
PROTESTS IN IRAQ WON'T CHANGE PARLIAMENTARY VOTE RESULTS, SAYS TURKMEN LEADER

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14.08.2018

Daily Sabah (13 August 2018)

Anadolu Agency

Protests against the results of the manual recount of the May 12 parliamentary polls will lead to nothing, the head of the Iraqi Turkmen Front said yesterday.

"Any objection to the results of the manual recount would not change anything," Arshad Salihi told Anadolu Agency (AA).

Last week, Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission said the manual recount of the May 12 parliamentary election results is compatible with the electronic count. According to the results, Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's Sairoon Coalition won 54 parliamentary seats, followed by a Hashd al-Shaabi-led coalition with 48 and Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's Victory Bloc with 42. On Sunday, the electoral commission began to receive complaints from political parties about the poll results.

"Commission judges were subjected to pressure; that's why the results in Kirkuk were kept as is," Salihi said. He claimed that votes were manipulated in around 1,140 polling stations in Kirkuk.

"Judges, however, recounted votes in 190 polling stations only and wrapped up their work in Kirkuk before the set time," he said. Salihi said he will file a complaint against the results of the manual recount. "But we don't pin high hopes on changing the vote results because we know that pressure is piling up on the commission," he said.

"We have no choice but to resort to international organizations to follow up on the issue," he said.

Once Iraq's Federal Court approves the results of the manual recount, incoming members of Parliament will hold a first session to elect a new assembly speaker. Within 30 days of the first parliamentary session, the assembly will elect, by a two-thirds majority, the country's next president.

The president will then task the largest bloc in Parliament with drawing up a government, which must be referred back to Parliament for approval.

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