

Editor's Note

Regime's Presidential Candidates Solidify Iranian People's Determination to Boycott Sham Elections

Last week, the Iranian regime's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei handpicked six candidates for the upcoming sham presidential elections through the Guardian Council's vetting. This selection has only served to solidify the Iranian people's determination to boycott these sham elections and intensify their demands for genuine democratic change following the regime's inevitable overthrow.

The regime's disqualification of other candidates, even those who have proven their complete loyalty to the establishment, sends an unmistakable message: Khamenei is committed to an ever-tightening reign of repression within Iran, coupled with a dangerous escalation of terrorism, warmongering, and nuclear ambitions on the international stage.

Among the vetted candidates is Mostafa Pourmohammadi, a notorious figure akin to Ebrahim Raisi, the infamous "Butcher of Tehran." Pourmohammadi, a former member of the death committee responsible for the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners, epitomizes the regime's brutal past and present. His inclusion in the candidate list underscores the regime's commitment to its legacy of violence and suppression.

Simultaneously, the regime pours millions of dollars into a relentless campaign to spread misinformation about its primary opposition, the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK). This effort includes producing and sponsoring films and documentaries both within Iran and internationally. One such recent documentary, "The Children of Camp Ashraf," unveiled in Sweden, exemplifies the regime's propaganda. It distorts the MEK's humanitarian decision in the early 1990s to protect their children by sending them out of Iraq during wartime.

To counter this narrative, an Iranian opposition network has produced a compelling 40-minute TV program, complete with English subtitles, that meticulously debunks the disinformation presented in the regime-sponsored documentary (see below for more or [click here](#)).

This week's featured article is written by former US Vice President Mike Pence and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. They write in RealClear Politics: "If America's leaders renew our commitment to maintaining maximum pressure on Tehran while supporting the Iranian resistance, we believe that the day will soon come when the unelected ayatollahs release their iron-fisted grip on Iran and her people."

Human Rights

A life in chains: Human rights abuses against long-time political prisoner Kalbi

Iran HRM (June 6) - Gholamhossein Kalbi, one of Iran's longest-held political prisoners, exemplifies the severe human rights violations faced by supporters of the People's

Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). Born in 1959 in Bandar Mahshahr, Kalbi has endured more than 23 years of continuous imprisonment without a single day of furlough. His harrowing journey through Iran's prison system reflects the harsh realities faced by political prisoners under the Iranian regime. Kalbi's first imprisonment occurred in the early 1980s. From 1981 to 1987, he was detained for six years due to his association with the PMOI. However, his most significant ordeal began on January 8, 2001, when he was arrested again in Dezful. This second arrest marked the start of his prolonged and brutal treatment at the hands of Iranian authorities. [Read more...](#)

Security forces arrest two Kurdish women in relation to the 2022 Iran uprising

NCRI Women (June 6) - Two Kurdish women, Zahra Nabizadeh and Hataf Akrami, have been detained by security forces. Their arrests echo the broader sociopolitical tensions that continue to reverberate within the country in the aftermath of the 2022 Iran uprising. In this report, we delve into the circumstances surrounding the apprehension of these Kurdish women. Zahra Nabizadeh, a detainee from the 2022 nationwide demonstrations in Mahabad, faced another arrest after being summoned and visiting the Intelligence Department of Mahabad. Hataf Akrami, a Kurdish citizen residing in Bukan, was arrested by the security forces. The arrest occurred with intimidation and violence, and she was subsequently transferred to an undisclosed location. [Read more...](#)

Christian convert sentenced to five years in prison

HRANA (June 8) - Esmail Narimanpour, a Christian convert, has been sentenced to five years in prison by the Revolutionary Court of Ahvaz, as reported by Mohabat News. Narimanpour was charged with "acting against national security through association with Zionist-Christian organizations." Narimanpour was initially arrested by security forces in Dezful county on December 24, 2023, and subsequently released on bail from Sheiban Prison, Ahvaz, in April 2024. During his arrest, security personnel conducted an extensive search and seized several of his possessions. [Read more...](#)

