



IEC chief for Kunduz gunned down

By [Hidayatullah Hamdard](#) Sep 18, 2013 - 11:23

KUNDUZ CITY ([PAN](#)): The Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) chief for the northern province of Kunduz was gunned down in the provincial capital on Wednesday morning, police said.

Eng. Amanullah Aman came under attack from unidentified motorcyclists in the 3rd police district of Kunduz City at 6.30am, the deputy police chief for the province said.

Col. Ibadullah Talwar told Pajhwok Afghan News the IEC chief was evacuated to hospital after being seriously wounded in the assault. The assailants made good their escape.

But Public Health Director Dr. Saad Mukhtar said Eng. Aman succumbed to his wounds two hours after being transferred to the Doctors Without Borders' Hospital.

The 45-year-old IEC official, who had also served as an education official, received critical bullet injuries in his abdomen, thigh and arms. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Link <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/18/iec-chief-kunduz-gunned-down>

Presidential vote: 40 obtain documents

By [Mohammad Asif Ahmadzai](#) Sep 18, 2013 - 18:06

KABUL ([PAN](#)): The Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) on Wednesday said 40 likely candidates, including a woman, had obtained information kits on presidential elections.

Another 137 individuals, including 10 women, acquired documents on provincial council polls, slated for April 5, 2014, IEC spokesman Noor Mohammad Noor told Pajhwok Afghan News.

The papers contain conditions and other information for election candidates. He asked likely contenders, who obtained the documents, not to leave a single content untouched; otherwise their candidacy would stand rejected.

Noor asked presidential hopefuls to submit their nomination papers to the IEC at the earliest because there would be rush during the last days of the registration process.

Earlier, a reliable source confided to Pajhwok Afghan News that some key politicians had obtained information kits from the commission.

They include the grand electoral alliance members Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Ahmad Zia Massoud, Commerce Minister Anwarul Haq Ahadi and Right and Justice party chief Hanif Atmar.

Security Transition Commission chief Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, Mohammad Mohaqiq, former defence minister Abdul Rahim Wardak and presidential advisor Hakim Noorzai have also received the papers.

Other recipients are Nangarhar governor Gul Agha Sherzai, Sardar Mohammad Nadir Naeemi, Abdullah Kandahari, former presidential candidate Sarwar Ahmadzai, Dil Aqa Kohdamani, Duad Sultanzoy and Younas Fakoor.

Noor said more than 60 organisations had been registered to monitor the elections and many others had also submitted documents in this regard.

So far 500 election observers had obtained relevant cards, he added. Registration centres remained open from 8am to 4pm and on every Thursday from 8am to 1pm, he added.

As elections approach, political groups and alliances have intensified contracts to muster public support and reach consensus over fielding joint candidates.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/18/presidential-vote-40-obtain-documents>



Sadat elected as electoral watchdog chief

By [Abasin Zaheer](#) Sep 19, 2013 - 18:13

KABUL ([PAN](#)): Soon after being sworn in, new Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) members on Thursday elected Abdul Sattar Sadat as head of the watchdog's administrative board, Reda Azimi his deputy and Nadir Mohseni as secretary.

On Sept. 11, the selection committee recommended 15 of the 263 short-listed applicants to the president. The nominees included three females, five Pashtuns, four Tajiks, two Uzbeks, three Hazaras and one Turkmen.

Karzai appointed five of the individuals as IECC commissioners last week. Sadat, Azimi, Mohseni, Azizullah Aryafar and Paighambar Qul Doghan are members of the electoral watchdog.

The IECC members were sworn in at a ceremony, attended by [Meshrano Jirga](#) Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar, Supreme Court Judge Bahauddin Baha and other officials.

Mohseni told reporters the commission, in its maiden session in Kabul, appointed administrative board members through a secret ballot. Sadat and Aryafar ran for the top slot. Sadat, who secured four votes, was elected as the commission's chief.

Azimi and Mohseni were elected unopposed as deputy head and secretary respectively. Sadat recalled the masses, political parties and civil society groups were not happy with the outcome of the previous elections.

"We will make our all-out efforts to ensure the elections are transparent, inclusive, free and acceptable to the people of Afghanistan," he said after his election as IECC chief.

He promised the panel would discharge its duty with full honesty, saying the commission was autonomous and its members would act independently.

