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EDITOR'S NOTE.

An election post-mortem always bears the hallmark of housekeeping: How was it conducted. Did the processes follow laid down rules? How should the actors and observers make future plans for observed hitches and grey areas that attracted widespread concerns?

That is what this edition is all about, the presentation of the reports, findings and recommendations of stakeholders who observed and monitored the 2019 general elections held in Nigeria between February 23 for the Presidential and National Assembly election and March 9 for the governorship, Houses of Assembly and Municipal Councils of the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Abuja.

But certain peculiarities emerged that local and international stakeholders have pointed out need to be addressed in support of the ongoing democratization in the country.

Indeed, democracy gets enriched through theory and practice, and when relevant stakeholders take more than a passing interest in the conduct, fairness, equity and

openness of the process right from the mode of party primaries adopted by the participating political parties to actual campaigns, voting, presentation of results and announcement of winners.

With all that gone, the observers and monitors who took active part during the election have rolled out their findings and made suggestions for a better outcome in the future.

Notable among them is the European Union Election Observer Mission, EOM, to Nigeria, which has been actively involved in the democratization process in Nigeria since 1999. Their reports, findings and recommendations make interesting reading on pages 5, 10 and 11.

Closely following that are also the reports and recommendations of select NGOs, CBOs and agencies of government.

Among them are CLEEN Foundation, National Broadcasting Commission, NBC and the Institute for Media and Society, IMS. They devoted special teams to observe and monitor the elections. Their succinct suggestions are packaged for your delight in the inside pages.

Then there is an informative interview on how the media fared in its coverage of the election. It is



from a seasoned professional journalist and former President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, Mallam Baba Dantiye. It is on pages 8 and 9

The photo page is full of photos that tell their own story during the period under review. Enjoy.

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IMS UNVEILS REPORT ON BROADCAST MEDIA CONTENT MONITORING EXERCISE

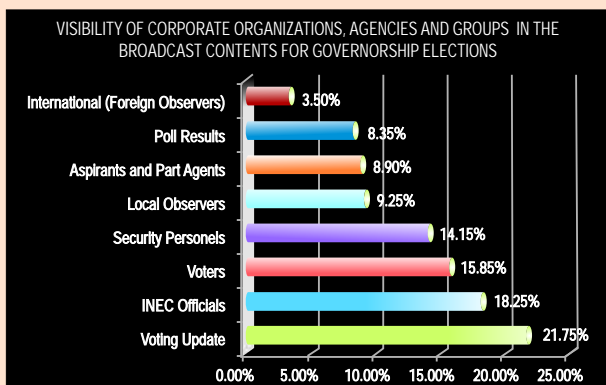
Just like the presidential and senatorial elections, the governorship election, which took place on March 9 had its own share of the electoral saga and the media played its role by giving coverage to the election day activities. There were instances of killings, kidnaping of key politicians, snatching of ballot boxes, and destruction of federal or state property. An example is the ambush of the Borno state governor's convoy with more than four persons reported dead.

The Nigeria Television Authority, NTA,

reporting. A total of eight (8) radio stations and five (5) television stations, which made thirteen (13) broadcast stations were selected for monitoring and the contents of their programmes were analysed during the 2019 gubernatorial election.

The twelve (12) broadcast stations that were monitored include:

Radio Benue, Gotel Radio, Yola (FM), FRCN, Abuja, Rhythm 93.7, PH, Nigeria Info, Dream FM, Splash FM 105.5 Ibadan. All the radio stations are private-owned except FRCN.



reported a number of unpleasant happenings in Ibadan during the gubernatorial elections. Some of these events are the hoodlums' attack of a polling unit and carting away of ballot box. Also, a member of the house of representative in Oyo state was shot dead by gunmen after the governorship election.

All of these occurrences raised concern on how the media projected the governorship election amidst the various incidences. As part of effort to implement its media mandate under the EU-SDGN project Nigeria, the Institute for Media and Society, IMS, conducted a broadcast media content monitoring exercise during the governorship election. The exercise produced a report that examined the effectiveness of the broadcast media in the discharge of its basic responsibilities and social role. In the monitoring exercise, selected television and radio contents were carefully coded and analysed under the following categories: programme types, thematic focus, visibility of individual and corporate actors, quality of reports, and the language of

The monitored television stations were TVC, NTA, Channels TV, AIT, STV. Again, all the stations are private-owned except NTA.

