyard from which the unit is accessed. So, living in this particular project, although you are in a high-rise, you benefit from the luxury of having a garden, just like a villa.

At [Shift] Process Practice we have projects as small as 60 square meters and as big as 640,000 square meters. So, the scale of the project is not important for us. The scope of effectiveness of what we design on the users, on the spectators and on the architectural community is what we try to focus on.



### Tell us please about the design process of Iranian pavilion and how you got involved in Dubai 2020 Expo?

There was an official request for qualification (RFQ) that was announced by the Iranian Expo Committee. The public call for qualification was asking for the professional portfolio of registered offices plus a statement of how the office is aiming to approach the architectural problem of designing for Iranian Pavilion for the Dubai 2020 Expo, given that Dubai 2020 Expo had already announced its main theme. So we submitted our academic background, our resume, and samples from our professional portfolio including some of our past projects, along with recommendations from our clients. When we heard back from the Committee, they wanted to have more details about a number of our previous major projects that were representative of our professional practice. They also wanted to know about the organizational structure of our office and who would be leading the design if we got the project. And of course, our design philosophy for the project was important to the Iranian Expo 2020 Committee. So we submitted all these document - I think that we submitted a total of 300 pages of various supporting documents. We were then shortlisted and got interviewed in person about our projects and portfolio, and again our proposed design philosophy.

I'd like to expand a bit on the design philosophy here. Each design brief represents an architectural problem or issue to be solved. In this sense, I think architects are problem solvers. Based on the design brief, we come up with a question, a problem at hand, and we need to address it and find a solution to the “problem”. The question to be addressed for a national pavilion in an international Expo is, “how can you capitalize on the potentials of architecture as a ‘discipline’ in its true essence, to create a national brand or to provide a medium for one?” National branding should illustrate cultural specifics of a nation, while creating this same image of that





nation as globally connected. So, national branding implies that we are global enough that you can have a conversation with us, but at the same time, we are locally specific in a way that what emerges from our conversation is going to be unique and different from your conversations with others.

In addition, when we were addressing the architectural project as reflected within the design philosophy, we explained our belief that historically speaking, the Expo is a platform for different nation-states to brand themselves as modern, up to date, and contemporary entities, while capitalizing on how their culture and civilization is trying to thrive domestically given prevailing global circumstances and challenges. At some point in the past, perhaps in the early days of world expositions, different nations would try to brand themselves in terms of their technological achievements.

However, today, participants believe that Expo should be about cultural distinctions, because technology has been, let's say, globalized in the sense that it has crept into our lives in the same way everywhere.

**What was the holistic concept of your design? In terms of volumetric design of Iranian pavilion, what ideas inspired you?**

When we started to think about the project, we thought that the conceptual design phase should be led in a trans-disciplinary way, so we teamed up with a series of other firms with different areas of expertise. For example, we involved people like Hossein Madani, who is a design anthropologist; Siamak Farshchi who is in the business of branding and hospitality; Iman Maghsoodlou, an interior designer, and Farhad Fozooni, a graphic designer and artist. We also wanted Yaser Moosapour involved as an architect who is very good at history and theory of architecture. Also, we chose Amirhossein Taheri another architect whose approach

toward architecture is very substantial and fundamental in the way that concept takes shape in my opinion. So for many days, we weren't even drawing a line; all we did was talk about ideas we had. It's very interesting how cross-fertilization between different disciplines happens in these kinds of brainstorming sessions; an idea which may be a mundane idea in design anthropology or in social sciences, when adopted in discipline of architecture for instance, can create wonders.

We started talking about how Iran's pavilion can be a door into our contemporary routines of life both in terms of domestic as well as communal and societal traditions. We also discussed how, because of misrepresentation of our country in international media, perhaps due to our unique geopolitics, so many wonders of our country are not portrayed properly to the outsiders. So we talked about these wonders, what it is that makes us really distinctive in terms of a nation, a culture and a civilization plateau. We considered our diverse geography and our old civilization and young population. We moved on to examine our contemporary art, which is currently one of the only aspects of Iran that is being noticed by westerners in auctions like Christie's. Then we weighed in our cuisine which is also quite characteristic of an ancient culture. One of the ideas that came out of our conversations was the concept of emergence as a component and character of our culture, and how everything in our culture has a way of "emerging" over time. In our cuisine for instance, the final taste emerges through hours of simmering and blending, and this reflects so many other aspects of Iranian psyche and tradition.

Our team's discussions evolved into talking about our folklore art, and soon the topic turned to the practice of our everyday lives - which is quite unique as well because each of us leads kind of parallel lives as our domestic private practices are different from social practice in many ways. Politics also came up in our talks. You may ask why politics? It's because politics in its most general term, is a part of the discipline of Architecture. Iran's plateau, the Old Persia, has been host to the longest continuous government in the region, and why is that? In our long history stretching over millennia, Iran has been under serious invasions from the east to the west and from the south to the north, and we are still here as a nation. Every historical fact adds up to the expectation that Iran as a country should not exist at this point. But, here we are still, and I think the reason for that is this fact that Iranians are very good at politics and diplomacy. They know how to converse, and they know how to negotiate deals. There have been distractions along the way, but generally, they know how to turn violence into a conversation of civilizations. Then we thought about Shahrazad and recognized that Shahrazad is the embodiment of politics in Iran.



Out team deliberated what was it that Shahrazad did? Soon we reached the conclusion that by telling stories, Shahrazad postpones, for 1001 nights, the violence of a king who is eager to kill. Looking at this idea from another perspective we can say that conversation in Persian means telling stories and offering narratives. Inspired by this perception, we had our “story” to tell! We decided to create an emerging narrative of contemporary Iran and we envisioned that each part of the narrative should be a singular spatial pocket - a “conversation” - in the Iran pavilion giving visitors the choice of whether they want to be exposed to that micro-narrative or not. In this way, each individual would have a very personal reading of contemporary Iran based on their choices of visiting different parts of the pavilion. So based on how you decided to navigate this collectivity of spatial pockets, you would have your own personalized narrative of my country. Thinking about Shahrazad as an inspiring mythology, we thought that the pavilion shouldn't be a singular autonomous monolithic building. It should be some sort of a field condition with modules of space conversing with each other within space and time. That's why when you look at the plan of our proposal, it is a collection of cubes, distributed in the allocated area for the project with a lot of open space in between. When you enter the Iran pavilion, it is not perceived as a building. Instead, the visitor experiences it as a neighborhood of small spatial pockets, each with its own story to tell.

The main theme of Dubai 2020 Expo is “creating future, connecting minds.” So we translated the first part to this idea of “thinking of a low-definition future.” What I mean is that for us Iranians with all this turbulent history and our current status, the future is never quite defined and predictable. The Iranian survival strategy is thinking of a short term future with this mentality which is reflected in poems of some of our most famous poets like Khayyam, and that's how they manage to maintain their sanity amidst all sorts of crises. For the second part, or the “connecting minds”, of the Expo theme, we reflected on the fact that our technique of resilience as a nation is “celebrating empathy.” We are quite diverse and perhaps the reason is that we always re-appropriate other cultures: we have borrowed from invaders like Arabs, Turks and Mongols, and all these cultures are somehow absorbed into Persian culture, morphing into a Persian version of themselves. For us that had something to do with the fact that our culture is very empathic. With this approach, and reinterpreting the theme of the Expo, we came up with this dual concept of “thinking of a low-definition future, celebrating empathy.”

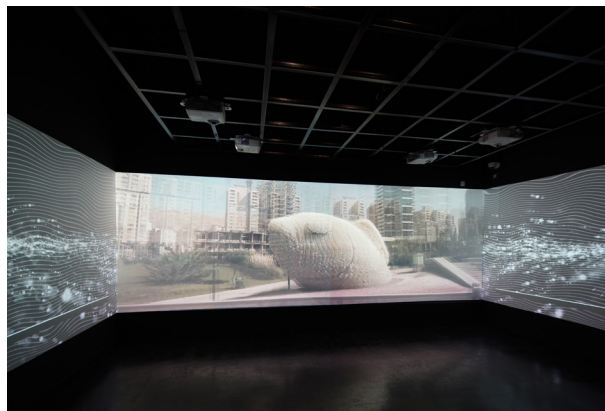
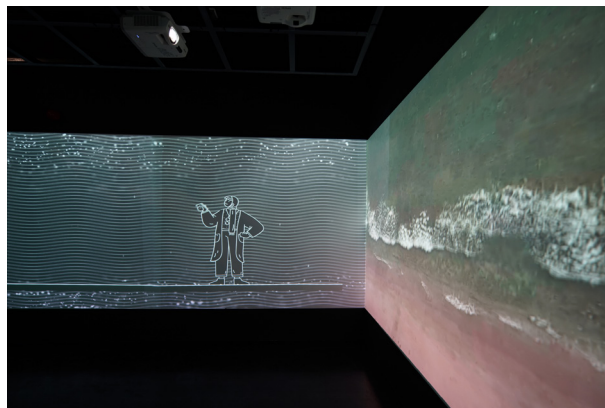
In terms of the architectural concept, the spatial diagram of the pavilion is this field condition of a series of cubes with a bit of randomness and this is very much what's happening in our tradition of miniature painting as well. Each part of the canvas in a miniature painting is telling a different part of a story simultaneously. This was one of the first diagrams we created for our design where we framed different parts of the story or narrative of contemporary Iran in different cubes. Following the tradition of miniature painting, in terms of creating a narrative in diffused fashion, we chose to go with this field condition of concurrent micro narratives. The other idea we incorporated into our design was that Iranians have always had some sort of a soft power as opposed to hard power. If we follow the turbulent history of Iran, from Amir Kabir to Mosaddegh and Zarif, there is some sort of a soft power of diplomacy at work.

This idea of soft against hard was another concept that inspired us for the symbolism of the architectural language, the non-negotiable and hard surface of the blue glass in contrast to negotiable soft bead curtains that are juxtaposing the blue hard surfaces.

## How did the design process work?

What I explained was in terms of volumetric design that was inspired by Shahrazad and the Arabian 1001 Nights, deconstructing a narrative down into its elements. Afterwards, we needed to choose an architectural strategy. To do that, we devised our first spatial diagram; a sort of colony of three-dimensional pockets, operating as a field condition, meaning that we were bringing together a diverse set of elements while allowing them the space to express their individual identity. Now we needed to further develop this spatial diagram into an architectural project. So that's when we had to choose an architectural language.

What inspired us in terms of architectural language, was this duality between earth and sky which is present in vast



of the country are flat where you see the horizon at the far distance. There, something sublime happens: land meets the sky along a clear-cut line, and this creates a duality between the color of earth and the color of sky which you see in our traditions of art and architecture, from miniature paintings to the architecture of mosques and the art of mosaic in architectural ornamentalations. In all of these forms of Iranian art you notice the turquoise color of the sky set against the earth tone colors. This duality inspired us in terms of choosing the architectural language. That's why each of those spatial pockets are envisioned as a blue cube with a bead curtain as a secondary tier of the architectural threshold.

There is something very poetic about the bead curtain; it is a border, but at the same time, it isn't. I mean, it has some level of ephemerality, it is negotiable, you can enter it from everywhere. But in between the bead curtain and the turquoise solid cube, there is a very peculiar space as well. You are inside, but at the same time, you are not. This creates a sort of tiered gradual spatial embodiment, so the borders of each spatial pocket are not defined and are therefore negotiable, and each three-dimensional pocket becomes like a place with negotiable boundaries.



Another aspect of the bead curtain is that it engages other sensory experiences as well; if the wind passes, you can hear the beads bumping into each other. If they get wet, you will have a different olfactory experience. The touch is important as well, because when you touch it, it is negotiable and your tactile understanding of the project is going to be quite different from one moment to the next as they cling to each other in one way or another.

Initially, we proposed that the bead curtain should be out of a sort of baked clay, but given the limitations that happened during the construction, Covid-19 and the economic sanctions against Iran, bead curtains could not be produced either in Iran or Dubai and as a result the client (Iranian Expo Committee) asked us to change it to wooden spheres. That was not ideal but still a lot of those spatial effects and sensory registers remained untouched in the project. bureaucratic procedures hindered the process. We also had difficulty procuring all material that was needed and because of the limitations in terms of Sanctions, many providers would unfortunately not work with Iran's pavilion. So it was a constant fight to make this figment of our imagination a reality. But step by step it finally happened!

**Please describe more some of the challenges you faced during the design and the construction process of Iran's pavilion at Dubai 2020 Expo?**

I think this was one of the hardest projects that I have coordinated so far. One of the challenges that we had was that different parts of the pavilion had been assigned to different operators (like those representing the arts and culture of Iran, or the technology, energy, mining sectors of the country) and so coordinating their respective wishes for their space was quite hard. What I mean is that as the architect of the building, I was familiar with each part of the design, and for the past 3 years I had been living with this project so it had been a part of my daily life. So I had to make sure that what each of the operators wanted was aligned with what I had designed. It was quite a bit of a challenge as So from here the client had to choose a contractor as we were not involved in this phase of the process. As designer, aside from the architectural plan, [Shift] Process Practice was responsible for preparation and delivery of the "bill of quantity" which itemized materials, parts, and labor for budget purposes based on construction documents. Once delivered, the client would go for a separate construction bid and choose a locally registered contractor in Dubai to implement the design.

**Did you stay involved during the construction process? What role did you have during construction?**

We were supervising the construction in terms of the quality of execution of details. It was not easy to communicate effectively with the client and the contractor as red tape and you can imagine. But at the end of the day, I think it was all worth it. I believe that the result is in fact very good and we were all very proud that we were involved in it.

**What did you have in mind in terms of material choice for the project and the interior design of different spatial pockets?**

For the interior of the pavilion, we wanted a very minimal style. We went with white and grey concrete and white plaster. As for the exterior, we wanted a sort of sky-ish blue, turquoise kind of color scheme. That's why we went with colored glasses for the façade of the cubes, so the glass is in the front and the color coat is in the back, and you have the reflection of the glass and the turquoise color at the same time. As I mentioned before, the bead curtains

were supposed to be made of cooked clay, but it just didn't happen. There was an interesting local provider but the problem was the limitations of transportation and shipping, insurance and the like. Economic sanctions were another impediment to financial transactions, and then Covid-19 happened. We simply couldn't find any provider in Dubai who would be willing to produce that many spheres in that short a time, so we changed it to wood. That's the only thing that I regret, but I know that given the circumstances of construction, no other option was logistically possible.

**Earlier you mentioned that Iran is misrepresented globally. How do you think grand venues like the Expo can enhance the global presence of Iran as a nation?**



To begin with, I don't believe that management and agency of Expo should be under the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade. Expo committee should come under Ministry of Culture. Expo is not a business opportunity. It is a cultural platform. One of the major challenges in terms of maintaining the focus of the project, content-wise, is this misunderstanding of the nature of the Expo. I think that if for the next venue, there was a way for the Iran pavilion to be led by the Ministry of Culture, then a lot of misunderstandings about the nature of this event, and the goal of the architectural space dedicated to Iran's representation in such a venue, would be resolved. For the current pavilion, it was quite challenging to make those in charge understand that in Expo you brand yourself culturally, in a contemporary language, and that's how you create business opportunities - although the idea is that it is not a DIRECT business opportunity! You cannot blatantly conduct transactions in your pavilion. None of the other participating nations would do that. So I think this bureaucratic misunderstanding is a very important concept - even more so than sanctions because at the end of the day the project has been built. But it would have been way easier to communicate content to a group who had culture in mind as a priority and not transactional business.

**It is the first time that Expo is happening in the Middle East and North Africa region. How important is that for Iran as a neighboring country?**

Expo taking place in Dubai is very significant for Iran. I mean the Expo is happening in the south of a very important body of water that even its name was a tug of war. Therefore, Iran's presence and contribution to this international event on its southern border is essential. The Expo is also a platform for conversation, in terms of regional geopolitics and context. It is a very good opportunity for soft politics. When a country participates in the Expo, it brands itself as a contemporary nation, and at the same time, it builds on the fact that it's a nation of dialogue.

Another crucial aspect of the Expo is its global context, which is once again, a very important opportunity to set the record straight. In the minds of the global community,

Middle East has always been coupled with tension and war, with radicalism, and oil politics. But now, the name of the region is connected with culture, with dialogue between different civilizations, with national branding, with future and hope, and with conversations around sustainability and resilience. What bad can come out of it?! It was obviously very important for us that we have a representation at the Dubai Expo 2020. I think these are the opportunities a nation shouldn't miss.

**Were you involved in provision of content in other parts of the pavilion like the spatial pockets or cubes?**

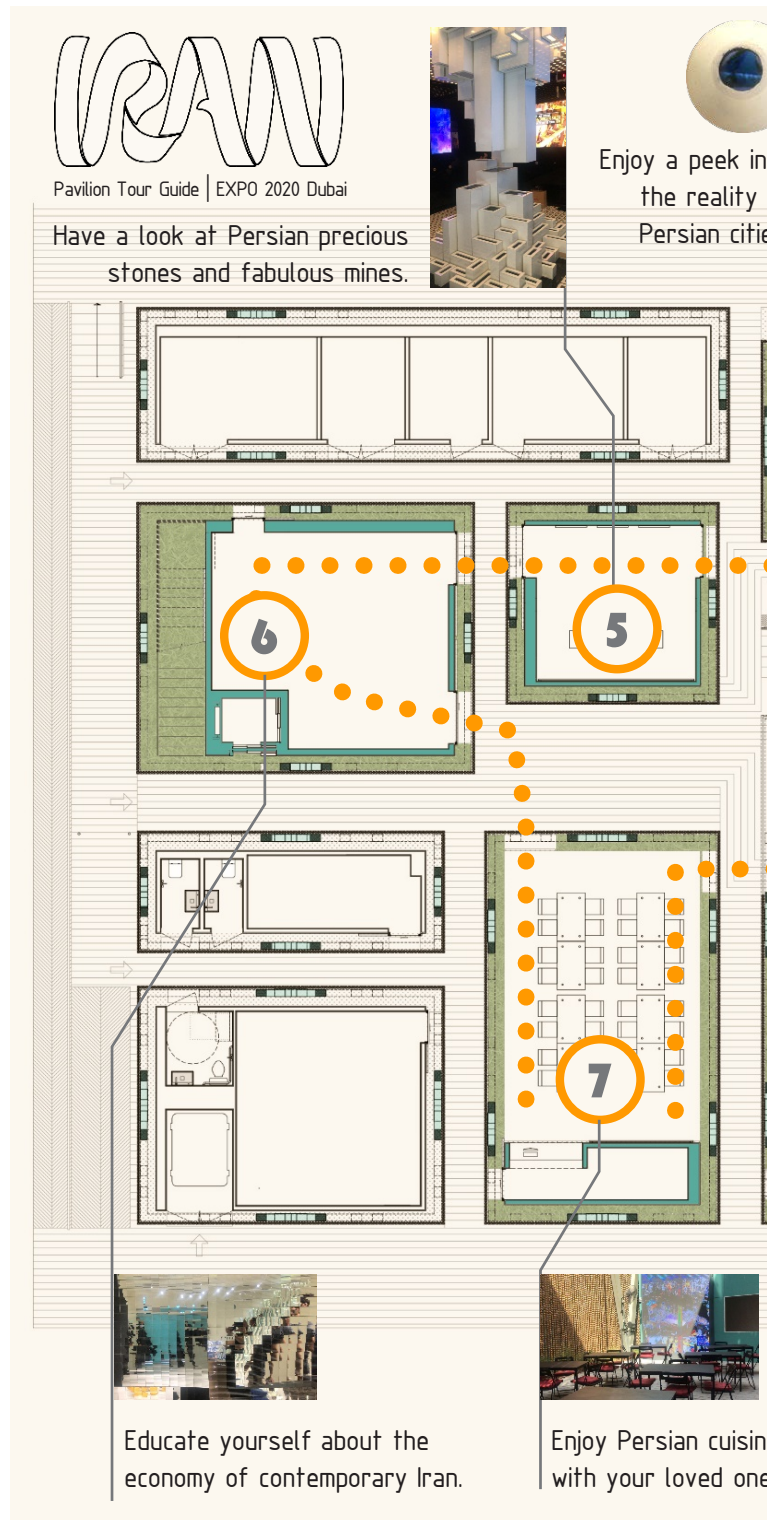
One of the people with whom during the coordination of content I had the honor and joy of working was Dr. Sorena Sattari, Deputy Research and Technology Officer of the President and Director of the National Elites Foundation. One of the pockets, Gallery #9, was allocated to their unit. They approached us and wanted to include us in provision of content. During many brainstorming sessions with their representatives, we decided that for that particular spatial pocket, we are going to go with a "meta narrative" of contemporary Iran based on young and globally connected population of Iran.

We wanted to show how this globally connected middle class of educated Iranians are leading their lives using contemporary technologies which they had to develop themselves because of the sanctions. For example, in North America, there is Amazon, and in Iran we have Digikala. If they have Uber, then we come up with Snapp. And the examples are so many in this regard. Because of the sanctions and because we are grudgingly disconnected from the world markets, this void of global market products has created a national ecosystem of innovation from which a lot of domestic startups have emerged. We came up with this idea of an immersive media space for Gallery #9 that provides a very fast paced audio-visual content that puts you as the spectator within the context of everyday life in Iran facilitated by different Iranian smart applications and novel technologies. I really like the outcome of the content for that spatial pocket, and I think that it is one of best in the Iran pavilion.

**As Expo is going on, what are your wishes and hopes for our national pavilion?**

Hopefully it will be documented well and the visitors will be exposed to a part of the reality of contemporary Iran which is a very diverse and exciting fact. This reality can't be framed in conventional media-driven frames and I'm very happy that we were able to represent Iran in a way that is not portrayed through the orientalist lens of westerners and it's not self-

Orientalizing either. Self-Orientalizing refers to the situation when somebody from the east tries to represent herself through the lens of orientalism herself, to wrongly idolize a culture. So we tried to make sure we are not obsessing over contemporary Iran either. We are realistic and it is not a fantasy. It is a real narrative of what's happening in our country and how Iran should be branded as a nation-state.







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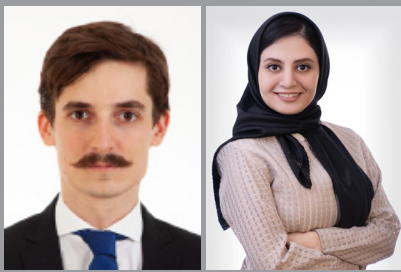


Iran International Exhibitions Co.  
Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade

Architectural Design of the Pavilion by:  
[Shift] Process Practice

# Intellectual Property law in Iran: What you need to know

By: Ferdowsi Law Firm



**PAUL-ARTHUR LUZU** is a partner at Ferdowsi Legal, a multinational consulting firm in commercial, tax, legal and trading fields. Trained as a lawyer and based in Tehran, Paul-Arthur primarily assists foreign companies interested in the Iranian market, including for compliance and sanctions issues. Besides Iran, he is active in the Middle East at large.

**SIMA GHAFFARI** is an associate at Ferdowsi Legal and a member of the Iran Bar Association. Sima is currently an International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Young Arbitrators Forum (YAF) Representative in the North Africa, Middle East and Turkey.

Iran's research and innovative sector being a lively scene and Iran remaining a strong commercial market, intellectual property (IP) and the protection of creative activities are key issues to consider when doing business here.

Whether you work in a small and mid-size enterprise (SME) or a multinational company, what brought about your success might be target of replication, your brands and products may be counterfeited, and your ideas could be sold without your consent. Some foreign companies negligently kept Iran in the blind spot of their IP strategy and discovered too late that their brands and innovations were not sufficiently protected when the Iranian market reopened after the JCPOA was signed in 2016. Certain Iranian companies chose on the other hand to crudely imitate foreign brands instead of creating their own strong domestic brands.

And this misrepresentation extends to even the copying of the packaging features of popular foreign products. In this environment of counterfeiting and copying without license, the benefits of protecting personal creations are often unfortunately not considered in Iran. But now, a resurgent trend is seen for domestic production of foreign brands, under license, thanks to the quality of the operational infrastructure of local partners. This strategy to enter the Iranian market may solve plenty of sanctions issues but it also raises IP questions.

Furthermore, one should be aware of how to protect one's intellectual property rights including original designs, trademarks, inventions, innovative products, confidential information, etc. Based on the definition provided by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), IP rights can be divided into strategic categorizations including patents, trademarks, trade secrets and copyrights.

## Protection of IP rights, where is Iran?

At the international level, Iran is a member of WIPO and has acceded to key treaties with respect to the topic of IP including the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, the Madrid Agreement and Protocol for International Registrations of Trademarks, the NICE agreement for International Classification of Goods and Services, Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration. In the context of copyrights, Iran has not signed the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. Hence, Iran has not reached the same extent as Western countries regarding its intellectual property legislation.

The Iranian domestic legislation organizes the protection of patents, industrial design, and trademarks as well as the more traditional creative works like books and music and other less business-oriented products. Also, Iran passed a specific Act on the Protection of Rights of Computer Software over twenty years ago in 2000.

However, the Iranian legal system does not provide a strong protection for trade secrets and there is no provision as to related utility models. By exception, the Electronic Commerce law refers to trade secrets that can be of electronic nature or with electronic support. Yet a well-drafted Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) or a confidentiality agreement for a specific period and with deterrent penalties can also serve the interests of the innovators and businesses. Protection by a legally binding NDA is not limited to the intellectual property like designs or formulae, or business ideas, and can also cover all information that parties classify as confidential information. Thus, given the lack of protection of trade secrets by law, NDAs should be considered at

the onset of any conversation before discussing any intended disclosure of important innovations or ideas to third parties (e.g., investors, etc.). The exclusion of any items from confidential treatment as well as the term of the agreement should also be clearly cited in the NDA.

