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Tension in Iran after election

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15th June, 2009

THE ARTICLE

There is political uncertainty in Iran following the elections on June the 12th. Thousands of people have clashed with security forces in the capital Teheran. Police arrested up to 100 members of Iran's opposition party. The rioters and those arrested claim the election was rigged. Opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi has cast doubts on the fairness of the presidential poll. Mr. Mousavi called the election results a "dangerous charade". He called on his followers to resist a government he said was based on "lies and dictatorship". One of those arrested is Mohammad Reza Khatami, the brother of former president Mohammad Khatami. The street clashes are the largest seen in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is carrying on business as usual. He called the elections free and healthy. Official results show he was the winner with over 60 per cent of the vote. Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke to the nation live on television after his victory. He called on all Iranians to work hard to strengthen their country. The country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the nation to respect the election results. He warned his people the state would deal with any opposition. There were mixed reactions to Ahmadinejad's victory from around the world. The leaders of Venezuela and Pakistan were among those to send their congratulations. Reports from the White House suggest President Obama still wants dialogue with Ahmadinejad.

WARM-UPS

1. IRAN: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Iran. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

uncertainty / elections / security forces / opposition parties / doubts / lies / clashes / business as usual / official results / victories / leaders / mixed reactions / dialogue

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. ELECTIONS: What do you care about? Complete this table with your partner(s). Talk about what you wrote to your partner. Change partners and share what you heard.

| Issue | How's your government doing? | What do you want to change? |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Jobs | | |
| Education | | |
| Crime | | |
| Environment | | |
| Health | | |
| Economy | | |

4. RIGGED: Students A **strongly** believe all elections need to be monitored by a UN body; Students B **strongly** believe no country should interfere in another country's election. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. TENSIONS: Does your country have a history of political tension? Talk about these phrases with your partner(s).

- political uncertainty
- clashes with security forces
- opposition supporters arrested
- rioters in the streets
- lies and dictatorship
- revolution
- doubts on the fairness of elections
- dealing with opposition

6. RIOT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'riot'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. There have been fights between people and the police in Iran. | T / F |
| b. Police arrested 100 supporters of the ruling party in Iran. | T / F |
| c. The main opposition leader asked his followers to accept the results. | T / F |
| d. The last time there were big street clashes in Iran was 30 years ago. | T / F |
| e. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won't work until everyone knows the results. | T / F |
| f. Mr. Ahmadinejad won the election by a tiny margin. | T / F |
| g. Not all world leaders were happy that Mr. Ahmadinejad won. | T / F |
| h. President Obama wants to continue talks with Ahmadinejad. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. uncertainty | a. argue |
| 2. clashed | b. good wishes |
| 3. claim | c. continuing |
| 4. doubts | d. doubt |
| 5. resist | e. suspicion |
| 6. carrying on | f. responses |
| 7. called on | g. fought |
| 8. reactions | h. talks |
| 9. congratulations | i. oppose |
| 10. dialogue | j. asked |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. There is political uncertainty in Iran | a. of Iran's opposition |
| 2. people have clashed | b. Iranians to work hard |
| 3. Police arrested up to 100 members | c. with Ahmadinejad |
| 4. cast doubts on the fairness of | d. with security forces |
| 5. The street clashes are the largest | e. 60 per cent of the vote |
| 6. Ahmadinejad is carrying on | f. seen in Iran |
| 7. he was the winner with over | g. following the elections |
| 8. He called on all | h. to Ahmadinejad's victory |
| 9. There were mixed reactions | i. the presidential poll |
| 10. Obama still wants dialogue | j. business as usual |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