These selected stations represent 62.2% for private-owned stations and 34.8% for public-owned stations.

Data for the report were gathered from political programmes of the selected stations. These include all programmes on the election day that were specifically meant to discuss the election and other trending political issues. These programmes include: News Reports, Discussions, Debates, Commentaries and Analysis, Interviews, Phone-in programmes and others.

In order to carefully monitor and analyse the contents, four important questions that are central to election and election issues in the broadcast media guided this exercise. The questions are:

1. What are the broadcast media talking about?
2. Who are the actors given coverage by the broadcast media?
3. What is the quality of reporting with reference to balance?
4. Are there traces of incitement or hate speech?

In totality, 455 contents were monitored, observed

and analysed from the election day media broadcasts. One hundred and sixty five (165) of the broadcast contents were from the selected radio stations and 290 broadcast programmes were monitored from the selected television stations on the gubernatorial election day.

This abridged version of the 38-page monitoring report highlights key areas in the report dealing with visibility of actors, people with disabilities and without disabilities, young people and other age grades, politicians and other citizens, rural and urban areas. Others are quality of report on balanced coverage of the poll and quality report on extreme speech.

VISIBILITY OF ACTORS:

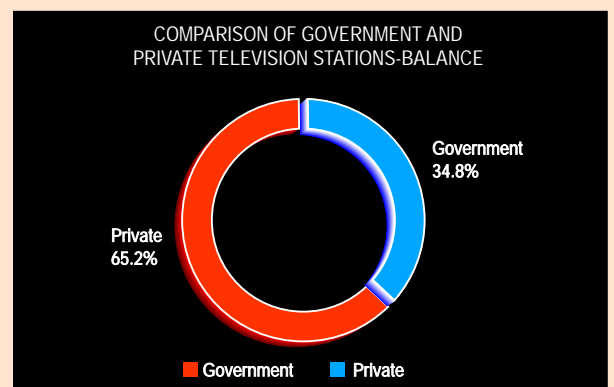
(a) Individual Actor

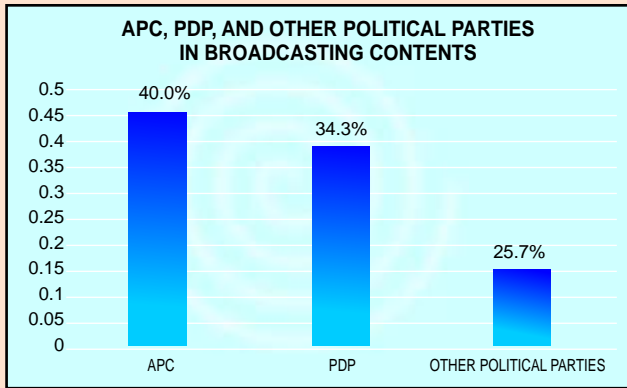
Results presented show that men accounted for 68.40% of the individual coverage while women had just 31.60% of the media visibility. This is not surprising because men already had more visibility in the separate report of the radio and television than women.

(b) People With Disabilities And Without Disabilities

The results show that people without disabilities enjoyed more visibility in the broadcast contents than people with disabilities. While able-bodied people accounted for 91.20% of the visibility, people with disabilities only had 8.80% of the visibility. This is considerably low and it shows that people with disabilities are yet to enjoy the same preference from the media as the able-bodied people.

Continues on pg. 4





Continued from pg. 3

(c) Young People And Other Age Grades

People who are grouped into “others” category accounted for 52.25%, which is the largest of the visibilities in the election day content based on age categorisation. Youth accounted for less than half of others at 20.35% and at the time of observing, people whose age were not known and do not fall into the categories of others accounted for 27% which is a bit higher than the percentage of the youth. This is not surprising as young persons were yet to make the appreciable impact on politics.

(d) Politicians And Other Citizens

The monitoring exercise also observed and compared the visibility given to politicians and other citizens by the media on the election day. The electorate enjoyed more visibility.

Ordinary citizens accounted for the larger part of the media visibility on the election day broadcast at 74.10%. Aspirants had less than half of the visibility enjoyed by the citizen at 16.60%. Other politicians accounted for 9.30%. This is expected as the electorate are the major player on the election day in any election.

