

Rouhani forges clear lead Iran presidential race, expected to win

DUBAI, President Hassan Rouhani has taken an unbeatable lead in Iran's presidential election, an Iranian official source told Reuters on Saturday, citing an early unofficial tally, and is set to hand an emphatic defeat to his hardline rival Ebrahim Raisi.

In a briefing for reporters, interior ministry official Ali Asghar Ahmadi outlined a similar proportion of votes, which if confirmed would give the pragmatist cleric a second term in which to pursue Iran's re-engagement with the world. One Rouhani supporter warmly welcomed the news, but said she expected him to provide greater social and economic freedoms, pledges he made when first elected in a landslide in 2013 by Iranians weary of economic decline and clampdowns on dissent.

"I am very happy for Rouhani's win. We won. We did not yield to pressure. We showed them that we still exist," said 37-year-old Mahnaz, a reformist.

"I want Rouhani to carry out his promises." Rouhani won 21.6 million votes in Friday's hard-fought contest, compared to 14 million for Raisi, with 37 million

votes counted, the source said, adding about four million more votes were still to be tallied.

Ahmadi, the interior ministry official, said that with 25 million ballots certified by the authorities so far, Rouhani had won 14.619 million and Raisi gained 10.125 million.

He said 40 million votes had been cast, indicating a turnout of about 70 percent, roughly similar to the showing in 2013. Ahmadi said final results would be announced later on Saturday.

The big turnout appeared to have favoured Rouhani, whose backers' main concern had been apathy among reformist-leaning voters disappointed with the slow pace of change.

"The wide mobilisation of the hardline groups and the real prospect of Raisi winning scared many people into coming out to vote," said Nasser, a 52-year-old journalist. "We had a bet among friends, and I said Raisi would win and I think that encouraged a few of my friends who might not have voted to come out and vote."

Analysts expressed caution about how much Rouhani would be able to do to bring

about broader reforms, despite his apparently decisive win, given the influence of security hardliners in Iran's hybrid clerical-republican system.

"The last two decades of presidential elections have been short days of euphoria followed by long years of disillusionment," said Karim Sadjadpour, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment who focuses on Iran.

"Democracy in Iran is allowed to bloom only a few days every four years, while autocracy is evergreen."

Rouhani, 68, who took office promising to open Iran to the world and give its citizens more freedom at home, faced an unexpectedly strong challenge from Raisi, a protégé of supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

The election is important "for Iran's future role in the region and the world", Rouhani, who struck a deal with world powers two years ago to curb Iran's nuclear programme in return for the lifting of most economic sanctions, said after voting.

Raisi, 56, had accused Rouhani of mismanaging the economy and has travelled to poor areas, speaking at ral-

lies pledging more welfare benefits and jobs.

He is believed to have had the backing of the powerful Revolutionary Guards security force, as well as the tacit support of Khamenei, whose powers outrank those of the elected president but who normally steers clear of day-to-day politics.

"I respect the outcome of the vote of the people and the result will be respected by me and all the people," Raisi said after voting, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

However, Raisi later appeared at the Ministry of Interior in Tehran on Friday and complained of a shortage of ballot sheets at many polling stations, according to Fars. More ballot sheets were subsequently sent out, the agency reported.

The Guards and other hardliners had hoped that a win for Raisi would have given them an opportunity to safeguard economic and political power they see as jeopardised by the lifting of sanctions and opening of the country to foreign investment. During weeks of campaigning, the two main candidates exchanged accu-

sations of corruption and brutality in unprecedentedly hostile television debates. Both sides the other's accusations.

Rouhani had urged the Guards not to meddle in the vote, a warning that reflects the political tension. Suspicions that the Guards and a militia under their control skewed voting results in favour of hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad led to eight months of nationwide protests in 2009, which were violently suppressed.

For ordinary Iranians, the election presented a stark choice between competing visions of the country.

