

FOREWORD

Our dear readers, this is a unique opportunity to share with you once again through this newsletter. In this edition, we mainly seek to share with you our experience of organizing the 2006 general elections.

For the very first time, the presidential, parliamentary and local council polls 2006 elections were merged into a single election cycle. For this reason, various activities of the three election programs were either running concurrently, or over-lapping.

The challenge of conducting the three-in-one polls in a single day called for concerted efforts and sacrifice on the part of the Commission's staff.

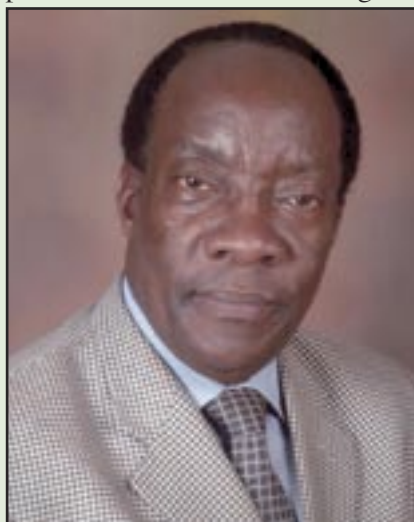
To cope with the new challenges, the Electoral Commission undertook various build-up arrangements like inter-party consultations, studying multi-party polls, researching about the implications of combined polls, training etc.

To accomplish the multiple tasks resulting from combined elections, the fixed number of personnel at the Electoral Commission was required to work late into the night, on weekends and public holidays. I extend a special word of thanks to our staff for exhibiting unwavering selflessness and sacrifice at a time when service to the nation was most required of them.

Looking back, I can confidently say the Electoral Commission did a great job within the constraints of especially funds and time.

I commend the government, electorate, political parties, candidates, agents, the media, development partners and our members of staff for the different forms of support that enabled us to deliver generally free and fair elections.

I congratulate candidates who successfully contested for various elective positions and appeal to them to include positive aspects of the losers' manifestos for the benefit of their constituencies in particular and the nation at large.



Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu

Losers should take heart and strive to contribute towards the development of the nation in other possible ways and try their luck next time. After all, 2011 is not very far!

Due to the fragmentation that may have resulted from the 2006 elections I recommend that national interests should take precedence over individual party and personal interests for cohesion and development of the country.

As I have pointed out before, we at the Electoral Commission are not

super-humans with the preserve of knowledge and skills in the management of elections. We therefore welcome positive proposals which whenever legally possible can be adopted for further improvement in the management of electoral processes.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter useful and request those who can to write to the editor, and contribute to the discourse about elections and democracy to do so.

Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu
Chairman, Electoral Commission

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IT'S TIME TO LOOK AT CANDIDATES' MANIFESTOS.

By Gusongoirye David .L.

As the election dust settles down, one is left wondering whether the newly elected political leaders will deliver Ugandans to the promised land of prosperity for all. Throughout the election period, few politicians took time to explain in-depth their manifestos to the masses. A manifesto in simple terms is a blue print of what an aspirant intends to do if elected. In well-developed democracies, aspiring politicians

It is believed that there are some less known politicians who trounced political 'heavy weights' not because they had wonderful manifestos but because they identified with certain political parties.

Issues like infrastructure development, girl child education, and rural electrification were given little attention or in some instances shelved in favour of popular slogans like

consolidation of the Movement's gains.

To add salt to injury, the 8th Parliament is going to be organized under a multi party arrangement where we shall have two sides, the ruling party on one side and the opposition on the other side. In this country where politics of numbers is preferred to brilliant intellectual argument, ideas especially of the minority will be suppressed. The harambe (hasty) style of passing bills, which was exhibited by the 7th Parliament, leaves people wondering whether the politicians themselves believe in the manifestos they write.

During a public dialogue on whether political parties' manifestos were addressing the real issues affecting Uganda, Rosemary Adong Oketch, Director of the Community Development and Resource Network (CDRN) described the manifestos "as a tool for wooing voters and are not based on critical analysis of the situation on the ground".

It was also observed that few Ugandans have actually seen or read the 5 manifestos of candidates who vied to become Uganda's next president. It was worse in the lower councils.

If we need responsible leadership in this country, it's high time we critically analysed the candidates' manifestos. The general public should be sensitised on the manifestos with the aim of holding the leaders accountable in their terms of office.



Photo: Foto source

Democratic Party (DP) official Betty Namboozee addresses a rally: Voters need to analyse issues in order to make right choices

are evaluated on the strength (and weaknesses) of their manifestos and not on trivialities like kitu-ki-dogo (a little something), agende (let him go), abeewo (let him stay), cadreship, ethnicity or whether one is "sharp" enough to pinch a few dollars off some western power.