## Registering your trademarks and patents

Without registration of the IP rights in Iran, one cannot bring an action for infringement. In Iran, only visible signs can constitute a trademark, therefore sounds or smells are not protected as trademarks which only include logos, words, symbols, designs, or slogans. Moreover, marks and patents should be Sharia'-compliant and cannot be contrary to Rules of Sharia, public order or morality. Foreign companies can easily find what would be considered contrary to Shariah law. However other elements are less obvious if a company does not have a local advisor. For instance, using a national flag in your trademark is not allowed.

Registering your trademark or patent can be done online in Iran. There is an online search database (in Persian) for patents and trademarks that applicants are advised to check in order to verify that previous identical or similar IP rights are not already registered in Iran. However, the scope of available public information online is quite limited. In fact, with respect to patents, one can only find claims of the inventor as to the benefits of a particular patent, a short description of the technical issues and relevant graphs and pictures. As to trademarks, one can find whether an identical trademark or brand is registered and if so, name of the owner of the brand, date of application and category of the label. As such it is highly recommended that companies and individuals conduct a thorough and comprehensive IP



research in the government databases and official gazettes to ensure that the IP rights that are being applied for are not already protected, used by a third party or are not identical or too similar to one in the same category. This will save time and money for the applicant and will avoid any potential litigations. The Industrial Property General Office of State Organization for Registration of Deeds and Properties in Tehran is responsible for all the issues related to the administration of the IP rights. The applications for registration and protection of IP rights should be filed online on the Industrial Property Office's

Obviously, the protection of trademarks and other products eligible for registration under IP rights will be rejected if they constitute copies or imitations of assets already protected and if the conditions for registration are not satisfied. This is particularly applicable for identical or similar trademarks on comparable goods or services, where a likelihood of confusion is possible. Furthermore, an application for a patent will be rejected if the subject of the application is not patentable, does not result from an inventive and original activity, or is not considered innovative by reference to applicable technical

## Protection of your IP rights: Points of attention

Any enterprise is exposed to risks that can affect its innovative and creative activities. This affects domestic companies and obviously foreign ones as well. The risk exposure can be addressed if a proper IP and legal strategy is built with the view to protecting the creative ideas and preparing to defend one's rights if and when necessary. Foreign companies investing or trading with Iran are much more at risk of facing deceitful registration troll trademarks or copycats. Ignored for a long time by key brands, the Iranian market has been re-discovered with the lifting of the international sanctions under the JCPOA.

Many foreign companies doing business in Iran suddenly realized at that time that they were either insufficiently protected or not at all with respect to their IP rights.

Indeed, this may have serious consequences for such foreign companies as Iranian courts will deny protection should the IP right of a foreign holder is not decisively registered in Iran, and several courts have in the past considered the owner of a brand not registered in Iran without legal stance or fallback in case of copycat registration. Also, from a business point of view, we can assume that confusion may exist or maybe created by Iranian companies with a well-known worldwide brand, while Iranian courts might rule that a foreign brand does not exist, for sanctions reason, in the mind of Iranian consumers.



website and supplemented with the required documents. Based on their respective IP and commercial strategies, applicants can, where possible, also apply for an international extension of the protection of their IP rights. This protection applies to trademarks under the so-called Madrid Agreement. If the application file is duly prepared and the conditions for registration and protection are met, the IP right is granted for a definite period of time, which is 10 years from the filing date of the application for trademarks (this period can be renewed for consecutive 10-year periods upon payment of the prescribed fees), and 20 years from the filing date for patents (if annual fees are paid on schedule). Attention should be paid to the protection of a patent as it is not renewable and ends at the end of the 20-year period. Also, the starting point of the protection of certain patents may differ, as for instance for medicines and some pharmaceutical products.

Foreign or non-resident applicants are advised to appoint an agent in Iran to perform IP searches and applications, and to provide the necessary and appropriate Power of Attorney to their agent. All the required documents for submission must be in Persian.

resources and environment. Protection of inventive and creative activities provides some means to the holders of IP rights should these rights be infringed. One may obviously resort to legal action for infringement in cases of counterfeiting. The holder of an IP right can also direct its actions against any competing IP rights obtained illegally: for instances the owner of a trademark can file a lawsuit and request the annulment of a competing, imitating or confusing trademark in accordance with article 41 of the Patents, Industrial Designs and Trademarks Registration Act. Likewise, the legitimate owner of a patent can request the invalidation of a competitor's patent which does not meet the required legal conditions (e.g., no innovation, no inventive action). Holders of IP rights must also pay attention to use the IP rights they have registered to avoid an action for invalidation brought by any interested third party claiming that the IP right has not received practical use. This is true for patents that have not reached industrial application or for trademarks not used over a 3-year period.

IP infringements also qualify for criminal response; intentional infringement can be punished by fines and/or imprisonment up to 6 months.

*Foreign or non-resident applicants are advised to appoint an agent in Iran to perform IP searches and applications, and to provide the necessary and appropriate Power of Attorney to their agent.*



# Intellectual Property Laws within the Iranian Legal System

By: Dadflamingo

*\* Dad Flamingo is a full-service business law and valuation firm, qualified by the Iranian Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology as a "Knowledge-Based Company" in both legal and valuation fields. Based in Tehran and Istanbul and recognized by the Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology in 2020 as "The Best Iranian Company" in Human and Social Sciences, "Dad Flamingo provides legal, financial and valuation services in all fields of industry with a particular emphasis on technology related businesses and venture capital domain. The capability of supporting the legal, financial and fiscal aspects of the referred matters at the same time, hiring and developing the latest innovative tools (AI, blockchain and big data) and providing the most practical solutions for every case are the main advantages of Dad Flamingo which enables its clients to enjoy fully integrated "one stop" legal and financial services.*



## Introduction

Over the last two decades, Intellectual Property ("IP") has become a subject of much debate and discussion among lawyers and stakeholders in the international trade arena. Technological developments, including in communications, the ever-increasing number of new inventions and the emergence of new businesses have also increased the relevance of this area on the domestic level.

Protection of IP rights is not a recent development under Iranian law, as the first piece of legislation dedicated to industrial signs and trademarks passed by the Iranian legislature dates back to 1925. Since then, with the aim of keeping pace with the global trends in IP laws, the Iranian government has passed and, where necessary, amended several sets of rules and regulations governing and protecting IP rights including trademarks and trade names, patents, industrial designs, and geographical indications.

Iran is a signatory to the 1959 Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization since 2002. As a member of the Madrid Agreement, in 2003 Iran also signed its Protocol on the Universal Registration of Trademarks. Finally, Iran has been a party to the Nice Agreement for the International Classification of Goods and Services since 2018. Under Iran's IP laws, a trademark, depending on its nature, can be protected under two different Acts: 1) the Patents, Industrial Designs and Trademarks Registration Act, effective as of 2008 ("Act of 2008"), and 2) the Electronic

Commerce Act of 2003 ("Act of 2003"). Additionally, administrative and judicial precedents play an important role in many aspects of IP rights protection in Iran.

In this Article, we will discuss the definition of a trademark, the difference between a trademark and a trade name, the mechanism of a trademark's protection and its expiration, as well as the related dispute resolution system under the Iranian legal framework.

## Trademark overview

Trademark is not a newly established concept. In fact, trademarks had already existed in the ancient world. Centuries ago, Indian craftsmen used to engrave their signature on their works of art before sending them to Iran.

Trademark as a branch of IP rights assumes particular importance as it can help traders grow their business and establish their own dedicated brands. With trademarks, the goods and services of business owners can be distinctly defined and recognized thereby securing the branded products from being misappropriated out in the marketplace. Trademarks also help to protect consumers and the public from misleading competitive behavior and practices. Trademarks can be registered and owned by both natural and legal persons.

### Trademark definition

A proper understanding of trademarks requires a precise definition. A trademark can be defined as any symbol or sign or a combination of both used to identify a product or a service. A trademark can consist of any word, shape, sound, color or a combination of such. Article 30(a) of the Act of 2008 employs more or less the same definition; however, it is noteworthy that Iranian law only allows registration of visible signs as a trademark, thus making invisible signs such as sounds and voices not eligible to be registered as trademarks. Moreover, there are specific requirements to meet for registration of a trademark, such as being distinctive and non-deceptive.

## Trademark vs. Trade name:

A trade name and a trademark are two concepts that may sound similar but are in fact different. A trademark, as defined under Article 30 (c) of the 2008 Act, is a name or title that identifies and distinguishes a natural or legal person from others. A trade name, on the other hand, is a legal name by which a natural or legal person is known in a particular trade or profession. The main difference between a trademark and a trade name is that business owners have only one trade name but they can choose multiple trademarks



for their goods and services. In other words, while a trade name represents the image of a legal or natural person itself, a trademark represents a person's goods and services. However, a trade name can be often the same as a trademark.

**Protection of national and International Trademarks in Iran:** According to the 2008 Act, the Iranian legal system provides no protection for unregistered trademarks meaning that a trademark must be registered with the Industrial Property Office of Iran to be protected. There are two exceptions to the general rule:

Trademarks that are well-known, as defined in the Act, can be protected without the need for registration. A well-known trademark is a trademark that, may enjoy a degree of protection, even when unregistered, due to its widespread recognition.

Trademarks that were continuously used before the ratification of the Act of 2008, can be protected without the need

in Iran, it is protected from use and misuse by others in this territory so that no one other than its registered owner has the right to use it without the trademark's owner permission. In the event of an infringement, the owner of the trademark is entitled to take legal action against the perpetrator both to stop the infringement and to receive compensation for any damages.

#### **International trademark system (Madrid):**

Foreign trademark owners can enjoy equal legal protections in Iran like those who have registered their trademark in Iran. Instead of being directly registered in Iran, International trademarks can be registered for use in Iran through the WIPO-Madrid system, without any need for establishing a subsidiary or a branch in the country (an otherwise legal requirement for registering a trademark in Iran).

#### **Expiration of Legal Protections:**

By registering a trademark, protection of that trademark and the rights arising from its protection begin. However, this protection is not indefinite and will expire in the following events.



for registration. According to Article 20 of the Trademarks and Patents Registration Act of 1931, the owners of these types of trademarks have the priority right to register their respective trademark.

#### **To register a trademark the following essential requirements must be met. The trademark:**

*Must be capable of distinguishing one company's products or services from those of others.*

Must not be identical with, or confusingly similar to, or constitute a translation of a trademark which is well known in Iran for identical or similar goods or services of another enterprise in Iran.

Must not be identical to a trademark registered in the name of a different owner with an earlier filing date, or priority right, with respect to the same goods and services.

In addition to the protection given by the Act of 2008, the Act of 2003 also protects the IP rights of a trademark owner in cyberspace. According to the Article 66 and 76 of this Act, use of trademarks as domain name or any online usage of trademarks which may mislead or deceive the other party in terms of the originality of goods and services is illegal and the offender will be punished with a one to three years prison sentence and a penalty of 20,000,000 to 100,000,000 IR Rials.

Registration of a trademark protects it by creating the exclusive right of usage for its owner. Once a trademark is registered

#### **Expiration of legal protection period**

Around the world, registration of a trademark is valid for different durations depending on the country in which the trademark is registered.

In Iran, according to Article 40 (d) of the Act of 2008, a registered trademark is valid for ten years as of the filing date of its application for registration. This protection period can be renewed at the request of the trademark's owner for one more ten-year period.

#### **Disuse of the trademark for more than three years**

If the trademark's owner does not use the registered trademark on a continued basis for a period of three years as of its registration date (except in the event of force majeure), any interested party (e.g., competitors) can put a request for revocation of this registered trademark before the court which may annul the registration before the end of the 10-year life of the registration.

*JCPOA signatories should show a clear gesture of good faith, and as a matter of simply giving economic weight to any talks connection*



## The impact of economic sanctions on intellectual property:

Iran has been subject to a variety of financial and trade sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union over the past several years, which have had adverse effects on different aspects of the presence and activities of foreign businesses in Iran. One such element to consider is what impacts economic sanctions may have had on IP rights of a foreign entity in Iran. In principle, sanctions currently in force do not deprive IP owners from protecting their IPs and enforcing the associated rights in this country. However, the owners of IPs have had to consider whether their principal activities are subject to any constraints under the sanctions. In certain circumstances, some foreign entities may choose to halt their operations in Iran until the international restrictions are removed or eased, and such suspension of activities may last for as long as a few years. As mentioned earlier, disuse of a trademark for a more than a 3-year period is one of the grounds which may lead to forced expiration of a trademark protection even if the trademark has been duly registered. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that if trademark owners cannot use their trademark due to suspension in their business operations (while resolving sanction related issues), such nonuse of the trademark may lead to loss of their trademark protection.

### Becoming a generic trademark:

It takes considerable effort and time for a trademark to become well known in the market. This can almost exclusively be achieved by hard work and diligence on the part of the trademark owner. However, when a well-known trademark becomes generic it loses its product distinction from competitors and no longer identifies a particular manufacturer or source of a product, and soon it loses its legal protection as a trademark. In the same way, a trademark becomes generic when instead of signifying a specific maker of a product, it is commonly considered the type or quality of that good or service. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to the status of the trademark at the consumer level and prevent it from becoming generic.

**Nonconformity with the legal requirements for trademark registration:**

If at any time it is determined that any of the legal requirements for registration of a trademark have not been met, an interested party can file a lawsuit to cancel the trademark. The result will be cancelation and the end of trademark's protection. Therefore, special attention must be paid for the registration of a trademark in Iran in accordance with all legal requirements.

### Trademark Dispute Resolution under Iranian Law:

In general, petitions concerning trademarks in Iran are heard by specialized branches of the civil and criminal courts located in Tehran (known as the “Specialized Branches”), as well as by a commission in the Industrial Property Office (“the Commission”) also based in Tehran. Depending on the nature of the claim, a civil or criminal court may have jurisdiction over the case.

Lawsuits and objections related to the registration of a trademark such as infringement, prohibition of use, damages and revocation of registration certificates are heard in Specialized Branches while claims related to pre-registration of a trademark such as objecting to a registration or non-registration of a trademark are filed before the Commission. Decisions issued by this Commission, as well as those delivered by the Specialized Branches can be appealed in civil courts within 60 days from the date of issuance.





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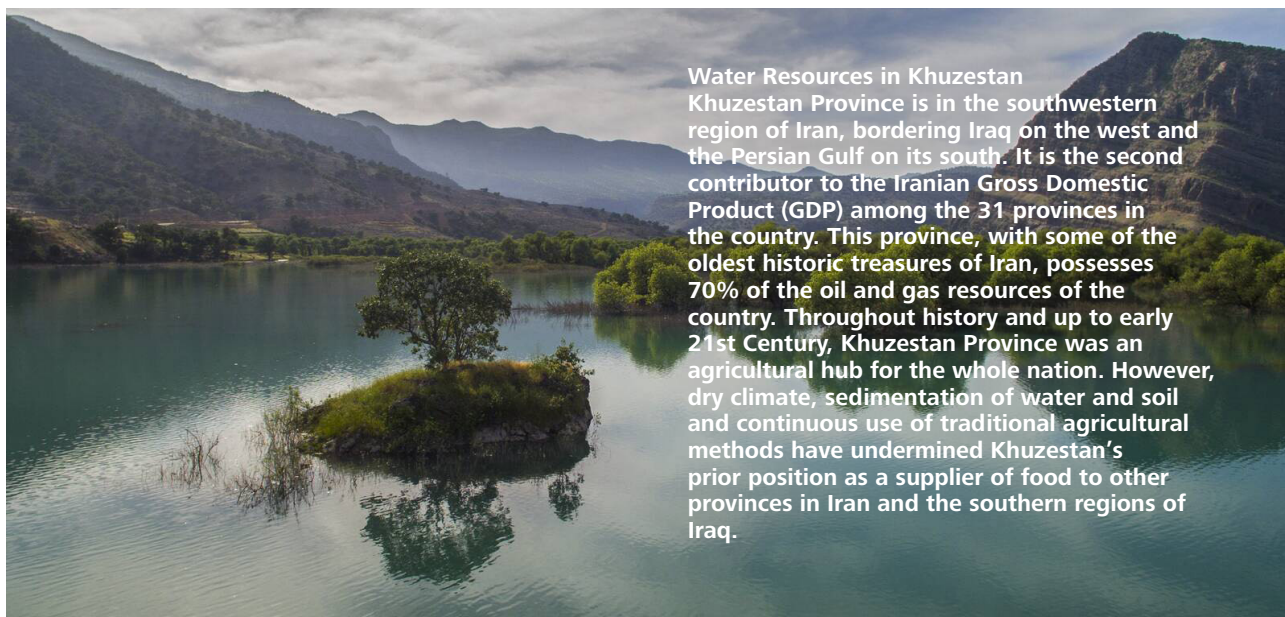
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# Water Supply Conditions in Khuzestan Province

By Khosrow Salour, Sayeh Gostar Pars Managers Ltd.



**Water Resources in Khuzestan**  
Khuzestan Province is in the southwestern region of Iran, bordering Iraq on the west and the Persian Gulf on its south. It is the second contributor to the Iranian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) among the 31 provinces in the country. This province, with some of the oldest historic treasures of Iran, possesses 70% of the oil and gas resources of the country. Throughout history and up to early 21st Century, Khuzestan Province was an agricultural hub for the whole nation. However, dry climate, sedimentation of water and soil and continuous use of traditional agricultural methods have undermined Khuzestan's prior position as a supplier of food to other provinces in Iran and the southern regions of Iraq.

With a population of 4.5 million and covering an area of 64,055 sq km, Khuzestan has numerous freshwater resources. The province relies heavily on surface water including rivers and lakes

The following major dams exist in the province for agriculture and freshwater supply purposes. The general specifications of each dam are shown below in table 1 and the locations of the dams are reflected on map 1.

## Khuzestan's Rivers:

1. Karun River
2. Dez River
3. Karkheh River
4. Marun (or Jarahi River) River
5. Shavar River
6. Zohreh River

## Khuzestan's Lakes:

1. Shatt-e Tebemb
2. Shahyoun Lake
3. Kaboud Lake

These natural water resources supply 85% of the agriculture and drinking water requirements of Khuzestan. In contrast, under-ground water resources and streams in the province are either salty or are polluted with residential and industrial wastewater.

According to the Khuzestan Province Urban Water and Wastewater Company (UWWC), in the one-year period between 2019 and 2020, about 450 million cubic meters of wastewater was discharged into the Karoun River and the Persian Gulf.

In general, the province's northern cities and villages suffer from the water supply shortage whereas the southern urban and rural areas suffer from the inferior quality of water.

Table 1 - Dams in Khuzestan Province

Name	Type of Dam	Capacity (Cu Meters— in millions)	Location	Height (Meters)
Karun-3 Dam	Arc Dam	2,970	Over the Karun River, Izeh County	205
Marun Dam	Rock-Fill Embankment Dam	1,200	Over the Marun River, Behbahan County	175
Shahid Abbaspour Dam (Karun-1 Dam)	Arc Dam	2,470	Over the Karun River, Masjed Soleyman	200
Dez Dam	Concrete Dam	3,300	Over the Dez River, Andimeshk County	203
Gotvand Dam	Concrete Dam	4,500	Over the Karun River, Gotvand County	180



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Department, said in May 2018. Some of the dam reservoirs in Khuzestan are often empty. These dams have also caused or exacerbated environmental degradation. For example, the Gotvand Dam, completed in 2012, was built on salt beds that made the water in the reservoir unfit for irrigation.

Since much of Khuzestan province's river water is redirected to other provinces or used in agriculture and industry, little is left for Khuzestan's local inhabitants. Much of the water that flows downstream is unfit for drinking, and the province does not have adequate wastewater treatment plants. Like many other countries in the MENA region, shortage of water often creates public unrest as well as disturbances in industrial and agriculture activities. Water related unrests and demonstrations have occurred in Khuzestan on several occasions during 2020 and 2021.



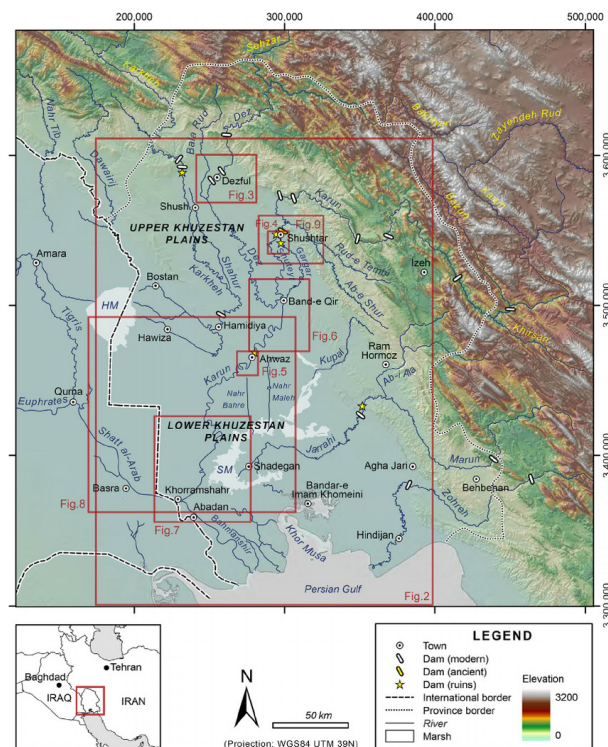
**Table 2 - Khuzestan's Water and Wastewater Indicators**

Number of Cities Covered by Khuzestan WWC	63
Water Supply Pipeline Length	10,000 km
Wastewater Network Length	3500 km
Number of Urban Water Purification Plants	21
Number of Water Storage Units	700,000
Number of Modern Water and Wastewater Laboratories	21
Number of Rural Water Purification Plants	76
Number of Urban Wastewater Treatment Plants	2

Source: National Water and Wastewater Engineering Company

Since the 1970s, the Ministry of Energy of Iran has built more than a dozen dams in Khuzestan to manage seasonal flooding, generate hydroelectric power, irrigate crops, and supply other provinces with fresh water. The government has since recognized that many dams have unfortunately done more harm than good.

"We made these mistakes in the 1980s. Then we came to realize that in places that we'd built dams, we shouldn't have built any, and in places where we should have built dams, we didn't build any," Isa Kalantari, the head of Iran's Environment





## Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Khuzestan's water and wastewater infrastructure has not seen much renovation and expansions in the past decade. Several improvement projects need to be implemented before a major development can be noticed in the water purification and sewage network infrastructure. The relevant data on the province's water and wastewater infrastructure is shown on Table 2:



According to the Ministry of Energy, whereas the average wastewater network and treatment's penetration rate in the whole country is 50%, in Khuzestan this rate is only 35%. In 2020-2021 out of the 500 million cubic meters of wastewater generated, only 40 million cubic meters was treated for provincial use.

Moreover, Iran Water Resources Management Company records show that since 2013, a total of \$8 billion has been used from the National Development Fund for the construction of the following projects: 28 small and large dams, the sewage system of Ahwaz and Abadan, and the Khorramshahr water supply pipelines. However, the water demand growth and the recent popular unrests in the province show that neither the government nor the private sector investments have been a success.

### Water and Wastewater Plans and Projects

The question then, is how the government plans to combat the water supply and wastewater discharges' shortcomings in Khuzestan? As the first step, a Governor has been appointed with special legislative powers. Mr. Sadegh Khalilian, the new Governor of Khuzestan with special powers, is a graduate of the Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University in Soil Sciences. Mr. Khalilian has management experiences in the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, which is a national government oversight body for agriculture in Iran.

As a second step, a special budget from the Leadership Office has also been allocated in addition to the annual central government budget for the completion of water and wastewater development projects. The National Water and Wastewater Engineering Company announced in June 2021 that the Ministry of Energy has allocated the following budgetary funds to the Khuzestan urban and rural water and wastewater projects:

*The province's northern cities and villages suffer from the water supply shortage whereas the southern urban and rural areas suffer from the inferior quality of water.*

**Table 3 - Budgetary Allocation for Water and Wastewater Projects in Khuzestan 2021-2022 (in millions of dollars)**

Investment for Completion of Ongoing Projects	\$ 540
Funds to Cover Losses for Farmers affected by Drought	\$ 6
Funds to Cover Losses for Farmers affected by Flooding	\$ 6
Funds for Research at the Ministry of Agriculture	\$ 2.5
Jihad for Water Irrigation Projects	
Wastewater Treatment Plant and Network	\$ 50
Construction Work	
Water Supply to 30 Villages	\$ 30
Total	\$ 134.5

Source: National Water and Wastewater Engineering Company





This short-term public investment can assist in completing several water and environmental projects in Khuzestan. Beside funding provisions, and to better address the shortcomings in the water sector, the Ministry of Energy also established nine water basins in April 2021. Each basin is managed by a committee consisting of a representative from the following organizations: the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, Department of Environment, Ministry of Industries, Mines and Trade and Plan and Budget



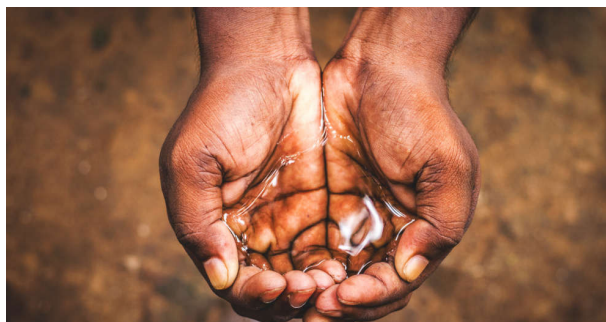
Organization. These committees allow relevant regional water and wastewater projects to receive government funds on an accelerated basis.

The two representatives of Khuzestan Province in the Majlis (Iran's Parliament), Mr. Seyed Karim Hosseini and Mr. Shabib Joyjari have also presented a bill to reactivate a number of government measures from years back, that could assist the region in completing and executing new infrastructure development projects. This bill includes: 5 to 10 years of tax exemption for private investors in development projects all around the Khuzestan Province, allocation of 3% from the national sales of crude oil to the province and allocation of substantial funds from the National Development Fund for water and wastewater projects.

