

Islamic Parliament of Iran; 1st Term

Preface

The name of Iran's legislature was "National Consultative Assembly" in the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. After Iran's first post-revolutionary assembly took office on July 22, 1980, a single clause was added to the legislature's rules of procedure, renaming the legislative body "Islamic Parliament of Iran".

The first term of the Islamic Parliament of Iran coincided with myriads of ups and downs. It saw specifically three rounds of presidential elections due to the dismissal of first president Abolhassan Banisadr and the immediate assassination of his successor Mohammad Ali Rajaei, formation of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, closure of universities, severance of full diplomatic ties between Tehran and Washington, and the outbreak of eight years of war by Iraq among other issues.

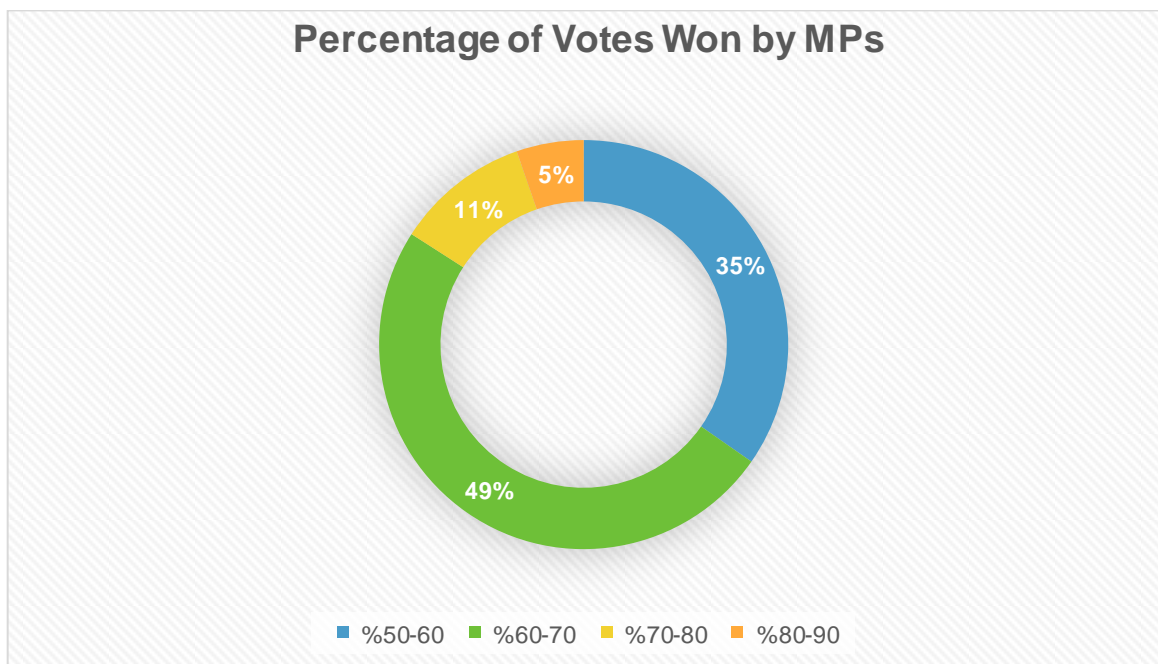
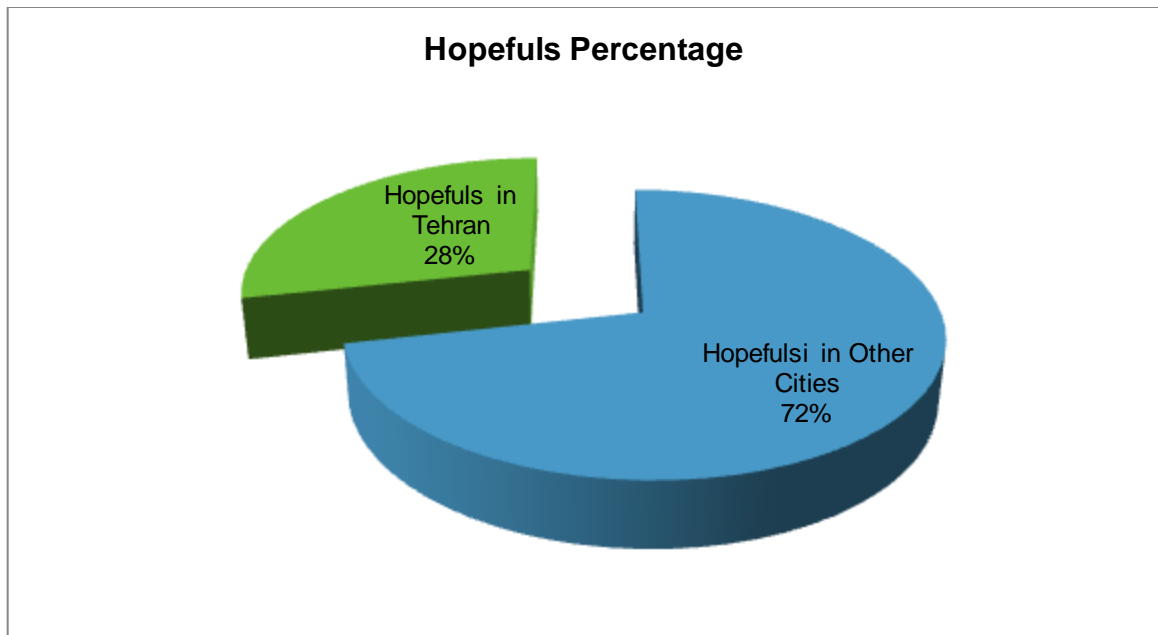
The first step in the direction of general elections for the Islamic Parliament of Iran was the adoption of election law for parliament. The Ministry of Interior was tasked with drawing up the text of the law, which was approved by the Council of Revolution.

