

Iran Election Update

May 20, 2013

- Former President Hashemi Rafsanjani released his 3rd campaign statement in which he calls for “Campaign Ethics, Good Promises, and Converting Enemies into Friends.” He [continued](#), “I believe that the presence of different views in the election is the means to create a political epic” (political epic refers to refers to the Supreme Leader’s Persian New Year message in which he called the new year of 1392, the year of a “[political and economic epic](#)”). Rafsanjani said, “But what convinced me to take part in this race is” my concern about “blaming the shortcomings of religion for the weakness in running the country, the recession in production, youth unemployment, a sick economy, the fear of Iran’s neighbors, moral and cultural contradictions, and international sanctions.”
- The spokesperson for the Guardian Council, Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei, [told](#) Hamshahri Online that the final list of approved candidates will be released on Tuesday, May 21, and “The Guardian Council (members) are independent and are not afraid to disqualify anyone. They only fear God.” This comes as reports over the weekend [claimed](#) that the Guardian Council may take into consideration physical condition when vetting candidates to ensure the candidate could work several hours a day. Former President Hashemi Rafsanjani is 78 years old.
- MP Ali Motahari, the unofficial spokesperson for Rafsanjani’s presidential campaign, [said](#), “Mr. Hashemi has had the greatest role in the (Iranian) revolution.” He warned that if the Guardian Council disqualified Rafsanjani because of his age, it would be playing “a dangerous game.” Motahari also raised the possibility that the Supreme Leader might issue a state decree to reinstate him if he is, in fact, disqualified.
- The Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei [warned](#) today that “the enemy (through the election) is after someone who will make Iran dependent, weak, and backwards in many areas as well as pursue a foreign policy track in favor of foreigners.”
- Former First Deputy Speaker Mohammad-Hassan Aboutorabi Fard, also known as the “Coalition of Five” candidate, [announced](#) his decision to step down from the presidential race, as [did](#) Iran’s former Foreign Ministry spokesman Rahmin Mehmanparast. BBC Persian also [reports](#) that the Perseverance Front nominee and former Minister of Health Bagheri Lankarani also withdrew his candidacy in favor of Saeed Jalili.
- While speaking to a group of women from Tehran and Qom, presidential candidate and confidant of President Ahmadinejad, Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei, was asked what he would do if he were to be disqualified. He [answered](#), “If I am to be disqualified I will lawfully pursue my rights.”
- Davood Ahmadinejad, brother of current President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as well as one of his strongest critics, [announced](#) he is stepping down from the presidential race in order to back candidate Saeed Jalili. Jalili also [tweeted](#) this development from his Twitter account.
- Nuclear negotiator and presidential candidate Saeed Jalili kept his online campaign presence up by [adding](#) an Instagram account to supplement his Google Plus and Twitter accounts.
- According to a Fars News [survey](#) that asked over 164,000 respondents in over 241 cities, towns, and villages, around 70% of respondents will participate in the presidential and local elections while 14% will choose not to participate. Around 15% of respondents remain undecided as to whether to participate.

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



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Election date is June 14, 2013.