

Egyptian Association for Supporting Democratic Development

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Press Release (1)

The Egyptian Association for the Support of Democratic Development (EASD) is monitoring the voting process during the run-off election for the first phase of Parliamentary elections on November 15, 2005 with 159 monitors in 23 districts throughout 5 governorates. From the opening of the polling stations at 8:00am until 11:00am, monitors located in the various governorates reported on numerous violations, including:

1. Judges are preventing monitors from entering the polling station in several cases, with the excuse that they were instructed to do so, despite the monitors possession of badges from the Upper Parliamentary Election Committee and official letter from EASD;
2. Numerous polling stations opened more than one hour;
3. Campaign literature in support of ruling party candidates is present within polling stations; and,
4. Voters are being pressured to cast their ballot in favor of National Democratic Party (NDP) candidates in some polling stations.

As a result of these reports and in support of the principles of democracy and transparency, EASD once again stresses on the critical need to allow the presence of civil society monitors within the polling stations to observe the voting and counting process without any restrictions or conditions, in accordance with the recent judicial ruling issued by the Administrative Court regarding this matter.

During the preliminary hours of the Election Day, EASD monitors observed a number of violations, including:

Prevention of monitors from entering the polling stations

- Judges at polling stations 40 and 41 in the Kaabish Club in the district of Haram in Giza and polling station 6 in the Kassem Amin Secondary School in the Abu Karkas district of Minya, informed EASD monitors that they were instructed to not allow any monitors inside the polling stations.
- An NDP candidate agent by the name of Abd El Nasser Al-Gabari prevented EASD monitors from entering polling station 1 in the Saha Center in Nazla Al-Saman district in Giza.

Late opening of polling stations

- EASD monitors reported that polling stations 1, 2, and 3 in the Saha Center in Nazla Al-Saman district in Giza did not open until 8:30am.

- The Nagah Fikry Training School in the district of Kasm Giza and the Safat Al-Laban Elementary School in the Kerdassa district in Giza did not open until 8:45am.
- Polling station 72 in the Giza Dahab Secondary School polling station opened late because there were no candidate agents present.
- Polling station B in the Makaram Akhlaq School in the Awala district in Marsa Matrouh did not open until 10:36am because candidate agents were not present.
- Polling station 2 in Khodr Elementary School in the district of Astanha in Manoufiya did not open until 8:30am.
- Polling stations 65-67 in Rarmoun School in the Bandar Malawi district of Minya did not open until 9:00am because candidate agents were not present.

Voter registry violations

- EASD monitors reported that voter registries were not posted in the Naabish Club polling stations 40 and 41 in the district of Haram and in the Nagah Fikry Training School in the district of Kasm Giza, but were only in the hands of National Democratic Party (NDP) and Muslim Brotherhood loyalists.
- The voter registry was not posted in the Nagah Fikry Training School in the district of Kasm Giza, but available with NDP members.
- The voter registry was not posted in the Safat Al-Laban Elementary School in the Kerdassa district or polling stations 1-3 in the Saha Center in Nazla Al-Saman district in Giza.
- In the Bahitha Al-Badiya School in the Awala district in Marsa Matrouh, EASD monitors noted that there were no signs directing citizens to which polling station they should vote in and the voter registry was left on a chair in front of polling station 23.
- EASD monitors reported that many citizens left the Makaram Akhlaq School in the Awala district in Marsa Matrouh without voting because the voter registry was not posted.

Campaign material inside and outside the polling stations

- EASD monitors documented campaign material for candidates from all parties outside polling stations 1-3 in the Saha Center in Nazla Al-Saman district and Aabour Elementary School in Boulaq Al-Dakror in Giza.
- Campaign material for NDP candidate Mohamed Ziad and independent candidate Al-Mandou Al-Husseini was posted outside Mustafa Kamel School in Boulaq Al-Dakror in Giza.
- Outside the Bahitha Al-Badiya School in the Awala district in Marsa Matrouh, EASD monitors noted campaign ads for NDP candidate Abdallah Mistour Farag and independent Suleiman Hamel.
- NDP campaign ads were present outside the Girls' Secondary School and the Ahmed Fawzi School in the Awala district of Marsa Matrouh.
- EASD monitors reported the presence of campaign material inside the Nahdet Elementary School in the Birka Sebaa district in Manoufiya, as

well as live campaigning over loudspeakers outside the station for Muslim Brotherhood candidate Sabri Amer.

No measures to protect voter secrecy

- EASD monitors observed that no measures were taken to protect voter secrecy in the Nagah Fikry Training School in the district of Kasm Giza in Giza.

Incidents of voter intimidation

- EASD monitors documented incidents where NDP activists were pressuring voters to cast their ballots in favor of ruling party candidates in the Aabour Elementary School and the Mustafa Kamel School in Boulaq Al-Dakror district in Giza, as well as in the Khodr Elementary School in the district of Astanha in Manoufiya. These voters were made to stand and wait as they were questioned by NDP members on who they were coming to vote for.

Vote-buying

- In the Amariya School in the Old Cairo district in Cairo, EASD monitors noted cases of vote-buying at 20 EGP per vote for NDP candidates.

Bussing voters

- EASD monitors reported cases where groups of voters were transported by bus (license numbers 3426 and 125) to the Independent School and Amer Bin Abd El Aziz School in the Helwan district in Cairo.

Incidents of violence

- In the Astanha Secondary School in the Astanha district of Manoufiya, EASD monitors reported that agents for independent candidate Mustafa Assayyed Aoud prevented agents for Muslim Brotherhood candidate Yasser Hamouda from entering the polling station. This led to an outbreak of violence between these groups in front of the polling station, and security forces had to intervene to contain the situation and separate the parties. Unfortunately, three citizens were injured during the fight: Mohamed Ibrahim Aoud, Ahmed Al-Said Al-Manoufi and Ahmed Samara.
- In the Berba School polling station in the Berba village in the district of Abu Karkas in Minya, supporters of independent candidate Ala' Rida prevented NDP voters (for NDP candidate Farouk Taha) from entering the polling station and voting.

**Address-6 Hussein Ahmed Rashad Street, from Adnan Sidki Street
off of Tahrir Street, in front of the National Center for Research
Doukki, Giza**

Phone +(202) 3353270

-Fax no. + (2023389537

E-mail : easd_2004@hotmail.com