(e) Arms of Government

The executive arm has the largest visibility of the three arms of government. The executive arm accounted for 54.05% of the visibility in the contents and was followed by the legislative arm at 40.40% while the judiciary arm had 5.60% of the total visibility of the arms of government.

This is not surprising because members of the judiciary arm of

government do not contest in elections

(f) Rural And Urban Areas

Urban areas enjoyed more visibility at 79% of the coverage on the election day. Rural areas only accounted for 21%.

This shows

that the

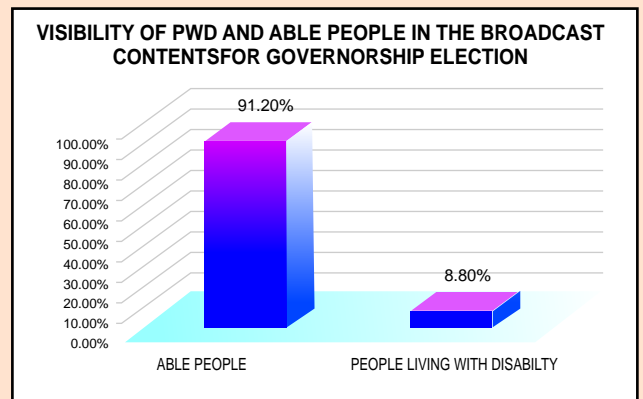
selected media stations gave much prominence to electoral activities in the urban area than rural areas.

(g) Political Parties

The report showed that APC and PDP had major visibilities when

compared to other political parties in the election day broadcast media contents. While APC accounted for 38% of the visibility, PDP had 35% and other political parties combined, had 27%. The result confirmed the notion that APC and PDP were the major players among other parties on the election day.

Continues on pg. 9



2019 Poll: NBC Sanctions Broadcast Stations

The National Broadcasting Commission, NBC penalized some broadcast media stations for violating provisions of the NBC codes during the 2019 general election.

At a news conference in Abuja headquarters of the Commission, recently, Director-General of the commission, Malam Is'haq Modibbo, said that the stations, which cut across the country, violated provisions of the Nigerian Broadcasting Code and have been sanctioned accordingly.

He said; “Despite our various interventions, at the end of the Presidential election which was held on Feb 23, 45 stations were found culpable of infractions on the provision of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code and have been sanctioned accordingly.

“We gave them the highest level of sanction under the NBC, which is to make them to pay N500,000 each and they cut across the entire country.

Arguing that the NBC also sanctioned stations that allowed politicians to utter abusive, inciting and provocative statements during rallies, he pointed out

that such unprofessional conduct happened on several radio and television stations, “particularly and unfortunately on the big national networks such as NTA, AIT, Channels, TVC News”.

Modibbo warned that any of the stations that continued to broadcast hate and inflammatory comments that threaten the security of the country would be shut down.

He said that it had become necessary for NBC to issue such warning as the country moves to the next election.

As a way forward to maintain effective check on erring stations in the future, Kawu stated that the commission had set up a National Monitoring System involving all members of the board of management of NBC to monitor stations on a 24-hour basis.

“We monitored all the broadcasts in every single Radio and Television and all our licence. We monitored exactly the way people performed during the elections,” he said.

The DG said that NBC was working in partnership with INEC, EFCC, and Nigeria Financial Intelligence Units on tracking campaign financing in the country.

“It is a very vital part of deepening the democratic process and it is important for us to mention this as we move to the next elections,” he concluded.



EU EOM: Systemic Failings And Electoral Security Problems In Nigeria Show Need For Serious Reform

“The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) included a core team of 11 experts and 40 long-term observers deployed to 20 locations on 21 January. The EU EOM issued its first preliminary statement on 25 February after the presidential and National Assembly elections. On 9 March, the EU EOM deployed 73 observers from 26 EU member states, Canada, Norway and Switzerland across 22 states. On election day, observers visited 223 polling units and 81 collation centres. Observers assess the whole electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections to which Nigeria is signatory, as well as the laws of Nigeria. The EU EOM is independent from EU institutions and member states. EU EOMs adhere to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation signed at the United Nations in 2005.