This law, which came into effect on February 7, 1980, stipulated that elections be held locally particularly in Tehran, and required each candidate to win an absolute majority to be elected. Some political groups protested this law. In the end, the idea of local elections was scrapped; however, runoff vote and absolute majority requirement were endorsed.

Ambiance of 1st Election

- The legislative election was held on March 14, 1980.
- Number of Eligible Voters: 20857391
- A total 10575969 million ballots were cast.
- Voter turnout was at approximately 52.14%.
- In the first election, voters chose their favorite nominees in person (and not from parties and election lists) in different constituencies. Each constituency was often a county. Every candidate was required to win 50% plus one vote to be elected into parliament. In case no candidate won the absolute majority in a constituency, a runoff was held.
- Number of First-Round Electees: 98
- The runoff vote was held on May 9, 1980.
- Number of Second-Round Electees: 129
- Number of Midterm Electees: 100
- Representative of Armenian Christians in Northern Iran: Harae Khaltiyan

- Representative of Armenian Christians in southern Iran: Haraj Khajatouriyan
- Representative of Assyrians: Sergoun Bit Oshana Gougtafeh
- Representative of Jews: Khosro Naghi
- Representative of Zoroastrians: Parviz Malekpour
- Four women were among the MPs in the first parliament: Maryam Behrouzi, Ateqeh Sediqi, Gohar ash-Sharia Dastgheih, and Azam Taleqani.
- Some 2000 hopefuls registered, including 540 from Tehran. (Sharei, 2017:45)



Political Parties and Groups in 1st Election

- Society of Combatant Clergy¹
- Islamic Republic Party²
- Islamic Revolution Mujahideen Organization (IRMO)
- Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI)

Election Lists

1. Great Alliance

The Society of Combatant Clergy and the Islamic Republic Party had initially released separate lists, which shared many names; however, on February 11, 1980, these two groups along with IRMO and several other groups reached an agreement on a 30-member³ list⁴. The Great Alliance list was the most successful in Tehran. (Kalbasi, 2016:14)

2. FMI

This list, which was the second successful in the Tehran election, comprised of five members⁵. The list managed to send nine of its nominees into parliament⁶. (Bazargan, 1984:102)

¹ The core of the Society of Combatant Clergy was developed in 1977 under the aegis of Ayatollah Morteza Motahari. The clerical body was mainly tasked with planning demonstrations, preaches in mosques, developing slogans and coordinating and arranging anti-Pahlavi struggles.

