



Probe into suspect ballots may change results: IECC

By [Muhammad Hassan Khetab](#) Apr 16, 2014 - 22:32

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) on Wednesday said ballot boxes, which had been quarantined, would be investigated next week in the presence of local and foreign observers.

IECC spokesman and member Nader Muhseni told reporters in Kabul that all suspect ballot boxes had been quarantined in coordination with the Independent Election Commission (IEC).

The central authority had appointed a delegation to open and investigate all quarantined ballot boxes next week in front of representatives from the media, civil society, political parties, representatives of candidates, local and foreign observer missions, he said.

He said 343 of 892 complaints classed a "Priority-A" had so far been investigated and the rest being probed, saying the investigations could impact election results.

The IECC has registered nearly 3,500 complaints, including 2000 having documents in support.

A day earlier, the IEC announced a recount of votes cast at 500 polling centres in the presence of observers and journalists.

Muhseni welcomed reports his commission had received from election observers appointed by civil society and the two local watchdogs --- the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA) and the Transparent, the Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA).

He welcomed the reports, saying they indicated irregularities had been committed. He said such reports from international observers would be welcomed for the sake of transparency.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/16/probe-suspect-ballots-may-change-results-iecc>

Police officer who shot female MP detained

By [Muhammad Hassan Khetab](#) Apr 16, 2014 - 10:23

KABUL (Pajhwok): A security official, who shot and injured a female lawmaker in the capital Kabul last night, has been arrested, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Wednesday.

The ministry said in a statement Mariam Kofi, who represents northern Takhar province in the [Wolesi Jirga](#), was shot and injured after an argument with a police officer in an upscale district last night.

She was rushed to hospital and her condition was out of danger, the ministry said, adding the attacker was being interrogated in police custody.

Wolesi Jirga secretary Irfanullah Irafan also said Mariam, the older sister of another lawmaker Fauzia Kofi, was in a stable condition after she was shot in the foot.

The shooting occurred the same day gunmen kidnapped the deputy minister of public works, Ahmad Shah Wahid, as he was travelling in his car to work.

There has been no ransom demand and no group has taken responsibility for Wahid's kidnapping so far.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/16/police-officer-who-shot-female-mp-detained>



Probe into suspect ballots may change results: IECC

By [Muhammad Hassan Khetab](#) Apr 16, 2014 - 22:32

KABUL (Pajhwok): A senior UN mission official on Wednesday said the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) needed support to safeguard impartiality and transparency in their work.

Ján Kubiš, UN secretary-general's special representative for Afghanistan and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) head, expressed these views following a meeting with Dr. Sima Samar, chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC). The two national electoral bodies direly needed support to highlight the importance of the coming re-accreditation review of the AIHRC. "Dr. Samar and I discussed the enthusiastic participation of Afghans who exercised their basic human right to vote in the presidential elections," said Kubiš.

He went on to say that "we agreed that Afghan voters expect no less than for due process to be followed, meaning that their votes will be counted, complaints resolved in an impartial, fair and efficient manner in which fraudulent votes will be excluded and valid final results will be respected by all candidates." Dr. Samar briefed Kubiš on her recent discussions with the Ministry of Finance on the steps necessary for the AIHRC to retain its "A" status as per the ICC's recommendations.

The recommendations include the need for the government to better define the process for appointing human rights commissioners and to ensure public financing for the commission's work under its constitutional mandate.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/16/afghan-electoral-bodies-need-support-un>



Votes of 10 ballot boxes partially invalidated

By [Hadi Ghafari](#) Apr 16, 2014 - 15:24

BAMYAN CITY (Pajhwok): Votes cast for presidential candidates at 10 ballot boxes were partially invalidated after a recount in central Bamyan province, an official said on Wednesday.

Votes of 11 suspicious ballot boxes were recounted in the presence of election observers and Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) officials at polling sites in Bamyan City and Kahmard, Yakawlang, Panjab, Waris and Shibar districts, regional IECC chief Niamatullah Tanin told Pajhwok Afghan News.

He said votes of 10 boxes having no stamps, problems in the locks and in large numbers to a single candidate, were partially declared void.

The official said preliminary results had already been dispatched to the IEC headquarters, but officials there ordered a recount due to some mistakes in the process of counting votes.

Complaints about instances of ballot stuffing in Kahmard district, 140 km from Bamyan city, and blank votes also prompted the IEC to order a recount, he said.

Tanin said they had registered 28 complaints including objections about ballot stuffing in Darband and Ashepshta areas of Kahmard district, where the security situation was not stable.