Barriers to education, sports, and arts for women and girls in Iran

NCRI Women (June 7) - Despite the absence of explicit legal barriers to women's education, the patriarchal regime in Iran imposes severe restrictions, rooted in its inherent misogyny. The stark reality is that opportunities for education, sports, and the arts are scarce due to the systematic plundering of the nation's wealth, affecting all citizens, but disproportionately impacting girls. The regime's civil law (Article 1401) sets the legal marriage age for girls at just 13, leading to premature school dropouts, domestic responsibilities, and early motherhood. Economic hardships and remote school locations further exacerbate the issue, making girls' education the primary casualty of poverty. The regime's bias against female education manifests in injustices during national exams and university admissions. Even after achieving higher education, women face numerous hurdles, effectively barring them from progressing in their careers. [Read more...](#)

Protests, Economy

Iran names six candidates for president, including Parliament speaker

The New York Times (June 9) - Six candidates, including the speaker of Parliament, have been approved to run in the Iranian election this month to succeed President Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash last month. The vote comes at a moment when the country faces acute domestic and international challenges, state media said on Sunday. The speaker of Parliament, Mohammad Baqer Ghalibaf, and five other men were approved by the Guardian Council, a 12-person body that vets candidates, for the balloting on June 28. ... Ghalibaf, a retired pilot and former commander of the Revolutionary Guards, has run twice unsuccessfully for the country's presidency and is a former mayor of the capital, Tehran. He became speaker of Parliament in 2020 following a legislative election. The other candidates include a former interior minister, Mostafa Pourmohammadi; Saeed Jalili, a former chief nuclear negotiator; and the current Tehran mayor, Alireza Zakani. The country's next president will be confronted with problems at

home and abroad. Deep economic troubles, exacerbated by international sanctions, are fueling discontent among some Iranians who have demanded social and political freedoms as well as prosperity. [Read more...](#)

Nationwide protests erupt in Iran over economic and social grievances

NCRI (June 10) - Iran witnessed a wave of protests today, June 10, as various groups across the country took to the streets to voice their grievances over economic hardships, inadequate pensions, and harsh government policies. In cities including Tabriz, Sanandaj, and Bijar, retirees and pensioners from the Telecommunications Company of Iran (TCI) held protest rallies. The demonstrators demanded higher pensions and better living conditions, chanting slogans such as "Company with high income, what happened to you?" and "Company with high income, where did your income go?" These protests reflect the retirees' frustration with the regime's failure to adjust pensions in line with the rising cost of living. [Read more...](#)

Western Policy, Nuclear Weapons

Listen to Tehran's opponents, and help them secure a truly democratic future

Townhall (op-ed, June 8) - On June 29, expatriate Iranian activists will gather in Berlin from all across Europe to participate in a rally organized by the leading coalition of democratic opposition groups, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI). Similar summertime gatherings, many held outside Paris, have attracted upwards of 100,000 attendees, including high-profile political supporters from Europe, the United States, and across the world. All indications point to the forthcoming event being well-attended, and just as vigorously supported by international dignitaries and the NCRI's many global supporters. The event's timing is uniquely significant this year. The demonstration will be held just one day after the Islamic Republic holds a special "election" to determine who will take the place of Ebrahim Raisi, the country's former president who died in a helicopter crash in mid-May. Whomever assumes the mantle is certain to carry on the brutal domestic repression and violent regional interference that became synonymous with Raisi's tenure during his three years in office. [Read more...](#)

With dysfunctional Iran policy, time to heed Berlin rally's message

Townhall (op-ed, June 10) - ... Western powers must resist the temptation to see this presidential transition as an opportunity to reset relations with the Iranian regime or re-engage in negotiations over the regime's nuclear program. Neither its nuclear ambitions, support for terrorism, nor human rights abuses will undergo a transformation with a mere change of president. Democratic nations must recognize the need for the regime's overthrow and view the electoral boycott as a sign that the Iranian people are ready to resume their pursuit of this goal. Ongoing clashes between regime authorities and Iranian activists, led by the MEK's "Resistance Units," indicate that anti-regime activism has only intensified despite heavy-handed crackdowns. Western powers must pay attention to the election, its boycott, and its aftermath. Most importantly, they should listen to the recommendations of the Iranian people and the organized resistance to better understand the correct policy on Iran. [Read more...](#)

