
KURDISH KDP LEADER NAMES IRAQI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

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BAGHDAD, (Xinhua) -- The leader of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Masoud Barzani on Monday nominated Fuad Hussein as the party's presidential candidate.

"Based on his competence and abilities, I nominated Dr. Fuad Hussein for this post," Barzani said in a statement.

Fuad Hussein, 69, is an independent Kurdish politician born in the city of Khanaqin in Iraq's eastern province of Diyala. He graduated in 1971 from the Education College in Baghdad University and served as the head of president office of the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan since 2005.

On Sept. 19, the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) named Burham Salih as their presidential candidate, asserting that the ceremonial post should be held by one of the party's members.

After the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the PUK leader Jalal Talabani acted as the Iraqi president until 2014, when Fuad Masoum, a PUK leading figure, took over the post.

Since 2003, an informal power-sharing system agreed upon by Iraq's three largest ethnic-sectarian components stated that the prime minister is a Shiite Arab, the speaker of parliament a Sunni Arab and the president a Kurd.

The Iraqi newly-elected parliament speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi set Sept. 25 as the date for the next parliament session to vote on Kurdish candidates for the presidency.

According to the Iraqi constitution, the president-elect needs to gather at least two thirds of the votes. Then, the elected president needs to form a government within 30 days.

If the parliament lawmakers fail to vote by a two-third majority, the two candidates with the highest number of votes shall compete with each other and the one receiving the majority of votes in the second round of vote shall be declared the president of Iraq.

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