Provincial IEC chief Aziz Ahmad Rassouli also confirmed the irregularities in Kahmard, saying voting had been ongoing beyond the official closing time and had begun ahead of the official starting time in the town.

He said they had evidence of electoral fraud in those areas and they had already shared it with the IEC's main office.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/16/votes-10-ballot-boxes-partially-invalidated>

Partial vote recount ordered in Kandahar

By [Bashir Ahmad Naadem](#) Apr 16, 2014 - 16:24

KANDAHAR (Pajhwok): Independent Election Commission (IEC) officials on Wednesday started recounting suspect votes in southern Kandahar province following allegations of fraud and other irregularities in the April 5 elections, an official said.

IEC Director Eng. Abdul Hadi Dawari told Pajhwok Afghan News the recount was launched in line directives from the IEC main office in Kabul.

He said candidates' representatives, journalists, members of the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA) and IEC officials were overseeing the recount process of at least 24 ballot boxes delivered from polling stations in Ghorak, Daman, Panjwai districts and parts of Kandahar City.

Meanwhile, Marwand Wazir, the Independent Electoral Complaint Commission (IECC) chief in Kandahar, said they had registered 200 complaints, including 98 against presidential hopefuls.

Other complaints were filed against IEC employees, observers of candidates and security forces, accusing them of massive irregularities, he said.

A total of 3,000 complaints have been registered with the IEC from across the country pertaining to fraud and other irregularities.

The IEC has said it would address all complaints in the shortest possible time and recount process in provincea is aimed to ensure transparency.

Daikundi provincial council candidate finedBy [Pajhwok reporter](#) Apr 17, 2014 - 14:50

NILI (Pajhwok): A provincial council candidate was fined 50,000 afghanis on charge of committing fraud in the April 5 elections in southwestern Daikundi province, an official said Thursday.

Mir Hussain Nazari, provincial Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) spokesman, said that Mohammad Zahir, a provincial council candidate, was fined on charge of copying and removing other candidates' names from ballot papers.

He said fake ballot papers were distributed among his supporters to project that other candidates were disqualified. Rejecting the claim, the accused candidate said such claims were part of propaganda campaign against him hatched up by his rivals.

The issue had been referred to the main office of Independent Election Commission (IEC) in Kabul for further investigation.

Nazari said that 28 elections' related complaints had been registered with the IECC, with 21 of them were received by telephone regarding lack of ballot papers in the polling stations, he said.

Six of the complaints stood in the A category which would be investigated carefully.

He said 15 ballot boxes including one of them belonged to presidential candidates in six polling sites were declared suspicious with fraud and other anomalies in Daikundi province.

"The complaints may affect the result of votes, that is why these ballot boxes will be quarantined for a thorough review," Nazari concluded.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/17/daikundi-provincial-council-candidate-fined>

High percentage partial results next week: NoorBy [Mohammad Haleem Karimi](#) Apr 17, 2014 - 23:01

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Independent Election Commission (IEC) on Thursday said it was announcing next week a second batch of partial results of a high percentage from the April 5 presidential elections.

Noor Mohammad Noor, the IEC spokesman, told reporters in Kabul it would be a high percentage result, but did not provide a specific time and date.

He said ballot papers from all the provinces had reached the IEC's main office in Kabul and that the process of compiling partial results was ongoing as planned.

The IEC on Sunday announced partial results based on 10 percent votes, a tally that puts Abdullah Abullah in the lead and his closest rival Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai in second place.

The 10 percent or 506,000 votes had come from 26 of the country's 34 provinces. IEC officials said the next results would include ballots from all the provinces.

Noor said they had recounted votes polled at 217 polling centres of the 500 sites believed to be suspicious and the sites were in 24 provinces.

He said they were recounting votes of another 500 polling centres in response to a request from the Independent Electoral Commission (IECC).

His remarks come a day after the IECC called for suspect ballot boxes to be put in the quarantine.

However, the IECC spokesman said it was later agreed with the IEC that votes of suspect ballot boxes should be recounted.

While the IEC spokesman, Noor, said quarantining ballot boxes was aimed at separating fraudulent votes from valid ones. He added their investigation into quarantined ballot boxes and the recount process went ahead.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/17/high-percentage-partial-results-next-week-noor>

**45 ballot boxes quarantined in Helmand**By [Shams Jalal](#) Apr 17, 2014 - 16:44

LASHKARGAH/ASADABAD (Pajhwok): At least 45 ballot boxes have been quarantined in southern Helmand province, while a vote recount of 10 ballot boxes is underway in eastern Kunar province, officials said on Thursday. Regional Independent Election Commission (IEC) chief in Helmand Rahim Gul Alikhel told Pajhwok Afghan News votes cast in 10 of the 45 quarantined ballot boxes belonged to presidential candidates. He added 62 complaints about electoral fraud and other irregularities had been registered and them 33 had so far been addressed and five rejected. Alikhel said the complaints were filed in Lashkargah, the provincial capital, and some districts. No one has so far fined or introduced to the judiciary on fraud charges, he said. In Kunar, 10 ballot boxes with votes cast for presidential candidates faced a recount. Provincial IEC chief Mohammad Zahir Akbari said they had been ordered by the IEC main office to recount votes of 10 ballot boxes.

