

Turkish party's voter support narrows

by UPI

ANKARA, Turkey -- Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling political party has seen its voter support diminish in local election results, returns indicate.

Speaking in Ankara Monday at the headquarters of the Justice and Development, or AK, Party, Erdogan blamed the media as well as opposition political groups for his party's showing, saying, "I am not satisfied with election results so far," the official Anatolia News Agency reported.

Preliminary results tabulated late Monday showed the AK Party leading with 39.13 percent of the vote, while the main opposition group, the Republican People's Party, registered 22.83 percent and the nationalist People's Action Party had was third at 16.22 percent, The New York Times reported.

The results showed a big decrease in support for Erdogan's party from 2007, when it when it polled 47 percent of the vote. Analysts told the newspaper the decline was attributable to the global economic crisis as well as to allegations of widespread corruption within the party.

Meanwhile, at least five people were killed and dozens more wounded in election-related violence in Turkey, CNN said, with at least two local election candidates left dead.

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