

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is conducting an observation mission and analyzing Afghanistan's electoral process before, during and after the April 5 presidential and provincial council elections.

## Complaints adjudication may delay announcement of final presidential election results

The Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) is working to process more than 2,000 complaints and submit its decisions to the IEC by May 11. However, an IECC official stated that the process could be extended, potentially delaying the release of the final results for the April 5 presidential elections.

The IEC announced preliminary results on April 26 and indicated that Abdullah Abdullah received 44.9 percent of the vote, while Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai received 31.5 percent. Zalmi Rassoul received the third highest number of votes with 11.5 percent, while Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf received 7.1 percent.

The IEC plans to announce the final results on May 14, but it cannot do so until all complaints are resolved. The IECC has already extended the process past the original May 8 deadline, and now plans to send its decisions to the IEC on May 11. The IECC official said that the commission could extend its complaints process until May 18 if necessary.

There are 2,133 complaints related to polling and counting and 80 appeals against Provincial IECC (PIECC) decisions. A total of 121 complaints are related to the preliminary results. The IEC invalidated more than 234,000 votes from 525 polling stations, including 100,000 from 150 polling stations in Herat.

Abdullah's campaign submitted 115 of the 121 complaints related to the preliminary results, while four were submitted on behalf of Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai. The campaigns of Mohammad Daoud Sultanzoy and Mohammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai submitted one complaint each. All candidates requested more information on the votes invalidated from the 525 polling stations. Abdullah's team requested information specifically on invalidated votes in Baghlan, Herat and Kunduz provinces.

"The IEC says that votes of 525 sites were invalidated, but it's not clear where these sites are located," said a member of Abdullah Abdullah's campaign. "Knowing this will allow us to understand whether we had votes there or not."

Khalid Orey, head of the IEC's legal department, said votes from the 525 polling stations were questionable because they lacked IEC stamps and signatures from site managers.

The IECC is processing complaints by region and has scheduled daily public hearings from May 4 to 9. It held its first public session on April 30 to discuss its dismissal of nine complaints against IEC decisions on invalidated votes.

The IECC is investigating another 746 polling centers in 31 provinces. The province with the highest number of polling centers under investigation is Paktika with 89. Eighty-four (84) polling centers in Herat are under investigation, while 76 are under investigation in Kandahar. Logar has one polling center under investigation, Kapisa has two and both Panjshir and Kunar have three.

The IECC's spokesman, Nader Mohseni, told Tolo News that more than 1,000 complaints were directed at IEC staff.

The Provincial IECC in Ghazni is investigating allegations of fraud against a number of police chiefs and an IEC district field coordinator who was allegedly caught stuffing ballot boxes in Nahoor district. In Andar district, the PIECC found ballot boxes in three polling centers stuffed with ballots that had not been separated from their original bundles.

In Bamyán, the Provincial IECC issued fines against two IEC officials for allegedly casting fraudulent ballots in favor of specific presidential candidates. However, the IEC officials appealed and the cases are under investigation. The IECC invalidated two ballot boxes at a polling center in Kahmard district, which was raided by armed men who prevented people from voting and stuffed the boxes with about 1,200 votes.

The Provincial IECC in Daikundi issued a fine against a candidate who allegedly attempted fraud by distributing fake ballot papers with names of rival candidates removed. The candidate appealed the decision.

## Presidential candidates declare campaign expenditures

Abdullah Abdullah declared almost twice as much in campaign spending as his closest rival, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai. According to data posted on the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) website, Abdullah Abdullah spent slightly more than the legal limit of 10 million Afghanis/AFN (approximately 175,000 USD) and received nearly 14 million AFN in donations. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai declared approximately 5.7 million AFN in expenditures and nearly 3 million AFN in donations.

No.	Presidential Candidate	Total Donations (AFN)	Total Expenditures (AFN)
1	Dr. Abdullah Abdullah	13,984,500	10,023,954
2	Muhammad Daoud Sultanzy	101,000	4,037,569
3	Abdul Rahim Wardak	0	399,280
4	Abdul Qayum Karzai	1,105,000	8,014,754
5	Muhammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai	2,830,200	5,698,842
6	Muhammad Nader Naeem	2,350,000	5,497,863
7	Zalmai Rassoul	9,840,000	9,840,842
8	Eng. Qudbuddin Hilal	11,000,000	6,210,303
9	Muhammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai	0	8,402,370
10	Prof. Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf	540,000	5,228,674
11	Hadayat Amin Arsala	1,252,350	10,116,260
<b>Total</b>		<b>43,003,050</b>	<b>73,470,711</b>

Source: IEC website, May 5, 2014

Presidential and provincial council candidates are required to submit campaign expense reports throughout the election to the IEC, which then posts the information online. Candidates who violate expenditure limits can face penalties, including fines. However, the Commission stated during the campaign that it would be difficult to verify expenditures and even called on civil society groups and the public to report any evidence of overspending.

According to data posted on the IEC website, two candidates reported receiving no donations at all: Rahim Wardak, who dropped out of the race before Election Day and declared spending nearly 4 million AFN during the campaign; and Mohammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai, who claimed 8.4 million AFN in expenditures.

As preliminary results issued by the IEC on April 26 revealed that none of the presidential candidates' preliminary figures had 50 percent of the vote, it is highly likely that a second round election will be conducted.

The IEC is required to publish on its website any corrections to the preliminary results from audits or recounts. If a results form is changed after a recount, the IEC is required to publish the revised form along with the original and an explanation for the change.

Mr. Khalid Orya, chief of the IEC's legal department, stated that the recount—based on the disqualification of 234,000 ballots—has been completed, and that the IEC will publish the new results forms on its website.

The IEC has not posted any information on audits since April 21. By that date, it had completed 52.9 percent of the audits for 1,610 polling stations.

### Brief Updates

- The IEC has completed audits of the provincial council elections in 15 provinces, Tolo News reported. The IEC plans to announce preliminary results of the provincial council races on May 17 and final results on June 7.
- The National Tally Centre has processed preliminary results for the provincial council elections in 13 provinces.
- Mohammad Shafiq Gul Agha Sherzai has announced his support for Abdullah Abdullah for a possible second round election. Preliminary results indicated that Sherzai received 1.6 percent of the popular vote. Sherzai received the majority of his votes from the southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan.
- The IEC is considering holding the runoff election on June 14, which would provide enough time to obtain materials to replace those damaged and destroyed during the March 29 attack in Kabul on the IEC headquarters.
- The IEC has requested that its supplier in Dubai begin printing ballots for the runoff election.