**Several of the noteworthy water and wastewater projects on the agenda of the Ministry of Energy for solving the water shortage problems in Khuzestan Province are:**

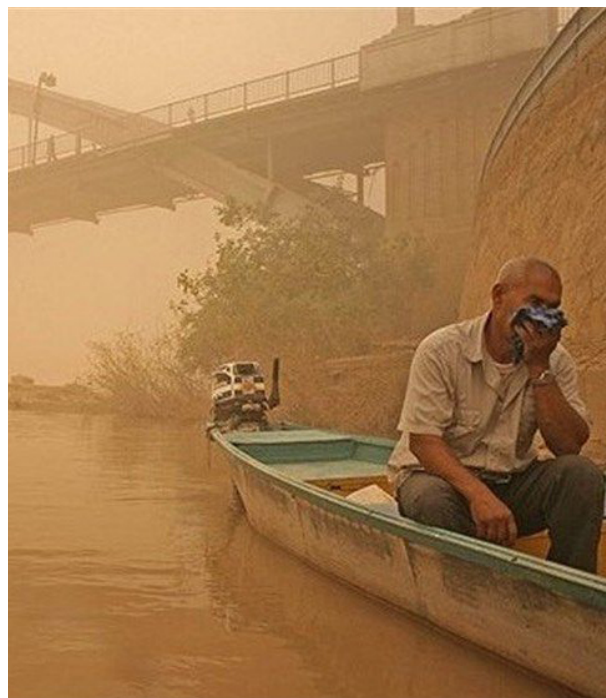
- Ghadir Water Supply Project, from Dez Dam to 18 cities in Khuzestan Province
- Ghadir Pipeline Bypass Project, from Ghadir Water Pipeline to the second Ahwaz Water Purification Plant, including construction of a 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> water storage unit and installation of gravity filters in the purification plant
- Completion of construction of wastewater plants in the provincial cities of Abadan, Khorramshahr, Bandar Imam, Shadegan and Mahshahr with a total capacity of 300,000 m<sup>3</sup>
- New wastewater plant construction projects in the provincial cities of Izeh, Behbahan, Andimeshk, Shush and Bostan
- New water desalinization projects in cities of Shadegan, Ram Hormouz, Bandar Imam and Mahshahr with a total capacity of 30,000 m<sup>3</sup>

*Khuzestan's water and wastewater infrastructure has not seen much renovation and expansions in the past decade..*

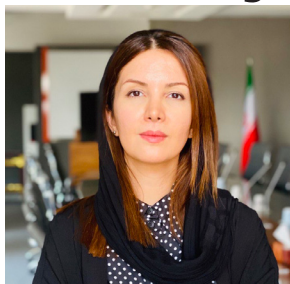


- Completion of construction of Ahwaz wastewater network and treatment plant
- Irrigation of 550,000 hectares of agricultural land

Some of the above-mentioned projects, such as Ghadir water supply pipeline and Ahwaz wastewater plant are more than 70% completed. However, other projects such as the irrigation of 550,000 hectares of land for agriculture, and new wastewater plants in some of the provincial cities and towns are in their preliminary stages.



# That Pinnacle of Luxury: The Mystery of Caviar



*Melika Zarrinkar is an accomplished Business Development professional with hands-on experience in the hospitality industry, having graduated from Institut Supérieur de la Gestion Hôtelière (ISGH) of Namur, Belgium in Hotel Management. Zarrinkar is a "Master" in the international Caviar industry and has worked for major global caviar producers. Her experience in the industry has given her the benefit of detailed insight in the life cycle of caviar production from farming and processing all the way to branding and marketing. Zarrinkar had a complete change of career in 2020, and with a new focus on the energy industry, she is currently an independent consultant in that sector.*

## About Sturgeon

A member of a species as old as the dinosaurs, the sturgeon already existed over 200 million years ago. The sturgeon family is among the only fish that is naturally flexible in its environment: It can live in saltwater as well as in fresh water. There are 27 different species of the sturgeon but only a few are famous for their caviar. The appellation of "caviar" is attributed to eggs from the sturgeon family and each category of caviar is graded by quality and has a commercial name which matches the scientific name of the fish. For example, on a container of Beluga caviar, one should also see mention of *Huso Huso* which is the species of sturgeon associated with that type of egg.

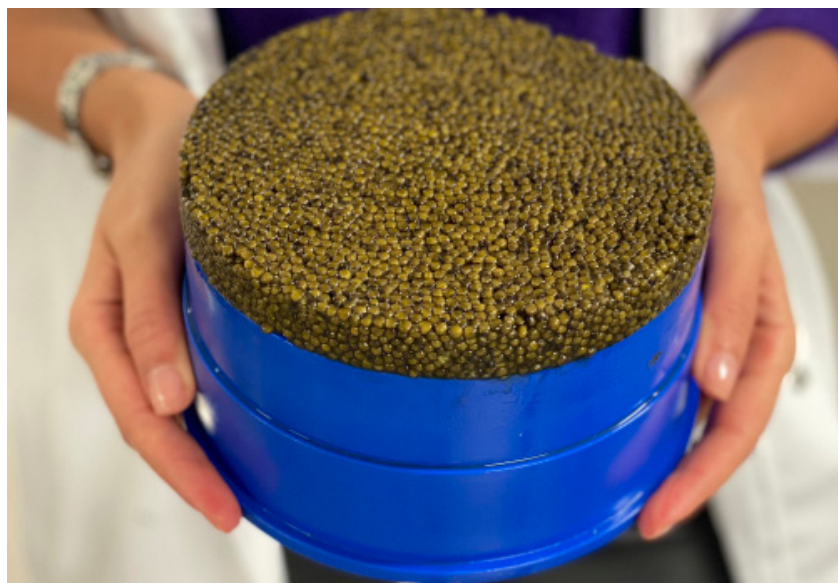
## The Caspian Sea

When we talk about caviar, the first location that comes to mind is the Caspian Sea in northern Iran. Although the Caspian Sea is shared among five neighbouring countries, in years past, it was mainly the Iranian caviar that was renowned for its taste and its unique quality. This was because the Caspian coastal line bordering Iran was deeper, cleaner and the catch was done in river estuaries.

## Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

In 1997, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which is responsible for protecting endangered species, listed all sturgeon species in appendix 2 of the convention rules. Since that date, any trade of caviar and sturgeon meat has been conducted under CITES rules. But as the number of sturgeons plummeted in the wild, CITES announced a permanent fishing ban in 2010.

Long before the sturgeon became a protected species by CITES, many sturgeon fish hatcheries and farms



existed to cater to the high demand for both caviar and the fish meat. But as supply was limited, the prices of both products were driven to very high levels.

As such, the market had seen the emergence of aquacultures around the globe, which later turned into the only source of product once the stricter ban on wild fishing was introduced.

## Farmed Caviar

Several factors are paramount for achieving the real taste of this product as well as its best visual appearance. Sturgeon can be farmed in different systems of farming from open system to totally closed recycle system.

## The water

In general, the water is channelled from nearby mountains to recreate a natural ecosystem for fish. The temperature of the water should be preferably between 14 to 22 Centigrade and it should be constantly recycled and monitored. In Iran, these sturgeon farms are mostly located by Caspian Sea coastline and benefit from sea water. Water is the



most important element in sturgeon farming, and a drop of any pollutant in a large quantity of water can affect the taste of the end product.

## Age

The maturation cycle of each species must be respected. Patience is the key for successful sturgeon farmers as they must wait until maturation is completed before starting the processing of farming eggs for final delivery as what the consumer knows as caviar.

It is important to note that this maturation period varies according to the species of the sturgeon.



### The food

When farmed, sturgeon is fed with the pellets made of animal proteins of marine origin, vitamins and minerals.

### Why caviar has its own price?

The age of maturation of the species is the determining factor in the price of caviar, and after that other factor like supply and demand and branding come into play. Beluga caviar from the *Huso huso* species is usually the most expensive on the market, and this is because the age of maturation of the *Huso huso* is between 12 and 18 years. One can compare that to 8 to 12 years of maturation for *Oscietra caviar* ("*Gueldenstaedtii* species") or 4 to 7 years for *Baerii caviar* ("*Baerii* species"). Climate and water temperature are the two factors which influence the speed of the maturation.

### White caviar or "almas" ("diamond" in Persian)

Almas "white, goldish, greyish" caviar could come from any species of sturgeon whose eggs are albino. This genetic mutation being very rare, it sometimes goes unrecognized. Aside from its unique colour, this caviar is exactly like any other caviar. And the higher price of it is only for its colour.

### Culture and general information about caviar

- Today caviar brands on the market do not all necessarily have their own farm. Caviar is packaged under different brands at larger sturgeon farms which handle large quantities of sturgeon eggs.
- The origin of the caviar is always mentioned at the back of the container. (e.g.: Country of origin: IR (as in Iran))
- Imperial Gold caviar is a Hybrid caviar: It is *Acipenser schrenkii* and *Huso dauricus* species of sturgeon eggs. This caviar comes from Amur River on the border of China and Russia and is very popular on the European market.
- There are many high-quality sturgeon breeding farms all over Europe (Italy, Poland, France, Germany, Belgium, ...), and on other continents.

### Summary of characteristics of the 3 main caviars

The Beluga caviar is slightly iodized, buttery, melting in texture and generally has the largest grains. The color of the grain is light gray to dark gray with a

golden reflection from time to time. *Oscietra* caviar has a nutty flavor, and the grains have a firm texture rolling between the palate and the tongue.

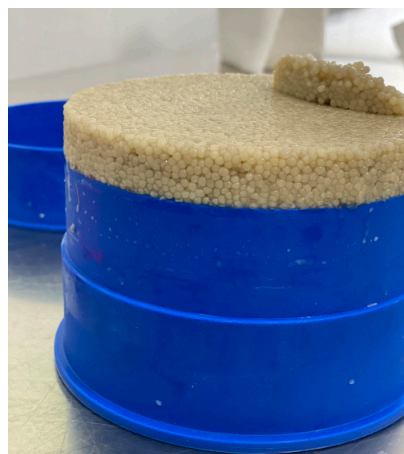
### Some Facts:

- Caviar has a high nutritional density. It is rich in essential fatty acids, and it is a good source of vitamins D and B12. It also provides proteins, essential minerals and antioxidants (iodine, iron,



selenium and magnesium)

- The meat of Sturgeon fish has many fans and is considered one of the most delicious fish by many avid epicures
  - Each box of caviar sold in the world must be traceable and must have a CITES code which is usually found under the box.
  - Best temperature to keep caviar is -2
- The grains of the *Oscietra* are medium-sized and are golden green in color. The *Baerii* caviar has a texture that is firm and fragile at the same time. With a hazelnut flavour, the *Baerii* has the smallest grains compared to the other two types of caviar.



to +2 Centigrade

- 10% of the total weight of a female sturgeon is usually its eggs.
- Sturgeon aquaculture expertise and know-how has advanced significantly over the past two decades.

Sturgeon fish have a long maturation process. As such, sturgeon farming requires a large initial investment and has high operational costs.

Proper health management of the fish is essential for successful caviar production and for achieving the right caviar quality and quantity.

# Professor Mahmoud Hessabi: Father of Modern Physics

By: Reza Taeb



Professor Mahmoud Hessabi



Professor Seyyed Mahmoud Hessabi was born in Tehran, Iran on February 25, 1903. He started his elementary school education from the age of 7 at the French Christians School in Beirut, Lebanon far from his birthplace, burdened with its associated hardships as a young foreigner. His high school years coincided with the outbreak of World War I because of which schools in Lebanon, including his, shut down.

After two years of studying at home, he continued his studies at Syrian Protestant College and received his high school Diploma at the tender age of 14.

Professor Hessabi got his first bachelor's degree in Literature at the age of 17 and went on to add degrees in Civil Engineering, mathematics, astronomy and biology from the American University of Beirut and the French University of Beirut. Blessed with a vigorous scientific spirit, he then traveled to Paris, France and added to his list of degrees with a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering and also a degree in Mining Engineering.



Professor Hessabi continued his studies and research in physics at Sorbonne University in Paris and received his PhD in physics in 1927. With a PhD thesis on "Photoelectric cells sensitivity".

After completing his education, despite excellent research opportunities available to him in Europe and USA, he decided to return to Iran and serve his beloved people. During a career that stretched over more than 60 years, Professor Hessabi accomplished numerous important scientific and cultural feats and played an important role in the development of his native country. The list of Professor Hessabi's

**The list of Professor Hessabi's achievements during his fruitful lifetime is a long one. To name a few he:**

- Charted the first coastal road map between Persian Gulf ports for Iran's Ministry of Roads and Transport in 1927
- Established the first weather monitoring station in Iran in 1931
- Installed and operated the first radiology center in Iran in 1931
- Calculated and set Iranian time zone in 1932
- Wrote the Tehran University charter and was founding member of Tehran University in 1934
- Was appointed as the First General Manager of National Iranian Oil Company
- Founded nomad schools in 1951
- Led the opposition efforts for the membership of Iran in CENTO (Baghdad Pact)
- Established the Geophysics Institute of Iran in 1951
- Established Iran's atomic energy research activities and guided the related tasks
- Set up atomic centers in Iran heading the committees and delegations at international conferences and organizations (such as the IAEA) which led to the establishment of Iran's Atomic Energy Center.

Professor Hessabi continued lecturing at Tehran University for 3 generations of students some of whom went on to become professors at the same institution. He was named Distinguished Professor of Tehran University in 1971. Professor Hessabi wrote 25 research papers, articles and books that have been published by universities such as Princeton and Tehran University where his books were also used as university textbooks. His theory of "Infinitely Extended Particles" is well-known among the world physicists. Professor Hessabi was awarded medals of "Officier de la Legion d'Honneur" in 1951 and "Commandeur de la Legion d'Honneur" in 1956 by the French government. During his many years of scientific research, he had numerous interactions and scientific exchanges with well-known international scientists such as Albert Einstein, Louis De Broglie, Erwin Schrodinger, Max Born, Enrico Fermi, Paul Dirac, Niels Bohr and scholars such as Bertrand Russell and Andre Gide. Professor Hessabi was honored for his invaluable contributions to science at the "60 Years of Physics in Iran" convention and was nominated as "Father of Modern Physics in Iran" in 1987.

Professor Hessabi passed away on September 3rd, 1992 while under medical care at Geneva Cardiac Hospital. He is buried in his family tomb in Tafresh, Markazi Province in Iran, according to his wish and will.



# Professor Hessabi Museum and Foundation: Culture and Science under One Roof

Professor Hessabi Museum and Foundation is located at the late professor's residence in northern Tehran and has about 68,000 visitors during the academic year. Visitors to the museum are from all ages and walks of life and include students, teachers and professors, as well as high ranking government officials and laypersons of all backgrounds. Professor Hessabi's museum includes a mobile unit which, despite all difficulties of maintaining such an entity, has turned into a model exhibit in provinces far from its base in Tehran.

Professor Hessabi's eldest son, Iraj has been the custodian of his father's legacy and his continued presence and oversight in the last 30 years has turned the museum into a success story to be shared by all.

The long career Professor Hessabi stretched over decades of service to his country when he represented Iran in numerous capacities around the world:

He was, for 28 years, the only representative of Iran in conferences on atomic energy around the globe, and he spent 12 years as Iran delegate to conferences on space, and 8 years at conventions on climate change affecting earth's ozone layer. Interestingly, and in character with his diverse range of interests, while shouldering such critical responsibilities for his country on the international scene, Professor Hessabi brought back with him souvenirs from his travels. These were rare plants which he planted in his garden at home and soon turned into a botanic garden with a variety of plants, some unique to his collection.

Professor Hessabi and his wife, Ms. Haeri, collected many species of birds and animals over a 60-year timespan. These included birds like finches and peacocks and animals like deer and rabbits which they considered divine creations for which they cared with devotion and love as they multiplied and increased in numbers in their garden.

They even conducted classes and educational courses on how to care and tend to such beautiful creatures. According to Professor Hessabi, "If our children learn how to care of a tree, plant or animal, they will be able to treat their fellow human beings well in the future."

Professor Hessabi provided his foundation with state-of-the-art equipment, and at his directive, for years, even after his passing in 1992, free educational workshops and seminars have been conducted for all ages on a variety of subjects and on a range of scientific topics.

The Hessabi Foundation is home to the Professor's extensive research documents over his prolific scientific life as well as his rich travel logs. This fertile trove of research archives that include tens of thousands of pages of priceless scientific analyses and explorations has served as a scholarly means for instructional purposes for many young and eager minds. Essays, articles and books of Professor Hessabi, along with his interviews with students, friends and colleagues have been assembled recently and are ready for publication. It is anticipated that the publication of these documents will further enhance the prominence enjoyed by Professor Hessabi. Professor Hessabi established many scientific groups and laid the grounds for numerous tribal organizations such as the Tafreshi, Farahani, Ashtiani, Baboli, and Yazdi associations

which each engage in cultural affairs of their respective representative people. He is also credited with organizing a few university alumni associations one of which was for the alumni of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Tehran with 23,000 members (several of whom are currently serving in government positions). Professor Hessabi is remembered affectionately and with great respect at all these organizations which he founded with sheer love and dedication.

Another valuable asset at the Hessabi Museum and Foundation is the collection of books in a wide range of fields from scientific and engineering to medicine, law, philosophy, history, geography, space, astronomy, and even religious studies.

This collection of almost 27 thousand recently catalogued volumes adorns the library of Professor Hessabi's residence-turned museum and is considered an exceptional cultural treasure both in terms of content as well as volume for a home library. It is recounted that after a visit to Professor Hessabi's library, one of the leading scientists visiting Iran under a UNESCO delegation commented that the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken science to people's homes!



## Restaurants

### Negima Café & Restaurant

Location: Khorasani St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 69 01 50  
Social Media: @negimarestaurant

### Avli Restaurant

Location: Andarzgoo St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 23 10 06  
Social Media: @avli.tehran  
Website: www.Avli.ir

### Matador Lounge Spanish Restaurant

Location: Farmaniyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 80 08 22  
Social Media: @matador.restaurant  
Email: ar\_khosandi@yahoo.com

### Rebelan International Food

Location: Tajrish St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 24 512  
Social Media: @rebelangroup

### Boomi International Food

Location: Fereshteh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 01 19 50  
Social Media: @boomipersiankitchen  
Website: www.Boomikitchen.com

## Business

### Sarmad Iron and Steel Complex

Location: Nelson Mandela St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 29 10 63  
Website: www.Sarmadsteel.com

### Dadflamingo

Location: Mollasadra St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 44 75 22 09  
Website: www.Dadflamingo.com

### Turquoise Partners

Location: Niavaran St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 70 62 38  
Email: info@turquoisepartners.com  
Website: www.Turquoisepartners.com

### Hamayesh Ara

Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 76 56 81  
Website: Info@Hamayeshara.com

### Kavir Motor

Location: Shariati St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 574 06  
Website: www.Kavirmotor.com  
TradexMena  
Location: Istanbul, Turkey  
Tel: +9021 22 44 25 51  
Email: info@tradexMena.com  
Website: www.Tradexmena.com

## Business

### Asia Instrumentation

Location: Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 65 02 95  
Email: info@asiainstrumentsltd.com  
Website: www.Asiainstrumentsltd.org

### AraEnterprise Business Consultancy:

Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 76 56 81  
Email: info@araEnterprise.com  
Website: www.AraEnterprise.com

### Andritz

Location: Amol  
Tel: +9811 442 042 04  
Email: andritz@garmaelectric.ir  
Social Media: @garma\_electric  
Website: www.Andritz.com

## Malls

### Iran Mall

Location: Kharazi St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 29 29  
Social Media: @the\_iranmall

### Rosha Department Store

Location: Farmanieh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 25 71 40 00  
Social Media: @rosha.store

## Services

### Die Industrial Company

Location: Savad Kooh, Mazandaran  
Tel: +9811 42 43 43 20  
Social Media: @onedieco  
Email: info@refahavaranzand.com  
Website: www.Refahavaranzand.com

### Dorsa Home

Location: Gholhak St, Tehran  
Social Media: @dorsahome  
Website: www.Dorsa.net

### Amirkhizi Carpet

Location: Zaferanieh St, Tehran  
Cell: +98912 111 66 52  
Website: www.Amirkhizicarpet.com

### Iran Steel

Location: Shariati St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 297 50

### Nobka

Location: Zarnegar St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 88 76 02 10  
Social Media: @smartnobka  
Website: www.Nobka.ir

## Services

### Darya Hamrah Paythakht

Location: Motahari St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 628 59  
Social Media: @daria.hamrah  
Website: www.Dariahamrah.ir

### SPAR:

Location: Sarmad St, Tehran  
Tel: +98 452 64  
Website: www.Spar.ir  
Iran Steel  
Location: Shariati St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 297 50

## Hotels

### Mirage Hotel Kish

Location: Kish  
Tel: +9876 44 42 22 20  
Social Media: @miragehotelkish

### Shemshak Boutique Hotel

Location: Shemshak  
Tel: +9821 26 52 79 41  
Social Media: @shemshak\_boutique\_hotel  
Website: www.Shemshakboutiquehotel.com

### House of Elephant

Location: Karimkhan Zand St, Shiraz  
Tel: +9871 32 23 14 66  
Social Media: @house\_of\_elephant  
Email: houseofelephant57@gmail.com  
Website: www.Houseofelephant.com

### Yakhchal House

Location: Hatef St, Esfahan  
Cell: +98913 905 00 69  
Social Media: @yakhchal.house  
Website: www.Yakhchalhouse.ir

### Moshir Al Molk Historical House

Location: Hatef St, Esfahan  
Cell: +98913 110 91 81  
Social Media: @moshiralmolk  
Email: islamic.h.museum@gmail.com

### Joybar Boutique Hotel

Location: Neshat St, Esfahan  
Cell: +98913 404 91 57  
Social Media: @joybarboutiquehotel  
Email: joybarboutiquehotel@gmail.com  
Website: www.Joybarboutiquehotel.com

## Beauty Salon

### Niloufar Zand Beauty Salon

Location: Elahiyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 01 16 14  
Social Media: beauty\_by\_niloufar  
Email: nilou\_zand@yahoo.com  
Website: www.Niloufarzand.com



## Beauty Salon

### Nita Beauty

Location: Velenjak St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 2240 44 55  
Social Media: @nita.beauty  
Website: www.Nitabeautysalon.com

### Beauty Time

Location: Zaferanieh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 18 19 13  
Cell: +98912 029 32 71  
Social Media: @beauty\_time.b.t  
Email: beautytime1399@gmail.com

### Hans Beauty Salon

Location: Zaferanieh And Fereshteh St, Tehran  
Tel Zaferanieh: +9821 22 17 06 44  
Tel Fereshteh: +9821 22 04 32 27  
Social Media: @hans.beauty.salon

## Clinics

### Mehregan Dental Care

Location: Pasdaran St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 79 31 63  
Social Media: @mehregan.dental.care  
Website: www.Clinic-mehregan.com

### Dr. Basati Dental Clinic

Location: Aghdasiyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 80 08 30  
Email: info@drbasati.com  
Social Media: @dr.basati  
Website: www.Drbasati.com

### Dr. Nejatian Pain Care Clinic

Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 76 58 10  
Social Media: @drnejatian

### Dr. Afrashi Dental Clinic

Location: Vanak St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 8821 6673  
Social Media: @dr.afrashi  
Website: www.Drafrashi.com

### Dr. Kamali

Location: Parkway St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 72 147  
Cell: +98912 159 22 22  
Social Media: @drkamaliclinic  
Website: www.Drkamaliclinic.com

## Art Galleries

### Art Chive Online Art Platform

Location: Tehran  
Cell: +98912 112 13 29  
Social Media: @artchive.art  
Email: info@artchive.art  
Website: www.Artchive.art

## Art Galleries

### Soo Contemporary Gallery

Location: Ferdowsi St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 88 80 98 08  
Social Media: @soocontemporary  
Email: info@soocontemporary.com  
Website: www.Soocontemporary.com

### Dastan Basement Gallery

Location: Elahiyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 02 31 14  
Social Media: @dastanbasement  
Email: info@dastangallery.com  
Website: www.Dastan.gallery.com

### Londeville Global Art & Collectables

Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 76 56 81  
Website: www.Londeville.com

### E1 Art Gallery

Location: Elahiyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 60 71 26  
Email: e1artshop@gmail.com  
Social Media: info@e1art.gallery  
Website: www.E1art.gallery

## High-End Jewelry

### Goharbin Jewelry

Location: Valiasr St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 88 77 73 01  
Social Media: @k.goharbin  
Email: info@goharbin.com  
Website: www.Goharbin.com

### Zomorodi Jewelry

Location: Fereshteh St, Tehran  
Social Media: @zomorodi

### Safae Jewelry

Location: Aghdasiyeh St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 15 19 17  
Social Media: @zomorodi  
Email: ma@safae.co

### Ab Jewelry gallery

Location: Tehran  
Tel: +98912 215 51 20  
Social Media: @abjewelrygallery

### Ghazal Sadr

Gemmologist  
Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 86 12 92 98  
Website: Sadrjewelry.com

### Reza Sadr

Master Gemmologist & Professional at Int'l  
Gemmologist & Jewels Business  
Location: Saadat Abad St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 86 12 92 98  
Website: Sadrjewelry.com

## Gyms

### Power House Woman's Crossfit Gym

Location: Enghelab Sport Complex, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 26 21 63 90  
Social Media: @block68ir  
Email: blockphilosophir@gmail.com  
Website: www.Blockphilosophy.ir

### Muscles Land

Location: Niavaran St, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 22 80 38 72  
Social Media: @sarzaminazoleha

### Hypoxy Slim factory

Locations: Saadat Abad, Niavaran & Jordan, Tehran  
Tel: 021 88 68 89 91  
Email: marketing@hypoxy.ir  
Social Media: @slimfactory\_hypoxy  
Website: https://hypoxiiran.com

## Interior Design

### Mitra Ghorbani

Location: Elahiyeh St, Tehran  
Cell: +98912 243 37 41  
Social Media: mitraghorbani\_ir

### Leila Kalali Home Concept Store

Location: ASP towers, Tehran  
Tel: +9821 88 05 06 67  
Social Media: @leilakalalihomepluse