² The main objective of the Islamic Republic Party was to bring together forces faithful to the Islamic Revolution. This party believed that the Islamic Revolution had to be followed by fighting with counterrevolutionaries, safeguarding the Revolution and establishment of the Islamic government, which required unity among forces faithful to the Islamic Revolution.

³ The candidates on this list were as follows: Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Mohammad Javad Bahonar, Hassan Ayat, Mohammad Ali Rajaei, Kazem Mousavi Bojnourdi, Ali Akbar Nāteq Nouri, Abdolmajid Moadikhah, Fakhroddin Hejazi, Hadi Ghaffari, Mohammad Ali Hadi, Mohammad Mousavi Khoiniha, Ali Akbar Monifar, Hossein Kamali, Assadollah Lajevardi, Gohar ash-Sharia Dastgheib, Mohammad Baqer Lavasani, Seifollah Vahid Dastjerdi, Saeed Amani, Reza Zavarei, Ali Akbar Velayati, Habibollah Asgaroladi, Akbar Pour Ostad, Mohammad Javad Hojjati Kermani, Najaf Qoli Habibi, Mehdi Shahabadi, Mohammad Eslami, Mohsen Mojtahed Shabestari, Ahmad Molaei and Fereshteh Hashemi.

⁴ This list included 23 nominees of the Islamic Republic list. Seyyed Abolqasem Hazavehi, Akbar Pourostad, Mohammad Baqer Shayverd, Abdollah Jasbi, Abolqasem Sarhadizadeh, Mahmoud Kashani and Javad Mansouri, who were core or leading members of the party, had been dropped. The primary list of the Society of Combatant Clerics had dropped Ebrahim Yazdi, Mostafa Chamran, Ali Asghar Morvardi, Ali Golzadeh Ghafouri, and Abdolmajid Irvani.

⁵ They were as follows: Mehdi Bazargan, Jalaluddin Ashtiani, Abdolali Bazargan, Fathollah Banisar, Ali Asghar Behzadnia, Mohammad Tavasoli, Mostafa Chamran, Hassan Habibi, Ali Danesh Monfared, Mohammad Ali Rajaei, Yadollah Sahabi, Ezzatollah Sahabi, Hashem Sabaghian, Ali Sadeqi Tehrani, Mostafa Katiraei, Ali Akbar Moifar, Mahmoud Manian, and Ebrahim Yazdi.

⁶ The list nominated by FMI shared three candidates with the Great Alliance – Hassan Habibi, Mohammad Ali Rajaei, and Ali Akbar Moifar – and three with the Office of Cooperation – Hassan Habibi, Ezzatollah Sahabi, and Fathollah Banisadr.

3. People-President Cooperation Office

Nine of 21 nominees⁷ of the People-President Cooperation Office were elected in Tehran. Azam Taleqani was the only exclusive member of this list⁸.

4. Revolutionary and Progressive Nominees (Mujahideen Khalq)

On the list nominated by the Mujahideen Khalq, Ali Gholzadeh Ghaffouri (jointly nominated by People-President Cooperation Office and Movement of Combatant Muslims) was elected. Masoud Rajavi, with 530,000 votes, went into the runoff and failed. Twenty-nine candidates of Mujahideen Khalq went into the runoff vote in other cities, but none was elected. (Qadr-e Velayat Cultural-Artistic Institute, 2015:45)

5. National Front

The National Front list was not complete and it included only 11 nominees⁹. It only overlapped with FMI list on the name of Mahmoud Manian. Some National Front candidates in other cities¹⁰ were elected, but in the end the voting in those constituencies were declared null and void or the credentials of the electees were rejected. In Tehran, none of the National Front Candidates were elected. (Qadr-e Velayat Cultural-Artistic Institute, 2015:33)

6. Iran Muslim People Revolution Movement

Of 12 nominees of the Iran Muslim People Revolution Movement¹¹, 4 were elected into parliament¹².

