



## Iran Warns of Phone and Text Scams

**OE Watch Commentary:** Most international discussion about Iranian cyber issues revolves around the Passive Defense Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' efforts to hack critical infrastructure, or the efforts of Iran's various security services to control social media. Meanwhile, Iran's cyber police force occasionally releases statistics about other cyber violations in which they have become involved, such as the distribution of pornography. The excerpted article from the cyber-focused Iranian website *Gerdab.ir* is of interest because it reports a growing problem of Iranian scam artists seeking to trick Iranians into providing confidential information such as ATM passwords and banking information. In effect, the same sort of phishing scams which plagued the United States and other Western countries until public sophistication about online issues grew, now plagues a less experienced Iranian society.

Financial sanctions have largely insulated the Iranian economy from the outside world. The Islamic Republic developed its own electronic network in 2002 to create an intranet for Iranian banks and most Iranian banks were connected to the system by 2010. This has allowed Iranian banks to issue ATM cards both to allow Iranians to access Iranian rials and conduct other banking functions such as electronically paying bills and taxes. Despite this network, broad distrust of Iranian banks and suspicion about government has hampered the Iranian government's efforts to make society less cash dependent. That such scams are occurring with increasing frequency and now merit a special warning and a hotline likely will reinforce ordinary Iranians' preference to conduct cash transactions rather than rely on electronic banking. This in turn will both limit Iranian government insight into many financial transactions and breathe new life into a currency black market which thrives on differences between official and street rates." **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**



An ATM in Imam Khomeini Airport City.

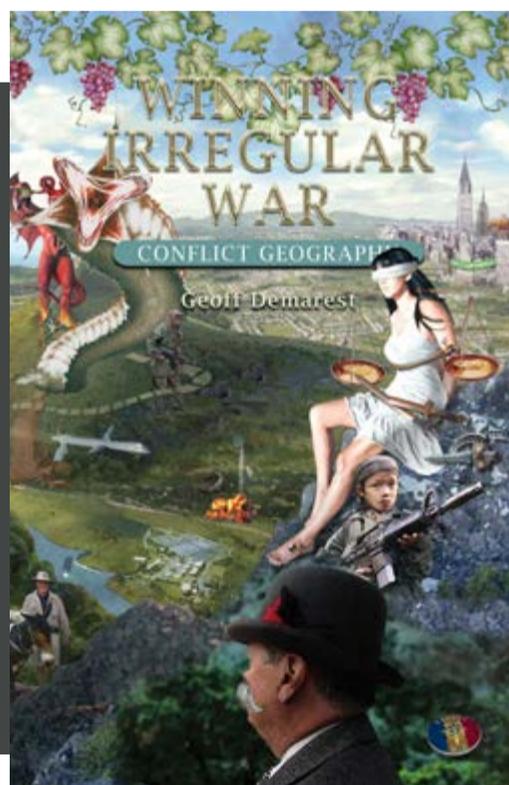
Source: Imam Khomeini Airport City, [https://www.ikac.ir/Portals/\\_default/Skins/dng-theme/images/ATM.jpg](https://www.ikac.ir/Portals/_default/Skins/dng-theme/images/ATM.jpg)

*“Scammers have been abusing citizens.”*

**Source:** “Moraghab Kalahabardari az Tarigh Tomas-e Telefon va Peyamakha-ye Ja’li Bashid (Beware of fraudulent phone calls and fake texts),” *Gerdab.ir*, 30 July 2019. <https://gerdab.ir/fa/news/28743>

### *Beware of fraudulent phone calls and fake texts*

According to a *Gerdab* report, The Tehran division of the Telecommunications Company of Iran warned about the sending of fake SMS messages about winning prizes, donations or instructing citizens to reveal their ATM code. The Tehran division of the Telecommunications Company of Iran declared, “Scammers have been abusing citizens under the pretext of goodwill, offering cash and non-cash prizes, and requesting bank passwords.” Accordingly, Tehran Telecommunications demands its customers and citizens to contact Telecommunications Public Relations Unit with number 2021 before taking any action.



**Geoff Demarest's *Winning Irregular War* is about a broader set of conflicts than just 'insurgency.'** In its 144 sections, Geoff Demarest uses a distinct, reconciled, more effective strategic grammar that draws on the disciplines of law and geography over political science. As Geoff Demarest puts it: **“I hope that some of the ideas in it will be contagious.”**

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