Ms Maria Arena, Chief Observer, EU EOM

Before the completion of the entire electoral process in the 2019 polls, the EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) under the leadership of the Chief Observer, Ms Maria Arena, made the following preliminary report which was largely substantiated by local commentaries, observations and reports of the media, NGOs and other stakeholders.

In the preliminary report, the EU EOM stated that election operations for the governorship and state assembly elections improved, with EU observers more positively assessing polling procedures. However the elections were marked by an overall low turnout, it observed.

“There was also violence, including against election officials and voters. Security forces obstructed observer access to some collation centres. The elections were competitive with overall freedom to campaign. However, there was misuse of incumbency, including on state media, preventing a level playing field. There was also pressure on local media outlets and journalists before and on election day. The systemic problems evident in the 2019 electoral process show the need for an inclusive national discussion on reform for greater electoral integrity and participation.

Polling on 9 March was more orderly and was assessed more positively by

EU observers. However turnout was consistently recognised to be overall very low. There was a significant improvement in opening times, with nearly two-thirds of polling units

opening on time or less than 30 minutes late. The procedures for accreditation of voters were significantly improved, but secrecy of the vote was not always sufficiently protected.

“There was extensive live coverage of election day in the electronic media,

increasing transparency of the process. However electoral transparency was limited by restrictions on journalists and observers. In five states, journalists from respected media houses were obstructed from reporting in certain areas. Civil society groups reported that military and security agents denied citizen observers access to eight collation centres in three states, and that they were further denied access in a number of others by INEC personnel or threatening groups.

EU observers were prevented from entering the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Rivers, apparently by military personnel. On 10 March, INEC suspended all electoral processes in Rivers citing widespread violence and disruption to the elections.

Continues on pg.10

...Files Report on Supplementary Governor/Assembly Election

In continuation of its observation mission at different stages of the 2019 election in Nigeria, the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM), monitored the supplementary governorship election held in five states of the country on 23 March. The states were Bauchi, Benue, Kano, Plateau and Sokoto where governorship and 45 State Houses of Assembly election took place.

The supplementary poll followed elections INEC's cancellation of the results in a number of polling units during the March 9 governorship and assembly election. INEC listed electoral misconduct, violence, failure to use smart card readers and over-voting as the reasons for the cancellations. Re-polling took place in 623 polling units with 397,120 registered voters, 2.7 per cent of all registered voters in the affected five states.

The EU EOM which deployed 20 observers to monitor polling, counting and collation of results in the states, observed extensive electoral security problems in some areas.

In the extra report, it said, “In particular, parts of Kano were largely inaccessible to EU observers, and citizen observers and journalists were also obstructed. EU observers also witnessed increased interference by party agents and cases of vote-buying.

“Party leaderships did not appear to take any steps to rein in their supporters. Given the high stakes and the reduced electorate involved, supplementary elections are systemically vulnerable to parties strategically pressurising voters and disrupting the process.

Continues on pg.10

Pictures of activities during



Person with albinism about to vote



Mr. W. Stuart Symington, United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Executive Director of YIAGA Africa, and other officials at a press briefing in Abuja recently.



A view of IMS Situation Room monitoring during the 2019 polls



Dr. Bensen Olugbuo, Executive Director of CLEEN Foundation (middle) and other officials at a press briefing on the 2019 elections



An INEC ad-hoc committee member



IMS's Dr. Akin Akingbulu, Executive Director, (middle), Mr. Sunny Dada, Project Manager, (left) and Olusegun Samuel, Communication Officer, (right) in the Election SITUATION ROOM.



Civil Society Situation Room addressing the press on election monitoring by the group



Voters undergoing accreditation at a polling unit on election day



PWDs-Waiting-Patiently-for-the-Result-After-

ing and after the 2019 Polls



or to Nigeria (Right), Mr. Samson
r officials of YIAGA Africa, at press briefing in



Journalists at a YIAGA press briefing in Abuja



noc displays a ballot paper before voting commenced on election day



INEC-Official-Educating-PWDs-on-Vote-Casting



tion



Dr. Akin Akingbulu, Executive Director, middle, Mr. Sunny Dada, Project Manager, Olaniyi Olaniyan, Programme Manager and Olusagun Samuel, Communication Officer, all of IMS in the SITUATION ROOM in the just concluded elections.

