

IRAN

Date of Elections: June 20, 1975

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the popularly chosen members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Iran comprises the National Consultative Assembly (*Majlis*) and the Senate.

The *Majlis* is composed of 268 members. The Senate consists of 30 elected members (15 from the capital, Teheran, and 15 from the provinces) and 30 members (15 from Teheran and 15 from the provinces) appointed by the Shah (King). Both deputies and Senators serve for 4 years.

Electoral System

Requisites for electors:

Majlis: Iranian citizens, of either sex, at least 18 years of age who are residents of, or have lived for at least 6 months in, their constituency are entitled to vote. Barred from voting, however, are insane persons and those legally under custody, those officially converted from Islam, fraudulent bankrupts, beggars and those who earn their living through indecent occupations, criminals and persons convicted of offences punishable under Islamic law, persons who have been convicted of political crimes against the Government and the independence of the State, and members of the armed forces.

Senate: Iranian citizens, of either sex, at least 25 years of age who have been residents of their constituency for at least 6 months are entitled to vote. Persons legally placed under the care of an executor or an administrator and those sentenced for crimes and/or misdemeanours or deprivation of civil rights who have not been legally rehabilitated are barred from voting, as are members of the armed forces and police.

Electoral registers are revised before each election. Voting for either Chamber is not compulsory.

Requisites for candidates:

Majlis: All Iranian citizens, of either sex, between the ages of 30 and 70 who are of Muslim religion (except those deputies representing religious

minorities), who are able to read and write Persian, and who have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness and are well known in their constituency may be candidates for the *Majlis*. The following persons cannot however be elected: members of the Shah's immediate family; members of the armed and police forces; governors-general, governors and their deputies, court presidents, public prosecutors, attorneys-general and tax officials, all within the area of their jurisdiction; fraudulent bankrupts; criminals and other convicts liable to punishment according to Islamic law; public sinners, heretics and those converted from Islam by religious court; and persons convicted of political crimes against the Government and the independence of the State. Also ineligible are heads of government departments within the area of their jurisdiction, as well as Ministers and their deputies, while other Government officials are eligible if they resign from their posts after their election and for the period they serve as deputies.

Senate: Candidates of either sex must be Iranian citizens not less than 40 years of age; they must furthermore be Muslims (except those Senators representing religious minorities) who are either natives of the constituency in which standing for election or well known to its residents and who have a reputation for honesty, trustworthiness and a high degree of familiarity with the affairs of the State.

Person having the above qualifications should, in addition, belong to one of the following categories: religious leaders who have been elected to the *Majlis* at least three times; persons who have acquired the rank of Minister, ambassador, governor-general, chief justice, attorney-general or section-chief of the State court and/or those who have at least 20 years of judicial service; retired high-ranking military officers; persons who have acquired the rank of professor with at least 10 years of service; persons who have had at least 20 years of civil service and have acquired the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary or an acting and/or under-secretary in a Ministry; landlords and merchants who pay taxes of at least 500,000 *rials* annually; and eminent lawyers who have served for 15 years as attorneys-at-law and who have a doctorate in law or at least 20 years of judicial or legal service.

Government officials within the area of their jurisdiction, persons sentenced for crimes or misdemeanours or deprivation of social rights even though they have been rehabilitated, and persons placed under guardianship are barred from being elected as Senators.

Except for the disqualification pertaining to Government officials within the area of their official jurisdiction, the above regulations are in turn applicable to Senators appointed by the Shah.

Deputies and Senators are elected by simple majority vote. A by-election is held to fill a parliamentary seat which becomes vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The general elections were the first to be held in Iran since the Shah proclaimed a one-party State in March 1975. The new, sole Iran National Resurgence (*Rastakhiz*) party replaced the multi-party system under which existed pre-eminently the governing New Iran (*Iran Novin*) party and the opposition People's (*Mardom*) party, the latter of which held 37 seats in the outgoing *Majlis*.

Some 80 % of the approximately 750 candidates for Parliament were standing for election for the first time. A significant number of women were elected.

Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveida, former leader of *Iran Novin* and head of *Rastakhiz*, headed the Government after the elections.