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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

Iran Decides

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

Iranian Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians headed to the polls at home and abroad on Friday in closely-contested elections to choose the country's 12th president.

Expatriates also cast their ballots in the presidential and City Council elections at 310 polling stations in 102 countries. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei was among the first to cast his ballot. Speaking after casting his vote, the Leader said, "I thank God Almighty for the blessing of democracy, election, and popular participation. This is a great blessing."

There are many reasons why Ayatollah Khamenei described the 2017 election as highly "important" and said the people are deciding their destiny:

-Iran is the only democracy in the Middle East that offers guarantees for either side of the political spectrum. That's why, as maintained by Ayatollah Khamenei, "Even those who don't believe in the system and the leadership come to the ballots."

-Iran's democracy is unique in that it offers its citizens a wider choice than just the two major parties – reformers and principlists. There is a range of alternative voices in the City Council elections in particular, which gives more people a voice.

-The election is an opportunity for further unity and progress, and to say no to foreign meddling in domestic affairs. If anything, the election belongs to the nation, and there is transparency on the part of the public and the authorities alike. The Friday vote will have profound consequences not just for Iran but for the region.

-The high turnout demonstrates that people are both interested in the results of their contributions and how such contributions affect major decisions. They believe that their participation will open a new and beneficial chapter ahead of them.

-Sovereignty and freedom are manifestations of political participation in the Iranian society which is also a sign of democracy that would promote independence among the nation. It will assist people to have a more positive and enthusiastic perspective towards life.

-As maintained by Ayatollah Khamenei, the only winner of the polls is the Iranian nation that once again passed the difficult test of demonstrating national unity and solidarity in the face of foreign threats, sanctions, and conspiracies. The Friday vote is set to shape the country's future for a generation, potentially even more so than the previous elections, leading toward a higher quality of democratic governance.

In sum, all Iranians from different ethnic groups and religious backgrounds have the right to vote and to have their say on what they consider to be the most important priorities the elected government needs to focus on in their communities. That has always been the case since the 1979 revolution. In the process, the Islamic Republic has paved the way for all people, irrespective of gender, race or ethnicity, to have the democratic right to vote on how their country should be governed.

It is important that the world community puts this important history of the evolution of Iranian religious democracy into context and really values the hard fought right Iranians have to vote. It's also important to understand that the people's choice at the polling booth on Friday goes well beyond the next four years; that the choices they make today will have a significant impact on their lives and the lives of future generations.

Quake Hits Bojnord in Northeast Iran

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- A 4.1 magnitude earthquake struck a mountainous area of northern Iran on Friday as the country held a presidential election.

It wasn't immediately clear if the temblor, which struck near its border with Turkmenistan, had any effect on voting in the polling in that area. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

The Iranian Seismological Center described the earthquake as having a magnitude of 4.1, with a depth of 12 kilometers, or 7.5 miles. It says the temblor struck near the city of Bojnord in Iran's Northern Khorasan province.

On Saturday, a magnitude 5.7 earthquake in the same province killed three people and injured about 200.

Iran experiences frequent earthquakes. In 2003, some 26,000 people were killed by a magnitude-6.6 quake that flattened the historic southeastern city of Bam.

Iran Rejects UN's Education 2030 Agenda



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi gestures as he speaks during a press conference organized at Foreign Ministry building in Tehran, January 2, 2017.

TEHRAN (Press TV) – Iran has stressed that it will never accept any UN document that even minutely goes against the country's beliefs and religious values.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi was referring to a UN document, dubbed as the Education 2030 agenda, which charts out development goals for world nations.

He said Iran has officially notified UNESCO that any part of the document which is against the country's cultural, religious, social and moral

beliefs will not be executable.

"Our country has no commitment whatsoever to its execution," he said, stressing that this is Iran's "unchangeable stance" on the subject.

On May 7, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the document had been prepared under the influence of world powers.

Iran signed the document in 2016, but Ayatollah Khamenei said the Islamic Republic will not submit to it.

"A hushed signing and implementation of this document is definitely not permissible and the related bodies have been notified of that," the Leader said.

Iran's education planners say the UNESCO document is not in tune with the country's educational standards, adopted by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution.

They have warned that submitting to the UNESCO agenda would require Iran to share its educational information which could end up in wrong hands.

