



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAIROBI, KENYA: Thursday, October 29, 2020

SUBJECT: SENSATIONAL AND ALARMING HEADLINE IN THE STAR NEWSPAPER

The Commission's attention has been drawn to a report appearing in the Star Newspaper of Thursday 29th October 2020 under the headline **'TWO DEAD, 12 CRITICAL AS CORONA HITS IEBC'**. The Commission notes with great concern that the headline story is sensational, alarmist and lacking in facts.

The Commission wishes to clarify that the assertion in the Star article that 12 staff are in critical condition is false and misinforming. Currently, no staff of the Commission is in critical condition nor fighting for their lives as indicated in the story. The few staff that tested positive to the virus are in stable condition having been discharged to self-isolate and recuperate from their homes. Since the emergence of COVID-19, the Commission sadly lost 2 staff to the pandemic, both had pre-existing conditions prior to contracting the virus. To the families of the deceased, the Commission conveys its heartfelt condolences.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, the Commission took several measures to contain the virus, including mass testing of staff at the headquarters and fumigation of all its offices at Anniversary Towers with the help of Nairobi Metropolitan Services, Health Department. Further, the Commission developed safety protocols in consultations with the Ministry of Health to guide staff, electorates and stakeholders in the conduct of elections amid the pandemic.

The situation is not dire as painted in the story and it is the Commission's view that such a story did not merit to make National news. Further, the tonality of the story could lead to stigmatization of the affected families who are already agonizing over loved ones affected by the virus. Many organizations, both public and private, have unfortunately lost staff to the pandemic and have not received such headline coverage. We therefore view this story as malice and a plot to undermine the Commission.

The Commission wishes to reiterate the need for media outlets to ensure objectivity, factuality and accuracy of information being disseminated to avoid causing unnecessary panic and misinformation in the public domain.

W. W. Chebukati
Chairperson