Rouhani, known for decades as a mild-mannered establishment insider rather than a gung-ho reformer, had adopted the mantle of the reform camp in recent weeks, with fiery campaign speeches that attacked the human rights records of his opponents.

"I voted for Rouhani to prevent Raisi's victory. I don't want a hardliner to be my president," said Ziba Ghomeysi in Tehran. "I waited in the line for five hours to cast my vote."

Many pro-reform voters are still lukewarm Rouhani

supporters, disappointed with his failure to make broader changes during his first term. But they were anxious to keep out Raisi, who they see as representing the security state at its most fearsome: in the 1980s he was one of four judges who sentenced thousands of political prisoners to death.

For conservatives, the election represented a chance to restore the values of the 1979 revolution, which requires elected officials to be subordinate to the Shi'ite Muslim clergy and supreme leader.

Despite the removal of nuclear-related sanctions in 2016, lingering unilateral U.S. sanctions that target Iran's record on human rights and terrorism have kept foreign companies wary of investing, limiting the economic benefits so far.

Raisi focused his campaign on the economy, visiting rural areas and villages and promising housing, jobs and more welfare benefits, a message which could have resonated with millions of poor voters angry at the Tehran elite.

North Korea says U.S. has to roll back 'hostile policy' before talks



North Korea's deputy U.N. envoy said on Friday the United States needed to roll back its "hostile policy" toward the country before there could be talks as Washington raised concern that Pyongyang could be producing a chemical used in a nerve agent.

"As everybody knows, the Americans have gestured (toward) dialogue," North Korea's deputy U.N. ambassador, Kim In Ryong, told reporters on Friday. "But what is important is not words, but actions."

"The rolling back of the hostile policy towards DPRK is the prerequisite for solving all the problems in the Korean Peninsula," he said. "Therefore, the urgent issue to be settled on Korean Peninsula is to put a definite end to the U.S. hostile policy towards DPRK, the root cause of all problems."

North Korea, also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), has vowed to develop a missile mounted with a nuclear warhead that can strike the mainland United States, saying the programme is necessary to counter U.S. aggression.

U.S. President Donald Trump warned in an interview with Reuters in late April that a "major, major conflict" with North Korea was possible, but said he would prefer a diplomatic outcome to the dispute over its nuclear and missile programs.

Trump later said he would be "honored" to meet the North's leader, Kim Jong Un, under the right conditions. A U.S. State Department spokesman said the country would have to "cease all its illegal activities and aggressive behaviour in the region."

The U.N. Security Council

first imposed sanctions on North Korea in 2006 and has strengthened the measures in response to the country's five nuclear tests and two long-range rocket launches. Pyongyang is threatening a sixth nuclear test.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley raised concern on Friday about an application by North Korea to patent a process to produce sodium cyanide, which can be used to make the nerve agent Tabun and is also used in the extraction of gold.

"The thought of placing cyanide in the hands of the North Koreans, considering their record on human rights, political prisoners, and assassinations is not only dangerous but defies common sense," Haley said in a statement.

North Korea submitted the patent application to a U.N. agency, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), for processing. The agency does not grant patents. U.N. sanctions monitors said they are investigating the case for any violations. Under U.N. sanctions, states are banned from supplying North Korea with sodium cyanide and Pyongyang has to abandon all chemical and biological weapons and programs.

WIPO said in a statement that it has strict procedures to ensure full compliance with U.N. sanctions regimes. It noted that "patent applications are not covered by the provisions of U.N. Security Council Resolutions."

Haley said: "We urge all U.N. agencies to be transparent and apply the utmost scrutiny when dealing with these types of requests from North Korea and other rogue nations."

At a White House in crisis, Trump looks increasingly isolated

WASHINGTON, President Donald Trump's fellow Republicans in Congress are showing signs of going their own way, both on politics and policy, determined to salvage what they can of their agenda on healthcare and tax reform in the wake of one of the most difficult weeks of any American presidency. At the same time, Trump's failure to fill senior roles at federal agencies means he does not have a cadre of loyalists who can help rein in a bureaucracy that many in Trump's orbit believe are out to leak information intended to damage the president. That has worsened the isolation of the White House in a city that relies on friends and allies to shake off a crisis.

