INTERNATIONAL

Zimbabwe slowly releases election results

Delay raises tensions amid fears of rigging

AP, Harare

Zimbabwe's Election Commission released a handful of results Monday from presidential and legislative elections, announcing an equal number of wins for both parties after a delay that raised tensions amid fears of rigging.

But the opposition party claimed unofficial partial results showed it had garnered 60 percent of the vote, compared with only 30 percent for President Robert Mugabe in the toughest challenge yet to the leader's 28-year rule.

In an early morning nationwide

broadcast on radio and television Monday, deputy chief elections officer Utoile Silaigwana declared results for six parliament seats three for Mugabe's ruling party, three for the opposition.

Then he went off the air, saying, "We'll be back with you when we have more results."

Four hours later, the commission announced results for another 18 parliament seats nine each for the ruling and opposition parties. Those results included Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa losing his seat in a former ruling party rural stronghold

The piecemeal announcements could not be explained. Election observers have said some initial results were known as early as 11 pm Saturday night, some four hours after polls closed. In previous elections, partial results have been announced within hours of voting ending.

"Clearly the delay is fuelling speculation that something might be going on," said Noel Kututwa, chairman of several civic, church and other groups.

Following the initial announcements from the government, Secretary-General Tendai Biti of the opposition Movement for

Democratic Changes told reporters that the party had won 96 seats in the House of Assembly. Biti said the results were based on vote counts posted on polling stations for 128 of the Assembly's 210 seats.

Voting in Saturday's elections was generally peaceful. But discontent with Mugabe has grown around the country, where unemployment stands at 80 percent. The same percentage of Zimbabweans survives on less than \$1 a day. Inflation is the highest in the world at more than 100,000 percent and people suffer crippling shortages of food, water, electricity, fuel and medicine.

Bush seeks to boost ties with allies

AP, Washington

President Bush is promoting Nato expansion and trying to shore up ties with allies as he heads to Europe for a week. But many world leaders have begun looking beyond him as his secondWhite House term winds down.

Bush was departing Monday for Eastern Europe, starting with a brief stop in Ukraine to tout that country's democratic reforms.

The president then goes to Romania for his last summit with Nato leaders, where the alliance's membership and the war in Afghanistan will be key topics.

Bush is also scheduled to visit Croatia and head to Russia for what will likely be his final meeting with Vladimir Putin as Russian president. Bush hopes to break a logjam between the two nations over a proposed US missile defence system; Putin's successor takes overin May.



Protesters hold a placard with a Swastika, reading "Nato is Gestapo," as they burn an effigy of US President George W Bush during a rally in the centre of Kiev yesterday. The rally was organised by leftist parties against Bush's visit to Ukraine and against Nato.

Hillary faces tough odds as Obama's lead widens

AFP, Harrisburg

US Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton faced increasing odds against her Monday as a new opinion poll showed rival Barack Obama consolidating his nationwide support.

A Gallup tracking survey indicated the Illinois senator extending his lead over Clinton among Democrats nationally to 52 percent versus 42 percent, Obama's largest lead of the year so far.

This marks the first time either candidate has held a double-digit lead over the other since early February, when Hillary Clinton led Obama by 11 percentage points,

the polling firm pointed out. On Sunday, the New York senator vowed to stay in the White House race to the bitter end as party elders floated ideas to avert a paralysing struggle between her and Obama.

In a Washington Post interview, the former first lady said: "I know there are some people who want to shut this down and I think they are

"I have no intention of stopping until we finish what we started and until we see what happens in the next 10 contests, and until we resolve Florida and Michigan."



A key adviser to Iraq's prime minister says military operations in the besieged southern city of Basra will finish before the end of this week.

Sami al-Askari says most of the Basra area is under control. A nearly weeklong government crackdown on a Shia militia there sparked fierce battles in several southern cities and Baghdad.

Al-Askari, an adviser to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, was speaking a day after radical Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr called on his militia fighters to stand

Al-Maliki vowed to stay in Basra until the militia was crushed. But al-Askari said Monday the leader is expected to return soon to Baghdad, though he gave no exact

Gun-toting fighters of hardline Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr yesterday melted from the streets after days of fierce clashes with security forces as a curfew was lifted in Iraq's capital and eased in

on Sunday pulled his fighters off in their homes ...

the streets, signalling an end to the firefights which have killed more

than 320 people across Iraq. AFP correspondents in Baghdad and Basra said the militants had disappeared on Monday and the fighting which had rocked the two cities and several other Shiite regions since last Tuesday had died

The Sadr movement in Baghdad confirmed fighters from the cleric's feared Mahdi Army militia were no longer deployed on the streets, including in their bastion of Sadr City in eastern Baghdad.

