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BAGHDAD, Iraq - Iraq's first democratically elected government was sworn in Tuesday after last-minute bargaining by the new prime minister failed to bring the disaffected Sunni minority into key Cabinet posts.

One by one, Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari and members of his Cabinet walked to a podium and pledged to defend Iraq and its people amid a surge of violence that has killed nearly 170 people in six days.

But five ministries — including the key defense and oil portfolios — remained in temporary hands and two deputy prime minister's slots were unfilled as al-Jaafari struggled to balance the demands of Iraq's competing ethnic and religious factions.

Al-Jaafari particularly wanted the defense minister's job filled by a Sunni Arab as a way to draw the formerly dominant minority into the fight against an insurgency that is thought to be based primarily among Sunnis.