The result is problems on multiple fronts: a government whose bonds with Congress, federal agencies and the public look increasingly fractured; an ambitious but stalled programme of reforms; and a president whose low approval ratings threaten his party's control of Congress in the 2018 midterm elections.

Trump and his beleaguered staff, some White House aides told Reuters, feel besieged by a parade of negative stories and abandoned by fellow Republicans on Capitol Hill, as the furor over the firing of FBI Director James Comey and allegations that Trump tried to influence the probe into Russian meddling in last year's election show little sign of abating.

Since Tuesday, when leaked excerpts of a purported memo by Comey detailing his conversations with Trump were made public, few Republicans beyond the White House have rushed to the airwaves to push back against suggestions that the president may have obstructed justice in asking Comey to end the probe into the conduct of former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn.

As the Russia probe entered a new phase on Wednesday with the appointment of former FBI Director Robert Mueller as special counsel in the investigation, a move that will likely place the White House under even stronger scrutiny, some Re-

publicans expressed surprise that the White House had not done more to recruit them to backstop the president.

"It's kind of funny. The answer is no," said Senator James Inhofe, a Republican from Oklahoma, when asked by Reuters whether the White House had reached out to him to come to Trump's defence. "I don't know anyone else that has been contacted."

The White House did not respond to a request for comment on this story. Trump left on Friday for his first foreign trip as president. The 10-day trip will take him to Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Europe.

The administration has continued to struggle to fill the hundreds of open positions at senior levels of government that remain open, leaving the White House alone to grapple with one challenge after another.

For example, the Justice Department still lacks senior officials in place to head up the anti-trust, civil rights, criminal, and civil divisions, as well as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, according to its website.

At the Department of Homeland Security, the chiefs of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Transportation Security Administration, have yet to be confirmed.

And at the Department of Education, a sprawling bureaucracy of 4,400 employees with a \$68 billion budget, "all the key roles except for the secretary remain empty or filled with people in an acting capacity," said a Department of Education official.

"Nobody knows when or if they will be filled anytime soon," said the official, who declined to be identified by name. The department did not respond to a request for comment. Trump has frequently complained that Senate Democrats have stalled the approval process for his nominees. But the White House has also been slower to send nominees to the Senate than previous administrations.

New Russia probe leaks threaten to derail Trump's foreign trip



WASHINGTON, U.S. President Donald Trump was hit on Friday by embarrassing leaks that a senior adviser was a "person of interest" in a probe of possible collusion with Russia during last year's election campaign and that Trump had boasted to Russian officials of firing the man heading the investigation.

The reports, emerging just as Trump jetted off to Saudi Arabia on his first foreign trip as president, were likely to extend the turmoil engulfing his administration since the May 9 firing of former FBI Director James Comey. The Washington Post, citing sources familiar with the matter, did not identify the senior Trump adviser except to say that the person of interest was close to Trump, a Republican who entered the White House four months ago. U.S. law enforcement uses the term "a person of interest" to mean someone who is part of a criminal investigation but not arrested or formally accused of a crime. The person may be cooperating or have information of use to investigators. Separately the New York Times reported that Trump boasted to Russian officials at a White House meeting last week that firing Comey relieved "great pressure" the president faced from a law-enforcement probe into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

"I just fired the head of the FBI. He was crazy, a real nut job," Trump said, according to the Times, which cited a document summarizing the meeting and read to it by an unnamed U.S. official.

"I faced great pressure because of Russia. That's taken off."

Trump met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Russia's ambassador to Washington in the Oval Office the day after Trump fired Comey, who was in charge of the Russia election probe.

The Times said the document was based on notes taken from inside the Oval Office. Reuters was not immediately able to verify the accuracy of that account.

