

Iran Election Update

June 6, 2013

- During the televised presidential debate on culture last night, candidate Mohammed Reza Aref criticized the current government for wasting an important cultural opportunity when Asghar Farhadi, the director of the Oscar-winning film “A Separation,” gave his acceptance speech as a message of peace to the world. “We weren’t able to use this opportunity or its potential for cultural diplomacy with the world,” [said](#) Aref.
- An op-ed in Jahan News highly criticizes candidate Mohammed Reza Aref and [asks](#), “Mr. Aref, how well do you know your cultural figures?” During the presidential debate on culture, Aref mentioned Oscar-winning director Asghar Farhadi and world-renowned Persian classical singer Mohammad Reza Shajarian. The article reveals photos of Farhadi and Shajarian shaking hands, sitting next to each other, and cheek-kissing unveiled women, which is frowned upon in the eyes of the Islamic Republic.
- Asr-Iran has conducted its latest [poll](#) and asks its readers, “No matter who you want to vote for, after watching the second debate regarding culture and society, which candidate in your opinion sounded the most logical and practical (about culture)?” As of Thursday afternoon, over 65,000 people voted and overwhelmingly chose Hassan Rouhani as he led with 57%. Coming in second was Mohammed Reza Aref with 15%, and Mohsen Rezaei following him with 12%. All the other candidates had 5% or less.
- Tabnak posts a set of [photos](#) of Mohsen Rezaei campaigning in the city of Shahrekord in the Bakhtiari province. Large amounts of supporters came out to hear his speech in the main square where Rezaei [pledged](#) to diversify Iran’s economy and wean it off oil revenues if elected president.
- Campaigning for village and local city councils around Iran began [today](#). There are over 126,000 seats up for grab around the country.
- BBC Persian has filmed a new [documentary](#) about the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad titled, “The Man with the Spring Coat.” The documentary provides an in-depth look of all aspects of his tenure as the president of Iran, such as his populist agenda both inside and outside of Iran, Iran’s nuclear program, domestic political infighting, the disputed 2009 presidential race, and other interesting topics.
- Fars News posts [two](#) sets of photos of ordinary Iranians campaigning in public streets for their respective candidates. Voters are [passing](#) out flyers and posters to other perspective voters in cars and on sidewalks.
- YJC.IR (Young Journalists Club) English reports that activist Bahman Sharifzadeh is still holding out for President Ahmadinejad’s right-hand-man Esfandiar Rahim-Mashaie to be allowed to run in the presidential election. Sharifzadeh [said](#), “We will not lose hope until the last moment that Mashaie may appear on the electoral scene. As Mr. Ahmadinejad said we will not lose hope until the last moment, because there is some basis to our hope.”
- YJC.IR News posts photos of the presidential candidates in the “green room” [preparing](#) before last night’s debate, as well as a series of photos of [ordinary](#) Iranians watching the debates on television. YJC.IR News also posted a series of photos shot around the Khorasan province of candidate [Mohammed Bagher Qalibaf’s](#) campaign promotions.
- On a Facebook page created for Mohammed Reza Aref, a short [video](#) clip is posted that shows Aref during a television interview explaining why “he is worried and upset.” He describes his vast experience in government and says, “I am worried for the children that we had a revolution for (in 1979), I am worried about the relationship between the first and second generation of the revolution, and I am worried about the advancement of this country.”

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



Additional Iran Election Updates are available [here](#).

Election date is June 14, 2013.