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# The New Iranian Cabinet; Domination of Hard-liners

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## Authors

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**Summary :** The Iranian parliament approved new ministers of the Iranian government last week except minister of education, this means approving 18 ministerial picks of Ebrahim Raisi. New ministers officially took office and this means end of eight years of Hassan Rohani's cabinet. But this is not just end of moderate Rohani's government!

The Iranian parliament approved new ministers of the Iranian government last week except minister of education, this means approving 18 ministerial picks of Ebrahim Raisi. New ministers officially took office and this means end of eight years of Hassan Rohani's cabinet. But this is not just end of moderate Rohani's government! But according to the selection of new officials this is the beginning to control all the three key powers in hand of hard-liners. And this can be seen as the end of the traditional reform era.

## Background of rising hard-liners power

This is not for the first time that power completely goes under control of conservatives in Iran. Back in 2002 in the Islamic councils election of cities and villages conservatives won in most of the places especially in Tehran and they elected not very well known person such "Ahmed Mahmood Najad" as mayor of Tehran. Then in 2003 under shadow of disqualifying reformist candidates by the guardian council strongly in the 7<sup>th</sup> term of Islamic Shura council (parliament) hard-liners became majority and in the end in spring 2005, for the third time on a row won the elections and Ahmed Najad became president of the Islamic republic. By considering presidency of Ayatollah Hashmi Shahroodi (1999-2009) and then Ayatollah Amuli Larijani (2009-2018) over the Iranian judiciary we can say during that period all branches of power were in hands of hard-liners.

## How hard-liners took power?

In the new term, conservatives again through following previous experience succeeded in achieving the absolute power. And main pillar of this victory was in the hand of the guardian council which in a row of elections rejected most of the reformist candidates and even disqualified those conservatives were critical to authority, and this in order to prevent rivals and resistance in the face of hard-liners. Along with this situation, US sanctions especially increase of economic sanctions and daily pressure on people, as well as some of the authority reactions against protesters, led many people to boycott in the last three elections.

In this way hard-liners in the early 2020 in the 11<sup>th</sup> parliament election won majority of seats and former Tehran mayor who lost in the presidential race several times been elected as parliament speaker. Then in two elections of presidency and Islamic councils of cities and villages that were took place in spring 2021, hard-liners easily won the elections. Along with these changes the Iranian supreme leader picked Hujatulislam Mhuseen Ezhayee who is radical conservative and replaced Ebrahim Rasii as president of the Iranian judiciary in order that officially and openly the authority and three branches of power to be in the hands hard-liners.

## Condition of political movements under Raisi

Ebrahim Raisi who is traditional conservative, despite that he promised to form a cabinet to be from multi blocs and bureaucrats but he has chosen all ministers from conservative circle. In his cabinet there is no reformist or moderate official. And some of the representatives from conservative line that in formality were Raisi's rival, now he has chosen them as members of his cabinet including " Saeed Ezzatullah Zarghami" as minister of cultural heritage and tourism, and "Mhuseen Razayee" as deputy president for economic affairs.

And directly supported " Ali Reza Zakani" as mayor of Tehran and expected soon to pick presidential candidates" Amir Hussein Qazi Zada Hashmi" with "Saeed Jalili" from conservatives for key positions in his cabinet. But reformist presidential candidates such " Muhseen Mihr Alizada" and " Behroz Himmati" do not get any positions in his cabinet.

In the end and according to the developments, we can say that all the exchanges in the past two years in the Iranian political scene, show the will of Islamic republic leaders to impose absolute power of hard-liners over all departments and organizations in Iran. A will that even the guardian council rejected candidacy of "Ali Larijani" from moderate conservatives, and "Eshaq Jahangiri" deputy reformist of Hassan Rohani during the 13<sup>th</sup> presidential race.