### Sarira Garden Low Maintenance

Location: Tehran  
Tel: +9821 88 94 41 05  
Cell: +98935 776 55 64  
Email: sariragarden@gmail.com  
Social Media: @sariragarden

### Azadeh Azizi

Location: Tehran  
Cell: +98912 846 09 12  
Social Media: @azadehazizigroup.com  
Website: www.Azadehazizigroup.com

### Hossein Rezvani

Location: Farmanieh, Tehran  
Tel: 021 26 12 54 62  
Email: nh@hosseinrezvani.com  
Social Media: @hossein\_rezvani\_iran  
Website: www.hosseinrezvani.com

### ZEEEN

Palladium Shopping Center, Moqadas  
Ardabili Street, Tehran, Iran  
Tel: 021 2266 8363

Email: hello@zeen.ir  
Social Media: @hossein\_rezvani\_iran  
Website: www.zeen.ir

# Trends calendar

## IRANIAN HOLIDAYS in 2022

GREGORIAN date	IRANIAN date
	● EVENT

		16 DEY		17 DEY		24 DEY		1 BAHMAN		8 BAHMAN
JANUARY	6	● The martyrdom of Hazrat Fatemeh Zahra, peace be upon him	7	● Friday	14	● Friday	21	● Friday	28	● Friday

		15 BAHMAN		22 BAHMAN		26 BAHMAN		29 BAHMAN		6 ESFAND
FEBRUARY	4	● Friday	11	● Victory Day of Revolution in Iran ● Friday	15	● Birthday of Imam Ali (Father's Day)	18	● Friday	25	● Friday

		10 ESFAND		13 ESFAND		20 ESFAND		27 ESFAND		29 ESFAND		1 FARVARDIN		2 FARVARDIN
MARCH	1	● Mabaas Hazrat Rasoul Akram	4	● Friday	11	● Friday	18	● Friday	20	● Nationalization of Iran's oil industry	21	● Nowruz Holiday	22	● Nowruz Holiday
		3 FARVARDIN		4 FARVARDIN		5 FARVARDIN								
	23	● Nowruz Holiday	24	● Nowruz Holiday	25	● Nowruz Holiday								

		12 FARVARDIN		13 FARVARDIN		19 FARVARDIN		26 FARVARDIN		2 ORDIBEHESHT		3 ORDIBEHESHT		9 ORDIBEHESHT
APRIL	1	● Friday	2	● Sizdah Be-Dar	8	● Friday	15	● Friday	22	● Friday	23	● National Entrepreneurship Day	29	● Friday

		13 ORDIBEHESHT		14 ORDIBEHESHT		16 ORDIBEHESHT		23 ORDIBEHESHT		30 ORDIBEHESHT		6 KHORDAD
MAY	3	● Eid al-Fitr	4	● Eid al-Fitr	6	● Friday	13	● Friday	20	● Friday	27	● Friday

		13 KHORDAD		14 KHORDAD		15 KHORDAD		20 KHORDAD		27 KHORDAD		3 TIR
JUNE	3	● Friday	4	● Demise of Imam Khomeini	5	● Bloody Uprising	10	● Friday	17	● Friday	24	● Friday

		10 TIR		17 TIR		19 TIR		24 TIR		27 TIR		31 TIR		7 MORDAD
JULY	1	● Friday	8	● Friday	10	● Eid-al-Adha	15	● Friday	18	● Eid al-Ghadir	22	● Friday	29	● Friday

		14 MORDAD		17 MORDAD		18 MORDAD		21 MORDAD		28 MORDAD		4 SHAHRIVAR
AUGUST	5	● Friday	8	● Tasooa Hosseini	9	● Ashura Hosseini	12	● Friday	19	● Friday	26	● Friday



# Trends calendar

## IRANIAN EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS in 2022

The 23th Int'l Exhibition of Medical, Laboratory Equipment, Pharmaceutical Products



24 - 27 Dec 2021



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 15th Int'l Exhibition of Goods, Services and Equipment for Stores and Chain Stores



2 - 5 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 12th International Exhibition of Cement, Concrete Manufacturing Technologies And Related Machineries



2 - 5 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 12th Int'l Exhibition of Architecture, Modern House & Interior Design



11 - 14 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 17th Int'l Exhibition of Mine, Mining, Construction Machinery & Related Industry & Equipment (Iran Conmin 2021)



20 - 23 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 3th Iran Int'l Exhibition & Conference of Exhibition Industry



20 - 23 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 2nd International Build & Property Show



20 - 23 Jan 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 19th Int'l Exhibition of Accessories, Machinery, Wood, Equipment & Related Industries



7 - 10 Feb 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 6th Int'l Exhibition of Equipment and Technologies of Health, Safety, Environment Crisis Management, Fire-fighting & Rescue



7 - 10 Feb 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 26th Int'l Oil, Gas, Refining & Petrochemical Exhibition



7 - 10 Feb 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 26th Int'l Exhibition of Electronic, Computer & E - Commerce



16 - 19 Feb 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 5th International Power Generation & Turbomachinery Exhibition



25 - 28 Feb 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 19th Int'l Exhibition of Environment & Renewable Energy



26 Feb - 01 Mar 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 6th International Exhibition Of Logistics, Supply Chain & Distribution



26 Feb - 01 Mar 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

International Exhibition of Industrial Parts and Reverse Engineering



26 Feb - 01 Mar 2022



Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

The 12th Iran Int'l Renewable Energy, Lighting & Energy Saving Exhibition



26 Feb - 01 Mar 2022

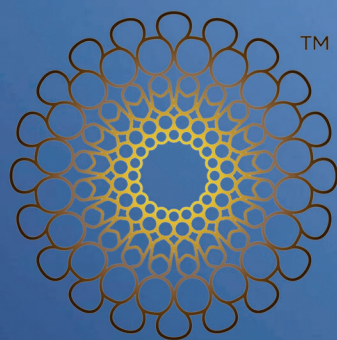


Tehran  
International Exhibition Centre

### Important Note:

Please note that there may be changes (postponements/cancellations) as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.





TM

**EXPO**  
**2020**  
DUBAI  
UAE



# Trends

*Trends Lifestyle covers a wide variety of interesting topics such as:  
art, fashion, cinema, music, books, travel, sports, biographies and much more!*

*A big thanks to our knowledgeable contributors who wrote the articles or were interviewed on these subject areas.*

*We hope you enjoy!*

# Life Style

## **Disclaimer:**

The writing style of our content may differ from article to article and is based on subject matters as well as our contributors' diverse backgrounds and writing styles. Certain statements in our content may also be the personal opinions of our contributors and not necessarily those of Trends Magazine.



# From an Artist's Atelier to an Art Gallery: What it Takes Shahed Saffari

By: Ghazal Mostafa

*Born in 1985, Shahed Saffari is the director of INJA gallery and gallery liaison at Teer Art. INJA Gallery was founded by Saber Abar in the autumn of 2018, and Teer Art, where Shahed joined also in 2018 and is charged with forming and maintaining relationships with other galleries as local brand ambassador, is a private-sector initiative to promote modern and contemporary Iranian art through two simultaneous and sister events: Teer Art Fair and Teer Art Week. Teer Art aims to create a space connecting local and international galleries, art collectors, industry professionals and visitors of all backgrounds and stripes. From emerging artists to established modern masters, from urban installations to panel talks, Teer Art offers a complete insight into the exciting and fast-moving world of contemporary Iranian art. With six years experience managing and assisting a photography gallery, Shahed is closely connected to both Tehran galleries and the national artistic community. Shahed is also a board member of Iran Galleries Association since September 2021.*

**Please tell us about yourself and your background. How did you get involved in INJA Gallery? What about Teer Art?**

I am Shahed Saffari. I have been working professionally in the art world for about 10 years. Academically, I became familiar with art when I started studying graphic art at school. Later in 2003, I studied painting at the University of Science and Culture in Tehran. I entered the world of art galleries when I began working at Silk Road Gallery (2012), which specializes in photography. During the five years I worked there, I met photographers, artists, gallery owners and collectors who laid the foundation for the network I have now. The experience of participating in art fairs and photography festivals alongside the Silk Road Gallery director, Ms. Anahita Ghabaian was very attractive to me. After a while, I decided to work independently and to expand my network. This required me to step out of my comfort zone, which felt risky at the time.

But within a year I was collaborating with both Teer Art and INJA Gallery!

**Tell us about a typical day at work. How does it start? What do you do? What motivates you at the workplace? What have you learned from mistakes on the job?**

My workday does not have a specific time span. For example, I can be sitting at my laptop and working at 3 a.m. A lot of my work is done on the laptop, my notebook and the online calendar for gallery planning. So, I can work wherever

and whenever I'm focused. Sometimes, I work in the gallery office outside of the work hours and before my colleagues arrive. The rest of my daily workday is devoted to appointments. And recently, because I'm a member of the board of Iran Gallery Association, its work has also been added to my agenda. Visiting artists' studios is a constant part of my schedule. One of the things I always try to pay attention to in my work is the saying "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today".

I try doing everything on time as much as possible, because accumulating them together can disrupt my schedule altogether and deprive me of peace of mind necessary for me to accomplish my daily goals. Something one of the successful managers, Mr. Shahin Fatemi, has once said is always on my mind: "Always start by doing things that are hard to do for you and you're running away from." This phrase gives you a strange energy to move forward.

Sometimes when I have a job-related problem, it's when I check and see that things have piled up and so it's just not going well. So recently, my new routine includes simply taking some time off during the week to come back to my work with a fresh outlook.

**Describe your creative process for curating exhibitions, from conception to execution.**



With respect to the fundamental premise of our exhibits and the process of selecting the artworks, we have determined an ethos and fundamental mindset for our gallery by which we choose the path of the shows.

We have a combination of both in the exhibitions we hold at the gallery, that is, a number of group exhibitions and a certain number of solo exhibitions are held throughout the year, for all of which we have tried to have a specific process because it allows us to move forward more focused on this path.



In defining this line of thought, we usually move group exhibitions forward by topic. This way, we choose a topic and accordingly, different generations, both modern and contemporary, with younger and older artists coming together. Combining these two generations makes the result fascinating.

There are times when we find a collection by chance, or maybe it gets emailed to us. Sometimes artworks that are sent for our review don't fit in our line of thought, but we decide to take them on it because we see that they have something new to say. These out-of-line collections can sometimes make the audience think and be a stimulus for drawing them to the exhibition. In the last three years since we started our work, we've always considered this point in the exhibitions we've held.

When we enter the execution process, we first determine the date of the exhibition with the artist, and after this step, we go through a series of routine procedures that are

The art community in Iran is small, and those who are active in it are in some form of relationship, either direct or indirect. And because of these connections, they are all relatively familiar with each other. People like gallery owners, curators, art teachers or those who personally have art schools, and artists and anyone who is working in this field in one way or another, have their own lines of thoughts and individual behavior towards the concept of art gallery. And each one of these people's individual behavior in their own position can create a new wave or a new path in the world of art exhibitions and have an impact of his or her own. This personal attitude toward art and how it should be exhibited can sometimes have positive or negative effects on the process of curating artwork. Historically we've seen that the personal attitudes of some of these artist "influencers" have been interpreted in different ways by people. This is a very important topic around the world, and it is often the topic of discussion by art panels where it is debated on several levels. There are

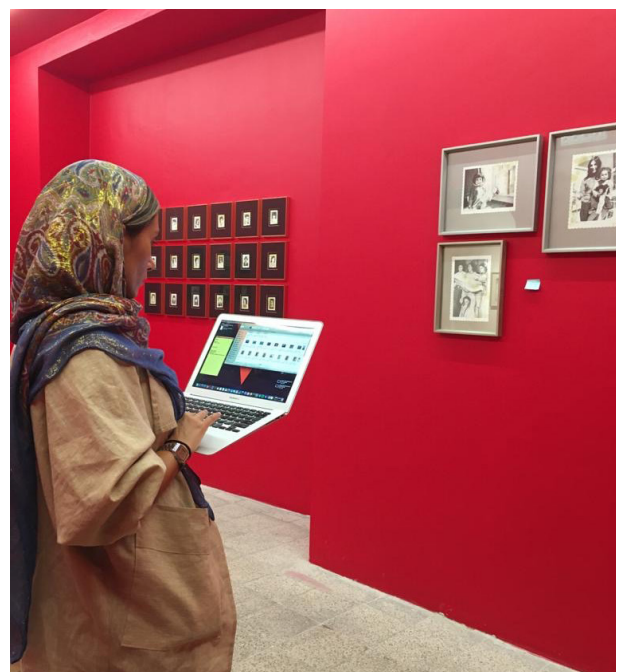


necessary for the setting up of any exhibition. These procedures include creating the content of the exhibition advertisements, setting the price list of the works, and preparing the list of invitees of the exhibition which are all done with the help of our colleagues in the gallery.

The invitations to an exhibition are usually divided into several categories as some are sent to the gallery's mailing list, some are sent to serious art connoisseurs, and then of course we have the general public, and also a group of art students interested in artworks. Finally, a series of processes are conducted for preparing the physical space of the exhibition and deciding the form of installation of the works.

We have a tradition at the INJA Gallery that we paint one of the two halls that make up the exhibition space based on the artworks being shown and in consultation with the artist. This painting of the walls is done ahead of the final installation phase in the week before opening of an exhibition.

**How do current trends in the artistic community influence your work? How do you find new artists, new ideas? How should an artist contact or approach a curator or a gallery?**



also many books that have been written on these different viewpoints with translations available in the Iranian market for those interested.

As a result, if a trend is started by someone in a specific field of art, it will certainly affect the behavior and activities of all involved. This fact is especially important in Iran since we live in an Islamic society with its own rules. So, gallery owners, for instance, must pay special attention to these trends and consider them carefully. A misjudgment of the meaning and charge of a trend can have consequential effects on the license of a gallery owner who is obligated to work within the framework of existing rules of the country.

On the subject of finding new ideas and artists, the process is such that Saber and I supervise the gallery's exhibitions together. Obviously because I manage the internal affairs of the gallery personally, I'm more directly involved in the

I get involved in daily affairs of the gallery sometimes and so Saber has greater opportunity to think more deeply about gallery themes and topics and so he comes up with very good and interesting ideas. We then talk about how much potential an idea has to be carried out.

About how artists present their work to the gallery, I personally have held workshops on this subject and have tried to talk about it in different media. Presenting the works has a hierarchy and it's important that artists pay attention to it. I've talked about it on an Instagram live on the Academy page and tried to briefly explain it.

It was early in the pandemic that INJA Academy held a number of online workshops, one of which was about the relationship between the artist and the gallery, and in one section there is mention of how the artist should promote him- or herself for the gallery. It is rare for prestigious young



day-to-day affairs. But when it comes to choosing exhibition contents and artists, both of us are equally decision-makers. One thing that's interesting in our collaboration is that apart from the friendship that has been between us for years, sometimes our tastes are not the same, but we always try not to impose our personal opinion and tend to approach the subject with the goal we've chosen for the gallery and decide accordingly.

I check the emails for artists who send us their work, and if I see anything significant, I send it to Saber and we talk about it. On average, a very small percentage of the work that is emailed to the gallery is of acceptable quality or is sent according to the correct guidelines. There have been several cases where a work has attracted our attention from the emails, or we see and select something from the artist's Instagram. We then send a message to the artist and if they're not working elsewhere, we meet with them to check their work closely. Sometimes artworks don't have the necessary quality up close, and many times it may be the opposite and we find impressive pieces.

As for ideas, I think that when you start a job and you move forward with it, new ideas find their way. This is especially true if quality is important to you, and you are serious in your work and your convictions. Having said that, one can still innovate and be creative in unpredictable conditions too if necessary. Galleries are rated for their quality of exhibitions and the artwork they choose to display and that is where we see how much a gallery has considered the creativity that we talked about earlier.

This creativity for a gallery can be anything, like a series of out-of-gallery exhibitions or shows held in public spaces, or a series of projects at artists' studios, and many other ventures that are based on the initial line of thought. Saber and I also talk about these subjects, although we each also think about them separately.

artists who are working professionally to interact with galleries themselves directly. There has always been a divide between the artist and galleries, which I think is the result of a tradition shaped over time that made galleries out of reach to artists. In other words, there have always been gallery owners who give their artists enough time to align themselves with the expected quality of the gallery and exhibitions, but unfortunately there are times when this alignment doesn't happen.

This created a friction and a divide between the artist and the gallery owners which had become hard to bridge. Today, of course, the relationship and the quality of interaction between these two parties are much improved.

Of all the proposal emails we receive, some are not interesting in terms of their presentation. But even so, I always take the time to check each and every one of our emails regularly. Sometimes I get an email with high quality artwork but it comes to us with an inferior quality presentation, or else it's been sent in a very disorderly fashion. Unfortunately, the reason might be because the artist was never trained in proper presentation and delivery of their work.

I often see an artist who has an academic education but lacks this very essential skill to best showcase his or her work because this is not something that can be taught at the university. Being able to promote oneself is very necessary for an artist as it provides a chance for their work to be exhibited in a deserving way at some point, get commented on, and be guided toward its natural growth path.

If an artist doesn't get to exhibit their work and their artwork is limited to their personal atelier, their story isn't told, which can be very sad especially for artists who have something new to say to their audience at large.



**For you, what is the toughest or most challenging aspect of being an art gallery director? What is your perception of taking on risk? Describe one of the most challenging projects you've ever worked on. How do you handle stressful situations?**

The biggest challenge of my job as a gallery director is to keep the gallery as a whole under control so every aspect of it runs seamlessly and in tandem.

Perhaps if I give you more detail about some aspects of my work you can get an idea. For one, the main object of my work every day is how to make the gallery better and more successful. We also have a number of artists who collaborate with us on a regular basis, and in order to continue this relationship, a separate project must be defined for each of them. I then must keep in touch with them frequently and discuss any new ideas they may have.

So, as you can imagine,



another challenging part of this job is upkeep of the relationship with the artists. Of course, if there is mutual understanding among all parties, this cooperation will go well.

Another challenge of a very different kind is the matter of gallery sales. A gallery is a business where you introduce artists and promote their artwork. As a gallery director I have to work on selling an artist's artworks for whom their art is their main source of income, for a good price to benefit both the artist and the business that relies on a portion of the sales for its existence. To be successful in achieving the sales goals, I must keep adding to the number of gallery customers while maintaining a good relationship with them by updating them on a range of subjects from new artists and exhibitions our gallery is planning on having to answer any questions they may have about the art market in general. Customer service is very important for both artists and clients, as well as anyone who is working with us.

In other words, if I can take care of art needs and provide our clients with proper service, that means I can keep doing business with them.

Risk taking is a part of our job, although I am not a person who can take a 100% risk. I have a rather strong conservative personality, but it is a fact that if you are reluctant to take any risks, you cannot grow or improve. So, in many places

you have to come out of your safety zone and move forward. These days our art gallery is in the process of participating in a foreign art fair for the first time, and so everything feels very different. In fact, we are entering another dimension in our work and each stage of this story is very challenging and at the same time very interesting to me.

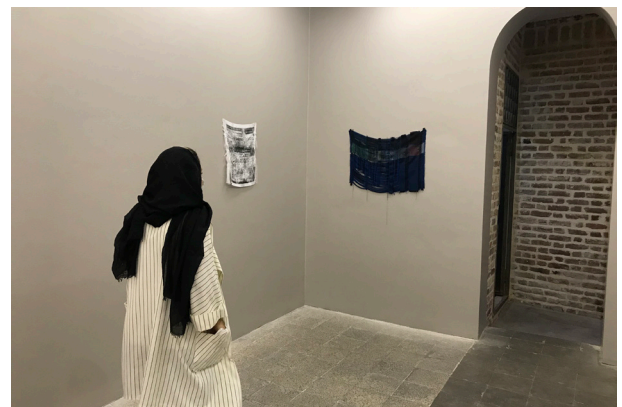
**How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted your work and the art galleries' activities? What is your thought on online exhibitions taking place during the outbreak of the pandemic, especially for important art fairs such as Teer Art?**

When the pandemic started, it was a difficult situation and the entire world got impacted and it affected most jobs and professions in one way or another. Many galleries were closed for instance. We had to close INJA Gallery temporarily hoping that soon we would be together again. We were



hoping for it to take only a month or so, but it dragged on much longer of course. So we quickly switched to the online exhibition format. The art gallery system is such that artists could also have online exhibitions, but it wasn't a very satisfying experience for the artists personally, because every artist works very hard to put together a collection and wants to have a grand opening. Artists of all backgrounds want to have friends and potential buyers to come and see and enjoy their artwork in person, and this wasn't a possibility.

*All photos by Sam Dehpour*



That being said, we couldn't just put a stop to everything, so we kept going. We held online exhibitions and took advantage of this period when galleries were closed to move INJA Gallery to its new home. So for about 3 months while we were preparing the new place, we didn't have an exhibition. We tried to sell our artists work online and so we held a group exhibition that had a decent number of sales.

By the beginning of summer, we opened the gallery in its new location and had a very magnificent grand opening within the framework of all the Covid-19 protocols. The gallery has been open permanently ever since and the exhibitions are held regularly. If the gallery gets overly crowded, our colleagues at the gallery will guide visitors in and out to keep the number of visitors inside at the required maximum number for our space.

During these past two years, we were constantly in a situation that we had to make decisions quickly and instantaneously. In our decisions, we were required to consider all aspects of our work such as the artists, the gallery, morale of everyone involved and our social responsibility, and I think under these circumstances we all became very good gallery owners.

There are pros about online exhibition and of course some cons. For our online shows, we tried to provide the chance for the buyer to come and see the work in person in a private appointment to make the purchase.

During these unusual times, we haven't had a moment of quiet. I believe you can be creative in any situation, but it's in these extraordinary circumstances that you can succeed only with a little creativity. For us, we had to quickly change direction when something didn't work anymore, and we always tried to find new solutions for any problems we encountered. On the positive side, these conditions made it easier to cultivate an international audience. Last year we at Teer Art, had an online art fair and it had an amazing impact which might have even been more than in-person art fairs. We had visitors who couldn't attend in-person and being online allowed them to see the artwork all the way from London, New York and many other places around the world which resulted in having good overall sales. While we have lots of obstacles, we did our best to be a successful and active team.

To give you a little background about Teer Art, we prepared and planned Teer Art Edition 3 before the pandemic, and when the lockdowns started, we kept everything on hold with the hope that things would get back to normal, but they didn't. We had to completely postpone the show until things got better. The success of an art fair depends on the number of visitors who attend it and their physical presence. Today with more people vaccinated and the pandemic somewhat tamed in most parts of the world, Art fairs are being held in person again and the world of art is returning to its previous normalcy. The situation with opening of art galleries is different in various countries. In Iran with the current conditions, we decided not to hold art fairs until the virus is completely eradicated.

**How much is too little, and how much is too much when it comes to information and material in the exhibition space?**

There's no specific answer to this question but I'll give my personal take based on my understanding of the subject. The amount of information that is presented in an exhibition is not important. What really matters is that the people who visit the show have a limited amount of time and can't spend hours browsing - and that's why an art gallery is different from a museum. Therefore, in a gallery, the information should be provided to visitors in such a way that they have

a minimum and maximum amount of knowledge of what they are viewing, and the process should not take long to tire them.

Essentially, there are two parts to the process. One is that the artist writes a note called the Artist's Statement, and then there's another separate note that I always write myself which is a press release. These two should complement each other and give a complete description of the entire exhibition. When the audience enters the gallery, they first read the artist's statement. The gallery usually allows the artist a free hand at what they want this statement to say about their art, but I always point out to them to keep it short. Most of the



time artists prefer someone else to write the statements for them. My suggestion to the artists is to write the statement themselves and explain in a simple way how their particular collection came to life, and where it originated from.

In the Press Release I write a quick summary of the artist's background and a few lines about how we've assembled the collection. This will help the audience to better understand the exhibition. It helps a lot if the artist's statement is in poem format as it adds an artistic touch to what the artist is trying to convey.

**Do people understand what art gallery directors do? In your opinion, do curators have an ethical or social responsibility?**

Not really, even some of those who work in this field, don't know exactly what the director of a gallery is responsible for! There may be a few things that all people in management position do in common but ultimately, depending on what each manager's specific job and function entails, their day-to-day activities are different.

With respect to gallery directors, some may work the regular 9-5 weekday schedule, but there are those also who are busy with gallery activities 24 hours a day. If you want the gallery to be more professional and competitive with others in the industry, you have to put more effort into it.



For me personally, one of the things I like to do is to call on artists we work with at the gallery from time to time just to ask how they are.

If necessary, I will visit their studios and we'll chat over coffee together. Maybe that's something not everybody does, or maybe they do, but I know it helps to improve the relationship between the artist and myself. This kind of closeness makes them have a better understanding of our gallery's outlook. It generally creates a more attractive and friendly work atmosphere and when it's a friendly environment, you work better.

I also like and follow Nicolas Party very much from among the younger artists who are producing great artwork. The mindsets and perspectives of these artists are different and I find this to be fascinating.

I am also very fond of Iranian photography. Specifically, I am very interested in documentary photography. It comes from my work background in the Silk Road Gallery. I was in touch with a lot of photographers when I worked there, so this genre has a place in my heart. I have been collecting art since I entered in this field and at the very beginning, I only collected documentary photography.



For the second part of the question about curators, I think everyone should have a moral and social responsibility objective and it's not just about curators. The curators, in general, do what gallery directors don't necessarily do. They define the project for exhibitions and curate the content from beginning to the end. Given the politically sensitive situation that our country has in the region, sometimes art projects have a completely personal take on matters which might be about individual identity for example.

**Is there any specific artist that you admire the most, nationally or internationally?**

There are many artists that I follow and admire both in Iran and abroad. Sahand Hesamiyan is one of the local artists whose work is always very attractive to me. In fact, I am very interested in artists who use elements of Iranian art or classical Islamic architecture with their own individual expression and in a contemporary way. This is really interesting to me and I'm subconsciously attracted to those artists. Most of the projects that I've been doing in the last few months have all been in this range.