UN Security Council must take action against the Iranian mullahs

Townhall (op-ed, June 10) - Following a shameful display of appeasement to the Iranian regime, it is now time for the UN Security Council (UNSC) to redeem itself by confronting the mullahs over their nuclear program. After the Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi, was killed in a helicopter crash on May 19, the UNSC in New York offered their condolences and held a one-minute moment of silence. Raisi was known as the 'Butcher of Tehran' for his role as an executioner of tens of thousands of political prisoners. Nevertheless, the UN HQ in Geneva disgracefully flew their flag at half-mast in his honor and in an outrageous affront to the Butcher's victims, the UN General Assembly held a memorial service on May 30. [Read more...](#)

Iranian Resistance

[Why is Iran's regime revisiting the "MEK child soldier" allegations?](#)

NCRI (June 10) - In recent months, those who care about developments inside Iran, its uprisings, and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK) have noticed a new narrative emerging on Persian-language social media as well as some major news outlets: child soldiers within the MEK. At first glance, it appears that an independent journalist or an amateur filmmaker has spontaneously decided to investigate and expose this extraordinary subject out of personal care and motivation. However, upon closer examination of the extensive propaganda and exploitation of this narrative inside Iran, it becomes clear that the primary audience and beneficiaries of this coordinated campaign are not in Europe but rather within Iran itself. This campaign initially surfaced in Germany's Die Zeit magazine, followed by a so-called documentary film screening in Sweden, and then an article in Le Monde on Saturday, June 8. The message is very clear: the writer or filmmaker, who has produced their content at the behest of particular beneficiaries, claims that the MEK, the only coherent and unified organization that has fought against the clerical dictatorship for the past 45 years, is worse than the regime itself. [Read more...](#)

[Watch: The truth about "The Children of Camp Ashraf" documentary](#)



[Iran's regime shaken by rebellious youths and Resistance Units after Raisi's death](#)

PMOI (June 7) - As Iran's regime continues to reel from the aftermath of the irreparable blow of the death of the Ebrahim Raisi the Executioner of 1988 massacre, the widespread activities of PMOI Resistance Units in various cities have shaken the foundations of the regime. At the same time, rebellious youth, coinciding with the anniversary of the death of mullahs' regime found Ruhollah Khomeini, burned banners and posters of regime supreme leader Ali Khamenei, Raisi, and former IRGC Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani in the streets and squares of the cities. [Read more...](#)

Featured Article

[Raisi's death foreshadows trouble for Iran's dictatorship](#)

By Mike Pence and Mike Pompeo
RealClear Politics (op-ed)
June 10, 2024

The unexpected death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash should remind the world that no oppressive regime can last forever, as they are intrinsically unstable. Just as the Soviet Union collapsed under the weight of its own sins, so too will this be the ultimate fate of the tyrannical regime in Tehran.

As the leader of the free world, the United States must be prepared when that day inevitably arrives – and that requires supporting the courageous Iranian citizens who continue to resist the regime from within.

Raisi was a mass murderer responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of political prisoners and protestors over the past forty years, and helped the regime spread terrorist violence across the region. His appointment as president in 2021 was widely viewed as a sign of the regime's growing frustration at its inability to quell growing dissent within its own borders.

Despite Raisi's bloody crackdown, the resistance only grew stronger during his time in power. In fact, in recent years the resistance mounted the largest and most sustained anti-establishment demonstrations since 1979. Thousands of teachers, workers, retirees, and students courageously took to the streets across the country, demanding change.

But if there's one thing America and her allies should have learned by now, it is that the Iranian regime is incapable of moderating on its own. Every olive branch extended by Western nations over the past four decades has been snapped in two. Tehran cannot be "nudged" in the right direction by the naïve left running the Biden administration, just as they were undeterred by the same cast of characters in the Obama administration.

