

Egypt Reports 37% Voter Turnout in Presidential Polls



Cairo, May 28 (RHC)-- Egypt's electoral commission says about 37 percent of the country's eligible voters have cast ballots in two days of presidential election. According to electoral commission chief Abdel Aziz Salman, the turnout by the end of the second day on Tuesday stood at about 37 percent of the 53 million electorate.

The meager turnout comes as supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood movement have boycotted the elections and said that they would not recognize the outcome.

Almost 52 percent took part in the 2012 polls when Morsi was elected. Earlier on Tuesday, the organizers of the election extended the voting into Wednesday, with an electoral official saying that the decision was made to "give a chance to the largest possible number of voters to cast their ballots."

Leftist politician Hamdeen Sabahi, who faces former army General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in the election, protested the extension, saying that it raised "questions... about the integrity of the process" and seemed aimed at "interfering in numbers and participation rates."

Sisi's campaign also lodged a complaint against the extension, insisting that it was not required. However, the objection appears to be an attempt to ward off criticism.

The retired field marshal, who is expected to win the vote, toppled the government of the first democratically elected president, Morsi, in July 2013 by a military coup. He also suspended the constitution and dissolved the parliament following the ouster of Morsi. Sisi is also accused of leading a deadly crackdown against the supporters of the Brotherhood.

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