⁷ They were as follows: Mohammad Eslami, Mohammad Hossein Batouli, Fathollah Banisadr, Mohammad Reza Pasandideh, Abdossamad Taqizadeh, Mohammad Jafari, Hassan Habibi, Mohammad Javad Hojjati Kermani, Fakhroddin Hejazi, Kazem Sami, Ezzatollah Sahabi, Mehdi Shahabadi, Mohammad Baqer Shayverd, Hossein Shafiei, Tahereh Saffarzadeh, Azam Taleqani, Mehdi Zarif, Nemat Gholamvand, Ali Gholzadeh Ghaffouri, Ali Asghar Morvarid, and Mohammad Ali Hadi.

⁸ Fakhroddin Hejazi, Mohammad Ali Hadi, Hojjati Kermani and Mehdi Shahabadi were the candidates shared by this list and the Great Alliance, Hassan Habibi was shared with the Great Alliance, Ezzatollah Sahabi and Fathollah Banisadr shared by FMI and Great Alliance, Kazem Sami was shared by the Movement of Combatant Muslims and Iran Muslim People Revolution Movement, and Ali Gholzadeh Ghaffouri was shared by the Mujahideen Khalq Organization and the Movement of Combatant Muslims.

⁹ They were as follows: Kazem Hasibi, Asghar Parsa, Assadollah Mobasheri, Parviz Varjavand, Abdolkarim Anvari, Mahmoud Manian, Hassan Lebaschi, Adib Boroumand, Hassan Shahdi, Ebrahim Karimabadi, and Abdolhossein Khalili.

¹⁰ They included Ahmad Madani, Khosrow Qashqaei, Karim Sanjabi, Ali Ardalan, and Abolfazl Qasemi

¹¹ They were Kazem Sami, Mehdi Zarif, Nezamoddin Qahari, Mahmoud Nekourouh Motlaq, Mohammad Maleki, Abdolkarim Lahiji, Abdossamad Taqizadeh, Mohammad Javad Hojjati Kermani, Mohammad Mousavi Khoiniha, Ezzatollah Sahabi, Mostafa Mirkhani, and Ezzatollah Khalili.

¹² One of them was party leader Kazem Sami. Sami was also present on the list nominated by the Office of People-President Cooperation and the Movement of Combatant Muslims. Mohammad Javad Hojjati Kermani (nominated jointly by the Great Alliance and the Office of Cooperation), Mohammad Mousavi Khoieiniha (nominated jointly by the Great Alliance and the Movement of Combatant Muslims) and Ezzatollah Sahabi (nominated jointly by the Office of Cooperation and FMI) were elected.

7. Movement of Combatant Muslims

The Movement of Combatant Muslims nominated 11 candidates¹³ in the Tehran constituency, five of whom were nominated also by the Iran Muslim People Revolution Movement and four by the Mujahideen Khalq. Kazem Sami, Ali Golzadeh Ghaffouri, and Mohammad Mousavi Khomeiniha were elected into parliament.

Presiding Board

1. Speaker

The speaker of the first round of Islamic Parliament was Ali Akbar Hashemi Bahramani (Rafsanjani). Rafsanjani had been elected from the Tehran constituency in the first round of vote. Before being elected to parliament, Rafsanjani sat at the Council of Revolution and was caretaker of Interior Ministry.

