



C/O Kenya Human Rights Commission
Gitanga Road, opposite Valley Arcade
P.O. Box 41079 - 00100
Nairobi, GPO Kenya
Tel: +254 - 020 - 2044545/2106763
Office Cell: 0733 629034, 0722 264497
Email: Press@khrc.or.ke
Website: www.khrc.or.ke
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KURA YANGU SAUTI YANGU PRELIMINARY PRESS STATEMENT ON THE ONGOING VOTING PROCESS

The Kura Yangu Sauti Coalition (KYSY) is currently engaged in monitoring the ongoing 2017 General Election with a deployment of 500 spread across 290 constituencies and 47 counties of Kenya. This undertaking is informed by more than one year of election-related observation and analysis since the inception of the coalition in April 2016.

Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu congratulates Kenyans for coming out in large numbers to exercise their civic right to vote. While we note that voting largely went well compared to 2013, however, we wish to bring to the attention of IEBC the following issues for action:

Failure of Kenya Integrated Elections Management System

The partial failure of KIEMS in some polling centers for example in Umoja 1 primary school polling station 48, Roysambu Primary school polling station 7, Kulamwe Primary School in Isiolo South, Kunya Primary School in Kisumu East, Kileleshwa Primary School and in Dadaab and Arsi. In some cases, this resulted to delayed commencement of voting while in other cases the system failed to capture details of people who had voted. For example, in St. Joseph Primary school in Kirinyaga Central Constituency in Kirinyaga County a delay of 45 minutes was noted.

Moreover, voters whose names were missing from either biometric or hardcopy register were in some instances turned away for example in Starehe constituency while in other cases like in St. Mary's polling station in Nairobi, Achego Polling Center in Muhoroni Constituency and in Namawanga Primary in Sirisia constituency for voters who did not appear in the biometric list where found in the copy register. At Aga Khan polling center in Kisumu more than 30 voters were turned away because their names were missing from the register.

Electoral Malpractices

Gross misconducts by IEBC officials were noted in some polling stations for example in Yala township primary school where a Presiding officer was allegedly guiding people on who to vote. Moreover, and in Migadini polling station in Changamwe constituency, a presiding officer was seen issuing voters with 2 ballot papers. Lastly, in polling stations such as Edelvale primary school number 3, Kabete Technical Training Institute, presiding officers were demanding letter of appointments and oath secrecy from accredited observers.

Finally, a deployment of security personnel as IEBC officials in some constituencies was observed. A case in point is Ngumbato ward, Msambweni constituency where a CID Officer and an Administration Police were allegedly recruited as Presiding and Deputy Presiding Officers respectively.

Late opening of polling centers

We observed late opening of polling centers for example Greenspan Shopping Mall where by 9:15am the polling station had not been set up and the materials had not been received resulting in confusion and long queues. The same was also noted at Moi avenue primary school and Ngunyumu primary school, Ruaraka where cases of delays resulted to tensions, stampede and injury of voters and observers was noted.

Lack of support to special interest groups

Accessibility to the polling stations; lack of ramps, braille ballots for the visually impaired voters, lowered voting booth for people on wheelchairs and sign language interpreters.

Violence at polling centers

Use of violence by state security organs as evidence in Ziwa la Ng'ombe in Nyali constituency where teargas was used to disperse voters who became agitated following late opening of the polling center.

Other Incidences

Voters who had been registered in particular polling centers who came to vote where turned away and redirected to other stations an example is Isiolo where a man was found himself incorrectly listed in Murang'a county.

We also noted that the indelible ink being used in some polling stations such as Kileleshwa primary school number 2 and Kariobangi South was very faint and can easily be concealed with nail polish or can be washed off. In some cases some IEBC officials resulted to using pelican ink or example in Dr. Mwenje polling center.

ENDS

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