Karzai for final poll results on scheduleBy [Mohammad Asif Ahmadzai](#) Apr 17, 2014 - 19:54

KABUL (Pajhwok): Dubbing the April 5 vote a giant leap forward in achieving peace and stability, President Hamid Karzai on Thursday hoped for the final results to be announced to the waiting masses on schedule.

In a radio speech, Karzai said the presidential and provincial council elections had been a success and strong evidence that the Afghans believed in democracy.

He said the unprecedented turnout, estimated at 60 per cent of 12 million eligible votes, showed the Afghans had complete faith in themselves that they had the capacity to progress and prepare themselves and their country in line with present day demands.

Karzai said important stages of the elections had gone successful with the help of Almighty Allah and due to people's cooperation with the authorities. "It should be our collective effort to conclude the remaining stages successfully as well." He said the Independent Election Commission and the Complaints Commission were investigating complaints and the process was on track and fast. The president hoped the final results would be announced on schedule and the new president and his new government would be able to take successful steps in achieving more progress, peace and stability.

He said the countrymen were expecting the two electoral institutions that they would complete the remaining stages in a transparent and judicious way to meet their expectations.

"We believe that our respected candidates will endorse and respect the public mandate so as the country enters a new bright chapter of stability, confidence and democracy."

Initial results based on 10 percent of the vote from 26 out of 34 provinces showed Dr Abdullah in the lead with 41.9 per cent and Ashraf Ghani in second place with 37.6 per cent. Final results are expected on 14 May.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/17/karzai-final-poll-results-schedule>

Taliban threaten, hold hostage Ghazni votersBy [Saifullah Maftoon](#) Apr 17, 2014 - 23:46

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): Some residents of southern Ghazni province on Thursday claimed the Taliban had started hurling death threats at them after they participated in the elections on April 5.

A resident of the Deh Yak district, Mohammadullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News he was hit black and blue by the rebels because he had cast his vote.

"After the elections, the Taliban came to our village. They hit me and several other residents."

Khan Mohammad from the same area said he survived near-death beating after he was taken hostage by the Taliban four days because being bailed out.

"The Taliban came to our house after the elections and took me away with them," he said, claiming he was among several others the insurgents had taken hostage.

Rahmatullah, who lives in Zarai Kala area of the Andar district, said his brother had received death threats from the Taliban.

He said the government had promised to protect voters and now it should come forward and rescue people from the armed militants.

The Taliban have reportedly harassed residents in Geru, Zan Khan and Arjistan district of Ghazni for participating in the yet to be decided elections.

Pajhwok made attempts at seeking comments from local officials, but in vain.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/17/taliban-threaten-hold-hostage-ghazni-voters>

**Victory via fraud unacceptable: Sherzai**By [Bashir Ahmad Naadim](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 19:41

KANDAHAR CITY (Pajhwok): Presidential runner Gul Agha Sherzai on Saturday said he would not endorse a president elected through fraud and such an election would be in violation of national sovereignty.

Sherzai told this to a gathering of tribal elders and residents coming all the way from Helmand, Uruzgan, Zabul, Nimroz and Farah provinces to the southern city of Kandahar.

The former Nangarhar governor said the Afghans braved threats to participate in the April 5 polls, but unfortunately the elections were massively rigged countrywide, especially in Kandahar.

He claimed most Kandahar residents had voted for him but most of the votes were either torched or thrown into toilets.

IEC: 70pc results preparedBy [Pajhwok Report](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 16:28

KABUL (Pajhwok): Result sheets from 5,972 polling centres from across the country have reached the tally centre in Kabul and are being processed, the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) said on Saturday.

In a statement, the IEC said it had so far cleared more than one-thirds (77.55 percent) of tamper-evident bags at intake and the remaining were expected to be cleared by Sunday and the results at the IEC's tally centre were now in stages of recording and tallying.

Seventy percent (70.71pc) of results had been prepared, scanned and archived, the statement said, nonetheless, it added based on audit and recount criteria, the results might still be subjected to further verification.

Field audits or recounts of results have been conducted at polling stations each day since April 13 and substantive progress has been made, the statement said.