There is _____ uncertainty in Iran following the elections on June the 12th. Thousands of people have _____ with security forces in the capital Teheran. Police arrested up to 100 _____ of Iran's opposition party. The rioters and those arrested claim the election was _____. Opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi has cast doubts on the _____ of the presidential poll. Mr. Mousavi called the election results a "dangerous charade". He called on his followers to resist a government he said was _____ on "lies and dictatorship". One of those arrested is Mohammad Reza Khatami, the brother of _____ president Mohammad Khatami. The street clashes are the _____ seen in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

based
largest
members
rigged
political
former
fairness
clashed

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is _____ on business as usual. He called the elections free and _____. Official results show he was the winner with over 60 per cent of the vote. Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke to the nation _____ on television after his victory. He called on all Iranians to work hard to _____ their country. The country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the nation to _____ the election results. He warned his people the state would _____ with any opposition. There were mixed _____ to Ahmadinejad's victory from around the world. The leaders of Venezuela and Pakistan were among those to send their congratulations. Reports from the White House suggest President Obama still wants _____ with Ahmadinejad.

strengthen
live
dialogue
carrying
deal
healthy
reactions
respect

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the gaps.

There is political uncertainty in Iran following _____ June the 12th. Thousands of people _____ security forces in the capital Teheran. Police arrested up to 100 members of Iran's opposition party. The rioters _____ claim the election was rigged. Opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi has cast doubts on the fairness of the presidential poll. Mr. Mousavi called the election results a "dangerous charade". He called on his _____ a government he said was based on "lies and dictatorship". One of those arrested is Mohammad Reza Khatami, the _____ president Mohammad Khatami. The street clashes are _____ Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is carrying on _____. He called the elections free and healthy. Official results show he was the winner with over 60 per cent of the vote. Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke _____ on television after his victory. He called on all Iranians to work _____ their country. The country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the nation to respect the election results. He warned his people the state _____ any opposition. There were mixed reactions to Ahmadinejad's victory from around the world. The leaders of Venezuela and Pakistan were _____ send their congratulations. Reports from the White House suggest President Obama _____ with Ahmadinejad.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'security' and 'force'.

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| security | force |
|-----------------|--------------|

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• following• forces• claim• dangerous• arrested• since | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• usual• winner• strengthen• warned• mixed• dialogue |
|---|---|

STUDENT ELECTIONS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about elections in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

| | STUDENT 1 _____ | STUDENT 2 _____ | STUDENT 3 _____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. | | | |
| Q.2. | | | |
| Q.3. | | | |
| Q.4. | | | |
| Q.5. | | | |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

IRAN ELECTION DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'election'?
- c) Are you concerned about what is happening in Iran?
- d) What do you think of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?
- e) What three adjectives would you use to describe Iran?
- f) Do you understand people who clash with police in the streets?
- g) What do you think of the arrest of 100 members of Iran's opposition?
- h) Do you believe the Iranian election was free and fair?
- i) Do you think Ahmadinejad's government is "based on lies and dictatorship"?
- j) Are you surprised at what has happened in Iran?

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IRAN ELECTION DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Is it right that Ahmadinejad is carrying on business as usual?
- c) Don't you think people should accept the election results?
- d) What pictures have you seen of the tensions in Iran on television?
- e) How should Iran's government deal with the street protestors?
- f) Why are there always mixed world reactions about Iranian politics?
- g) Do you think all world leaders should congratulate Ahmadinejad?
- h) What will happen in Iran over the coming days?
- i) What do you think Barack Obama and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad would talk about?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?

