

January 23, 2008

Here we are yet to recover from the aftermath of the elections. Despite the efforts to bring the government side and the opposition to table for talks that will end the quagmire, it is the common person who is bearing the brunt.

Koffi Annan is in the country to mediate between President Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga. We hope and pray that all will be well and that an agreeable position will be reached by the two leaders to stop the bloodshed that is happening and allow Kenya to get back to its life and business.

In some places there has been retaliation by communities whose Members were attacked elsewhere where they had settled. They in turn are attacking members of other communities in their midst. More and more people continue to lose their lives and get displaced.

It is unfortunate that neither the government nor the opposition seem ready to loosen their stands. Raila Odinga of ODM (opposition Orange Democratic Movement) has held that president Kibaki has to resign for them to be able to talk. He insists he has no faith in the country's justice system, that's why he is not ready to place an election petition before the courts.

On the other hand Kibaki insists he won the elections and therefore he is not the aggrieved party so he shouldn't be extending a hand to the opposition. Some of his ministers have demeaned the Annan visit as "coming to take tea at state house" which has called for reactions, Kenyans asking whether there is no tea in Ghana!

The other unfortunate thing is the fact that the government issued a state ban on any live broadcasts here in the country. Now the Media Council has given the ministry concerned 24 hours to reverse the decree failure to which the council warns of dire consequences. A few hours remain as this done yesterday afternoon.

Now the Election Commission says Kibaki won the elections and the media is distorting facts. The Chairman of the commission has been on record saying he did not know who won the elections. If you can read today's Nation newspaper online, see the story on page ...

People here are no longer interested in who won or lost the elections. What they want is assurance on their security and return of peace and calm. There are claims that each of the candidates: Raila and Kibaki

rigged in their respective regions. But the whole country believes there were anomalies in the tallying of presidential votes.

The fact that president Kibaki appointed, as his vice, Kalonzo Musyoka who came third in the presidential race with less than a million votes has led others to believe that the rigging may have been done even before elections.

People are calling for a rerun, but this may not go down well with some quarters. Others are calling for a power sharing agreement. Still others think it is in a new constitution that a lasting solution may be found, and what better time than now to get a disinterested team as a transitional government as we pave way for a new constitutional dispensation and a fresh elections in two year's time?

All in all, many people are caught in between. We do not know for sure whether we can get to towns before we are ambushed. Many people are resorting to staying indoors. But work has to continue. Tension is rife and many are not able to trust their next door neighbour, with whom they had been friends for decades.

The education sector has really been affected. It is January, schools have opened but children cannot get back to their schools. The most hit areas are in regions where hundreds of people had to flee their homes and a number of schools were torched. Now those children who were learning in regions other than their home regions fear for their lives and many of them are now seeking admittance to schools within their own regions!

It is PEACE that we pray for, as we hope that the Annan led talks will bear fruits that will last.