"We accept there are challenges and threats, but we will not bow to pressure," he vowed, appealing to the masses, political and civil society groups to extend their cooperation to

the IECC in ensuring transparency in the April 5 presidential and provincial council elections.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/19/sadat-elected-electoral-watchdog-chief>



Who is who on IECC?

By [Khawaja Basir Ahmad](#) Sep 19, 2013 - 20:21

KABUL ([PAN](#)): Three members of the Independent Electoral Complaint Commission (IECC) have studied law and political science, one graduated from history and geography and the fifth did masters in journalism and human rights.

The five individuals, who were sworn in at a ceremony in Kabul on Thursday include Abdul Sattar Sadat, Reda Azimi, Nadar Muhseni, Paighambar Qul Doghan and Azizullah Aryafar. They were among the 15 short-listed individuals introduced by the selection committee to the President.

After taking oath on Thursday, the members held a ballot, electing Sadat as the commission chief, Azimi as his deputy, Mohseni as secretary and spokesman of the IECC. Sadat, son of Abdul Jabar, was born in 1979 in northern Baghlan province, where he studied high school before doing his masters in law and political science from Kabul University in 2000.

A poet and writer, Sadat established a cultural centre in Baghlan and worked as a civil society activist. He remained administrative board's member of the [Wolesi Jirga](#). Azimi was born in 1969 in central Parwan province. She studied journalism at Kabul University and obtained a bachelor degree in human rights from Denmark.

She worked as editor-in-chief for a magazine named Women Rights, and was head of coordination office of Afghanistan-Pakistan, and had worked as deputy of rights and social justice of Afghanistan.

She was appointed as member of [Meshrano Jirga](#) on reserved seat by President in 2005 and has been working as a commissioner of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) over the past one and a half years.

She has authored three books namely “Women Rights in Islamic Countries”, “Domestic Violence Against Women” and “announcement is a crime”.

Muhseni was born in 1978 in Yakawlang district of northern Bamyan province. He graduated from law and political science faculty of Kabul University in 2005.

Without giving details, he told Pajhwok Afghan News that he had obtained a master’s degree in law from a foreign country.

He has worked as head of the registration department at the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Commission and taught as lecturer at private education institutes including Katib, Tolo Aftab and Gharjistan in Kabul.

Aryafar was born in 1969 in central Parwan province and has acquired BA degree in law and political science from Kabul University.

From 1992 to 1997, he worked as director of publications for Afghan film and worked as publication manager at Radio Television of Afghanistan (RTA) during the interim government.

Since 2009, he has been working as director of information and public relations at the IEC.

Doghan was born in 1954 in the Aaqcha district of Jawzjan province. After his high school, he graduated from history and geography from the education faculty of Kabul University.

He was the translation department head at the Ministry of Education and was the chairman of carpet export union. He also served as district chief for Andkhoi, Darzabad and Qarqeen districts of Jawzjan.

Link; <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/19/who-who-iec>



IEC seeks civil society help in holding inclusive polls

By [Pajhwok reporter](#) Sep 19, 2013 - 16:36

KABUL ([PAN](#)): The Independent Election Committee ([IEC](#)) on Thursday sought cooperation from civil society in holding transparent and inclusive polls, warning no one would be allowed to interfere in the process.

Addressing a conference on the role of civil society networks, IEC member Sarir Ahmad Barmak said they needed public cooperation in conducting an inclusive election.

He acknowledged without people’s support, the commission would find it hard to hold fair elections. In order to make the process a success, support from the civil society groups was a basic condition, he continued.

Barmak added the panel had mapped out a mechanism preventing meddling from individuals, government and non-governmental organisations in the elections.

“The strategy barring security organs and other institutions from creating hurdles to the electoral process will be shared with the government and NGO representatives at a meeting,” he explained.

The panel has also framed a policy banning candidates from putting an ethnic prospective on the polls. The official said any contender violating the policy would be disqualified.

Calling insecurity a major challenge to the elections slated for April 2014, he urged relevant institutions take all possible measures to ensure a satisfactory law and order environment.

Speaking at the conference, [Wolesi Jirga](#) member and head of Civil Green Movement Naheed Farid said approval of new electoral laws, security transition, increasing insecurity and tensions among political parties made the upcoming vote more challenging.

