

Iran: The Week in Review

July 11, 2013

- July 5: Outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad [announced](#) an increase in maternity leave for Iranian mothers. The law was approved late last year by the Guardian Council and finally approved in June of this year. An amendment to previous family planning and population control legislation now gives mothers nine months of maternity leave, while their spouses are allowed two weeks of leave to be with their families. The new amendment also assists Iranian mothers who have already given birth to children in the past year. According to the new change, mothers of children who have not yet reached the age of nine months will be allowed to take maternity leave up until the child reaches nine months of age.
- July 5: In a meeting with other reformists figures, former president Mohammed Khatami said, "We should not overlook the non-partisan discourse, role, and the approach the Supreme Leader took in the recent presidential election victory of Hassan Rouhani." Khatami [spoke](#) about his own potential candidacy in the presidential election by saying, "Had I run (for president) and was disqualified, I would have accepted the decision." As a conciliatory gesture, Khatmai also mentioned, "We accept Mr. Rouhani's political positions and dialogue, but if a conservative (candidate) held these same positions we would have supported him as well."
- July 6: Outspoken MP Ali Motahari [said](#) he believes that it is no longer necessary to continue incarcerating political prisoners who were arrested and jailed following the 2009 presidential election protests. "I have stated this a few times before, arrest without due process or a fair trial should not occur. If Mr. (Mir Hussein) Mousavi and Mr. (Mehdi) Karroubi were tried, they would have defended themselves and said what they had to say, and the facts would have been clear to the people. Instead they were punished without trial and their rights as citizens as well as the rule of law were rejected." Motahari further explained that security concerns regarding their release are currently baseless as national reconciliation has already begun with the victory of Hassan Rouhani in the presidential election.
- July 6: Prominent political analyst and University of Tehran political science professor Sadegh Zibakalam [said](#), "I have no doubt that if Ayatollah Rafsanjani returned to the podium at Friday Prayers more than one million people would attend prayers in Tehran. Even congregants who have stopped attending prayers over the past few years will once again return." Zibakalam believes that public interest is growing daily about Rafsanjani and his take on domestic matters and that Rafsanjani cannot be destroyed as one of the pillars of the political system.
- July 7: Mehr News posted [photos](#) of a symposium honoring outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad held at the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting International Conference Center.

- July 7: Iran's Chief of Police Ismail Ahmadi-Moghadam met with president-elect Hassan Rouhani today as Rouhani [emphasized](#) civil rights as they discussed the rights of citizens, privacy, and security issues as well as police authority during their meeting. Afterward the police chief said, "With the valuable experiences and broad personal perspectives that Dr. Rouhani has, we are optimistic that with the help of the Eleventh Government we will be able to better serve the people through a broader outlook and provide the people with peace of mind."
- July 8: In an interview with ILNA, prominent political analyst and University of Tehran political science professor Sadegh Zibakalam [said](#), "The main characteristics of an inclusive democratic political group are loyalty and freedom, and it seems in Iran there is no such party currently in the political arena...I personally believe that someone like (former reformist presidential candidate) Mohammed Aref, as well as other democracy seekers, can successfully form such a group." With regard to cabinet appointments for president-elect Hassan Rouhani, Zibakalam said, "It would be best that the extremist minority not create problems in (cabinet) procedures for the people and the country since it is they, the majority, who have voted Rouhani into power."
- July 8: While speaking at the University of Tehran, former presidential candidate Mohammed Aref [said](#) that the government of Mr. Rouhani should prioritize the academic demands and needs of students. "Unfortunately over the past few years the university environment was governed as a closed environment and the students' optimistic moods turned into detachment," he said.
- July 9: Outgoing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad used his personal website to "[strongly deny](#)" that he was seeking the position of Head of the Iranian Soccer Federation. An official statement from the president's public relations department read, "Certain news websites published a claim that was apparently made by a former official of Iran's soccer federation, and these so-called revelations are completely false and baseless." The memo went on to ask that Iranian media should uphold Islamic morality and piety and that the publication of false news damages the prestige and credibility of the media.
- July 9: ISNA posted [photos](#) of Vice President Mohammad Reza-Rahimi as he attended a large commencement ceremony in Kerman celebrating the completion of over one million housing units that have been built in villages across Iran.
- July 9: Mehr News also [published](#) a series of photos of a parade that traveled through the main thoroughfares of Tehran marking the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan.
- July 9: Ahmed Nategh Nouri, the brother of Ali Akbar Nategh Nouri, the former Speaker of Parliament, current member of Iran's Expediency Council, and advisor to the Supreme Leader, [said](#), "In the run-up to the presidential election, Mr. Rafsanjani, Mr. Khatami, and Mr. Nouri (his brother) all helped Mr. Rouhani win the presidency, and currently they are all advising him." He further stated that his brother's role in the Rouhani government is "strictly an advisory role so that Rouhani will be able to form a nonpartisan cabinet."

- July 10: Former reformist MP and current member of the Central Council of the Islamic Labor Party, Soheila Jelodarzadeh [said](#), “The (governmental) programs that are being presented by president-elect Hassan Rouhani are pretty much reformist programs, so what else could we (reformists) possibly want? We couldn’t even fathom such an idea in our sleep!” She continued, “Every Rouhani administration program and goal that I read about are the same programs that reformists want. It would make no difference if these ideas and goals were offered by Mr. (Mohammed) Qalibaf or Mr. (Saeed) Jalili. The fact of the matter is, the programs of the Rouhani administration are the same programs that reformists have been wishing for.”
- July 10: Fars News published a series of photos of President Mahmoud [Ahmadinejad](#) sharing an Iftar banquet (the breaking of the daily fast) with orphan children. ILNA posted photos of Hashemi [Rafsanjani](#) visiting the home of the Javad Sepehri family and paying his respects to the four martyrs of the family who were killed during the Iran-Iraq war.
- July 10: [Addressing](#) a group of students at the University of Tehran, former presidential candidate Mohammed Aref spoke about the 14th anniversary of the 1999 July student uprising (18th of Tir incident) and said, “Students have always been at the forefront of the revolution.” He emphasized, “If the student dormitory incident was dealt with in a wise manner, with peace and justice, there would have never been the sensationalized rhetoric of the students confronting the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran... The 18th of Tir incident was very painful and sent the academic community into mourning.” He continued, “Rehabilitating, strengthening, and supporting student movements in our universities is very important. The university atmosphere has changed, the new environment should allow students to be more active, but we shouldn’t have expectations that are too high. It’s better to be realistic and patient while the newly elected government tries to improve the country.”

By Hanif Zarrabi-Kashani



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