

2016 elections test public confidence in Kiggundu EC again



A man holds a ballot box that was destroyed by rowdy voters after voting materials reached late at the polling station in Kampala. PHOTO BY MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

Accused. Right from day one, with the exception of the ruling National Resistance Movement, other players challenged the Electoral Commission's ability to deliver on its mandate. Take FDC's Kizza Besigye who on the day of his nomination accused the EC of bias and being a "walking stick of President Museveni", writes **Stephen Kafeero**.

The Electoral Commission (EC) has devoted a better part of this electoral exercise emphasising that it is an impartial and independent organisation capable of delivering a

credible, free and fair election, but some of the stakeholders in the process think otherwise.

EC chairperson Badru Kiggundu is no stranger to the accusations levelled

against him and the institution that he leads ranging from partiality to fraud concealment in elections, having been at the helm of managing Uganda's elections since 2002.

For example, the results of the first presidential election he managed in 2006 were challenged in court which found irregularities but nevertheless upheld them.

In the run up to February 18, when Ugandans voted for president and MPs, Dr Kiggundu and his officials used media briefings and other functions to dismiss the allegations that

the commission he leads is biased, as baseless and challenged those making them to adduce evidence.

Dr Livingstone Sewanyana, the chairperson of Citizens Election Observer Network Uganda (CEON-U), one of the organisations actively observing the 2016 elections, says the electoral environment in Uganda is riddled with serious problems, such as commercialisation of politics, voter bribery, intimidation, an unlevelled ground where some candidates having

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