2. Vice Speakers

- Seyyed Ali Akbar Parvaresh
- Mohammad Khomeiniha
- Habibollah Asgaroladi
- Mohammad Yazdi
- Seyyed Mohammad Khamenei

As it was said earlier, besides the Islamic Republic Party, FMI, and the Movement of Combatant Muslims, other groups had their hopefuls elected into the first parliament. Therefore, it became one of the most diverse parliaments in terms of political affiliation of MPs. The legislators with political affiliations mainly headed parliamentary committees. For instance, FMI member Ezzatollah Sahabi chaired the Planning and Budgeting Committee and Sergoun Beit Oshana, who represented religious minorities, headed the Health Committee. (FMI, 1983:43)

1st Islamic Parliament in a Glance

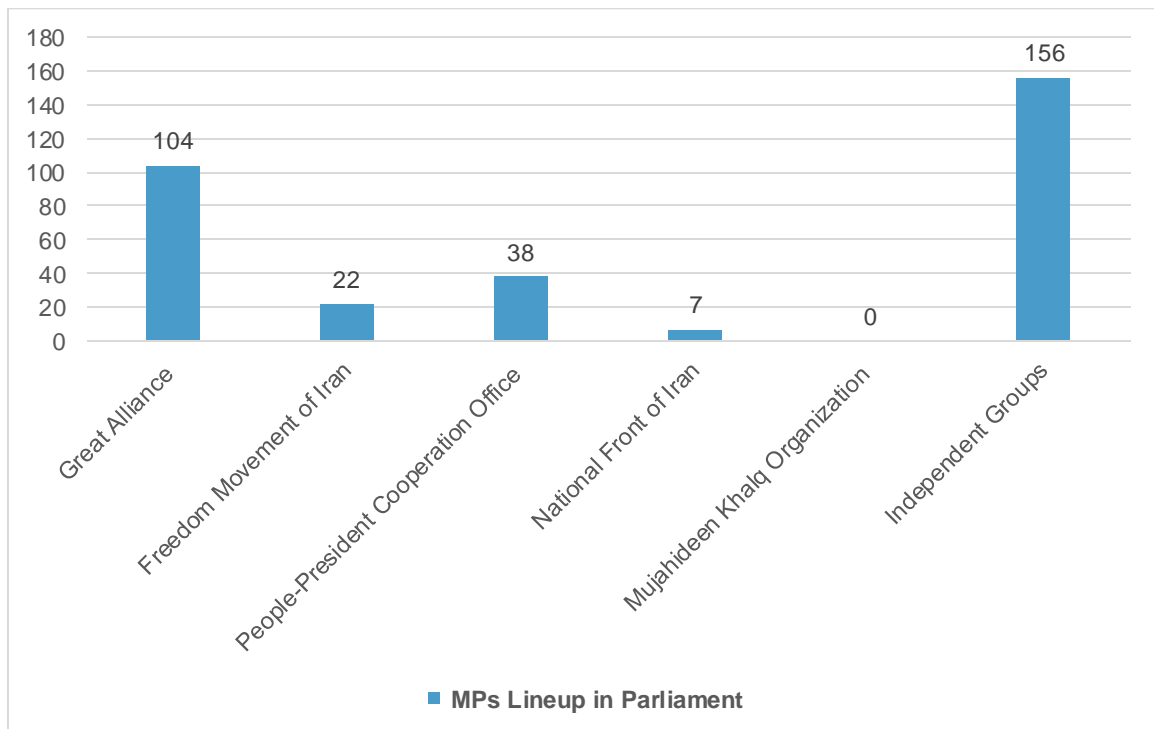
- It held its first session on May 28, 1980.
- There were 327 lawmakers.
- The first parliament held 625 open and 16 closed-door sessions, spending around 2,400 hours on deliberations.

¹³ They were Ali Golzadeh Ghaffouri, Mohammad Mousavi Khomeiniha, Hassan Eftekhari Ardebili, Ezzatollah Khalili, Mostafa Mirkhani, Kazem Sami, Tahereh Saffarzadeh, Masoud Rajavi, Mohammad Maleki, Mehdi Abrishamchi, and Mohammad Shانهchi.

