

Results of Election Campaign Observation over 2013 RA Presidential Elections within January 21- February 4, 2013

Within the scopes of 2013 RA Presidential Elections, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor has been conducting observation of election campaign in the cities of Vanadzor and Ijevan throughout Lori and Tavoush regions, respectively.

The observation mission is carried out by 7 observers in Vanadzor and 4 observers in Ijevan. In the framework of the observation mission, the observers are in charge of attending meetings with presidential candidates in Vanadzor and Ijevan cities, having a discourse with some of the meeting participants or the presidential candidates and their representatives at availability, visiting election campaign headquarters of the candidates and conversing with their heads. The previously tailored observation tools are filled out by the monitors during all of their visits.

Election Campaign Headquarters

February 4, 2013 data suggest that within the scopes of 2013 RA Presidential Elections the election campaign headquarters of only one presidential candidate Serzh Sargsyan function in Vanadzor and Ijevan cities. It should be noted that 1 mobile election campaign headquarters of Raffi Hovhannisian also operates in each of the aforementioned cities. As of February 4, 2013, the observers conducted interviews with the heads of Serzh Sargsyan's 4 and Raffi Hovhannisian's 1 election campaign headquarters in Vanadzor, and those of Serzh Sargsyan's 8 campaign headquarters in Ijevan. In conformity with the data provided by the heads of Serzh Sargsyan's campaign headquarters, 57 headquarters of Serzh Sargsyan function in Vanadzor and another 7-35 in Ijevan. In Vanadzor only 1 of the interviewed heads of campaign headquarters replied to the above-mentioned question, while in Ijevan, 5 out of the interviewed heads mentioned the operation of 35

campaign headquarters, 1 noted 34 and 2 heads suggested 7 campaign headquarters.

According to the heads of Serzh Sargsyan's campaign headquarters, there is a paid personnel in 3 of the headquarters/2 headquarters in Vanadzor and 1 in Ijevan/, while the staff members volunteer in the remaining 9 headquarters/1 in Vanadzor and 8 in Ijevan/.

Hence, on the whole, 14 out of the headquarters staff members hold paid positions and 40 of them work voluntarily. According to the data provided by the head of Raffi Hovhannisian's mobile election campaign headquarters in Vanadzor, they work on voluntary basis.

Meanwhile, a citizen, who didn't want to introduce himself, phoned at Organization's hotline and informed that 3 persons are employed in each of Serzh Sargsyan's campaign headquarters in Vanadzor and each of them represents a family comprised of 3 voters, moreover, each staff member mandatorily presents passport data of another two citizens, who become committed to give their votes to Serzh Sargsyan.

In this manner, each staff member provides minimum 5 votes in favor of Serzh Sargsyan by receiving 30 000 (thirty thousand) AMD in return, which is issued as a salary. According to the information provided by another citizen, under the decree issued by Serzh Sargsyan's Central Election Headquarters, all of its members must present themselves as zealous party activists, who work voluntarily.

Even while summarizing the observation results, it becomes clear that only the heads of those headquarters noted they worked on voluntary basis, that were attended by the observers on the first few days of the election campaign.

Campaign Materials

Within the frames of the observation mission 2 cases of violation regarding campaign materials of 1 presidential candidate, particularly, posting of campaign posters in a prohibited site. Hence, campaign posters of presidential candidate Serzh Sargsyan were posted in the area of Ijevan stores. In this regard, one of the heads of election campaign headquarters stated, “Random people enter the headquarters, who can take the posters and post it in legally prohibited sites” by turning to the observer with a request to be more attentive and report on such cases. By the way, the posters were removed from the aforementioned prohibited sites. The head of Serzh Sargsyan's election headquarters in Ijevan notified the observer that Raffi Hovhannisian's posters were posed in prohibited sites, particularly, in the villages.



