

# Leader: Turnout in runoff 'backbone' of Islamic Republic

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei underscored the turnout of Iranians in the presidential runoff election on Friday as the "backbone" of the Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with scholars from Shahid Mottahari University in the capital Tehran on Wednesday as Iranian people, in their millions, are scheduled to cast their ballots for the second round of the presidential election on July 5, Press TV reported.

Describing the participation of people as the "backbone and source of pride for the Islamic Establishment," the Leader said, "The better, clearer and more evident the participation, the more capable the system will be to achieve its domestic goals and to pursue the goals in the strategic development of the country, which is a

big opportunity."

"This election is very important and anyone who loves Islam, the Islamic Republic, the progress of the country, the improvement of the situation and [favors] bridging the gaps should show this interest by participating in the election on Friday," the Leader said.

Ayatollah Khamenei described the turnout in the first round of the election as less than expected and contrary to predictions, stressing that the reasons are being investigated by politicians and sociologists.

Campaigning for the runoff vote officially began on Saturday, shortly after the results of the June 28 election were approved and announced by the Interior Ministry.

Masoud Pezeshkian and Saeed Jalili received the highest number of votes but no candidate managed to secure the absolute ma-



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei speaks during a meeting with a group of scholars from Shahid Mottahari University in the capital Tehran on July 3, 2024.  
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majority, paving the way for the runoff election. Pezeshkian is a former health minister and senior

lawmaker from the northwestern city of Tabriz. Jalili is the former lead nuclear negotiator and head of

the top security body. More than 24 million people cast their votes in Friday's election to replace

the late president Ebrahim Raisi, who lost his life in a helicopter crash on May 19.

## UNSC should avoid double standards in fight against terrorism: *Iran*



### International Desk

Iran's deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs has underscored the United Nations' leading role in the fight against terrorism, calling on the UN Security Council to avoid double standards in this regard.

Addressing the 63rd Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) on Preventing and Countering Terrorism on Wednesday, Reza Najafi said that the UN should take appropriate steps in the fight against terrorism.

The Iranian official referred to the unilateral approaches adopted by some countries, including the United States, saying that such approaches have endangered the international peace and security.

He also said that a recent move taken by Canada to list Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps as a "terrorist" organization violates Iran's national sovereignty. Najafi underlined that Iran will decisively respond to the Canada's violation of its national security.

Najafi said terrorist groups act as the tools of some trans-regional actors to achieve their goals. He also pointed to the regional cooperation on the fight against terrorism, calling for the governments not to use their soil as a safe haven for terrorists.

He said that the dispatch of terrorists to the Middle East region is a threat to the peace, stability and security of all countries in the region. The Iranian official also warned about the relocation of terrorists in the region following the defeat of Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Najafi also described the designation of resistance groups in the Middle East region, including in the occupied Palestine, as "terrorists" by the Western governments as one of their destructive moves in the region.

"In fact, the repression of people under occupation (Palestinians) should be considered as a terrorist act, and so the Zionist regime is a clear example of a terrorist regime."

Iran's capital, Tehran, is hosting the two-day meeting of AALCO on Preventing and Countering Terrorism. AALCO, originally known as the Asian Legal Consultative Committee (ALCC), is an inter-governmental organization that was founded on 15 November 1956 with seven Asian states as its first members.

AALCO has presently 48 members comprising of the major states from Asia and Africa. Two-thirds of the world's population lives in AALCO member states.

Back in 2014, Iran held an AALCO meeting where such topics as maritime laws, rights of refugees and migrants, economic sanctions, latest developments in Palestine, as well as international trade laws and sustainable development were discussed.

## Economy sparks blazing row in final runoff debate

### National Desk

Three days before presidential runoff election on Friday, two candidates running for Iran's presidency, took part in the second and last televised debate to present their plans.

The Reformist Masoud Pezeshkian and Conservative Saeed Jalili discussed the country's economy, sanctions, and the 2015 nuclear deal on Tuesday night after the first debate, revolving basically around foreign policy, was held on Monday.