Another artist who I believe is doing this type of artwork really well is Abolfazl Haroni. Ahmad Amin Nazar is another domestic artist whose work I love very much. He has not had a new work for a long time because of his age. Outside of Iran, Gerhard Richter's thinking is very interesting to me.

**What are the opportunities and obstacles for Iranian artists? What is the greatest challenge for Iranian artists abroad? What advice would you have for aspiring young artists?**

These days because of the wide range of online applications, and also social media, that are both inescapable and are used by everyone and everywhere, distances have been reduced. Artists can very well use these opportunities and environments in order to present their work. Many of the artwork sales are done in this space as looking at art and choosing an art piece on these online platforms is an accepted form of art dealership these days. Most gallery owners also operate in cyberspace and can take advantage of these opportunities by adhering to the necessary privacy rules of social media. Again, we come to the same old saying that everyone should have a passion for their work, and also take time and get experience in any field, whether they are an athlete, artist, or politician. Anyone in any situation can succeed if they take it seriously and shape their talent. Speaking English might not be an artist's top priority but improving foreign language skills is something I always recommend a lot as it can come in handy once their success takes them outside Iran.

There is also a lot of competition in this sector, and this works well for artists. Also, artists should realize that if they want to reach their professional goals, working with a gallery and curator who understands their passion and artistic expression will be ultimately more advantageous to them.

# Merging the Past with the Future: From an Artist's Viewpoint

By: Ghazal Mostafa

INTERVIEW



*History, memory and the post-tribal inform the work of Persian-born artist Firouz FarmanFarmaian, whose lifetime of living in exile in Paris, in Andalusia and in North Africa profoundly influenced both his creative practice and individual character. "It is circumstance that ultimately shapes lives," says the artist, whose work seeks to actively engage in bridging dialogues between past and future, east and west, archaic craft and innovative technology. As such, his compositions possess a vivacious and spontaneous energy, as well as a deeply symbolic quality, which speak to a multiplicity of currents in planet preservation politics, art and philosophy.*

Originally rooted in Persian lore and focused on themes of nature, architectonics and the interplay between realism and abstraction, FarmanFarmaian's ever-evolving body of work presents deep underlying explorative segments united by common motifs of movement and texture. The raw and visceral emotion of his pieces is tempered by material properties often produced and sourced within the framework of tribal collaborative craftsmanship. Each work is the result of careful contemplation of the techniques and tools that achieve a singular aesthetic and emotional intention. These in turn are deftly combined to create a unique visual rhythm across a wide range of media, including painting, sculpture, film, music and VR. FarmanFarmaian lives and works between Andalusia and Marrakech.

## **Please tell us about yourself and your background.**

I'm the oldest of my siblings, my brother Teymour (Architect) and sister Ayshé (Professor). I live with my wife Camilla and our two dogs in Sotogrande, Spain, but we're in the process of relocating to Athens.

I was born in Tehran but grew up between Paris, Marrakech and Andalusia (Spain) in my post-revolution displaced family, navigating boarding schools, prep schools and universities. Luckier than most other uprooted youngsters my age, my parents were still able to provide me with schooling modeled by the international education that is the FarmanFarmaian way of excellence. My education was in fact embodiment of

the compelling lessons of our family's revered ancestor, Shazdeh Abdol-Hosseini FarmanFarma who believed in pursuing a scholarly education that integrates the traditional with the forward looking.

Despite my parents' desire to have me take on my grandfather's line of work as an Architect (AbdolAziz FarmanFarmaian is celebrated as the former Shah's crowning builder and his legacy positions him as the Middle East's most influential architect) I chose to trust an inner call and engage in an avant-garde artistic exploration - keeping in line with my dear late great aunt Monir FarmanFarmaian.

As a side, I should tell you about Monir to describe my choice of following in her footsteps. Monir was a force. First married to Iranian abstract painter Manoucher Yektaï, she left postwar Iran for New York City to establish herself as an artist- a feat in itself for an Iranian woman of her era. Once in New York she joined the bustling art scene befriending the likes of Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, and Frank Stella. In the late fifties, after marrying my uncle Abol Bashir FarmanFarmaian, Monir went on to be celebrated in uppermost international art circles as one of the planet's best. Her vision layered traditional Persian technique with conceptual contemporary form. A beacon.

After two years of attending Architecture School at Paris Beaux-Arts, I changed course and enrolled in the Art school at the Beaux-Arts and soon started to paint using multidisciplinary

material such as nomadic designed fabrics, industrial glue on wood, or acrylic markers and plastic paint with a lot of texturization, asserting a first presence on the competitive Paris art scene.



Abdol Aziz FarmanFarmaian

**As a multidisciplinary artist, how do you describe your work? What inspires you the most? What are the main materials and mediums that you use?**

**What is the main reason behind your diverse choice of material? What are the main ideas that traversed your work?**

On my Instagram Bio Line, you will find me described as a Multivalent Retro Futurist.





“  
FarmanFarmaian’s multimedia works revolve around  
the ideas of movement and memory as they apply to  
the life and consciousness of a self-identified nomad.  
-The Huffington Post

*We R The Nomads Agency - Style Jan Pauwels  
Marrakech*

The term ‘multivalence’ reflects a plural, multidisciplinary and interconnected - interwoven - approach to any practice. Each medium is a tool embedded in the larger idea of my palette - each tool is intimately married by one movement to the next giving the end result its final imperfect, ever evolving balance as in a Sufi harmony. I use film, sound, paint, VR technology and sculpture, weaving them into a multi-sensory immersive experience.

Retro Futurism is not a new concept. It references 1930’s art deco futuristic visuals and Fritz Lang’s Retro Sci-Fi vision as seen in the movie Metropolis, later to be repurposed in the sixties and seventies by art circles. I chose to widen the scope to the exploration of the thematic related to the tension and the connection between past and future, archaic and innovative.

With respect to the materials that I work with, I have moved from raw canvas, natural pigments, acrylic and plastic paint to a process-oriented method where I source all my material in connection to the specificity of my project and/or particular painting, often engaging in collaborative exchanges with the world of crafts.

**You have your own way with music from being the founder and lead singer of electro rock band “PLAYGROUND” and your first solo album “Vagabond Heart”, to sonic signatures in your exhibitions. Tell us more about it.**

I acquired my first Spanish guitar around the same period that I joined Artistes Associés (a 90’s Graffiti Collective) as a teenager spraying frescoes on suburban walls and subway wagons and had a first whiff of stage life with a retro rock outfit patched together in boarding school.

The urge to put together a functional band followed me up to art school (The Velvet Underground and Andy’s Factory played a role in the choice of the band’s name, PLAYGROUND). By then, I had started experimenting with sound, film and image via a string of avant-garde Super 8mm short films and ethno-music documentaries ( Ava400A-sa, The Destiny of Nathalie X, The Gnawa Trail ) that had a fair lifespan considering the quasi-non-existent Parisian underground scene (we did not join the French hip-hop movement).

Most of the crowd I was shooting films with were first class musicians. Unforgettable jam sessions multiplied. Out of those sessions PLAYGROUND was born. A fabulous time: we had plugged into the early 2000’s rock revival, rolling down from NYC - fueled by the likes of John Casablancas and Jack White. Our demos went right up to Virgin Music Paris A&R and a frantic bid to sign us raged on the indie scene for months. We settled for the friendly approach of an upcoming label holed up in Montmartre - Le Village Vert Records - turning down various offers coming from major labels.

PLAYGROUND would be fiercely independent - a trait that has defined me pretty well through the years.

From 2003 up to 2010 PLAYGROUND toured extensively, recorded, produced and dropped hundreds of original tracks and remixes - a curated selection of which you can find on my website\*. PLAYGROUND was always one to experiment, open to collaborations with different types of producers such as Daniel Presley (Faith no More, The Breeders), Dimitri Tikovoï (Depeche Mode, Placebo) or Eric Chédeville (Daft Punk, Sebastien Tellier). The irony of it all was that the band split just as we hit gold in 2010.

A Vagabond Heart is a farewell to the music industry. A very personal and internal work that followed the general unleashing of negative energies leading to the band’s dissolution. I regrouped reconnecting with Morocco: a heartfelt land and a second country since my father Tino rebuilt a beautiful life in the Kingdom following our forced exile and the Islamic Revolution.

I retreated to Essaouira - capital to the Gnawa Brotherhood (I had come close to shooting the Gnawa Trail documentary at the inaugural 1999 Essaouira Festival) and their powerful healing immemorial cosmogonic music built on a peculiar mix of African Animism and Muslim Sufism. I wanted a reconnection to a needed sense of spirituality and to nature; a refuge to write and meditate on the paths ahead.

Part of those meditations included the teachings of Iranian philosopher Dariush Shayegan (and later those of Joseph Campbell and his Power of Myth): to operate a successful ecology of the planet there exists the need to

reconnect to the elements and operate on an 'Ecology of Soul'. In the face of mounting planetary (and interplanetary) challenges I am convinced that we are in urgent need for radical change. As the central French writer-thinker and De Gaulle's Minister of Culture André Malraux lays it: 'The 21st century will be spiritual or will not be [at all].'

The necessary experimentations involve free association of form: a radical liberation from limiting formats, confining structures and the enclosing of culture - mirroring the unstoppable shift from indigenous (national) identities to a unique multicultural planetary identity.

It is as crucial to move closer to the extemporizing conversational modalities of Jazz and to ultimately open up to the immensity of worldwide tribal heritage, a force that holds invaluable treasures.

On these founding ideas I engaged in the creation of a series of versatile nomadic installations around the world as I simultaneously created FORRM, a collaborative sonic platform with which I currently produce the Soundscapes that accompany exhibitions and FilmPoems.

**What is the main theme of your book "RUN"? What inspired you to write?**

As I state in its opening pages, RUN was a diary, a therapist and a companion as I took the exit door toward castles made of sand, so to say.

RUN was written alongside the Vagabond Heart album. One fed the other. After the PLAYGROUND Record deal with Zadig & Voltaire Music / Sony ATV went to the wall - my time in Paris was over. I took a one-way train ride out to the city of Arles, in Provence in southern France. Founded by Julius Caesar at the commercial crossroads of Gaul, Italy and Spain - Arles holds a superb archeological museum on the river Rhône, a powerful immersion into Roman classical antiquity (a period of history I am deeply passionate about).

I crossed into Spain via the Pyrenees mountains - then flew to China and survived a frozen winter in the company of an old boarding school friend who had himself ran off to resettle in Beijing. Moving into his very traditional Chinese house just across a Buddhist temple, I set up an atelier for three consecutive months and savored using Chinese ink,



calligraphy brushes and rice paper. But my sojourn in China did not last for long - so I made it back to Essaouira and to the Marrakech Medina - where I got run down by an old brown Mercedes at dawn one morning!

From that point on a true creative reconstruction began....

It's all there, in the RUN.

As you mentioned, there are illustrious artists' names in your family, such as your late grandfather, Abdol-Aziz Farmanfarmaian, and your late great aunt, Monir Farmanfarmaian. How did artistic endeavor become almost a family tradition? How and in what way(s) is your art influenced by these iconic figures?

I mentioned both my grandfather Aziz and my grand aunt Monir along the commanding prominence of Shazdeh FarmanFarma earlier. But will share two family anecdotes that have shaped me.

We left Iran in January 1979 on a PanAm flight to Paris. Aziz had married my grandmother Leyla (Lili) Gharagozlou after WWII. The Gharagozloos were the khans of Hamadan, but on her mother's side Lili was half French of aristocratic stock. Paris had been her city all along, and we owned an apartment with a view on the Ranelagh Park not far from the Musée Marmottan to whom the Monet family had donated a segment of his Nymphéas panels. Aziz took me there many times, sitting me on a bench in front of Monet and

ordering me to stay silent and absorb the art. These moments embody the foundation of my love of paint and of Monet as one of my most important references. Over time those silent absorptions taught me the meaning of the quasi-abstract movement, the connection to nature, the inner understanding of the power of Beauty.

As I grew up, my father supported my natural penchant and encouraged me to take up the brush. He had always disliked Paris and had bought property South of Spain where he could give full reign to his passion for polo. When I visited him on breaks from boarding school, I would spend my time sketching the horses and the players from the side of the field - to later recreate them on canvas with oil paint using impressionist techniques. At around the age of 18 my parents sent me to NYC to stay with my aunt Monir. I came with a polo painting in my bag as a gift. I always remember how she looked up with a flash of steel in her eyes as she scanned it and said: "Never let go". Never let go.

**Your wife Camilla FarmanFarmaian is a curator, and a cultural producer. Has her artistic point of view inspired you in any way? Tell us about PATIOO.**

Camilla and I first met way back in 2003 as PLAYGROUND was picking up. Yvan Tayeb (a reputed Parisian manager) had booked us 4 nights a week at the Chesterfield Café off the Champs Elysées on a month-long gig marathon. Camilla was then studying Fashion marketing at ESMOD and was operating extras for Yvan at the Chester. She was thoroughly unimpressed by superfluous Rock & Roll antics. She always saw and zoomed in on the elemental and intrinsic aspects of art.

Later, she chose to work with the Press Office of the Japanese A-Net Bureau fashion line, seduced by the minimal tradition of Japanese design, and also for the House of Balenciaga at the height of Nicolas Ghésqiere's fame - at his most creative. As she moved from fashion into the art scene, she brought with her an eye that mixes postmodern conceptual with raw beauty, taking no prisoners.

***From the very start she has taught me how to never compromise to achieve true vision, to value and***



*We R The Nomads*  
*Agency - Style KM couleurs Tanger*



On a purely artistic level she has added air to my style by letting go of the ornamental - and by focusing on the core, the absolute essence. These words aptly portray her touch as an avant-garde gallery owner and curator within the framework of her digital and physical programs on such platforms as Nouvelle Vague Art spaces, We R the Nomads Agency and more recently with PATIOO MONOROOM.

Inaugurated in September 2020 in Sotogrande in southern Spain, PATIOO feeds on the ongoing urban decentralization movement fueled by the pandemic. The exhibition is a conceptual white box with a dogma: one artist, one artwork revolving every three months with a curatorial line set on technology, video art and installation.

Her tight lineup of handpicked artists includes NY based Norwegian light and video artist Anne Katrine Sens-tad, London based Iranian sculptor and installation artist Farnoush Amini, Chicago based Israeli Video Artist Alina Orlov, and Tehran based Pop Art Painter Amir Nasser Akhlaghi-Fard, as well as Parisian multidisciplinary Contemporary Artist Frédéric Atlan and Photographer Manolo Espaliú of Seville.

I believe that the way ahead lies in a qualitative integration of technology into the creative palette. The new frontier is a dynamic merge of the physical and the virtual.

**How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted your work? Tell us about your experience with virtual exhibitions during the pandemic such as "Traces Sound Walk". Do you think that the pandemic has changed the art scene forever or at least for the foreseeable future?**



I have used the time off during the pandemic to explore innovative tech solutions. I first looked into augmented VR online viewing rooms (such as Berlin based VR platform Kunstmatrix) launching TRACES VR on the occasion of the digital edition of Frieze London 2020.

But I felt frustrated by the limitations of screen experience just as in early 2021 the crypto boom opened unprecedented and unchecked avenues into the decentralized Metaverse, and blockchain-secured crypto collectibles

went through the roof. This was the rise of NFT's (Non-Fungible Tokens) in the crypto market.

I feel NFTs give true import to the undervalued sphere of digital art and create a new platform for physical art enhanced into digital editions (effectively locking royalties).

In keeping with my position via-a-vis NFTs, in March of 2021 I dropped the "NFT ART NOT NFT TRASH" public declaration as one of my first NFT activities, radically denouncing the avalanche of trash selling at insane prices like the pre pandemic excesses of the Art-world.

I believe that the way ahead lies in a qualitative integration of technology into the creative palette. The new frontier is a dynamic merge of the physical and the virtual.

I went on to experiment with the Oculus Quest II VR headset plugging into apps that enable me to design, export, import and transform creations in the framework of a virtual studio. The experience led to the creation of various VR immersive experimental projects set in the Metaverse (details available on [www.firouzfarmanfarmaian.com](http://www.firouzfarmanfarmaian.com)).

These explorations further convinced me that the post pandemic art scene needs radical change, a redefinition that would exclude established art world deities. Mentalities are muting, art forms and cultures are merging, new forms are arising. We must learn to welcome the 2020's in this environment of change and transformation.



**What is the story behind your latest exhibition "Memorandum of the Unknown Path" which was nominated for the Jameel Prize 2021?**

Morocco for me filled the void created by exile. It started a cultural connection that began way back in 1999 with the production of my first ethno-musical documentary on Gnawa music. This connection lasted right up to the Mem



*Banners of The Unbanished*

orandum installation-exhibition in 2020 that I produced in collaborative fashion with Berber women weavers of the Moroccan Sahara, and that was shown under the powerful cupola of the Marrakech's Royal Theatre on the occasion of the 1-54 African Art Fair.

Primarily conceived as a fabulous dance based on Berber tribal culture, Memorandum of the Unknown Path is also a Blueprint - a referential show - a foundation on which I am creating future installations. The installation has a multilayered format built around the idea of a virtuous cycle. The approach is to source, produce, and transform in order to preserve, thereby integrating a positive collaborative dynamic. At its heart lies the idea of relating to archaic forms issued from tribal cultures merging the past and the future into a single transformative movement. As Kandinsky or Picasso had done in their own time - to develop new forms through initiating a conversation with tribal art. The Post Tribal show on the other hand, is an Ecology of Soul, a necessary bridge to be built to reconnect to deep planetary values our collective ancient cultures have kept intact, redeemed from the devastation of the post-industrial age.

**Can you describe the project you are most proud of?**

Any project for me lies within the bigger picture: My whole body of work is The Project, a construct of interwoven shows linked by a common memorial thread connected by tribal cultures. You can say this post tribal vision is an approach inspired by French-Caribbean thinker Edouard Glissant's idea of the

Produced by the We R the Nomads Agency and curated by Sveva Manfredi Zavaglia, the project enjoys the backing of a strong team of professionals along with the support of past and potentially new partnerships.

For me it's also a starting point to explore the Central Asian tribal culture and to also reconnect to my own clan's long-lost lore.



*Firouz FarmanFarmaian preparing street ferscoe*

memorial trace, and positively deconstructing Jacques Derrida's darker input. The dynamic was primarily established with the Nomadic Displacement, a site-specific installation in 2017 at the Musée de Marrakech, soon solidified by the Poetry of the Tribe exhibit in Tribeca NY in 2018 (Salomon Arts Gallery, Leonard Tourné Gallery) and later with Permanence of Trace in Mayfair London in 2019 (We R the Nomads Agency, Space 50). In 2020 Memorandum of the Unknown Path at Théâtre Royal de Marrakech (We R the Nomads Agency, Magic of Persia Foundation, Flora Family Foundation) unified my visions under one dome - establishing the actual multivalent open format.

**Please tell us about your upcoming projects, including shows, exhibitions and so on.**

I will be going to Kyrgyzstan in a few days to stay through November 2021. There I will source, produce and create the central segment of my upcoming installation-exhibit, GATES OF TURAN with the collaboration of the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic for the Venice Biennale 2022.



*Poetry of the Tribe 2018 opening NYC featuring arts patron Gerasimus Mariani di Pergola and Galerist Javier Tourné*



*Ceremony Installation - Nomadic Displacement at Musée de Marrakech 2017*





*Portrait of a Berber Woman  
Panel II From London show  
2019*



SEPAND  
DANESHThe "Corner" as Symbol  
of Human Condition

By: Ghazal Mostafa



*Behind the scenes of making the models of 25 sculptures for French pavilion at Expo Dubai 2021*

*Sepand Danesh was born in 1984, Tehran, Iran, and has lived and worked in Paris since he was 12. He uses drawing, painting and sculptures as a rhizome of opportunity to understand human condition through its behavior. His paintings embody the optical illusion of the inside corner without floor or ceiling (as the metaphor of impediment) and they shelter his personal memory and also a larger cognition of the human race through history, the sciences and the arts.*

**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview. Please introduce yourself and tell us about the journey that got you into the world of fine arts.**

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity.

I was born in Tehran during the Iran-Iraq war in 1984. As a child I felt trapped in that conflict and in the social and political changes that transpired during those years in Iran.

At the age of 12, I left Iran with my parents. It was the beginning of a long journey in which I experienced another series of traumatic events such as the loss of my native language and socio-cultural affiliations, as well as financial security, in addition to the experience of war in Iran.

I was somehow pushed to literally think my inner feelings out and find ways to escape.

At first it was simply drawings. I imagined a grid in which I fragmented my reality into small pictograms. I did thousands of drawings over many years. Then one day I was finally able to take a step back and discover a specific form of behavior and expression called "ART". I wanted to know more about it and to practice it.

When I started painting, my interior world was so far away from my surrounding reality that I needed to find a space to express it. The idea of the "corner" as represented in my paintings, the vertical space without floors and ceilings, seemed to suit my penchant for double-entendre. As enveloping as it is repelling, the corner embodies the dual dialectic of confinement and escape.

I realized that this duality is somehow a metaphor of human condition, trapped on earth, in bodies, in language, in ideas, etc. and that each human being will experience it in some form and at some point in a lifetime. Since this



discovery, I have concentrated all my philosophical research on finding and making an archive of similar human experiences found in art, science, and history.

The corner blocks the viewer and because of that, forces him to escape the reality of being trapped through imagination and fantasy of the mind. A shelf is placed in my corners, for instance, that creates a platform to host combinations of fragments that produces humanized objects.

More recently, I have started a new set of work of sculptures based on the combination of similar fragments as in my drawings, and these constructed figures are characters composed of cubes that live in my corners. With this concept in mind, I have produced 25 sculptures for the French Pavilion in Dubai Expo 2020. Visitors can experience the sculptures physically by using them as urban furniture.

**Tell us about the design process for the French pavilion and how you got involved in Dubai 2020 Expo? How does it feel as an Iranian-French artist to be contributing at Dubai Expo?**

No matter how impressive and big an exhibition is, at some point people will need to rest. My sculptures, based on 20cm cubes create the perfect ergonomics for human body as much as for adults as for children. Also, I wanted everybody to feel they can use the esplanade as they wish.

**What is the story/ concept behind the sculptures? What ideas inspired you?**

The sculptures are made from wood with metallic interior structures and then painted over. Each cube has four shades of the same color. For example, a yellow cube is painted with four different shades of yellow. This particularity gives a digital aspect to the pieces because the light and shadow on the sculptures stay always the same no matter what the surrounding light. The shapes are inspired by an interstellar radio message sent to space in 1974, carrying basic information about humanity and Earth.

**What were some of the difficulties and challenges you had faced during the design and also construction and installation process of the sculptures at Dubai Expo 2020?**

Every part of this project was a challenge. Apart from technical problems, working during Covid-19 made things way more complicated.

But with the help of everyone involved in this project, we were finally able to make it.

**What inspires you the most? What are the main materials and mediums that you use?**



Both my parents were book lovers, and my inspirations are mainly from literature. I am most interested in the way that humans have tried to escape obstacles both mental and physical. I use all material and mediums, try new things, and always want to push my limits further.

**What inspires you in your drawings and creative ventures? What lies behind your vision in your work?**

I have a wide range of possibilities that I keep in my drawings and when I find a very interesting hero, I always look forward to finding its anti-hero. Coming from a very divided background, I have learned that inspiration is like the cockpit of an airplane. Pilots must know all the buttons on their cockpit panel even if they never use them. Because if one day, when they are cruising at several thousand meters of altitude, a button starts flashing indicating a problem, they must know what it is all about and be able to find an immediate

solution. It's the same for artists. Art helps building links between individuals and their environment but unfortunately, art is not recognized for its real effect on human development and without it a decline of civilization is not only inevitable but also a slow process which makes it irreversible or very hard to rebuild. Berthold Brecht used to say: we often talk about the violence of the flow which carries everything but never of the violence of the shores. Art constitutes the shores of all civilizations.



**You briefly mentioned that Covid-19 affected your work at the Expo. But how has the pandemic impacted your work as a whole?**

**Do you think that the pandemic has changed the art scene forever or at least for the foreseeable future?**

Covid-19 has not affected my research because as I pointed out earlier, I have always felt trapped and confined in different ways, but Covid-19 shows that a big change is occurring in the human behavior and the pandemic is not the cause of it but one of its consequences.

**What project(s) are you currently working on? Please tell us about your upcoming projects (including shows, exhibitions etc.)**

My favorite thing to do is to be part of collaborations with researchers about fragmented reality, meta cognition in art, paradox of the concept of the corner, network sciences and similar subjects.

I have a few propositions for new public space intervention projects which seem to be a very challenging area for urban design, and I have upcoming shows also in galleries that I regularly update on my Instagram.

# 10 Exhibitions in 7 Months

*The need to follow health protocols and considerations during the Covid-19 outbreak to mitigate its spread caused artistic activities, which often took place in certain closed spaces, to gradually slow down and almost discontinue altogether. Consequently, around late February 2020 when signs of Covid-19 surfaced around the country and thus in Tehran, we saw many visual art exhibitions ready to launch simply shut down.*

*Although the closures lasted for several months and in some cases for a year, it prompted some artists to find ways to put an end to the shutdowns by reaching out to government officials in charge and demonstrate that coexistence of art and the pandemic is not an impossible concept.*



## A Review of Painting Exhibitions by Behdad Najafi Asadollahi, Abstract-Expressionist Painter, Curator and Organizer of Visual Arts Exhibitions

**Behdad Najafi Asadollahi**, is an abstract and abstract-expressionism style painter and curator of visual artworks. He is one of these artists who has tried with a passion and diligence, and in full compliance of health protocols, to share with his audience his love of art. Over the past 7 months Najafi has organized 10 group painting exhibitions in Tehran because he believes that humans, as social beings, have never lived without art throughout history, and art has always been part of our lives.

