

Low voter turnout amongst Turkmen in Iraqi polls



"Election results will not be able to be announced transparently as Iraq is not secure and stable and we are concerned about the results," said Turkmen lawmaker Aydin Maoruf.

World Bulletin / News Desk <http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/135723/low-voter-turnout-amongst-turkmens-in-iraqi-polls>

Only half the Turkmen population eligible to vote were able to cast their votes in the Iraqi elections at the end of April, said a Turkmen lawmaker.

Aydin Marouf said the voter turnout was 70 percent in Kirkuk but only 55 percent of Turkmen could cast their votes due to the security situation.

"The voter turnout was low in Mosul and the predominantly Turkmen-populated town of Tal Afar due to insecurity, which had a bad impact on Turkmen," he said.

The vote took place amid myriad security challenges, particularly in the western, predominantly Sunni Anbar province and in certain parts of the country's north, where government troops have been battling militant groups since December.

More than 12 million Iraqis went to the polls despite security threats and the voter turnout was 60 percent. Election results are expected on May 25.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is seeking a third term in office, but faces fierce opposition, with sectarian bloodshed at its most intense in more than five years.

However, many Sunnis, a minority in Iraq, are opposed to Iraq's Shiite-dominated government and continue to voice anger over the Iraqi army operation's mounting civilian death toll since last December with the stated aim of flushing out militants who Baghdad claims are linked to Al Qaeda.

The United Nations said 2013 was the deadliest year in Iraq since 2008, with more than 8,800 people killed, most of them civilians.

These are Iraq's first parliamentary elections since the withdrawal of foreign troops three years ago.