Comey, who has not spoken publicly in the 10 days since he was fired, will testify in an open session of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, which is investigating possible Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

Committee leaders said on Friday he would appear sometime after the U.S. Memorial Day holiday on May 29.

"I am hopeful that he will clarify for the American people recent events that have been broadly reported in the media," the committee chairman, Republican Richard Burr, said in a statement announcing the appearance.

Public approval of Trump has dropped to its lowest level since his inauguration, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Friday. The May 14-18 opinion poll found that 38 percent of adults approved of Trump while 56 percent disapproved. The remaining 6 percent had "mixed feelings."

U.S. stocks immediately pared gains after the reports but still closed higher for a second straight day. Earlier this week, investors dumped

stocks in response to reports that Trump in February had asked Comey to stop investigating his former national security adviser, prompting accusations the president may have tried to hamper the probe.

"As the president has stated before - a thorough investigation will confirm that there was no collusion between the campaign and any foreign entity," White House spokesman Sean Spicer said in a statement in response to the Post report.

After days of political tumult in Washington, the Justice Department announced the appointment on Thursday of a special counsel to look into Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible collusion by the Trump campaign. The Times report added to the impression given by Trump himself in a television interview last week in which he said the Russia issue was a factor in firing Comey. The White House has given different versions of the reasons for the dismissal. Asked about the Times report, Spicer said of the former FBI chief, "by grandstanding and politicizing the investigation into Russia's actions, James Comey created unnecessary pressure on our ability to engage and negotiate with Russia."

"The investigation would have always continued, and obviously, the termination of Comey would not have ended it," Spicer said, adding that the real story was the leaks of "private and highly classified conversa-

tions." Democrats, who have compared the widening scandal to the Watergate break-in and cover-up that brought down Republican former President Richard Nixon in 1974, were quick to pounce on the latest reports.

Democratic Senator Edward Markey called them "seismic revelations" and questioned whether the United States might be heading into a constitutional crisis.

"This is an inflection point in the entire Russia collusion investigation," he told MSNBC. "It makes it very clear that what Donald Trump was trying to do was to end the Russian investigation."

"This is what OBSTRUCTION looks like: 'I faced great pressure because of Russia. That's taken off,'" Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy said on Twitter.

Republican Representative Scott Taylor told CNN there was "no question" that Trump had "some stumbles this week." But he added: "I haven't lost my confidence in the president to be our president, I just haven't."

Before the latest reports, the White House had hoped to shift attention away from the political firestorm in Washington to foreign policy as well as the president's ambitious pro-business economic agenda in Congress.

Trump's trip, which also includes stops in Israel, Italy and Belgium next week, has been billed by the administration as a chance to visit places sacred to three of the world's major religions while giving him time to meet with Arab.

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NOTICE
Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on **Tuesday, the 30th May, 2017** to consider inter alia the Audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and year ended 31st March, 2017. The above Notice is available on the website of the Company www.supertex.in and on the BSE website www.bseindia.com.
For Supertex Industries Ltd.
Vaishali Naik
Company Secretary
20th May, 2017

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EXTRACTS OF THE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2017

Sl. No.	Particulars	(Rs. In Lacs)		
		Quarter Ended 31.03.2017	Year Ended 31.03.2017	Corresponding Quarter Ended 31.03.2016
1	Total Income from Operations (net)	264.90	949.32	268.38
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	-138.21	81.25	16.62
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	-138.21	81.25	16.62
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	-116.03	65.44	23.83
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	-116.03	65.44	23.83
6	Equity Share Capital (Face Value Re.1/- Each)	3,199.38	3,199.38	3,199.38
7	Reserve (excluding revaluation reserve as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year)	-	6,253.11	-
8	Earning per Share (Basic and diluted) before and after extraordinary items	-	0.02	0.01*

Note: The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange Website : (www.bseindia.com) and on the Company's Website : (www.comfortintech.com)

For and on Behalf of the Board of Directors of Comfort Intech Limited
Sd/-
Anil Agrawal
Director
Place : Mumbai
Date : 20th May, 2017

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