- A total 804 bills and motions were tabled.
- The Cabinet lineup was discussed 31 times to finally give vote of confidence to 102 ministers and vote down 12.

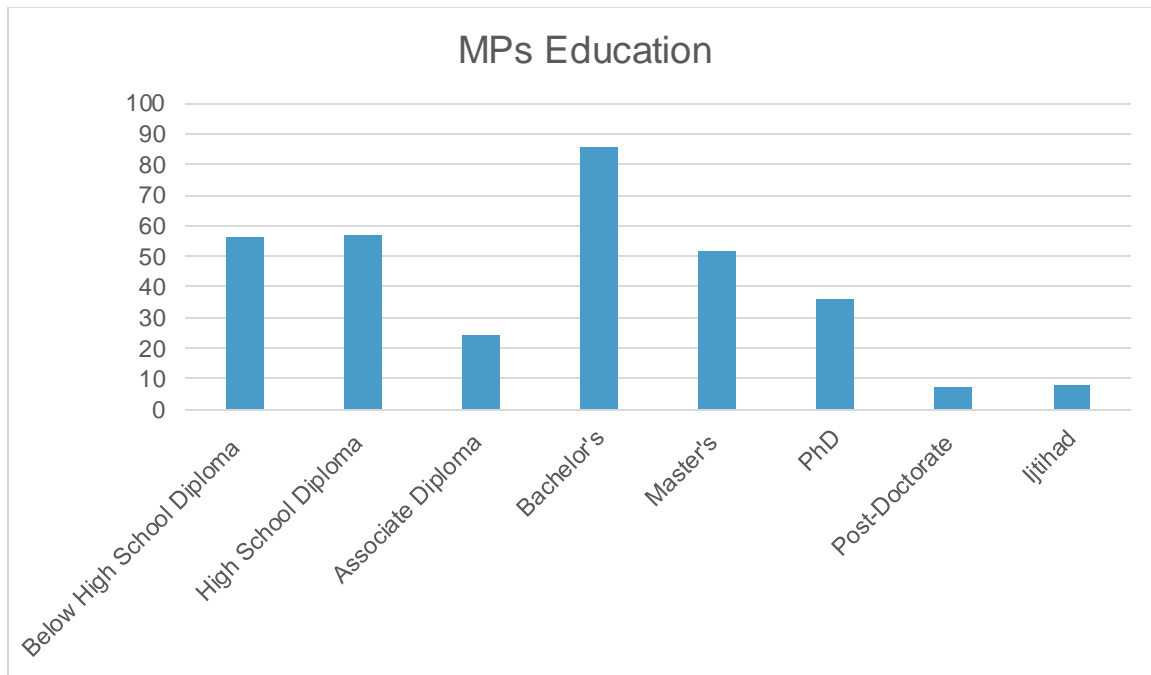
Parliament Lineup

- Great Alliance: Society of Combatant Clergy, Islamic Republic Party, Islamic Revolution Mujahideen Organization, Islamic Teachers Association, Muslim Women Movement, Islamic Dawn Organization, Union of Shahr-e Rey Islamic Associations, Al-Hadi Foundation: 104 MPs
- Freedom Movement of Iran: 22 MPs
- People-President Cooperation Office: 38 MPs
- National Front of Iran: 7 MPs
- Central Council of Revolutionary and Progressive Candidates (Mujahideen Khalq Organization): No MP
- Independent Groups: 156 MPs



MPs' Age and Education

Most lawmakers (72) were aged 30 to 35 and only three were aged above 70. As far as their education degree is concerned, 56 did not hold a high school diploma, 57 were high school graduates, 24 held associate diploma, 86 bachelor's, 52 master's, 36 PhD, 7 post-doctorate and 9 were high-level degree of Islamic jurisprudence (Ijtihad). (Fawzi, 2008:70)



