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IRAN PRESIDENCY

Moderate Rohani wins by landslide

AGENCIES

Moderate cleric Hassan Rohani won Iran's presidential election yesterday, the interior ministry said, scoring a surprising landslide victory over conservative hardliners without the need for a second round run-off.

The outcome will not soon transform Iran's long tense rela-

tions with the West, resolve an international crisis over its pursuit of nuclear power or lessen its support of Syria's president in the civil war there - matters of national security that remain the domain of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

But the president runs the economy and 50.68 percent, AFP adds. wields important influence in decisionmaking, Reuters report.

could provide latitude for a diplomatic thaw with the West and more social freedoms at

home after eight years of belligerence and repression under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who was legally barred from seeking a third consecutive term.

Rohani in his statement hailed his election as a "victory of moderation over extremism," media reported.

"This victory is a victory for wisdom, moderation and maturity... over extremism," the mid-ranking moderate cleric who was also backed by reformists said. The interior ministry said Rohani had

won outright with 18.6 million votes, or Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei on Saturday congratulated Rohani's resounding election mandate Rohani on winning the presidential election, the website leader.ir reported.

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MEET THE NEW MAYORS







Ariful Haque Chowdhury, Sylhet



Moniruzzaman Mony, Khulna



Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, Rajshahi

Pak militants kill 25

Blasts hit women students' bus, then a hospital where victims were taken

AFP, Quetta

At least 25 people were killed in troubled southwest Pakistan on Saturday when militants blew up a bus carrying women students and attacked a hospital treating survivors, officials said.

A bomb attack on a bus in Quetta, capital of the restive Baluchistan province, killed 14 women students, and another 11 people died in a blast at a city hospital around 90 minutes later.

The second attack hit the emergency

ward of the city's Bolan Medical Complex where the wounded were taken and was followed by a gun battle with militants holed up inside the hospital.

The siege lasted for several hours and ended when security forces stormed the building.

Quetta was the scene two of the bloodiest attacks in Pakistan this year, both targeting Shiite Muslims, and the student victims were members of a women's university popular with the minority community.

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Giant balloons like this one carrying computer equipment are being launched by Google in New Zealand and special antennas have been fitted to the homes of volunteers to test internet connectivity. The idea behind the experiment is to provide access to the internet, especially in remote and disaster hit areas.



Google tests balloons to beam internet

Targets getting entire world online

AP, Christchurch

The translucent, jellyfish-shaped balloons that Google released this week from a frozen field of New Zealand's South Island passed the first big test of a lofty goal to get the entire planet online.

Google's leaders hope to launch thousands of balloons into the stratosphere in order to bridge the gaping digital divide between the world's 4.8 billion unwired people and their 2.2 billion plugged-in counterparts. If successful, the technology might allow countries to

leapfrog the expense of laying fiber cable, dramatically increasing internet usage in places such as Africa and Southeast Asia. "It's a huge moonshot. A really big goal to go after," said Google's project leader Mike Cassidy. "The power of the

internet is probably one of the most transformative technologies of our time." Experts said the project, still in its experimental stage, has



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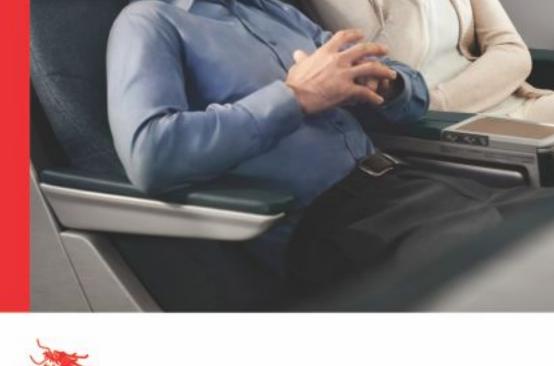
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