

Election Chief Calls for New Elections in Primorye Region After Reports of Mass Violations

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Ella Pamfilova / Kremlin.ru

Russia's top elections official has called for new elections in the Primorye region after investigating allegations that local precincts had rigged the vote in favor of a Kremlin-backed incumbent.

During a second round of gubernatorial elections in the region on Sunday, Andrei Tarasenko of the ruling United Russia party surged in the polls after having consistently trailed his challenger from the Communist Party, Andrei Ishchenko. Supporters of Ishchenko accused local officials of manipulating the vote count to force a Tarasenko victory and launched protests in the central square of Vladivostok, the administrative center of the region.

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A Central Election Commission (CEC) task force arrived in Vladivostok on Wednesday to investigate the allegations of fraud. Previously, CEC chief Ella Pamfilova [said](#) the results could be declared invalid if the vote-rigging complaints were proven true.

“We recommend for the Primorye electoral commission to annul the results,” Pamfilova was [quoted](#) as saying by the state-run TASS news agency.

Ishchenko declared he opposed holding a new round of voting, [saying](#): “We’ve already elected a governor.”

Earlier on Wednesday, a Primorye election commission spokeswoman [told](#) TASS that the regional commission had the final say over whether or not to declare the results invalid.

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