

POLITICS

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Varsity students locked out of polls

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By Frank Kimboy
The Citizen Reporter

Dar es Salaam. Some higher learning institutions' students in Dar es Salaam will be locked out of October General Election after they failed to register because the exercise started in Dar es Salaam when they were already on holi-

days. Speaking in Dar es Salaam during a symposium, which brought together higher learning students to discuss the role of young people in election, they expressed their anger towards the National Electoral Commission (NEC) for not considering students when preparing the timetable for listing by using the Biomet-

ric Voter Registration (BVR).

According to Mr Bernard Muta, a student from Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, the voter registration was conducted in Dar es Salaam between July 22 and August 4 when many higher learning students were on holiday.

"I think there is conspiracy here because at first the exercise was supposed to start on June 30 and end on July 10 before it was postponed twice. NEC should have considered us when drafting the

timetable," said Mr Muta.

Mr Audas Songo, a student from St Joseph University, said the move has denied about 15,000 students their right to vote. According to Mr Songo there will be no free and fair election if some people will be locked out of elections apparently for no reason at all.

Ms Kuruthumu Mgala said even those who registered their names while still in Dar es Salaam might not participate in the election because they would still be on holi-

day as all higher learning institutions will be opened after the polls.

Civic Education Teachers Association (Ceta) project coordinator Goodluck Mollel urged NEC to address the student concerns. According to Mr Mollel, since the students encountered the same challenge in 2010 he expected that the problem shouldn't have recurred.

The workshop was hosted by Ceta in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.