Changes

Some of those elected to the first parliament failed to serve out their term due to one of the following four reasons:

1. Non-endorsement of credentials
2. Resignation
3. Moving to other branches of government
4. Death due to assassination, bombing, car accident or natural causes (Mohammadi, 1991:155)

Number of resigned MPs: 9¹⁴

Number of credential non-endorsement: 16¹⁵

Number of MPs assigned to executive branch or judiciary: 17¹⁶ (Darabi, 2009:54)

¹⁴ Sargoun Bit Oshana, Ahmad Salamatian, Ahmad Ghazanfarpour, Mohammad Mehdi Karimi, Ali Golzadeh Ghaffouri, Mohammad Zeid Behbahani, Mohammad Shojaei, Hossein Kermani, Mohammad Taqi Motahari Farimani

¹⁵ Hassan Behrouzieh, Jafar Tavakoli, Assadollah Javanmardi, Abolqasem Hosseinjani, Rahman Dadman, Khosro Rigi, Mohammad Rahim Saadati, Rampour Sadr Nabavi, Khosro Qashqaei, Seyyed Ahmad Madani, Ali Mohimi, Karim Sanjani, Ali Ardalan, and Abolfazl Qasemi

¹⁶ Mohammad Emami Kashani, Mohammad Javad Bahonar, Seyyed Akbar Parvaresh, Ahmad Tavakoli, Mohammad Sadeq Haeri Shirazi, Gholam Reza Hassani Bozorgabad, Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khamenei, Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, Mohammad Ali Rajaei, Habibollah Asgaroladi Mosalman, Mohammad Alinejad Sarikhani, Seyyed Mohammad Gharazi, Hassan Ghaffourifard, Abdolmajid Moaidkhah, Seyyed Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi, Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, and Ali Akbar Velayati

Martyred MPs

Martyred in the Islamic Republic Party headquarters bombing: 27 MPs

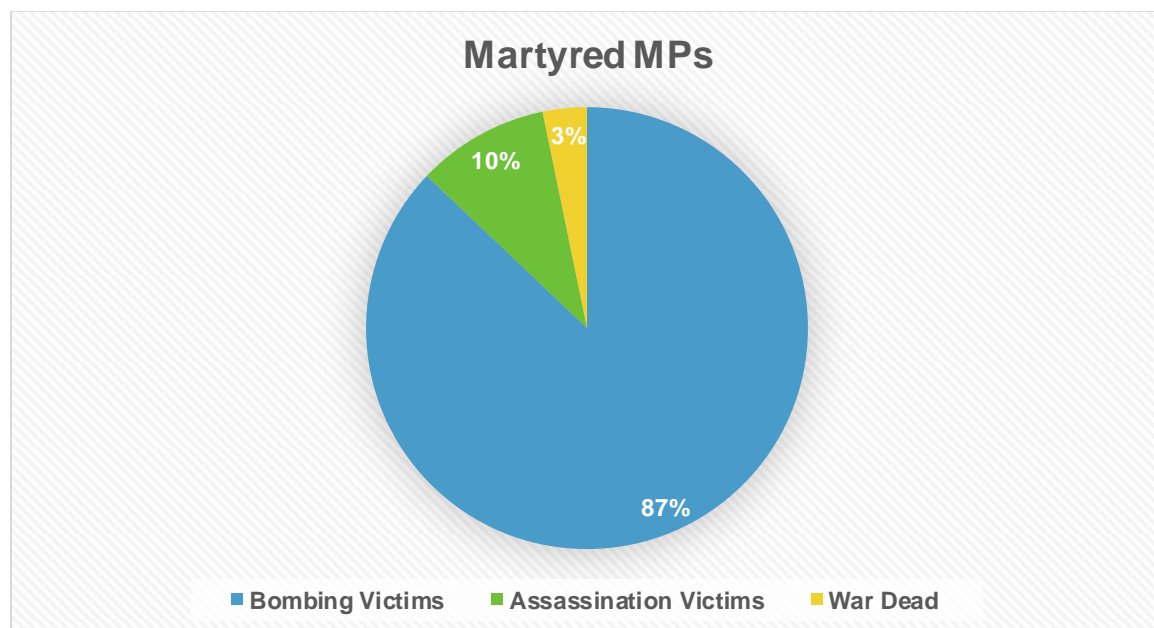
(Seyed Reza Paknejad, Dezfouli, Seyyed Mohammad Taqi Hosseini Tabatabaei, Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Hossein Lavasani, Shamsoddin Hosseini Naeini, Gholam-Hossein Haqani, Mohammad Ali Heydari, Abbas Heydari, Seyyed Mohammad Kazem Danesh, Gholam-Reza Danesh Ashtiari, Ali Akbar Dehqan, Seyyed Abdolmajid Dialameh, Seyyed Fakhroddin Rahimi, Seyyed Mohammad Javad Sherafat, Mir-Behzad Shahryari, Qasem Sadeqi, Mohammad Hossein Sadeqi, Seyyed Nouroddin Tabatabaeinejad, Mohammad Hassan Tayebi, Seyfollah Abdolkarimi Komleh, Abdolvahab Qasemi, Emadoddin Karimi, Bijaninejad, Mohammad Ali Montazeri, Abbas Ali Nateq Nouri, Mehdi Nasiri Lari, Ali Hashemi Sanjabi)