In the just concluded elections, all the five presidential candidates had wonderful ideas in their manifestos, aimed at raising the quality of life and increasing the standards of living. It's surprising however that some candidates walked away with less than 1% of the total vote. This probably underscores voters' suspicions as to whether some of these aspirants for political positions are indeed committed to their manifestos.

egaali ekozeeko (the experienced candidate), akyaali mboko (he's still resourceful). Some of the trivial issues that took centre stage included personal attacks, age, ethnic background, education (or the lack of it), moral scandals that overshadowed personal capabilities and leadership qualities.

The preoccupation of some debutant politicians with uprooting the incumbents has left people wondering whether they can offer alternative political management systems, which can make the dream of poverty eradication palpable.

On the other hand, the NRM leadership has stressed the need of having cadres in all positions of influence in order to ensure continuity and

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THE TRIBULATIONS OF THE PEAK ELECTION SEASON.

By Moses Watasa W., Senior Election Officer

Introduction.

Hurrah! Now that the ‘storm’ of peak election season is over, Election Officers who have been in the hot, steaming and smoking ‘kitchen’, preparing a multi-course menu of elections can revert to ‘normal life’.

If you dialed any of the Electoral Commission’s offices any time between 7.00 am and 11.00 pm, there would be someone to pick the phone! Even after getting home late, it was necessary to keep cell phones on, as work-related consultations would often continue.

There is a mild-mannered Election Officer who was cautioned for switching-off his mobile phone a number of times after going home...or wherever he would go after work! The switching off was thought to symbolize a deficiency of commitment to the cause of the Electoral Commission at a time when his services were needed most!

However, colleagues who know him well say his switching-off was precautionary because as the “hyena-in-chief”, he feared that “strange” late-evening callers and beepers could spark-up domestic violence at home! Ssshh! Don’t call The Red Pepper!

Week-ends, public holidays, annual leave and other forms of what should ordinarily have been free time turned into official working hours.

Towards the end of 2005, when people with “normal” working schedules were taking the annual two-week festive season break, it was business as usual at the Electoral Commission. In fact the festive season was crunch-time of the election cycle – campaigns for

general elections were under-way, and nominations for the different levels of local council elections were due. The phones were buzzing like crazy!

The strain sets in.

The tight engagements season compelled some Election Officers to bolt from the vital social networks that often define the very essence of life. The burn-out effect aside, this working schedule turned some Election Officers

into unreliable friends, fake spouses, bad neighbors, ‘irresponsible’ parents – name them.

With the heightened demands of our jobs firmly in the driving seat, everyone and everything else got relegated to the back stage! At a personal level, I struggled to find time for my little daughter currently at a kindergarten. I felt guilty and wanting as a parent for I would often leave her in bed (early morning) and return home to find her asleep! There was hardly time to talk to her and lavish her with her with parental love and attention.

Spouses of Election Officers must have prayed for a faster end to the election season! Imagine the frustration of having a spouse who is just not available because s/he has got “married” to a job? S/he gets home late and often jumps out of bed before dawn! And this goes on...and on - for about two years! Yet, it is in times like these, that our resolve to serve the nation is put to a stern test. To come out of such situations unscathed, you needed to be at your very best in terms of time

and personal management, something for which Electoral Commission officials need a thumbs-up.

It is said that every cloud has a silver-lining. A chubby Election Officer says the absorbing engage-



Photo: Bukuya Paul

Hectic: An EC official attends to anxious applicants during the final day of the Voter Registration Exercise.

ments of the peak election season ‘ushered-in peace’, at home! There was hardly free time for him to spend home and inevitably battle his wife over the TV remote control!

He belongs to the growing legion of the ‘hardcore’ soccer lovers who religiously follow the proceedings in the European soccer leagues. His routine absence from home gave the wife lee-way to tune into her favorite programs like Bay Watch, ER, Carte Blanche, Ki-Nigeria, The Woman of My Life and other soap-operas and movies. There was no ‘dictator’ (hubby) at home to rudely terminate the movies in preference for Premier League action, especially involving Arsenal FC which he supports.

Conclusion.

That was the election season. A double-edged see-saw of activity that some times threatened to burst our nerves, while presenting a sprinkle of possibilities in the case of our soccer-loving brother above!

ARE OBSERVERS IMPORTANT IN AN ELECTION?

By Peninah K. Ssekabembe, Senior Election Officer

During every major election, the Electoral Commission accredits local and international election observers. By law, and for purposes of credibility, the Commission has got a duty to accredit election observers who are expected to be non-partisan and to follow a set of guidelines normally issued by the Commission to observation missions.

election. I know you are asking: how?

By letting them observe each and every aspect of the election, it shows that there is transparency, which is very vital considering that elections tend to be about perceptions.

comprising 440 (local) and 477 (international observers).

The observers are expected to make observation reports and avail copies to the Electoral Commission. These reports have got positive and negative highlights, which act as learning points. The Commission works on the negative aspects to



Photo: Foto source

Sir Ketumile Matsire, former president of Botswana led the Commonwealth Observer Team: The debate on the importance of poll watchers requires an objective approach.

