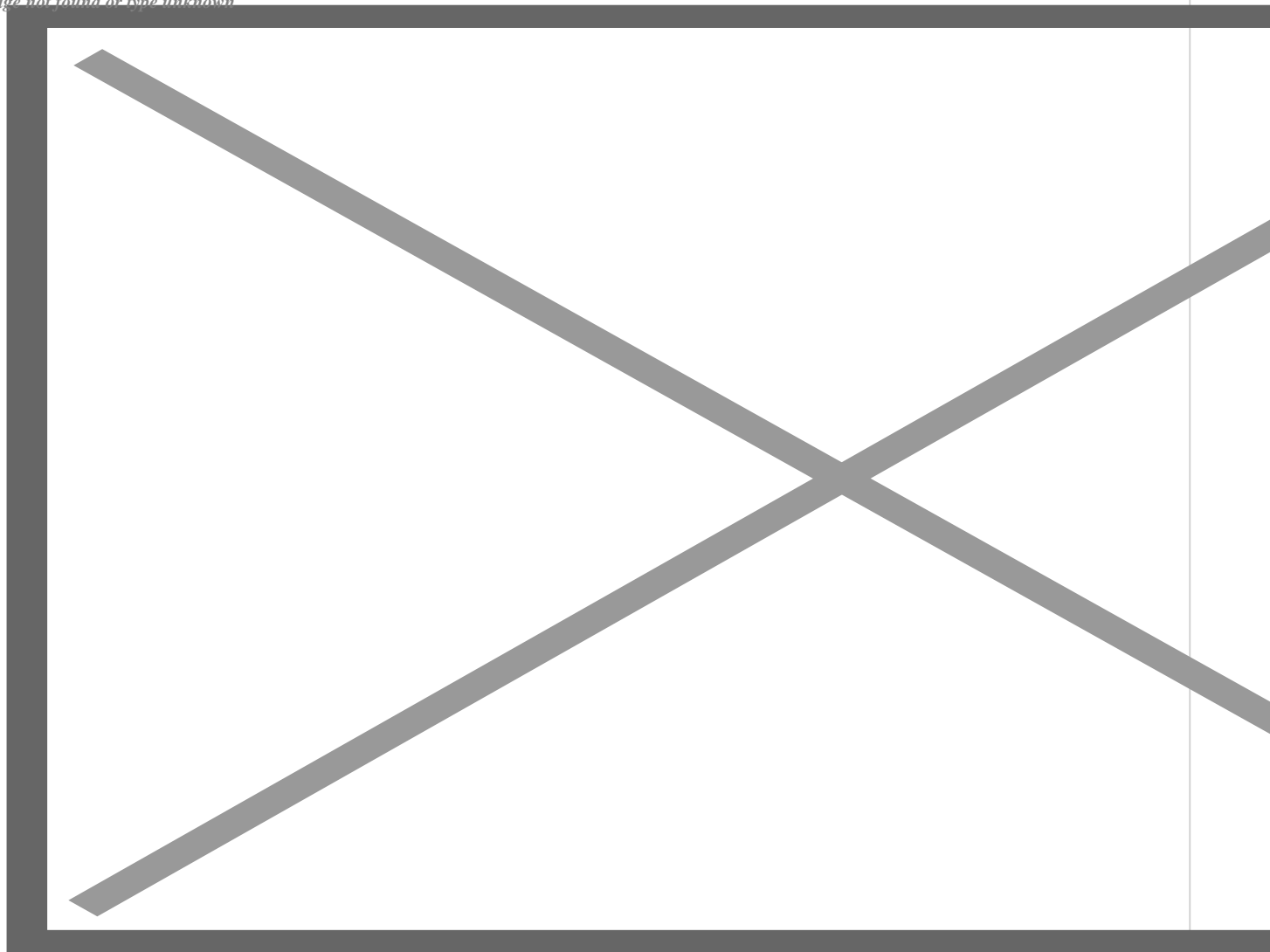


U.S. official says Israel behind assassination of Iranian scientist

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Washington, December 2 (RHC)-- A senior American official has acknowledged that the Israeli regime was behind the assassination of an Iranian scientist, CNN reports. The official, however, "declined to give details about whether the Trump administration knew about the attack before it was carried out or provided support," according to the report released Wednesday.

“The official said that in the past, Israelis have shared information with the US about their targets and covert operations before carrying them out but would not say if they did so in this instance. The Iranian nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, who was killed Friday, had been a target for the Israelis for a long time,” read the report.

Prominent nuclear physicist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was assassinated in a terrorist attack near the Iranian capital Tehran. The attack targeted the vehicle carrying Fakhrizadeh — who headed the Iranian Defense Ministry’s Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research (SPND), the agency said.

“President Donald Trump has given [Secretary of State Mike] Pompeo carte blanche to continue carrying out the administration’s “maximum pressure” campaign over the next two months,” added the report.

The anonymous U.S. administration official further suggested that the assassination of the top Iranian scientist could hamper efforts by the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden to pursue diplomacy with Tehran.

“An Iranian move to take kinetic action against the U.S. -- particularly killing Americans -- would make it harder for Biden to lift sanctions on Iran when he gets into office in order to jumpstart diplomacy,” read the report.

Iran has vowed to continue its nuclear program despite the US and Israel's attempts to disrupt it. Tehran has also vowed to retaliate the brutal assassination by the Zionist regime.

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