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5 Kyrgyz Parties Win Parliamentary Seats

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BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan — Kyrgyzstan's parliamentary elections, triggered by the April overthrow of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev and the worst ethnic violence in decades, saw five parties win representation, although none have a majority.

Weeks after an Oct. 10 vote, the Central Elections Commission on Monday announced the final results, which will mean heated negotiations lie ahead to form a coalition government in the mountainous nation, which hosts U.S. and Russian air bases.

Kyrgyzstan is trying to move out of almost 20 years of failed authoritarian rule and to create the first parliamentary democracy in Central Asia, where the other four former Soviet states continue to be run by presidential strongmen.

"The day that the entire nation had been impatiently waiting for has come," Central Elections Commission head Akylbek Sariyev said before announcing the final results.

The parties that passed the 5 percent threshold to enter the parliament were Ata Zhurt with

8.47 percent, the Social Democrats (7.83 percent), Ar Namys (7.57 percent), Respublika (6.93 percent) and Ata Meken (5.49 percent).

With the five winning parties securing a little more than 36 percent of the popular vote, there are fears of a backlash. Analysts say some of the losers could call on their supporters to come out into the street to contest election results at protest rallies rather than initiate legal challenges.

The Butun Kyrgyzstan party, with a strong support base in the south and which finished sixth with 4.6 percent of the vote, has held vocal protests and threatened the authorities with new upheavals, saying it was robbed of representation in parliament.

"The Oct. 10 vote was illegal," Butun Kyrgyzstan leader Adakhan Madumarov told journalists shortly before the final results were announced. "A huge sum of money was simply wasted."

Under new rules, the parliament will be the country's main decision-making body, assuming more power than the president.

Under interim President Roza Otunbayeva's plans for parliamentary democracy, the prime minister will have more power than the president.

Under the new charter, Otunbayeva will be acting president until Dec. 31, 2011. Parliamentary elections will take place every five years.

With seats in the new legislature distributed proportionately, Ata Zhurt will hold 28 seats, followed by the Social Democrats with 26, Ar Namys with 25, Respublika with 23 and Ata Meken with 18 seats.

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