IEC Secretary Ziaul Haq Amarkhel explained: "We have established a number of mechanisms to detect and address fraud; and we will use every available means to protect the votes of Afghans from those who wish to undermine the electoral process."

Audits and recounts are conducted in line with an IEC-developed list of criteria by a joint team managed by the relevant IEC provincial offices.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/19/iec-70pc-results-prepared>

**Interim govt holds key to avoiding chaos: Sirat**By [Muhammad Hassan Khetab](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 17:27

KABUL (Pajhwok): A former justice minister and presidential candidate in the 2009 election on Saturday proposed an interim government be installed if the final results from the April 5 vote are feared causing political differences. Abdul Sattar Sirat told reporters in Kabul the global community

had been assisting the Afghan government over the past 13 years but the President Karzai's administration had failed to effectively utilise the aid.

Responding to a volley of questions, he said if the situation after the release of the final results led to a political crisis, "then we need to install an interim government to ameliorate things."

He, however, said if the new government was established in a transparent way, it would help avoid instability.

He expressed his willingness to serve in the next government if it had different policies and approach from the incumbent.

Coming hard on the [High Peace Council](#) (HPC), he said only impartial individuals could make peace with the rebels.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/19/interim-govt-holds-key-avoiding-chaos-sirat>

Noor assumes run-off election is likelyBy [Khwaja Basir Ahmad Fitri](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 19:07

KABUL (Pajhwok): Predicting the likelihood of a run-off election between two leading presidential hopefuls, the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) on Saturday said ballot papers of 523 polling centres had been recounted and of another more than 500 sites being probed.

Noor Mohammad Noor, the IEC spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News these sites were in 31 provinces and they would announce results once the investigation process had finished.

He said ballot boxes at 1,084 sites needed to be reassessed and they had so far investigated suspect ballot boxes of 500 sites so far in the presence of observers and representatives of presidential candidates.

Noor said these boxes belonged to all the provinces and the assessment was aimed at separating fraudulent votes from valid ones, a process still in place.

He said the election commission was making efforts to announce the final results on schedule.

However, he said they needed enough time to tell apart from fraudulent ballots and ensure the public mandate had been respected.

He said they were trying to release a high percentage partial result of the presidential election in a week.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/19/noor-assumes-run-election-likely>

36 Farah polling centres' votes quarantinedBy [Mohammad Humayoon Zaheen](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 14:56

FARAH (Pajhwok): Ballot boxes of 36 polling centres had been quarantined in western Farah province, officials said on Saturday. Dr. Ali Ahmad Nazhat Yar, provincial Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) head

said 29 of the 36 voting centres were located in Purchaman district while the rests in Khak-i-Safid, Pusht-i-Road districts and the provincial capital. He told Pajhwok Afghan News ballot boxes of those centres had been quarantined in the backdrop of complaints from presidential and provincial council runners and assessment of the commission.

Abdul Zahir Kamalzai, provincial Electoral Complaint Commission (*ECC*) head, said 33 voting centres were opened in Purchaman district on Election Day.

About 166 polling centres were opened on Election Day in Farah. So far, votes of about 1,000 centres had been quarantined by the IEC across the country.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/19/36-farah-polling-centres%E2%80%99-votes-quarantined>



91 Ghazni polling centres' ballots quarantined

By [Saifullah Maftoon](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 16:44

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): The Independent Election Commission (*IEC*) has ordered putting ballot boxes of 91 polling stations in the quarantine in southern Ghazni province, where 50 complaints have been filed, an official said on Saturday.

Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (*IECC*) official in Ghazni City Ahmad Shah Wahdat told Pajhwok Afghan News 17 of the complaints had been lodged against presidential candidates, 20 against provincial candidates and 17 against IEC workers.

“Seven of the complaints which had evidence in support have been investigated and as a result an Afghan Local Police (*ALP*) commander and a representative of a provincial candidate were fined,” Wahdat said.

He said they had forwarded all the objections to the IEC's main office in Kabul, which in return, ordered ballot boxes of 91 polling stations to be sealed.

He said each of the suspicious polling centres contained three polling stations and votes cast in these sites would be recounted in the presence of election observers.



Ballots boxes from 3 Kunar sites audited

By [Khan Wali Salarzai](#) Apr 19, 2014 - 22:56

ASADABAD (Pajhwok): The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (*IECC*) on Saturday announced quarantining ballot boxes from three polling centres in the Nari district of eastern Kunar province.

These ballot boxes contained votes cast for presidential candidates in the April 5 polls, *IECC* Kunar chief Murtaza Habibyar told Pajhwok Afghan News.

