

Relevant Agencies Unveil Plans To Make 2020 Polls Violent Free and Fair

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Dr. Benson Oluigbo, Executive Director of CLEEN Foundation

As part of efforts to ensure the conduct of a free and fair election in Edo and Ondo states in the last quarter of the year, amidst the covid-19 pandemic, the Nigeria Police Force and CLEEN Foundation, has worked out a security initiative.

CLEEN Foundation, an implementing partner in the European Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria, EUSDGN, and the Nigeria Police Force, at separate events, have devised the initiative for implementation ahead of the governorship polls and some bye-elections across the country.

According to CLEEN Foundation: “ First, security has remained the greatest challenge in conducting elections in Nigeria from 2011 post-election violence that gave birth to CLEEN Foundation Election Security Management Project, to violence that marred the 2019 general elections particularly from the south-south region and the recently conducted offcycle elections in Osun and Kogi States.

It continued: “In all these assessments, politicians topped the list as the greatest security threat in Nigeria. Second, COVID19 poses additional responsibilities to the security personnel in terms of enforcing social distancing and enforcement of safety protocols. For instance, how will the deployment of police address these additional responsibilities, will there be need for additional responsibilities? Will there be need for more security forces at the polling units beyond the usual number of three or four? What other strategies are available? How will the safety of security officials against COVID19 be guaranteed? Urgently needed ahead of these elections is a clear policy from the Nigeria Police Force on 'policing elections under COVID19 pandemic. The policy framework should be produced with inputs from stakeholders to ensure it responds to emerging concerns.”

Setting Priorities for Securing Fairness In Ondo and Edo States Governorship Elections.

The Foundation called for the review of the Nigeria Police Force COVID19 guidelines with more procedure in dealing with election



Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu

issues, notably, the

- Training and retraining of security personnel using the protocol developed;
- Conduct of security threat assessment in the focal states;
- Regular Engagement with stakeholders for update information both from security officials and other stakeholders (INEC, CSOs, Development partners, Political Parties, Traditional/Religious Leaders, Media) etc;
- Deployment of security personnel on election duty based on the findings of security threat assessment conducted by CLEEN Foundation and the Nigeria Police Force;
- Purchase/production of PPEs and other safety equipment (hand sanitizers, gloves, facial masks and distribution to security officers deployed on election duty;
- Welfare package of the personnel: This is very important; their accounts should be credited before deployment to the respective states.

In his response to some of the fears raised by CLEEN Foundation concerning the elections and general security, the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, while unveiling a new operational guideline for the police and other law enforcement agencies to curb the rising cases of rape, domestic violence, child molestation in the country, noted, that the operational guidelines, COVID-19 Guidelines / Protocols for Law Enforcement Officers have become necessary as it would help coordinate and reshape the conduct of personnel of the police and other law enforcement agencies on the front line of operations in the enforcement of the COVID-19 prevention orders, particularly during the conduct of elections..

Journalists continue to face Police harassment and Covid-19 infections in Nigeria

