

Iran poll highlights deepening power struggle

Iran's parliamentary elections could prove decisive in the struggle between religious and political hardliners. It is the first vote since the 2009 presidential election, which ignited the worst unrest in three decades



Supporters of
Supreme Leader
**Ayatollah Ali
Khamenei**

*Conservative,
traditionalist
groups under
establishment flag*



Supporters
of President
**Mahmoud
Ahmadinejad**

*Right-wing, radical
groups, with focus
on social justice
and class struggle*

■ Groups include **United Front of Principlists** – representing elite – and **Steadfastness Front** – far right group of former Ahmadinejad allies who have turned against president

■ Several newly founded groups, including **Government Supporters Front**, present themselves as advocates of poor and claim to be detached from centres of power

■ **Khamenei accuses president's inner circle – especially chief of staff Rahim Mashaie – of being part of “deviant current” promoting nationalist politics over Islamic clerical rule**



■ Ahmadinejad thought to favour Mashaie to run for president – gains in new parliament could boost chances of getting his name on 2013 presidential ballot

ELECTION FACTS

Population: 75m **Eligible voters:** 48m

Seats: 290 from 30 provinces

Number of candidates: After vetting process, 3,444 candidates allowed to run out of around 5,395 who originally signed up



Pro-reform groups boycotting vote because it is not “free and fair”