The suspect votes were investigated and separated from real ones on the basis of complaints registered in this regard. He said some ballot papers had not been stamped and others wrongly folded.

He said representatives of presidential candidates, observer missions and Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (*FEFA*) officials had been invited to monitor the assessment.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/19/ballots-boxes-3-kunar-sites-audited>

Abdullah, Ahmadzai seem heading for a runoff

By [Pajhwok Report](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 17:16

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Afghan election commission (*IEC*) on Sunday announced 50 percent results from the April 5 presidential race, showing Abdullah Abdullah's lead has slightly increased over his main rival Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, but both seem heading for a runoff next month.

Abdullah, a former foreign minister in President Hamid Karzai's previous term, collected 44.4 percent (1536133) of the votes tallied and Ashraf Ghani bagged 33.2 percent (1146251), with Zalmai Rassoul trailing at 10.4 percent (357930) votes in the third position.

IEC chief Ahmad Yusuf Nuristani told reporters in Kabul the remaining five candidates in a whole had received 12 percent of the votes counted.

Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf secured seven percent (241014), Eng. Gutbuddin Hilal 2.7 percent (94556), Mohammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai

1.6 percent (55778), Daud Sultanzyoy 0.5 percent (16907) and Hidayat Amin Arsala 8368 votes.

Nuristani said a third batch of the preliminary results would be announced soon.

On Saturday, IEC spokesman Noor Mohammad Noor told reporters he would not rule out the possibility of the election going to a second round between the two top-rated presidential candidates.

He said the vote tallying process was on track and only 30 percent work needed to announce the preliminary results.

Noor said if the election went into a second round stage, the election commission might not be able to hold it in the stipulated time of two weeks after the final results due until May 14. Under the Afghan Constitution, a presidential candidate must bag 50 plus one percent votes to emerge the winner, and a run-off between two top-rated runners shall take place within two weeks after the final results.

Independent Electoral Complaints Commission spokesman Nader Muhseni told Pajhwok Afghan News they had so far assessed 400 complaints regarding fraud and other irregularities in 17 provinces.

He said fraud incidents classed as "Priority-A" complaints could impact the results, saying a large number of photos, videos and other materials could be seen shared on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

The winner will replace President Karzai, who is in office since the 2001 US-led invasion ousted the Taliban, and whose relations with Washington have sharply deteriorated for his refusal to sign the security agreement.

[Link: http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/abdullah-ahmadzai-seem-heading-runoff](http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/abdullah-ahmadzai-seem-heading-runoff)

Thousands of votes in Herat cancelled

By [Storai Karimi](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 16:56

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) on Sunday said it had cancelled about 100,000 votes cast at 27 polling stations in western Herat province.

IECC Herat chief Abdullah Sherzai told reporters the votes were thrown out in light of investigations into 28 complaints registered in this regard.

He said the invalid votes belonged to presidential candidates and had been cast at polling stations in Herat City and Kushk, Rubat Sangi, Shindand, Farsi, Gulran and Kuhsan districts.

"Most of the votes were fraudulently cast in favour of Dr Abdullah Abdullah, Zamai Rassoul, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf," Sherzai said.

He confirmed some complaints were against IEC workers, accusing them of working for a particular candidate. Sherzai said a review of complaints from Chishti and Farsi districts was underway and could lead to cancelling more votes.

He said the Farsi district chief had also been accused of his involvement in election fraud and he would be tried if found guilty.

The IEC has sought the removal of the Herat Education Director for misusing his authority during the election process, but he continues to be on the job.

An IECC commissioner in Herat, Abdur Razzaq Najrabi said the decision to invalidate votes had been taken in haste. He claimed most of the complaints received at the IECC office were baseless.

Najrabi said such decisions amounted to deceiving the nation, saying there had been no clear reason to invalidate such a large number of votes.

[Link: http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/thousands-votes-herat-cancelled](http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/thousands-votes-herat-cancelled)

Kandahar candidate gunned down in Quetta

By [Bashir Ahmad Naadim](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 15:21

KANDAHAR CITY (Pajhwok): A provincial council candidate in southern Kandahar province has been gunned down by unknown assailants in the capital of Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province, officials said on Sunday.

Shah Mahmood Jalal, who contested on a provincial council seat in Kandahar during the April 5 elections, was killed a day earlier in Quetta, said Dawa Khan Minapal, the Kandahar information and culture director, who is also acting spokesman for the provincial governor.

He said Jalal had gone to Quetta for treatment and his corpse was brought to Kandahar late on Saturday evening from Quetta and taken to the Mirwais Hospital.

He said Jalal was a native of the Arghandab district, but he had recently located to Kandahar City with family.