Journalists Harassed In Delta State

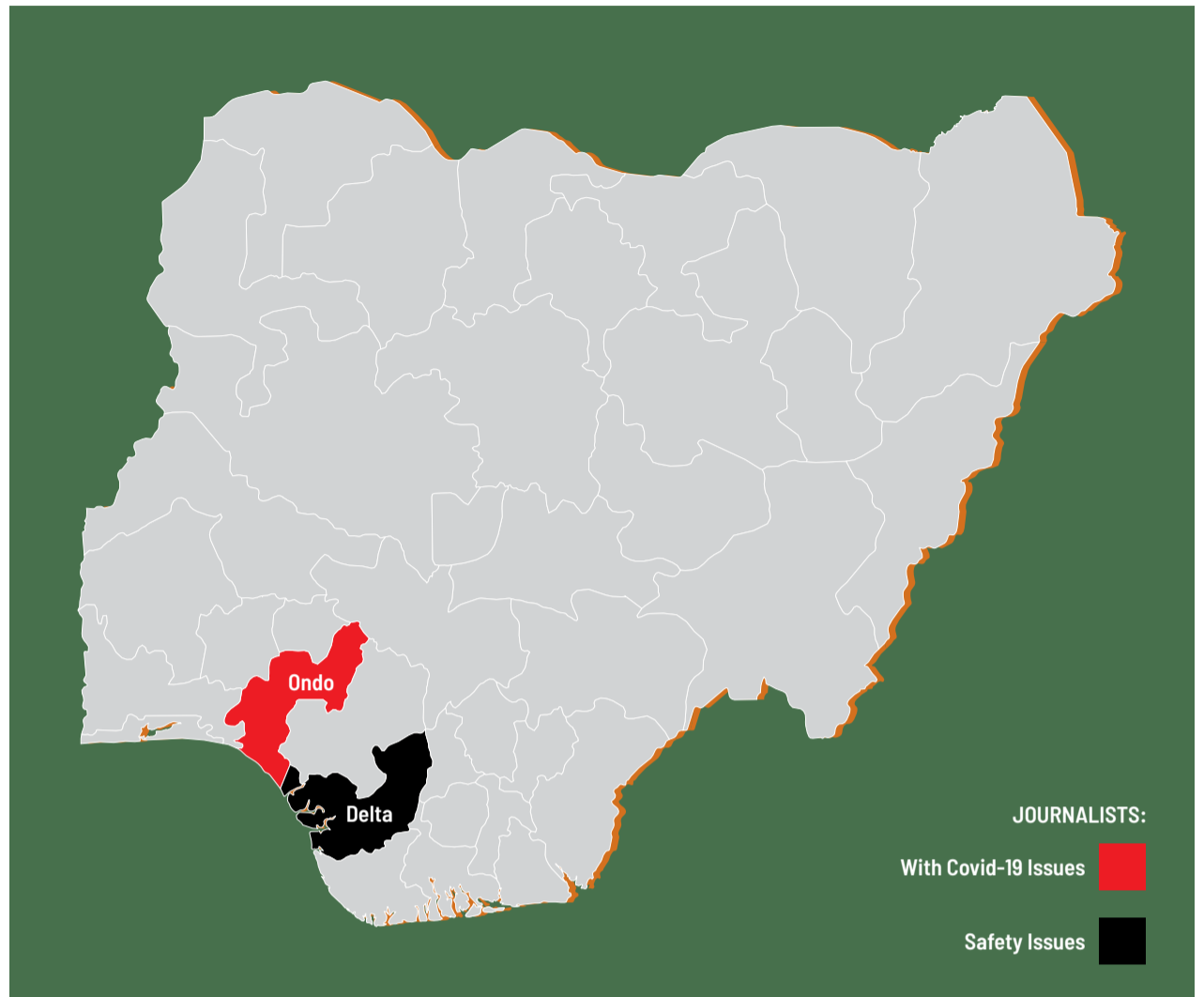
It appears trendy for Police to mount continuous harassment of journalists in Delta state. There is hardly a week without police infringing the rights of reporters, at times without reason. Just as reporters were four arrested by policemen from the Inspector General of Police office in Abuja recently, so to was the for reporting robbery in the government House recently so too has a journalist, Cletus Opukeme has been harassed for undisclosed reasons.

On May 28, at the Nigeria Union of Journalists' office in Warri, Delta State, police officers reportedly approached Mathew Omonigho, a correspondent with the privately owned Daily Post newspaper, and asked him about Opukeme's location.

When Omonigho said he did not know Opukeme's whereabouts, the officers grabbed him, tore his trousers, cut his belt, forced him into a vehicle, and took him to the Warri police station, where they interrogated him about Opukeme's whereabouts, Omonigho told the Committee to Protect Journalists, CPJ, an international media watchdog.

While Omonigho was in detention, four other reporters, namely, Edeki Igafe, with the government-owned News Agency of Nigeria, NAN, Christopher Odamah, with the Delta Trumpet newspaper, Onyekachukwu Meluwa, with the privately owned The Punch newspaper, and Francis Sadhere, with the privately owned Business Day newspaper who went to the Warri police station to investigate his arrest, were arrested them as well. The journalists said police also questioned them about Opukeme's whereabouts.

Opukeme, the publisher of the privately owned Daily Watch news website, told CPJ that he went into hiding after learning about the arrest of others. Opukeme said that in mid-May, Anietie Ekong, Akpabio's media aide, sent him threatening messages about his reporting, accusing him of writing false reports and saying he would "deal with him."



