

...individuals whose  
diplomas have been cancelled or

Others whose diplomas have  
been recalled and will require to

In a separate move, city tycoon  
Hamis Kiggundu has been referred

to the ruling, the LDC commenced  
the investigations leading to these  
recommendations.

Mr Itarikire Elias  
Mr Mbajja Bashir

Roberts  
Ms Kataika Florence

# Human rights body blames EC for poll mess

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**KAMPALA.** The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) has added its voice to those who have castigated the Electoral Commission for failing to conduct a free and fair election general election last week, which ended last week.

The UHRC said in a report that there were incidents of multiple voting reported in some polling stations across the country.

Addressing the media at the commission's head office in Kampala at the release of the preliminary report on elections, Mr Medi Kaggwa, the UHRC chairperson, cited an example of Rwibogo Primary School polling station in Rwampara County, Mbarara, where its election observers found out that Nicholas Kamugisha

had voted four times before he was found with five voter location slips under the guise of helping his illiterate relatives.

"Another case was found at Bulambuli Catholic Church [polling station] in Mbale District where an elderly lady was allegedly found in possession of many voter location slips, which she said she would use to cast the ballot on behalf of her sick relatives and another case was reported in three polling stations in Mbarara District," Mr Kaggwa said.

## More poll mishaps

He said other cases the commission noted were lack of secrecy of the ballot citing several cases at polling stations in Kampala and Wakiso districts where the secrecy was compromised. The UHRC said at those polling stations, there was no furniture to place

the basin for ticking the ballots. The basin had to be put down compromising the secrecy of the ballot.

Mr Kaggwa further stated that there were cases where voters were intimidated by the deployment of the military such as at Nabweru playground Polling Station and Kajjansi Dispensary Polling Station, both in Wakiso District, where there was heavy UPDF presence which scared away voters.

According to him, the commission monitored 1,359 polling stations across the country where they obtained the information and noted that particularly in Kampala and Wakiso districts, there were unprecedented delays in opening of most polling stations and ballot papers were delivered two hours or beyond after partial electoral materials had arrived. He said this prompted peo-

ple to become tensed up as presiding officers did not provide any information or update voters on what was going on.

However, UHRC commended the EC for making most of the polling stations (96 per cent) accessible to vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities, the sick and pregnant women. Mr Kaggwa said at most polling stations vulnerable people were given special attention in voting by attending to them first.

## General observations

According to UHRC, there were pockets of violence between supporters of different candidates before, during and after polling day. Mr Kaggwa cited cases in Mukono District where supporters of MP Betty Namboozie clashed with her rivals' supporters on February 17. He said some of Namboozie's supporters were arrested.

When asked on whether the police was not violating the rights of the FDC presidential candidate, Dr Kizza

Besigye, who has been confined to his home since the elections ended last week, Mr Kaggwa said the UHRC was monitoring the situation and urged police to produce him in court if they have a case against him.

Mr Kaggwa urged the EC to provide adequate and timely training for polling officials and improve on delivery of voter education during elections in future.

"EC should review the maximum number of voters that can be handled at each polling station to avoid imbalances in the work load and congestions at some of the polling stations and make sure all stakeholders get prior information on merged polling stations," Mr Kaggwa said.

He added that the police should use reasonable force on civilians and most importantly restrain itself from the use of live ammunition during crowd control.

Mr Kaggwa called upon all state and non-state actors that have a role in ensuring that human rights are respected.