A doctor at the Mirwais hospital told Pajhwok that Jalal had been shot in the face and his body was delivered to the hospital last night.

Kandahar Independent Election Commission (IEC) chief Abdul Hadi Dawari said they had come to know about Jalal's assassination through the media.

[Link: http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/kandahar-candidate-gunned-down-quetta](http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/kandahar-candidate-gunned-down-quetta)

Ballot boxes in 26 Balkh sites found suspicious

By [Zabihullah Ihsas](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 16:25

MAZAR-I-SHARIF (Pajhwok): The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) on Sunday said it had recommended placing under quarantine ballot boxes of 26 polling centres in northern Balkh province.

They said a vote recount and audit into 50 of 73 ballot boxes from 17 polling centres in Balkh had been completed in compliance with directives from the Independent Election Commission (IEC)'s main office in Kabul.

IECC official in Balkh Dad Mohammad Anabi told Pajhwok Afghan News there were 126 complaints and all of them had been investigated.

On the basis of 26 complaints having valid documents in support, ballot boxes of the 26 polling centres had been recommended to the IEC headquarters to isolate them, he said. These centres were in Mazar-i-Sharif and 14 districts, but most of the suspicious ballots belonged to Mazar-i-Sharif, Zari and Chamtal districts, he explained.

Anabi said the remaining 100 complaints did not lead to isolating any ballot boxes because the objections lacked documents in support.

“It is possible some of the 100 complaints were important, but the claims had no credibility in the absence of evidence,” he said.

He said they had set last Friday the last date for registering complaints, but no one turned up to register and they had to wrap up the process.

Anabi said IECC officials themselves had tried their level best to find evidence with regard to the remaining complaints, but in vain.

He said the process to review and recount votes polled at 17 polling centres, containing 73 ballot boxes, began a week back and was still ongoing.

Some of the 50 ballot boxes investigated had technical problems, said Anabi, explaining some ballots had not been stamped and one box had its locks broken and others votes wrongly folded.

He said most of the violations had technical aspect showing mistakes by election officials, but there was the possibility of interferences by irrelevant individuals.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/ballot-boxes-26-balkh-sites-found-suspicious>

8 Farah officials fined over electoral fraud

By [Zahin](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 11:18

FARAH CITY (Pajhwok): Two district police chiefs and six Independent Election Commission (*IEC*) workers have been fined for committing fraud during the April 5 elections in western Farah province, an official said Sunday.

Those fined included police chiefs for Khak-i-Safed and Pusht Koh districts, who had been deployed for security of polling stations in their respective towns.

The six IEC's workers had been tasked on the election day to monitor the voting process, regional Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) chief Ali Ahmad Nahzat told Pajhwok Afghan News.

However, he did not reveal the nature of fraud the six persons had committed. Another IECC official, wishing not to be named, said the police chiefs had been fined 12,000 afghanis and the IEC observers 3,000 afghanis each.

He said the individuals had been accused of their involvement in vote rigging. While, Nahzat said

the individuals were fined after a thorough investigation into the charges against them. Without giving details, he said one of the district police chiefs was charged on two counts because he had been involved in two separate fraud incidents during the elections. So far 3,500 complaints about the April 5 elections have been recorded with the IECC office. <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/8-farah-officials-fined-over-electoral-fraud>



92 ballot boxes quarantined; 11 officials fined

By [Hidayatullah Hamdard](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 14:46

KUNDUZ CITY (Pajhwok): At least 92 ballot boxes have been quarantined and 11 officials including two provincial council candidates and nine Independent Election Commission (*IEC*) workers fined on charges of elections fraud in northeastern Kunduz province, an official said Sunday. Sibghatullah Wafai, regional Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News 92 ballot boxes from 21 polling centers in Kunduz city and five other districts were quarantined.

He said the IECC workers had started recounting in presence of election observers and the result of the review would be published later.

He said it was expected 14 more polling centers belonging to Chahar Dara, Imam Sahib, Khan Abad, Ali Abad and Dasht-I-Archi districts would also be quarantined in the days to come.

Sixty complaints in line with April 5 elections have been recorded, with 35 of them stood in B and C categories which would be addressed while complaints with regard of A categories remained unresolved, the IECC chief added.

He said two of the provincial candidates with one of them posted his campaign poster in 15 meters distance to the polling center and another directed his two supporters to enter a polling center without authority letter.

He said nine of the IEC staffers were fined 20,000 afghanis on charges of irregularities and other anomalies.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/92-ballot-boxes-quarantined-11-officials-fined>

Many Nimroz polling centers' votes quarantined

By [Ahmad Shah Saber](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 11:54

ZARANJ (Pajhwok): The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) on Sunday said quarantined votes of 18 polling centers and 17 poll stations of southwestern Nimroz province.