Umahi Directs Journalists to Undergo Covid-19 Test



Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi State

Gov. David Umahi of Ebonyi has directed journalists and security personnel covering his activities and the state government's meetings to go for COVID-19 tests.

Umahi gave the directive on Tuesday while addressing newsmen in Abakaliki, saying that it was just "for us to free ourselves".

I Had Malaria; Ondo Journalist Refutes NCDC Claims of Corona Virus Infection

A journalist, working in Ondo State, has contested his coronavirus status after the government announced he had tested positive for COVID 19. Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, during his weekly media briefing at the Government House, Akure, on Tuesday, confirmed the story while he also disclosed that the total number of COVID-19 patients in the state has risen to 43. They included traders, artisans, civil servants and the clergy.

Speaking on his health status on Thursday, the journalist said he had even recovered from malaria three weeks before he was invited for COVID-19 test by health officials tracing others with the virus.

According to him, upon his arrival at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Akure, he was isolated and placed under watch by officials who conducted test on him which turned out negative. He said, "Yet they refused to release me not until after eight days at the isolation centre in Akure".

Faced with the Crunch, Media Managers, Owners Send S.O.S to Government As Content Streaming Providers Kick Against New Code on Business.

Editors Seek Government Funding for the Media

Few days after the Broadcasting Organizations of Nigeria (BON) and Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) appealed to the Federal Government for funding, following the impact of Covid-19, the Nigerian Guild of Editors, NGE, has made a similar, urgent request to the government.

NGE said the fund is to support the media to cushion the harsh effects of COVID-19 pandemic and its attendant lockdown.

The appeal was contained in the communiqué of the Standing Committee meeting of the Guild held virtually on Thursday, June 4, in Lagos.

The Guild emphasized the urgent and very compelling need for government intervention to save the media from total collapse as pay cut, downsizing, forced leave, delayed salary and job losses sweeps through the print, electronic and online media.

It specifically recommended the injection of funds by the Federal Government not only to help keep media jobs but also to ensure continued existence and operations of the various media houses.

The Editors noted that using public funds to finance private sector operations to save them from bankruptcy and total eclipse is not new and has been adopted in other jurisdictions. It cited the case of the United States government which used public funds to save the US automobile industry, the banking sector and allied industry from insolvency during the financial crisis of 2008 and the current \$2 trillion bailout fund for companies amid the Covid-19 scourge.

The Guild stated that media services are regarded as “essential services” hence they deserved to be so treated like other essential services that play key roles on the frontline in the fight against Covid-19.

For the media to continue to discharge its constitutional duty of keeping the people informed through ethical coverage and reportage of events, which is key to the survival of democracy, the Guild asked to government to act fast.

NBC Code: Netflix, Amazon, iROKOTV, Africa Magic Plan Divestment in Nigeria



Content streaming service providers, Netflix and Amazon, as well as pay television channels, iROKOTV and Africa Magic are considering halting further investments in the Nigerian content industry.

The four platforms have been reportedly forced to consider divestments in the country because of the 6th Broadcast Code recently released by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). The code seeks to end exclusivity to broadcast properties and compel re-sale or sub-licensing to other broadcasters, including direct competitors.

The new code, it was learnt, makes exclusivity illegal, compels content sub-licensing and aims to regulate the prices at which content is sub-licensed.

Creative and broadcasting industry sources disclosed that the four platforms, which have invested enormously in local content production that are exclusive to them, are convinced that the new broadcast code is a huge threat to their investments.

In his reaction the Chief Executive Officer of the popular television channel, Iroko TV, described the NBD code as inimical to the country's pay television industry.

In some tweets recently, he said: “Nigeria Broadcasting in making exclusivity illegal, compelling sub-licensing of content and regulating price is effectively turning private enterprise into state property”

“Interference”, he said, “distorts markets, If implemented, this 100 per

cent destroys Pay Tv in Nigeria. Under these proposed items, it makes zero sense for @Irokotv, @ROX_DSTV@ Netflix Naija@ Iroko @africa magictv @ffilmhouseCinema @SilverbirdTV @Sceneone TV or any other publication or independent production house to invest in local content.”