Emphasising on tight security and monitoring of the election process, he said the polls should be held in an inclusive and democratic manner.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/19/iec-seeks-civil-society-help-holding-inclusive-polls>

No presidential runner registered so far: IEC

By [Muhammad Hassan Khetab](#) Sep 19, 2013 - 18:10

KABUL ([PAN](#)): No candidate has registered so far for the presidential election slated for April 2014, but 213 individuals have jumped into the race for provincial councils since the beginning of the registration process.

The processes of candidates’ registration began in mid-September. The Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) spokesman, said on Thursday 46 possible candidates, including a woman, had been issued information kits.

Noor Mohammad Noor told Pajhwok Afghan News the commission had already guided recipients of presidential vote information kits on how to fill out the prescribed forms and submit them to the IEC.

He said filling the forms would take candidates time to apply for registration. Each of the recipients has been asked to produce 100,000 voter cards of their supporters and \$20,000 (1000, 000 afs) in cash guarantee.

Noor added so far, 1,776 people had received information kits for provincial council candidates. As many as 213 of them have registered, including 22 women. Each of them should have the support of 200 to 600 people and deposit \$400 in the IEC account.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/19/no-presidential-runner-registered-so-far-iec>



Enemies want to derail presidential vote: Tanin

By [Lalit K Jha](#) Sep 20, 2013 - 09:52

WASHINGTON ([PAN](#)): The enemies of Afghanistan want to derail next year's presidential vote, the country's envoy to the United Nations told the Security Council on Thursday, a day after the assassination of a provincial election head, Amanullah Aman.

"Our enemies want to derail the process, as made evident by the assassination of the head of the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) office in Kunduz province. But let it be known, no such acts will prevent a successful electoral process from taking place," Afghan Ambassador to UN Zahir Tannin told the Security Council.

Addressing the powerful 15-member body of the United Nations, Tanin said that Afghanistan was preparing for its third presidential elections, an accomplishment that demonstrated the increased maturity of Afghanistan's emerging democracy.

"The last decades were characterised by decisions made with violence, problems solved through war and power solidified with weapons rather than votes. Electing a new president is an important symbol that bloody struggle for power in our country belongs to the past," he remarked.

He said the coming elections were seen by all as crucial to the success of the transformation decade, the trust of Afghans and the continuing support of the international community. "The Afghans know this deeply, and this is why Afghans from all walks of life are actively engaged in the process and debate before the elections."

A robust electoral framework had been established: new members of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and Independent Election Complaints Commission (IECC) appointed, a chairman of the IEC has been elected, a national security strategy has been arranged and two new pieces of legislation signed into law.

"As Afghanistan looks towards a brighter future, the enemies of Afghanistan -- the enemies of peace -- continue their violent campaigns against civilians, soldiers, civil servants, men, women, children and foreign forces. If they see brutality as the measure of their power, they are wrong; it is a measure of their weakness," he asserted.

Tanin said the first attempts at peace negotiations were undermined by the Taliban's determination to take Afghanistan back to the past. "But the Afghan people do not want to return to the past. They want the violence to end. This is why, despite the atrocities, Afghanistan's leadership has not lost faith in a political solution," he concluded.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/20/enemies-want-derail-presidential-vote-tanin>



Insecurity impedes voter cards' distribution

By [Saifullah Maftoon](#) Sep 21, 2013 - 15:14

GHAZNI CITY ([PAN](#)): Residents and some -

public representatives from Ghazni province say those living in remote parts could not travel to district centres for obtaining voter registration cards due to insecurity on roads.

A provincial council member and resident of the Andar district, Amanullah Kamrani, said remoteness of registration centres and insecurity remained a major challenge facing residents.

He said registration centres had been opened in district centres and those living 10 to 15 kilometres away were unable to visit them. If the government does not ensure highway security, it will have no option but to open voter registration centres in villages.

Another council member, Hamida Gulistani, said conditions for participation in the registration campaign remained unfavourable amid fewer registration centres and insecurity in remote parts.

She asked how residents of the districts, where administrative chiefs could not perform duties due to security threats, would obtain voter cards.

Zankhan, Giru, Waghaz, Nawa, Aab-i-Band and Rashidan are the towns where residents say voter registration centres are yet to be opened. Mohammadullah, who arrived in Ghazni City for shopping, said no registration centre had been opened in the district.

He added if a centre was opened, it would not help because people in remote parts -- fearing Taliban's wrath -- would not visit the facility.