Provincial IECC chief Dr Abdul Raziq Saifi told Pajhwok Afghan News 42 complaints in line with April 5 elections had been recorded, with 28 among them those cases stood in A category.

He said eight of the class A complaints had been recorded against the presidential runners while the rests against provincial candidates. Fourteen of the complaints had recorded against Independent Election Commission (IEC) workers.

Votes of three polling sites have so far recounted in presence of observers and recounting votes of the rest of ballot boxes was underway, he added.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/many-nimroz-polling-centers%E2%80%99-votes-quarantined>



Journalists awarded commendation letters

By [Pajhwok reporter](#) Apr 20, 2014 - 13:36

KABU (Pajhwok): Police in central Uruzgan province lauded the role of media-people in creating awareness among masses about the importance of elections and awarded them with commendation certificates, an official said Sunday. A big ceremony was arranged on Sunday at the provincial police headquarters to honour journalists with appreciation certificates for discharging their duties during the polls. Col. Matiullah Khan, provincial police chief, praised the role played by media men for their ceaseless efforts to make the landmark April 5 elections successful. He urged journalists to safeguard the interests of Afghanistan in discharging of their professional duties. Media played a highly significant role in conducting free, fair and transparent ballot.

Present on the occasion, journalists thanked the police chief and underlined the importance for greater cooperation between police and the journalists' community.

Ajmal Wisal, reporter of Pajhwok Afghan News in Uruzgan also received commendation letter.

Earlier, similar ceremonies were held by different institutions in various provinces, including the capital Kabul, awarded journalists with appreciation certificates for their positive role in the ballot.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/20/journalists-awarded-commendation-letters>



Ghani asks IEC to stop releasing more results

By [Khwaja Basir Ahmad Fitri](#) Apr 21, 2014 - 13:57

KABUL (Pajhwok): Presidential runner Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai on Monday asked the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to stop releasing further results until fraudulent votes were cleaned out.

Ghani expressed his concern a day after the IEC announced a second batch of partial results based on nearly 50 percent of votes tallied in all provinces, showing his main challenger Abdullah Abdullah has widened his lead over him. Abdullah, a former foreign minister in President Hamid Karzai's previous term, collected 44.4 percent (1536133) votes, with Ghani trailing at 33.2 percent (1146251).

Ahmadzai, a former finance minister, acknowledged to reporters in Kabul that the results were not final and could change because half of the votes still needed to be tallied. However, he suggested it was imperative to separate genuine votes from bogus ones before announcing further returns. "We agree with the IEC that the results are not final but the question is that why it announced the results before separating bogus from genuine votes," he said.

Ahmadzai hoped the IEC would announce the next batch of results after throwing out fraudulent votes.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/21/ghani-asks-iec-stop-releasing-more-results>



HIA: No favourite in runoff race

By [Javid Hamim Kakar](#) Apr 21, 2014 - 12:14

KABUL (Pajhwok): The [Hezb-i-Islami](#) Afghanistan (HIA), led by Gulbadin Hekmatyar, has decided not to support any candidate if the elections headed for a second round runoff. The warning from HIA, believed to be the second largest militant group after the Taliban, comes a day after the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) announced 50 percent partial results from the April 5 vote.

The returns show Abdullah Abdullah's lead over his main rival Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai has slightly increased.

The former foreign minister in President Hamid Karzai's previous term collected 44.4 percent of the votes tallied and Ghani bagged 33.2 percent with Zalmai Rassoul trailing at 10.4 percent in the third position.

Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf secured seven percent, Eng. Gutbuddin Hilal 2.7 percent, Mohammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai 1.6 percent, Daud Sultanzyoy 0.5 percent and Hidayat Amin Arsala 8368 votes. However, it seems the two leading candidates will be unable to achieve the magic 50+1 percent of votes, raising the possibility that the elections will go to a second round.

The Hekmatyar's faction supported Hilal in the elections, but now says they would not support anyone in a runoff competition. An HIA official, wishing not to be named, told Pajhwok Afghan News they would boycott a second round runoff.

He said the decision in this regard had been made by the HIA leadership and its executive body, adding more details about their stance would be made public accordingly.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/21/hia-no-favourite-runoff-race>

MPs wants fake and valid votes separated

By [Abasin Zaheer](#) Apr 21, 2014 - 18:35

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some [Wolesi Jirga](#) --- lower house of parliament --- members on Monday asked the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) to withhold preliminary results until fraudulent votes were separated from original ones. Earlier, presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai also asked the IEC to stop releasing further results until fraudulent votes were cleaned out.

