

Iran Election Update

May 6, 2013

- In a meeting with election officials in charge of the presidential elections, the Supreme Leader [has declared](#) that "no one has been able and no one will be able to postpone June's presidential ballot." The Supreme Leader went on to say that "the turnout for this year's presidential election is crucial to the revitalization of the country." He continued, "The final results of the election should not be interpreted as 'winners and losers' as these are words and terms that are used in the West. In the divine duty of God, this interpretation does not apply."
- Former Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and current head of Iran's Expediency Council says he is currently assessing the situation before making up his mind to enter the country's upcoming election. Rafsanjani [told a group](#) of university students in Tehran that he needs to consult the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei before making a decision. He added, "I will not enter the race without the Leader's blessing because if Ayatollah Khamenei does not agree with my candidacy, the result will be counterproductive." Rafsanjani [continued](#), "If there's a situation where there is a difference between me and the leadership of the state, all of us will suffer."
- Popular news website Asre-Iran has [conducted a public opinion poll](#) and the survey reveals that over 50% of the respondents believe that former President Hashemi Rafsanjani will eventually submit his candidacy to run in this year's presidential election. As of Monday afternoon, of the approximately 29,619 readers who participated in the survey, 50.83% believe that Rafsanjani would submit his candidacy, while 49.17% believed that he would not.
- Presidential hopeful Ali Akbar Velayati, a principalist member of the 2+1 Coalition of presidential candidates and senior foreign policy advisor to the Supreme Leader, [has said](#) if he is elected, he will expand bilateral and international relations with other countries, noting that he would not let Iran be driven into isolation. He reiterated that any direct negotiations with the U.S. would be based on the guidelines outlined by the Supreme Leader.
- In a wide ranging [question and answer session](#) with students at the University of Tehran's Faculty of Literature's Firdowsi Hall, presidential candidate Hassan Rowhani, a member of the Expediency Council, Head of Strategic Expediency Council, and former nuclear negotiator, answered numerous questions from the students. Regarding voter concerns, Rowhani stated "that there is no greater betrayal of the public trust than when it is betrayed at the ballot box." Rowhani also continued his recent critique of the "Islamization of universities" and how female students have been banned from pursuing certain undergraduate courses. When asked about the 2009 presidential elections, Rowhani maintained that, "the continuation of the street protests after the government had publically announced that further street protests were illegal was not right, but I think the sedition had started before the 2009 presidential elections." When questioned about his relationship with the Supreme Leader and former presidents Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammed Khatami, Rowhani said that "my close relationship with all three men began before the revolution and God-willing it will remain that way." Rowhani ended by saying that he would welcome the candidacies of Rafsanjani and Khatami if they choose to run.
- Gholam Ali Haddad Adel, a principalist member of the 2+1 Coalition and former Speaker of Parliament, [has said that](#) "the experiences of former Presidents Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami are beneficial" and he would use their experiences in a future government if he is to be elected as president.

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



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Election date is June 14, 2013.