Campaigning for the runoff vote officially began on Saturday, shortly after the results of the June 28 election were approved and announced by the Interior Ministry.

Pezeshkian and Jalili received the highest number of votes but no candidate managed to secure the absolute majority, paving the way for the runoff election.

Pezeshkian, a cardiac surgeon, said that sanctions imposed by the West have badly hurt Iran's economy. He cited a 40 percent inflation over the past four years and the increasing poverty rates.

"We live in a society in which many are begging on the streets," he said, adding that his administration would "immediately" work to try to get sanctions lifted and vowed to "repair" the economy.

### Nuclear deal

Pezeshkian said he would find a solution to revive the nuclear deal by dis-



Saeed Jalili (r) and Masoud Pezeshkian, the two candidates running for presidency, take part in a televised election debate at the Iranian national TV in Tehran, Iran on July 2, 2024.  
● MORTEZA FAKHRINEJAD/IRIB

cussing the plan with the country's parliament and finding possible alternatives.

"No government in history has been able to flourish inside a cage," he said, referring to the impact of sanctions on Iran's economy.

However, he underlined that he will implement Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions, a law that was approved by the Iranian Parliament in December 2020.

Jalili, who strongly opposed the deal, said the US must honor its commitments on par "with the commitments we fulfilled." He condemned his opponent for not having any plans for getting sanctions lifted and said he would resume talks about a nuclear deal.

"You do not offer any solution for sanctions. Your only solution is to give more concessions, Jalili said.

Both candidates pledged to revive the economy, provide energy subsidies to poor people and facilitate importing cars while supporting the domestic auto industry.

Jalili said production volume is one of the most important issues related to cars. One of the ways

to increase production volume of cars is through imports.

Pezeshkian said there are many people who have dollars and if you allow, they will import cars into the country. Why don't we allow it?

"If you open up competition and allow cars to be imported, the market will regulate itself," he said.

### Inflation

Jalili pointed to the high inflation rate in the country and said that the issue of inflation must be resolved, without blaming individuals.

"I have repeatedly said that the cause of inflation is the government that takes money out of people's pockets," Pezeshkian said.

"Amid sanctions, prices inevitably rise, and we cannot make purchases, leaving the government to dip into people's pockets," he added.

The candidates also discussed subsidy, stock market and oil export.

## Iran sanctions US officials over suppressing pro-Palestine protests



The Iranian Foreign Ministry imposed sanctions on nearly a dozen US authorities for their role in suppressing pro-Palestinian protests that erupted at university campuses across the United States in condemnation of Israel's bloody onslaught against the Gaza Strip.

The ministry announced in a statement on Wednesday that the punitive measures were taken in accordance with the Law on "Countering the Violation of Human Rights and Adventurous and Terrorist Activities of the United States in the Region", (2017) particularly Article 5, which blacklists the following American individuals for their involvement in violation of human rights by quashing the peaceful rallies.

The statement further noted that the individuals will be subject to sanctions, pursuant to Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Sixth Section of the Law.

Accordingly, their accounts and transactions will be blocked in the Iranian financial and banking systems, and their assets will be frozen within the jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran. No visa granting their entry to the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be issued as well.

"All relevant national organizations and institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran will take necessary measures for the effective implementation of the sanctions, in accordance with the regulations adopted by the related authorities," the Iranian Foreign Ministry pointed out. Pro-Palestine student protests initially broke out at the campus of the University of California, Los Angeles in mid-April, with demonstrators calling for the end of the Gaza war and divestment with Israel.

Despite harsh crackdowns, including mass suspensions, evictions from university housing, and arrests, protests sprung up across the US with footage emerging of students, professors, and journalists being violently detained by the police on campuses. A new wave of demonstrations - marked by protesters setting up encampments on their campuses - also gripped the US while protests spread to other universities across the globe.