



PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE KASESE DISTRICT WOMAN MP BY-ELECTION

8TH AUGUST, 2012 (3:30pm)

CCEDU Observer deployment

The Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU) deployed 37 election observers to monitor the on-going Kasese Municipality by-election. Kasese District constituency has a total 437 polling stations.

Cause of by-election

The Kasese woman MP seat fell vacant after court nullified the election of Winnie Kizza over election irregularities. The contestants in this race include FDC's Winnie Kizza, NRM's Rehema Muhindo, and DP's Rosemary Masiko.

Opening time of polling stations

CCEDU observers witnessed the opening of most polling stations and generally reported that voting started after 7:30am contrary to 7:00am as required by the laws of Uganda. The late start was mainly occasioned by the lack of the required presence of five (5) voters in the queue to witness the opening of the polling station. In other polling areas, election officials reported late arrival of voting materials.

Political party agents

While both the National resistance Movement (NRM) and the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) deployed agents at all the polling stations visited, deployment by the Democratic Party (DP) was relatively low and sparse.

Electoral Commission

- **Logistics**

At the Rwenzori Square B polling station, the appointed presiding officer Ms. Grace Muhindo was summarily dismissed for late coming and opening of the polling station and a polling assistant Mbusa Edson appointed to take her place.

Preliminary observations however indicate overall improved logistical organization on the side of the Electoral Commission (EC). Apart from deploying relatively well trained officials to manage the polling exercise, the EC introduced and popularized a complaints reporting toll free line at its Kasese office which was a welcome step to the electorate in Kasese.

- **Registration glitches**

At various polling stations including Kamulikwizi Market, Rwenzori Square B and Saluti Church of Uganda, there were reports of voters whose names were missing in the voters roll while others found their ballots already cast.

Voter turn-out

The turn-up remains moderate with the rains disrupting the voting process in many areas in Kasese. Most polling officials are however optimistic that the turn-up will increase in the afternoon (after 3:00pm). Though we could not place an exact finger on why the voter turnout is generally low at most polling stations, most of the presiding officers at the polling stations visited said they expected the voter turn out to spike in the afternoon beyond 2:00pm. Gender demographics also indicate that more women are turning up to vote.

Security deployment

Security deployment remains very heavy around polling stations. At Rwenzori square B, Bishop Masereka clinic Polling Station in Kasese town for instance there is a contingent of over thirty (30) armed UPDF soldiers are deployed hardly 20 meters from the Polling Station. CCEDU is concerned about the potentials of such irrational military deployment in the electoral process.

Phantom polling station

One polling station, Nyakasanga Kizungu market was subject to two interesting incidences. In one, the police were apparently duped into responding to a false report that there was ballot stashing in a nearby house. The police search revealed nothing.

Yet in another, vigilant citizens discovered a ghost polling station, the “Upper Nyakasanga Kizungu market polling station” had been set up complete with “registers and electoral officials”. Upon confirmation that it was a phantom polling station, citizens dismantled it and confiscated the “voting material.”

Violence

Cases of pre voting day violence have been widely reported with arrests of many opposition supporters. However, no reports of violence on voting day have so far been observed or received and the voting process is so far on course.

CCEDU Observer Mission – Kasese By-Election

Citizens' Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda (CCEDU)

Human Rights House

Block 15, Plot 1853 Lulume Road Nsambya

P.O. Box 11027 Kampala, Uganda

Tel: +256-414-510263/498/276

Mob: [+256-772-332747](tel:+256-772-332747)

Fax: [+256-414-510498](tel:+256-414-510498)

E-mail: fhri@dmil.ug

Web site: www.fhri.or.ug/civic-education