A Giru resident, Abdul Karim, is among many who have not yet obtained voter cards. "There is no registration centre in our area, but people will not apply for voter cards due to insecurity and threats from the Taliban," he said.

However, the Independent Election Commission (*IEC*) chief for Ghazni, Abdul Basir Jalali, said registration centres were operational in 15 districts and so far 24,000 individuals had been registered, 23 percent of them females.

He added the commission planned to open registration centres in the remaining three districts and, if security was assured, such facilities would be extended to remote villages as well.

Around 20 days ago, IEC spokesman Noor Mohammad Noor put at two the number of districts -- Nawa and Zankhan --- where registration centres had not been opened.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/21/insecurity-impedes-voter-cards%E2%80%99-distribution>

70 registration centers closed in Paktia

By [Sahel Mangal](#) Sep 22, 2013 - 11:37

GARDEZ (*PAN*): Around 70 voter registration centres have been closed due to insecurity in several of districts of southern Paktia province, an official said on Sunday. Independent Election Commission (*IEC*) chief for the province, Amir Hamza Ahmadzai, told Pajhwok Afghan News the registration centres had been closed in Zadran, Garda Serai, Shawak, Janikhel, Samkani and Zurmat.

He claimed the provincial IEC had shared a list of the voter registration centres a few months ago with security organs. But the authorities concerned they could not provide security for the centers.

Closing the registration centers could deprive a large number of people of their franchise right in next year's presidential and provincial council elections, Ahmadzai warned.

Not satisfied with the current situation situations, residents of the restive border province said shutting the registration centres would raise questions the elections' credibility.

Abdul Hakim, hailing from Zurmat district, said thousands of voters would be affected by the closure of the registration centres. Hakim asked the government to maintain security in the districts.

Paktia police chief, Brig. Gen. Zalmai Oryakhel, said the districts were still under threat, but security forces were working together for paving the ground for a peaceful registration process.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/22/70-registration-centers-closed-paktia>



1st presidential runner files nomination papers

By [Muhammad Hassan Khitab](#) Sep 22, 2013 - 16:16

KABUL (*PAN*): Bismillah Sher on Sunday became the first presidential candidate to file his nomination papers with the Independent Election Commission (*IEC*).

Of the 48 people, including two women, who have obtained information kits on elections, Hezb-i-Wafaq-i-Milli leader Sher is the first to formally jump into the race this afternoon.

A day earlier, IEC Secretary Ziaul Haq Amarkhel said: "We are concerned at the delay in filing of nomination papers because conditions for contesting elections are tough for candidates this time around..."

Registration of candidates for the presidential and provincial council elections began six days ago, a process that will continue till October 6. So far, 1.4 million people have been issued voter registration cards, with women constituting 400,000 of them.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/22/1st-presidential-runner-files-nomination-papers>



Biased members still on IEC: Civil society

By [Pajhwok reporter](#) Sep 23, 2013 - 15:08

KABUL ([PAN](#)): Two leading civil society groups on Monday said their concerns about upcoming elections had increased due to lack of transparent and effective guidelines and the presence of biased commission members.

In a joint statement, Afghan Anti-Corruption Network (AACN) and Anti-Corruption Watch Organization said the nation was witness to fraudulent presidential and provincial council elections last time.

It added political appointees from the past still existed in certain key positions on the Independent Election Commission ([IEC](#)) and as well in the Secretariat, calling them the main cause of fraud in the previous polls.

"Under Article 6 of the Election Commission Law, the commission's chairman, his deputy, secretary and Secretariat head are obliged to perform their jobs neutrally, responsibly and in full conformity with the Constitution, Election Law and other applicable laws. "

Under Article 45 of the Election Law, a candidate for the presidential vote should submit serial numbers of one hundred thousand voter registration cards. A candidate for provincial council is required to submit 200 to 600 voter cards to the election commission.

The groups alleged several candidates were trying to obtain old serial numbers of voters from the Election Commission and most probably misused them in their favour. "There is speculation that certain commission employees may sell them to candidates. It will absolutely endanger the legitimacy of the upcoming elections."

The AACN and ACWO) asked the election commission to grant full attention to such fraudulent activities and not allow such practices take place for the sake of transparency.

"To prevent any possible deceptive action, the commission is requested to publish the serial Nos. of the voter registration provides by the candidates on relevant websites. Similarly, copies of the cards should not be accepted and instead original should be acquired."

