

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTIONS

1 message

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To: hon bird allan <elections22committee.parliament@gmail.com>

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to express our thoughts on the conduct of the 2022 General Elections.

We had general elections come and go but by far the 2022 was the worst one compared to the others since Independence.

Congratulations on your appointment, the Hon Allan Bird, Governor for East Sepik as Chairman of this all important Committee, since some of what we raise here in this forum will be taken further in Parliament in order for necessary legislative changes so that the system can be improved.

1. Powers, functions and responsibilities of the Electoral Commission.

Let me first stress here that the big problem we've had in elections and will continue to be is POLITICS, changes to the ways elections are run, the change of appointments of officials, the rules, venues the list goes on.

Secondly the system needs to be run by people with integrity from the commissioner down, the people appointed to run the election process with no professional or even moral ethics will be easily pushed around to do things they not supposed to.

Officers engaged in failed elections in 2017 were appointed to senior and sensitive positions again knowingly. Officers who were incompetent and who find it hard to say no under trying circumstances were appointed. Again politics comes into play again.

The powers and functions of the system are crystal clear but with politics coupled with incompetent and inexperienced officials, we stand little chance of improving the system.

2. Process involved in the conduct of the general election, with focus on the updating of the common roll, campaigning, voting, the counting, declarations, disputed return process.

Once again it's hard to talk about the conduct of the general election without politics and the heavy handed tactics employed by the politicians into ensuring that the laws are bent to favor them winning a seat.

Everyone along the chain of command in the electoral system favored certain candidates. Look at the inflation of figures for certain wards, how can the officers not know when such a deal is taking place, the RO, ARO, Election Manager and who else up the chain of command must already know the result before the seat is declared. When the final updated roll is released during pre-count, come on ec,

Voting takes place when a person picks up the ballot and writes 1 2 3 next to the candidate of their choice. In my ward officials allowed for the ballot papers to be distributed to the census units and certain individuals had to sit down and write down all the preferences and in fact this is what happened in all the wards of the Electorate, to put it simply the people didn't vote, someone voted for them.

Counting and declarations, don't know the role of the security personnel, they make many of the decisions in the count room, not the Returning officer, the security personnel even come up with their own polling officials list when they defend aggressively before and after polling and even during counting.

Disputed returns need be fast tracked and speeded up, a lot of electorates suffer from basic when the seat is not represented by a mandated leader.

The EC need to set some conditions for people who want to nominate,

- age before nomination,
- nomination fees be increased,
- how long a person has lived in a certain area.

- command.of.english,
- read and write in English
- be a Christian
- not been convicted
- others

3.Expenditure of the electoral fund

This be a open cheque book, expenditure after the return of writ, be the final bill the government settle.

(I am a victim of the 2017 general elections as one returning officer for one electorate when I lost everything, my permanent house, trade store, and animals, in looting damages and burning by loosing candidate.) Still waiting for the EC to give me some form of a response, let alone settlement.

Understandably they still have outstanding bills from even 2012 National Elections still to be settled. They don't seem to have priorities, what to settle first and what next.

4.Security by Royal PNG Constabulary, PNG Defence Force, PNG Correctional Institutions Services.

First and foremost, the commanders to inform the pesonnel what they're called out, the duties of police and defence force.

Their called to provide security, in some instances, in many cases they go out of their call especially at the count Centre and do things they are not supposed to which has become determental in some seats.

as a pulic servant I have taken part in elections and one time as a assistant returning for an electorate and these are just the bones of what I have observed over the years, I should be better placed when the team come around to the regions for consultations.

what has been presented here hopefully meets the requirements of the committee, and in the case you need further information in anything stated here, I would be all that willing to assist.