



## Iran Announces Mass Production of COVID-19 Test Kits

**OE Watch Commentary:** On 19 February, Iran reported two coronavirus deaths, hours after confirming their first case. As of the end of March, Iran had confirmed 41,495 confirmed cases and 2757 deaths. The latest models by the University of New South Wales predict that by late June, Iran could reach 48 million cases—half their population—if serious interventions are not taken.

While COVID-19 cases continue to grow at a staggering rate, Iranian media has reportedly been overflowing with mixed information surrounding the virus. As fake remedies made their way across social media, Iranian media reported nearly 300 people have been killed and more than a thousand have been sickened by ingesting methanol under the guise that it can cure or prevent coronavirus. As the passage from *Sputnik* notes, while Iranian hospitals are fighting to treat their coronavirus patients, they are further pressed to handle the influx of patients with methanol poisoning—and its side effects, which include permanent blindness.

Other Iranian media outlets have resorted to rhetoric—pointing out that US-led sanctions have crippled Iran’s ability to import the necessary drugs and protective gear to combat the virus properly. Despite US claims that medicines and medical equipment are not under sanctions, Iranian Foreign Ministry retorted that the US has practically blocked the transfer of Iran’s financial resources in other countries into the Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement (SHTA).

Nevertheless, Iran touts its technological superiority, announcing their achievements in producing a COVID-19 test kit that can provide results in three hours, with 98% accuracy. As the first accompanying passage from Iranian news outlet *Khabar* discusses, during an official ceremony held by Brigadier General Farhad Amiri, head of the Ministry of Defense’s Institute of Education and Research, and General Azizi Delshad, representative to the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defense’s Institute of Education and Research declared that these kits are highly accurate and have been verified by relevant authorities. Furthermore, the tests are reported to be entirely produced domestically, and are now being mass-produced in order to fulfill the needs of the Iranian armed forces and medical fields. Iran has even offered to export this kit to other countries, if required.

Pishtaz Teb Zaman Diagnostics is one of the companies responsible for supplying Iranian labs with 80,000 kits per week. According to the second passage from *Tasnim News Agency*, Vahid Younesi, a business development manager at Pishtaz Teb Zaman Diagnostics highlighted that his company was prepared to deliver 400,000 kits within the by late May. While listing key features of their kits, he stated, “It will take two hours for test results to come out”—an hour faster than reported by most Iranian media outlets. Without further details, Younesi pointed out that around 20 countries have already placed an order to purchase Iran’s kits. **End OE Watch Commentary (Plude)**

***“We are proud to present one of the most important defense achievements made by the scientists and experts of the Ministry of Defense.... This [COVID-19 test] kit can test for the virus with superior precision within 3 hours and can operate on all genomes in the world...Today, it is ready to be mass produced and provided to medical centers...”***

**Source:** “Kithaye Tashkhise Corona Sakhte Vezahrte Defa’ Che Vizhegihayeh Darad? (What are the Features of the Ministry of Defense’s Coronavirus Diagnosis Kits?),” *Khabaronline.ir*, 30 March 2020. <https://khabaronline.ir/news/1370785>

*What are the Features of the Ministry of Defense’s Coronavirus Test Kits?*

*A ceremony unveiling the mass-production of COVID-19 detection kits was held at the General Staff of the Armed Forces with Brigadier General Farhad Amiri, head of the Ministry of Defense’s Institute of Education and Research, and General Azizi Delshad, representative to the General Staff of the Armed Forces in attendance.*

*After extending holiday greetings for Eid, Amiri announced, “We are proud to present one of the most important defense achievements made by the scientists and experts of the Ministry of Defense, along with the support of Iran’s Armed Forces.”*

*General Azizi Delshad, head of the Industrial Research Department for the General Staff of the Armed Forces also said during the ceremony, “This kit can test for the virus with superior precision within 3 hours and can operate on all genomes in the world...Today, it is ready to be mass produced and provided to medical centers... “There is nothing else in the world similar to this kit that can also be exported.”*



## Continued: Iran Announces Mass Production of COVID-19 Test Kits

**Source:** “Iranian Coronavirus Diagnostic Test Kits Ready to Hit Global Market,” *Tasnim News Agency*, 25 March 2020. <https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2020/03/25/2230472/iranian-coronavirus-diagnostic-test-kits-ready-to-hit-global-market>

*Vahid Younesi, the business development manager at Pishtaz Teb Zaman Diagnostics, said the research and development team at his company began its work on the production of indigenous laboratory test kits for the new coronavirus, after the first cases were confirmed in Iran last month.*

*The Iranian coronavirus test kit “is exactly on par with the foreign-made ones as regards precision, functionality and time of diagnosis ... It will take two hours for test results to come out,” he said.*

*Younesi went on to say that his company will start exporting the Iranian coronavirus test kits once domestic needs are met, emphasizing that some 20 countries have placed orders to purchase the kits.*

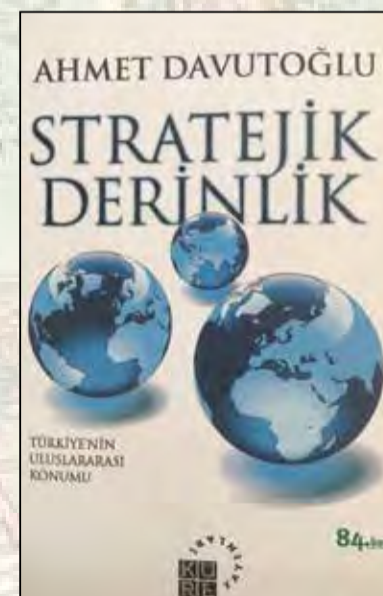
**Source:** “Suicide by Methanol Alcohol in Iran Over Coronavirus Fears!,” *Sputnik News*, 28 March 2020. [https://ir.sputniknews.com/iran/202003286153451-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%DA%A9%D8%B4%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%DA%A9%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%B3-%DA%A9%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D8%A7-/%](https://ir.sputniknews.com/iran/202003286153451-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%DA%A9%D8%B4%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%DA%A9%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%B3-%DA%A9%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D8%A7-/)

*There is only one problem in other countries, the coronavirus epidemic, but now we are simultaneously fighting on two fronts: Coronavirus and Methanol Poisoning.*

## Book Review: A Look Back and Forward at Turkey's “Strategic Depth” Foreign Policy Doctrine

Karen Kaya  
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“Strategic Depth (Stratejik Derinlik)” is a Turkish book published in 2001. This was a time when international relations theorists were describing new frameworks of world order and security modalities following the end of the Cold War and bi-polar world. Works such as Francis Fukuyama’s “End of History” and Samuel Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations” were icons of this intellectual period. It was in this context of a changing international system that Turkish International Relations Professor Ahmet Davutoğlu (who later served as Foreign Minister between 2009-2014 and Prime Minister between 2014-2016) attempted to define Turkey’s position in his book “Strategic Depth.” From around 2002 to 2012, the foreign policy that Davutoğlu outlined in his book was considered the doctrine and roadmap for Turkish foreign policy.



<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-monographs/309386>