Election observers are also expected to submit copies of their observation reports to the Electoral Commission which, where possible, inform positive improvements in the management of elections through adoption of some relevant recommendations there-in. However, the question is; are observers important in any election? Can't elections be conducted as scheduled without observers?

Well, an election can indeed be held without observers. However, it is very important to have them because they add credibility to an

Observers are free to interact with anyone including all stakeholders in the election like candidates, voters, civil society, security agencies, and election officials in order to draw their conclusions.

Inviting observers is also a cordial obligation since the Electoral Commission itself has often been invited to scrutinize elections in other countries, and must therefore be seen to reciprocate!

In this spirit during the 2006 general elections, the Electoral Commission accredited 917 observers

enhance the positives.

After all, the best way of learning is through accepting positive criticism and addressing your weak points. This follows the saying; "you can't have your cake and eat it too".

Yes, we need election observers rather than the other way round. An election not subjected to observer scrutiny tends to be perceived not to have been transparent and this casts an element of doubt as to whether it has indeed been a free and fair election!

A CALL TO LIVE UP TO UGANDA'S NATIONAL MOTTO.

By Sr. Margaret Magoba, Deputy Chairperson, EC.

Often times, I have thought with admiration and respect of the committee, group of persons or person who coined the motto of our mother country Uganda, "For God and My Country". In my view, there could not be any meaningful and relevant motto than this.

Our duty as Ugandans is to live up to this motto. It summarises the responsibility of each Ugandan

starting point instead of starting from far away places and people.

On the same note, Ugandans should be aware that conducting elections is one of the most complex and expensive exercises in a country like Uganda. It is high time, people of this land paid attention to the entire process straight from registration to polling/tallying of election results if they are interested in an enviable

remain at the forefront.

God created us with a reasoning capability, let us therefore choose/decide to live for God and endeavor to have our country at heart. Uganda remains a unique country rich in resources. We need to think out the way to be happy as Ugandans. Let us keep God at the center of our lives and work for the good of all Ugandans.



Photo: MGS

One nation under God: Religious leaders unite their faith to pray for a peaceful electoral exercise during the National Prayer Service held at Nakivubo Stadium, (February 2006).

at all times. Our lives, actions, words, intentions and plans should focus at loving and giving glory to God, after which Ugandans should work and develop this God-given beautiful country which includes people and nature.

Why then can't we just do that instead of endlessly pointing accusing fingers at each other?

Let us learn to begin with what went right instead of what went wrong. Positive thinking helps society to improve. Let us focus on what unites instead of looking for what divides. Let us spend our energies on peace building instead of clamouring for war and destruction. In all this, self, family, immediate community should be the

product. Pointing fingers at the Electoral Commission will not put an end to electoral malpractices. What is important is for all Ugandans to be collectively responsible for the future of this country.

For example, it is not practical to expect Electoral Commission officials/Police to do the impossible and move at night stopping politicians/agents from distributing salt, soap, name it to voters.

Personal responsibility is a pre-requisite of collective responsibility. Each person should be accountable for his/her actions. We are accountable to God and our country Uganda. In everything, God must be the beginning and end, while our beloved country and her people

We all need appreciation, understanding and forgiveness. It is important to always remember that what you want others to do to you, also do to others, as the Bible says. Ugandans should stop being indifferent to other people's feelings, stop assuming the role of a super human being. Everybody has a degree of flaws, inadequacies and imperfections. So let us stop and reflect.

Most important, let us reflect on what God wants of us as we live and develop our country.

Let us be brothers and sisters to each other and as much as possible live our motto: For God and My Country.

LEISURE: BEAUTY THROUGH THE LENS

(Adapted from *Adventures of a Cameraman* by Bukenya Paul)

She bent to lift the pot and carefully balanced it onto her head. As she rose, a tiny tweeter distracted her, and she turned her head to attend to its source. She knew it could be a bird, although on some occasions, it turned out to be a naughty little boy sent by an elder brother to spy on her. A smile swept across her

the folds over her teenage breasts.

In the homestead, she laboured with the strength of a bee, and served all with the humility of a maid. The little ones played on as she warmed their meal. The cheeks bulged like croaking frog as she blew the flame. She could hear the

sist the charm of her moves, as she stirred the crowds with the magic of her agile waist.

Her graceful feet tamed the dust, and the soft waist slowly weaved the tender dance into intricate patterns. The gentle rhythm of her music quietly pierced the ears, and the crowd was swept away in its mesmerising flow. They started to follow, falling with the effortless rise of her dance.

And then she started humming to the soft playing of the xylophones, the music gently flowing, and sometimes dripping, like honey. Finally, the notes rippled away with the ease of an evening tide.

The crowd was struck by her countenance as she acknowledged their cheers. They were elated by her skill, which not only captivated them, but seemed to transform her as well. Her face shone like a gourd coated with fresh ghee, and the milk-white teeth seemed to twinkle even in the dark.