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LANGUAGE

There is (1) ____ uncertainty in Iran following the elections on June the 12th. Thousands of people have clashed with security forces in the capital Teheran. Police arrested (2) ____ to 100 members of Iran's opposition party. The rioters and those arrested claim the election was rigged. Opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi has (3) ____ doubts on the fairness of the presidential poll. Mr. Mousavi called the election results a "dangerous charade". He called (4) ____ his followers to resist a government he said was based on "lies and dictatorship". One of those arrested is Mohammad Reza Khatami, the brother of (5) ____ president Mohammad Khatami. The street clashes are the largest (6) ____ in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is carrying on business as (7) _____. He called the elections free and healthy. Official results show he was the winner with over 60 per cent of the vote. Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke to the nation (8) _____ on television after his victory. He called on all Iranians to work hard to (9) _____ their country. The country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the nation to respect the election results. He warned his people the state would (10) _____ with any opposition. There were mixed reactions to Ahmadinejad's victory from around the world. The leaders of Venezuela and Pakistan were among (11) _____ to send their congratulations. Reports from the White House (12) _____ President Obama still wants dialogue with Ahmadinejad.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) political | (b) politics | (c) politician | (d) politically |
| 2. | (a) in | (b) out | (c) up | (d) on |
| 3. | (a) cost | (b) cast | (c) coast | (d) casts |
| 4. | (a) so | (b) from | (c) for | (d) on |
| 5. | (a) farmer | (b) firmer | (c) former | (d) framer |
| 6. | (a) seen | (b) saw | (c) seeing | (d) sees |
| 7. | (a) unusual | (b) usually | (c) unusually | (d) usual |
| 8. | (a) life | (b) live | (c) alive | (d) living |
| 9. | (a) strong | (b) strength | (c) strengthen | (d) stronger |
| 10. | (a) deal | (b) dealt | (c) deals | (d) dealing |
| 11. | (a) they | (b) those | (c) them | (d) these |
| 12. | (a) suggestion | (b) suggestive | (c) suggests | (d) suggest |

WRITING:

Write about **Iran** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about Iran. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. ELECTION ISSUES: Make a poster about the election issues in your country. Highlight your policies. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. TENSIONS: Write a magazine article about the tensions in Iran. Include imaginary interviews with a supporter of Ahmadinejad and an opposition supporter.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Ask him three questions about his country. Give him three suggestions on how he should deal with other countries. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. T c. F d. T e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. uncertainty | a. doubt |
| 2. clashed | b. fought |
| 3. claim | c. argue |
| 4. doubts | d. suspicion |
| 5. resist | e. oppose |
| 6. carrying on | f. continuing |
| 7. called on | g. asked |
| 8. reactions | h. responses |
| 9. congratulations | i. good wishes |
| 10. dialogue | j. talks |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. There is political uncertainty in Iran | a. following the elections |
| 2. people have clashed | b. with security forces |
| 3. Police arrested up to 100 members | c. of Iran's opposition |
| 4. cast doubts on the fairness of | d. the presidential poll |
| 5. The street clashes are the largest | e. seen in Iran |
| 6. Ahmadinejad is carrying on | f. business as usual |
| 7. he was the winner with over | g. 60 per cent of the vote |
| 8. He called on all | h. Iranians to work hard |
| 9. There were mixed reactions | i. to Ahmadinejad's victory |
| 10. Obama still wants dialogue | j. with Ahmadinejad |

GAP FILL:

Tension in Iran after election

There is **political** uncertainty in Iran following the elections on June the 12th. Thousands of people have **clashed** with security forces in the capital Teheran. Police arrested up to 100 **members** of Iran's opposition party. The rioters and those arrested claim the election was **rigged**. Opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi has cast doubts on the **fairness** of the presidential poll. Mr. Mousavi called the election results a "dangerous charade". He called on his followers to resist a government he said was **based** on "lies and dictatorship". One of those arrested is Mohammad Reza Khatami, the brother of **former** president Mohammad Khatami. The street clashes are the **largest** seen in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is **carrying** on business as usual. He called the elections free and **healthy**. Official results show he was the winner with over 60 per cent of the vote. Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke to the nation **live** on television after his victory. He called on all Iranians to work hard to **strengthen** their country. The country's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on the nation to **respect** the election results. He warned his people the state would **deal** with any opposition. There were mixed **reactions** to Ahmadinejad's victory from around the world. The leaders of Venezuela and Pakistan were among those to send their congratulations. Reports from the White House suggest President Obama still wants **dialogue** with Ahmadinejad.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - a 2 - c 3 - b 4 - d 5 - c 6 - a 7 - d 8 - b 9 - c 10 - a 11 - b 12 - d