On the contrary, only a campaign of maximum pressure can change the future of Iran. We know that maximum pressure works, because we helped implement such a campaign during our time in the Trump-Pence administration. An effective U.S. policy must include imposing crippling sanctions on Iran's leadership, punishing the regime for its support of terrorism abroad, and vigorously enforcing sanctions to shut down Iranian oil exports. At the same time, American policy must acknowledge and find ways to support the Iranian resistance that continues to oppose the regime from within.

Most importantly, President Biden should make it clear that Iran will pay a steep price if it continues to escalate the war in Israel through its terrorist proxies in Gaza, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere. And instead of demanding arbitrary limitations on Israel's military response to Hamas' terrorist attack, the president should fully support Israel's effort to eradicate Hamas in the south and secure her border from Hezbollah in the north.

We know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Iran can be a great nation once again. We know the rich history of Iran, which stretches back to time immemorial, is the story of a people who have made timeless and invaluable contributions to art, music, literature, science, and commerce. We know the vast untapped potential of the Iranian people, who possess the ingenuity, resilience, and spirit necessary to build a prosperous and free society.

If America's leaders renew our commitment to maintaining maximum pressure on Tehran while supporting the Iranian resistance, we believe that the day will soon come when the unelected ayatollahs release their iron-fisted grip on Iran and her people. A new glorious day will dawn, ushering in an era of peace, prosperity, stability, and freedom for the good people of Iran and a bright future for the wider world.

Mike Pence served as the 48th vice president of the United States.

Mike Pompeo served as CIA director and secretary of state in the Trump administration.

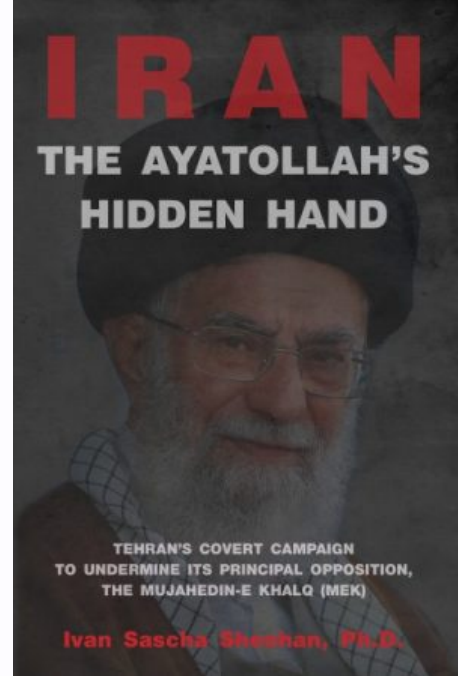
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Suggested Reading

[Iran: The Ayatollah's Hidden Hand](#)

In this informative and well-presented volume, Professor Ivan Sascha Sheehan pulls back the curtain on the regime's propaganda franchise. He reveals the excessive investment of funding, infrastructure, and workforce frantically trying to convince Iranians and the world not to believe their own eyes and ears. After years of trying to ignore the MEK, hoping others would do the same, regime officials now seemingly cannot stop talking about how effectively the MEK's message and organizing efforts are empowering the national uprising. Sheehan's research makes clear that the regime is scared, knowing that there is a blueprint and a competent political organization – run at every level by women – ready to help guide Iran to a legitimate constitutional future when the regime crumbles, just as happened with the Shah.

[Read more here.](#)



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About Iran Weekly Roundup:

This weekly is compiled by the US Representative Office of National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI-US). The NCRI is a broad coalition of democratic Iranian organizations, groups, and personalities founded in 1981 in Tehran. The NCRI is an inclusive and pluralistic parliament-in-exile that has more than 500 members representing a broad spectrum of political tendencies in Iran. The NCRI aims to establish a secular democratic republic in Iran, based on the separation of religion and state. Women comprise more than half of the Council's members. Mrs. Maryam Rajavi is the president-elect of the NCRI.

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