

“Travel in the land and see how He started the Creation.”

The Holy Quran 20/29

Tourism Holding of Social Security Organization

ONE HUNDRED HOTELS ONE HUNDRED BUSINESSES

Edited by:

Dr. GH. Ebrahim Fay Salami

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Preface

The transition in the structure of production and services in world economy, the necessity of getting rid of traditional and rentier oil-based economy, as well as the increasing shortage of water resources in Iran have necessitated new approaches such as tourism and hospitality industries.

Iran, a museum country, enjoys quite a few cultural and historical attractions, as a result, the demand for its visiting is rising.

Such cities as Isfahan, Shiraz, Hamedan, and Mashhad are well-known world museum cities. However, all important cities in Iran are suffering from insufficient hotels and accommodations.

In Iran's history of hospitality, there is the precedent for building 1000 caravanserais by Shah Abbas the Great in the XVII century and also 200 hotels in the 1970s. According to The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report of Economic Forum (2017), in terms of the number of hotels for one hundred people, among 136 countries Iran comes 116th in the world. At the same time, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Malaysia come 42nd, 64th, 28th, and 35th respectively. This report indicates that the present tourism and hospitality industries in Iran are traditional, sporadic, and limited.

The recent studies illustrate that Iran will need more than 770 three-to-five-star hotels in order to achieve its development plans by 2025. Support for constructing at least 500 four- and five-star hotels by the private sector has been envisaged in the documents of Iran's Sixth Development Plans. Accordingly, Social Security Organization in Iran has set the strategy of entering new markets and progressive development in the process of production and job creation as its top priority.

Based on the latest national and international studies on tourism industry in Iran, the "One Hundred Hotels- One Hundred Businesses" Plan has been offered as an incentive for development by Tourism Holding of Social Security Organization. In this plan, utilizing new approaches, developing the market, and creating some networks based on value chain and future study have been offered. Having designed such a plan, the Tourism Holding of Social Security Organization, as the biggest tourism group in Iran, is to organize cooperation and investment in constructing 100 hotels in 31 provinces of Iran. Such a plan has been designed in accordance with the strategy of Social Security Organization to enter new markets and to develop the process of developing production and supply construction. Internationally well-known brands in hospitality industry have also embraced to cooperate in this plan; they are also ready to create hotel networks and chains in Iran.

The plan "One Hundred Hotels, One Hundred Businesses" has been proposed based on land-use and spatial planning in order to organize and expand tourism market in Iran via extending tour-

ist destinations. By means of this plan, network creation as well as national and international links will be viable so that common brands and special Iranian brands will be created and developed. As a result, the plan ends up in the development of hospitality industry in Iran.

In addition to sustainable development, local cooperation with an economic approach to fostering culture and enhancing national identity, Iranian architecture and hospitality, and development of domestic tourism and social welfare in Iran have been accentuated in this plan. In the first phase, joint projects have been defined and prioritized for domestic and foreign investors to construct new and multi-functional hotels in the centers of provinces and big tourist destinations in such cities as Tehran, Isfahan, Kashan, Hamedan, Shiraz, Yazd, Qom, Bandar Abbas, Ahvaz, Bushehr, and Rasht. By implementing this plan, the possibility of world-wide marketing for Iran touring as well as arranging organized and continuous domestic and incoming tours will be provided.

The main propositions in the "One Hundred Hotels, One Hundred Businesses" Plan, regarding recognition, basic theories, strategies, programs, management, and implementing these projects have been defined in a 40-article manifest. Based on conceptual development, engineering development, construction, utilization, support & maintenance and disposal and the methods of implementing 100 projects from among 237 introduced projects, the systematic engineering process of this plan will be explained for 31 provinces. By implementing "One Hundred Hotels, One Hundred Businesses" Plan, sustainable development, social justice improvement, alleviating poverty, spatial planning, and the development of tourist destinations in 31 provinces of Iran will be facilitated.

By forming Special Units like Tourism Investment Promotion Unit (TIPU) with the aid of Iran Central Bank, Refah Kargaran Bank (belonging to SSO), and other banks, the methods of providing investment in tourism industry will be pursued by Tourism Holding of Social Security Organization; there are other facilities provided by investment laws in Iran as well. For some projects of this plan, five-to-ten-year-tax exemptions have been considered. By observing the Iranian Trade Laws, real and legal aliens may form a corporation, own properties, and transfer their shares and interests whenever they want. Furthermore, Social Security Organization is the mainstay of investment and cooperation.

The main strategy of this plan in investment is defining joint ventures with foreign companies and cooperating with them to gain profit in a win-win situation. The most important laws and regulations concerning support and encouraging foreign investment along with their manuals are provided in chapter four of the book, Plan, and it is also available on the following website: www.hegta.ir.

In addition to Social Security Organization (SSO), other organizations such as Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO), Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare (MCLS), Organization for Investment Economic and Technical Assistance of Investment (OIETAI), Social Security Investment Company (SSIC), and Iran Tourism Foundation are all the supporters of this plan.

In this plan, specialized and multi-functional approaches to hotels as a dynamic economic phenomenon have been accentuated and each hotel enjoys a separate economic and technical justification plan, which will be designed based on its own geographical, climatic, and locational features. In this "One Hundred Hotels, One Hundred Businesses" Plan, 237 projects with complete specifications have been nominated.

Ebrahim Bay Salami

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