Emphasizing that in today's world, human need for art does not require evidence and justification, and that every human being, with any level of culture, way of thought and background is somehow aware of this fact, Najafi believes these exhibitions also addressed the need to get out of the decline that hit the world of art and exhibitions in



*Behdad Najafi Asadollahi, Eastern Glory, 2020, Acrylic on Canvas, 100\*70 cm, Tehran*

the last year and a half of Covid-19 outbreak. In his public exhibitions of various works of visual art, Najafi has tried to bring color, creativity and beauty once again to people's daily lives.

Najafi's 10 exhibitions since early summer of this year in the capital city of Tehran were all done with careful executive planning and with specific goals in mind. Artists were invited, galleries were selected, and artwork was decided on in tandem with preparation of the galleries, installations and the impressive cooperation and support of the artists, all done with art lovers in mind. Also notably, six virtual exhibitions have been held online and the works of participating artists have been displayed around the world.

The cooperation of gallery directors, who showed special flexibility in managing, planning and executing all



related affairs, made it possible to hold these exhibitions in accordance with all the regulations and health protocols, which is also commendable. Holding these exhibitions created a sense of passion, vitality, mobility and indescribable energy in Najafi, much of which is due to the unanticipated reception of artists and art enthusiasts, the support of managers, and the high executive quality of the exhibitions.

"Life", began its virtual presentation on May 17, 2021 and continued online for three months after that date. Also, from June 29th to July 2nd, this exhibition was held in person with a display of 28 works in free and varied styles and techniques by 9 artists. Following the holding of a series of artistic events, a group exhibition of paintings titled "Tammuz" also opened on July 30, 2021, which continued until

August 4, 2021, during which time 21 paintings of eight artists were displayed in a variety of styles and techniques. "Color of Summer" was the title of another exhibition that opened both in person and virtually on August 3, 2021. The exhibition's in-person section continued until August 8 and displayed 28 works by 10 artists. Continuing the review of activities of Najafi, we should mention his "Au



Najafi has three main goals for regular and continuous running of these artistic events. These are (1) the success and expansion of artistic activities, (2) the increased bonding and communication among artists and their audience community, and (3) an increase in creativity and innovation with the rounding up and connecting of diverse content and ideas under one roof.

In describing the 10 exhibitions, we should first mention the "Baharang" exhibition, which initially started virtually on April 14, 2021, due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. In this exhibition 9 artists with paintings and works of calligraphy participated in various styles and techniques with a total of 51 works. On June 8, 2021, with the improving conditions and the addition of another artist to the "Baharang" group, the exhibition opened in person and hosted artists and art lovers with a total of 53 works through June 11. The second exhibition, "Color and



*Behdad Najafi Asadollahi, Glorious Mind, 2019, Acrylic on Canvas, 100\*70 cm, Tehran*

turn" exhibition, which was opened on September 17, 2021, as the beautiful autumn season approached. The exhibition welcomed artists and art lovers by displaying a variety of works from 10 artists until September 26. The last exhibition of this series of events called "Mehr Rang" opened simultaneously in person and virtually on October 11, 2021 and continued until October 15. In this group painting exhibition, 30 works with free style and technique by 12 artists were displayed. These days, the acceleration of vaccination, which has been on the rise for the past several months, has created the possibility and hope in everyone that in the upcoming winter season, everyone will be gradually vaccinated and the coronavirus chain will be finally severed. Naturally, the hope for artists is to have non-virtual, in-person exhibitions. However, during this period, it was proven that it is possible to set up galleries in cyberspace and keep art alive in the hearts and minds of people.

# Simple Chic Designs with a Traditional Touch

By: Ghazal Mostafa



*Tara Parvaresh is the founder & creative director of Tara Parvaresh women's clothing line. She was born in 1988 in the city of Sari in the Caspian region of Iran. Parvaresh started her career in 2010 after graduating from the Istituto Europeo di Design in Florence majoring in clothing design. Having first worked in advertising and marketing, she finally launched her own showroom in 2017 with the goal of offering high quality designer clothes for women and aspiring to expand her brand globally.*

## Please tell us about yourself and your background.

I have been interested in fashion design from a young age and have been designing clothes for myself and my family and friends since I was 15. My parents were rather strict about my education and would not allow me to study fashion design at high school, so I majored in mathematics and got my bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics Engineering from University of Mazandaran instead.

However, my passion for design was still very strong throughout my university years. So in order to improve my skills in what I really loved, I also took courses on the side, some even online, during those years for pattern making and sewing, design and figure sketching – all in line with my passion of fashion design.

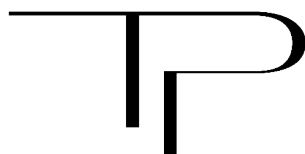
About 10 years ago, I started to hold seasonal and temporary shows in various locations, but gradually as my designs became more popular, I opened my own private showroom in Tehran about 3 years ago and started a private workshop for producing my designs.

## When did you finally decide it was time to become a fulltime designer?

As I mentioned before, I have always had a passion for design of clothing. That was why I never let go of my inner calling and in fact tried to improve my skills by taking those courses at the same time that I was studying to become an engineer! It took a couple years but once I felt more confident of my skills in clothing design and tailoring, I started my seasonal shows. This was while I was still working for an advertising company so all I can say is that the only thing that encouraged me to continue and work this hard was my interest and passion for this art.

## Do you follow a specific style of design? How do you describe your style in general? What do your designs/patterns mean? What is the story behind each collection?

I would describe my style as Simple Chic. These are simple pieces which I try to make with the highest quality fabrics possible, and then add few thoughtful details to make them unique. Pleats which are known as my signature in each design are used in most of my pieces and are all handmade.



TARA PARVARESH

Also, I use detailed fabrics with embroideries or textured, which I associate with traditional Iranian architecture and which I use for a different design in each collection. So, I can say generally my designs are modern and minimal pieces with a traditional touch. I should add that I like to play with different kinds of fabrics and cuts, and when possible, would rather use simple fabrics with no prints. For me, a fabric's texture stands above the prints or its other features.

## What inspires you to design? What/who influences your designs? Who are some of your biggest idols in fashion (globally, in Iran, France...)?

I can say everything from aesthetic and architectural elements of buildings to famous or less-known designers in the world influence my designs. In a way, a combination of all of them inspire me,

but I can say these days my favorite designers are Alexander MacQueen, Gabriela Hearst, Haider Ackermann and Maria Grazia Chiuri. There are also painters and fashion influencers I can add to this list.





**How would you describe Iran's growing fashion industry? What are the opportunities and obstacles for Iranian designers? And how do you evaluate Iran's market for national products?**

Iran's fashion market is a one with plenty of potential but unfortunately the least amount of support. I think what really invigorates this home-grown industry right now is unavailability of foreign brands and when available, their high prices.

Another very important and helpful trend for our fashion industry is wearing unknown or less popular brands which is also a craze around the world.

As far as difficulties in the field of fashion design I believe the main one is the lack of good quality raw materials, and the other is absence of modern sewing techniques and machines that negatively affect the quality of our production.

**How has Covid-19 pandemic impacted your work?**

For sure Covid-19 has affected the fashion market a lot and has transformed the way everything is done, creating new ways of shopping and even customer tastes in styles which may never change back. As for our showroom, we have limits for number of visitors at one time.

As we all know there are fewer extravagant and crowded parties than before the pandemic, and public preference is for smaller and more private gatherings with casual fashion styles. You may have heard or seen one of the biggest trends of summer 20/21 which is the "dad sandals"! You know it's big when Chanel does it, right? I believe that as long as Covid-19 is with us, this simplicity will be more or less preferred. I also don't think there would be anything such as going back to the old ways or how things were before the

pandemic. It's a new era and as they say, this is the new normal.

**Please tell us about your upcoming projects (including collections, shows, exhibitions etc.)**

As I am very interested in creating unique designs and also Iranian traditional art, I am working on some Persian handicrafts for the upcoming season that I hope will show as a good example of Persian art. Our fall/winter 21/22 collection is mainly focused on using hand-woven or handmade fabrics made out of wool and cotton which are mostly used for casual and formal coats. The fabrics are in a variety of bold colors like fuchsia, blue and orange, and also in black and cream colors. Another focus of the collection is the inclusion of card weaving (tablet weaving) and tape weaving techniques which are also all handmade. As these are time-consuming processes, this collection is a small experiment with limited pieces.



Uniqueness is always striking... being a woman, discovering yourself and appreciating your attractiveness, simplicity and exclusivity, the uniqueness that is apparent in your accessories and the way you dress up ...color, design, texture and anything that further embellishes and strengthens you. Individuality is significant and appreciated...it keeps you constantly fresh. We keep you always looking new ...a mindset that mirrors the beauty of your creation.



# Jewelry Inspired by Nature

By: Ghazal Mostafa



*Roham Babaei Fard founded his jewelry brand after completing his Civil Engineering degree. He had always been interested in architecture and design and so it did not take long before his interest in artifacts, antique ornaments, and colored gems inspired him to create his own jewelry collection. In his designs, Roham relies on and utilizes elements such as flowers, birds and insects.*

## Please tell us about yourself and your background.

I am an architect as well as a jewelry designer because I have always loved architecture as well as other forms of art. Jewelry design is my second passion and my second job aside from architecture, but I find the two very similar and connected to one another.

## When did you discover your love of jewelry? What first led you in the direction of making jewelry?

Even as a young boy, I liked old jewelries, antique pieces, and old stained glasses and how the rays of light would pass through them and create a vivid sense of life. I would always admire antique jewelries but never thought that I would pursue it as a career. Around four years ago I started making jewelry as a hobby and slowly it picked up as more people liked what I designed and made, and soon jewelry design became my second job.

## How would you describe your collections? Where do you find your design inspiration? What inspires you the most?

I would describe my collections as a magic world of colors, insects, flowers and simulation of what we imagine as paradise. When it comes to my collections, I find nature to be the most inspiring element.

## How do you want women to feel when wearing your jewelry?

I want women to feel confident and special. I want them to stand out and be unique. In fact, most of my clients feel like that when are wearing my jewelry and they tell me that when they enter a gathering, they always receive compliments on their earrings or necklace.

## Who are some of your biggest idols in fashion? (Globally, in Iran, Europe...) How

I don't have a fashion idol. I truly love antique jewelries, but most of the time their designer is unknown.

## What are your favorite materials to use?

I use brass as my main material instead of gold since I prefer my pieces to be valued based on the design and my creativity instead of how much gold has been used in them. I use semi-precious stones and my pieces are mostly limited editions. I want my creations to be used by people who really appreciate them.



## What's your favorite piece of jewelry that you've made so far and why?

I would say that my favorite piece is one of my latest necklaces. It is an olive branch with two doves carrying a stone. The stone's color and aura resemble the universe and our galaxy. We live in a time where the world is faced with Covid-19 pandemic, war and poverty in many of its corners, and we see what is happening in Afghanistan. My hope is that one day soon, the world will be filled with peace. This necklace is how I would describe world peace and a world without war.



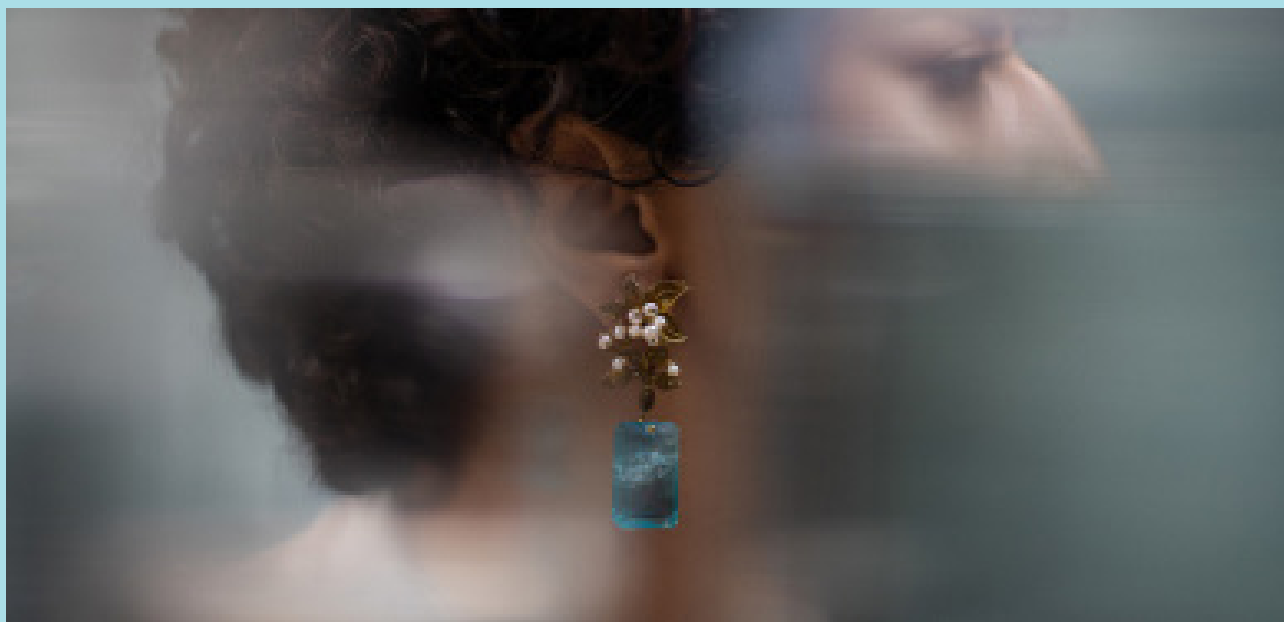


**How would you describe Iran's growing fashion industry? What are the opportunities and obstacles for Iranian designers? And how do you evaluate Iran's market for national products?**

Fashion in Iran is growing but not in a distinctive and original way. There are some great designers in Iran who are famous for their work in this market but at the same time we see a lot of copying going on in designs and styles. In general, I see a lot of promising professional designers in the growing fashion industry in our country.

The main obstacle for Iranian designers is that the fashion scene here is quite limited as far as its market size. I believe that fashion should be an international endeavor and that designers should have access to international events and shows so that they can grow at a global level.

Iran's market for national products has a long way to go to become independent. Iranian high-quality products are pricy, and therefore they are not available to the general public. Sometimes their prices are as high as those of famous outside brands.



**How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted your work?**

I am sorry that a lot of people have lost their loved ones due to Covid 19. It has been a challenging period on many levels for people around the world and all businesses everywhere have been affected by this tragedy.

In Iran too most events have been canceled and that has definitely impacted my work. But I tried to see Covid-19 pandemic as an opportunity to better appreciate life and my loved ones and become a better person.

**What advice would you have for aspiring jewelry designers?**

I would tell them to be creative and find their own style. Social media has now enabled us to be connected to a broader audience and designers have the opportunity to be seen by more people and grow at much faster pace than before. Unfortunately, this connectivity has also meant that a lot of people copy other designers, and I am completely against that. I believe that if someone is putting the time and energy into creating something, it must be on something unique and creative that has never been done before. No matter how beautiful a copy might be, it will never have the same value as an original piece.



## Arghavan Rouzbeh

Born in Tehran in 1989, Arghavan Rouzbeh started her career by making plexiglass jewelry in the summer of 2019 with a new approach combining the contemporary look with the traditional.

After several years of working with graphic design and marketing teams of a few established local companies active in the fashion world and also gaining knowledge on printing and graphics as an apprentice to her own father, Arghavan was finally able to establish her own brand.

Arghavan's personal style, with different accessories and loud colors, had always been eye-catching and she had all along wished that these vivid colors play an active role in other people's lives as well. That was how her personal interest in "statement accessories" motivated her to get started on her own creations.

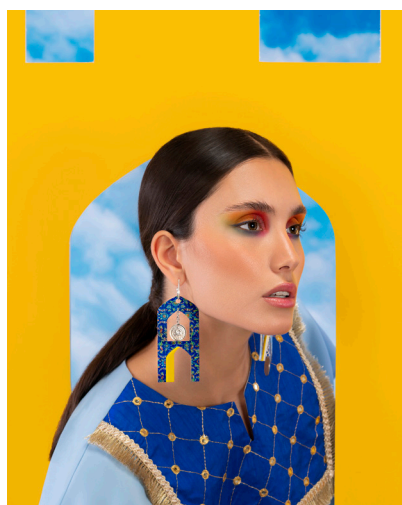
The technique she uses in the production of accessories is self-taught knowledge together with skills she picked up from her father's many years of experience in the printing and cutting industry.

Since unique and unusual accessories at affordable prices are always welcomed by all, Arghavan chose plexiglass as it is relatively inexpensive and can also be easily integrated with different metals.

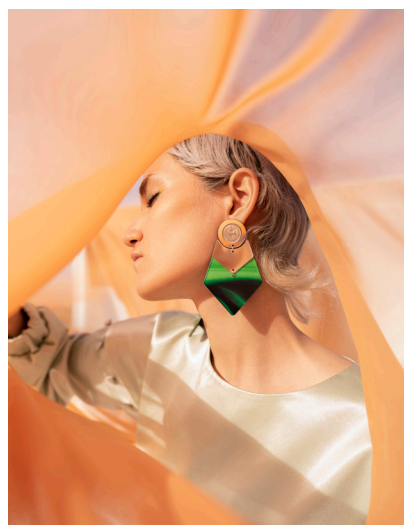
She has been able to apply her jewelry making techniques in producing plexiglass pieces combined with a variety of metals for each of her collections in the last 2 years, targeting a larger client base for her brand with its reasonable pricing.

While each collection is inspired by the environment Arghavan also borrows from geometric shapes and modern forms combined with elements from ancient Iranian culture to create her jewelry pieces.

For Arghavan study of art books and relationships and collaborations with other artists and brands have also played a valuable role in her creations during the last 2 years, and she hopes to continue on the same track going forward.



## UP & COMING DESIGNERS



While each collection is inspired by the environment Arghavan also borrows from geometric shapes and modern forms combined with elements from ancient Iranian culture to create her jewelry pieces.

Each collection has a story to tell in the world of graphics or architecture, which is reflected in the jewelry pieces ultimately available as wearable art. The patterns of Arghavan's jewelry are inspired from the world of graphics, and the forms she uses come from architecture and geometry.

Meanwhile, each piece is made as a single copy, which turns each work of art into a fingerprint unique to its owner. Pieces in all collections are produced with a slight difference from one another to make them unique and personal.

Currently Arghavan Rouzbeh and her small team in Tehran design and produce each collection which is available only in very limited quantity on a private basis. But in the very near future Arghavan has plans to market and sell her jewelry all over the country as well as in Canada, the United States, Europe and beyond.



## ZEEEN FASHION

Our focus and expertise in "Zeeen" are centered on handicrafts. Clothing, as one can imagine, is one of the oldest handicrafts of mankind from the past to the present. As such, in fall of 2019, we decided to launch the clothing and apparel division of Zeeen in a serious and focused way by combining the art of various ancient Persian handicrafts together.

With this concept in mind, our vision and priorities include the following three main approaches:

- The art of handicrafts in the production process is our priority.
- Design and production techniques are inspired by original Iranian arts and crafts.

- Products are crafted taking into account ideals of sustainable fashion and environmental protection.

The first collection of Zeeen's apparel was unveiled and presented on the night of Yalda (winter solstice) in 2019. The main composition of this winter collection was a combination of black and white clothing with red lining, whose original designs used the art of calico (Ghalamkar) on linen fabric and were finished with cotton embroidery by the tasteful Isfahani artists. Our primary goal was to use an old art to create functional products that match today's tastes.

Our second collection of clothing was created within the world of Covid-19 and the quarantine, and like its name, "Ziva" (in ancient Persian) meant life and hope for the future. The Ziva collection was made using handcrafted textile techniques such as natural linen fabrics, hand-printed calico with old motifs and natural dyeing. In designing the clothes of this collection, whose predominant colors were mustard and light turquoise blue, we were inspired by modern styles. Our goal was to create a convenient and practical collection by combining traditional handicrafts techniques with avant-garde designs.

The third collection was presented exactly one year after our first event, at the same time as Yalda night, in 2020. This time, we used the calico technique on embroidered quilted cotton fabrics suitable for winter weather.



The dominant color of this collection was black and white with dark navy color combination.

The fourth Zeeen clothing collection was for spring 1400. This was a collection with deep connections to the mood of spring, both in material, design and color, and full of color diversity and vitality: coral, light smoky beige, cream, charcoal and turquoise colors made up the range of colors of this collection. The main technique used in this collection was hand needlecraft on cotton and natural fabrics which was done by Afghan women artists living in Iran. This approach had the added benefit of job creation and productive entrepreneurship for this group of artisans.

Zeeen's clothing collection for the summer of 1400 was inspired by the green northeastern region of the country, from ShahKuh area in Golestan province. The special and unique handicrafts of black embroidery on white fabric is famous and comes from this region of Iran, where the local women's clothes and decorative arts, both past and present, display its beauty.

**Zeeen's Principles and Priorities**  
The design and production of Zeeen's clothes are still at the start of their path, and we believe this is just the beginning of a greater purpose and ambition for us.



However, from the very first days, our priority has been, and will continue to be, to observe and contend with a set of principles.

- Our main goal is to link Iran's original arts of the past with the needs and expectations of today's modern world. In this way, we try to bring the techniques and creative methods and ancient handicrafts closer to the interests and tastes of new generations by producing practical and attractive products.

- Our other basic and important priority is production in accordance with environmental principles and sustainable fashion. The truth is that today's fashion is one of nature's great destroyers. But we want to pursue a different way, and to do that, our products must have the least possible waste.

- Every design we produce is not just a simple dress to wear, but a creation that contains and narrates a story of handicrafts and its production path. This path goes from city to city and village to village in Iran to complete its tale.

- We believe that the manner of production and satisfaction of the artisan who is our colleague at each stage of this path is extremely important. Accordingly, providing a safe and healthy workplace for the artisans, as well as protecting the human and financial rights of all those who collaborate with us in the production chain of these apparels and accessories, is another of our priorities.





# KOOSHA PIANO



*Master Mani Koosha  
Born in 1988 in Tehran, Iran*

- *Doctorate in professional piano techniques*
- *Member of Federation of International Musicians "FIM" with registration number 5182.*
- *Certified with master's degree by Eftetah Art College for Piano Technical Training, accredited by Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of Iran.*
- *International Teacher of higher education of Piano Techniques.*
- *Founder of Koosha Piano Technical Training Complex.*
- *The first official and certified Iranian piano technician in Middle East.*
- *Head of Pardis International Piano Technical Training Complex.*
- *Head of Tehran Piano Engineering Training Organization.*

## About us:

The Koosha Piano Technical Training Complex was founded in 2016 by Master Mani Koosha in response to a shortage of trained technicians and interested students for repairing pianos at national and international levels.

This Complex trains skilled piano technical masters in all levels. Koosha Piano Technical Training Complex works diligently in the fields of service, repair, refurbishing and restoration of old pianos at the home of clients or in Koosha piano workshops in north of Tehran.

Koosha Piano has repaired and restored over 3,000 pianos in over 35 Iranian cities since its founding.

Master Mani Koosha has also conducted over 100 online as well as in-person courses for many students not only in Iran but also in Turkey, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, United Arab Emirates and Australia, and graduates of his courses have received his official and internationally accepted certificates.

## Our Goals:

- *Service, repair and restoration of all kinds of pianos in accordance with international standards.*
- *Training technicians of pianos for raising the knowledge and expertise of those who are interested in tuning, repairing and rebuilding all kinds of pianos including Soundboard and Pin blocks.*

Website: <https://piano-technical.com>

Instagram : @koosha.piano

Phone : +98 912 154 7834 +98 912 563 3895





# Reviving Iranian Handicraft Industry to Meet Modern Tastes

By: Bitā Nayeri



"Zeeen" is a collection whose name, identity and credibility are tied to the art of handicrafts, with the goal of creating a new design concept in the world of Iranian handicrafts. The Zeeen brand was started in 2012 building on the invaluable artful expertise of the "Heidarian Carpet", which is an acclaimed enterprise with a 130-years history.

Our task is to identify artists and crafts all over Iran. From the onset, we searched province to province, city to city and village to village, and came across artists who still have the artistic and creative spirit, but who have turned to other professions out of necessity. We invited the best from among them to collaborate with us by rethinking their designs and handicrafts to make them more marketable. With their active participation we created products that have both elements of the original arts of the past and also reflect modern tastes of consumers today.

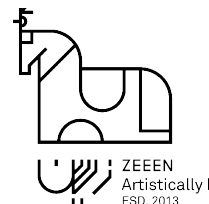
Part of what we do is to find a work of art or handicraft produced in a small village in Iran, in towns and places like Chaharmahal, Bakhtiari or Kurdistan, Sistan and Baluchestan or Khuzestan, or in a workshop in Isfahan, Shiraz or Yazd, and take these unique handicrafts to interested people anywhere in Iran or around the world, to a home in London, or Paris, New York, or Berlin, Toronto, etc. Our belief is that these artworks, in continuation of their destiny, will become ambassadors and narrator of Iranian culture, civilization and art wherever they go. To achieve our goal of spreading the enjoyment of these handicrafts worldwide, it was important not only identify the best artist and their artwork, but also to present them to international audiences in the right framework and format. It has been over 8 years now that Zeeen has been professionally engaged in bringing these handicraft items into world markets from production process to export.

Our efforts in all these years have been centered on supporting the original form and quality of handicrafts of our country. Simultaneously, we have been purposeful in our endeavor to further develop and improve the livelihoods of the artists who make these works. As such, our goal and strategy has been to rethink and improve the quality and visual display of Iranian artworks and handicrafts with the aim of bringing them closer to the tastes of today's audiences and contemporary generation both in Iran and elsewhere.

At both Zeeen and Heidarian Carpet, we try to use every opportunity and space to introduce as many and as best artists as possible who have collaborated with us over the years. We believe that introducing these artists who produce magnificent and creative artworks through their art and creativity is a part of our social responsibility.

One of the main priorities for the production and distribution of products at Zeeen is the selection of works whose manufacture process is environmentally friendly from beginning to end.