'The Media Gave Adequate Coverage of the 2019 Polls'

Malam Halilu Ibrahim Dantiye, fondly called "Baba" is a seasoned journalist, who recently retired as Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Cooperatives and Tourism in Kano State.

He had served as the Director General, Media and Communications to the Governor of Kano State, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, and as Director of Press and Public Relations to the former Governor, Senator Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso.

Baba Dantiye is a former Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Triumph Newspaper, former executive member of both The West African Editors Forum (WAEF) and The African Editors Forum (TAEF)

He became President, Nigeria Guild of Editors, from 2003 to 2008. He is a Member of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos.

In this interview with Media4Democracy, he advances reasons for his assertion that the media gave adequate coverage to the 2019 polls.



Malam Baba Dantiye

How would you assess the state of the Nigerian media today?

Well, my assessment of the state of the Nigerian media today would be that we have better skilled professionals than before in terms of training and better institutions of learning offering courses in Mass Communication and Journalism. There is also healthy competition among newspapers and broadcast stations, many of which are vibrant, while their editors and managers are showing some versatility in coping with the changing trends in this our new ICT and digital age.

What would you say are the major challenges facing the media currently?

One major challenge is the market because of the coming of social media. Many newspapers, for example, are facing the problem of readership.

Readership has dropped because readers now have various sources of information. Circulation and advertisement too has dropped. Even radio stations, at least some I know in Kano, are finding it difficult to power their operations

round the clock because there is no constant supply of electricity; they have to buy diesel. So you can see how much they would spend on operations. For newspapers, newsprint cost far outweighs sales. In terms of circulation, it is difficult for newspapers to reach their readers by circulations van because of bad roads and increasing insecurity in the country. Vans used to travel by night to get to their destination and serve the readers with copies on time. Not anymore. To break even is a major challenge for the media these days.

What remedy/solution would you suggest?

At a conference of all editors recently, it was suggested that many media outfits should bond together. I think that is one of the ways out of the problem. If they cooperate, in the area of circulation for instance, the vehicle of one media house can take newspapers of many

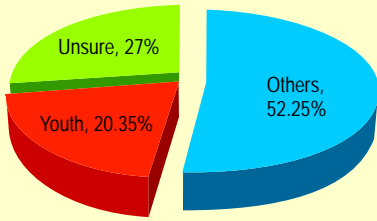
organisations in one direction. They can also cooperate in the area of sharing newsprint and printing materials. I know that as a fact, it had been done before. The same cooperation can be done in the area of printing, but now every newspaper house wants to have its own printing press. Why? The broadcast media can also find similar ways of cooperation within the bounds of integrity and independence of their stations.

The 2019 poll has come and gone with post election ripples still going on. Did the media provide adequate coverage in your estimation?

It depends on what you mean by adequate coverage. In a situation when you had 90 political parties, I would say the media did well. It is easy to say few parties dominated the scene, but have you considered that they had visibility, they had more candidates for all the elective positions. They also had candidates who could engage the media more than those who were media shy. Many of the parties were virtually nowhere to be seen or heard during electioneering. So in terms of coverage, educating the people, covering issues such as voter education and registration and reporting the process, I think the media did well before, during and after the poll.

Continues on pg. 9

YOUNG PEOPLE IN BROADCAST CONTENT FOR GOVERNORSHIP ELECTIONS



Continued from pg. 4

Quality of Report on Balance Coverage

Balanced report in the presentation of programmes accounted for 97.90% while non-balanced view had just 2.10%. This could be taken to mean that media stations were not biased in the presentation of their governorship election day political programmes and the portrayals of parties and political aspirants.

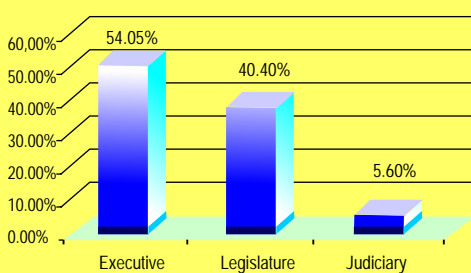
Report on Extreme Speech

In the governorship election day broadcast contents monitoring exercise, there was no occurrence of hate or inciting speech observed in the contents of all the selected media stations.