Assassination Attempt Victims: 3 MPs

(Hassan Ayat, Mohammad Taqi Besharat, Mojtaba Estoki)

Martyred in Iraq War: 1 MP

(Mostafa Chamran) (Kalbasi, 2016:78)



Main Measures in 1st Parliament

1. 1st PM

A bone of contention in the first Islamic parliament pertained to the election of the first prime minister in the Islamic Republic. After the first Islamic parliament took office, the most

important mission it had to accomplish for the full establishment of the Islamic Republic was the formation of a cabinet which was to be chaired by prime minister. In light of the significance of the fact that the prime minister could open a new period in Iran's political establishment by fully implementing pieces of legislation passed by parliament, naming a prime minister was the top issue in the 1st parliament (Fawzi, 2006:45). Each political faction was determined to impose its desired prime minister in order to dominate the society (Khajeh Sarvi, 1992:240). There was a conflict between Banisadr and his supporters and the nationalist-religious alliance on one side and the Islamic Republic Party-led canonic Islam on the other. President Banisadr reluctantly nominated Mohammad Ali Rajaei as nominee for prime minister.

2. US Embassy Hostage-Taking

The second important issue debated in the first parliament was the crisis created following the takeover of American diplomats at the US embassy in Tehran¹⁷. Imam Khomeini had ordered the Islamic Parliament to settle the hostage-taking crisis. The country was run by the interim government when the American diplomats were taken hostage. The government resigned in protest to the hostage-taking. After the resignation of the interim government, the Council of Revolution took over. An ad hoc committee was set up to resolve the crisis. The committee submitted its plan to parliament on November 2, 1980. The proposal was approved by MPs after lengthy deliberations and subsequently the American hostages were released. (Yazdi, 1984:42)

3. President Banisadr Ouster

After Banisadr was sacked as commander-in-chief of Armed Forces, the MPs opposed to him were convinced that Imam Khomeini no longer favored Banisadr as president. They moved quickly to impeach him. The motion to vote President Banisadr out of office was approved on June 20, 1981 by 177 votes in favor and one vote against. A total 190 MPs were present in parliament. Banisadr was unseated. (Kalbasi, 2016:22)

¹⁷ Less than a year after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a group of Muslim students following Imam Khomeini's line took over the US Embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979 in protest against the US crimes and providing sanctuary to the deposed shah of Iran, and took all of the embassy staff hostage.

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