We also ensure that everything about our products is rooted in the Iranian territory, so that from copper containers to clay jars, from wicker baskets to silk shawls and cushions, from seven-color tiles to colorful needlework, all of their raw materials are from within Iran and all products are made by the creative artists of our homeland. Since its launch over eight years ago, Zeeen has created employment for thousands of artists across the country from small villages to large cities, which has in turn resulted in strengthening of local communities.



Since its launch over eight years ago, Zeeen has created employment for thousands of artists across the country from small villages to large cities, which has in turn resulted in strengthening of local communities.

Many of these creative crafts men and women had had to abandon their artistic vocations and turn to other professions due to lack of customers and unprofitable businesses.

The increasing revival of Iranian handicrafts, for its part, prevents the emptying of villages and the involuntary migration of their inhabitants to larger cities where they are marginalized. As these artisans become aware of the growing number of distinctive buyers of their handicrafts both in Iran and around the world, they are more than ever focused on producing better and more high-quality products. Our goal at Zeeen is to further expand this culture of superior quality among our national crafts people, stabilize the idea of a lifestyle based on arts in Iran, and enhance the continued prosperity of Iranian handicrafts throughout our country and around the world.



# Heidarian Carpet: Reviving an Old Persian Identity

By: Bitu Nayeri

Handmade Persian carpet has a long history. So long that people around the world know Iran and Iranians only by this colorful and magnificent product and its originality and beauty. For this reason, the Persian rug, apart from all else, has become part of the identity and prized treasure of yesterday, today and tomorrow of Persians. Yet, this self-dependent and original brand has not been recognized by us Iranians as it should and has not been valued at par with its import and place in the world at large. At Heidarian Carpets, our dream and our goal are to realize this concept and further reinforce this ranking in a modern and contemporary way, both in Iran and around the world.

These qualities, along with the company's dedication to the value of craftsmanship has taken Heidarian Carpets far in the world of Iranian art and crafts. It is therefore no surprise that currently a larger circle of art enthusiasts around the world is welcoming, admiring and enjoying Heidarian's artistic heritage.

Arash Heidarian is the current CEO of Heidarian Persian Rugs. He took over business in 2006 after his father, Iraj Heidarian, and continued the family tradition while also introducing a new collection of Persian contemporary rugs. Keeping to the tradition of high quality and standards of Heidarian's



The story of Heidarian Carpets which today maintains its head office in Tehran, goes back to 1890, when the Heidarian family started a modest-sized Persian rug workshop. Today, after 130 years of hard work and business acumen by members of this tightly knit family enterprise, the fifth generation of Heidarians continues its tradition of producing high quality hand-woven rugs and carpets with an eye also on improving the livelihoods and quality of life of those artisans whose work defines the industry.

Heidarian's Persian rugs are woven by both nomadic tribe members as well as local weavers in villages and town workshops and are generally made in four major rug centers of Iran namely: Chaharmahal-o-Bakhtiari, Kurdistan, Fars and Azerbaijan provinces.

Along with reflecting the great history of Iran, the culture of its people and the penchant of modern Iranian art toward abstraction and fresh ideas, Heidarian's rugs are characterized by their craftsmen's techniques, the use of high-quality materials, truly natural and elaborate colors, and innovative patterns exclusively designed for Heidarian Carpets.

rugs, the modern collection represents a variety of patterns influenced by fresh ideas and subjective concepts of young designers. Today, Heidarians collections incorporate over 22 different categories in a variety of designs and sizes.





Although Heidarian Carpet is rooted in the original culture of carpet weaving in Bakhtiari tribes, over the decades it has expanded these roots from Tabriz to Kurdistan and from Kashan and Isfahan to the creative tribe of Qashqai and beyond.

The company has for generations solicited the cooperation of artists and master carpet weavers of each region to continuously re-imagine the ancient designs. At the same time, Heidarian Carpet has made every effort to improve the craftsmanship of the artisans, so that with their direct participation in the weaving and production process, the brand's carpets have both traces of the original carpet weaving art of the past while being in line with today's modern tastes.

All components of the original and handmade Persian carpets are rooted in the nature of Iran, so Heidarian Carpets considers protecting the environment and natural habitat of the homeland as an inseparable part of its principles.

As such, any action that causes any harm to the earth and its beauty is absolutely prohibited.



In its 130 years of continuous activity, Heidarian Carpets has directly created employment for thousands of artisans and craftsmen involved in the weaving of handmade carpets throughout the country, both in villages and cities, which has led to the improving of the quality of life in local communities.

The prosperity and revival of this original Iranian hand-woven art form prevents the emptying of villages and the forced migration of their inhabitants and members of nomadic tribes to larger cities where they are naturally marginalized. As these artisans realize that their hand artwork, sealed with the trusted signature of Heidarian Carpets, has refined and sophisticated followers throughout Iran and the world, they enjoy their work and do it with more enthusiasm and pleasure.

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At Heidarian Carpets, our goal is to further expand this culture of reciprocal appreciation and recognition, and enhance the day-to-day prosperity and value of Persian handmade carpets throughout Iran and the world.

Our vision and our main ambition that we strive to achieve is to bring the value and credibility of the Persian handmade carpet to the dominant high ranking that it deserves ahead of any competitors anywhere.

Persian carpets, both in terms of production details and in terms of type of design, color and quality of weave have the characteristics and charm that should undoubtedly be



*All components of the original and handmade Persian carpets are rooted in the nature of Iran, so Heidarian Carpets considers protecting the environment and natural habitat of the homeland as an inseparable part of its principles.*



considered a benchmark of lifestyle and interior design anywhere around the world.

As such, Heidarian Carpets tries to be a worthy representative and symbol of the original Persian carpet so that its enthusiasts both inside and abroad can proudly choose it and feel pleased and satisfied for owning it.

Heidarian Carpets has been the recipient of many honors and awards in over a century of being in business. Hand-woven collections with the Heidarian signature are recognized and sought after by the most renowned interior designers, architects and collectors from all over the world.

Yasaman Hejazi, a former President of Iran Women's Figure Skating Association and a winner of the National Iranian Women's Sports Management, is the founder and CEO of Block#68 Sports Club.

With over 25 years of experience in sports management, Hejazi has gained a unique insight into challenges of operating successful businesses in a male-dominated work environment.

**Please tell us a little about yourself, your field of study and the range of activities that you're engaged in.**

I have a master's degree in executive management from Sharif University of Technology. Over the past 25 years, I have been the founder of various sports venues. To name a few very quickly, in 2001, my colleagues and I established the Skate Academy of the Enghelab Sports Complex, followed by the Block Power women's sports club in the Enghelab Complex in 2008. Then in 2015 I founded Block#68 sports club in the A.S.P. Towers followed by the Block Blue women's four-season pool at the Enghelab Complex in 2019. In addition to the above, from 2006 to 2011, I was president of the Iran Women's Figure Skating Association and head coach of the National Figure Skating team. Finally, in 2020, Icebox International Ice Rink, located in Iran Mall, was put into operation by my colleagues and I under the IFITPRO Holding parent company.

**What exactly is entrepreneurship in the sports world?**

As I mentioned previously, over the past 25 years I have been the founder of various sports clubs in different fields of sports. With the establishment of each of these clubs, many job opportunities were created so that people of diverse ages and abilities were able to work in a variety of fields. Most of these people are coaches of various sports such as skating, bodybuilding, ball sports, swimming and most of all, group gym sports, bodybuilding, etc. Above and beyond coaching, employment opportunities were generated for



By: Dr. Kourosh Resalati

## Leadership under Iran's Queen of Figure Skating Yasaman Hejazi

administrative, financial, housekeeping, and dozens of other direct and indirect jobs. Providing optimal athletic conditions for these people, especially women active in sports, established me as a sports entrepreneur.

**You were the founder of the national figure skating team. How did you introduce this sport in Iran?**

**What challenges did you face to get started?**

My first ice skating experience dates back to the age of 3 alongside my older brother in London. At that time, we lived there because of my father's job which required him to be stationed in London. During those few years of my childhood abroad, I got familiar with ice skating. Back in Iran, roller skating in our backyard at home became my favorite sport although, of course, I chose it due to shortage of ice rinks in Tehran.

In my early teens, the Qasre Yakh roller skating rink, Abdoh Bowling and Niayesh Club opened, and I started training seriously and actually got pretty good at it. So soon my passion led me to coaching and I taught skating to both kids as well as adults at the Chizar Club in my later teenage years.

With the closure of ice rinks and the hardships that existed for women's sport in Iran until the 1990's, figure skating was practically non-existent. I had a very capable and close friend with whom I spent days and many hours practicing, researching and studying figure skating moves, and experimenting to master this sport to become more proficient in its specific maneuvers. Soon, with the training I'd gotten abroad and all those practice hours, I was able to establish inline figure skating and help make it gradually recognized in Iran.

In the 1990's, after years of neglect for women's sports in Iran, the Federation of Women's Public Sports was created. During those same early years, there were whispers of women's skating circulating among those in charge. Finally in 1997, I was appointed as the first official skating instructor and for many years I was also a teacher of 2nd and 3rd levels of skating while coaching women, refereeing, and conducting "train-the-trainer" programs for skating instructors. After several years, in 2006, I was appointed president of the figure Skating Association of Iran Skating Federation. The establishment of the Skating Academy of the Enghelab Sports Complex in the year 2000 had a tremendous impact on the advancement of skating in Iran.



**How is this sport received among young boys and girls? What age group does it include mostly?**

The figure skating, which in my opinion is a combination of art and sport, is designed for both girls and boys. It's interesting to know that boys and girls each have their own shoe colors. A figure skating shoe is white for girls, and black for boys.

Currently, there are more girls who follow figure skating. Although there seems to be more interest in this sport among girls in Iran, anyone regardless of gender can enter and succeed to a great degree if they put the necessary time and effort into it. In order to succeed globally, you must enter this sport from a very young age

freestyle skating, figure skating, hockey, etc.) and these days also follows ice skating fields, I think it has been one of the more successful federations in our country, and its achievements have exceeded its limited budget and the life of the Federation, and perhaps more importantly, the community's attention to this beautiful sport.

**Ms. Hejazi, please tell us a little about the #I love you, so I won't shake hands campaign. Where did its initial idea come from? What did you do to implement it?**

Because of my job and my workplace, I meet a lot of people daily, and given my personality, I do a lot of shaking of hands, hugging and exchanging energy!

The story began when, one month before the Covid-19 outbreak, I shook hands as usual with a colleague who had a cold. Later it turned out it wasn't a cold, and she had the flu. As a result, I also caught this virus, a disease that put me out of action for about two weeks. For the first time in my life, I stayed at home for that long, didn't exercise, didn't go to work, and became severely weak.

I was very anxious after my recovery as my immune system was very weak and I was afraid that other viruses would attack me. Every handshake and physical contact attracted my attention. I noticed how some people, who seemed to have a cold, were shaking hands with healthy people without any consideration.



and start exercising seriously. Due to the high physical fitness that figure sporting requires, the body should be formed in accordance with specific exercises before early adolescence.

**What is the current status of the Skating Federation in Iran? What successes has it achieved so far, if any?**

Our Skating Federation is a young and emerging organization founded rather recently in 2005. For various reasons, the figure skating circumstances are not good in Iran. However, since the Federation has 12 different fields in roller skating (such as speed skating,



I talked to our team, and I asked them to design a sign with a message that, while respecting the other side, discouraged physical contact in greeting situations. The sign would be clear in its message that this reluctance for physical contact is because of the interest in the health of those around us and rooted in the fact that we don't want to harm anyone with potential contagions.

If we really love someone, their health should be of great value to us. Showing a moment of reckless affection to our loved ones can, at times, have irreparable consequences.

Not shaking hands attracted everyone's attention during that campaign, followed by more care for personal hygiene, including washing hands - and all of this happened before the Covid-19 outbreak.

**Who did you get help from in running this campaign? How successful you think it's been in creating a new culture?**

The campaign was started by our own team at Block Sports Clubs. Coaches and staff at various sports complexes started wearing the specially created pins with the campaign message, and this was welcomed by everyone. Soon we had to make even more pins and the campaign spontaneously expanded to hospitals and kindergartens in Tehran and other cities requesting these badges. Within a few days, 100 pins grew to 5,000 in number, and spread to many other buttons with similar messages.

The first consequence of this campaign was that with the onset of the Covid-19 outbreak in environments such as sports clubs, where the culture of observing individual distance was gradually becoming entrenched, the percentage of people infected with the Covid-19 was surprisingly very low and negligible.

**You were selected in 2018 as a leader in the country's sports management field. What factors do you consider contributed to your success?**

The fact is, working in the company of people where everyone believes that women can, and should, be active shoulder to shoulder with men in all aspects of life in society is the main reason for all the achievements of my team.

**It seems that topics related to women's employment and independence appeal to you.**

**How did this issue become so interesting for you that you contribute so much of your time to it?**

Gender equality, especially in the workplace, has always been my main concern. All my efforts over the years have been to provide an energetic envi-



ronment for women's employment and likewise, designing a business in which creative minds can grow has been important to me. The establishment of the Block Power club in the Enghelab Club, which is the most inclusive sports complex for women in the Middle East, marked a turning point in my life. This is the period during which my belief of protecting women became a reality and job opportunities were created for women from all walks of life. I do not belong to feminist ideas, and I have equal respect for both sexes. I believe that if patriarchal society emerges, women's passivity also plays a role in it. Both men and women have duties in a healthy community, none of which can be ignored. To be honest, I'm not interested in exaggerating, but I'm sure women can stand on their own feet.

**Which prominent figures have you introduced to the professional world of skating so far? If possible, give a few examples of these people or tell us about their activities or successes.**

In nearly two decades of being active in sports environments, I have had many friends, companions, students and colleagues who have achieved remarkable success. But I have no claim to their accomplishments, and I do not believe that others are indebted to me. I've just tried to do my best and I've enjoyed it along the way in my life. That's why this is a question that should be

answered by others. I hope that one day I will read in an interview in your magazine with one of the prominent figures of our country that I have been able to have the slightest influence on their path to success.

**What are you busy with these days, and has the Covid-19 pandemic negatively impacted your group's athletic activities or financial status?**

Unfortunately, clubs were among those businesses that suffered the most in the last nearly two years.

The Block#68 club was completely shut down, the Icebox ice rink in Iran Mall, which had just begun to operate, was never able to show its true capacity, and other complexes came under severe economic pressure with repeated openings and closures.

The latest project that our team has started in the last year is the 1tekan sports application startup.

After more than 20 years of activities in various sports, the pandemic gave me the opportunity to think about my past and all I've achieved and brace for a new project. My new project is the result of all my years of work experience and at the same time is much different from everything I've done to date.

The advantage of a sports app is that it is not limited to one city or region, and I am very happy to be able to provide these services to everyone, wherever they are.

Considering the developments resulting from the pandemic and the feeling of need for change in providing services appropriate to our new lifestyle, we started working on the 1tekan sports app from August 2019 and this application became available to the public in August 2020.



# Best Time to Do Your Workouts!

Types of workouts and the best time during the day to do them are subjects that have occupied the minds of athletes and sports fans for a long time. In response, sports medicine physicians and sports coaches have frequently addressed these and other questions on the topic from different perspectives.

A common question is about the best time to exercise during the day. There is no definite answer to this question, although many claims have been made about it. Some have suggested that the best time is in the morning and before breakfast because it causes more fat to burn. Others claim that the afternoon or evening can be the best time because the body's strength and ability to perform hard movements are at their maximum.

The general fact is that the best time to exercise during the day depends largely on the individual, his or her purpose of the workouts, and the type of workouts he or she does. Of course, there is another factor, and that depends on the individual body's circadian rhythm, such as hormonal changes, changes in blood pressure, and one's body temperature. You do not need to have much expertise in the circadian rhythm of your body to be able to choose the best time to exercise; all you need to do is try different hours of the day. Exercise for a few weeks in the morning.

Then try the afternoon and the evening. See which of these times you enjoy the most to exercise, which one is more comfortable for you, and most importantly, for which of these times your performance is better. Keep in mind your type of exercise and your daily tasks. Choose a time that you can keep up with and one that is easier to get you into the habit of exercising:

## 7 to 9 a.m.:

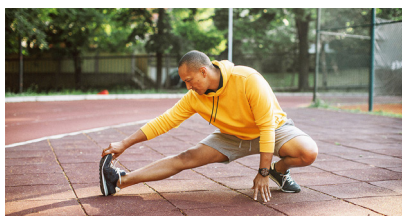
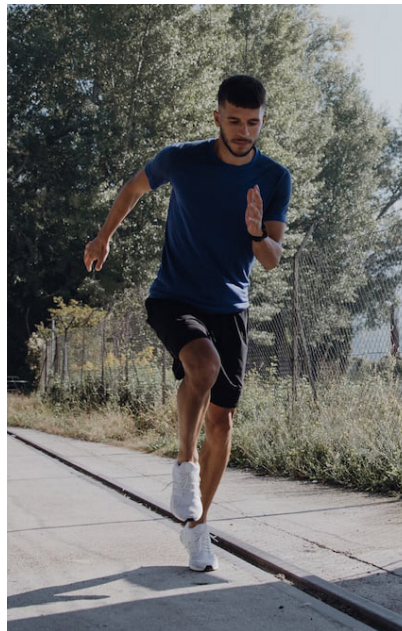
Pain tolerance is higher during these hours of the day: some studies have shown that people are less sensitive to pain in the early hours of the morning than at other times.

Some researchers believe the process maybe due to the effects of melatonin and cortisol hormones that are produced



## EXERCISE PHILOSOPHY

during the night. In addition, when you wake up, your body's levels of glycogen, insulin and blood sugar are low, so you start burning fat earlier during exercise. So ideally, if it is possible for you, the first thing you do after waking up should be to exercise. Of course, you should also pay attention to the intensity of training. Studies show that even with moderate intensity you can get the necessary results, and if the intensity of the exercise is too high, you will experience a drop in blood pressure.



## 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.:

This block of time in the morning is associated with alertness, the brain's reasoning abilities, and peak of our short-term memory efficacy. This may be associated with increased glucose metabolism during these hours. According to British researchers, skill-based sports performance and competitive strategies and decision-making are better when they are focused on between these hours in the late morning.

Of course, one should not forget to refrain from exercising immediately after eating, as blood is needed for the muscles during the exercise whereas after meals it is concentrated in the digestive system.

It is therefore important to give the body 90 minutes' rest after each heavy meal before engaging in any form of exercise.

## 4 to 8 p.m.:

This is the best time to perform physical activities for strength, speed and endurance. Because the body temperature is higher than other hours of the day, the capacity of the lungs and blood flow to the muscles are both higher, while the body also has more flexibility.

At this time of day, hand-eye coordination is greater in athletes and is a good time for running, cycling, swimming and racket sports games such as tennis.

## Warnings:

Keep in mind that from 8 p.m. onwards and as bedtime approaches, exercise can jeopardize sleep quality. It is better to have a 3-hour interval between exercising and sleeping at night.

## Do not forget:

If you exercise outdoors, be sure to pay attention to air quality. If the air is polluted, you can engage in simple exercises at home with the help of sport instruction videos.

*Reza Yazdani has been in the Iranian music business for over 20 years and has released 11 audio albums and 1 video album. He has done more than 40 soundtracks for movies, TV series and VODs (Video on Demand). Currently, he is active in the fields of music and acting.*

## From Electric Guitar to the Silver Screen

Reza Yazdani



By: Reza Taeb

**The Rock Genre is a great risk in Iran; how did you become so interested in this genre?**

I have been listening to this kind of music for about 30 years. Over time I excelled enough at it to be able to adapt it to the taste of music of Iranians by using more minor scales.

**You have obviously been very successful with your music. Tell us about your concerts please.**

My music has been well received by my followers both in Iran and abroad. And over the years I have had many memorable performances and concerts in Tehran and different cities of Iran, from Bandar Abbas, Ahvaz, Bushehr, and Kish, all the way to Isfahan, Shiraz, Urmia, Tabriz, and Rasht.

I have also held concert tours abroad in Canada, in Toronto and Vancouver, as well as in Sweden, Australia, etc. I hope we can restart having concerts soon again with the end of Covid-19.

**How did you get into the world of acting? What directors and movies helped you to expand your career in this field?**

My first encounter with the world of cinema was back in 2003 with a movie by Masoud Kimiai called "Hokm" (The Warrant).

Originally my intention was just doing movie soundtracks for more exposure for my genre of music. But soon I had starred in three more movies, "Raees" (The Boss), "Mohakeme dar Khiaban (Trial on the Street) and "Metropole" by Kimiai, which was an honor for me as I have always had great respect for him and his work.

The first film in which I played the lead role was "Tehran, Tehran", and then the movie "Booye Gandom" (Smell of Wheat). Cinema and acting had not been very serious for me, but then I played one of the main roles with Mostafa Zamani and Pegah Ahangarani in the film "Take Off" by Ehsan Abdipour. I got a lot of good feedback for acting in that movie and it encouraged me to continue in that field.

Ehsan Abdipour had a great impact on my acting and with his guidance I was able to see myself as an actor and that's when I decided to take acting more seriously. Later, in "Az Yadha Raft" (Forgotten) series by Bahram Bahramian, I played the lead role and since then, I've acted in about 6 or 7 movies as well as "Meydan Sorkh" (The Red Square) TV series which is on the screens these days.

**Your talent both as an actor and a musician has been recognized and applauded by great masters of Iranian cinema, like Masoud Kimiai and Ali Moallem and others. You have also appeared at the Hafez Awards annual ceremony before cinematographers and an audience of movie greats, and you are also a winner of the Hafez Award yourself. Please tell us more about your experience at this preeminent award ceremony.**

My association with this award ceremony is in more than one way: at the invitation of Ali Moallem, I have recited Hafez poems at the opening of these annual ceremonies over the years. In fact, this year, if I do it again, it will be my seventh year welcoming the prestigious audience of Hafez Awards with one of this great Persian poet's verses. But I have also been the recipient of the Hafez Award. The first time I was awarded this great honor was for the introductory music of Masoud Kimiai's movie "Hokm" back in 2004. Since then, I have also won the Hafez award for "Marg-e Tadjiri-e Yek



Roya" (The Gradual Death of a Dream) and "Tehran, Tehran", which made last year's award for the song "Eshghet" (Your Love) for the "Az Yadha Rafte" series my fourth Hafez Award.

**How do you assess the current state of music in our country? Has the presence of a number of emerging singers and the release of their music in cyberspace contributed to the qualitative growth of our music?**

I feel the situation in the music world is not very favorable at the moment. The music that was carefully composed and played by the musicians is now replaced by computer music, so that the type of deep-rooted music is rarely found these days. I hope we can soon return to good and lasting compositions again.

**Iranians see you in a new series these days. A different role and make-up from Reza Yazdani for you has begun to take shape in people's minds. Tell us about it.**

For Meydan Sorkh (The Red Square) series, which I am very excited about, I play with a different make-up and role which is very close to my favorite cinema genre, film noir. I was offered to play in this series by Bahram Bahramian, and we are still filming it. Makeup was proposed by Bahramian himself.

**Let's go back to music. Which album or music do you consider your most successful work? In popular polls, the song "Shomal" has always been one of your most popular pieces. What is your opinion?**

I'm a "nostalgia singer" and so I have sung a lot of songs over the years with a sentimental or wistful tone. Songs like "Shomal", "Cartoon", "Kooche Melli" (Melli Alley), "Lalehzar"...

It's hard for me to say which one of my songs is my favorite, but in albums, I like Sellole Shakhshi (Innermost Cell) album more than others.



For Meydan Sorkh (The Red Square) series, which I am very excited about, I play with a different make-up and role which is very close to my favorite cinema genre, film noir.



# Hanna Boutique Hotel: An Oasis in the Heart of Tehran



Our story begins with a ninety-year-old house on Lolagar Alley, a famous street in the heart of Tehran. Hanna Boutique Hotel is an expression of contemporary Tehran, and a collection of layers that have rendered one on top of another over ninety years. The experience of staying at the hotel will present you with different glimpses of life in Tehran, a unique experience at the center of a busy, chaotic city, where you can enjoy art, architecture, design, and modern-day hospitality.

Hanna Boutique Hotel is Persian Garden Studio's first venture into urban rehabilitation. The building of the hotel was purchased by the Studio in 2016, and after two years of restoration, Hanna Boutique Hotel was launched in winter of 2018. This boutique hotel has seven rooms, a restaurant, and Platform and Pop-Up spaces. Its interior design is inspired by contemporary Iranian and international architecture, resulting in a modern, state-of-the-art space that will provide its patrons with an intimate experience.

## LOLAGAR ALLEY

The six buildings that sit across one another on Lolagar Alley were constructed in 1930 by a master builder known as Hassan "Banna" (aka Builder in Persian). The buildings were commissioned by two brothers, Mohammad Bagher and Akbar Lolagar, hence the name given to the street. The houses on Lolagar Alley are symmetrical to one another; for every door and window, there is another identical one across the street.

The story goes that back in the early 20th century, once streets began to appear in Tehran and a general level of security was established, houses began to lose their high wall barriers and opened their windows to the public space. These houses on Lolagar Alley are considered Tehran's first examples of outward-looking architecture, as well as its first residential complex.



## CITY | STREET | HOME

Tehran is Iran's largest city and its capital. It is more populous than New York, larger than Mexico City, and denser than Seoul. It is a city in a mountain range, and every one of its neighborhoods, streets, and homes is filled with different experiences. Every person will define Tehran according to his or her particular encounter with the city. To experience Tehran is to experience a medley of elements that have come together from different social, historic, and cultural backgrounds to create this multi-layered metropolis.

At each corner of this old city one can witness different art and architectural styles, as well as a variety of lifestyles. Strolling through Tehran's streets will bring one face-to-face with elements from different historical eras.

## NUMBER 3

Number 3 on Lolagar Alley, the home of Hanna Boutique Hotel, is a house with bay windows facing the street, and a pattern of random textures on its façade. The building is a two-story structure with an area of 540 m<sup>2</sup>. On the inside, it is decorated with design plaster and tile work. Persian Garden

Studio began restoring this building in 2016.