As politicians were busy working to have or retain the political mandate for their candidate or parties, they might not have had time to verbally attack their political opponents. Consequently, the occurrence of hate speech was not recorded in the selected media contents.

In the quality of contents monitored on the election day, it is observed that the media houses were balanced in the presentation of their programmes and there were no occurrence of hate or inciting speech recorded in the analysis of the report.

VISIBILITY OF THE ARMS OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BROADCAST CONTENT FOR GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION



Dantiye

Continued from pg. 8

It is claimed that the media engages in gender mainstreaming and gives more coverage to men than women, even in instances when the woman is the newsmaker. What is your take on this?

No, no, no. You can only make news if you are able to do so. Everybody can make news. The truth for the media is that men have dominated the public institutions and agencies, which gives them the advantage of being newsmakers. Take for example, the male/female population in the National Assembly and the governorship, they are mostly male. Even so, there are women who are newsmakers too. But many of them are news shy. So, I do not think gender mainstreaming, as said, is deliberate. We even say the newsroom is gender friendly. Application for job in the media is open as far as I know. It depends on who wants to take the opportunity on offer. In any case, I think women need to be encouraged, particularly now that many are acquiring education compared to what obtained in the past.

Ownership structure is said to constitute a major challenge to professional conduct in the work place. As a seasoned professional who has worked in both private and public owned media, do you think this is so? Or is self-censorship the problem?

Anybody who sets up a media outfit has a reason for doing so, some mainly to promote their views, others to act as a

public trust and yet others to make money. For these reasons, the owners would want to promote and protect their outfits to grow into an institution or a business empire. For the reasons also the media organization have regulations and guiding rules. These rules are not written but understood. What is true for the private owner is true for the government owned media. So the issues of ownership interest would always be there. There is no doubt that there is also the problem of self-censorship in the media, but if it is exercised in the public interest, there is no problem. But you know that before one is appointed to a gatekeeping role, one must have spent a number of years during which that person would

have learnt the areas of interest of the owner and then know what to feed the public at any time.

There is this view about the threat posed by fake news to the media? How do you see this?

Fake news is no threat to the traditional media. It is a social media thing. Social media is a free for all, while traditional media is conscious of its markets and image. Even then, so -called fake news rise and fall with events. You will notice that since the elections are over, fake news has reduced: It flowed with the purveyors of fake news, mostly the politicians engaged in power struggles and using religion, ethnicity and misinformation to boost their image and decide outcomes in their favour. The issue of kidnapping and general insecurity is also gaining traction with fake news but if they are addressed quickly, fake news will reduce, if not die out.

I understand you are about to set up a media NGO to train media professionals and engage in leadership mentoring. How often should professionals undergo training and what kind in this digital age?

Training in any field should be continuous. We want to use the center to promote good leadership and improve practitioners' skills. We have observed that the quality of leadership needs to be improved in this information age. Training, as I said is continuous and we wish to intervene with training, particularly in the area of



Continued from pg 5

On election day on 9 March, violent

Buhari from the All Progressives Congress (APC), winning with a sizeable margin of nearly four million votes. The candidate of the main opposition, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, rejected the results and announced the party would contest the outcome in court.

“The turnout for the elections on 23 February went down to 28.6 million, or 34.7 per cent of registered voters as compared to 43.7 per cent in 2015, with wide variation between states.

“The national collation centre for the presidential election was open to party agents and observers, and was continuously televised. However inconsistent numbers, lack of clear checks and explanations, and insufficient public information undermined confidence in the integrity of the election. Polling was cancelled in many polling units without sufficient accountability, resulting in the annulment of voting for nearly 2.8 million registered voters. There was a large discrepancy of 1.66 million more registered voters, as announced by INEC on 14 January, compared to those announced by state returning officers during the collation of presidential results.

Continued from pg 5

In the polling units that could be fully observed, there were improved logistical arrangements and procedures were mostly followed, although there were problems with secrecy of the ballot.”

The observation team praised national and state-level media in Benue, Plateau and Sokoto for regularly updating the public about the supplementary elections.

It however stated that extensive electoral security problems were observed in parts of Kano where polling became inaccessible to EU observers in some areas.