The cripple leaped to glance at the moment of glory, to behold a beauty that stuns even the blind. I stretched my neck to take a closer shot and in the process, hit my head against a very hard object.

It was the bed post. There was no camera or tripod, or tapes, only scattered utensils and clothes. The queen dancer, drummers and ululating crowds were all in my head. It was only a dream!



Photo: Bukenya Paul

Enchanting: a dancer soars into her own world of rhythms and patterns

face as a sparrow fluttered off with tiny blades of grass. She followed it in its flight, and realised too, that it was time to go home.

She confidently walked away, rehearsing a pleasant tune. Some water spilled over onto her plaited head, gently falling like the mid-night dew onto her cheeks. She gently craned her neck, and shook the drops onto the kikoyi, wetting

sound of drums in the distance. A dancing competition was due in the evening and she had her eyes on the prize.

At the dancing grounds, her beautiful features robbed the crowds of speech; the women envied her while the men could not hold their desire. Her charm churned them all, their heads turning, and they stared, their eyes red. It was difficult to re-

**THE EDITOR WELCOMES
ARTICLES AND LETTERS
FROM OUR ESTEEMED
READERS**

OPINION; UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN UGANDA IS A PRIVILEGE!

By Twinobusingye Severino, Election Officer

In recent times, the government has introduced what is called a quota system where students are selected to join the university according to the district. This is done on the assumption that the plight of rural peasant students will be answered.

However, this is not a solution. What the government needs is a radical paradigm shift on education.

Our education policy is grossly deficient in pragmatism and dynamism. It is a fact that it is largely irrelevant. It is part of the colonial



In order to turn this vision into practical reality, the state needs to do the following:

1. Abolish government sponsorship in Universities in Uganda.
2. Abolish the so-called admission to state Universities based on district quota system.
3. Establish a national students loan scheme where every citizen eligible for university admission can access money to pay for his/her university education.



Photo: Ahmed Ockama

***Our Future:** For primary school pupils like these at Kitanyata Pr. Sch. Pakanyi Sub county, Masindi, university education may sound distant, but that is only to give us time to plan for them.*

legacy left at independence. And it has become a tool of promoting class interests hence class differences and inequality.

This state of affairs needs urgent attention by government. It is an obvious fact that since 1986, Uganda's economy has been steadily growing at more than 6% per annum. The logical implication of this is that after 20 years of steady

economic growth and development, Uganda now has interalia the capacity to provide free education for all its citizens up to University level. Uganda is no longer a poor country.

It is therefore prudent that the state should take full responsibility and provide free education to all its citizens up to the University level.

4. The courses that the students take at the University should be consistent with the needs of the country so that the graduates can immediately get jobs since the government shall have planned for them.

This measure shall solve the issue of un employment since the students qualification shall be relevant to the needs of the state.

Letter To The Editor

ELECTIONS IS A GAME; PLAY IT CLEAN!

By Father Peter Bakka, Masaka Diocese

As the practice of conducting periodic regular elections takes root in Uganda, it is important to nurture the democratic trend in order to sustain it. My particular concern is with voter education, which is intended to enable voters know when to vote, where to vote from and how to vote.

Voter education however, goes beyond this, and embraces other issues like politics being a real game during elections, understanding the phrase "free and fair" as applied to elections and awareness of the reasons behind various patterns of conduct during elections.

In the cliché *politics (read elections) is a dirty game* we often focus a lot on the word *dirty*, and forget to stress that before politics gets dirty, it first and foremost a game. Some call elections dirty in order to cheapen them. They confuse politics in general and elections in particular to be a career or even a religion of some sort.

Even if elections were a game, it wouldn't cheapen it, as games involve a lot financial investment and often fulfill very serious objectives similar to the way politics determines the country's security, economy, unity and prosperity.

In the game of football, for example, besides entertainment, we learn about the importance of teamwork, a competitive spirit, respect for referees and above all, how to win/ lose honorably.

Yet in elections, we have witnessed instances like violence and divorce as a result of election-related disagreements. As part of our voter education programs, therefore, there is need to sensitise people that elec-



The ugly face of election violence: The remains of a candidate's house burnt down during campaigns.

Photo: Ismael Tenywa

tions involve winning and losing on the part of those who contest, which their supporters should well be aware of and prepared for. This calls for separation of roles and respect for each other by the different actors in the electoral process. In elections as in the game of football, there are three major actors: the fans (supporters), the players (candidates) and the referee (the Electoral Commission).

While football fans are expected to passionately stand-by their team, make reasonable bets and enjoy the match, they are expected to desist from hooliganism and to respect the fans of the other team. After all without an opponent there wouldn't be a contest! This should be the same with politics.

The problem, however, is that elections as is the case with sports can sometimes get ugly! Even without referring to a particular study, the extent of dirt in elections tends to get over-board in developing countries like Uganda than in better es-

tablished democracies, especially in the west.

