



POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTRATION COMMISSION

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PPRC NEWS BRIEF

Monitoring of by-election and Village Head

The Political Parties Registration Commission on Saturday 29th June 2013 monitored the parliamentary by-elections for constituency 29, Bombali District, Local Council ward 329 and Village head elections in the Western Area Rural District.

This was done as part of the Commission's statutory mandate to monitor the affairs and conduct of Political Parties and to also ensure that Political Parties do not interfere in the Village Head Elections.

The Commission is pleased to inform the general public that all of these elections were peaceful with little or no report of violence as the police were present in all polling stations visited.

The commission is hereby calling on the supporters of all candidates to be patient as the National Electoral Commission is tallying the results.

Appeal to the Media, Civil Society and the General Public

The Commission is calling on Civil Society Organizations, the Media and the General Public to contact the Commission on issues bordering on the work of the Commission and on Political Issues.

Constituency 62,(mile 91) Tonkolili District By-Election

Following the appointment as a minister of the former Member of Parliament for Constituency 62, Tonkolili District, a by-election was required by law to be held. Tensions slowly grew to a height that required a team from the Commission to hold some high level discussions with stakeholders at Mile 91.

Few day after the engagement, ,the Commission by the Independent Candidate that he has voluntarily withdrawn from the race.

Internal Structural Capacity building

The Commission has developed **Terms of Reference** for the hiring of a Communications Consultant. The expected output of this consultancy is to contribute to strengthening PPRC's capacity for more effective internal and external communication by developing an outreach communication and visibility strategies to carry out the Commission's flagship programme (Political Education). This consultancy is expected to last for a period of seven months.

Constitutional Review

The Commission has developed a concept paper for Inter-Party dialogue on the Constitutional Review process. The dialogue will be to acquaint Political Parties with the earlier recommendations made by the CRC of 2006 of which ***Hon. Justice Tolla Thompson, current Chair of the Commission*** was a humble member.

The Concept paper presents recommendations such as the provision for full time Commissioners within the Commission; amendment of the relevant portions to empower the commission to issue sanctions; etc.

The Commission has held two meetings with the Political Parties: further discussion with the political parties in attendance was to also see how support for Political Parties' can be made a constitutional provision. This will be further dependent on the Commission establishing set criteria for the beneficiaries.

Conflict Mediation

Serious tensions within the leadership and the followership of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party became a cause for concern for the Commission. Some of the issues at the heart of the conflict rest on the issue of a "Flagbearer" after the elections.

Constitutional interpretation was required for the Sierra Leones Peoples Party on the matter regarding the position of the "flag bearer". The Commission was quick and very handy in its intervention on the matter. An invitation was sent to the Party's Elders' Council who took part in some of the deliberations at the Commission's headquarters.

Factional divisions within the SLPP have lately resulted to violence within the party for which the Police have had cause to permanently deploy personnel at the party headquarters. Discussions with the leadership of the party saw a peaceful resolution of the matter.

Conflict over Nigeria Donation

Towards the close of the just concluded elections in November 2012, the president of the Republic of Nigeria promised a handsome gift to Political Parties. The gift was meant to capacitate Political Parties in their drive towards the elections.

At the receipt of this denotation, almost all the Political Parties descended to chaos. The Commission intervened after receipt of numerous complaints from sections of party officials who however wanted an explanation on the use of such fund or are unsatisfied at the use of it.

With the Commission's statutory mandate to write and require explanations on the use of Political Party funds, this aspect was evoked and forced political parties to

complied. Several meetings were held at the Commission's headquarters to address the issue and sometimes amicably resolved.

Political Education

The Commission's Post Election interaction with supporters of Political Parties was a regional affair where the commission met supporters from all the regions. The interaction indicates weaknesses in the capacity of most parties. The Commission has therefore decided that regular dialogue and training for the leadership of Political Parties is key.

As a result of this the Commission resolves to support the review of Political Parties' constitutions and the development of party policies. These policies were to be reviewed and circulated to the wider membership of supporters. This move will be a measure to capacitate political parties. As at the moment the Commission is currently working on activities as to how parties will hold intra-party dialogues for this purpose.

Support to Parliamentarians

- The Commission had a working session with members of the House of Parliament in a move to capacitate parliamentarians on the filling and submission of campaign finance forms for contestants for the elections. This is a statutory requirement which all contestants must comply with. The training capacitated MPs on the processes and it is expected that by extension Political Parties benefit too.

Support to All Political Parties Youth/Women's Association

Advice has been proffered to the All Political Parties Youth Association in their drive to do their constitutional review. Regular interactions were held in a bid to help the association carve out a constitution free of contraventions with their parent institutions.

Regular interactions with the All Political Parties Women's Association have also helped in the planning for a roll out of some of their pending activities

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