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## Candidates Accuse Karzai, Iran of Trying to Rig Afghan Vote

Posted By [Jason Ditz](#)

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The [massive level of fraud in the September Afghan parliamentary elections](#) has left the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) with so much authority over which ballots and candidates to disqualify that many have complained they are able to de facto appoint much of the parliament. But who controls the ECC? The answer varies, depending on who you ask.

Nisar Faizi, a pro-US candidate in Herat, found himself disqualified for ballot stuffing after a fairly convincing win in the preliminary count. [Faizi insists that the Iranian government had bribed the ECC to get him disqualified.](#)

Iran's ability to buy influence in the country has been under growing scrutiny lately, particularly after the [confirmation that President Hamid Karzai regularly receives garbage bags full of unmarked bills from Iranian officials as a symbol of friendship.](#)

But 1.3 million ballots have been thrown out and a lot of disqualifications are still expected going forward. Many of the candidates losing out were rivals of President Karzai and they see Karzai's major influence over the ECC as the source of their disqualification.

The reality however is that with polling places never opening across about a quarter of the country, and about a fifth of the country's ballots being thrown out, no amount of

oversight and transparency by the ECC can possibly guarantee a result that is in keeping with the wishes of the voters. The vote was simply too crooked to salvage.