In our parallel with football, the referee is well protected and exercises discretion albeit within the rules (they dish out yellow and red cards), but the rulings tend to be final. In the same way, I think the Electoral Commission needs similar protection in order to play the referee's role in elections uninhibited. Of course football results are sometimes disputed by players and fans with complaints lodged with the relevant arbitrators but teams play on.

In conclusion, Ugandans need to learn as part of civic education what the Japanese pride themselves in (learned from the Americans); i.e. After the announcement of the official winner, send congratulatory messages, stop politicking and get down to serious business as a nation. Those who have been tearing and abusing each other start living as if nothing ever happened between them.

THE ROAD TO DECLARATION OF A WINNER IN A NATIONAL ELECTION

By B. M. Kiggundu, Chairman, Electoral Commission



Photo: Bukonya Paul

Last chance: hundreds line up at EC headquarters to register as voters

To many Ugandans, the electoral journey is very simplistic and equated to just turning on the switch of a light bulb.

To all of us, a day is 24 hours, but the difference is how this God-given time period is put to value. In simple terms, the how this time period is put to value is manifested by the difference in net worth of Microsoft and a peasant anywhere in the world or Uganda in particular.

The electoral journey through a national election in Uganda is composed of numerous activities:

- (a) Planning
- (b) Electoral Laws formulation
- (c) Budgeting
- (d) Register Update
- (e) Register Cleaning
- (f) Register Display
- (g) Display/Retrievals and Polling Register Cleaning
- (h) Recruitment/Training of Field Officials
- (i) Nomination of Candidates

- (j) Development/monitoring national campaign program
- (k) Procurement of various electoral materials
- (l) Packing of electoral materials
- (m) Delivery of Polling materials to Districts
- (n) Distribution of Polling materials on Polling day
- (o) Polling activities
- (p) Sort, Count ballots and declare at Polling Stations
- (q) Dispatch poll results from the Polling Stations to District Tallying Center
- (r) Retrieve ballot materials to sub-counties for storage
- (s) Tally and declare results at the Districts
- (t) Dispatch results to national tally center (fax, phone, direct delivery)
- (u) Tally at national tally center
- (v) Declare results within 48 hours (Sec.57(1) of the Presidential Elections Act, 2005)

Other activities include; Commission meetings, Electoral Com-

mission-Inter Party meetings, Security planning meetings, press conferences, talk shows at national, regional and local levels, accreditation of observers including inter-facing with them at various intervals, post-election debriefing meetings and others.

If you are used to an 8-hour work schedule, the Electoral Commission environment especially as preparations for a national election season commence is not the place to be. The Electoral Commission staff is a special breed of employees and surely this outgoing election season has proven it.

This latest electoral journey has been rigorous, eventful, but ultimately worth being a part of. It has not been perfect but the best Uganda has ever had in its democratic history. The clear winner of the 2006 national election was declared to be Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

PICTORIAL: NOMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DECEMBER 2005



Photo:Foto source

Attention: Y.K Museveni (R) is declared dully nominated as candidate presidential elections 2006 by EC Chairman, Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu (L)



Photo:Foto source

Family Support: Candidate John Ssebaana Kizito (2nd L) arrives for nomination at Namboole accompanied by his wife and other senior Democratic Party officials

PICTORIAL: NOMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DECEMBER 2005



Photo:Foto source

You are in: Electoral Commission Chairman, Eng. Dr. Badru M. Kiggundu wishes Uganda People's Congress (UPC) party candidate, Miria Kalule Obote well, shortly after her successful nomination as presidential candidate



Photo: Bukenya Paul

New Face: Independent presidential candidate Abed Bwanika defied all the odds to go all the way, and came 4th out of the five candidates.

PICTORIAL: NOMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DECEMBER 2005



Photo: Fotosource

Sseyi: Independent candidate Nasser Ntege Ssebagala pulled out of the presidential race shortly after his successful nomination, joined and won the mayoral race for Kampala City.



Courtesy Photo

Precedent: Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) presidential candidate Kiiiza Besigye (Inset) was nominated in absentia.

PICTORIAL: NOMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DECEMBER 2005 - THE LIGHTER MOMENTS

Photo: Fotosource



Crocodile tears:

Radio presenter and comedian, Paddy Bitama gets emotional before the press following his unsuccessful bid for nomination as presidential candidate

I will not give up:
Mr. Ainebyona a.k.a “Vicks Kingo” addresses the press after his unsuccessful bid for nomination as a candidate for Presidential Elections 2006



Photo: Fotosource



Photo: Fotosource

Republican Women and Youth Party official Stella Nambuya briefs the press on her candidate's unsuccessful bid for nomination. The party could not raise the nomination fee in time.

Opinion: **DECLARE ELECTION DAYS AUTOMATIC PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.**

By Bukenya Paul, Election Officer- Public Relations Department

During the recently concluded general elections, sections of the population criticized the government for declaring election days public holidays. I consider this matter as very sensitive, and join the debate but with supporting arguments on why election days should be, and this is possible through legislation, automatically public holidays.