The first step was to research the history of the building and identify its different layers of construction. Every layer added on to the building in different eras is a remnant of the lived experiences of its residents and those who lived in Tehran.

During the restoration process only the areas that needed to be repaired and restored were touched, and everything else – including the many layers of the building – were left intact. One can positively say that Number 3 on Lolagar Alley now displays its entire ninety-year history.





## PERSIAN GARDEN STUDIO

Hanna Boutique Hotel is Persian Garden Studio's first experience in urban rehabilitation. The Persian Garden Studio, the owner and developer of Hanna Boutique Hotel, is an architectural studio established by Iranian architect, Mahsa Majidi, in 2001. She has a Ph.D. in architecture and follows the triad of "construction", "job creation", and "connectivity" in all her professional activities. Hanna Boutique Hotel was also conceptualized based on this idea. With its urban rehabilitation projects, Persian Garden Studio has plans to return life to Tehran's empty nooks and crannies. Likewise, Hanna Boutique Hotel attempts to retain the purity of the original building and its spaces while meeting the needs of contemporary life.



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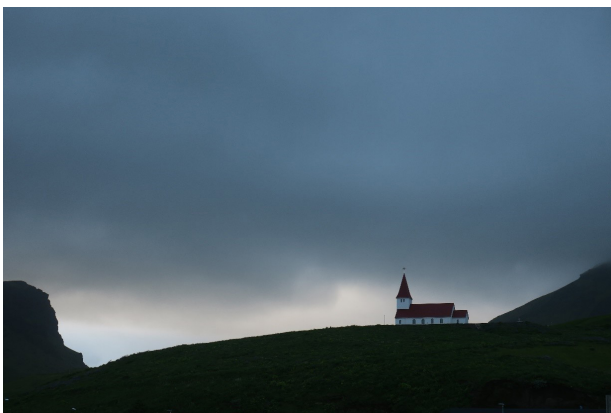
# ICELAND

By: Claudia Frey



*Claudia Frey was born in Stuttgart, Germany in 1951. She graduated with a degree in microeconomics and later worked as a manager for market information at Frankfurt-based VDMA for 40 years. She loves traveling and Iran is the 54th country she's visited.*

Who doesn't recall Eyjafjallajökull? The volcano with a name pronounceable correctly only by true Icelanders? It erupted in April 2010 and crippled half the world's air traffic. It also ruined the author's intended trip to China then. One more reason to cast a closer look on this island in the very North of Europe.



## Who lives there and how many?

Iceland has a population of barely 370.000 which equals the German city of Mannheim. The population is more or less homogenous and mostly descends from Norwegian Vikings. Each and every Icelander can trace back their family roots for hundreds of centuries.

According to the World Happiness Report; Icelanders rank among the happiest people worldwide. A major share of this lucky state of mind is attributed to the local environment: clean air, the clearest water one can imagine, no refuse anywhere, clean energy in abundance, a vanishingly small crime rate, a high standard of living and a 1000-year-old history of which everyone is proud.

The country lies close to the Polar Circle, Greenwich Mean Time is applied, and the summer months present almost continuous daylight while in the middle of winter one hardly sees any daylight.



## Icy cold and hellish hot

The island's South East is covered by vast ice fields. Vatnajökull- Europe's largest glacier – alone ranges about 100 km from East to West. With an area of 8.000 square kilometers it covers about 8 percent of the country's overall land surface. The ice can be as deep as 300 meters.

Vatnajökull's glacial tongues and those of neighboring glaciers reach down to North Atlantic's beaches creating most beautiful lagoons and icebergs. Underneath those ice masses lie numerous volcanoes, dormant currently, but which if they erupt can cause incredible disaster.

All photos By: Rupert Haimerl



## It bubbles and boils, smokes and smells

Iceland is located on the seamline between Europe and America, on two separate tectonic plates that drift apart a couple of centimeters every year. Earthquakes are daily experiences but most of them are not perceptible. Iceland is also located above a so called hotbed of intense volcanic activity. About 200 volcanoes are spread over the island – active ones like Fagradalsfjall on the Reykjanes peninsula – and the majority dormant.

Geothermal energy supplies Icelanders with cheap heat for their homes, for hot tubs like the famous Blue Lagoon, for the country's various industries, the greenhouses and an underground system to heat up the capital's sidewalks in winter. The geothermal fields – where it bubbles and boils, smokes and smells like sulfur – are spread all over the island. Their fumes have been the reason the capital was named 'smoking bay' – Reykjavik – by early settlers.





**Water in abundance – almost everywhere**

Water comes in all conceivable shapes and sizes – the sea, rivers, streams and streamlets, creeks, lakes, ponds, pools and puddles, glacial streams, moors and fens, hot springs, geysers and – waterfalls. They shape the scenery and their number is untold. Some of the most famous and well-known waterfalls are:

- Detifoss, the mightiest, most water-rich in Europe
- Gullfoss, the 'golden', famous, most popular, double layered, maybe most beautiful, often crowned by rainbows.
- Swartifoss, framed by black basalt columns like organ pipes in a church



*A puffin, Iceland's national bird*

The Central Highlands cover a vast area of land in the middle of the country and form a stark contrast.

They can only be crossed by 4WD and special buses; strict regulations to keep to the unpaved gravel roads apply. It was here where the Apollo 11 crew was trained for their trip to the moon.

**Traditional food will challenge true foodies**

The average tourist will enjoy delicious fresh salmon, lobster or local lamb, but will not be imposed upon with traditional food unless they insist on trying.

Fermented shark, smoked sheep's head, sour ram's testicles – just to name the stranger ones, are said to be a real challenge and should be better accompanied by Brennivin, a local strong spirit resembling Scandinavian Akvavit.





# Kish Island: A Brief History

*Kish Island's strategic geographic location served as a waystation and link for the ancient Assyrian and Elamite civilizations (1,500 BC) as their sailboats navigated from Susa through the Karun River into the Persian Gulf along the southern coastline, passing Kish, Qeshm, and Hormoz islands. When these civilizations vanished, Kish Island's advantageous position was lost and for a period it was subjected to turmoil and the tyranny of local rulers and other invaders. The establishment of the Achaemenid dynasty (550-330 BC) profoundly affected the Persian Gulf and it didn't take long for Kish, in particular, to be linked economically and politically with the civilizations of the Medes and the Persians at the height of their power.*

Kish, like the other Persian Gulf Islands, is located on a narrow strip of tropical vegetation in the Northern Hemisphere, with the Persian plateau to the north and the Arabian Peninsula to the south.

The island has a very dry semi-equatorial climate with little rainfall. Temperatures throughout the year range from lower 70 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter months, to high 90's Fahrenheit between April and October.

With the exception of some southeastern coastal areas in the Persian Gulf, Kish Island has the sunniest hours in the region. In summary, the island tends to be relatively hot and humid most of the year but surely pleasant enough to enjoy a variety of activities.

Amongst the Persian Gulf islands, Kish is the more luxurious and developed. Aside from its unique nature such as turquoise waters and shallow beaches, the tourist attractions of this charming island are due to its rich history as well as its kind and hospitable people. The pristine and beautiful nature, the meeting of land and sea, the clear sky, the pleasant air, and the pleasurable reverberation of the waves create such a sense of calm that one cannot even distinguish between imagination and reality.

Kish has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. The clean and clear blue waters, the lovely coral beaches, the fantastic views of the horizon, and the fascinating underwater creatures are some of the enjoyable features of this island. Among Iranians, Kish is known as the pearl of the Persian Gulf. This small island offers eye-catching sceneries, mouth-watering foods, and adventurous activities. There are numerous beaches on the island with many facilities.

Kish's population includes significant numbers of both Muslims and Christians. Kish Island is also designated as Free Zone with respect to trade, and in 2009, its total foreign trade was approximately \$9.2 billion. As such, fifteen percent of all imports to Iran are through Kish.

Besides the previously existing Iranian Oil Stock Market, it was inevitable that a new exchange, the Kish Stock Exchange was needed to be launched (in 2010) to facilitate foreign investment and monetary activities.

For over 50 years, the blue waters of the Persian Gulf in Kish Island have a guest. Greek Ship or Khoula F was a cargo steamship that has been beached on Kish Island for many years. Over time, she has turned into one of the most picturesque spots of the island.

The Greek Ship was built in 1943 by the British and its original name was Empire Trumpet. Over her long life, this ship has



had a number of British, Iranian, and Greek owners. They have changed her name frequently with each ownership. The last owner of this ship was Greek, which explains its current name Khoula F, while Naturalist, Persian Cyrus and Hamedan are some of her former names. With an area of 673 square meters and more than 7000 tons of weight, the Greek Ship ran aground in 1966. No one exactly knows what caused its wreck, but some say it was beached intentionally by its captain because it carried a large amount of insurance by a British Company. After its wreck, any effort to refloat the ship was unsuccessful, and the ship started to rust and fall apart ever since.



The ruins of the Ancient Town of Harireh, situated in the center of the island, are said to be over 800 years old. With a 3 square kilometer area, the relics include the remains of a mansion with Ilkhanid era (1256-1353 AD) tiles, a public bath, and a few workshops. According to some sources, Harireh was first built sometime between the late Sasanid period (224-651 AD) and the early Islamic era and was quite renowned during the Saljuk dynasty (985-1243 AD) and the times of the Atabakan of Fars (1148-1282 AD). Archeologists believe that the multi-storied structures of Harireh were destroyed in an earthquake. Referred to in the Gulistan, famous book of poems by Persian poet Sa'adi, the ruins of Harireh bear witness to the flourishing economy of Kish in ancient times when the island facilitated trade between China, North Africa and Europe. Although most of the structures are now in ruins, their form and decorations give one a sense of life in a Middle-East Island during antiquity.



# Iran's Tourism Industry: A Hotelier's Perspective

By: Reza Taeb



Hodayoun Bolourforoshha

*Born in 1963 in Iran, Hodayoun Bolour Foroshha, a successful civil engineering with a graduate degree from England, was interested and curious in his field of studies from an early age. With a family-owned business of a crystal shop, Bolour Foroshha also had a chance to meet and interact with a lot of customers because his father had exposed him to the business right out of primary school. But his construction business journey started when, having returned from England as a young man and still without a job, he and his brothers decided to turn the family home into a two-story house. Bolour Foroshha has a few major residential towers in Tehran's northern areas in his construction business portfolio, like the Negarestan Tower and the Marjan Residential Building. But his dreams of bigger projects, and his penchant for being people-oriented, motivated him to enter the tourism industry where he can combine his training as an engineer with his love of the hospitality business.*

## **Please tell us about the position of tourism industry and its importance for our country.**

We have a very beautiful country with four seasons incomparable to other countries and with few competitors, but unfortunately we have been unable to attract the international tourism industry to Iran. A couple reasons I can point to are, (1) lack of proper planning and, (2) some of the laws of the country. As a result, the potential for tourism has not been realized here in Iran. We have very hardworking and diligent people in our country who work day and night in this line of business, but they don't have the proper support or guidance from those in the government. The fact is that this industry should, with the help of good legislation, have a set of goals with a 20-year plan of action for it to reach its inherent possibilities.

tourism there. The little that has been done in Kish Island is done unprofessionally and with the single aim of generating income.

## **Describe the Mirage Hotel for us if possible please?**

Mirage hotel has 9 floors with 177 guest rooms and is only a 10 minutes walk to the big recreational pier of Kish. Other hotel amenities aside from the usual conveniences in similar high-end hotels for incoming guests, like free parking, breakfast, and laundry services, include high speed internet, a 3-star restaurant in hotel, and shuttle between the airport and the hotel. The Mirage also has a spectacular flower garden that I personally planned and executed after much studying and planning. The base of the hotel has a 5000 sq meter footprint, but by the 8th floor this space is reduced



## **When did you get your start in the field of tourism and what was the reason behind your decision?**

I entered the tourism industry around 2009 when it all started with a so-called educational trip around the globe which took me almost 2 months. As I traveled, I read the history of some of the high-end hotels in the world to learn about their construction, and then I realized that some of these hotels had a long list of directives for their construction, which they turned into published books to attract the attention of others.

## **Do you think currently all of the tourism potentials of Kish Island have been exploited?**

Kish is an island with very beautiful and spectacular beaches, but unfortunately to date we have not been able to take full advantage of these beaches in order to further enhance

to only 700 sq meters to allow for increased airflow in the higher floors.

## **Will Iran be able to compete with regional and neighboring countries, considering the current political situation?**

In response to this question, I want to express a positive stance, but I also wish that authorities shared my point of view on this issue. It is important not to look at competition in this field as a war, but rather as a contest that can engender progress. Kish region has a lot of potential for improvement, especially in the tourism industry. With the right laws and regulations as well as proper planning by authorities mandated with this power, we will be able to see significant impact on the creation of employment, education and quality of life on the Island, and on the future of the country.

# Invisalign Treatment: A New Look

**Dr. Davoud Abdollahi**  
Orthodontist



**Thank you so much for giving Trends this exclusive interview.**

**Please tell us about yourself and your background.**

I also thank you for visiting our clinic. From an early age I have been interested in technical work where I could fix things and this was true even as academically too I was doing quite well. So, for instance, during my secondary school years at Alborz High School in Tehran from which I graduated with a major in experimental sciences, I also held a part time job at a local mechanic shop repairing car oil pumps. In fact, I got so good and so fast at my job that they paid me a meager salary.

Then, after graduating from high school and finishing my 2-year military draft, I took the national entrance exam for University of Tehran where I ranked 207th and started dentistry school. During those years at the university, I also had a small shop in the Tehran Bazaar, but even so, I was able to finish my degree with a first-place ranking. Right after that I had to take another entrance exam for my area of specialty as an orthodontist.

I got the highest rank in the entrance examination for specialty fields in all universities of Iran, and I was also admitted with the top ranking in the field of Orthodontics at the University of Tehran. In my third year of specialty degree, I made a three-month trip to the United States, where I passed the U.S. National Dental Board part I and part II examinations and received a certification.

After finishing my specialty degree and passing the Orthodontist board exam in 2004 in Iran, I became a faculty member of Rafsanjan University for two years after which I started my medical career in Tehran. In 2008, I passed the Medical Practice License Exam in UAE and began my part-time practice in Dubai, which I still continue. In 2010, I went to Canada as a permanent resident and after a few years I got my Canadian citizenship, and also passed three

stages of Canadian dental exams, but I preferred to continue my career in Iran and the UAE. So, I returned home and started working with Invisalign Company through my Dubai practice in 2013 and this collaboration continues to date.



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**Please tell us about the work done at your dental office. What are some of the special dental treatments that you offer?**

Our focus in the dental office is on Orthodontic treatments, which include a variety of removable Orthodontic treatments in early childhood and teenage years, as well as fixed Orthodontics in teenagers and adults.

Also, combined Orthodontic and jaw surgery treatments (Ortho-Surgery) which are performed to correct severe dental-jaw abnormalities, are an important part of our practice.

The US Invisalign system is another major area of our activities, and we perform even complex Ortho-Surgery treatments with this system based on the patient needs. We often hear that clear aligner are not as effective as complex treatments.

Although, each treatment system has its own limitations, a large percentage of Orthodontic problems can be treated with clear aligners especially when the doctor is sufficiently trained and skilled and the patient cooperates. We have now added cosmetic treatments as well as dental implants to our treatment services.



### **Why did you decide on Orthodontics after dental school? Why not dentistry or another dental speciality?**

My main motivation in choosing Orthodontics was to make a big and significantly positive change on the face and smile of people with severe dental and jaw disorders, and to have an effective role in improving their quality of life. I believed Orthodontics could do that and now, after about twenty years of experience, this has been proven to me.

Many times, I've heard from my patients that before the treatment they didn't laugh, but after going through the Orthodontic regimen, they smile easily. Hearing this is the greatest pleasure for me because this positive change can be really effective in increasing our patients' self-confidence in achieving more success, as in better jobs, better marriages and better social relationships.

### **What is Invisalign? How does Invisalign work?**

Invisalign is a new Orthodontic procedure that uses clear aligners to straighten the teeth, in a way that the stages between the misaligned position of the teeth (primary) and the straight and ideal position of the teeth (final) are designed by computer software (in twenty stages, for instance). At each stage the teeth are slightly more straightened than the previous stage, so that when we gradually get from stage one to stage twenty, the teeth are perfectly straight.

### **What types of Orthodontic cases can Invisalign treat? Is Invisalign treatment painful?**



More than 90% of Orthodontic problems can be treated with Invisalign, if it is done by a skilled and experienced Orthodontist trained in the Invisalign method.

The Orthodontist usually adds some other components to this system and uses them in addition to the aligners. Patient cooperation in the use of aligners is also very important as they have to use them for 22 hours each day. In some cases, Invisalign and other methods should be used in combination.

As for pain it should be said that the Invisalign method is more comfortable and painless than the usual method of wire and braces, because the pressures are applied to the teeth in a much more regulated way and with a more calculated method. Also, the sharpness of the wires and braces are removed and the lips and cheeks are not injured and irritated as in the wire and braces system of straightening teeth.

### **Can both adults and kids use Invisalign? How long does Invisalign take to straighten teeth?**

Yes, both children and adults can use this method. This method is especially useful in adults because it is almost completely invisible, and the aligners are not seen on the

teeth and don't interfere with normal oral functions such as speech. At mealtimes, the patient removes the aligners from his or her mouth and puts them in a special box, eating comfortably as usual. Then the patient will need to floss and brush his or her teeth, and put the aligners back on their teeth.

In children, even when all the permanent teeth have not yet erupted, Invisalign can be used in such a way that the space required for the eruption of permanent teeth is maintained by the aligner so that each tooth erupts in its own proper space.

The duration of treatment is also different in each method as I have repeatedly observed that if the patient uses aligners full time, the speed of teeth movement will be faster than with the wire and braces method and as a result the treatment period will be shorter.

### **Is Invisalign better than traditional braces? Is it possible to switch from braces to Invisalign in mid treatment?**

Invisalign method has many advantages over wire and braces method, the most important being their invisibility. Another advantage is the removal of aligners while eating as normal, so that any food can be eaten without worrying about detachment or damage to Orthodontic appliances. In addition, oral hygiene, brushing and flossing are done as usual because there is no wire and braces, and as a result the teeth are cleaned better and easier, the risk of tooth decay is reduced and also gingivitis, which is common in wire and braces, significantly reduced in this method.

The irritation of the lips and cheeks and their injury also cease due to the lack of sharpness of braces and wires. There will also be no disturbance for normal oral functions such as speech, and in certain cases they can even be temporarily removed from the mouth if necessary.

And yes, it is always possible to switch from the wires and braces to the Invisalign method at any stage of the treatment. Obviously, in Ortho-Surgery cases, the presence of wires and braces is sometimes necessary in certain stages of treatment.

### **How much does Invisalign cost? Why is it more cost efficient to do it in Iran?**

In most countries of the world, the cost of Invisalign is almost the same as the wire and braces method. Obviously, if the treatment is done by an Orthodontist, it will cost more than a general dentist because the Orthodontist is trained in the desired field.

Due to our work experience and negotiations with Invisalign, we have been able to provide this service to our patients with the best quality and by an Orthodontist at a cost of almost half the usual amount.

Obviously, I'm talking about the original aligners of American Invisalign Company. Many companies and laboratories have imitated this method, and there are all kinds of fake and non-original aligners that are offered under the name of Invisalign at a lower price without the quality and efficiency of the original aligners. The simplest way to identify the original ones is to pay attention to the packaging of the aligners as well as the presence of the Invisalign logo, and the patient file number and the aligner number engraved on each of the original aligners.

### **How do you stay up to date with new treatments and advancements in orthodontics?**

To stay up to date, I try to attend domestic and international seminars and conventions.

I also read new articles of reputable journals, and I always try to stay up to date with the latest medical advances through internet. In general, I'm not interested in passivity, and instead I'm very eager in change and diversity, and I try to take a step forward every day.

# Asil Restaurant



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# Rozhin



Rozhin Mohammadpour was born in 1983 in Sanandaj, in the province of Kurdistan and currently lives in Karaj, about 20 miles to the west of Tehran. She is an art graduate and has been actively working in this field for over 15 years. Rozhin's artworks have a realistic approach from her surroundings, giving prominence to nature and its destruction. There exists an expression between abstraction and realism in her works and she tries to define the border between the two.

There is no perfect style in contemporary art for Rozhin. In her opinion, most of the artists get inspired by the perceptions and ideas of premier modern artists and add their own personal take to them.

Rozhin believes that two main differences distinguish the artist from other people in society: One is her or his tools and expressive language, and the other is their sensitivity to the phenomena and events that occur around them that make their reaction and approach to these events different from other people. When these issues are expressed through the language of art, the impact could be more meaningful than reality itself.

Rozhin is currently doing patina and mural painting.





# APFEL KITCHEN

## About APFEL Kitchen

Apfel Kitchen is the most valued provider of permanent kitchen cabinetry and closet rooms designed to last for a lifetime. For more than two decades, Apfel has established a reputation as one of Iran's leading cabinet designers by creating comfortable, personalized, and unique living and working spaces that reflect your personality in ways you never imagined.

## Our vision

Our distinct vision, is rooted in both art and architecture and is influenced by the latest trends in home designs. We believe that with the appropriate design, every place could seem radically different.

Apfel's professional team of architectures and designers want to make your home better than you could have dreamed by transforming the places you spend your time in into your favorite ones. Our team has acquired specialized training in the creation and delivery of products, which enables us to assist you in creating the ideal design for your space. The installation team is well trained and has the expertise essential to accomplish your project properly and on time with a high level of quality.

A good design comes from good communication and trust between our team and the client. All in all, we believe that real qualification will be represented in customer's satisfaction.

## Our design method

Looking for a custom-designed and practical space in your room such as an open closet room? Or maybe looking to transform your entire place into a unique yet comfortable one?

Don't worry! Apfel team is here to help you.

We will assist you in choosing the most appropriate design that compliments the other layouts in your room and shows your taste whilst still meeting your daily living demands.

## Our quality

We constantly seek to utilize only the materials with the highest quality in all our products and services.

## Our product lines

Apfel offers different product lines, which allows the customers to create their designs from a wide variety of possible choices.

## Our products

Kitchen cabinets and islands

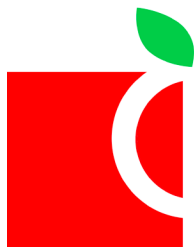
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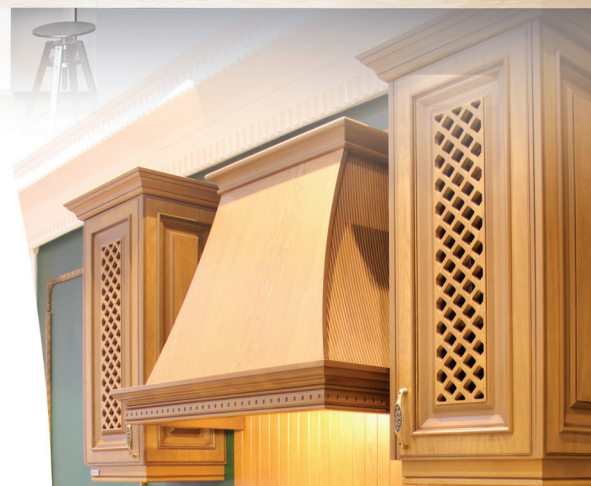
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# DIGITAL SMILE DESIGN

- Single visit dentistry
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The involvement of the Publisher with Zula's development has no doubt resulted in a desirable outcome. Not only for the fact that this localized version of the game includes the aforementioned new content, which creates an experience that cannot be had with the foreign versions of the game, but also for the fact that locally available servers within the borders of Iran allow the players to play with lesser latency and lower internet bills.

This is all without mentioning the benefits of the punctual and diligent customer support provided by Iran Zula team in Farsi, providing the client with a smooth experience throughout their time with the game. This capacity is of crucial importance to a massive online game like Zula.

In the latest update of the game that was released this spring, the Iranian user can participate in the widely popular battle royale mode. The availability of vehicles such as cars and boats, as well as the low hardware requirements of the game, has made Zula's Battle Royale mode a primary contender in all Iranian competitive Esport scenes.

Ever since 4 years ago, Sourena Games has been hosting massive tournaments like the Zula League, that have been the most important and perhaps of sole note steps in jumpstarting the Iranian Esports scene. Zula tournaments are currently the most organized and popular Esport events that are hosted by a publisher. During these 4 years of events, over 20,000 players have participated in these tournaments in more than 1500 teams. They have been awarded a sum total of 4,000,000,000 IRR as prizes for these tournaments, a groundbreaking record for Iranian Esports.

Through producing and publishing local content and games, and through increasing the general engagement of the Iranian public with Esports, Sourena Games seeks to acquire more of the Iranian PC Gaming market share.

After 5 years, Iran Zula has succeeded in attracting 3 million participants and a peak of one million active players, showing immense potential in the Iranian PC Gaming market.

Zula's amazing and profound success has indicated a massive potential PC Gaming market in Iran that was almost entirely untapped until now. However, we believe that this market is still untapped to a large extent, and can be fostered into a colossal and lucrative entertainment business sector.

Years of sanctions and isolation of the Iranian entertainment sector from the global entertainment industry has artificially created a massive demand and a vacuum for these products, and if any entity were to fill that demand, the growth experienced will be unprecedented in the history of media.

Zula is the first testament to this fact, and despite limited resources and tough situations, it has experienced a meteoric rise into the mainstream. Far from its true potential, with the availability of powerful servers, better and larger Esports infrastructure and strong marketing, Zula can feasibly achieve even upwards of 10 million active players.

ZULA.ir

# ZULA

ZULA is a Free to Play Online First-Person Shooter game developed by MadByte Games in 2016. Shortly after its initial release, the Iranian game developer, Sourena Games, localized and officially released the title in Iran in Farsi.

Despite the initial solo development by MadByte, Sourena Games has taken an active part in the development of the game, co-developing a plethora of new content with MadByte. This new wave of content chiefly includes new Maps and a selection of Melee and Ranged weapons.







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