

# Iraq PM Abadi says votes should be recounted if electronic system faulty - state TV

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Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said on Tuesday that if a new electronic voting system used in weekend elections was found to be faulty, the election commission should hold a nationwide recount, state television reported.

Abadi said that after accusations of fraud and faulty machines in the northern province of Kirkuk, the election commission should hold a manual recount there.

He added that if there were found to be faults in Kirkuk, the recount should take place in all of Iraq, state TV said.

In the northern province of Kirkuk and neighbouring Sulaimaniya, which has a majority Kurdish population, Kurdish opposition parties cried foul after the legislative election on Saturday, saying an unexpectedly strong win for one of the main Kurdish parties there was down to vote-rigging.

The election commission said on Tuesday that initial results from Kirkuk also indicated a win there for that party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

Iraq's first election since the defeat of Islamic State, which had taken over nearly a third of the country as it spread through Iraq and Syria in 2014, pitted Abadi against Shi'ite rivals more closely allied to Iran.

Initial nationwide results showed a surprise victory for the bloc that supports firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, a Shi'ite not aligned with Iran who campaigned on a nationalist, populist platform.

Iraq's election commission said the new electronic voting system, which requires biometric identification, would make vote counting quicker and ensure accuracy.