First, I would like to state right away, that, being an election officer, polling day is always an up-to-20-hour-working-day for me. And this applies to thousands of many other election officials, permanent and temporary, spread throughout the country. It can never be 'business as usual' at the district headquarters, where the Returning Officer (who in some cases happens to be the respective Chief Administrative Officer - CAO) has engaged his/her staff as tallying clerks, county/sub county/parish supervisors, drivers, and election constables.



to only authorized personnel during the period. If one repeats this (true) scenario across the whole country, then even if government does not pronounce it, it is as good as a public holiday.

Secondly, it is important to note that most polling stations are located at school grounds, which means,

school may as well remain closed on that day.

Thirdly, registered voters who cannot cast their ballots because they never had time to go to their (sometimes-upcountry) stations, have described their situation as a case of disenfranchisement, which is inconsistent with rights provided for in our constitution. Please note that the electoral law bars persons from registering to vote from their places of work, allowing them to do so only in areas (parish) of origin or residence. A public holiday offers such persons an opportunity to have a say in deciding who governs them by traveling and voting from their rightful upcountry stations.

We know from experience, that, except for civil servants and diplomatic missions, most people in Uganda go on with business as usual on all our 'official public holidays'. Surprisingly, election days tend to attract people to take a day off, or at least the biggest part of the day. Possibly there is a combination of factors, or due to anxiety, but it is common to find closed markets and shops, which is not always the case on Independence or Christmas day.

I agree that the cost of a public holiday is high to government and the business community, but I also think the costs of a poorly managed country are even higher. We need to establish good governance in order for business and peace to flourish, and this can be guaranteed by participatory democracy.

I however, feel that municipal/city division council elections should be held on the same day as the sub county/town council elections, so that we have only one public holiday instead of two. It was rather awkward to me, passing through

(Continued on page 20)



Thursday 23rd February 2006 was a public holiday which enabled voters to participate in electing their leaders.

With key staff from all departments deployed, other work virtually comes to a standstill until the elections are over. Please note that the district headquarters are always preferred, and gazetted, as tallying centers, and are in a sense, restricted

the pupils will find it hard to concentrate on their studies. Besides, the Electoral Commission prefers, and normally appoints teachers as polling officials. This combination implies that 'business cannot go on as usual in schools, and so the

Photo: Paul Bukenya

STAFF NEWS



Photo: Bukenya Paul

So help me God: Dr. T.S. Kiryapawo (L) takes his oath as Commissioner, Electoral Commission, before the Chief Justice Benjamin Odoki, 20th February 2006. He becomes the seventh and final Commissioner at The Electoral Commission.



Courtesy Photo

EC's Ms. Caroline Onekalit (Arrow) was in Afghanistan with other UN election officials to oversee poll in the war -torn contry. The elections was carried out jointly by the Joint Electoral Management Body Secretariat (JEMBS) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Ms. Onekalit went to Afghanistan as a United Nations Volunteer (UNV) working with UNOPS

SECURITY CHALLENGES DURING ELECTIONS

By IP Musoni Alphonse, OC-Security -Electoral Commission

Police, like a hospital, is one institution that one can never swear to do without. While in a hospital the physician will do most of the job, in the field of security, best results are realised when security personnel work in close partnership with the public.

The police mission statement goes thus: "To secure life and property in partnership with the public in a committed and professional manner in order to promote development".

Throughout the recent election period, the above statement was employed as the guiding light for the police officers attached to the Electoral Commission.

One noticeable challenge security had to handle carefully, yet effectively, was the issue of politicians with different political leanings. This being a re-birth of multiparty politics after more than two decades, a number of political hopefuls, most of them young citizens had high ambitions and could do whatever it takes to achieve their



targets. This often led to breaking some rules of the game thereby necessitating security to step in.

Neutrality is a ruling factor if the police is to do a professional service. Thanks to the excellent cooperation between the Electoral Commission staff and security, every hurdle was cleared smoothly.

Protection and escort of election materials was another challenge, to avert suspicion of possible tampering with materials. The men and women of the Mobile Police Patrol Unit accomplished the task of safe and prompt delivery of these materials. The Police also provided security for the Electoral Commission staff, from the Chairperson

and the Commissioners to the junior members as well as facilities, like the stores.

Having gone through the whole exercise from Presidential to Local Council elections, the Police Force reflected on the Police Mission Statement as already quoted above. There lay the secret - working in partnership (teamwork), a lesson for future activities. Teamwork ought to be nurtured, for with it, all the hurdles are overcome with relative ease.

All thanks go to God Almighty, the Commission staff and the Uganda Police Force.

As a security force, the Police reiterates a commitment to achieving the goals as stated in its Mission and Vision statements for a better Uganda.

I congratulate the successful candidates at all levels, and encourage those who lost to be positive for that is how democracy works.