"The militants have disappeared from Sadr City and its neighbouring areas and my information is that Sadr's order is being implemented everywhere," the Baghdad spokesman for Sadr's movement, Salman al-Fraiji, told

Fraiji said US and Iraqi forces still continued on Monday to "randomly arrest and raid houses in Sadr City, Diwaniyah, Karbala and Nasiriyah", areas where clashes took place, apart from Basra.

Haider al-Asadi, a fighter from Following six days of intense the Mahdi Army in Sadr City, said fighting with security forces; Sadr all the militants were "now sitting

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Position Vacancy Announcement

The United States Agency for International Development/Bangladesh (USAID) invites applications from Bangladeshi nationals for the position of Supervisory Voucher Examiner for the Mission's Office of Financial Management (OFM).

The Supervisory Voucher Examiner is responsible for the supervision of Voucher Examiners in overseeing the payment and accounts receivable operations and payroll functions. He/She reviews/processes project and operating expense/trust fund vouchers and maintains the integrity of the data input into the Mission Accounting System (PHOENIX). The incumbent is responsible for planning and organizing the work in the Payment Section, providing guidance and direction to the Voucher Examiners and resolving complex payment issues. The employee is also responsible for the scheduling of all payments through the United States Disbursing Offices (USDOs) in Kansas City, FSC/Bangkok, and the trust fund account in Dhaka. The incumbent is responsible for helping educate Mission staff in proper timekeeping procedures, in providing Mission management with routine management reports on payments and responding to inquiries from Mission employees and outside vendors/payees. This position reports to the Chief

Required Qualifications:

Applicants must be able to pass security clearance and health screening for fitness to work. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

1. Education: Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) or Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) with emphasis in business finance or accounting is required.

2. Language Proficiency: Fluency in spoken and written Bangla is required. English reading, writing, and speaking skills are required at a high level of proficiency. Competitive applicants will undergo testing to document their language ability. Must be able to communicate concisely and effectively with other mission staff, contractors, vendors and representatives of recipient organizations. On occasion, may be expected to act as an interpreter in situations where considerable importance attaches to proper word meaning.

3. Prior Work Experience: The applicant must have a minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience in voucher examining, accounting, and related fiscal work, with preferably two of the five years in an international organization. Applicant must be computer literate with a minimum of three years experience on accounting applications and possess a sound knowledge of Microsoft financial spreadsheet applications. Two/three years of supervisory experience is required for this position.

4. Knowledge: Applicant must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of professional accounting principles, theories, practices and terminology, and payroll and benefits. General knowledge of various methods of payment practiced by other international donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), parastatals, and various embassies is highly desirable. General knowledge of Bangladesh laws, regulations and procedures which may impact, on the USAID payment process (i.e., Value Added Tax (VAT), payroll tax, etc.) is required. A comprehensive knowledge of and demonstrated expertise in USAID voucher examination procedures, the Mission Accounting System (PHOENIX), and USAID organization and operations in general is

Skills and Abilities:

 A very high level of analytical skills, professional expertise and sound judgment

 Strong supervisory and management skills to effectively supervise the Voucher Examiners and to direct and coordinate various elements of a complex payment operation.

 Applicant must be able to maintain effective and cordial working relations with Mission employees and with external customers. Demonstrated ability to apply professional accounting practices, principles, and theories to all USAID accounting procedures:

Communication skills enabling applicant to respond to all payment inquiries and convey financial information in a concise and professional manner at all levels within the Mission and externally. Demonstrated ability to exercize initiative and work independently.

Ability to closely examine payment requests and to detect all arithmetical errors and instances of duplicate, excess or unauthorized claims. Competency in the use of financial spreadsheet and word processing applications and other financial management programs.

including development of reports. Ability to collect and present facts and recommendations in a clear, concise manner, both orally and in writing.