“The environment was intimidating and not conducive to voters' free participation in the election. Party leaderships locally and centrally did not appear to take any steps to rein in supporters and prevent evident violence, intimidation or other misconduct.

“Throughout the day, INEC did not comment on electoral disturbances, despite its overall responsibility for the election and security arrangements.

It continued; “In Nasarawa local government area (LGA) in Kano, which

“Although prior to the elections, INEC and civil society made efforts to

accounted for approximately one-third of all registered voters for the supplementary governorship election, EU observers witnessed organised intimidation of voters. For example, groups of youths with clubs and machetes patrolled the streets, and people with party agent tags harassed voters. During collation in Kano, EU observers saw that several INEC polling staff had been attacked. The police did not contain large groups of men with weapons.

“Due to intimidating crowds and disturbances, EU observers in Kano could not access or continue observation in polling units in Dala and Nasarawa LGAs. The electoral process in Kano was further compromised by the harassment and obstruction of citizen observers, and journalists from BBC Hausa, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), and TVC. This compromised scrutiny of both polling and collation of results in the affected areas.

“Isolated violent incidents also disrupted voting and counting in other states. In Bauchi, EU observers witnessed around 50 people with clubs disrupting counting in one polling unit.

Continues on pg.11

Continued from pg 10

In Benue, election materials were burnt, resulting in the cancellation of polling affecting 13,000 registered voters, and a collation officer carrying result sheets was shot in the leg.

On polling and collation procedures, it observed that party agents were seen to interfere more in the process than on the previous two election days.

“Some polling units in Kano were dominated by controlling party agents and supporters. Of the 40 polling units that EU teams could fully observe, agents were present in all and in five cases were seen interfering in the work of polling officials, in Benue, Plateau and Sokoto.

“EU observers in all five states also saw party agents trying to influence voters, assisting voters or voting on their behalf. Supporters and agents were sometimes present in polling units in excessive numbers, resulting in overcrowding. EU observers also saw vote-buying in Sokoto by both the leading parties, and indications of vote-buying in Kano. Citizen observers also reported party agents involved in vote- buying, and bribery of polling staff and police.

INEC, according to the team, improved logistical arrangements with most polling units observed open within half an hour of the official opening time.

It said procedures were mostly followed in the 40 polling units that EU teams could fully observe.

There, smart card readers were used to accredit voters in all polling units observed. However, manual accreditation procedures were not always correctly followed if card readers failed to authenticate fingerprints.

“The secrecy of the vote was not always sufficiently protected in nearly one-third of polling units observed.”

“The collation process was finalised in Bauchi, Benue, Plateau and Sokoto within 24 hours, but in Kano it was suspended for several hours due to concerns over the safety of lower-level collation staff.

For security reasons, collation of results in two of 29 LGAs in Kano had to be undertaken at the state collation centre. Similarly, ward collation had to be undertaken at one LGA in Bauchi. Adding to transparency of the process, the media provided live coverage of state-level collation. EU observers visited 12 collation centres and observed party agents present in all. EU observers noted that overall collation procedures were followed and the process was generally transparent.”

CLEEN Foundation Commends Conduct of Security Personnel on Election Duty

CLEEN Foundation, which conducted an Election Security Threat Assessments (ESTA) as input towards enhancing public safety and security during the 2019 poll, noted that, “the areas identified by CLEEN Foundation actually experienced violence. These include Rivers, Kogi, Akwa-Ibom and Lagos States amongst others.”

Dr Benson Olugbuo, Executive Director of the organization, said, the findings of the ESTA were disseminated widely between August 2018 and January 2019.

He said that despite “the perceived lopsidedness that characterized the deployment of security officers, 66% of the observers adjudged that the number of security officials present in the polling units were adequate or very adequate at all times.

“Security personnel largely conducted themselves in a commendable manner. They exhibited professionalism in maintaining law and order and assisted in coordinating the electoral process where necessary in most polling units. Available report notes that 83% of the observers rated the conduct of security personnel attached to the polling units across the nation as good and very good.

“Specifically, 92% of the security personnel attached to the polling unit were observed to be approachable to

the voters, 81% of the security officers were observed to be impartial on election duty across the polling units. However, about 12% of the security officers deployed to the polling units were observed to be somewhat partial and partial. This gives credence to incidents of complicity of security personnel on election duty in some polling units.

