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I won't accept results of rigged election - Mbabazi

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Warned. Mr Mbabazi also said the EC chairman will personally answer for the outcome of a rigged election.

BY ISAAC IMAKA
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KAMPALA. If he loses today's vote, Go Forward presidential candidate Amama Mbabazi will "stay in Kanungu crying" with his people, then return to Kampala a day after to commiserate with friends and then express gratitude to the people of Uganda for having put trust in him to the extent they did.

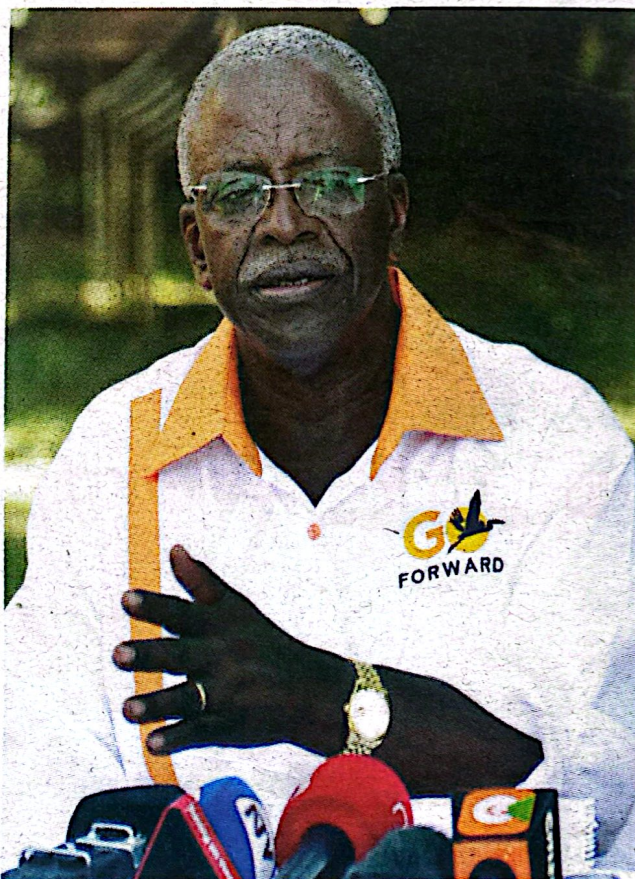
But that, he says, will be if the outcome is a true expression of the people's wishes.

"I will respect their wishes. But if the results are not a true expression of the people's wish and a result of manipulation or rigging, of course, I will not accept it; definitely not. I will reject them," he said.

Mr Mbabazi, who will be voting from his home village in Kanungu District, made the statements while addressing the media at his home yesterday.

He reiterated his condemnation of a decree by the Electoral Commission (EC) to ban people from going to vote with phones and cameras, saying it is a direct contradiction of the law just as is the order that people should stand 100 metres away from the polling station.

He said Dr Badru Kiggundu, the EC boss, will personally be held liable for any outcome arising from a rigged election.



Go Forward presidential candidate Amama Mbabazi addresses a press conference at his home in Kololo, Kampala yesterday. PHOTO BY RACHEL MABALA

"I am surprised by the current behaviour of my friend [Dr] Kiggundu. He will take full responsibility for anything that goes wrong arising

out of those decrees. He has no powers to ban cameras and phones," he said.

He further pointed out that there

are already plans by the ruling party to rig the election and that the electoral body is most likely to turn a blind eye.

"I am receiving reports about the activities going on in regard to tampering with the votes tomorrow (today) and we are monitoring them very closely," he said.

"I reiterate my call for our people to remain vigilant because ballot stuffing can be made at the polling station and that's where they (voters) can help."

Mr Mbabazi further said having worked with the ruling party, he well knows the pressures that the commissioners of the EC are going through, but urged them to follow their conscience and do the right thing.

"I think no one knows the pressures brought against them (commissioners) than I. I know them very well but I would like to urge them to resist them because they would have served their own conscience and the people of Uganda and that would be their contribution to the well-being of society," he said.

The country today goes to the polls with 15.2 million people expected to choose their next president and Members of Parliament.

The Opposition has been wary of the possibility of rigging, with many of the presidential candidates saying the vote has already been rigged.

Mr Mbabazi, who consistently told his supporters to guard the vote at the polling centres and leave Kampala (Electoral Commission central tallying centre) for him.

READY TO FIGHT IT

Yesterday, Mr Mbabazi said his team was continuing with preparations by deploying agents at every polling station in the country and will work with whoever is friendly and is interested in protecting the vote.