As the Police, we remain committed to our Motto - **PROTECT AND SERVE**.



Photo: Paul Bukonya

Together in the cause: Regular dialogue helped the stakeholders to interact, raise and address pertinent issues during the electoral programme. This workshop with representatives of political parties at Fairway Hotel was among the many in the build up to the general elections

Humour

WHAT LANGUAGE!

Compiled by Bukenya Paul, Election Officer

The Electoral Commission can be a very busy place, and in such situations things get done in an amazing way. Sometimes you just need to call to get something done. On other occasions you have to run around. No one can get busier than the other – we are all busy and everything is urgent, especially during an election season.

But there are things, or rather responses (phrases), which help get the stress off our heads or at worst rattle your ribs in a bout of laughter. Here we go.

The EC Printery.

I emerged from the Printery ‘minus-what-you-wanted’ but still with a smile I was following up a printing job sent earlier only to be told by the In-charge, Printery Section that; ‘the color seps were poorly done, with poor percentages. Take these films back ask them to reduce on magenta and cyan’.

Understating neither this cyan nor the magenta jargon, I stormed out of the Printery wondering...what the hell’s going on here?

Voter Education and Training.

A report to Management/Commission Meeting ended with this paragraph:

“Work on the manual is almost complete; we are waiting for award of contract to a printer. These materials are needed before commencing with ToTs next month”.

The Procurement Unit.

A sticker attached to a ‘bounced Memo requesting procurement of items for my department reads like this: “Please fill in a PP Form 20 describing your requirements,

to enable us commence with the transaction. Have Finance confirm availability of funds and Secretary authorize”.

Transport Section.

Sometimes, the response to a request for transport goes like this: the vehicle is available, but there is no fuel (the humorous officer pronounces it: fuwelo).

Network Administrator.

We are doing some “configuration and the network” will be off for the whole day. “Staff using PCs with multi-giga-byte RM memory should log off”, he continues.

Human Resource Department.

In a busy election year, such as 2006, every member of staff at EC expects this kind of communication on the eve of many a public holiday:

“As you all know, tomorrow is a public holiday. However, due to the heavy workload at the EC, it will

be a normal working day for us. You are kindly requested to report for duty...”

Finance/Cash Office.

This is the most important office at the Electoral Commission and I have noticed many an officer zoom-off and abandon lunch to respond to Bwana Waiswa’s (Cashier’s) summons: “Please come, there is something for you here...”

In most cases, it is a cheque, although sometimes it turns out to be hard cash being paid to you as a reward for some hard work delivered!

Finance/Coding Section.

Calling this office is like waiting outside the Operation Theater at a hospital emergency wing: “The batch was sent to Finance and we are now waiting for cheque printing”, they often declare.

And now, you start praying that your long-awaited cheque will be one of them... (Continued on page 20)

CAPTURED?



Courtesy Photo

No! Kampala lawyer Zam Zam Nagujja (2nd L) and EC’s Yudaya Khauka (2nd R) were part of the UN volunteers during the August 2005 Afghanistan elections.

Get To Know The EC

ELECTION MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Electoral Commission is committed to delivering free and fair elections as mandated under Article 61 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995).

In order to carry out its functions, the Commission came up with a number of departments to help it achieve its role and among them is Election Management Department. The Department is spearheaded by a Head of Department and consists of various sections, which include the following;

1. Desk Officers Section

These are Election Officers in charge of the various regions in the country as indicated:

- Desk Officer in charge Northern region
- Desk Officer in charge Far East
- Desk Officer in charge Near East
- Desk Officer in charge Mid West
- Desk Officer in charge Central South
- Desk Officer in charge Central North
- Desk Officer in charge South West

The Desk Officers are charged with the following duties:

- Study, interpretation and operationalisation of electoral laws.
- Co-ordination, establishment and operation of polling stations.
- Oversee the maintenance of databases of elections results.
- Oversee the specification of the structures, quality and quantity of polling materials.
- Co-ordinate and oversee the preparation, packing, dispatch and delivery of polling materials to district.
- Oversee the designing, production, distribution and control the use of ballot papers
- Co-ordinate organising and supervising candidates campaign meetings
- Co-ordinate the monitoring and evaluation of election activities
- Co-ordinate all field activities.

2. Cartography Section

This office is in charge of designing and production of all maps of the different administrative units including all changes or new units.