· Applicant must be a service-oriented team player with sound interpersonal skills; able to deal with colleagues within the Mission. customers, and the public in an informative, direct and nonaggressive way on delicate payment issues.

Interested applicants must submit a resume along with a one page cover letter stating level of education, experience, etc. that describes key experiences and perspectives which demonstrate how they qualify for this position. Please submit to the Human Resources Section, GPO Box 2593, Ramna, Dhaka-1000, no later than April 17, 2008. Only short-listed candidates will be notified. D-345

Position Vacancy Announcement

The United States Agency for International Development/Bangladesh (USAID) invites applications from Bangladeshi nationals for the position of Voucher Examiner for the Mission's Office of Financial Management

The Voucher Examiner is primarily responsible for examining a wide variety of program funded vouchers, invoices, and other requests for payment for goods and services received for the implementation of the foreign assistance program (program funds) under the Mission's strategic objectives. The incumbent is also responsible for preparing and examining other more difficult administrative-type vouchers, which include United States Personal Services Contract (USPSC) payroll, international travel vouchers and entitlement claims, such as Foreign Transfer Allowance, Education Allowance, Pre departure Subsistence Allowance, Medical claim etc. The incumbent maintains communications with the vendors, contractors and employees to provide guidance and to interpret the Agency's voucher examination requirement and/or to request additional information regarding proposed payments. This position reports directly to the Supervisory Voucher Examiner.

Required Qualifications:

Palestinian school children run after passing through an Israeli military

checkpoint in the occupied West Bank village of al-Ram, on the northern

outskirts of Jerusalem yesterday. A senior Palestinian official Monday dis-

missed an Israeli pledge to remove some 50 roadblocks as "nonsense" and

insisted it would have little impact on daily life in the West Bank.

Applicants must be able to pass security clearance and health screening for fitness to work. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

1. Education: Completion of 2 years College degree or diploma is required. A Bachelor of Science/Arts or equivalent level in accounting, finance or business administration is desired.

2. Language Proficiency: Good working knowledge of both written and spoken English is required at a high level, and competitive applicants will undergo testing to document their language ability. Must be able to write and speak in a concise and thoughtful manner on financial and organizational issues, and must communicate effectively with English speaking staff members, the general public, and customers.

3. Prior Work Experience: The applicants must have three to four years of progressively responsible experience in payment processing or related fiscal work. A minimum of two years with an international private, nonprofit, or public agency or an international organization, progressively involved in voucher examination and accounts payable functions is desired. Must be computer literate with a minimum of two years experience on computerized accounting applications. Must have a sound knowledge of financial spreadsheets, international payroll operations and accounting procedure.

4. Knowledge: Applicants must have general knowledge of payment and payroll. Specific knowledge and understanding of complex computerized accounting and payment systems is desired. Working knowledge of public payment processing requirements with comprehensive understanding of the Prompt Payment Act and the Mission Accounting System (PHOENIX) is preferred.

5. Skills and Abilities:

 Ability to closely examine payment requests and to detect all arithmetical errors and instances of duplicate, excess or unauthorized claims is required.

Competency in the use of financial spreadsheet and word processing applications and other financial management programs in the performance of their duties are required.

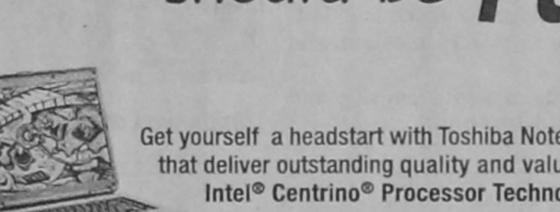
Ability to collect and present facts and recommendations in a clear, concise manner, both orally and in writing is required.

Applicant must be a service-oriented team player with sound interpersonal skills; be able to communicate effectively and maintain cordial working relations with American and FSN colleagues, representative of Non-Government Organizations and international entities and be able to deal with the public in an informative, direct and non-aggressive way on delicate payment issues.

Interested applicants must submit a resume along with a one page cover letter stating level of education, experience, etc. that describes key experiences and perspectives which demonstrate how they qualify for this position. Please submit to the Human Resources Section, GPO Box 2593, Ramna, Dhaka-1000, no later than April 17, 2008. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified. D-346

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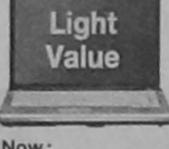
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