Netanyahu Seeks New U.S. Sanctions on Iran

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) – The occupying regime of Israel's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants to persuade President Donald Trump to impose tough new sanctions on Iran, a close adviser said.

The restrictions would aim to inflict damage in the same way that blocking money transfers did before Iran signed the 2015 nuclear agreement, said Michael Oren, a deputy cabinet minister to Netanyahu and his former ambassador to the U.S. The Zionist leader was among the most outspoken opponents of the deal and relishes the prospect of renewed confrontation if Iran violates its terms, he said.

"That's a 'Dirty Harry' moment," Oren said in an interview on Thursday in Tel Aviv, referring to the brinkmanship adopted by Clint Eastwood's detective in the 1971 movie.

Trump is flying to Occupied Palestine on May 22 from Saudi Arabia, which is also pushing the president to get tough on Iran. Trump has described the nuclear deal as a "disaster" and this week imposed new sanctions on Iran over its missile program -- ahead of the country's presidential election on Friday.

For Netanyahu, Trump's visit is a chance to reset ties with the U.S. after relations deteriorated under former President Barack Obama. Netanyahu made a passionate

speech to a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress in March 2015 to try to derail the Iran nuclear deal that Obama supported.

Since the nuclear deal, formally the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, was agreed in July 2015, Iran has repeatedly tested ballistic missiles -- some, Netanyahu has said, inscribed with "Israel must be wiped out" in Hebrew -- arguing that conventional weapons aren't covered by the pact. Iran also supports groups that have attacked Israel, including Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Besides Iran, Netanyahu also wants Trump's assistance in reviving Israeli-Palestinian talks -- but without causing the collapse of his fractious coalition regime, Oren said. Persuading Saudi Arabia to deal openly with Israel is also on Netanyahu's wish list for Trump, he said, as is U.S. military support to buffer the occupying regime from the fighting in neighboring Syria.

Trump has said he wants to strike "the ultimate deal" to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If he can "bring home negotiations with the Palestinians without preconditions, if he can bring in some type of regional component -- maybe an announcement date for a regional summit -- that would be what he would call 'huge,'" Oren said.

The Holy Qur'an



And say: Work; so Allah will see your work and (so will) His Apostle and the believers; and you shall be brought back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did.
The Holy Qur'an (9.105)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:01
Evening (Maghreb)	20:06
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:16
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	05:56

Ayatollah Nateq Nouri Resigns Post: IRNA

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Head of the Inspection Bureau at the Office of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei resigned his post Thursday ahead of the presidential election.

According to IRNA quoting an informed source, Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri has submitted his resignation, but it has not been accepted yet.

The source also rejected as lies reports by some news channels that Nateq Nouri had been dismissed for supporting one of the presidential candidates.

The source said Nateq Nouri had

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Moving Forward

KAYHAN: Irrespective of who wins the Friday vote, the Iranian nation is the winner and will move forward. Despite some four decades of regional and international tensions, wars, conflicts, sanctions, and irresponsible moves by certain politicians, the Islamic Republic has managed to move forward intact. This all is indebted to public participation. This evolution, this progress will continue apace. The day will also come when enemies will be disheartened and will stop their anti-Iran rhetoric and stance.

Economic Transparency

VATAN EMROOZ: The winner of Friday vote is important. But more important than that is to find out where the tsunami of liquidity has gone over the past four years. Where are the bank assets? With what permit did financial institutes collected people's money? Why is there recession in the housing market? The concern is that the liquidity is at the hands of certain currents and individuals with links to the West. They might be into something. We are concerned about new plots and new seditions, whose ultimate goal is to stop Iran's evolving democracy and progress.

Unsung Heroes

SIASAT ROOZ: Many families have lost their guardians. Many orphans will never see their fathers again. Many families and widows are still mourning the deaths of their beloved ones who sacrificed their lives to protect the holy shrines in Iraq and Syria. These martyrs sacrificed everything in order to protect Iran's sovereignty and security. Those who vote should always keep in mind the names of these unsung heroes and their grieving families.

Election No-Shows

AFTAB: The truth is, those who have banned elections have rarely been able to affect the election results. As maintained by the Brookings Institute, in 171 elections, the no-shows have only in 4 percent of the cases been able to impose their wills on the establishments. This should be more than enough for the no-shows to revise their positions and take part in elections. Today is the day of making big decisions for a better future for all.