

# Bishops set up centre to tally election results

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**KAMPALA.** Bishops under their umbrella organisation Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) have set up a situation room that will, among others, monitor today's electoral processes, including tallying of results and promised to announce their verdict immediately after the Electoral Commission has declared the winner.

Namirembe Diocesan Bishop Wilberforce Kityo Luwalira, who is also chairing the UJCC national election steering Committee, told journalists yesterday that they have dispatched 863 election observers across the country to provide their secretariat with information on how events will unfold in various parts of the constituencies.

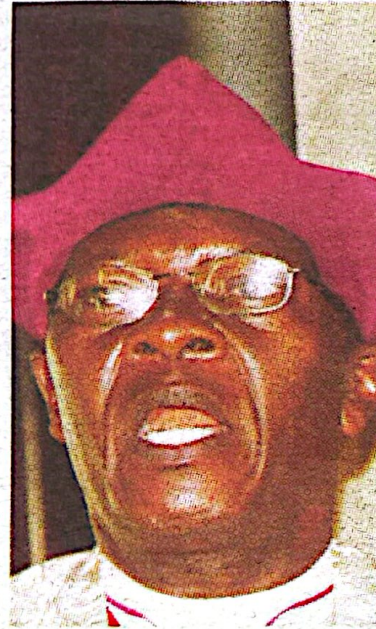
"We believe that every voter who has listened to the candidates and the issues they have raised has now made up his or her mind and is prepared to

vote candidates of their choice. Ensure that you do not miss to participate in this historic process. The secretariat has set up a situation room which will be a centre for collecting, collating and consolidating information from different parts of the country," Bishop Luwalira said.

The Electoral Commission okayed political parties and groups to set up parallel tally centre, but warned that it's the only one with the mandate to declare the eventual winner. The Rev Fr Dr Silvester Arinaitwe Rwomukubwe, UJCC executive secretary, said the Christian churches' body cannot abdicate its role to shape public opinion on such an important exercise.

"We are not paralleling with them (EC). What we are doing is what we have always done as UJCC. We send our people all over the country to inform us what is taking place out there, the violence, the timing of opening polling stations and

what other incidents they may see. Our work is to inform the people here that such and such



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a thing is happening and can you intervene," Rev Fr Dr Rwomukubwe said.

"At the same time, they send us the results. We are not allowed by law to say anything before Electoral Commission have announced the results. According to the law, after voting, the EC has 48 hours to release their results. It is immediately after that that our interim report will come out. This comes with the results we have gathered and the processes we have gone through to reach those results."

Bishop Luwalira appealed to the EC chairman, Dr Badru Kiggundu, to ensure his commission is professional while handling these elections as they "have far-reaching implications on the citizens". To the candidates, the bishop asked them to accept the EC's verdict and only seek redress through the courts of law if they don't agree.

"Remember the race goes on, it is one candidate who will receive the crown. You, therefore, need to appreciate the voice of the majority. We would like to urge any candidate who may not agree with the verdict of the Electoral Commission to seek redress in the courts of law. Please do not resort to violence," the bishop appealed.