AACN once again urged the Independent Election Commission to respect the Constitution of Afghanistan, Election Law and all other applied Laws and maintain neutrality, saying the Independent Election Commission is expected to prevent all kinds of frauds to safeguard legitimacy of elections.

The network also called on political party, national and international bodies to closely watch the process.

Link: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/23/biased-members-still-iec-civil-society>

Mohaqiq quits as MP to contest presidential vote

By [Abasin Zaheer](#) Sep 24, 2013 - 14:24

KABUL ([PAN](#)): Wahdat-i-Islami Party chief Mohammad Mohaqiq on Tuesday announced his resignation as a member of the [Wolesi Jirga](#), lower house of the parliament, to contest next year's presidential vote.

The Hazara community leader told Pajhwok Afghan News he had tendered his resignation to the Wolesi Jirga's Administrative Board. He said it would become clear on Sunday whether he would run for the presidency or vice-presidency.

Mohaqiq is widely tipped as one of National Coalition of Afghanistan's candidates for the two VP slots. Former foreign minister Dr. Abdullah Abdullah is believed to be the alliance nominee for the top constitutional office.

Under the Election Law, all government officials, including judges, attorneys and civil servants, have to quit their jobs if they want to run for presidential, parliamentary and provincial council polls. Resignation has to be submitted 75 days ahead of the elections.

Meanwhile, Wolesi Jirga 2nd Deputy Speaker Mohammad Saleh Saljooqi confirmed receiving Mohaqiq's resignation. First Deputy Speaker Mirwais Yasini has approved the resignation, informing the Independent Election Commission of Mohaqiq's intention.

Link:<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/24/mohaqiq-quits-mp-contest-presidential-vote>



Govt determined to hold fair elections: Khalili

By [Zarghona Salehi](#) Sep 24, 2013 - 17:36

KABUL (*PAN*): Second-Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili on Tuesday said there would be no problem if computerised national identity cards were not issued to all Afghans ahead of next year's elections.

The electronic ID cards were to be delivered before the April 2014 presidential and provincial council polls, but the plan is unlikely to be completed till that date.

Amirzai Sangin, the telecommunications and information technology minister, said earlier computerised ID cards could not be issued until elections.

Addressing the first international Information and Telecommunication Technology (ICT) Conference in Kabul, the minister said the process would resume after the elections.

But Khalili, who also attended the conference, said elections would not lack transparency if the cards were not issued.

Urging people to obtain voter cards, the VP said the government was determined to take every possible step to ensure inclusive and fair elections, acceptable to all.

Link:<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/24/govt-determined-hold-fair-elections-khalili>

Wolesi Jirga approves law against land grab

By [Abasin Zaheer](#) Sep 23, 2013 - 15:36

KABUL (*PAN*): The *Wolesi Jirga*, lower house of the parliament, on Monday unanimously approved a draft law against usurpation of government and private lands, a major problem facing the war-torn country.

The house commission on monitoring government activities submitted the three-chapter law, having 17 articles, to the assembly for endorsement today.

Fazal Azim Zalmai Mujaddedi, the commission head, said a key objective was to provide assistance to judicial organs in wresting back illegally grabbed lands and preventing the seizure of such properties in future.

"Based on the proposed law and in light of other regulations, the government reserves the right to charge lease on the land and properties unlawfully seized and fine and imprison grabbers," he told the house.

Mujaddedi revealed regional warlords and government officials had illegitimately seized more than half a million acres of land across the country. "The practice continues apace, thanks to corruption in state institutions and the absence of an effective law in this regard."

In response to calls for exposing the accused, Mujaddedi said the commission had prepared a detailed report on land grab that would be placed soon before the legislators.

Sher Wali Wardak, the panel's deputy head, told Pajhwok Afghan News the report contained names of 15,000 individuals who had illegally occupied government and private properties. He claimed the grabbers included ministers, governors, police chiefs, senior government officials and tribal elders.

But lawmaker Abbas Ibrahim said the house panel could expose land sharks, particularly top government officials. "Only small-time land grabbers and low-level government servants will be named."

All 125 members present during the session raised their green cards, supporting approval of the proposed law, which will be sent to the *Meshrano Jirga*. When approved by the upper house, the draft will go to the president, who will sign it into law.

Link:<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2013/09/23/wolesi-jirga-approves-law-against-land-grab>