

IEC boss says 'We have done well'

Just weeks before South Africans were to cast their votes, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was faced with a potential crisis when its chairperson Pansy Tlakula was embroiled in a tender controversy which ended up in court.

As expected, political parties questioned Tlakula's independence and asked the courts to remove her from the commission, days before the national poll. But despite the row, the IEC has managed to deliver credible elections with few cases of alleged wrong doing on the part of IEC staff.

There were also very few incidents of intimidation and violence reported in Wednesday's election. SAnews spoke to IEC Chief Electoral Officer Mosotho Moepya to find out how the electoral commission managed to survive the storms and deliver South Africa's fifth democratic elections.



(Image: GCIS)

How would you rate the IEC's preparation for this election?

"I've always had a view that this is an election we prepared for so well. When we started just about two years ago to prepare for this election, we indicated to the nation that everything that we needed to do, we will do. We set out right from the beginning to do what we needed to do and we are very pleased. Even when we had challenges as you know in the past few weeks, we said the electoral commission will deliver credible elections and we believe we have done just that."

How have South Africans responded to the 'I vote SA campaign'?



(Image: GCIS)

"I'm very excited, I'm honoured and I'm humbled by how this nation has reacted to the work that we have done. It's been a very tough election -- the most contested election since 1994. South Africa has reacted very well; our people have not disappointed us. My colleagues in the IEC have indicated themselves that they have laboured extremely well, challenges were extremely limited and we dealt with them. We showed that we will never back off from a responsibility like this."

In terms of voter turnout, what can you tell us at this stage?

"Up to now we have 4.1 million vote results that have come through (8:30am). Those areas that these votes have come from, there are 5.7 million registered voters - that gives you a turnout of about 73%. But it's still early; it's just about 30 to 40% of the votes that have come through now. It will change extremely [sic] in a day [sic] to come. I'm hoping by the end of today (Thursday) we will have received an overwhelming majority of the results."

In terms of the declaration of the results and the final announcement - when can we expect that?

"We cannot declare the results earlier than Friday, in law, the last objections will be received by the commission at 5pm on Friday and the commission must consider all those objections before the declaration of results. Provisionally the final results are planned to be issued on Saturday, but the law requires that we issue the results in seven days."