

# *Balloting for Afghan presidential election concludes*

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KABUL, April 5 (Xinhua - RHC) -- The polling for Afghanistan's presidential election concluded on Saturday and counting of ballots has begun, the country's election officials have declared.

The voters also cast their votes for the provincial councils candidates on the same day.

The Afghan election officials said that the election was relatively peaceful.

Despite the rainy weather, the election officials said that they were hopeful that the turn-out was big. The exact numbers will be determined after the counting process is completed.

They said that the IEC has taken note of allegation of fraud and all those allegations are being investigated.

The Taliban insurgent group fighting the government had vowed to disrupt the election process.

The militants launched several attacks in one dozen of the country's 34 provinces, killing at least one person and injuring scores of others, but they failed to interrupt polling, officials said.

The number of presidential candidates has dropped to eight after the withdrawal of three contenders from the race, and over 2,500 candidates are running for 458 provincial council seats in 34 provinces, including

96 seats for women.

The leading presidential candidates are former Foreign Ministers, Abdullah Abdullah and Zulmai Rassoul, as well as former Finance Minister, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai.

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