Voters' list

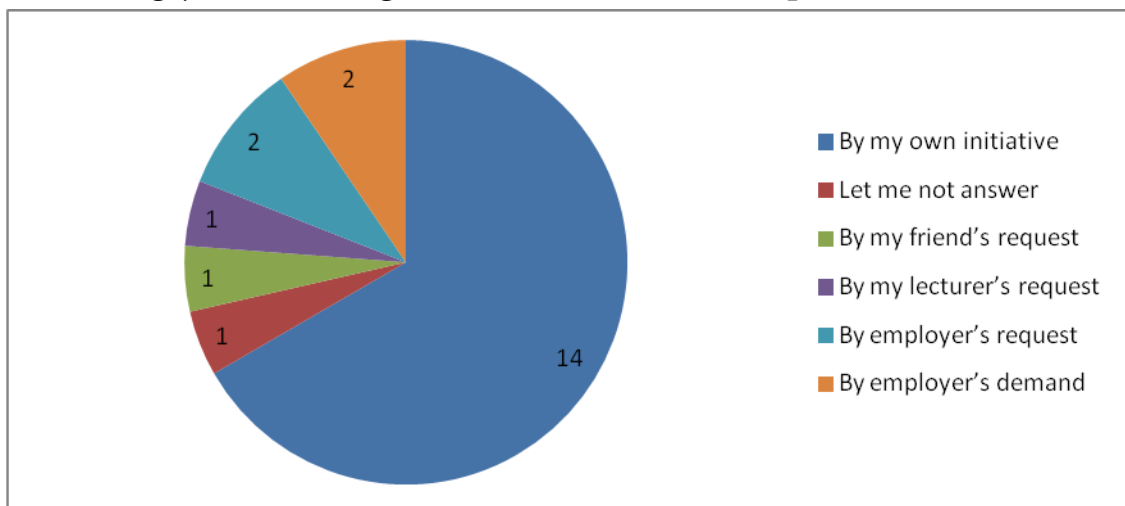
Within the framework of 2013 RA Presidential Elections, a number of concerns regarding the voters' list have been recorded. Specifically, 2 heads of Serzh Sargsyan's election campaign headquarters in Vanadzor noted that names of deceased citizens are included in the voters' lists. “1730 citizens are included in the voters' list, 11 out of which are dead”, noted one of the headquarters' heads.

Administrative Resources

As of February 4, during the campaign of RA Presidential Elections, Serzh Sargsyan/meetings/ and Hrant Bagratyan /TV broadcasting in Vanadzor and a meeting in Ijevan/ visited the cities of Vanadzor and Ijevan. The results of observation mission conducted by the Organization and the warnings received from citizens confirm that the administrative resources are once again used to the benefit of the government's candidate during the campaign of current presidential elections

Hence,

- Prior to and on the very day of Serzh Sargsyan's meeting with Vanadzor electorate some citizens informed the Organization that state institution staff members and parents at kindergartens were ordered to mandatorily attend the meeting with Serzh Sargsyan. The Organization representatives conducted observation over 2 meetings of Serzh Sargsyan and 1 meeting of Hrant Bagratyan with voters, where they talked to 26 citizens from Vanadzor and Ijevan cities. The responses provided by citizens to the question if they attended Serzh Sargsyan's meeting on their own accord are presented below.



One of the citizens complained to the Organization representative, “As if you are not aware, you came here with as much desire as I did. I took an offense, we are obligated to attend the meeting with passports, they gather

everyone and later order the Police officials to clear the area. Who forced you that you are so uneasy? A teacher cannot be treated like this, you must mandatorily attend the meeting, it is obligatory, but they never consider if we wish it or not.”

Whereas, 5 citizens who had partaken in a meeting with Hrant Bagratyan responded to the same question by mentioning they attended the meeting by their own initiative.

- During the campaign of RA Presidential Elections Artur Baghdasaryan, Chairman of "Orinats Yerkir" Faction and Secretary of the National Security Council held a meeting with his co-partisans in Vanadzor State Theatre House after Hovhannes Abelyan, where he urged them to actively participate in the elections and at the same time presented the faction's cooperation with RPA Party and their joint goals.
- There was a line of citizens in one of the election campaign headquarters of Serzh Sargsyan in Vanadzor while the head of the headquarters had a list on his table. The observer wanted to clarify what list it was and the head of the headquarters responded that it contained names of state institution employees. To the question what the list was for, he mentioned he didn't know as they had just received it. Meanwhile, the Organization was notified by citizens that:
- Assemblies in Vanadzor schools were set up where the school headmasters asked the teachers to vote for Serzh Sargsyan without taking money in return for a vote.
- 2 employees of Vanadzor state register were forced by the RA Ministry of Justice to present 2 obligatory voters' list to the incumbent president of RA, each of them containing data of minimum of 10 citizens with their precinct number.
- Several of Vanadzor schools and institutions not only demanded the teaching staff to provide lists and passport data of their family members, but also their signatures.

Benevolence, Concealed Election Bribery

The Organization was notified by a citizen that during the election campaign an order was issued in Vanadzor schools which required provision of 70% participation in the elections. Samvel Karapatyan's (Tashir Samvel) name should be upheld, since he awarded the Lori region responsible, while, the latter, in his turn, rewarded 2 teachers in each school /1 senior and 1 young teacher) with 100.000 AMD during elections.

Heads of 2 campaign headquarters in Ijevan stated that 2 citizens had come up to them with requests which were submitted to the Regional Central Headquarters by them.

Hence, at this writing, it can be inferred that the incumbent president launches his apparent advantage towards other candidates, which is displayed by the use of unrestrained human and financial resources applied as a result of RPA- state body fusion. Whereas, the other candidates don't possess enough resources to conduct such an adequate election campaign. The true competition between the candidates is missing.