3. Statistical Section

This office is responsible for the maintenance of database on the following:

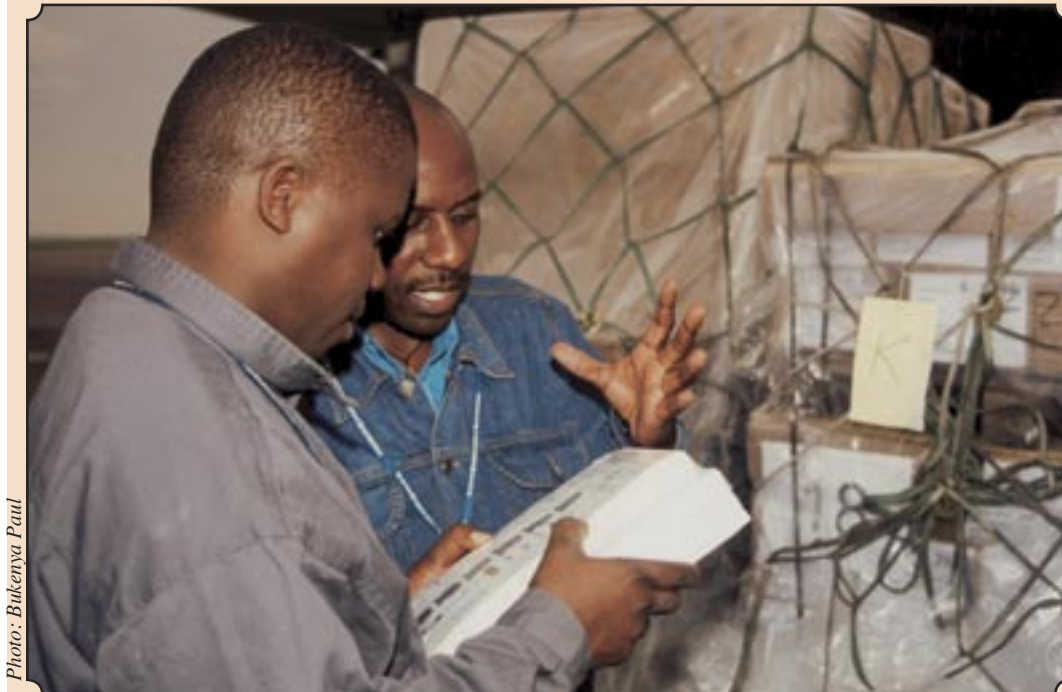
- Nomination of candidates
- Election programs
- Election results
- Election budgets
- By elections
- Administrative units
- Compilation of Electoral Commission budget.

4. Registry Section

This office is responsible for maintaining all documents used during elections and these include:

- Nomination forms
- Tally Sheet
- Declaration of results forms
- Transmission of results forms

All the above sections are co-ordinated by a senior election officer who harmonises departmental programmes and activities.



This is Okay:

*Silver Mugenyi
and
Charles Lwanga
of Election
Management
Department
study
a sample of
a consignment
of ballot papers
at
Entebbe Airport*

STAFF NEWS



Photo: Fotosource

Smart: EC Commissioners wait for the next aspirant during nomination of presidential candidates at the Mandela Stadium, Namboole



Photo: Bukenya Paul

March for Peace: EC Staff marched from Jinja Road to Nakivubo Stadium to invoke the mercy of the Almighty for peaceful elections



Photo: Bukenya Paul

Leaving nothing to chance: An EC staff goes through the 3-in-1 polling process at a demonstration conducted for press and representatives of political parties.



Courtesy Photo

On 6th May 2006, Mr. Mugwanya (Admin. Dep't) took Justine Namigadde as his wife, "provoking" Micheal Jjuuko (bestman, Data Processing Dep't) to start the search for Miss Right. Watch this space!

The EC's Standing Resolution

To "promote public confidence in the Electoral Commission as a credible institution in charge of management of the electoral process through a transparent, accountable and efficient human resource, conducting continuous voter education and update of the Voter's Register in order to deliver peaceful free and fair elections and referenda in accordance with the Constitution".



What Language! *(from page 17)*

Registry.

You all know who best brings out the humour in this Section but this yellow sticker attached to my 'bounced letter' got me laughing all day:

"Please Paul, clearly indicate the names of the recipient. I will not always drop your anonymous mail at that office. Sincerely, who are you writing to all the time that never gets bored? How unromantic of you to send love letters in a brown official envelope?"

This was followed by a phone call: "Paul, you should keep track of your date. They moved office to northern Uganda".

Poll days should be holidays *(from page 14)*

with business going on as usual while the rest of the country was 'supposed' to take a day off to elect leaders at sub county/town council level. Ideally, a public holiday for purposes of elections-of-a-national-nature, should affect the entire country, not particular areas.

Please note that the constitutional deadline for Uganda's general elections now falls on 12th March, and the month already has a holiday (8th March being the International Women's Day). It would be unfair

to go on in this manner if the Easter Holidays of the year 2011 fall in the month of March. The business community will be much more relieved to know beforehand that March 2011 will have six public holidays, that is, International Women's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, a public holiday for Presidential and Parliamentary, Local Council 5, and Local Council 4&3 (municipal/city division/sub county/town council elections). This can be contained if it comes once every five years.

Please note that I have not established the Easter Holidays for 2011, and the number of days is for

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Photo: MGS

Innovation: the transparent ballot box was one of the new measure introduced by Electoral Commission to ensure fair elections.