The calls come a day after the IEC released partial results based on nearly 50 percent votes tallied in all the provinces, showing Abdullah Abdullah's lead over Ahmadzai has slightly increased.

Abdullah with 44 percent votes is in the lead and Ahmadzai with 33 percent in the second place. The Electoral Complaints Commission has said its investigation into about 3000 registered complaints is underway. Bashir Ahmad Tanj, who represents northern Faryab province in the lower house, said the two electoral bodies should separate bogus votes from genuine ones before announcing further results. He warned if fake votes were not cleaned out, it could leave the people of Afghanistan concerned about the vote's credibility.

His viewpoint was echoed by a colleague from western Herat province, Manwar Shah Bahadari, who asked the IEC to stay committed to impartiality throughout the process in order to avoid any political turmoil. He said the people of Herat did not support fraud in the elections and their votes should not be considered fraudulent. This he said a day after the complaints commission declared about 100,000 votes as invalid at 27 polling centres in Herat. Ghulam Hussain Nasiri, who represents central Maidan Wardak province, told the house that the elections were of great importance to the people of Afghanistan.

He said officials of the two electoral bodies should appear before the legislature and brief lawmakers about electoral problems.

He said the ballots should have been counted inside polling centres because tallying them at the IEC's tally centre could lead to fraud. However, votes have been counted at polling centres amid complaints observers were denied access to results in some polling stations.

Nasiri said the IEC should announce results based on real votes because any ambiguity could push the country into crisis.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy said the IEC should play a responsible role in compiling results. "The Wolesi Jirga is not supportive of electoral fraud nor it accepts fraud, but votes should not be cancelled if the evidence is not strong enough," he remarked.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/21/mps-wants-fake-and-valid-votes-separated>



Senators underline preparations for runoff

By [Abasin Zaheer](#) Apr 22, 2014 - 16:30

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some members of [Meshrano Jirga](#) or the upper house of parliament on Tuesday asked electoral bodies to separate genuine votes from the bogus ballot and get prepared for the runoff.

The call came at a time when second round of partial results of April, 5 presidential and provincial council polls had been made public by the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) the other day. Earlier, the IEC announced a second batch of partial results based on nearly 50 percent of votes tallied in all provinces, showing his main challenger Abdullah Abdullah has widened his lead over his main rival Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai.

Abdullah, a former foreign minister in President Hamid Karzai's previous term, collected 44.4 percent (1536133) votes, with Ahmadzai trailing at 33.2 percent (1146251).

Bismillah Afghan Mal, a Kandahar representative in the upper house, said the election commission should separate fake votes from the valid ballot and then announce more results.

Without bowing to pressures, the electoral commissions should take decision by keeping established law in mind, honor people's votes and bring electoral violators to justice, he added.

His colleague from Kunar province, Rafiullah Haidari, urged candidates to demonstrate patience until final results were announced and avoid spreading rumor.

"All candidates should focus to serve people and they should avoid comments which fuel differences among people," he added.

A senator from Kabul, Khaliq Dad Balaghi, said releasing of partial results showed the election was heading toward second round.

If none of candidates secured 50+1 percent of votes cast, the election constitutionally go to the second round and two leading runners would contest in the runoff.



Paktika's 183 polling centres votes quarantined

By [Ali Muhammad Nazari](#) Apr 22, 2014 - 17:00

SHARAN (Pajhwok): At least ballots of 183 polling centres had been quarantined in southeastern Paktika province, election officials said on Tuesday.

Abdul Majid Malang, the Independent Electoral Complaint Commission (IECC) commissioner in Paktika, said 50 of the voting centres were located in Orgun and the rests in other districts.

In his chat with Pajhwok Afghan News, he added: "Each voting centre comprises six ballot boxes and 1,098 ballot boxes of the polling centres have been quarantined. Bogus and valid votes will be separated."

He said votes of 12 boxes in Waza Khwah and Wrombai districts that were reportedly stuffed in favor of presidential and provincial council runners had been declared invalid. But he gave no further details.

Paktika IECC director, Muhammad Hanif Hairan, said they played active role in monitoring the polls in the province.

So far, 34 of the 43 complaints recorded by his office, which were evaluated with nine more, were sent to the main office for evaluation, he added.

Hairan said the women department director, Bibi Hawa and district chief of Khoshamand, Gula Khan had been fined 35,000 and 70,000 afghanis respectively following their involvement in fraud in the ballot.

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2014/04/22/paktika%E2%80%99s-183-polling-centres-votes-quarantined>