

Iran: The Week in Review

August 1, 2013

- July 26: The Secretary of the Tabriz House of Labor, Kareem Sadeghzadeh, [said](#) the legacy of the Ahmadinejad government “will be millions of unemployed people and negative growth in the economy.” Sadeghzadeh advised President-elect Hassan Rouhani to choose someone to lead the Department of Labor who is “popular with the people, experienced, and stays away from the game of politics.... This way he can effectively communicate with the people.”
- July 26: Law Enforcement Forces Commander Esmail Ahmadi Moghaddam [said](#) that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was opposed to any police commanders stepping down because of deaths at the Kahrizak detention facility in 2009. Apparently after meeting with the families of Kahrizak victims, Moghaddam reported back to the Supreme Leader to which Khamenei said, “You did well and I wished you had done this earlier.”
- July 27: The spokesman of the Moderation and Development Party, Gholam Ali Dehqan, [said](#) that President-elect Hassan Rouhani is determined to form a moderate and extra-factional cabinet that would include both principlists and reformists. “Rouhani will use the potential of various political parties, and this constitutes meritocracy in the cabinet of the 11th administration,” said Dehqan.
- July 27: In an interview with Fars News, Iran’s former ambassador to Italy Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini [spoke](#) of regret over the image of the disputed 2009 presidential election and the subsequent protests. Hosseini said the election “had great potential for Iran’s development in the international arena” with its “integrity” and “credibility.” He then complained, “The incidents afterwards and the situation with the sedition created a deep scar on Iran’s international reputation. The situation gave hope to Iran’s enemies and brought disappointment to Iran’s friends. Furthermore, it gave new life to all of the groups opposed to the Islamic Revolution as well as the hypocritical cult (the “terrorist” Mujahedin-e Khalq).”
- July 27: First Vice President Mohammed Reza Rahimi [stated](#), “Over 3 million housing units were launched and... another 1.5 million housing units will be inaugurated during the future (Hassan Rouhani) administration.” Rahimi then declared, “The Mehr housing project is on one of the most successful projects of Mr. Ahmadinejad’s government due to its role in providing housing for low-income residents.”
- July 28: Outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad plans to [establish](#) a private technical science-based university in Tehran after he leaves office. He has already received the proper permits and permission from the Education Ministry to establish a non-profit university. The plans are for an international university that admits Iranian students as well as international students.
- July 28: Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei met with students and student activists to discuss scientific, cultural, academic, and political views. Khamenei’s personal website also posted a series of [photos](#) of the event. During the Q&A part of the event, a student asked Khamenei what the term “moderation” exactly meant. The Supreme Leader provided a guarded answer by saying, “The president-elect has come up with this slogan. Surely he expressed his own understanding of the term and subject of moderation.” A few students asked about the “sedition” of the 2009 elections to which Khamenei [touched](#) upon:

“When reviewing this bitter event, the main issue is that they (seditionists) violated the law and behaved in an uncivilized manner, and stood on the other side of the law and inflicted damage and harm on our dear Iran.”

“Of course in all of the corners and cracks of such a big incident there could be some issues, where sometimes an innocent person can be cruel, but the main issue should not be lost because of these (smaller) issues. Why and for what reason did they take to the streets to deal with their claim that there was cheating in the 2009 election? We have repeatedly asked and proposed this question publicly, so why haven’t they answered? Why haven’t they apologized?”

“In private meetings they say fraud has not occurred, so for what reasons did you make the country suffer and want to bring it to the brink?”

“Do you know what would have happened if God didn’t help us during the sedition of 2009 and a lot of people had died? Do you know what type of days this country would have seen? Of course, God did not will it, and the nation used their intuition.”

- July 28: Tehran MP and member of the parliament’s Cultural Commission, Ali Motahari [called](#) on the head of the Judiciary Sadegh Larijani by saying that he should put pressure on security officials to release all political prisoners. “Now that national reconciliation has been achieved in the recent elections, the crisis of the 2009 elections should be dissolved. The majority of prisoners whose crime was simply to criticize (the government) should be free and Mr. Mousavi and Mr. Karroubi’s crimes should be identified and resolved. If these two men should apologize then shouldn’t Mr. Ahmadinejad apologize as well for inflaming the debate regarding the sedition? At the very least they (Mousavi and Karroubi) should be able to defend themselves.”
- July 29: Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei officially [decreed](#) that Hassan Rouhani’s inauguration ceremony will be held in Tehran on Sunday, August 4 at 4pm and in the presence of domestic and foreign leaders. The Supreme Leader also pointed out that the leaders of foreign nations who will be attending will meet with him, the president-elect, and the speaker of parliament.
- July 29: Iran’s English press news service PressTV [reports](#) on the highlights of outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s live television interview on state television in which he tallied up the achievements that he and his administration were able to claim during his eight years as president. Among his many achievements was that he was the first president of Iran to make a trip to the border of the Zionist state (President Ahmadinejad visited Lebanon in October 2010). He also made 115 international trips during his two terms in office, and the reasoning behind the large amount of travel time was “to engage in dialogue with nations.”
- July 30: In an interview with ILNA, Tehran City Council member and former vice president of Iran Masoumeh Ebtekar [warned](#), “Unfortunately, the per capita consumption of water in our country is excessive and far higher than developed countries. In some parts of Iran, people use water up to four times the global average amount.” As the director of the Environmental Board on Tehran’s City Council, Ebtekar explained that neglected irrigation systems and poor agricultural efficiency planning only compound the problem. She said recycling and reusing treated water as well as educating the public on water conservation through national media are steps that can be taken to reduce water consumption.

- July 31: Former female MP, and one-time Ahmadinejad candidate for the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security, Fatemeh Ajorlou [spoke](#) against the establishment of a Ministry of Women's Affairs in President-elect Rouhani's government, saying, "The female population, according to statistics, constitutes half of the working population, and the female character is part of the entire population of Iran... If we want to limit this entire female population to one ministry, not only will this not solve problems, but it will bring about a new crisis."
- July 31: Borna News posted a [photo](#) of President-elect Hassan Rouhani in his Army fatigues as a young man. His military badges reveal that he was a *Afsareh Vazifeh* (Officer) and not a private, which could mean that he did his mandatory military service after college.
- July 31: Akbar Torkan, senior advisor to President-elect Rouhani and former Minister of Defense under Hashemi Rafsanjani, [spoke](#) out against outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad by saying, "At the end of former president Mohammed Khatami's presidency, the incoming administration of Ahmadinejad asked Khatami to not pass certain legislation before his administration took office, and we (the Rouhani administration) ask Ahmadinejad to honor our requests as well, just as Khatami did his." With regard to Ahmadinejad's last minute political and economic activity before he leaves office, Torkan warned, "The last week of the Ahmadinejad administration shouldn't be a week of looting."
- July 31: ISNA posted a series of photos of outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's last official cabinet and administration meeting, which took place in the city of Mashhad. Pictured in one of the [photos](#) are President Ahmadinejad and Esfandiar Rahim-Mashaie, his close confidant and disqualified presidential candidate, in what could be some of the last photos taken of the two while they both are still in their official capacity.

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



Additional updates of "Iran: The Week in Review" are available [here](#).