

Former Iraqi Kurd judge says Saddam Hussein's execution violates Iraqi Law

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The first chief judge who presided over Saddam Hussein's trial for crimes against humanity said on Monday that the late dictator's execution by the Iraqi government was illegal.

Rizkar Mohammed Amin, who later resigned as the trial's chief judge, said Iraqi law banned executions during the Eid al-Adha festival period that marks the end of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

The four-day Feast of the Sacrifice began for Iraqi Sunnis on Saturday – the day Saddam was hanged in Baghdad – and on Sunday for Shiites.

Amin also claimed that Iraqi law stipulates an execution must be carried out 30 days after the appeal court's decision on the sentencing, which in this case upheld the death sentence of Saddam.

But in ratifying the death sentence on December 26, the appeals chamber insisted that the law stipulated the sentence be implemented within 30 days.

Amin resigned as chief judge of the Dujail trial following political pressure amid accusations that he was lenient with Saddam and occasionally allowed the late dictator to carry out outbursts in court.

Saddam was hanged on Saturday in a Shia district of Baghdad after he was found guilty of executing 148 Shiite villagers from Dujail in the 1980s where he escaped an assassination bid.

He was buried on Sunday in his home village of Awja. Iraq's National Security Adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie denied that Saddam was executed on Eid al-Adha, in an interview with CNN just hours after the hanging.

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