He suggested that for 'national emergencies', 20 per cent of broadcast hours should be dedicated as well... the government. Nationalization in everything but name”

“I invest billions of Naira in content then I am compelled to share with everyone else as NBC sets the price. Why? Ridiculous?”

According to another industry source, the broadcast platforms view Sections 9.0.1 to 9.0.3 of the broadcast code represent a direct assault on investors, as it erodes the possibility of reaping dividends on their investments.

“These sections prohibit broadcasters from entering into rights acquisition agreements that do not allow the sub-licensing of such rights in Nigeria. The implication is that any such agreement entered into is void,” the source explained.

An Enugu-based industry source also reasoned that Sections 9.1.1.8 to 9.1.1.11 of the Code are most injurious to investors in the industry.

Fire Razes FM Station in Ebonyi

A fire outbreak on Monday destroyed the production studio of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria's Unity FM, Abakaliki in Ebonyi state.

The General Manager of the station, Mr Rex Eze, said the fire started at the production studio and burnt it completely.

Eze said the fire was caused by an electrical fault, noting that workers were in the studio when the fire broke out.

He said that computers, laptops, furniture and electrical appliances, were damaged by the fire.

NBC Warns Against Unedifying Free Satellite Transmission

Acting Director General of the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC, Prof Armstrong Idachaba has warned operators against what he called unedifying content in the free satellite transmission in the country.

Handing down the warning in a statement in Abuja on Thursday, he said the Commission recently monitored the transmission of Free-To-Air satellite transmission and found that some of the channels broadcast content that threaten the core values that undermine the unity and peace of the country.

He said: "It has therefore become expedient to remind all broadcasters or operators and users of satellite broadcasting in Nigeria of the provisions of the Nigeria Broadcasting code and the Act which are the grand laws for broadcasting in Nigeria.

"Section (2) of the NBC Act CAP N 11, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, states, "No person shall operate or use any apparatus or premises for the transmission of sound or vision by cable, television, radio, satellite or any other medium of broadcast from anywhere in Nigeria

except under and in accordance with the provisions of this Act".

He said, in view of this Act, "all broadcasters transmitting Free-To-Air satellite must encrypt all broadcasting signals on their platform."

Expressing appreciation to broadcast stations for in-depth coverage of Covid-19 pandemic, he however, said, "The Commission warns that unclassified, vulgar and obscene musical videos will not be tolerated henceforth."



Ondo State Bans Viewing Centres



Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State

Ahead of the full resumption of sporting activities, the Ondo government, has banned viewing centres from operating in the state.

Governor Rotimi Akeredolu in his weekly broadcast in Akure on Monday, said the step was taken to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in the state.

The state confirmed 19 new cases of COVID-19 in the last 12 days, taking the total number to 43.

He said; "Situations like this call for dire, swift and sustained measures. Government will proceed to take all necessary steps to reverse this threat to the people of the state. To this end the following steps have been approved as our

invigorated approach to the spread of the pandemic:

"All Premiership football viewing centres are hereby banned from operations until further notice," Akeredolu said.

Some of the viewing centre operators, expressed their sadness on their inability to resume business after being out for close to three months following the suspension of sporting activities globally due to COVID-19.

"Will the government give us money? We have been home for more than three months. At least they have allowed churches and mosques to operate for one hour, all these are just sentiments. People go to the markets, churches, courts and other public places but they are stopping us from operating," Tosin Akinyemi, a viewing centre operator in Akure, told journalists.

He lamented; "Since this lockdown, I've been without money, I resorted to asking people for money at some point, when I had a football house (viewing centre) worth N900,000. There is nothing the government can do; I will open my viewing centre and show matches except the government is ready to give us money." But another operator around the FUTA area of Akure, Femi Kehinde, said even though he was sad about the decision, he felt it was for the good of the citizens.

FG Will Continue To Guarantee Press Freedom, Says Buhari



President Muhammadu Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari has said the government will continue to guarantee press freedom in the country and harness the power of the media for positive development.

Speaking during a nationwide broadcast on Democracy Day on Friday, Buhari who assured Nigerians of continued accountability and transparency in governance while fulfilling his administration's cardinal programmes on security, anti-corruption and economic development, said his government, "will continue to guarantee freedom of the press as we place high premium on responsible journalism that is devoid of hate speech, fake news and other unethical professional conduct."

