



## Iran: New Indigenous Rifles Unveiled

**OE Watch Commentary:** The Iranian government prides itself on its indigenous defense industries, both as a matter of national prestige and for the perceived security independence it provides from outside suppliers. Often, Iranian officials brag about large platforms—the Karrar tank, for example, or the Makran helicopter carrier. However, Defense Minister Amir Hatami recently announced production of several new guns and rifles, according to the excerpted article from Iran’s main economic daily and politically centrist *Donya-e-Eqtasad*.

The excerpted portion of the article focuses on the Masaf assault rifle that appears to be a copy of the Heckler & Koch HK416 used by the Norwegian and French militaries. The fact that the Masaf is essentially a copy of other weaponry highlights Iranian military industries’ ability to reverse engineer relatively simple equipment. At the same time the Masaf suggests that, despite its rhetoric, Iranian military engineers focus on stealing intellectual property rather than creating it for themselves.

Regardless, if the Masaf operates as Hatami advertises, it provides a versatility that will benefit not only Iran in the field, but its many proxies in Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen, especially given the willingness of the Iranian military to transfer not only weaponry but also the capability to manufacture it to its proxies. The Masaf could also become a moneymaker for Iran should it choose to export it to various African, Southeast Asian, or Latin American countries. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**



The Masaf Assault Rifle, unveiled by Iranian Defense Ministry on 6 March 2021.

Source: Mehr News Agency, <https://media.mehrnews.com/d/2021/03/07/3/3712307.jpg>

**“The effective range is 600 meters with a thermal camera.”**

**Source:** “Moshakhsat-e Monaser beh Fard Yek Saleh Pihtar Fateh Tamam Irani (Unique Specifications of an Advanced Indigenous Iranian Rifle),” *Donya-e-Eqtasad* (Iran’s politically centrist and primary economic daily), 7 March 2021. <https://donya-e-eqtasad.com/تی‌اس‌ش‌خ‌ب/ین‌اری‌ام‌م‌ت‌ه‌ت‌ف‌ر‌ش‌ی‌پ‌ح‌ال‌س‌ک‌ی‌د‌ر‌ف‌ه‌ب‌ر‌ص‌ح‌ن‌م‌ت‌ا‌ص‌خ‌ش‌م-62/3746742-ن‌ا‌و‌خ>

### *Unique Specifications of an Advanced Indigenous Iranian Rifle*

Simultaneously with the 13th Annual Armed Service Soldiers Festival, held by the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Support, Brigadier General Amir Hatami unveiled the “Masaf,” an advanced Iranian-made assault rifle. The effective range is 800 meters during the day and 600 meters with a thermal camera [at night].

### *What are the characteristics of the Masaf Assault Rifle?*

The Masaf takes a 7.62×51 mm round, and it is a light-weight, air-cooled weapon with a short-piston and is armed by indirect pressure of gunpowder gas and fed by ammunition which increases the reliability and lifespan of the weapon and its parts. It has three modes: sniper, short burst, and automatic. The weapon also has a standard Picatinny rail that allows for the installation of peripherals such as cameras, laser sights, grenade launchers, tripods, etc. The Masaf also has an automatic reload feature. The telescopic scope can be adjusted... and the presence of a repellant in the arming mechanism reduces the kick of the weapon, which in turn increases its operational capability.

*Ergonomic considerations were factored into weapon design.*

*This weapon is configured in such a way that, without special tools, can be converted into a sniper or carbine version. This weapon can fire all 7.62 x 51 mm bullets.*