



**KASRILS,
THIS IS
WHY SA
MUST
VOTE –
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**ELECTIONS
2014**

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IT'S YOUR DUTY



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Call for patience, tolerance after violence mars start to voting

SACRED RIGHT: Chief electoral officer Mosotho Moepya has appealed to all voters, especially those who have resorted to protesting, to act in a manner today that shows pride in our country.

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GOOD weather and good behaviour, please. That is what electoral officials are hoping for at today's polls.

"Don't miss this opportunity to make your voice heard and to have your say in the future of our country. South Africa needs all your votes," said chief electoral officer Mosotho Moepya.

He called for patience and tolerance after a start to the polls marred by community protests, a voting official who didn't know the law, and slow special votes in the Durban area.

"We appeal to all voters to exercise patience and tolerance, and to act in a manner which shows pride in our country as they visit the voting stations," said Moepya.

"We make a special plea to those communities which have been expressing their frustrations and grievances through protest action to respect the rights of all South Africans to make their voice heard through the electoral process."

Late yesterday, Moepya said the Independent Electoral Commission was ready for the polls.

The IEC and justice, crime prevention and security cluster ministers had identified potential hotspots in KwaMashu, KwaZulu-Natal; Bekkersdal, Gauteng; Marikana, near Rustenburg, North West; Sterkspruit, Eastern Cape;

Tight security promised at polls

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SECURITY was expected to be tight at polling stations throughout the country as millions of South Africans cast their votes.

SANDF spokesman Siphwe Dlamini said the SAPS would work jointly with defence force members who would be deployed to volatile areas if the need arose.

The Johannesburg metro police department (JMPD) also forms part of the security plans to ensure free and fair elections and the safety of voters.

Yesterday, SAPS spokesman Solomon Makgale said police officers would be deployed to all polling stations to monitor the

situation. "There will be police officers inside and outside the polling stations," he said.

However, Makgale would not be drawn into revealing how many police officers would be deployed.

"We never give out numbers; generally there will be a high police visibility."

Makgale said other police officers would be "patrolling in the vicinity of the polling stations so that if there is a problem, they are able to respond promptly".

JMPD Chief Superintendent Wayne Minnaar said their officers would escort the ballot boxes as well as other materials needed at the polling stations.

They would also escort the boxes to the results centre afterwards and assist the SAPS in possible hotspot areas.

"They will monitor all the polling stations until they close to ensure a safe environment for the voters," Minnaar said.

Other traffic officers would ensure free traffic flows on the roads and respond to any incident as quickly as possible.

Dlamini said the SANDF had been part of the security cluster sector's security-plan discussions for the elections.

"We will do an analysis of the problematic areas and deploy our members accordingly," he said. – *Additional reporting by Botho Molosankwe*

voting stations in ward 14 of Maruleng, Limpopo, being unable to open on Monday. Last night, though, everything was back on track.

"Obviously we are taking (threats of protest) seriously and have planned for them, so we are not caught by surprise. We are comfortable with the security plans that are on the table so we, together with the security agencies, don't anticipate problems," deputy chief electoral officer Sy Mamabolo said.

The election process in general was going smoothly. He said IEC officials were reporting that all special votes had been completed yesterday.

"It's all systems go for (today). The special votes (which took place on Monday) will be counted and reconciled after voting on May 7, and then they will be mixed up with the rest of the ballots."

Moepya also confirmed that an electoral official from KwaThema, Springs, was replaced after storing voting materials – including two special votes that had been cast – in a party official's home overnight. The incident was tweeted about by another party official, who Moepya thanked.

"We mentioned the challenge of cellphones and social media with regard to breaching secrecy. But this was a case in which a cellphone camera and an alert party agent and the power of social media helped us to enhance the credibility of this election, and we remain grateful," Moepya said.

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IN ASHES: People clean up the remains of a voting station that was set alight by community members in Bekkersdal last night. PICTURE: BOXER NGWENYA

Bekkersdal IEC sites burnt

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ANGRY Bekkersdal community members have burnt down Independent Electoral Commission tents that would have been used as polling stations today.

Flames and smoke from the burning polling stations could be seen from afar in the township at about 9pm last night.

Three polling stations were

burnt to ashes and one person was arrested, according to the police.

Community leader Paseka Ndevu said residents were unhappy with the army's presence.

He said the community had raised their concerns during a meeting held at a community hall in the afternoon.

Ndevu said the meeting had been called by community leaders who were pleading with residents to go and vote peacefully.

"The community said the presence of the army brings back bad memories about the apartheid era.

They said they were willing to vote, but they wanted the army to move out of the area," he said.

Ndevu said the meeting had ended with residents saying they would vote. He was surprised when he received calls telling him that IEC tents were on fire.

Police said Bekkersdal residents ran amok and burnt the polling stations after the meeting had ended.

The army has been deployed to the volatile township since Monday in order to maintain order in the area during the election period.

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South African Airways, the leading airline on the African continent, has been awarded the 4-Star Airline ranking for 2014 by Skytrax, the independent global airline rating organisation, for the 12th year in a row

