

Cops ignored rape cases in poll violence, says Waki

BY GEORGE MURAGE

POLICE ignored women reporting sexual abuses during the 2007-8 post-election violence, Justice Philip Waki has said.

Waki, who chaired the Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence, said investigations indicated victims encountered unhelpful or insensitive police officers.

“Police are said to have given preference to public disorder problems at the expense of the gender crimes,” he said.

Waki said women in poor neighbourhoods seeking food for their lost children during the violence bore the brunt of chaos as they were raped and left for dead.

He wondered what happened to the task force formed by police to look into the implementation of the recommendations on sexual offences during the violence.

He said little has been heard of the task force adding that “it would be a sad day for Kenya if no action is taken against the rapists”.

“The country has relatively good laws on sexual offences, but accountability for the horrendous sexual crimes that took place during the post-election violence has been slow,” he said.

The High Court judge was speaking during the opening of a three-day implementation workshop on the Sexual Offences Act in a Naivasha hotel.

“Currently the police department has yet to fully customize their stations to accommodate sexual violence victims,” he noted.

Justice (Rtd) Effie Owour, who chairs the task force on the implementation of the Sexual Offences Act, said they are disturbed by the increase in sexual violence in the country.

She said statistics indicate that sexual violence rose by 12 per cent in 2010 when other crimes dropped by five per cent.

“We face various challenges which include increasing incidences of sexual violence despite an enabling and comprehensive legislation,” she said.

Attorney General Amos Wako said the government is committed in improving prevention and response to sexual violence. In a speech read on his behalf by Waki, the AG said the government has made progress in the implementation of the Act. “We have managed to train prosecutors, state counsels and police officers on the act and set up gender desks in police stations,” Wako said.

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REVEALED: Justice Waki and retired Judge Effie Owour at the workshop.