

## Hezbollah MP: Electoral dilemma caused by lack of Saudi-Iranian understanding

Hezbollah's Loyalty to the Resistance bloc MP Kamel al-Rifai stressed that a lack of Saudi-Iranian understanding over Lebanon's politics has had a negative impact on the issues of forming a government and agreeing on an electoral law.

"The lack of Saudi-Iranian understanding over Lebanon's politics has had a negative impact on the issues of forming a government and agreeing on an electoral law," Rifai told Kuwaiti newspaper *Al-Anbaa* in an interview published on Sunday.

He continued: "This lack of understanding led to a political dispute between the March 8 and 14 groups, which is neither beneficial to Lebanon nor to the Lebanese people."

"The crises of forming a government and adopting an electoral law will remain unsolved unless regional understandings are reached," Rifai added.

The Hezbollah parliamentarian also told the Kuwaiti daily that "as long as there is no Saudi-Iranian understanding, the parliament's mandate will definitely be extended for a period that ranges between six months and a year."

Lebanon's rival political parties on Saturday remained deadlocked on reaching a consensus on a new electoral law, spurring fears of an extension of parliament's term as well as the holding of parliamentary elections under the auspices of the 1960 law.

The parliament was set on Wednesday to tackle what law to adopt for the upcoming elections, but Speaker Nabih Berri postponed the session after the LF, PSP, Future and independent Christian MPs proposed a mixed law as an alternative to the Orthodox one.

In mid-April, the government officially changed the election date from June 9 to June 16, by way of a decree, and parliament approved a law extending the suspension of candidacy filing until May 19.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister-designate Tammam Salam is having to jump over hurdles in an attempt to form a government ahead of the scheduled parliamentary elections. The representation within the upcoming cabinet is being contested between the opposed March 8 and March 14 groups.