He noted that though observers reported that 88% of the voters felt safe at the polling units with low incidents of threats at 8 per cent of the polling units across the country, “CLEEN Foundation received reports of incidents involving the military and political thugs in Rivers State. In another report, a detachment of military personnel obstructed passage of electorates into their polling units. These incidents continue to raise the debate on the deployment of the military during election.”

Other shortcomings observed by the foundation included violence that led to loss of lives in some states like Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ebonyi, Kogi and Zamfara States, the destruction of ballot papers, burning of INEC offices and attack launched on some policemen by thugs and harassment of observers by security agents and political thugs. Other observations were vote buying, late arrival polling materials.



Dr. Benson Olugbuo Executive Director of CLEEN Foundation (middle) and other officials at a press briefing on the 2019 elections

IMS PRESENTS ELECTION SITUATION ROOM REPORT

The IMS set up an Election Day Media Monitoring Team for the governorship and state Houses of Assembly election on March 9, 2019.

The Executive Director of IMS, Dr Akin Akingbulu led the team that included Mr Sunny Dada - Programme Manager, Mr. Olaniyi Olaniyan-Programme Officer and Mr Olusegun Samuel- Communication and Visibility Officer. The Media Monitors in three other locations, namely, Port Harcourt, Kaduna and Yola were also mobilised for the activity.

The Lagos monitors, Damilola Agbaje (supervisor), Yemi Ajayi, Zainab Akodu and Bukola Obaujo were mobilised to monitor radio and television stations in Lagos and neighbouring states.

The Situation Room, which opened at the Conference Room of the Institute for Media and Society, IMS, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria, monitored the media coverage of the governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections on Saturday, 9 March, 2019. The governorship election held in 29 states while the State House of Assembly took place in all the 36 states.

Stations Monitored and Programme Names: The television stations monitored for election live updates were: TV Continental, Lagos (Nigeria Votes 2019); Silverbird TV, Lagos (Nigeria Votes); Channels TV, Lagos (The Verdict); Lagos TV, Lagos (Choice 2019); DITV, Kaduna (Nigeria Decides 2019); Liberty TV,



Kaduna (Zaben 2019); AIT, Lagos (Nigeria Votes); NTA, Abuja and other Network Centres (Nigeria Decides); Galaxy TV, Lagos (Election Watch); Rivers State TV, Port Harcourt (2019 Election Studio); ITV, Benin (Nigeria Decides 2019) ; PRTV, Jos (Plateau Decides); Wazobia Max, PH (Nigeria Decides: Rivers in Focus); Niger Delta TV, Yenagoa; Anambra Broadcasting Service, Awka (Nigeria Decides) and Adamawa TV, Yola (Adamawa Resolve).

Presenters: The presenters on the various television programmes on election day exhibited fair level of professionalism in the anchoring of the programmes. But it was also noticed that the major political players and parties were given more prominence in the field reports.

Incidents involving Broadcast Journalists: 1. Nonso Isiguso of Nigeria Info in Port Harcourt alongside five other journalists were abducted by “suspected militants in military

uniform” in Ahoada West Local Government of Rivers State. They were eventually released but Nonso Isiguso was in shock for some time and could not relate his experience in the hands of the abductors.

2. A BBC journalist, Ms Ajoke Uholotse was slapped by a politician Segun Adewale (A.K.A Aeroland) in Lagos. Her offence? She was filming an incidence of vote-buying by the said politician. A contact in BBC said their official policy does not allow reporters involved to speak on such matters

3. Collins Ossai of Channels TV in Edo State was barred from reporting the election in some areas in Esan part of the state by political thugs.

4. A Premium Times (online) Reporter Kunle Sanni was abducted and taken to the bush by political thugs in Plateau State when he took photographs of underage voters. He was released after he deleted all the pictures on his phone though a picture sent out earlier had gone viral on social media.

5. Suspected political thugs attacked an unnamed FRCN reporter and some other journalists in Zonkwa, Kaduna State. They were injured and their working tools seized and destroyed. They were attacked for recording voting irregularity going on in the area.

Social Media: Live updates from the elections were shared on all IMS social media platforms and generated reactions from all over the world, including a call from CPJ in the US.

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