On government reforms of the media, he said; "Government continues to recognize and harness the power of the media for positive development. The reforms of the broadcast and advertising industries including the digital switch over and continuous engagement through town hall meetings remain central to accurate and credible information dissemination

He expressed "deep appreciation to members of the press for your doggedness in the struggle for attainment of democracy since the beginning of our nationhood," and admitted that, "the relationship between the media and successive governments has not always been perfect," while he accepted, "But there is no denying the fact that you have been an effective watchdog for the society especially in holding public officers to account."

He expressed regret that, "It is sad that in the course of securing our democracy, some of your colleagues have had to pay a heavy price."

He concluded by stating that though democracy was under the threat of Covid-19 pandemic, the country will come out stronger.

"Nigeria has survived many crisis and before and came out stronger," he said.

Editor's Note

The impact of Covid-19 on the media is now clear and obvious. A quake literally rippled through the media during the week when some big media housed laid-off many staff and redeployed others, the first such sweeping changes in a long time.

To halt the ugly trend, the Nigerian Guild of Editors following an earlier stand by the Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria, BON and the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria, NPAN, urged the federal government to help through funding.

That is a major feature on our page on Media Business, where we feed you the detail of that appeal.

While the government is yet to respond to that plea, President Buhari, however, has reassured the media that the government will continue to guarantee press freedom in the country. How he gave spelt out that guarantee you will find on our page on policy and regulation. Here, too, you will find why content streaming services providers are threatening to divest business in the country.

Holding elections during a pandemic like Covid-19 as the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, plans to do in Edo and Ondo during the last quarter of the year, is a first experience in the country.

To get it right, stakeholders are making suggestions. In this edition, we bring you suggestions by CLEEN Foundation, one of the implementing partners of the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria, EU-SDGN and the Nigeria Police Force, on security and violence. It is our page one story.

As usual, we have added an update on the Covid-19 status in the 36 states of the federation. Welcome on board.

The Editor
Institute for Media and Society, Nigeria

NCDC Confirmed COVID -19 Cases by State, June 12, 2020

States Affected	No.ofCases (Lab Confirmed)	No.ofCases (on admission)	No. Discharged	No.of Deaths
Lagos	6,611	5,532	997	82
FCT	1,097	792	280	25
Kano	1,048	442	556	50
Ogun	523	296	214	13
Edo	490	343	122	25
Rivers	454	244	188	22
Oyo	434	309	118	7
Katsina	411	171	219	21
Bauchi	392	152	230	10
Kaduna	392	141	241	10
Borno	381	150	205	26
Jigawa	314	138	171	5
Gombe	293	146	135	12
Delta	225	151	63	11
Ebonyi	152	82	70	0
Kwara	143	72	70	1
Plateau	130	28	99	3
Sokoto	129	12	103	14
Nasarawa	128	92	31	5
Imo	114	94	19	1
Abia	97	81	16	0
Zamfara	76	0	71	5
Ondo	54	14	31	9
Anambra	53	39	13	1
Yobe	52	20	25	7
Osun	50	6	40	4
Kebbi	47	13	29	5
Niger	46	19	26	1
Akwabom	45	28	15	2
Adamawa	42	4	34	4
Enugu	35	20	14	1
Bayelsa	32	9	20	3
Ekiti	30	10	18	2
Taraba	18	8	10	0
Benue	13	12	1	0
Kogi	3	3	0	0

Highlights

- On the 11th of June 2020, 681 new confirmed cases and 5 deaths were recorded in Nigeria.
- No new state has reported a case in the last 24 hours.
- Till date, 14,554 cases have been confirmed, 4,494 cases have been discharged and 387 deaths have been recorded in 35 states and the Federal Capital Territory.
- The 681 new cases are reported from 17 states- Lagos(345), Rivers(51), Ogun(48), Gombe(47), Oyo(36), Imo(31), Delta(28), Kano(23), Bauchi(18), Edo(12), Katsina(12), Kaduna(9), Anambra(7), Jigawa(5), Kebbi(4), Ondo(4), Nasarawa(1)

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