

# Ahmadinejad faces tough election challenge

The stage looks set for a showdown between reformists and hardliners as incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad battles for a second term against three prominent candidates in Iran's presidential election



## HARDLINERS

**Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, 52**

Represents Iran's ultra-conservatives and is close ally of Supreme Leader **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei**

Promised Iranians share of country's oil wealth, his popularity has waned since 2005 due to worsening economy



**Mohsen Rezaei, 54**

Former military commander, now secretary of Iran's **Expediency Council** political arbitration body

Outspokenly critical of Iran's economic policy, he could weaken Ahmadinejad by splitting conservative vote

## REFORMISTS

**Mir Hossein Mousavi, 67**

Served as Iran's prime minister from **1981-89**, remembered for efficient handling of economy

Seeks to change Iran's negative image in world but is unwilling to make concessions on nuclear programme



**Mehdi Karroubi, 71**

Moderate cleric, former speaker of Iran's parliament, now chairman of **National Trust Party**

Promises social reforms, increased dialogue with West, and to open Iranian economy to private sector

